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The CTCR Report on "The Ministry"

Samuel H. Nafzger

In the autumn of 1981, after seven years of research, the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) completed work on "The Ministry: Offices, Procedures, and Nomenclature." Copies of this document were sent to all synodical congregations, pastors, and teachers, together with a recommendation from the President of Synod that it be given widespread and careful discussion.

The purpose of this article, published at the request of the CTCR, is to provide background material to assist the members of the Synod in their study of this report on "The Ministry." In keeping with this objective, we shall therefore first discuss the present context for this document by reviewing the questions and issues concerning the ministry which have been directed to and discussed by the Commission in recent years. Then we shall outline the basic positions on the doctrine of the ministry which have been advocated by confessional Lutherans during the past hundred and fifty years. Finally, we shall highlight the basic conclusions of the CTCR report itself in the light of the contemporary and historical discussions on the doctrine of the ministry.

I. The Contemporary Setting

A. *Formal Requests for a Study on the Ministry*

"The Ministry: Offices, Procedures, and Nomenclature" is the CTCR's official response to three formal requests that it undertake a study of various aspects of the doctrine of the ministry.

1. THE ST. LOUIS SEMINARY BOARD OF CONTROL

In August 1974 the CTCR received a request from the Board of Control of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, which was endorsed by the President of Synod, that it "provide a theological study of proper 'call' nomenclature and procedures, particularly as these apply to the varied ministries of the church." In an accompanying letter, the Board presented the reasons for this request:

> The need for this study arose within the Board of Control as we endeavored to employ proper terminology for issuing calls and appointments to prospective faculty members and staff members, some of whom are clergymen and others of whom are not. We noted that in our own practice in recent years there has been some variety in the nomenclature employed. The question was also raised whether the procedures for issuing various types of calls or appointments should be clarified, particularly whether the issuing of a

> Divine Call should differ in any respect from the issuing of a staff appointment. Another question that received considerable discussion was whether a person can be dismissed from a call through the same procedures that would normally be employed for dismissing someone because of a breach of contract.

The Board concluded that this subject "has dimensions that reach far beyond our own Board and could best be answered in a broader synodical study."[1]

2. THE NORTHWEST DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors of the Northwest District, also in August 1974, officially requested that the CTCR study various aspects of the doctrine of the ministry. The Board adopted a resolution petitioning the Commission on Theology "to produce for the Synod an in-depth study of the Power of the Keys, especially as it pertains to the right and autonomy of the local congregation in the exercise of 'The Keys,' the call, ordination, and the relationship of the constitution and bylaws to the Scriptural doctrine of 'The Keys.' "[2]

3. THE MICHIGAN DISTRICT

The Michigan District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod adopted a resolution at its 1976 convention which petitioned "the CTCR to make a thorough study of the Doctrine of the Call."[3] This request grew out of a discussion of questions such as the following: Do district executives have divine calls? Are calls without tenure divine? Is a man still a pastor if he does not have a divine call with tenure?

B. *Reactions to the CTCR Report of 1973 on "The Ministry in Its Relation to the Christian Church"*

As the CTCR prepared "The Ministry," it took into account the reactions which it had received to its March 1973 report, "The Ministry in Its Relation to the Christian Church."

In this document, the Commission had responded to a number of assignments which had been given to it over the years by the Synod in convention. For example, 1965 Resolution 5-14, "To Ordain Called Male Teachers," had been referred by the convention to the CTCR "for a report to next convention."[4] In response to this assignment, the CTCR came to the following conclusion in its 1973 report regarding the ordination of called male teachers:

> Since called male teachers in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod are called to perform certain functions of the

> Ministry, and are considered clergy, and since, moreover, ordination is an adiaphoron, that is, a custom of the church not divinely commanded, there are no biblical or theological reasons why teachers could not be ordained to perform that function of the Ministry to which they are called. In view of the above declaration, and in view of the widely expressed desire for the ordination of the Synod's called male teachers, and to express to these teachers the importance of their high office as a part of the public Ministry of the church, the CTCR recommends . . . that the Synod approve the ordination of synodically certified and called male teachers and directors of Christian education.[5]

In reaching this conclusion concerning the possibility of ordaining called male teachers into the teaching ministry, the members of the Commission were also "forcibly impressed" by the realization that what is said about called male teachers "applies equally to the thousands of consecrated woman teachers in synodical schools." As a result, the Commission's report also made the following recommendation concerning women teachers:

> In view of the fact that ordination is not a formula by which a person becomes a pastor, but the church's declaration that the person ordained has been called to perform certain functions of the Ministry, there appears to be no biblical or theological reason why women teachers could not be ordained to the office of teaching the Word. It must be understood that this is a vastly different question from the question of the ordination of women to the pastoral office.[6]

While these recommendations were never acted upon by the Synod in convention, many reactions to them were received by the Commission. Some in the Synod were overjoyed that the CTCR had recommended the ordination of men and women teachers, others were dismayed, but almost everyone seemed to be somewhat confused. Although the Commission had made it clear that its recommendation was that teachers should be ordained into the *teaching ministry* and not into the office of pastor, and in spite of widespread agreement in the Synod that ordination is an adiaphoron, this term is still very clearly associated in the piety of the Synod with the pastoral office.[7]

C. *The IRS Status of Teachers as "Ministers of the Gospel"*

1. CALLED MALE TEACHERS IN THE LCMS

Although the Commission has not been asked to, nor does its report on "The Ministry," address the question as to whether

women teachers should be classified by the Internal Revenue Service as "ministers of the Gospel," the CTCR is aware of the fact that this question has been under discussion in various parts of the Synod in recent years.[8]

The Internal Revenue Service has traditionally classified called male teachers of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as "ministers of the Gospel." This status, which has not changed despite certain general statements in IRS publications whose application to such male teachers is often misunderstood by local Internal Revenue employees, has been established by rulings issued by the National Office of the Internal Revenue Service.[9] In 1950, for example, the IRS ruled, on the basis of a brief submitted to it by legal counsel on behalf of a called male teacher and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, that he was "a minister of the Gospel within the purview of section 22 (b) (6) of the Internal Revenue Code." Therefore, the IRS held, "the rental value of living quarters" furnished him was not includible in his gross income for Federal income tax purposes.[10]

The Office of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue lists the following reasons for recognizing called male teachers of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as "ministers of the Gospel":

> The Lutheran Church consists of local Lutheran congregations which are sovereign, self-governing bodies. The Lutheran pastor and the Lutheran teacher only are charged with the public ministry within a particular congregation. Such congregations have united themselves in a voluntary synodical organization. No layman as such may hold membership in the Synod; membership in the Synod is held by congregations, pastors and teachers. Therefore, by official regulation of the Church the teacher is classified with the pastor in the matter of membership in the Synod.
>
> It is stated that the term "teacher" arises from the fact that these men are employed to teach in the elementary, secondary, and higher schools established, maintained and conducted by the Lutheran Church, and that the term "teacher" is in a sense a misnomer as it implies that these men are in the same category as teachers of public or private schools. It is pointed out that, according to the doctrine of the Lutheran Church, only those who have been specially "called" by the congregation may publicly exercise the rights of preaching, teaching and performing other functions of the public ministry. Elders, deacons, Sunday school teachers and others participate in church work but the special "call"

into the public ministry of the Lutheran Church is reserved for only two classes of men, the pastors and teachers.

The Lutheran Church maintains a system of ten preparatory schools, two seminaries for the training of its pastors and two teachers' colleges for the training of its teachers. The students who attend the preparatory schools may enter either the seminaries and become Lutheran pastors or the teachers' colleges and become Lutheran teachers. The curriculum of the teachers' colleges centers around courses in religion which is at the core of and permeates the entire course of study. There are thirteen courses on religious subjects, eight of which are required and five of which are elective. It is contended that the Lutheran teachers' training is such that it qualifies him as a minister of the Gospel. The Lutheran parish schools integrate religious education with the entire school life, curricular and extra-curricular, and the work of the teacher is regarded as part of the ministry of the church. Financial assistance is offered to students in the teachers' colleges.

At the time a young man is trying to determine whether or not to become a Lutheran teacher emphasis is placed on the service he is to render to God in the profession, and it is made clear that his chief compensation will not be the financial remuneration but the satisfaction of serving the Lord. It is pointed out to him that as a Lutheran teacher he has a heavy responsibility as a servant of the Church. The office of the Lutheran teacher is said to be a lifework and the average term of office about thirty-five years.

A "call" is issued by a particular congregation or other authorized body requiring the services of a pastor or teacher. The "call" is not merely an appointment to a secular position; it involves an election by the congregation. A "call" is never issued to laymen or to women, and may be issued only to such servants of the church as have been specially trained and officially approved by the Synod as pastors or teachers. If the Lutheran teacher accepts the "call" he is then installed by the congregation which issued it. Both teachers and pastors are installed, the only difference being that the initial installation of a pastor is called an ordination. The teacher's first installation is essentially the equivalent of an ordination in that it is a formal, solemn confirmation of the teacher's "call" as a lifelong servant of the Church — a consecration or setting aside of such person for lifelong service. By reason of his

> "call" the teacher shares with the pastor the performance of the public ministry in the Lutheran Church. In the exercise of the functions of the public ministry, the Lutheran pastor and teacher are on an equalify [sic] as ministers of the Gospel.
>
> A very important and significant factor is that a Lutheran teacher may be authorized by the congregation to perform and often does perform any or all of the following ministerial duties: confirmation instruction, preaching and conducting church services, baptizing infants or adults, administration of Holy Communion, visiting the sick, spiritual guidance of Church organizations, spiritual counsel, mission work, funeral services, and Church discipline. It is a matter of custom and not of doctrinal prohibition that Lutheran teachers do not conduct marriage ceremonies.
>
> Like that of a pastor, the "call" of the teacher is for life. If a teacher or a pastor deserts his vocation for invalid reasons or disqualifies himself in any manner, he is declared "ineligible for another call" and officially removed from the synodical roster of ministers of the Church by the Synod.
>
> Lutheran teachers along with the pastors participate in the pension plan operated by the Church.

On the basis of this understanding of the status of called male teachers in the Synod, the IRS came to this conclusion:

> In view of the foregoing it appears that teaching in a Lutheran parochial school is a function of the public ministry in the Lutheran Church and that a Lutheran teacher has the status of a minister of the Gospel within the Lutheran Church. It further appears that a Lutheran teacher is subject to the same rules and regulations as a pastor with respect to call, installation, discipline, and retirement; performs the same functions as a pastor insofar as the congregation which he serves sees fit to authorize him, and enjoys, as does the pastor, membership in the Synod. It is held, therefore, that Mr. Eggen is a minister of the Gospel within the purview of section 22 (b) (6) of the Internal Revenue Code. Accordingly, the rental value of living quarters furnished Mr. Eggen is not includible in the gross income of Mr. Eggen, for Federal income tax purposes.

The IRS's ruling concludes by stating that this ruling is "applicable only to the teachers of The Lutheran Church— Missouri Synod, the conclusions being based on the particular facts presented with respect to teachers of that organization."[11]

It is important to note that this ruling of the IRS refers to "two

classes of men, the pastors and teachers." One would never surmise, on the basis of this IRS ruling, that there are women parochial school teachers in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

2. WOMAN PAROCHIAL SCHOOL TEACHERS IN THE LCMS

Traditionally, a formal distinction was clearly drawn between "teachers" (meaning male) and "women teachers" in the Synod. For example, "teachers" were extended "calls" and "installed" into office, whereas eligible female teachers were "appointed" and were "inducted" into office.[12] But the 1965 convention of the Synod changed this distinction. It adopted a statement which held that the appointment of certified women teachers "should properly be regarded as a call," that it is proper to speak of their "installation" into office, and that "the scope of activity of a certified graduate woman teacher would seem limited only by the abilities which she has and the assignment which the congregation gives her in keeping with Scriptural principles."[13] Moreover, in 1973 the Synod declared, without a single delegate asking for the floor to speak, that "all teachers, male or female, who have met all requirements for inclusion in the official roster of the Synod be considered eligible for membership under the terms of Article V and VI of the Constitution."[14]

In the face of these developments, is it any wonder that it was not very long before women teachers in the Synod began to feel that they should be eligible for the same IRS privileges as men teachers? And at the same time, it should come as no surprise if some expressed confusion that the Synod has repeatedly and consistently reaffirmed its traditional position that "the Word of God does not permit women to hold the pastoral office or serve in any capacity involving distinctive functions of this office" (1969 Res. 2-17; 1971 Res. 2-04; 1977 Res. 3-15). In other words, the question must necessarily arise: How is it possible to say that "the Lutheran pastor and teacher are on an equality as ministers of the Gospel"[15] and that no distinction should be drawn between men and women teachers, while at the same time maintaining that the Synod has no women pastors?

Therefore, in view of this contemporary discussion regarding the IRS classification of "ministers of the Gospel," the Commission, although it had not prepared its report on "The Ministry" with this discussion in mind, felt it advisable to have its report reviewed by Synod's legal counsel prior to its adoption in May 1981. The Commission was informed that this document, while clearly recognizing the Synod's position opposing the ordination of women into the pastoral office, would not place in jeopardy the

IRS status of called men teachers as "ministers of the Gospel." Moreover, it was pointed out to the CTCR that whereas the IRS had previously based "minister of the Gospel" classification on authorization "to exercise *all* of the ecclesiastical duties," it has now amended this requirement to read "*substantially all* of religious functions" of the public pastoral ministry.[16]

Significantly, 1981 Resolution 5-09, "To Classify 'Ministers' for Purposes of Federal Law," which was referred to Synod's Board of Directors "for study and report at next convention," had been prepared by the directors in consultation with Synod's legal counsel after they had reviewed the CTCR report on "The Ministry."[17] Left undecided, however, is the question of the Synod's position regarding the seeking of a determination by the IRS to grant "minister of the Gospel" status also to its called women teachers. This is a question which the Synod still must face.

D. *Other Questions*

While the Commission was working on the report on "The Ministry," it received a number of requests for opinions concerning various aspects of the doctrine of the ministry.[18]

1. Is it proper for an auxiliary agency of the Synod to issue a call?[19]
2. May a synodical convention or synodical president remove a District president of the Synod without violating the doctrine of the divine call?[20]
3. May a congregation abolish the office of head pastor?[21]
4. Does a pastor of a congregation leave "The Ministry" when he takes a call to teach at a synodical college or seminary?[22]
5. Is it proper for teachers, directors of Christian education, and lay ministers, on a regular basis, to preach and to administer publicly the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper?[23]
6. Are men who have been ordained into the pastoral office in other denominations and those LCMS pastors who are returning to the pastoral ministry after having left it for a time to be "re-ordained"?[24]
7. What is the propriety of status calls?[25]
8. May parochial school teachers be franchized to vote at district and synodical conventions?[26]

II. Historical Background

Holsten Fagerberg begins the chapter on the ministry in *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions* by stating:

> In order that the Word, the sacraments, and absolution might come to men, the church has the office of the ministry.

> Few questions, however, have prompted greater arguments than has the concept of the ministry in the Lutheran Confessions. This discussion, which was carried on in the middle of the 19th century, has not yet been concluded but has, on the contrary, once again become a matter of great interest. And although the theologians involved worked to a large extent with the confessional writings and thus had a common basis for their studies, they produced widely varying results.[27]

Disagreements on the doctrine of the ministry among confessional Lutherans became prominent during the 1840's when a debate broke out in Prussia on this issue. In the face of the Revolution of 1848, the relationship of the church to the state and the constitution of the church became a burning question. On the one hand, there were those who argued that *das Amt* (the office of the ministry) was divinely instituted and that it belonged to the essence of the church. Others held that "the office" had gradually developed in the congregations as the need arose, with the episcopacy arising after the year 70 by apostolic institution. This discussion set the stage for a long running debate about what the Lutheran confessions mean by the phrase *ministerium ecclesiasticum* ("the ministry of the church"). Fagerberg poses the question this way: "Is it a function which basically can be exercised by all believing Christians? Or is it a special service which is entrusted to servants who are called and ordained thereto? Or is it a function in the church, exercised by persons who are called for this purpose?"[28]

Since the middle of the nineteenth century Lutheran theologians have taken three fundamentally different positions on this question, which can be categorized as follows: (1) the "episcopal school," which emphasizes the *office* aspect of the doctrine of the ministry; (2) the "functionalist school," which appears to identify the office of the ministry almost exclusively with function; and (3) the "mediating school," which attempts to steer a middle course between the first two positions.

A. *The "Episcopal School"*

Some theologians take the position that "the office" of the holy ministry is a special estate. They contend that "the office" is the contemporary form of the New Testament apostolate (Stahl) and that the person who holds this office is the personal representative of Christ (Vilmar). Perhaps the best known early advocate of this understanding of the ministry was Wilhelm Loehe (1808-72).[29] He held that the office of the ministry is not merely derived from the universal priesthood but that it is rather a special office and gift of

God. In addition, it was his position that there is a "succession of elders" and that the Spriptures do not indicate any participation of the people in the office. Conrad Bergendoff summarizes the position of the "episcopal school" in these words:

> Stahl, Vilmar, and Loehe represented the autonomy of the ministry, speaking of the divine right of the order which did not come from the universal priesthood but was constituted by Christ, maintained itself in a ministerial succession, and existed parallel with the congregation which it served.[30]

Holding somewhat similar views was also Pastor Grabau in Buffalo, who regarded the church as the visible aggregate of pastors, whose function was "to instruct their parishioners and direct all church affairs, and laymen, whose duty it was to hear and obey."[31]

Theologians belonging to the "episcopal" school have looked to a number of passages from the Lutheran Confessions to support their position:

> Our teachers assert that according to the Gospel the power of the keys or the power of bishops is a power and command of God to preach the Gospel, to forgive and retain sins, and to administer and distribute the sacraments [AC XXVIII, 5].
>
> According to divine right, therefore, it is the office of the bishop to preach the Gospel, forgive sins, judge doctrine and condemn doctrine that is contrary to the Gospel, and exclude from the Christian community the ungodly whose wicked conduct is manifest [AC XXVIII, 21].
>
> The Gospel requires of those who preside over the churches that they preach the Gospel, remit sins, administer the sacraments, and, in addition, exercise jurisdiction, that is, excommunicate those who are guilty of notorious crimes and absolve those who repent. By the confession of all, even of our adversaries, it is evident that this power belongs by divine right to all who preside over the churches, whether they are called pastors, presbyters, or bishops.
>
> For wherever the church exists, the right to administer the Gospel also exists. Wherefore it is necessary for the church to retain the right of calling, electing, and ordaining ministers [Treatise 60-61, 67].
>
> The church has the command to appoint ministers; to this we must subscribe wholeheartedly, for we know that God approves this ministry and is present in it [Ap XIII, 12].

Theologians taking this position, moreover, tend to hold that ordination is effective by divine right and that it is therefore essential.[32]

B. *The Functionalist School*

Opposed to the position of the "episcopal school's" emphasis on "the office" as a divinely instituted, special estate, is what might be called the "functionalist school." According to this view, the *office* of the holy ministry exists in the church not by divine command but by human arrangement. What exists by divine command is not a special office but a function, an activity — namely, the function of preaching the Gospel and of administering the sacraments. This function belongs to the whole church. For the sake of good order, however, and as a result of development which has taken place in the years following the apostles, the church, in particular the Christian congregation, calls a person to carry out these functions in its midst in behalf of all. The net result is that this functional view of the ministry combines the office of the holy ministry with the universal priesthood of all believers. Theologians belonging to this school tend to regard ordination as nothing more than a pious custom of the church. The leading exponent of this understanding of the ministry in the nineteenth century debate on this issue was J.W.F. Hoefling (1802-53), a professor at Erlangen.

In 1853 Hoefling presented a refutation of Loehe's views in a book which argued that "the office" was not specially instituted but had its origin in the priesthood of all believers.[33] It was Hoefling's contention that the Loehe view turned the Gospel into a ceremonial law. Others who tended to take variations of Hoefling's position in the nineteenth century debate were his colleagues in Erlangen, J.C.K. von Hofman and G. Thomasius. In more recent years this position has been advanced by Gustaf Wingren, P.E. Persson, E. Kasemann, and Eduard Schweizer.

The "functionalist school" cites as evidence for its view those passages in the confessional writings which emphasize the means through which Christ creates and preserves the church:

> To obtain such faith God instituted the office of the ministry, *that is, provided the Gospel and sacraments.* Through these, as through means, he gives the Holy Spirit, who works faith, when and where it pleases, in those who hear the Gospel [AC V, 1-2 (emphasis added)].

The translation of the Latin rendition of this article reads:

> In order that we may obtain this faith, the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and the sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Spirit is given, and the Holy Spirit produces faith, where and when it please God, in those who hear the Gospel.

The *Tractatus* contains the following passage:

> . . . the keys do not belong to the person of one particular individual but to the whole church . . . He [Christ] bestows the keys especially and immediately on the church, and for the same reason the church especially possesses the right of vocation [Treatise 24].

Functionalists find support for their position in Tappert's footnote to Augustana V: "This title ["The Office of the Ministry"] would be misleading if it were not observed (as the text of the article makes clear) that the Reformers thought of 'the office of the ministry' in other than clerical terms."[34] Wingren, accordingly, holds that Augustana V does not refer to a special office but to "activities" which are necessary to the life of the church, thereby identifying the office of the ministry with the preached Word.[35] Functionalists, in accordance with this standpoint, hold that when the Confessions refer to the *Predigtamt* (preaching office), they have in mind the active and life-giving Gospel, regardless of who it is who presents it. According to this view of the ministry, office *is* function. Although theologians holding this view sometimes continue to speak of "office," they use this term to refer to functions.

C. *The Mediating School*

Taking a position somewhere between the two extreme positions of the "episcopal school" and the "functionalist school" are a variety of theologians who occupy a wide middle ground. E.W. Janetzki of the Lutheran Church in Australia describes the position of this school in this way:

> In general, theologians who hold this middle ground position, against Hoefling and others, reject the teaching that the office of the ministry is a human arrangement derived from the universal priesthood of believers; it is a divinely-instituted office. On the other hand, the middle ground theologians reject the view that the office constitutes a special class or estate in the Church, and that the authority to function in the office is conferred by ministers through ordination. They maintain that the office does not exist over or above the Church but in the Church.[36]

Foremost among the nineteenth century theologians in Germany who attempted to find a mediating position on the doctrine of the ministry were Harless, Kliefoth, and Theodosius Harnack. More important for us in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is C.F.W. Walther, who, with his 1851 theses on church and ministry (*Kirche und Amt*), sought a compromise between the positions of Loehe and Hoefling in a dispute which arose between the Missouri and Buffalo Synods.[37]

In opposition to Carl Vehse, who wanted to reduce the office of the ministry to a mere public service enjoined to a person, Walther decisively held to the distinction of "the office of the ministry" from the priesthood of all believers. Walther's first three theses, therefore, emphasize, against the functionalist position, that the "pastoral office" is divinely instituted:

1. The holy ministry, or the pastoral office, is an office distinct from the priestly office, which belongs to all believers.
2. The ministry, or the pastoral office, is not a human ordinance, but an office established by God Himself.
3. The ministry of preaching is not an arbitrary office, but its character is such that the Church has been commanded to establish it and is ordinarily bound to it till the end of days.

But Walter was fighting a battle on two fronts. He also intended for his theses "to repel the attacks of Pastor Grabau," as he puts it on the title page of his book *The Voice of our Church on the Question concerning the Church and the Ministry* (*Kirche und Amt*).[38] Accordingly theses 4, 9, and 10 reject certain aspects of the doctrine of the ministry held by the "episcopal school":

4. The ministry of preaching is not a peculiar order, set up over and against the common estate of Christians, and holier than the latter, like the priesthood of the Levites, but it is an office of service.
9. Reverence and unconditional obedience is due to the ministry of preaching when the preacher is ministering the Word of God. However, the preacher may not dominate over the Church; he has, accordingly, no right to make new laws, to arrange indifferent matters and ceremonies arbitrarily, and to impose and execute excommunication *alone*, without a previous verdict of the entire congregation.
10. According to divine right the function of passing judgment on doctrine belongs to the ministry of preaching. However, also the laymen have this right, and for this reason they also have a seat and vote with the preachers in church courts and councils.

In Thesis 7 Walther holds that the office of the ministry (*Predigtamt*), which he identifies throughout with the pastoral office (*Pfarramt*), is conferred by God through the congregation:

7. The holy ministry is the authority conferred by God through the congregation, as holder of the priesthood and of all church power, to administer in public office the common rights of the spiritual priesthood in behalf of all.

This office is conferred by God through the call of the

congregation, "as prescribed by God," and not by ordination, which has not been divinely instituted but "is an apostolic church ordinance and merely a public, solemn confirmation of the call" (Thesis 6).

Before moving to the CTCR report on "The Ministry," it is necessary to say a word in this brief historical review about Walther's eighth thesis. It reads:

8. The ministry is the highest office in the Church, from which, as its stem, all other offices of the church issue.

In elaboration of this thesis, Walther writes:

> For with the apostolate the Lord has established in the Church only one office, which embraces all offices of the Church and by which the congregation is to be provided for in every respect. The highest office is the ministry of preaching, with which all other offices are simultaneously conferred. Therefore every other public office in the Church is merely a part of the office of the ministry, or an auxiliary office, which is attached to the ministry of preaching, whether it be the eldership of such as do not labor in the Word and doctrine, 1 Tim. 1:15, or that of rulers, Rom. 13:8, or the diaconate (ministry of service in the narrower sense) or the administration of whatever office in the Church may be assigned to particular persons.[39]

Some in the recent history of the LCMS have taken issue with Walther's position as stated in this thesis.

August C. Stellhorn, for example, in a number of essays written around 1950, presents his view that the preaching and teaching of God's Word and the administration of the Sacraments was "the one divinely instituted office or ministry" and that it was given "to all true disciples of Christ, to all true believers, regardless of age or sex — not to an organization, not to a class of Christians, such as only the men, only the adults, only the clergy."[40] He writes:

> There is no such thing as 'only *one* divinely-instituted Church position,' as we have commonly claimed for the present-day pastorate. On the contrary, if the positions in the early Christian Church may be said to be divinely instituted, then Scripture teaches that God instituted a number of offices or church positions none of which can be proved to exist in its original form today.[41]

A.C. Mueller, in his book *The Ministry of the Lutheran Teacher* (1964), agrees with Stellhorn. Mueller shows his tendency towards the functionalist school when he writes in the introduction of his book:

> Two views of the ministry have been propounded among us,

> and they are mutually exclusive; it is an either — or. According to one view, the pastorate is the one divinely instituted office; all other positions in the ministry stem from the pastorate and are auxiliary offices to the pastorate. According to the other view, which I believe is the Biblical one, God has instituted the office of the ministry, that is, He has commissioned His church to proclaim the Gospel and administer the sacraments, but He has not prescribed the forms in which the church is to fulfill the commission. All forms of the ministry, including the pastorate, stem from the one divinely instituted and all embracing office of the ministry.[42]

He does not hesitate to say that Walther's position "is not in agreement with Scripture." He continues: "If in this instance Walther, great theologian he was, erred, then we ought to correct his error and get back to the Scriptures and to Luther and the great theologians who are in the tradition of Luther."[43]

Having reviewed the questions on the ministry which had been addressed to it and mindful of the basic stances which Lutherans have taken on this question, the Commission proceeded to prepare "The Ministry: Offices, Procedures and Nomenclature," to which we now turn.

III. "The Ministry: Offices, Procedures and Nomenclature"

A. *Background and Procedure of Preparation*

It should be pointed out at the outset that "The Ministry" does not purport to be an exhaustive study of all aspects of the doctrine of the ministry. Noting that the word "ministry" is frequently used in a general or wider sense to refer to "the service of all Christians," and that this service "is intimately connected with the public ministry," the Commission expressly states that the purpose of this report is to "focus on the ministry in the narrower and public sense" (p. 11). This document, therefore, does not take up such matters as the priesthood of all believers and the important implications this doctrine has for the service of all Christians, nor does it discuss working relationships between pastors and teachers, directors of Christian education, parish and lay workers, deaconesses, and others in team ministries.

The Commission began its study on "The Ministry" by conducting a thorough exegetical study of what the Scriptues have to say about the ministry. It then studied what the Lutheran Confessions have to say about this doctrine. It also reviewed the writings of the orthodox theologians on this topic, as well as those of the fathers in the Missouri Synod and contemporary theologians in this country and other countries, especially in Northern

Europe. After four years of researching and studying this assignment, the Commission discussed a lengthy and rather technical draft of this report with the faculties of the Synod's two seminaries, with representatives of the Synod's teachers colleges, with synodical staff people from the Board of Higher Education, the Board of Parish Education, the personnel and statistical department, and finally with Synod's legal counsel. On at least three different occasions this report was discussed with the Council of Presidents. Following these consultations, the original draft was completely re-written, then discussed and revised by the plenary CTCR, and finally published and distributed to the Synod for study and guidance in October 1981.

B. *The Scriptures on "The Office of the Ministry"*

The Commission summarizes its findings of what the Scriptures have to say about "the office of the ministry in the church" in the following paragraphs (pp. 13-15):[44]

> The functions of the divinely established office of the public ministry can best be seen by looking at the nomenclature that Scripture uses to refer to it. In 1 Tim. 3:1 Paul uses the word *episkopee*, that is, the "oversight," to refer to the office of bishop. As a father manages his household, so the bishop stands at the head of his congregation as one who is charged with the duty of caring for the church of God. As the apostle Paul's co-worker, Timothy himself is to exercise the duties of this office as he worked among the congregations founded through the preaching of the apostle. As an overseer of the congregation, Timothy is to command and teach pure doctrine. He is to attend to public reading of Scripture, to preaching, to teaching. He is to oversee the spiritual life of the old men, the young men, the old women, the widows, the children, the slaves, the masters, and "the rich in this world." The people are to be encouraged and guided to pray for all men. Women are to be guided in modesty of dress and adornment. The members committed to the overseer's care are to be instructed about and warned against those who forbid marriage and enjoin abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving. From all of this it is clear that the oversight is not exercised according to a man's own ideas and standards but according to the revealed will of God through the inspired apostles' God-breathed words. There is a bishop's office (*episkopee*), and oversight is one of its definitive functions.
>
> Another Scriptural term for the office of the public ministry is elder (*presbyteros*). There are different kinds of elders, and 1 Tim. 5:17 indicates that some were specifically engaged in

preaching and teaching. The presbyters teach and preach the Word of God, by which the Holy Spirit creates and sustains faith in the hearts of the members of the flock and empowers and guides them for Christian living and service.

Hebrews 13:7 indicates that there were in the church "leaders," those who "spoke to you the word of God," and in verse 17 the people in the churches that are addressed are admonished: "Obey your leaders (*heegoumenoi*) and submit to them; for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account."

In Ephesians 4:11-12 St. Paul refers to the various offices that God gave to the church for the building up of the saints for the work of service. Two important observations should be made within the context of this report. In giving the "shepherds and teachers" to the church, God was also appointing them, just as He appointed kings for Israel (1 Kings 1:48; 1 Sam. 12:13; cf. also Eph. 1:22.) Moreover, by attaching the definite article "the" to "shepherds and teachers" the apostle indicates that teaching belongs to the essence of the duty of shepherding. Although there are varying interpretations of this passage from Ephesians 4, it is evident that teacher (*didaskalos*) does not refer to the modern office of the parish school teacher. The emphasis here is on how the saints are prepared for service by apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors/teachers. The pastor does this by teaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments. [Hence the Lutheran Confessions call this office "the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments" (AC.V).][45]

Of great significance for the nature of the New Testament ministry are expressions like "the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4), "ministers of a new covenant" (2 Cor. 3:6), "the ministry of the Spirit" (2 Cor. 3:8 NIV), "the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18), and Paul's reference to himself as "a minister" of the Gospel (Col. 1:23).

In Titus 1:5 Paul writes: "This is why I left you in Crete, that you might amend what was defective [*ta leiponta*, used intransitively to indicate what is absent, lacking, missing], and appoint elders in every town as I directed you." Immediately the prerequistes for such elders, who are referred to as bishops, are presented (v. 7).[46]

In Acts 14:23 the example of the apostles is recorded. They appointed (ordained) elders for them in every church. In Acts 20:17 and Acts 20:28 the term elder and bishop are used interchangeably, as in Titus 1:5 and 7. In Acts 20:28 Paul

admonishes the elders: "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God which he obtained with the blood of his own Son."

On the basis of the Scriptural evidence, the Commission concludes that "the office of the public ministry, the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments in the church, is divinely mandated" (p. 15).[47] So strong is the case for the "office of bishop" in the Pastoral Epistles that it has become one of the best-known arguments used by critical exegetes against their Pauline authorship.[48]

C. *The Lutheran Confessions on "The Office of the Ministry"*

The most important passages from the Lutheran confessions have already been referred to above.[49] All that is necessary at this point, therefore, is to present the following aspects of the ministry which the Commission finds in the confessional writings (pp. 8-9):

God has given Word and sacraments that people may come to faith.

God has arranged that the Word and sacraments should be taught and administered.

Since such a ministry has been established by God, individuals are called to be ministers by the church.

Those who are called to be ministers hold and exercise the office of the ministry.

The Power or Office of the Keys, given by Christ to the church, is exercised publicly on behalf of the church by the called ministers.

The power of the ministers is the power to preach the Gospel, administer the sacraments, and forgive and retain sins.

The power of the ministry is not a temporal power but a power in spiritual matters of Word and sacrament.

Ministers cannot arrogate such authority to themselves, but it must be conferred by the call of the church.

D. *Office and Function*

The key characteristic of the CTCR report on "the office of the ministry" is that it seeks to take seriously *all* that the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions have to say about both the *office* and the *function* of the public ministry.On the one hand, the Commission concludes that the Scriptures teach that the office of ministry is divinely instituted. Something divinely willed is missing if the office of the public ministry does not exist. A

congregation does not have the right to abolish the office of pastor in its midst. This office, however, is referred to in the Scriptures by several different names. Lutherans, therefore, have never insisted on the necessity of using any one certain term for this office. The CTCR has chosen to call it "the office of the public ministry" — "office" because this is the term most generally used since the Reformation to refer to the one divinely established office and "public" in order to recognize that this ministry is performed at the request of and with accountability to the church. Other terms may, of course, also be used, such as pastor, shepherd, elder, bishop. Moreover, there has certainly been some development in church offices over the years. From time to time, new offices have been created and abolished by the church, according to need. But it is just as clear that it is God's will that one office — the office of the public ministry — exist in the church at all times.

On the other hand, the office of the public ministry is described in the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions chiefly — but not exclusively — in dynamic and functional terms. As Fagerberg points out:

> The term *ministerium* goes back to New Testament word *diakonia*, and it points both to the office itself and to the activities for which this special office was designed. These meanings are closely related to each other, but the Confessions clearly emphasize the latter. Activity as such need not presuppose an office in the conventional sense, but an office must always carry out a distinct activity — and that is what the Confessions accent in particular.[50]

Typical is the Treatise's reference to Ephesians 4:8-12:

> He [Paul] enumerates pastors and teachers among the gifts belonging exclusively to the Church, and he adds that they are given for the work of ministry and for building up the body of Christ [Treatise 67].

Article V of the Augsburg Confession refers to Galatians 3:14, "that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith," in support of its opening statement: "In order that we may obtain this faith, the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments was instituted."[51]

"The Ministry" holds that office and function must both be maintained. When *office* is emphasized to the exclusion of function, too much importance becomes attached to the person who holds the office. But there is no basis in the Scriptures for holding that an indelible mark is given to the one who has been

placed by a divine call into the office of the public ministry. When the *function* of the ministry is emphasized to the exclusion of the office, however, the ministry becomes an abstraction.

At the same time, office and function must also be carefully related to one another. This the Commission does by pointing out that both office and function have their foundation in Christ's ministry (pp. 26-27):

> The office of the public ministry of the church is rooted and grounded in the ministry of Christ. He was the Suffering Servant, the God-man, who not only taught about God's love but completely satisfied the demands of God's holy Law by vicariously living a perfect life and dying a sacrificial death for our transgressions of God's Law. His priestly, prophetic, and royal actions are the essential content and power of the ministry of the church. God not only provided salvation and declared the whole world just for the sake of Christ, but He also provided the means of grace and the ministry of the Word and Sacrament "to offer and apply to us this treasure of salvation" (LC II, 38).
>
> In the beginning our Lord appointed, trained, and sent out the apostles. In his love for the world, God arranged for the continuation of the apostolic ministry and message. The message of the apostles, learned by them directly from the Lord and taught to them by the Holy Spirit, was to remain the church's treasure.
>
> The pastoral ministry is apostolic in terms of what it teaches but not in terms of an unbroken succession of ordaining bishops . . . .

According to the CTCR report, both office and function are important. These aspects of the ministry must be kept in proper tension, if we are to be faithful to what the Scriptures say about the ministry. Failure to do this results in error and confusion. But the recognition that the doctrine of the ministry embraces both office and function is helpful in answering some of the sensitive and complex problems which trouble us today.

E. *Auxiliary Offices in the Church*

It is from this perspective of office and function that the CTCR report considers auxiliary offices.[52] In agreement with Walther, the Commission writes (pp. 16-17):

> The office of the public ministry includes within it all of the functions of the leadership of the church. Early in the history of the church we have an example of the church selecting some of its members to carry out in the stead of and under the

direction of the apostles some of the functions of their ministry. In Acts 6 we read that, at the request of the apostles, the church selected and commissioned certain men to perform functions that the apostles had been carrying out. They were appointed to the duty of providing for the physical support of the widows in the church. They were called by the church in prayer and were set apart for their office by the laying on of hands. Scripture suggests (although it does not say it directly) that this new office was of great help to the work of the church. It is reported that immediately after they were commissioned "the word of God increased; and the members of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem" (v. 7). The calibre of these men is forever memorialized in Acts 6 and 7 by the account of the witness and martyrdom of Stephen.

From this the CTCR concludes (pp. 17-18):

The church has the right to create offices from time to time that have the purpose of extending the effectiveness of the office of the public ministry. Here a word of C.F.W. Walther is instructive. He wrote: "The highest office is the ministry of preaching, with which all other offices are simultaneously conferred. Therefore every other public office in the church is merely a part of the office of the ministry, or an auxiliary office, which is attached to the ministry of preaching . . ." Walther sees such offices as "sacred offices in the church," and each exercises a function of the pastoral office of the church and is an aid to the pastoral ministry.

The church has the right to distinguish such auxiliary offices of the church from each other. Some require an extensive knowledge of Scripture, ability to teach or counsel, or other capabilities that are closely related to the teaching and shepherding functions of the office of the public ministry. The church has always exercised the right to designate some of its offices as so involved in the spiritual functions of the office of the public ministry that it has provided specific training, is more formal in summoning members of the church to such offices, and has rightly included such offices within its concept of "ministry." Such offices call for functions that not only are necessary for the functioning of the public ministry but that only the church performs as an institution. Thus, the teaching of the faith in a Christian school is a function unique to the church. Properly speaking, a professional, trained teacher who is called by the church

> may be said to be performing a function of the office of the public ministry . . . .

The Commission continues (p. 19):

> Putting it simply, there is only *one* pastoral *office*, but the office which we formally refer to as "the office of the public ministry" has multiple *functions*, some of which are best handled by another, e.g., the parochial school teacher who is performing *that* function of the pastoral office. The pastoral office with all of its functions is mandated for the church. Other offices are established by the church to assist in carrying out pastoral functions.
>
> Thus, we may speak of various "ministries" in and of the church, but we must be careful to distinguish them properly. An office is not defined solely by what one who holds it does (function) but by duties, responsibilities, and accountability assigned to it. The pastoral office is unique in that *all* the functions of the church's ministry belong to it.

According to this report of the CTCR, therefore, only one office, the office of the public ministry (commonly referred to today as the pastoral office) is divinely instituted. This office, however, embraces a wide range of functions connected with the preaching of the Gospel, administering the sacraments, and exercising supervision in the church. The church has the freedom to establish additional offices to enhance the "administration of the office of the public ministry" (p. 28). In this way the auxiliary offices established by the church to strengthen the ministry of preaching the Gospel, in that they are also grounded in the ministry of Christ Himself, possess their own validity. The Commission writes (pp. 27-28):

> The office of the public ministry is so broad that it can effectively employ the gifts of helpers in its performance. The Congregation is blessed when it places at the side of its pastor faithful and capable teachers, for instance, who enhance his administration of the public ministry. The validity of their office derives not from the person of the pastor but from the Christ-grounded nature of the office of public mininstry. . . . The thought needs to be stressed not only that the teaching office in the church is *auxiliary* to the pastoral ministry but rather auxiliary to the *pastoral ministry*. It is grounded not merely in the priesthood of believers but, through the office of the public ministry, in the ministry of Christ and the apostles. The fact that not all appreciate this does not change its tremendous theological significance for all who labor in

> the church. To ground the auxiliary offices of the church in a vague and unembodied 'ministry in general' is no gain for anyone. To see them flow from the specific office that is amply attested and exemplified in the New Testament and strongly championed in the Lutheran Confessions is a higher view of the auxiliary offices than that which would seek an independent grounding separate from the office of the public ministry of Word and Sacrament . . . . The holder of an auxiliary office . . . holds an office that is not only the priesthood of believers (which all Christians hold) nor the office of the public ministry. It is a ministry that has its own validity.

Although not in the *office* of the public ministry, holders of auxiliary offices perform one or more of the *functions* of the office of the public ministry. They exercise divinely mandated functions in behalf of and with accountability to the church. They are therefore in the public ministry of the church.

By the same token, a holder of the office of the public ministry may be asked to specialize in certain functions of the office without leaving it — e.g., a seminary professor, synodical or district president. The determining factors are the office for which the church has found an individual to be qualified and the functions of the public ministry which he has been called to perform.

F. *The Call*

The Commission's report on "The Ministry" offers the following definition for the term call (p. 29):

> A person is "called" when he or she is summoned by the church to the office of Word and sacrament or to an office auxiliary to it on a full-time permanent basis and by education, by certification, and by solemn and public act (e.g., ordination or commissioning) is brought into a unique relationship with the church from which he or she has unique authority and through which he or she is authorized to perform functions of that office of the church into which he or she has been ordained or commissioned, at a specific post for the length of time which is ordinarily continuing and indefinite, but which in certain cases and under certain special circumstances may be a specified period of time, which is evidenced by the individual's name being placed on and retained on one of the official rosters of the Synod.

This definition was deliberately prepared in order to take into

account both the theological aspects of "the call" and also its legal, contractual implications.

Noting that the term "church" here means "the congregation or other unit of the church, as well as the Synod itself," the CTCR states that "the call from and by God through the church is essential for entry into the pastoral ministry or its auxiliary offices . . . . It is God's call mediated through the church (as a single congregation or a group of congregations) as it is guided in prayer and by the Holy Spirit that makes a man 'overseer' in the church. All who serve in the pastoral ministry or its auxiliary offices must be called by the church" (p. 29).

The term "divine call" is nowhere found in Scripture. It is therefore an ecclesiastical term which the church may decide to use in a variety of ways. The CTCR, noting that it would be possible for the church to employ it to refer to the assignment which a Christian congregation gives to Sunday School teachers or other such offices in the congregation, nevertheless holds that to do this would blur "the uniqueness of the office of the public ministry and its facilitating offices" (p. 29). The Commission therefore recommends that it be "restricted to the call into the office of the public ministry in the congregation or to another assignment in that ministry." This recommendation means that "it should also be used for auxiliary offices that are directly supportive of the teaching and preaching function of the pastoral ministry" (p. 34). The Commission expressly states that "both men and women who have been certified by the church may be and ordinarily should be solemnly called" (p. 30).

The voice of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has not been entirely unanimous in its understanding of the permanency of a call. There appears to be some developement in the history of the Synod, for example, regarding the necessity for unlimited terms. Pastor Brohm stated in 1845:

> We can in no wise approve of a call with a time limit. Such calls are altogether unworthy of a Lutheran congregation, because they are in direct conflict with the doctrine of the divinity of the call, because they militate against the law of love, and because they tend to destroy the obedience which members of the flock owe to their pastors.[53]

Wyneken compared pastors whose calls have a time limit to cowhands (*Kuhhirten*). C.F.W. Walther also strongly opposes calls with time limits. He writes in an 1846 article in *Der Lutheraner*:

> Unfortunately it has become customary in our country to

> hire ministers for one year, even as we hire our servants and cattle herders . . . . Even in emergencies these calls with a time limit cannot be justified. It is not proper for a pastor or a candidate of theology to accept such a call, because it is contrary to Scripture, contrary to ecclesiastical administration ["Kirchliche Praxis"], and contrary to the dignity of the ministerial office ["streitet wider die Wuerde des Predigtamts"]. Holy Scripture and the Church know only a call for life ["Die Heilige Schrift und die Kirche weiss nur von einem Beruf auf Lebenszeit"].[54]

But in 1898 Francis Pieper, in response to the question as to whether a congregation could issue a call for temporary assistance as a result of its pastor's "illness," "physical weakness," or "because of being overburdened with work, for instance, by taking over the District Presidency," states: "The call for temporary help stays within the bounds of divine order and has nothing in common with the objectionable temporary call. The essence of the temporary call does not consist in this, that a call is limited as to time, but in this that human beings arbitrarily limit a call as to time, that is, that they want to determine how long a pastor is to be active at a certain place."[55] And in 1934 P.E. Kretzmann took the position that "with regard to assistant pastors, day school teachers, professors at church institutions, and men in similar offices conditions may make a temporary call altogether unobjectionable."[56]

The CTCR report takes the position on the permanency of a call that, although "there is no scriptural evidence to indicate that all calls are necessarily permanent or tenured," nevertheless "the nature of the ministry as a continuation of the apostolate and as a call from God implies that calls are generally not limited in time" (p. 33).

G. *Ordination*

This is what the CTCR has to say about ordination (p. 22):

> Ordination has its historical roots in the New Testament and in the church through the ages. It is a solemn ecclesiastical rite by which a duly qualified member of the body of Christ who has accepted a valid call from the church is presented to the church as a gift of the Holy Spirit and publicly declared to be a holder of the office of the public ministry. It is a public ratification of the call and an invocation of the blessings of God upon the new minister. While the rite of ordination including the laying on of hands is not a necessity, it is to be

> revered as an ancient apostolic custom. In keeping with this custom, the laying on of hands of other pastors, and the presence of teachers and members of the church from places other than the site of the ordainee's immediate call is meaningful. When a man is ordained in one congregation, for example, he is recognized as a member of the public ministry of the whole confessional fellowship. Ordination as an act does not impart an additional authority that the call does not give, nor is it a sacrament. As a matter of uniform nomenclature and in accordance with common understanding, the term "ordination" should be reserved for a man's entry into the office of the public ministry. The initial acceptance by the church of the gift of also those who are to serve in the vital auxiliary offices should be carried out with solemnity befitting the office. Tradition, common expectations, and the uniqueness of the pastoral office speak against using the term "ordination" for other than the office of the public ministry.

Several things follow from this understanding of ordination. In the first place, the Commission points to the rite of ordination as expressing "the transparochial nature of the office of the public ministry and its auxiliary offices." The Commission states (p. 30):

> We stress the fact that ordination is the declaration of the whole confessional fellowship. In the end, a single congregation or an agency representing larger segments of the church does issue the call. Nevertheless, in a Synod of congregations bound by a common confession and loyalty, good order demands that admission into the pastoral office or into its closely allied auxiliary offices is not the act of a single congregation or agency . . . . This transparochial nature of the office of the public ministry and its auxiliary offices is important because a person called to one congregation is recognized by the whole church and, by virtue of ordination or commissioning, is eligible to be called by other segments of the church."

The Commission continues (p. 31):

> Confusion and chaos result when congregations or agencies act unilaterally in deciding who may fill the office of the public ministry or the auxiliary offices . . . . For a congregation willfully to ignore or ride roughshod over the concerns of the rest of the church in establishing its ministry is a sin against the brotherhood and may even be a schismatic act in that it ignores the transparochial aspect of the "regularly called" (AC XIV).

For precisely this reason the Commission holds that, although advisable, it cannot be demanded that ordination take place in the location of the calling church.

In the second place, the Commission is no longer recommending that teachers be ordained into the teaching ministry, although there are no theological objections. Rather, it suggests that the Synod, for the sake of good order and clarity, restrict the use of the term ordination for those "first called into the office of the public ministry," and that it use the term "commissioning" for placing a person into "an office clearly auxiliary to the central functions of the pastoral ministry" (p. 34).

Finally, the Commission does not give a clear "yes" or "no" answer to this question: "Should men who have been ordained in a different church body be 'reordained' when they qualify for and accept a call into a different confessional fellowship." In response to this question, the CTCR says (p. 39):

> This depends to a large extent upon how one defines "ordination." If to reordain means that the previous ministry of the man in a Christian congregation is not recognized as valid, then it would be an unacceptable practice. We should and do recognize the ordination of others to work as ministers in their own church body. However, heterodox ministers may not function in our churches, not because they are not ministers, but because they are heterodox and because they have no call.
>
> On the other hand, a decision to "ordain" a previously ordained minister would be in order if by this action the church is publicly stating that the man is now being accepted into the ministry of our church body and that he publicly accepts and agrees to preach and teach according to the Scriptural and confessional standards of the Lutheran Church.

In other words, the Commission's report holds that it would be giving too much emphasis to the rite of ordination to *insist* either that such an individual *must* be "re-ordained or that he *could* not be "re-ordained."

Conclusion

The CTCR report reaches two important and far-reaching conclusions concerning the doctrine of the ministry upon which all of its recommendations concerning nomenclature and procedure are founded. On the basis of its study of the Scriptural evidence the Commission concludes in the first place that there is

only one divinely instituted office in the church (p. 15):

> From these references there emerges a picture of an office that was instituted by God, in and with the apostolate, for which very specific qualifications are listed, and the essence of which is properly defined in the Augsburg Confession as "teaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments" (AC V) on behalf of and with accountability to the church ("publicly") (AC XIV).
>
> On the basis of the Scriptural evidence and the corroborating statements of the Lutheran Confessions, the office of the public ministry, the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments in the church, is divinely mandated. It may exist in various forms, that is, the "flocks" to which a man ministers may have various forms, and the office may be designated by a number of names, but it remains an office mandated by God for the good of the church. It is not enough to say that God commands that the Gospel be preached and that the sacraments be administered. God has ordained a specific office. The duty of those who hold the office by God's call through the prayerful summons ("call") of the church is to preach the Gospel and administer the sacraments in the church and to supervise the flock committed to their care.

In coming to this conclusion, the Commission, rejecting both the "episcopal" and "functional" undertaking of the ministry, indicates its agreement with Walther and the traditional understanding of the doctrine of the ministry of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.[57]

In the second place, the Commission concludes that the New Testament does not present a precise list of the functions which those who hold the office of public ministry must perform in order to continue in this office (p. 15):

> No specific "checklist" of functions of the office of the public ministry is presented in the Scriptures. For instance, nowhere are we told specifically that an elder "celebrated communion" or that only the elders spoke the words of institution at the celebration of the sacrament. The supervision of the shepherd-elder-bishop is a supervision of the teaching of the Word and administration of the sacraments. In this way they are leaders to be obeyed in their speaking of the Word of God. They are supervisors of the spiritual life, the faith, and the Christian service of the church and its members. This is a heavy responsibility that no man can take

> upon himself but rather to which he must be legitimately called by the church (*rite vocatus*) (Acts 1:23-26; 13:2-3; 14:23; 2 Cor. 8:19; AC XIV).

This necessarily implies that it is not divinely mandated that the office of the public ministry can only be exercised in a typical parish situation. In other words, there may be non-parish pastors. The church itself has the responsibility for carefully defining "the offices and their functions to which it summons its spiritual leaders" (p. 21). The Commission suggests that the church ask such questions as the following as it makes decisions regarding whether or not a given individual is in the office of the public ministry (p. 20):

> Has the church found an individual to be qualified for the office of the public ministry? Has the church called him to exercise an overseeing and shepherding ministry in the church? Has the church formally called him to hold the office of the public ministry and entrusted him with the responsibility of that office, even though it may ask him to specialize in certain functions of this office? And is he, upon installation into the office, pledged to be and remain accountable for the faithful conduct of his office to God, to the church, and to the believers committed to his care? Questions such as these indicate a need for clarity and precision in the issuing of "calls."

These two conclusions imply that it is necessary to distinguish clearly office and function when considering the doctrine of the ministry. There is only one divinely instituted office, but this office embraces a number of divinely mandated functions. The church has the freedom to establish additional offices to carry out some of these functions as the situation demands. All of those who carry out divinely manated functions in behalf of the church on a fulltime basis are in the public ministry of the church, but not everyone who carries out a divinely mandated function does so in the one divinely established office. Moreover, not everyone who has been found qualified for and placed in this one divinely established office must necessarily at all times carry out all of the functions which belong to this office.

One final word needs to be said here. While the CTCR was not asked to nor has it in fact addressed the question of how those who have been placed in the office of the public ministry should relate to those who carry out divinely mandated functions in other offices called into being by the church (auxiliary offices), the

Commission has nevertheless considered it important to say the following (p. 27):

> As Christ was the Father's obedient Suffering Servant, so His ministers are servants, even slaves, as St. Paul calls himself. No one is to seek office in the church for personal glory. A man may aspire to the office, but it is God who calls him through the church. The church calls those who hold the office of the public ministry, and it calls those who stand beside the public ministers to labor in the Gospel mission of the church.

The recognition of the fact that all those who are in the public ministry of the church are servants of Christ will lead pastors to maintain the dignity of the position of those serving in auxiliary offices, and it will lead those who hold auxiliary offices to regard the pastor of the flock as also their pastor. Such a spirit will motivate the pastor and his associated workers to be ready at all times to accord respect and submission in the areas assigned to each, so that together they may be able to perform their ministries in a peaceable and God-pleasing manner.

FOOTNOTES

1. Letter from Dr. Ralph Bohlmann, at that time President of Concordia Seminary, dated August 5, 1974, on file in CTCR offices.
2. Letter from Dr. Emil Jaech, at that time President of the Northwest District, dated August 22, 1974, on file in CTCR offices.
3. Letter from Pastor John L. Heins, Secretary of the Michigan District, dated February 28, 1977, on file in CTCR offices.
4. *Proceedings of the Forty-Sixth Regular Convention of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod,* 1965, p. 127.
5. "The Ministry in Its Relation to the Christian Church: A Report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations," 1973, p. 10.
6. *Ibid.*
7. This may be due in part, at least, to the fact that "The Order of the Holy Communion" in *The Lutheran Hymnal*, p. 16, calls for the Minister to pronounce the absolution in these words: "Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and *ordained* servant of the Word . . ." (emphasis added).
8. See *Tax and General Information Bulletin*, published by the Board of Directors of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1977. A copy of this bulletin was sent to all LCMS congregations in 1977. Additional copies are available from the Office of the Treasurer, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 South Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, Missouri 63122.
9. In former years the IRS recognized as "ministers of the Gospel" only those individuals who were "invested with the status and authority of an ordained minister fully qualified *to exercise all of the ecclesiastical duties* of that church denomination." In more recent years the IRS has expanded this definition of a "minister of the Gospel" to "allow commissioned or licensed ministers to be treated in the same manner as ordained ministers of the Gospel when the commissioned or licensed ministers *perform substantially*

all the religious functions within the scope of the tenets and practices of their religious denominations." Cf. Revenue Ruling 65-124, 1965-1 C.B. 60, and Revenue Ruling 66-90, 1966-1 C.B. 27 (emphasis mine). In accordance with this change, the IRS has now granted "minister of the Gospel" status to Jewish cantors. Cf. Revenue Ruling 78-301, C.B. 1978-2, 103, which reads: "A Jewish cantor who is not ordained but has a bona fide commission and is employed by a congregation on a full time basis to perform substantially all the religious, sacerdotal, training and educational functions of the Jewish denomination's religious tenets and practices is a minister of the Gospel within the meaning of Section 107 . . . ." Cf. also *David Silverman*, 57 T.C. 75, 1972.

10. *Tax and General Information Bulletin*, p. 32.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 29-32.
12. Cf. *The Lutheran Agenda* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House), 1948, pp. 132f., 136f. "The Order for the Installation of a Teacher" states: "Whereas, then, by divine guidance, thou has recognized in this call the voice of God . . . ." "A Form for the Induction of Women Teachers" reads: "_____ Evangelical Church has duly appointed thee to be a teacher in our parochial school."
13. "Statement on the Status of Certified Graduated Women Teachers of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod," *Convention Workbook*, 1965, p. 47. Cf. *Proceedings of the Forty-Sixth Regular Convention of the Lutheran Church— Missouri Synod*, p. 99.
14. *Convention Proceedings*, 1973, p. 190.
15. *Tax and General Information Bulletin*, p. 31.
16. It is on the bases of this revision that the IRS has recently granted "minister of the Gospel" status to Jewish cantors as well as rabbis. See footnote 8 above.
17. *Convention Proceedings*, 1981, p. 176. Res. 5-08 resolved: "That only those duly ordained pastors and duly commissioned male teachers who are listed on the Synod's official membership rosters shall be regarded by the Synod as 'ministers of the Gospel,' 'ministers of religion,' 'ministers of the church,' or similar titles for purposes of United States income taxes, social security (FICA and self-employment taxes), unemployment taxes, and selective service."
18. Because of limitations of staff and time, it has been the general practice of the Commission to present formal responses to requests for opinions only to those coming from official boards, commissions, agencies, and conventions of the Synod and its districts.
19. *Convention Workbook*, 1975, p. 41.
20. *Convention Workbook*, 1977, p. 49.
21. *Convention Workbook*, 1977, p. 48.
22. Cf. "The Ministry," p. 33.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 35.
24. *Ibid*, p. 39.
25. *Ibid.*, pp. 38-9.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 34-5.
27. Holsten Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions (1529-1537)* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1972), p. 226.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 227.
29. Loehe's views are set forth in his 1849 book entitled *Aphorismen uber die neutestamentlichen Amter und ihr Verhaeltnis zur Gemeinde.* Cf. Holsten

Fagerberg, *Bekenntnis, Kirche, und Amt in der deutschen konfessionellen Theologie des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Uppsala: Almquist- Wiksells Boktrycheri, 1952), pp. 103f.

30. Conrad Bergendoff, *The Doctrine of the Church in American Lutheranism* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1956), p. 29.
31. W.H.T. Dau, *Walther and the Church* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1938), p. 48.
32. Cf. Treatise 65.
33. Hoefling presents his understanding of the doctrine of the ministry in his 1853 work *Grundsaetzen evangelisch-lutherischer Kirchenverfassung.*
34. Theodore G. Tappert, trans. and ed., *The Book of Concord* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), p. 31.
35. Fagerberg, *A New Look*, p. 228.
36. E. W. Janetski, "The Doctrine of the Office of the Holy Ministry in the Lutheran Church of Australia Today," *Lutheran Theological Journal* 13 (November 1979), p. 69.
37. Walther's "Theses on the Ministry," which were approved by the Synod in 1851, have been appended to the CTCR report on "The Ministry," pp. 44-5.
38. *Walther and the Church*, p. 47.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 79.
40. August C. Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher's Position in the Ministry of the Congregation," unpublished essay, n.d., p. 2.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
42. Arnold C. Mueller, *The Ministry of the Lutheran Teacher* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), pp. 11-12.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 83.
44. What follows is the Commission's *summary* statement of what the New Testament says about "the office of the ministry." It should be noted, however, that C.F.W. Walther finds evidence for the divine institution of the pastoral office also in the Old Testament. He includes as "proof from the word of God" that "the pastoral office is not a human ordinance, but an office established by God Himself" appears "from the Old Testament *prophecies* to the effect that *God* Himself would give to the Church of the New Covenant shepherds and teachers." *Walther and the Church*, pp. 71-2.
45. Karl Heinrich Rengstorf writes in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* in his article on *didaskalos*, vol. 2, p. 158: "And if in Eph. 4:11 the common article makes it plain that the *didaskaloi* are identical with the *poimenes*, this lies in the nature of case; for the *poimen* is the one who is responsible for the life of the community, and therefore *didaskein* in the widest sense is part of his office." Others disagree with this interpretation. See, e.g., Martin Dibelius, *Handbuch zum Neuen Testament*, 12 (Tuebingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1953), p. 81.
46. Cf. William F. Arndt, "The Doctrine of the Call into the Holy Ministry," *CTM* 25 (May 1954), pp. 337-352.
47. Cf. Gerhard Friedrich's article in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* under *keerusso*, vol. 2, p. 712. He writes with reference to Rom. 10:5: "This statement is decisive for our understanding of the preaching office. The face that *apostellein* is linked with *kerussein* elsewhere in the NT is no accident [Mk. 3:14; Lk 4:18, 43f.; 9:2]. It belongs to the very nature of things. Without commissioning and sending there are no preachers, and without preachers there is no proclamation. True proclamation does not take place through Scripture alone, but through its exposition, Lk 4:21. God

does not send books to men; He sends messengers. By choosing individuals for this service, He institutes the office of proclamation."

48. Martin Dibelius, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), pp. 4f. Cf. also John A.T. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminister Press, 1976), p. 68; J.N.D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 14.
49. See pages above.
50. Fagerberg, *A New Look*, p. 228.
51. Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 235. Fagerberg writes: "The idea that the office of the ministry is identical with the Gospel in action has no support in the Lutheran Confessions."
52. The Commission suggests that "perhaps a better term than 'auxiliary' might be found." See p. 28. Although it was not happy with this designation the CTCR used it nevertheless because this was the term (*Hilfamt* in German) which Walther used to refer to those offices which the church establishes from time to time in accordance with its needs. See *Walther and the Church*, p. 69. Other terms which have been suggested for these offices are "associated," "adjunct," "specialized," and "related." There may be other designations which merit the serious consideration of the church.
53. *Der Lutheraner* 1 (1845), pp. 61-63, 65-66. Quoted in Carl S. Mundinger, *Government in the Missouri Synod* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947), 196, fn. 61.
54. Quoted in Mundinger, p. 97.
55. Quoted in *The Abiding Word*, I (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House), p. 381.
56. P. E. Kretzmann, "The Doctrine of the Call with Special Reference to the Auxiliary Offices in the Church," essay presented to the Northern Nebraska District Convention, 1934, p. 16.
57. Cf. William F. Arndt, pp. 339-40. Dr. Arndt writes: "There is one office, not a charismatic one, which the Holy Scriptures indicate the church must have. It is the office of elder. The proof of this sweeping assertion is contained in Titus 1:5: 'For this reason I left you on Crete that you should continue to supply in proper order that which is still lacking and place elders in the various cities, as I instructed you in detail.' Note carefully what Paul says here. He not only tells Titus to see to it that the congregations on Crete are provided with elders, but also that when this office is missing, something is lacking or wanting. From time we have to draw the conclusion that this office must be found in a Christian church if it is to be equipped as it should be. The office of elder is the same as that of bishop, as Titus 1, 5, 7. and Acts 20, 17, 28. show. Other passages, for instance, 1 Peter 5, 1ff., show us that these elders had the function of pastors, of shepherds. When the New Testament speaks of pastors and teachers, we may assume that the same persons are meant who in other places are called elders by the holy writers. We must say, then, that of the many offices we find in the church today the one that can be proved to rest on a direct divine mandate is that of elder, or pastor, or bishop."

Timeless Treasure: Luther's Psalm Hymns

Oliver C. Rupprecht

Perhaps nowhere is Martin Luther's interest in "the common man," as he called him, and in the affairs of ordinary folk demonstrated more clearly and more beautifully than in his adaptations of Scriptural psalms for hymnic purposes. Although his monumental achievement in providing a suitable and normative translation of the entire Bible is in a class by itself, and although his pioneering work as an educator displayed passionate concern for the spiritual and intellectual enlightenment of the people, his work in hymnody, particularly his use of Biblical psalms for devotional purposes, brings significant evidence of his intense desire for the spiritual instruction, nourishment, edification, and well-being of average persons — those who might be without the benefit of high culture and scholarly training.

The Source

Luther loved the Psalter — not with a vaguely sentimental attachment to the book but because of specific and precisely identifiable points of merit. In his magnificent "Preface to the Psalter" Luther lists, first of all, the element of Messianic prophecy contained in the psalms.[1] In addition to that prime distinction the psalms are notable, says Luther, because of their clear and comprehensive presentation of the human condition — not merely the outwardly visible works and deeds of human beings, but their words, their very thoughts and emotions, the inner workings of heart and soul.[2]

Luther's most famous reference to the Psalter's disclosure of personal emotions has become a classical statement concerning this prime and precious feature of the divinely inspired psalms: "Here you look into the heart of all the saints, as into a lovely garden of pleasure and delight. You see what beautiful flowers grow there because of joyous thoughts concerning God and His numerous blessings. Yes, you seem to be looking into heaven itself. You see what pleasant trees grow there. You sense the heartbeat of those trees, and you discover a great variety of beautiful, joyous thoughts concerning God and the benevolent acts He performs."[3]

No one need fear that this otherworldly climate is too rarefied or remote for flesh-and-blood people living in the present world.

The thoughts and statements of the psalmists invite personal identification with those who sing and speak the words. "You will notice that the saints sing one song with you . . . . In sum, if you wish to see a picture of the holy Christian Church, presented in miniature and set forth with vivid colors and in lively figures, take the Psalter; there you will have a bright, clear, excellent mirror that will show you what Chrisitianity is. In fact, you will find yourself in the psalms; you will imagine that they were written only for you, and you will admit that you could not have said these things any better yourself.[4] Indeed, recognizing yourself in the Psalter, you will find in it the true 'gnoothi seauton' ('know thyself'), as well as God Himself and all His creatures."[5]

Obviously, Luther did more than to translate the Psalter from Hebrew into German. A man so vibrantly alive, responding so sensitively to every shade of meaning and to each delicate nuance of thought and emotion contained in the original text, would not — could not — be content with lexicographical accuracy and precision. He would reach beyond these for the intangible but vital elements that make up the soul and spirit of the original utterance.[6] But to reach for these he must be aware of them, and to be aware of them he must have more than a concern for literalistic definitions. His work as a translator must be the outgrowth of a passionate desire to utilize words for a presentation alive with ingredients that lie at the heart of human existence transfigured by divinely wrought spiritual regeneration. Such an assignment, to be successfully performed, involves more than intellectual resources. It demands the presence of a strong and vibrant personality — the ultimate secret of a translation distinguished by high nobility of thought and emotion, by an onrush of power, and by enduring beauty transcending the glory of what is commonly known as "literary style."

"The power of a translator," said C.A. Dinsmore of Yale University, "really comes, not from his intellect, but from the depth of his personality. The choice of a word or of a rhythm is not a matter of thought; from the depths of one's being comes a compulsion which forces words to fall into their places by a sort of inevitability. No one can translate a great piece of literature who is not one in spirit with the original author. He must catch the same vision, quiver with the authentic passion, enter into the innermost soul of the writer. The heart must feel what the hand writes."

Referring to the work of England's foremost translator of the Bible, Dinsmore says: "He [William Tyndale] could translate the Bible because first he experienced it. The moods of high serious-

ness and intense moral earnestness, out of which came the sacred books, were his habitual moods.[7] He could not only render the words of Paul, he could transmit his spirit. In plain and vivid sentences he reproduced the Gospel thought, and caused the rhythm of the Gospel passion to beat again in our English speech. Perhaps I cannot better state the peculiar note in Tyndale's translation than by claiming for it the quality which John Morley asserts belongs to good writing. Style, he says, 'is agitation rigorously restrained, the touching and penetrative music which is made prose by the repressed trouble of grave and high souls.' "[8]

Dinsmore's insistence on the importance of a translator of Scripture habitually dwelling in a genuinely spiritual climate — on intimate familiarity with truths that enrich the soul — applies with special force to Luther's achievements in areas of Bible translation and the production of hymnody. Living in the world of the Bible, Luther absorbed and incorporated its message into his very being. This is the reason for the eloquence, the power, the beauty, the strong emotion distinguishing the excellence of his superb translation of the psalms. The pulsation of his mighty heart, a heart thrilled by God's redeeming love, animates the pages. They move, they tremble in one's hand. They shake with a soaring upward movement as though refusing to be held down while striving for their natural exalted habitat. To miss this sensation when reading Luther's translation of the psalms is to be deprived of one of the most thrilling experiences in all literature.[9]

Affinity for Greatness

It would be strange indeed if all these qualities were not present and observable in Luther's hymnic versions of the psalms. To read or to sing hymns like "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" (Ps. 46), "O Lord, Look Down from Heaven, Behold" (Ps. 12), "The Mouth of Fools Doth God Confess" (Ps. 14), "May God Bestow on Us His Grace" (Ps. 67), "If God Had Not Been on Our Side" (Ps. 124), and "From Depths of Woe I Cry to Thee" (Ps. 130), is to become aware of a man whose heart was attuned to the grandeur of the underlying concepts. His keen mind seized on the rich potential offered by Scriptural thoughts and words for hymnody in his own day and time. His is an instructive example.

In this connection we need to note carefully that two elements distinguished Luther's procedure in the writing and composition of psalm hymns. One was his search for the lyrical, the singable in textual material. Luther knew that hymns, like psalms, are to be sung. They find fullest expression when joined with music. "Die Noten machen den Text lebendig," he said on more than one

occasion. ("The notes cause the text to become alive" — not as though the Spirit of God were dependent on music for life-giving power, but meaning that the tonal and rhythmic qualities of music may support, supplement, and intensify the impact of the words.) At the same time Luther knew, in his selection of texts, that words of deep feeling are the most natural ally of music. It is possible to write great narrative poetry — and great doctrinal hymns — but as a rule even these, to become songs, are infused with lyrical elements of emotion. Luther's keenly perceptive mind recognized the value of the Psalter's emotional content. He was aware of its remarkable suitability and adaptability for Christian song, even as his delicately sensitive soul responded to the lyricism expressed and evoked by the Psalter's lilting lines and paeans of power.

By common consent, music is the "language" of the emotions. Although lacking — and never replacing — the presicion of verbal utterance,[10] music is endowed, as if by compensation, with a potential for power that can vigorously enhance the impact of the spoken word, unless deliberately abnormalized into sterility. The modern distortion and denial of music's true function to provide emotional power caused a New York music critic to complain about "the lack of vitality in contemporary [classical] music."[11] Another critic lamented the current necessity of "Picking Up the Musical Rubble After the [toneless and atonal] Earthquake."[12]

Luther would have no traffic with such aberrations in the realm of music. Focusing on the heart as the seat of human emotions, Luther singled out the Psalter's emotional content as one of its principal virtues. "The Psalter places before us not merely the external works of God's children but also their heart, so that we can look into the fountain and wellspring of their words and works, that is, into their heart. We see what kinds of thoughts they had. We see the condition of their heart and how it responded to a variety of affairs, how it reacted to danger and need."[13]

The other element distinguishing Luther's procedure in the production of psalm hymns was his fastidious adherence to principles determining suitability in the emotional content. For the conscientious writer of hymns, an indiscriminate use of emotional materials will not do. Triviality offers no opportunity for the serious writer of hymns. The best songs deal with emotions of substance, based on universal themes possessing enduring value, enriched by sentiments of nobility, beauty, and grandeur.

Some people are repelled or intimidated by greatness. For

Luther, one of the humblest and most reverential of persons, the bigness of thought, exalted beauty, and majestic grandeur of divine utterances (in the Bible generally and in the Psalter specifically) had a special attraction directly relevant to his plans for the production of hymnody. Although delighting in simple beauty, Luther recognized the potential in expressions of great substance and worth. This was the reason for his use of the stirring emotional content in the great psalms. Undeterred by bigness of thought, by the vast panorama confronting him in the Psalter, Luther recognized the sterling worth of great emotions experienced by great people on the basis of great thoughts. Great thoughts and great emotions, then, served as a storehouse of rich materials, yielding a timeless treasury of song.

Some eras are relatively or completely barren of greatness. A modern English critic faults the Victorian era because "great thoughts, great emotions were lacking."[14] On the other hand, a mere assertion of greatness will not do. The senseless clamor in ancient Ephesus, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians,"[15] merely highlighted the pathetic deficiency in pagan religious culture. The assertion of greatness must be substantiated by incontrovertible evidence. Luther found greatness irrefutably manifest in the divine utterances of Scripture and filled his hymns with them. The grandeur of heaven rings in his paraphrases of Biblical psalms. Luther's sensitive ear caught the tones and overtones of those massive utterances. Here, too, in its own way, was a case of "deep calling unto deep."[16] His own soul had experienced reality in the human plight and in the heavenly promises proclaimed with authoritative voice in the psalms of David, Asaph, and other divinely inspired masters. It was natural for Luther to wish to share that highest kind of reality with others and, for that purpose, to utilize ageless psalmody to respond to his own needs and to the universal problems of mankind.[17] Modest as he was (willing to recognize superior talent and ability in others, and careful to subordinate his own ideas to the tried and tested materials of those who had preceded him and had been noted for great achievements in the realm of religious song), Luther patterned much of his own work after that of Old Testament psalmists and other writers of great hymns.

There was nothing self-conscious or artificial about Luther's care to present and preserve greatness in his psalm hymns. His concern was the outflow of a mind and heart focusing on divine glory and striving to provide hymnic materials that would be suitably expressive of divine truth. In striving for an elevated tone (whether in words or in music), Luther was conforming to

Biblical principles and practice. God Himself emphasizes the majesty that ought to attend worship of the Most High.[18] Nor is this emphasis on majesty and grandeur a matter of divine whim, unrelated to the realities of human life. The practical outcome resulting from an awareness of divine majesty is acutely relevant to hymnic activities; it produces precisely what Luther sought to achieve, a lyrical response on the part of God's children. "They shall lift up their voices, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea."[19] It was perfectly natural, then, to base hymnody on the Psalter, the hymnbook of the Old Testament church. But we need to remember that all kinds of unnatural developments have a way of creeping into cultic activities. The evidence of abnormality is all around us in some of the secular and "sacred" grotesqueries of our time.[20] There is all the more reason, then, for gratitude that Luther chose a course dictated by lofty precept and noble precedent. Thomas Campion, an English Renaissance poet, although writing in a different connection, aptly described Luther's goal: "Let well-tuned words amaze/With harmony divine."[21]

What may escape our observation is the *reason* for Luther's choice. Why did he do what he did when focusing on hymnody? He did not approach the task from the outside. He did not ask, "What will sell?" His choice of a perfectly natural procedure was the natural outgrowth of what ought to be natural for the children of God — the habit of living in the realm of divine thought and language. The world of the Bible was Luther's natural habitat. It has been said that to read Luther is to be led more deeply into the Bible. The reason is obvious: Luther's writings — whether poetic or prose — came from the Bible. They were rooted in Scriptural thought and expression. His hymns had the same source; they sprang from the great truths uttered in Biblical psalms. The excellence of Luther's choice and the validity of his procedure have been vindicated by subsequent developments in the church. The figure of Martin Luther stands prominently among those who went from exalted precept to a pattern of excellence.

Balance and Blend

The balance that Luther achieved and maintained in his composition of psalm hymns, joining imitation with originality, makes them a most remarkable phenomenon in the realm of Christian hymnody.[22] His songs are distinguished by a rare and notable blend in the language which they employ. It is free, but faithfully adhering to exalted precept; original, but authentic; timely, but traditional; adapted to contemporary conditions, but

conforming to timeless thought patterns serving the deepest and continuing needs of the human soul. Luther's psalm hymns are modern without suffering from the short-lived superficiality of modernism. Certainly one of the most easily recognizable instances illustrating Luther's "modernizing" of the psalms is his use of the name of Jesus Christ in "A Mighty Fortress" (Ps. 46) and in "The Mouth of Fools Doth God Confess" (Ps. 14). The name of Christ does not occur in these psalms. But for Luther the Psalter — for that matter, all of Scripture — is Christo-centric. In his "Preface to the Psalter" he singles out the Messianic element as the salient feature of Old Testament psalmody. But Luther sets forth more than the Christological aspect of the psalms. The human element of the psalms is extolled in detail in Luther's "Preface to the Psalter." Even so, however, Luther's deft hand in the psalm hymns draws from the inspired thoughts and words their applicability to modern conditions.

Luther's version of Psalm 12 is a case in point. With a depth of understanding born of personal experience and with a strength of imagination envisaging the collective cry of the beleaguered church, Luther paraphrases Psalm 12 as an intense plea by the persecuted church, answered by the glorious reply of her compassionate and omnipotent Lord. The stanzas of "O Lord, Look Down from Heaven, Behold" (Ps. 12), like those of other psalm hymns, have a remarkably modern ring. "Heresy" and "false doctrine" refer to the contemporary denial (in his day and ours) of Luther's "pure doctrine." And the beautiful statement about the divine word — "Its light beams brighter through the cross" — is a modern refinement of a basic Biblical teaching. To sing the six stanzas of "O Lord, Look Down from Heaven, Behold" is to experience deepening thought and profound emotion but, above all, a reassurance of God's supremacy and the power — active through His word.

Love of Principle and of People

Luther's modernizing paraphrase of Psalm 12 and of other psalms is vibrant with an emotion foreign to many persons today — a passionate love of that which is holy and true and right and good. To charge the modern era with a lack of passion for high principle is not the result of a biased individual opinion but agrees with observations recorded by competent and objective critics. In a recent comment on contemporary indifference toward viciousness among nations, the well-known columnist George F. Will said: "What is outrageous is the lack of outrage."[23] Will regards this deficiency as "a symptom of the degeneration of the political will," an American phenomenon noted several years ago by

Alexander Solzhenitsyn. Analyzing this phenomenon, a writer in England's *Manchester Guardian Weekly* said: "The leaders [who oppose corrective action] cloak themselves in a moralistic ideology, when it is nothing of the sort. It is fear . . . . [The euphemism] merely serves as a cloak to provide a sort of nobility to cowardice."[24]

But Luther's psalm hymns are distinguished by more than personal devotion to the preciousness of truth or a conviction of its sacred and inviolable character. Concern for the welfare of human beings beats strongly in Luther's lines. "Therefore, says God, I must arise; the poor My help are needing," Luther sings in his paraphrase of Psalm 12. This concern for people is beautifully developed in Bach's Cantata BWV 2, based on Luther's paraphrase of Psalm 12.[25] What is the price of this kind of practicality? Luther was aware of the struggle that is necessary to obtain and retain the truth. He was not "spoiling for a fight," but neither did he shirk his responsibility as a Christian warrior. He could not ignore the divine warning: "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion!"[26] The great poet Coleridge, quoting Wordsworth, complained that Robert Southey "writes too much at his ease" and that he "seldom feels his burdened breast / Heaving beneath th' incumbent Deity."[27] Luther knew that the church on earth is the church militant (as Christians in communist countries and also in many free lands know from painful experience), and the beauty of the prize inspired him to go to battle.[28]

Moreover, the joyous confidence of triumphant faith permeates Luther's psalm hymns and imparts a vigor that dare not be neglected. It is frustrating to hear congregations singing "A Mighty Fortress" and "O Lord, Look Down" in a listless manner that fails to reflect the energy of mood and, above all, the grandeur of concept in the portrayal of the church's unconquerable Lord. Rightly sung, these hymns thrill and invigorate Christian faith. What missionary (to mention another instance) can be timid after hearing or singing Luther's great missionary hymn, "May God Bestow on Us His Grace," based on Psalm 67?[29] But the hymn must be sung with attention to the reassuring divine promises given in the verbal message and to the splendor of the musical setting.[30]

Contrast and Confirmation

Luther's psalm hymns do not represent an attempt to replace Scriptural forms. They can never be a substitute for what is offered in the Bible. Let us admit that a paraphrase is a paraphrase. Luther's psalm hymns can hardly be said to have

reproduced the grandeur, the authoritatively compelling tone, of the divine original. Who can approach the grandeur of "Be still, and know that I am God" or the self-assured calm of "God is our Refuge and Strength" or the absolute finality of the conclusion to Psalm 67: "God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him"? Who can duplicate the rhythmic surge in "O Lord, the heathen are come into Thine inheritance"[31] or the intensity of emotion in "Oh, that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion"? These are achievements that stand in solitary grandeur and in unapproachable beauty. There is all the more reason, then, for recognizing the marvel of Luther's success in providing the people with paraphrases that offer the pure gold of divine thought in attractive and memorable forms.

Luther's psalm hymns do not achieve the majestic tone of the originals. Yet for vigor of proclamation, "A Mighty Fortress" reaches notable heights. Again, for intensity of emotion Luther's paraphrase of Psalm 12 ("O Lord, Look Down") is an achievement in its own right, notable for a comprehensive picture crowded with humanizing details and suffused with elements of divine compassion and triumphant glory. The rhythmic surge of the words (which must be felt and expressed in congregational singing) moves strongly in an ascent to the throne of grace, while the music (usually not ascribed to Luther, but most appropriately joined to the paraphrase) illuminates and intensifies the basic thoughts and emotions, as is shown in a superb and highly imaginative orchestral transcription by Eugene Ormandy for the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra.

What we have in Luther's psalm hymns is humanizing without humanism; individualizing without brash individualism; particularizing without becoming lost in details of the immediate and the present; a vigorous concern for the church without ecclesiasticism. Each of the hymnic paraphrases centers on God, "who is above all, and through all, and in you all."[32] For this reason the prevailing mood in Luther's psalm hymns is one of reverence, and the tone is consistently appropriate. Luther speaks and sings the language of the people, but he assumes that they are the people of God. He does not descend to the tawdry in an unprincipled striving for commercial success or mass appeal. The German word *popular* (untranslatable in English) accurately describes Luther's achievement. Luther's hymns, including his psalm hymns, observe an important line of distinction sometimes blurred in modern hymnody; they are popular without becoming vulgar, as Hugo Leichtentritt of Harvard University has pointed out.[33]

Appropriation and Use

There can be no question as to the validity of Luther's work in paraphrasing Old Testament psalmody. The question is: Will we dig into the treasure trove? To do so is evidence of ripening judgment. Charles Sanford Terry has pointed out that J.S. Bach in his maturer years made increasing use of Reformation hymnody, a treasure that includes Luther's paraphrases of Old Testament psalms.[34] Acquisition of this rich material may entail considerable cost. Fortunately, it is free from inflationary spirals. It may, however, involve time and determination to benefit from its blessed potential. But why balk at the cost? "The only thing more expensive than an education," said Benjamin Franklin, "is ignorance."

FOOTNOTES

1. "Even if it were not distinguished by any other point of merit, we ought to regard the Psalter as dear and precious because it prophesies Christ's death and resurrection so clearly . . . that it might very well be called a little Bible. In the Psalter everything that is contained in the entire Bible is comprehended so beautifully and so briefly that it constitutes an excellent '*Enchiridion*,' or handbook." *Das Weimarische Bibelwerk* (St. Louis und Leipzig: Fr. Dette, 1877), p. 606. (All translations, also from other German works, are by the author of the present essay.)
2. It was to be expected that Luther's intense love for the common people and his desire to make Biblical truths appealing to ordinary and uneducated persons would make him eloquent when singling out the Psalter's vivid portrayal of life among the children of God. What strikes Luther is that the Psalter is representative of all humanity, particularly in its description of God's children. Beginning with a reference to the incarnate Son of God Himself, Luther says: "In the Psalter you find not merely what one or two saints have done but what He who is the Head of all saints has wrought and what all saints continue to do — how they conduct themselves toward God and in their relationships toward friends and foes, how they bear up under suffering and in danger . . . . It seems to me that the Holy Spirit deliberately undertook the task of bringing together material for a small Bible and for a book of examples whose range is representative of all Christendom and includes the lives of all saints, so that anyone who cannot read the entire Bible would here have, in one small book, a kind of summary of all Scripture." *Ibid.*, p. 607.

   To the remarkably comprehensive panorama portraying the pious performance of God's children in their everyday affairs must be added the Psalter's constant practice of permitting us to read and hear the very words spoken and sung by those whose statements, through divine inspiration, have been recorded in the Book of Psalms. Scorning the legends and other narratives that purport to relate the deeds of saints but have little to say about their words, Luther terms the Psalter a "prize" because it brings, in abundance, the very words spoken by God's children in prayer and song. Nor is this all. "The Psalter does even more," says Luther. "The subject matter of the words spoken and sung is most precious and of the greatest importance. In the psalms we hear the saints talking with God Himself, in a mood of great

earnestness about matters that are of the most vital significance." *Ibid.*, p. 607.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 607.
4. Many a parishioner has said: "Pastor, the psalms seem to have been written for me and for my problems" — as, indeed, they were, under inspiration by the omniscient author of universal truth.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 607.
6. To emphasize how faithfully Luther captured and reproduced the spirit of Old Testament psalmody, Blume says: "Luther's psalm hymns really give us the psalms themselves, not merely imitative suggestions or paraphrases; as a result, it was possible to refer to them as 'German psalms.' " Friedrich Blume, "Die evangelische Kirchenmusik," in *Handbuch der Musikwissenschaft*, ed. Ernst Buecken, X (New York: Musurgia Publishers, 1931), p. 21.
7. For the present discussion, which deals with hymnody, it is acutely relevant to point out that this insistence on the presence of a characteristic mood has special significance for requirements involved in the production of church music. Those who venture to write religious poetry or to compose music intended for religious purposes should have a background of personal experience in spiritual affairs, both doctrine and practice. They should dwell habitually in a climate congenial to the development of spiritual life. A sudden generous impulse to "serve the church" with a religious song from someone who has been preoccupied with secular activities can hardly be expected to achieve its purpose, though the intent may be one of genuine sincerity. We do not expect industrial architects to be notably successful in designing a church. Each professional person is deserving of commendation in his own field, but the requirements for suitability and success are divergent. Luther and his fellow hymnists had a rich experience of spiritual truth. Their habituation to spiritual thoughts and emotions and their familiarity with church music of the past became evident in their products of sterling and normative worth. "The sound was right," both of words and of music.
8. Charles Allen Dinsmore, *The English Bible as Literature* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1931), pp. 84-85. Speaking not merely of translations but of qualities inherent in the original Biblical writings themselves that make those writings great as works possessing supreme literary merit, McAfee courageously strikes a note rarely encountered in surveys and evaluations discussing reasons for the Bible's unique greatness as a work of literary art. With an excellent sense of proportion McAfee says: "The Bible is a book of religious significance from first to last. If it utterly broke down by the tests of literature, it might be as great a book as it needs to be. It is a subordinate fact that by the tests of literature it proves also to be great. Prof. Gardner, of Harvard, whose book *The Bible as English Literature* makes other such works almost unnecessary, frankly bases his judgment on the result of critical study of the Bible, but he serves fair warning that he takes inspiration for granted, and thinks it 'obvious that no literary criticism of the Bible could hope for success which was not reverent in tone. A critic who should approach it superciliously or arrogantly would miss all that has given the Book its power as literature and its lasting and universal appeal.' Farther over in his book he goes on to say that when we search for the causes of the feelings which made the marvelous style of the Bible a necessity, explanation can make but a short step, for 'we are in a realm where the only ultimate explanation is the fact of inspiration; and that is only another way of saying

that we are in the presence of forces above and beyond our present human understanding.' " Cleland Boyd McAfee, *The Greatest English Classic* (New York: Harper, 1912), pp. 89-90.

The "Gospel passion" to which Dinsmore refers in the quotation beats more strongly at certain times than at others. It is no secret that certain periods of history have been marked by a prevailing and widespread mood that could be called genuinely and predominantly spiritual. Dr. McAfee makes the pertinent observation that England's "early seventeenth century was an opportune time . . . . Theology was a popular subject. Men's minds had found a new freedom, and they used it to discuss great themes. They even began to sing" (evidence that the response was not merely one of intellectual assent but of emotional identification). "It was a period of remarkable awakening in the whole intellectual life of England, and that intellectual life was directing itself among the common people to religion. Another English writer, Baton, says a profounder word in tracing the awakening to the Reformation, saying that it 'could not fail, from the very nature of it, to tinge the literature of the Elizabethan era. It gave a logical and disputatious character to the age and produced men mighty in the Scriptures.' A French writer went home disgusted because people talked of nothing but theology in England. Grotius [Dutch jurist and statesman, 1583-1645] thought all the people in England were theologians." McAfee, pp. 97-98.

9. In tracing the origin of Luther's hymns Blankenburg makes this remark: "In choosing a pattern, Luther adhered to Scriptural thought and expression, but his primary source was the Psalter." Walter Blankenburg, "Der gottesdienstliche Liedgesang der Gemeinde," *Leiturgia*, ed. Karl Ferdinand Mueller and Walter Blankenburg, IV (Kassel: Johannes Stauda, 1931), p. 580.
10. Although celebrating the uniqueness of music as a source and expression of emotional power, Sidney Lanier, one of America's great Southern poets, concludes his long poem "The Symphony" with a statement that is both descriptive and concessive: "Music is love in search of a word." Thus, even one of its most ardent advocates admits that music cannot supply the words that provide life with a rational and intelligible basis. This point is all the more significant, since Lanier's poem begins with an impassioned plea for a fuller use of emotional expression: "O Trade! O Trade! would thou wert dead! / The time needs heart — 'tis tired of head . . . . / When all's done, what hast thou won / Of the only sweet thing that's under the sun? / Ay, canst thou buy a single sigh / Or true love's least, least ecstasy?"
11. Harold C. Schonberg, "Contemporary Music Glanced Backward," *New York Times*, December 30, 1979.
12. Donal Henahan, *New York Times*, September 6, 1981.
13. *Bibelwerk*, p. 606.
14. William Gaunt, *Aesthetic Adventure* (Philadelphia: Richard West, 1945), p. 216.
15. Acts 19:28.
16. Psalm 42:7.
17. It should be carefully noted that the true servant of God desires to share his discoveries and experiences with others. His is a selfless objective (as far as this is possible in a sinful human nature); his procedure is not the strutting of a person vying and competing with others for grandiloquent utterance and flattering adulation. Far from reveling in vainglorious achievement, the conscientious hymnist actually is troubled and concerned about adequately fulfilling the demanding obligations of his task.

Perhaps no one has stated the case better than Ludwig Lewisohn in his description of the conscientious artist (whether in the realm of literature or elsewhere), whose efforts frequently are dismissed by an uncomprehending public as nothing more than an attempt at self-glorification. He observes that "the sullen dilettante and dabbler" scorns the conscientious artist for his attempt to produce a great, or at least appropriate, work. Greatness — "an occasional glimpse of it followed, as the dabbler could not know, by other moments of anguished doubt — this is resented as arrogant detachment from the gay crowd of purveyors of merchandise in the pseudo-literary market-places . . . ." Quoting Zelter, a contemporary and companion of Goethe, Lewisohn says: "The true artist often lives in loneliness and despair, the while he is convinced that men are in search of the very thing he possesses and can communicate." Lewisohn speaks of the true artist's "determination — unrelated to argument or polemic — to make his" or God's "vision of the sum of things, 'of man and nature and of human life,' prevail. Thus he needs to persuade yet cannot stoop to please. He is immensely willing to yield to the demand of his day . . . . But it is hard for him when his day, his age, does not make that demand upon him and seems to have no need of him." Ludwig Lewisohn, "The Man of Letters and American Culture," *Chap Book* (Brandeis University, May 1949), pp. 2-3.

Luther, too, encountered this kind of churlish misinterpretation of his work. But he forged ahead with undiminished zeal in his determination to provide the best possible kind of hymnody. He could rise above feelings of personal frustration because his dominating interest was not self-advancement but the glorification of God in a faithful portrayal of divine majesty and mercy. The secret of Luther's successful persistence lay in his devotion to a cause — to *the* cause. Subjectivity succumbs. Objectivity overcomes obstacles and opposition.

18. Isaiah 6.
19. Isaiah 24:14.
20. One of the more glaring examples of hymnological absurdities was cited recently by a Chicago newspaper columnist, a member of a Roman Catholic church. He and his wife Lori asked their six-year-old son Alec, "What did you sing in church?" (This was a weekday service.) "Hooray for God. Hooray for Mom. Hooray for Dad," Alec replied. "Lori," said the columnist, "broke up a second before I did. Though she is not a Catholic, she has had some experience monitoring what passes for Catholic hymns in the new post-Vatican II age . . . . Bach Sunday in many churches Catholics are asked to sing the sappiest collection of non-tunes this side of WLUP. Limp music and limp words are printed in limp little booklets that have replaced the St. Joseph Daily Missals of yore . . . . How can your heart be uplifted when you hear a song ask God how He feels today? To suggest that Catholics need a Bach, quick, is obvious; but what can we do until Bach arrives? When a six-year-old boy sees through the mealy-mouthed sentiments of modern Catholic songs, it may even be too late to wait . . . ." Bill Granger, "The Trouble with Catholic Hymns," *Chicago Tribune*, October 3, 1982.
21. Thomas Campion (1567-1620), "Now Winter Nights Enlarge."
22. Actually, Luther's psalm hymns are distinguished by an even more important kind of proportion than the balance he maintained in matters of hymnic form and structure between imitation and originality. Of primary and decisive significance is the fact that Luther's psalm hymns are pre-

dominantly utterances of *proclamation*, rather than of petition, or even of praise. Adhering to the principle that Christian song, like everything else in the church service, should, for the most part, bring God's message to man rather than man's response to God, Luther was careful to enrich his psalm hymns with manna from heaven, the divine word, which alone can instill, nourish, and sustain spiritual life. Petition and praise have their place (as in the divinely inspired Psalter itself), but priority and pre-eminence must be assigned to the proclamation of divine truth. Only so will the congregation, and the individual souls constituting it, grow strong in faith and be equipped for the challenges and opportunities confronting the children of God in every era.

Luther's dicta concerning the downward, upward, and horizontal purposes of hymnody (downward — bringing food from heaven; upward — lifting the human heart into its proper relationship, reunion with God; horizontal, to right and left — creating proper relationships with friends and foes) are so vital and essential for a correct understanding and use of hymnody, yet are so frequently overlooked, that we urgently need to recall the direction of his thought. Specifically, Luther held that the primary purpose of Christian hymn singing is identical with that of the Christian sermon; it is to proclaim divine truth. To find that many people are startled, even shocked, by an announcement of that kind is to observe how far we have traveled from Luther's scripturally oriented position. One of the most excellent summaries of Luther's statements on the primacy of preaching and teaching in hymnody has been provided by Oskar Soehngen in his masterful essay entitled "Theologische Grundlagen der Kirchenmusik," (*Leiturgia*, IV [Kassel: Johannes Stauda, 1961], p. 76). Here are a few of his pertinent observations: "For Luther, congregational song constitutes a part and a form of preaching . . . . Even as the sermon is a special instrument used by God for the proclamation of His word, so Christian song, too, is a divinely appointed means, tool, and device for the same purpose; for what is sung in church consists of the words of Holy Scripture. If, in addition, music is used to supplement and support the words, the presentation of the divine message may be even more effective . . . . In his letter to Georg Spalatin (1523), announcing the forthcoming publication of a hymnbook, Luther took for granted the Scriptural purpose of the book: 'We are issuing a hymnbook so that the word of God may remain among the people by means of song.' In his preface for Johann Walter's hymnbook (1524), Luther said: 'I have collected a few hymns to promote the Gospel and to cause it to circulate among the people.' In a sermon of 1525 he says: 'The word of God wants to be preached and sung.' " Quotations like these may suffice to show that the principal factor of "balance and blend" maintained in Luther's psalm hymns was *theological*. His statements indicate the intensity of his desire that hymnody serve primarily as an instrument for the (downward) proclamation of divine truth and not merely, or mainly, as an outlet for an upward or horizontal response on the part of the singing congregation.

23. George F. Will, "What Is Outrageous Is the Absence of Outrage," *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, December 27, 1981.
24. H. Tekamp, "Europe Must Wake Up to the Nature of Soviet Power," *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, December 27, 1981.
25. Of similar beauty is the tender concern for lowly folk displayed by Robert Burns in "The Cotter's Saturday Night." The lovely picture of evening devotions in the family circle of the humble cottager is an unforgettable one — showing, as in Luther's paraphrase of Psalm 12, love of principle and of

people; the cottager's earnest devotion to Biblical truth is joined with loving concern for the spiritual well-being of his family members. True love of pure doctrine is not coldly "doctrinaire." To think so is to distort and misrepresent the Biblical concept of love for divine truth. Genuine concern for purity of teaching begins in the intellect (John 17:3), but from there it radiates to ever-widening circles of people. They are the ultimate object of doctrinal concern. Purity of teaching is focused on their welfare. It is a means of grace, an instrument for salvation. It has, as Luther knew, a thrillingly practical purpose; human beings ("the poor") are to be reclaimed and rewon for a life so beautiful that it moved Robert Burns to attempt a description ennobled by deep reverence and enlivened by sustained rapture (*The Cotter's Saturday Night*, 138-144):

Hope 'springs exultant on triumphant wing,'
That thus they all shall meet in future days;
There, ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear,
Together hymning their Creator's praise,
In such society, yet still more dear,
While circling Time moves round in an eternal sphere.

26. Amos 6:1.
27. Letter by Samuel Taylor Coleridge to Joseph Cottle (Spring 1797), *The Best of Coleridge*, ed. Earle Leslie Griggs (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1934), p. 582.
28. "Then shame, thou weary soul! / Look forward to the goal: / There joy waits thee. / The race, then, run, / The combat done, / Thy crown of glory will be won." *The Lutheran Hymnal* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1941), 444:2.
29. Reinhold J. Mueller (Kerrville, Texas), former missionary in China (1929-1951), told a church music conference at Camp Okoboji, Iowa: "You may be surprised to hear me say so, but the truth is that the natives in China love to sing Lutheran chorales." (Who ever said that "East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet"?) "In fact," said Rev. Mueller, "I have to say that the Chinese Lutherans sing them better than many Lutherans in the United States. I was somewhat shocked by the relatively weak and listless singing of Lutheran chorales by some persons in this country. In China our church members sing them with a will. (In recent years, Communist influence has interfered, but in areas like Hong Kong and Taiwan the work is still going on, also in regard to church music.) It was especially thrilling to hear Chinese children sing Lutheran hymns during the Christmas season. It would be an inspiration for Lutherans in the U.S. to observe the vigor and enthusiasm with which Chinese Christians sing Lutheran chorales. We can learn from them." A similar statement was made a few years ago by a visitor from India who had come to the United States for work in the Lutheran Lay Ministry program.
30. Regrettably, limitations of space in the present survey prevent giving attention to the superbly eloquent musical settings of Luther's psalm hymns. This vital aspect of the songs calls for detailed consideration in a separate discussion.
31. Some Bible readers may readily recognize the striking similarity between the cry uttered in Psalm 12 (and in Luther's paraphrase of that psalm) and the passionate plea of another great singer, Asaph, recorded in Psalm 79 (perhaps especially vv. 1, 5, 9, 11).
32. Ephesians 4:6.

33. "Since his [Luther's] intention was to make the common people in the churches sing the chorale tunes, he made them as plain and as popular as possible. At the same time he knew how to give them a dignified spiritual character, with no trace of vulgarity, of cheap popularity, emptiness, or insignificance. The most famous chorale attributed to him is 'Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott.' . . . It is a poetic paraphrase of the Forty-sixth Psalm. But what a power of language, what a strong manly soul in these verses, what a consoling confidence in the help of God, what a courageous militant spirit against the evil in the world!" Hugo Leichtentritt, *Music, History, and Ideas* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1940), p. 105.
34. Terry mentions "Bach's delight in the stalwart Reformation tunes" and "his bias towards the masculine words and melodies of the Reformation century." Charles Sanford Terry, *Bach: A Biography* (London: Oxford University Press, 1940 [1928]), p. 255; *Bach: The Cantatas and Oratorios, Book II*, in "The Musical Pilgrim" series, ed. Arthur Somerville (London: Oxford University Press, 1925), p. 11.

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Original Sin and the Unborn

Albert L. Garcia

The current phenomenon of rampant abortion has raised with new urgency an important question related to the doctrine of original sin. The question meant is this: What are the implications of the doctrine of original sin for unborn children in general and those who die before birth in particular — and, specifically, children who are aborted. First we need to consider the doctrine of original sin itself.

I. The Biblical Doctrine

In considering the doctrine of original sin one thing must remain clear at all times. All children from the time of their conception are sinful human beings. This is the teaching of Scripture.

Psalm 51 is a well-structured psalm in which the teaching of original sin is quite evident. David, the repentant sinner, speaks to the fact of his inherited corruption. Not only at birth did David show the imprint of corruption; but already at the very moment that David was conceived through the sexual act of his parents, David as a human being bore the imprint of sin. That the sin is traced back to conception specifies the time of its transmission but does not put the blame of sin on the sexual act itself. To be sure, some commentators understand the psalm in this way. But such an understanding is essentially a form of Gnosticism. The fact is that we are sinful from the time of our conception. The New Testament is also very clear on this point. Thus Jesus tells Nicodemus that "that which is born of flesh (*sarkos*) is flesh (*sarx*) and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6). The fact that we came forth from sinful parents means that we bear the imprint of sin. Paul is also very clear in Ephesians when he speaks of us being "by nature (*phusei*) children of wrath" (2:3). Here the word "flesh" could be substituted for "nature," and the very word *phusis* implies that our *physical* natures bear the imprint of sin. Thus original sin is clearly taught in Scripture. It relates to something inherent in us as a result of Adam's and Eve's sin.

Martin Luther in his explanation of Psalm 51 deals quite clearly with these points. Luther regards the baby in his or her mother's womb as a responsible human being before God because of inherited sin. He vividly explains verse 5 of this penitential psalm as follows:

> This verse of the psalm teaches us about the cause of sin, why

> we are sinners. The prophet confesses publicly that he was wicked by his own fault, not only by that of his parents, while he was growing and being formed as an embryo in the womb. Thus before she gave him birth, his mother was nourishing a sinner with her blood in the womb. We should hold the same thing about everyone who is born, ever was born, or ever will be born into this world, except Christ. The fact that John the Baptist and others were sanctified in the womb (Luke 1:15) does not abolish the fact that they were conceived in sin, just as the flesh still remains wicked in adults who have been sanctified by the Spirit and faith.[1]

On this point John Calvin in his interpretation of Psalm 51 is in agreement with Luther. The word "conceived" (*yechemathni*, derived from *yacham* or *chamam*, which mean "to warm") is interpreted by him literally as "hath warmed herself of me," here with reference to procreation.[2] Calvin continues:

> The passage affords a striking testimony in proof of original sin entailed by Adam upon the whole of humanity. It not only teaches the doctrine, but may assist us in forming a correct idea of it . . . the Bible, both in this and other places, clearly attests that we are born in sin, and that it exists within us as a disease fixed in our nature. David does not charge it upon his parents, nor trace his crime to them, but sits himself before the Divine tribunal, confesses that he was formed in sin, and that he was a transgressor ere he saw the light of this world.[3]

On the basis of Scripture, then, we need to stress that the baby from the time of conception is a sinful human being and thus is born with sin. We need to stress, in the teaching of this doctrine, sin from the time of conception and not only from the time of birth. Sometimes we tend to be unclear on this matter. Two cases in point are the Latin text of the Augsburg Confession and the English translation of Franz Pieper's *Christian Dogmatics* with respect to the doctrine of original sin.

Article II of the Augsburg Confession states in the Latin text that "all those propagated according to nature are born in sin."[4] The German text stresses that "all men who are born according to the course of nature are conceived and born in sin."[5] The existence of sin from the time of conception is clearly expressed in the German, while the Latin text stresses the existence of sin at the time of birth. It is true, of course, that sin exists at birth, but nowadays we need to stress specifically its presence from the time of conception. The Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord

is quite clear on this point when it stresses that "original sin is transmitted through our carnal conception and birth out of sinful seed from our father and mother."[6]

In the English translation of Franz Pieper's explanation of original sin, one reads that this is transmitted "by natural birth." The original German text actually states that it is transmitted through "natural descent" ("durch die natuerliche Abstammung").[7] The German points quite clearly to the beginning of each individual's sin in his conception. The German usage of *geboren* is such that sometimes it is to be rendered as "conceived" and sometimes as "born." In some cases, however, when the theological context dictates the translation "conceived," it is nevertheless translated "born" in the English version of Pieper. It is correct to say that since Adam's Fall we are born in hereditary corruption, but it is important to stress that we are, indeed, conceived in sin. This emphasis is lacking in many cases in the English translation of Pieper's *Christian Dogmatics*.[8]

II. Issues concerning the Stillborn

During Luther's day many babies were stillborn. We thank God that today science has progressed to the point that this occurrence is less frequent. Nevertheless, still today some children, in spite of our scientific technology, are born dead — sometimes to Christian parents. In referring to such cases should we moderate the Biblical teaching of original sin? This we cannot do. We saw how emphatically Luther stressed this point in his explanation of Psalm 51. But he also stressed the possibility of a child (in the manner of John the Baptist) being filled with the Holy Spirit while still in his or her mother's womb. How then, shall we counsel the parents of a stillborn?

1. We need to deal with the phenomenon of death. Death comes to this world because of our sin. The creation itself was made subject to futility because of Adam's and Eve's sin (Rom. 3:23; 5:12; 8:20). But how can this fact begin to comfort some faithful parents who have lost their little one? The fact that the baby died does not mean that God has rendered a judgment against them; it is part of the judgment which rests upon the whole of creation. In essence, the death points not to a specific judgment of God, not to a specific sin, but to the whole human condition. Quenstedt in a very practical way connects the reality of death with the sin in us. It we were not sinners, we would not die. If babies were not sinners, they would not die. Quenstedt writes:

> But infants and those not yet born, die either on account of

some fault (*delictum*) of their own or of an actual transgression; therefore, on account of the actual transgression of another, *scil.*, of Adam, who tainted them with his own stain.[9]

2. We need to deal with the phenomenon of promise, the way in which Jesus deals with believers. Baptism is a proclamation of promise. In it God leads us from death to life (Rom.6). It is the means that the Lord has provided for us under normal circumstances to deal with the phenomenon of sin. Yet we need to be reminded that baptism did not exist in the Old Testament. God dealt with His people on the basis of the promise of the Messiah. The point which is clear from the New Testament is that the Lord condemns those who hinder little ones from coming to faith and to the knowledge of truth. The corressponding imperative is clearly seen in Mark 10:14: "Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." We need to keep this point in mind in dealing with parents who are grieving for the death of a baby. Parents who partake of the means of grace are parents living in accord with the imperative of the Lord. Thus we tell them that the Lord is pleased with them. But what about their stillborn child? In the same way that the Lord filled John the Baptist through the preaching of the Word with the Holy Ghost, God could have worked through His Word the act of faith in the baby. Parents who have been living within the context of the means of grace have, like the Old Testament faithful, lived a life of faith conditioned by the promised of God. Parents should not speculate but be glad that they have lived a life in the light of God's Word. God does not expect any more or any less from us. But what about the parents of the child that was aborted willfully?

III. The Responsibility of the Abortionist

Throughout this study we have seen how original sin is present in the child at conception. We cannot escape this fact. We cannot, like the Roman Catholics, speak of a "limbo state" to which unbaptized dead babies go. We would thereby accept a Roman watered-down understanding of original sin. For original sin is really sin and not merely an inclination to sin. Individuals who are considering the killing of their babies should be aware of the biblical teaching concerning original sin. If they abort their child, not only are they responsible for its physical death, but they also prevent its baptism. In essence they are depriving their little one of the gift of God's kingdom.

Unfortunately, more than likely guilt feelings concerning

abortion will result *post factum.* How should we counsel those who come to us laden with the guilt of such a grievous crime? I find that we need to deal with all the issues. Since we are dealing with grievous sin, we need to cover all the bases in order to lead someone to repentance and to peace. We must discuss the fact, not only that the person committed a murder, but also that he rejected the Gospel of salvation for his child. For to discuss only one side of the coin and not the other may, in effect, leave the person still burdened. Then, as a positive step, we must point not only to forgiveness in Christ for the murder but also to the means of grace which the sinner needs so much.

FOOTNOTES

1. *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann (55 vol., St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1955-), 12, p. 350.
2. John Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, translated by James Anderson (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1949), II, p. 290.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 290-291. Here Calvin proceeds to refute the error of Pelagius, who denied original sin as hereditary. He also refutes the Roman Catholic position: "The Papists grant that the nature of man has become depraved, but they extenuate original sin as much as possible and represent it as consisting merely in an inclination to that which is evil." Thus Calvin on this point agrees with the Lutheran Confessional position (cf. Apology II).
4. English quotes are taken from *The Book of Concord*, ed. Theodore Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959). Latin and German quotes come from the *Concordia Triglotta*, ed. F. Bente (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921). Tappert, p. 29; "quod post lapsum Adae omnes homines, secundum naturam propagati, nascantur cum peccato" (*Triglotta*, p. 42).
5. Tappert, p. 29. Note that while the German rendering stresses that "all men are full of evil lust and inclinations from their mother's wombs," the Latin just mentions "born in sin." The actual German text reads, "Das nach Adams Fall alle Menschen so naturalich geboren werden, in Suenden empfangen und geboren werden" (p. 49). The *Triglotta* emphasizes in italics "*empfangen und geboren.*"
6. SD I; Tappert, p. 510.
7. Franz Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1950), I, pp. 538-543. The German treatment can be found in *Christliche Dogmatik* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1924), I, pp. 646-652. The quotations come from the English text, p. 538, and the German text, p. 646. This same mistake of rendering "die natuerliche Abstammung" as "natural birth" rather than "heredity" is made fairly consistently. Cf., e.g., German text, p. 649, and the English rendering, p. 541.
8. We have only "are born" rather than "conceived" in the rendering on page 539. Here the English translation reads "that all men since Adam's fall are born with hereditary corruption." The German text expresses it as follows: "nach Adams Fall alle Menchen in dem Erbserderben (*corruptio hereditoria*) geboren werden laesst." Since the stress is on "nach Adams Fall," and the context is the *corruptio hereditoria*, I would choose to render

geboren as "begotten" or "conceived." It would make clearer the point of origin for the individual of original sin.

9. Quoted from Heinrich Schmid, *Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1875), p. 241.

Theological Observer

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON BIBLICAL INERRANCY: SUMMIT II

In October 1978 the first conference of the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy met to affirm this doctrine. The group, who for the sake of convenience may be called evangelicals, was formed to affirm the traditional church teaching on the Bible's origin. Evangelicals are recognizable by a certain attitude to the Bible and their opposition to tampering with the Biblical history. Thus, the movement arose almost as a direct reaction against the radical movement which discounted the historical authenticity of what was reported in the Bible and assigned a minimal role to the Spirit's unique operation in the production of the Scriptures. Since the council's inception, two members of the LC-MS ministerium, Robert D. Preus and Walter A. Maier, have been connected with the organizational structure of the group. In retrospect, it seems that it may have been easier to provide a definition for the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy than it is to define the function of this doctrine in the actual task of interpretation. Summit II met in Chicago on November 10-13, 1982, to tackle this thorny issue. Participating from the LC-MS were John Franklin Johnson of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and Robert Preus, Kurt Marquart, and the undersigned from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. All invited participants were required to present a theme paper or respond to one. These papers were assigned. The topics of the sixteen theme papers show the multiple ways in which the hermeneutical task was addressed:

(1) Truth: The Relationship of Theories of Truth to Hermeneutics.
(2) Historical-Grammatical Problems.
(3) Genre Criticism and the Sensus Literalis.
(4) Problems of Normativeness in Scripture — the Cultural vs. the Permanent.
(5) The Trustworthiness of Scripture in Areas Relating to Natural Science.
(6) The Adequacy of Language and Accomodation.
(7) The Author's Intention and Biblical Interpretation.
(8) The Role of the Holy Spirit in the Hermeneutic Process.
(9) Philosophical Presuppositions Affecting Biblical Hermeneutics.
(10) The New Hermeneutic.
(11) Presuppositions of Non-Evangelical Hermeneutics.
(12) The Unity of the Bible.
(13) Contextualization and Revelational Epistemology.
(14) Patrick Fairbairn and Biblical Hermeneutics as Related to the Quotations of the Old Testament of the New.
(15) Homiletics and Hermeneutics.
(16) The Role of Logic in Biblical Interpretation.

Essays on these sixteen topics and two responses to each such essay were prepared ahead of time and sent to the participants. The total number of printed pages came to over 600 pages. No papers were read at the conference, since they were prepared and distributed ahead of time. Each participant was required to be versed in his own assigned area and one additional one. As the conference spaned four days, enough time was allowed for sixteen groups to discuss their themes and work towards theses covering their areas. The results of the sixteen groups were fed back to the central coordinating council, which met considerably past midnight to come a unified conclusion. Hotel conference rooms

were set aside in order to keep the process moving as efficently and as rapidly as possible.

Before the meeting had begun, Dr. James I. Packer had prepared in preliminary form the theses adopted at the end of the session. Throughout the conference, as information came back from the committees, the theses were adjusted by the central committee in which Dr. Packer continued to assume the lead role. The evangelical movement with its all-embracing attitude to Calvinists and Arminians must by definition be compromising. Squabbles on dispensationalism were bound to surface, but had to be avoided if any progress was to be made. A suggestion by one Lutheran participant to include a statement on the proclamation of the Law and the Gospel as the chief function of the Scriptures was not accepted. This fact does not mean that Lutherans were without influence. The second draft contained this thesis: "We affirm that the Holy Spirit illuminates all who ask God for light in their study of the biblical text, so that believers are not wholly dependent for the understanding of Scriptures on the expertise of professional scholars." Such a statement more than strongly suggests that the Spirit might work outside of the Biblical word through special illumination. The thesis did not appear in the final draft. The general chairman was Earl D. Radmacher, and James I. Packer was the leader of and spokesman for the formulating committee.

In reporting such a conference, it is difficult to avoid being extremely personal, since observing all the meetings in process was impossible. I was a respondent in the committee on genre criticism, which at its first session literally leaped into the question of the propriety of using certain tactics judged by many to be incompatible with Biblical inerrancy. One New Testament scholar, self-identified as an evangelical, had written a book which allegedly claimed that one of the evangelists had played fast and loose with the historical data. His approach was judged inacceptable. The underlying question is when does a self-proclaimed evangelical scholar lose his right to be considered such.

In the committee on homiletics and hermeneutics, of which I was an adjunct member, I quite innocently brought up the Christocentricity of the Bible with special attention to the Old Testament. The point was not merely the belief that there is Messianic prophecy in the Bible (to which all present were committed) but that Christ is the basic theme of the Bible. A great deal of discussion followed, to put the whole matter mildly. Article III, affirming that Christ is the central focus of the Bible, was the formula resulting from that discussion. With sixteen committees at work, each producing separate theses for incorporation in a final statement, much of the basic work remained under the surface. Each participant will see events from his own experiences. There is the happy possibility that one of the publishing houses in Grand Rapids will make all the essays, together with the final deliberations from the committee, available in a single volume. This publication would provide a picture of the state of evangelical hermeneutics today and allow readers to come to their own conclusions.

To provide one example of a hotly debated issue, the work of committee on the use of the Old and New Testaments attracted much attention, with much of its discussion involving Hosea 11:1, "Out of Egypt I have called My Son." Was the statement to be taken only as a direct Messianic prophecy, as it is taken in Matthew 2, or could it have a wider meaning? The matter came up in several committees to which I was not assigned; thus, I was only able to catch the tail end of the discussions. A compromise was hammered out and appears as the second sentence in Article XVIII, "The single meaning of the prophet's words includes, but is not restricted to, the understanding of those words by the prophets and necessarily involves the intention of God evidenced in the fulfullment of those

words." One side was unwilling to tolerate the idea that one passage could have two or more meanings. The other side would not accept the idea that one word was valid in only one historical situation. The problem was resolved by affirming that the specific meaning of the text must relate to any applications of it but that a broader application is possible. The key word here is "application."

The question has to be raised of the legitimacy and value of confessional Lutheran participation in evangelical groups. There can be argument as to whether it should begin, because it is already happening at different levels. For example, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod officially participated in the production of the New International Version of the Bible, which in many places adjusts passages to fit a Calvinist, and sometimes Fundamentalist, bias. Evangelical methods of evangelism and stewardship are brought into Lutheran circles without any awareness that an essentially un-Lutheran theology is being brought along. These, however, are not matters involved in the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy, but they do show that Lutherans have been involved with evangelicals in one way or another. Participants came together because of a similar background in the last two or three generations when the special divine quality of the Bible as revelation had been attacked, ignored, or re-interpreted.

Confessional Lutherans and evangelicals are going to approach theology differently on the cultural level. Where Lutherans have a keen awareness of their confessional heritage, even where they deviate from it, evangelicals approach the hermeneutical task with no such formal commitments. For them such commitments are unnecessary fetters. This is not to say that they do not operate out of their theological self-understandings, but these self-understandings are not in each instance codified as they are for Lutherans with their confessions. Therefore, Lutherans often come to their hermeneutical conclusions before and apart from the hermeneutical tasks; evengelicals are less compelled to set forth conclusions so firmly, even if these conclusions are not seen in any way as being binding. A Lutheran, operating in evangelical circles, does not have the luxury of appealing to the confessional position of his church. He is forced to put forth his arguments purely on Biblical grounds. Evangelicals, on the other hand, suffer frequently from having to leave many questions open. This dilemma prevents evangelicals from defining themselves except in a general way. On the other hand, it does provide them the opportunity of approaching the exegetical task with less clearly stated exegetical presuppositions, and thus they operate with a higher degree of freedom. This may explain why evangelicals have taken the lead in exegetical research and why confessional Lutherans have not matched their productivity either in quantity or quality. This paucity of exegetical materials have forced confessional Lutherans to rely on evangelical exegetical scholarship. Since evangelicals are not bound by confessional documents in the sense that Lutherans are, they find it easier to produce documents. Lutherans operate with a catholic attitude toward their confessional documents and thus must demonstrate that any new one is in accord with the older ones. This may explain why evangelicals were in a better position to offer a document like "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Hermeneutics." They are not hampered by the once-and-for-all attitude that Lutherans inevitably assume. The document was hammered out in the course of four days and should not be read with either the same devotion or historical-critical attitude that is brought to the reading of the Lutheran Confessions.

For some time some confessional Lutherans have spoken of the value of adopting a quasi-confessional document on the nature and interpretation of the Scriptures. This adoption has not taken place, simply because, as mentioned,

Lutherans take a profoundly serious view of church documents. The evangelicals, as in many matters, have filled in the gap and provided, not only a workable document, but perhaps a better one than one coming from one denomination. While the LC-MS has been exposed to (to the point of being threatened by) recent exegetical procedures, its total exposure is not as great as the exposure of the evangelical seminaries collectively. Their scholars are more likely to have studied under the pace-setting New and Old Testament exegetes and thus are capable of addressing the larger problems. The Chicago document does not resolve the Lutheran-Calvinist debate over the Spirit's operation in the Word; the document was not intended to address the traditional difference. Therefore, it would be unfair to read the document in the light of that question. It does speak to questions faced by Lutherans and evangelicals since the 1950's, and perhaps should be considered the most lucid composite response to appear in American Protestantism.

The question which Lutherans face is what role they can play in the evangelical concern for proper hermeneutics without adopting the basic Reformed presuppositions of evangelicalism. It seems clear that Lutherans and evangelicals each claim for the Bible a different purpose. Both hold to its divine origin and see salvation as its purpose, but the middle ground is viewed by each somewhat differently. Thus, evangelicals stress the Bible as revelation making salvation known. Knowledge, truth, and revelation are words often stressed by evangelicals. Lutherans do not understand the Bible as simply revealing unknown things about God, but as providing an intimate communion with Christ. For Lutherans, Scripture does not lay down laws for sanctified living, but presents Christ everywhere in such a way that the Christian life is permeated by Him. Though the emphasis may seem slight, it is real and important. For Lutherans revelation is Christological — and not merely Christocentric — and the Spirit functions only in regard to Christ. He does not reveal mysterious things about God apart from Christ. The difference between evangelicals and Lutherans is the difference between religions of knowledge and of redemption.

In one committee this matter came up in the course of the discussion. It was not difficult to defend the Christological position, since Jesus upbraids the disciples on the way to Emmaus because they had failed to come to the realization that all the Scriptures spoken of Him. One participant described concern for the Christological nature of the Bible as a Lutheran quirk. Article III, stating that Jesus Christ is the central focus of the Scriptures, was directed to this Lutheran concern for the Gospel, though this truth is capable of stronger expression.

It is difficult to identify all the real behind-the-scene movers in this kind of situation, as there were sixteen contributing committees. Present at each committee was a liaison man who not only reported the adopted resolutions of each individual committee, but also identified any critical point that might receive less than universal support from the entire group. Thus minor issues were prevented from absorbing the time of all. James I. Packer remained responsible for the form of the final statement. Earl D. Radmacher was the chief coordinator in administrative matters. The group, under his leadership, had determined to speak to the hermeneutical issue with concrete answers, and this goal was accomplished. Evangelicalism by its very nature has a lower awareness of denominationalism than Lutheranism, but inevitably Calvinism and Arminianism square off against one another sooner or later in a meeting like this one. Though the final statement does not and was never intended to speak to this tension, the tension came up several times. In the Arminian-Calvinist debate,

Lutherans, who always seem to be a mere remnant in size at such gatherings, are generally left out in the cold. As a tribute to his pioneering contributions, Carl F. H. Henry was given the honor of giving the final address, which was intended as a rally call. His address concluded the conference on Saturday morning.

A catalyst throughout the sessions was Walter Kaiser, dean of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois, a professor of Old Testament theology. His rising prominence in evangelical circles was indicated by his being chosen for the opening address. More often than not, participants looked to him to resolve difficulties, which he did with a wit that was at the same time charming and disarming. All such conferences need such persons. His prominence at the meetings indicates that evangelical concerns at the present time have moved from more purely theological concerns to exegetical ones. In the fifties and sixties concern centered around the theology of Barth, Brunner, and Bultmann, with a reaffirmation of the Bible's inspiration and inerrancy. The 1982 Chicago meeting shows that evangelicals are now addressing the question of what these principles mean in actually using the Bible. Evangelicals are always going to be concerned with such things as sanctification and the changing of society in a way that will make Lutherans feel uncomfortable. These are long-standing differences (now nearly five hundred years old), and are not likely to be resolved now. Evangelicals have learned to live with differences that Lutherans never could. They have, however, taken the lead in addressing hermeneutical questions. Here they have been most effective. Anyone who considers that they are obscurantist simply has not bothered to read them. They are neither simplistic nor negative. The Chicago Statement is an attempt to provide an umbrella-like explanation of what they have been doing and guidelines for future activity. It is not intended to provide rules for exegesis. The evangelicals will, for example, not tolerate any approach that casts in doubt the historical authenticity of events reported in the Bible (see, e.g., Articles XIV and XXII). At the same time they are not only considering but also using new techniques of exegesis. Consider the names of the essays mentioned above and Articles XIII and XVI with their references to literary techniques and genre study.

One LC-MS participant remarked that, even though the evangelicals are not in leadership positions in the mainline denominations, they are going to be the religious leaders in the United States by the beginning of the twenty-first century. Though their political strength has been perhaps over-rated, they are a force which could not be imagined twenty years ago. Their congregations may be independent of denominational structures, but they are the ones numbering between 5,000 and 10,000 members. Their churches are full. The same predominance is true also in providing raw theological leadership. James Boice, the council's chairman, is both a prolific theological writer and the pastor of a large Philadelphia area congregation. In setting forth the traditional church doctrine for modern times, the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy took the lead of 1978. The group has taken the lead in even the more thorny issue of hermeneutics.

Lutherans by confessional commitment and heritage must avoid complete involvement in the movement, but the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy does provide an opportunity to air and identify the important hermeneutical questions and come at least to certain limited conclusions. It would be difficult to identify any other group that has provided this opportunity so constructively. Evangelicals with their Reformed heritage and with no appreciation of Luther's doctrine of the two kingdoms cannot avoid seeking a triumph of the Gospel in political terms. Still this flaw does not negate the

Lutheran debt to many evangelical scholars for their prolific and high-quality work in the field of exegesis. Lutherans can repay this debt to evangelicals by stressing such themes as the proclamation of Law and Gospel as the ultimate function of the Scriptures. The proclamation of the Law and the Gospel is really only a restatement of the central fact that all Scriptures come from Christ and speak from Christ. Even though the document should not be considered uniquely Lutheran, certain changes offered by the Lutherans present were accepted by the group to remove certain obviously offensive statements. Confessional commitment requires not only allegiance to our position, but also actual involvement with other Christians in sharing what we hold so dearly. Confessional Lutheranism cannot be synonymous with parochialism to the point of sectarianism. Evangelical hermeneutical research puts confessional Lutherans under obligation to share more fully in exegetical tasks. It remains to be seen as the twentieth century draws to a close whether we will assume this exegetical obligation.

David P. Scaer

POSTMILLENIALISM AND THE AUGUSTANA

In the September 1982 issue of *Ministry: A Magazine for Clergy* ("the international journal of the Seventh-day Adventist Ministerial Association"; 55:9, pp. 12-14) appeared an article entitled "The One Thousand Years of Revelation 20" by Hans K. LaRondelle, Th.D., professor of theology in Andrews University (Berrien Springs, Michigan), a proven scholar committed to the infallibility of Scripture. LaRondelle, following the usual contemporary categorization, denominates the four major approaches to the interpretation of Revelation 20 as historic premillenialism, dispensational premillenialism, postmillenialism, and amillenialism. Both forms of premillenialism hold that the church will enjoy a period of visible glory in human history exactly one thousand years long between a physical resurrection involving only righteous people (the Second Coming) and a physical resurrection involving wicked people (Judgment Day). The historic premillenialists have included not only theologians whose doctrine of Scripture is conservative (e.g., J. Barton Payne), but also more liberal minds (e.g., G.E. Ladd). The dispensationalists raise upon this basic premillenial foundation an elaborate theological edifice for which the doctrine of the millenial kingdom, with a Jewish state in Palestine as its chief cornerstone, provides the basic blueprint — so much so, indeed, that dispensationalists traditionally deny any mention of the New Testament church in Old Testament prophecy. It is the dispensationalists, of course, who are currently most vocal in popular American eschatology (e.g., Hal Lindsey). The Adventist view advocated by LaRondelle is, on the other hand, a unique form of non-dispensational premillenialism.

Postmillenialism differs from premillenialism in rejecting, not only the special position allocated to the Jews by dispensationalism, but also the fundamental tenets of two (or more) resurrections and a literal interpretation of the word "thousand" in Revelation 20. LaRondelle correctly observes that postmillenialism is similar to amillenialism in holding "that Christ's kingdom is a present reality because He reigns in the hearts of His believers." Unlike amillenialism, however, postmillenialism, as LaRondelle points out, "expects... a conversion of all nations prior to the Second Advent." He continues his

depiction of postmillenialism in this way (p.12):

> Consequently it looks forward to a period of earthly peace without friction among nations, races, or social groups. The kingdom of God will grow gradually through ever-expanding gospel preaching. Thus the millennium is conceived to be not a quantity of time, but a quality of existence differing from our present life style only in degree. The millennium will end with the apostasy of the antichrist and the personal return of Christ in glory, followed by one general resurrection of the righteous and the wicked.

Thus we now denominate as "postmillenialism" the position which the old Lutheran dogmaticians used to call "subtle chiliasm," while they would have thrown almost all modern premillenialists into the box labelled "crassest chiliasm" (*crassisimus chiliasmus*). Postmillenialism was a very popular view (the most popular form of chiliasm, indeed) in the optimistic reign of Queen Victoria. Very few of its adherents, however, managed to survive the two world wars of this century. It has been just long enough, however, since World War II for the unquenchable faith of modern man in the inevitability of progress to begin reasserting itself in the theological garb of subtle chiliasm.

We must demur, therefore, to the assertion of LaRondelle that the "Lutheran Augsburg Confession and the Puritan Westminster Confession are basically postmillenial." I am not aware of any statement in the Westminster Confession which either endorses or rejects millenialism of any species, but the imputation of postmillenialism to this classic statement of Presbyterian doctrine seems to contradict the more historically accurate statement of LaRondelle that in post-Augustinian times amillenialism "became the traditional position in both Catholicism and Protestantism, specifically in the conservative Reformed and Presbyterian churches of today." We would concede, however, that even traditional Reformed theology is, for many reasons (including its theocratic confusion of law and gospel, church and state, the Sinaitic covenant and the new testament), a fertile breeding ground of chiliast fungus. The Augsburg Confession, on the other hand, explicitly excludes from the Lutheran Church all advocates of millenialism (including postmillenialism). The third paragraph of Article XVII (in the Latin form) makes this asseveration concerning those who subscribe this confession: "They also condemn others who are spreading Jewish opinions to the effect that before the resurrection of the dead the godly will take possession of the kingdom of the world, the ungodly being suppressed everywhere." Also relevant are the citations of John 8:36 ("My kingdom is not of this world") and Philippians 3:20 ("Our commonwealth is in heaven") in Article XXVIII ("Ecclesiastical Power," 14-16). Other pertinent points are the assumption that the end of world history could come at any moment (contrary to the postmillenial dream of a long golden era yet to arrive) and the repudiation of the optimistic view of future events essential to postmillenialism. Thus, the confessors address this appeal to the Holy Roman Emperor in Article XXIII ("The Marriage of Priests," 14, German form):

> In loyalty to Your Imperial Majesty we therefore feel confident that, as a most renowned Christian emperor, Your Majesty will graciously take into account the fact that, in these last times of which the Scriptures prophesy, the world is growing worse and men are becoming weaker and more infirm.

The Latin version reads, "Inasmuch as the world is growing old and man's nature is becoming weaker, it is also well to take precautions against the introduction into Germany of more vices." All these themes of the Augustana, as well as many others inimical to chiliasm in general and postmillenialism in particular, receive considerable development in the later confessions. For example, the

recognition of the papacy as the Antichrist prophesied by Scripture surfaces already in the following year in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession (VII-VIII: 4, 23-24; XV: 18-21; XXIII: 25; XXIV: 44-51, 98) and is reiterated with dogmatic certitude in the Smalcald Articles (II, II: 25; II, IV: 10-15; III, III: 25), the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope (39-59), and the Formula of Concord (SD X: 20-22). This identification of the papacy as the Antichrist opens a yawning chasm between the Lutheran Church and all postmillenialists as well as almost all modern premillenialists and, indeed, almost all modern non-Lutheran and pseudo-Lutheran amillenialists.

There have, admittedly, been claimants to the designation "Lutheran" who have advocated postmillenial views. Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705), the father of pietism, proffered milky millenialism in his *Behauptung der Hoffnung kuenftiger besserer Zeiten* (1692), indulging in pleasant dreams of happier times for the church than she had ever enjoyed previously — as the result of a general conversion of both Jews and Gentiles. The famous pietist exegete Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687-1752) elaborated upon Spener's eschatological outline in such a radical way that his ideas were closer to modern premillenialism (indeed, dispensationalism) than to modern postmillenialism, so that he is regarded by many as a hero of the premillenial faith, even as he is regarded by higher critics, very significantly, as preparing the way for the advent of *Heilsgeschichte* ("salvation history") theology. Bengel predicted a millenium of exactly one thousand years to begin in the year 1836, bringing a general conversion of Jews and Gentiles, a greater measure of the Holy Spirit in the faithful, and increased fruitfulness of the earth.

The moderate critic, Franz Delitszch (1813-1890), imbibed chiliast spirits with moderation in polite deference to prevailing tastes. In his discussion of Isaiah 2:4 he produced this epitome of nineteenth-century naivete (*Isaiah*, tr. James Martin [Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, rep. 1975], I, pp. 116-117):

> If any dispute arise, it is no longer settled by the compulsory force of war but by the word of God, to which all bow with willing submission. With such power as this in the peace-sustaining word of God (Zech. ix. 10), there is no more need for weapons of iron: they are turned into the instruments of peaceful employment . . . There is also no more need for military practice, for there is no use in exercising one's self in what cannot be applied. It is useless, and men dislike it. There is peace, not an armed peace, but a full, true, God-given and blessed peace. What even a Kant regarded as possible is now realized, and that not by the so-called Christian powers, but by the power of God, who favours the object for which an Elihu Burritt enthusiastically longs, rather than the politics of the Christian powers. It is in war that the power of the beast culminates in the history of the world. This beast will then be destroyed. The true humanity which sin has choked up will gain the mastery , and the world's history will keep Sabbath. And may we not indulge the hope, on the ground of such prophetic words of these, that the history of the world will not terminate without having kept a Sabbath? Shall we correct Isaiah, according to Quenstedt, lest we should become chiliasts? "The humanitarian ideas of Christendom," says a thoughtful Jewish scholar, "have their roots in the Pentateuch, and more especially in Deuteronomy. But in the prophets, particularly in Isaiah, they reach a height which will probably not be attained and fully realized by the modern world for centuries to come." Yet they will be realized. What the prophetic words appropriated by Isaiah here affirm, is a moral postulate, the goal of

sacred history, the predicted counsel of God.

The same thoughts, again suggested by the logic of *Heilsgeschichte* theology, filled the mind of Delitzsch when he read Isaiah 65 (*Ibid.*, II, pp. 491-492):

> But to what part of the history of salvation are we to look for a place for the fulfilment of such prophecies as these of the state of peace prevailing in nature around the church, except in the millenium? . . . The prophet here promises a new age, in which the patriarchal measure of human life will return, in which death will no more break off the life that is just beginning to bloom, and in which the war of man with the animal world will be exchanged for peace without danger. And when is all this to occur? . . . This question ought to be answered by the anti-millenarians. They throw back the interpretation of prophecy to a stage, in which commentators where in the habit of lowering the concrete substance of the prophecies into mere doctrinal *loci communes*. They take refuge behind the enigmatical character of the Apocalypse, without acknowledging that what the Apocalypse predicts under the definite form of the millennium is the substance of all prophecy, and that no interpretation of prophecy on sound principles is any longer possible from the standpoint of an orthodox anti-chiliasm, inasmuch as the antichiliasts twist the word in the mouths of the prophets, and through their perversion of Scripture shake the foundation of all doctrines, every one of which rests upon the simple interpretation of the words of revelation.

The postmillenialism of Delitzsch is the logical conclusion from his *Heilsgeschichte* theology and his consequent deviation from orthodox Lutheranism in identifying the central theme of Scripture, going so far indeed as to maintain that "we must free ourselves from the prejudice that the centre of the Old Testament proclamation of salvation lies in the prophecy of the Messiah . . . as the Redeemer of the world" (*Psalms*, tr. James Martin [Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, rep. 1975], II, p. 300). In a similar way, not only such liberals as John Bright, but also modern millenialists (e.g., Ladd and such dispensationalists as Herman Hoyt and John Walvoord) have snatched the sceptre from justification by grace through faith in Christ and have enthroned in its place the realization of the kingdom of God as the predominant theme of Scripture.

Thus, despite the pretensions of Spener, Bengel, Delitzsch, and the like, the orthodox Lutheran church recognizes no chiliast as the rightful bearer of her name for the simple reason that he has broken his ordination vow to her to conform all his teaching to the Augsburg Confession — as presented to emperor, empire, and world in the year 1530 — and to the subsequent Lutheran Symbols. Thus, *The Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States* takes this stand: "With the Augsburg Confession (Art. XVII) we reject every type of Millenialism, or Chiliasm," including the postmillenial opinion "that before the end of the world the Church is to enjoy a season of special prosperity" (42:1). Among the charges which the *Brief Statement* brings against chiliasm, postmillenialism as well as pre-millenialism is convicted on the following counts: it contradicts the clear teaching of Scripture "that the kingdom of Christ on earth will remain under the cross until the end of the world, Acts 14:22; John 16:33; 18:36; Luke 9:23; 14:27; 17:20-37; 2 Tim. 4:18; Heb. 12:28; Luke 18:8"; it "engenders a false conception of the kingdom of Christ"; and it "turns the hope of Christians upon earthly goals, I Cor. 15:19; Col. 3:2" (42:2-3). Likewise, the Synod declares in the following article, "we teach that the prophecies of the Holy Scriptures concerning the

Antichrist, 2 Thess. 2:3-12; 1 John 2:18, have been fulfilled in the Pope of Rome and his dominion" (43). Consequently, the church of the Augsburg Confession must insist that the condemnation of chiliasm and the identification of the Pope as Antichrist are not to be included "in the number of open questions" — "these doctrines being clearly defined in Scripture" (44).

Douglas McC. Lindsay Judisch

Homiletical Studies

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Exodus 32:7-14
September 18, 1983

Moses was up on Mt. Sinai a long time, and Israel urged his brother Aaron: "Make us gods!" Aaron suggested: "Let me have your golden earrings!" (perhaps hoping the Israelites would refuse). The Israelites complied, and Aaron fashioned a "molten calf" (v4), perhaps the winged and human-headed bull which was the emblem of divine power from a very early date in Babylon. To Aaron this image seemed to be the smallest departure from pure monotheism for which the people would settle. Our text shifts back to Mt. Sinai to the conversation between the Lord and Moses.

Introduction: "Why am I here?" Some, no doubt, never become serious enough to ask this question. Many settle for inadequate answers: "Make a fortune. Leave a name. Have fun." Are we offered a loftier challenge? This brief conversation in the midst of an Old Testament incident offers suggestions on

Really Making an Impact

I. The sad situation (vs7-10a).
   A. People have left God (v7). Indeed, Jesus pictures sin as "awayness" (cf. Lk 15: away from the fold, away from the purse, away from the father's house).
   B. People have transgressed God's laws (v8a; Is 53:6).
   C. People credit their blessings to other gods (v8b). Today they credit luck, "whom you know," ingenuity, "living right."
   D. A just God must punish sin (vs9-10).
   E. Most people pray only for the "good life" for themselves and their families:
      God bless me and my wife,
      Our John and his wife,
      Us four and no more!

II. The glorious outcome.
   A. God has made us His people by means of events occurring in Bethlehem, Nazareth, Gethsemane, and Calvary (vs11-14).
   B. Someone was the instrument of the Spirit in bringing you God's love, the forgiveness of sins, and the assurance of salvation (cf. the prayer of Moses for Israel, vs11-14).
   C. We must consider what friends, relatives, and neighbors are missing; God loves them, but they do not know it. God wants to bless them through the work of His Son Jesus Christ. Let us, therefore,
      1. Pray for someone.
      2. Bring someone into contact with God's Word.
      3. Expose someone to God's love.

Conclusion: What more significant impact can one make upon a person than to bring him the news of God's love and eternal life.

George H. Beiderwieder, Jr.
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EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Amos 8:4-7
September 25, 1983

Introduction: In our text the prophet Amos sternly rebukes many of his contemporaries in Israel for their wicked business practices. It is rather shocking to read about such corrupt dealings, since these occurred within a nation whose people were supposed to be the people of God. Lying at the root of this behavior was the evil of covetousness. This is something regarding which we need be concerned and on our guard as the people of God today. Amos' words have a practical significance for us (Ro 15:4). Let us direct our attention to the warning of the prophet and the theme it suggests:

The Fearful Sin of Covetousness

I. It represents a tragic repudiation of a just and loving Lord.
   A. Amos had a call to preach repentance chiefly to the Northern Kingdom of Israel about the middle of the eighth century B.C. Israel was characterized by great political power, material prosperity, apostasy from the Lord, oppression of the poorer classes, and manifest sins.
   B. In our text Amos inveighs against the merchants who could hardly wait for religious holidays to pass so as to start selling their produce again — chiefly by crooked means which impoverished the lower classes (vs4-6).
   C. Actuating the rich in these vicious practices was the sin of covetousness — the inordinate and incessant desire of the heart for more money and more of the material things money can buy. This is a fearful, soul-destroying sin. The covetous man is an idolator (Eph 5:5). Covetousness involves the repudiation of the Lord Himself and His love. It leads to other grievous transgressions, as God punishes sin with sin.
   D. Amos communicates to Israel God's response to these evils.
      1. The Lord swears by Himself ("the excellency [or, pride] of Jacob," v7) that He will mete out punishment to the evildoers.
      2. Yet the Lord's very sending of the prophet to denounce and warn the people is evidence of His love for the fallen and His desire for their repentance and return to His blessing (cf. Am 5:4,6,8,14,15; Is 55:6-7; Ps 130:4,7; 86:5,15). There is forgiveness with God because of the sacrifice which the Messiah will bring (Is 53).
   E. Tragically, the Israelites did not heed Amos' warning to repent. In 722 B.C. the terrible divine judgment struck — the deportation of the ten northern tribes. The greater tragedy is that most of those taken away also perished in damning unbelief.

II. It must be persistently resisted in the power of the Lord.
   A. The devil, the world, and the flesh tempt us to be covetous and to commit sins to which covetousness leads. If we are not guilty of those sins which Amos mentions in the text, our covetousness manifests itself in other ways. Examples are defrauding fellowmen in any manner; cheating in income tax payments; working incessantly, even to the neglect of the family; worrying; compromising spiritual principles for the sake of a raise or advancements; quarreling over the division of a family inheritance; spending to "keep up with the Joneses"; gambling; and refusing to give generously to the Lord (cf. 1 Tm 6:10).
   B. How shall we resist covetousness?
      1. By acknowledging our covetousness as the sin that it is.

2. By believing that God forgives us because of Christ's redemption (Mt 20:28; Is 1:18; 1 Jn 1:7-9).
3. By drawing on the power of Christ to overcome this sin (Ro 6:11-14) in all its aspects.
4. By faithfully using the means of grace so that we are strengthened to live the stewardship life, giving liberally and joyfully to the Lord (2 Cor 9:6-7; 1 Tm 6:17-19; Ac 20:35) and relieving the needs of others (Is 58:7,10).

Conclusion: Fight the fearful sin of covetousness with all your might in Christ!

Walter A. Maier

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Amos 6:1-7
October 2, 1983

Each of us has been born into the world, as the crown of God's creation, in order to become His child and to serve and glorify Him in being and behavior. The latter we do when we live in love. Our text shows us that

God Is Serious about Our Living in Love

I. Living in love toward our neighbors, especially the brethren.
   A. The prophet Amos addresses persons in Judah as well as Israel (note "Zion," Jerusalem, as well as "Samaria," the capital of Israel, v1).
   B. The specific social sins for which Amos has to excoriate especially the affluent leaders of both nations are their toleration of violence and reclining in luxury at expensive feasts, in total indifference to the needy about them (vv3b-6a). Their great sin of omission is that "they are not grieved for the affliction [ruin] of Joseph" (v6:6b) — the gross disobedience to God on the part of all the people of Israel, over which the leadership manifested total unconcern. Amos announced impending divine judgment because of these sins.
   C. In other words, there was no love for one's neighbor as for one's self — and here the reference is to lovelessness between *brethren* in the Old Testament church.
      1. The love they should have demonstrated is what the New Testament refers to as *agape*, a love marked by concern for others and their needs, coupled with the benevolent purpose of doing what is necessary to supply these needs — even at the expense of personal sacrifice when necessary. It is the love commanded by God in the summaries of the first and second tables of the law (see Mt 22:37; Dt 6:5; Mt 22:39; Lv 19:18b).
      2. *Agape* is perfectly exemplified in the love God had for the world (Jn 3:16). God was concerned for our sin-cursed race and gave His Son into sin-atoning, sacrificial death for the sins of all men.
   D. It would seem that those touched by this love of God and saved by faith in Jesus would be filled always with love for God and fellowmen. Yet this is not the case. We think of our own sins against others, especially the brethren — if not those of the text, then, for example, indifference to the spiritual plight of the unbelieving about us, unconcern for the spiritual well-being of the brethren, offensive conduct toward and outright sinning against the latter.

E. God visited lovelessness and its sinful manifestations in Israel with punishments — spiritual death, the destruction of the nation (v7), and damnation. Let us detest our sins of lovelessness and flee for pardon to the wounds of Jesus.

II. Living in love toward God Himself, loving Him supremely.
   A. The basic problem in Israel was, of course, the people's lack of love for God Himself. Note in the case of the leaders their thanklessness to God, who had made Israel a great nation (v2); sacrilege in drinking wine from bowls consecrated for use in worship (v6a); the use of God's gifts to satisfy fleshly appetites; refusal to heed prophets like Amos and to receive God's promise of mercy.
   B. We grow in our love for God as we contemplate His great love which He showed us in sending Christ to die for us.
      1. The love which God first showed us, God's love alone, moves us to love Him.
      2. As we love God for who He is and what He did and does, we live in love.

Conclusion: We are the children of Joseph, the New Testament people whom God loves. May the love of God for us move us daily to live in love toward our fellow Christians and toward God.

Walter A. Maier

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Habakkuk 1:2-3, 2:2-4
October 9, 1983

Introduction: After his policeman-son had been senselessly shot in a delicatessen hold-up, a distraught father sobbed: "Where will all this violence end?" The dead man's companion added bitterly: "Somebody's going to pay for this." We live in an age of violence and lawlessness. In recent years even the most ardent and optimistic supporters of the inherent goodness of man have been reluctant to predict, as they once did, a coming utopia when men will live together in peace and harmony. To us Christians, too, it often seems as if some alien force is in control, as if some murderous spirit has been unleashed throughout the entire land to maim and kill seemingly at will. And we cry out: "Why doesn't God do something?" It was this same kind of "mad scene" that distressed the prophet Habakkuk in his day and which caused him to call out to God for a judgment which would put an end to it all and bring salvation (Hab 1:2). But God seemed indifferent to the cry and even held in front of the prophet's eyes the whole range of human wickedness before Habakkuk was finally shown God's answer to man's violence.

The Prophet Cries, God Answers

I. The prophet's cry concerned man's violence and degeneracy (vs2-3) and God's silence.
   A. Violence involves sins against both the first and second tables.
      1. It is a sin against God, who alone gives to man life and health (Gn 2:7).
      2. It is a sin against man, doing wrong to our neighbors, whom we are to love as we do ourselves (Gn 4:8; 37:23-28; 1 Kgs 21:1-14; Mt 27:1).
   B. Degeneracy ("iniquity," v3) involves disregard for law and order, the order and organization God intended when He created the world and man (Gn 6:5; 2 Tm 3:1-4).

C. God's silence has meaning.
   1. Silence does not necessarily mean indifference or unconcern (consider the case of the Syro-phoenician woman, Mt 15:23).
   2. Silence may be God's signal that He has a better way (Eph 3:20; Ex 14:13-16).

II. God's answer concerned a coming vision.
   A. The vision was to be written boldly so that it could be read easily and proclaimed broadly. (This is the meaning in v2 of "that he may run that readeth it.")
   B. The vision would be fulfilled later at a time fixed by God (v3; Ga 4:4-5).
   C. The vision was a vision of the truth. "It shall speak and not lie" (v3b).
   D. The fulfilment of the vision is certain, though delayed (v3c). It is a vision of the atonement, of justification through the Messiah (cf. Hab. 1:5 and Ac 13:38-41). The great sin offering is God's answer to man's violence and degeneracy (Is 53:6); the cross is the altar on which the offering for all sin (violence, contention, strife, etc.) was made.
   E. The just shall live by faith in the vision.
      1. Faith is not self-confidence — our sinful pride being our own god (v4a).
      2. Faith is trust in the fulfilment of the vision, i.e., the Messiah and the atonement.

Conclusion: Now we know where to look for an answer to iniquity, strife, contention in our own lives. Calvary is where "all of it ends." "Somebody has paid for it." Through Christ we are victorious and will be victorious over all our enemies.

John Saleska

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Ruth 1:1-19a
October 16, 1983

Introduction: Remaining steadfast in the face of losing everything (leaving everything behind) is a constantly recurring theme in the Scriptures. Abraham remained faithful even though leaving behind his homeland, kinsmen, and his father's house (Gn 12:1-5). Joseph remained firm in his trust in God despite the severest of trials (Gn 37,39). A great number of the Jews in exile in Babylon, having suffered the loss of everything, remained firm in their conviction that God could be counted on to take care of everything. Job suffered every imaginable kind of loss and yet said about God: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him" (Job 13:15). Finally our Lord Himself left behind all the treasures of the universe, suffered the loss of everything, even life itself, and was forsaken by God. Nevertheless He clung tenaciously to His heavenly Father through it all.

Remaining Steadfast in the Face of Loss

I. Remaining steadfast despite the loss of material things (v1).
   A. Loss of food(v1). So called "natural disasters" often lead us to conclude that God has forsaken us. God can be trusted to provide for His people (Ps 37:25).
      1. He provided bread for Israel in the wilderness (Ex 16:4-21).
      2. He provided food for Elijah during the drought (1 Kgs 17:6).
      3. He provided ministering angels to Christ after His fast and temptation in the wilderness (Mt 4:11).

B. Loss of home (vs 1, 6-18). Familiar surroundings, with the comfort and security they offer, are often hardest to leave behind. God can be trusted to provide a place for his people.
   1. He provided a home away from home for Daniel and his three friends (Dn 1:3-7).
   2. He provided a home and family for Moses (Ex 2:15-22).

II. Remaining steadfast despite the loss of a loved one (vs3-5). The death of a loved one often leaves us bitter and angry with God (v13). But God can be trusted to provide for His people. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Ro 8:32).
   A. He can be trusted to provide a way of escape in this world so that we can bear it (1 Cor 10:13) — a "homeland" and "loved ones" for us to love and serve (vs16-19a; Ru 4:13-17).
   B. He can be trusted to provide an everlasting homeland and a reunion with beloved family members and friends forever (1 Th 4:14-18).

Conclusion: It was the spirit of the Messiah that enabled Abraham, Joseph, Job, Naomi, and Ruth to suffer the loss of everything and still remain steadfast. Christ enables people to endure the loss of all things and still gain everything. Christ enabled Ruth to say: " . . . Whither thou goest, I will go" (v16). Through Christ we who were not God's people are called God's people (v16). Leaving everything behind, we will go where He has gone and lodge where He lodges; we will be His people and His God will be our God.

John Saleska

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Genesis 32:22-30
October 23, 1983

The New Testament invites us to take the name "Israel" or "New Israel" to ourselves, the church (Ro 2:38f; 9:25ff; Ga 4:26; 6:16; Php 3:3; Re 3:9). We are not, however, to engage in allegorizing and thus to gnosticize away the historical character of God's revelations of the past. The theophany at Peniel has been the subject of considerable criticism. We take it as it stands.

Another pitfall associated with this text is an unwillingness to admit that Jacob (or any of the patriarchs) sinned. Jacob too had a sinful flesh which led him to connive and deceive, e.g., to gain the blessing (Gn 27:6ff).

Jacob's wrestling match at Brook Jabbok was a pivotal point of his life. Before this crisis he had sought by "grabbing," "supplanting," and deceit to gain the blessings of God's grace. He drove a hard bargain for Esau's birthright (Gn 25:29-34), and he deceived his faith to obtain the blessing (Gn 27:6-29). Such devious dealings may have seemed a reasonable match to the actions of his surly uncle, Laban (e.g., Laban's substitution of Leah for Rachel, Gn 29:23ff), yet they displayed a lack of implicit trust in God and demonstrated Jacob's need for a transformed life.

God now commanded Jacob to return to the land of his fathers and promised to be with him (Gn 31:3). This return posed a formidable crisis for Jacob inasmuch as Esau's hostility — seemingly witnessed by the 400-man army — had been unappeased. Delitzsch rightly points out that Jacob's conscience was aroused by his previous treachery and even by fear of God Himself. This fear led to a prayer and a plan (Gn 32:9-21). The prayer is a confession of Jacob's

unworthiness (vv10-11) and his hope in the steadfast love and faithfulness of the God who promised to make Jacob's descendants like the sand of the sea (v12). Jacob's unnecessary plan was to appease Esau with various gifts.

The "angels of God" (32:1) who formed "two camps" (one for each of Jacob's parties) recall the general ministry of the angels to believers. However, the "Angel of the Lord" who wrestled with Jacob is unique. He took the form of a "man" (*ish*, 32:24); but in Him Jacob saw "God face to face" (v30); and He is specifically called "God" in Hosea 12:3-4 (cf. Gn 48:16). He was the pre-incarnate Son of God. Jacob named the place "Peniel" ("the face of God", v30) because he had "seen God" and still lived (cf. Ex 33:20-23; Is 6:5; Jn 1:14; 14:9). "Israel" (v28) is more than an appellation; it describes the character and work of the individual. It means "wrestler with God." All spiritual descendants of Israel are strugglers with God.

You Can Have a Transforming Encounter

I. It is an encounter with ourselves.
   A. As we struggle against the flesh — weakness, a cunning nature like the earlier Jacob.
   B. As we struggle against fear — when a burdened conscience accuses us as it did Jacob (cf. Ro 2:15; Ps 51).

II. It is an encounter with our fellowmen.
   A. Strive to live at peace with all men by means of God's way of reconciliation.
   B. Be a peacemaker — that is our mission (Mt 5:9; Col 1:20).

III. It is an encounter with God.
   A. God often appears as our adversary, in a crisis, in order to "test" us and help us mature (cf. Ho 12:2-4). We wrestle with "tears."
   B. God promises us His blessings, especially a "faith that overcomes the world" (1 Jn 5:4-5).
   C. God blesses us in Jesus Christ so that we beomce "princes of God."

G. Waldemar Degner

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Deuteronomy 10:12-22
October 30, 1983

Two thoughts pervade the Christian exposition of this text. First, God does promise "rewards" for keeping His commandments. Luther put it thus in explaining the conclusion of the commandments: "But He promises grace and every blessing to all that keep these Commandments" (cf. Ro 2:6-8). Accordingly, we do not annul the law by our faith, "but we put the law on its feet" (Ro 3:31). The second thought that must occupy one's consideration is that not we, but Christ, came "to fulfill the law and the prophets" (Mt 5:17). Those who are in Christ now have Christ as their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Our works do not count in attaining salvation; it is Christ's fulfilling of the law in perfect obedience that counts (1 Cor 1:30). Every obligation that we have toward God has been fulfilled by Jesus; we are free!

Moses leads the people of Israel to reflect on the past providence of God for the purpose of instilling obedience and gratitude. Thus the context (8:1-10:11) is a rehersal of God's goodness in providing bread, shoes, clothing, and discipline during the past forty years (8:1-5). The goodness of God is to lead man to repentance (Ro 2:4), to obedience (8:6), and to a remembrance that it is God

"who is giving you power to make wealth" (8:18). The blessing of a good and fruitful land are not due to "our righteousness" or to our being better than those wicked nations who are drivien out (9:4-6). Israel, in fact, had "been rebellious against the Lord from the day" that God chose her (9:24; cf. Ps 78). Therefore, how odd of God to choose the Jews! Only because of His steadfast love did God redeem Israel as His inheritance and not destroy her for her unfaithfulness (9:26; 10:10).

The text itself opens with the rhetorical question (v12) which we shall take in abbreviated form for the theme. The reply to the question is obvious. There are no intricate or burdensome rules required, but only a regenerated heart which recognizes the right relationship toward God (Mt 11:28-30; 22:37).

What Does God Require of You?

I. He requires us to fulfill our duty.
   A. Toward God (vs12, 20) — fear (Dt 6:13; cf. 1 Pe 1:17); awe (Re 14:6,7); love (Mt 22:37); walking in His ways (Dt 8:6); service (vs12, 20); keeping His commands (v13); honoring His name (v20); cleaving to Him (v20).
   B. Toward our neighbors (v19).
      1. God is good to all, evil and good (Mt 5:44-48), orphans and widows (v18), strangers (v19; Ps 146:9), afflicted (Israel in Egypt) and broken-hearted people (Ps 34:18).
      2. God asks us to love the stranger (v19) as well as those of the household of the faith (Ga 6:10).

II. He provides us with motivation for the requirements.
   A. He is a great and awesome God (v17).
      1. He is God of gods, Lord of lords, mighty, terrible, showing no partiality and taking no bribes (cf. Ps 136:2-3; Dn 2:47; Ex 20:3).
      2. He is the owner of heaven and earth (v14; cf. 1 Kgs 8:27).
   B. His goodness and grace is central to the mystery of the Gospel (vs15, 18).
      1. His affection for Israel was completely undeserved (vs15, 21, 22).
      2. His goodness to orphans and widows illustrates His love (v18).
      3. He is our God by virtue of His choice (v21).

G. Waldemar Degner

THIRD-LAST SUNDAY IN THE CHURCH YEAR
Exodus 32:15-20
November 6, 1983

Introduction: We "law-abiding" citizens are often annoyed when we get the book thrown at us for speeding or jaywalking. We say, "Why aren't the police out there chasing *real* criminals?" At least, we think, we ought to receive a light penalty. But law-breaking is law-breaking. Our text shatters our excuses as it tells us about

Throwing the Book at Sin

I. Moses threw it.
   A. The book is God's.
      1. His words of authority — a reflection of His holy will.
      2. His words of loving concern.
         a. "God Himself with His own fingers made a beginning of writing in order that . . . the purity of doctrine be preserved to posterity . . ."

(M. Chemnitz, *Examination of the Council of Trent*, I: 54-cf. vs 15-16.

b. These words derived from the God who rescued Israel from Egypt (Ex 20:2).

c. These words were meant for the good of God's people (Ex 24:12; cf. LC,I:333).

B. But the people rejected it — and Him.

1. They tried to defend or excuse themselves (see vs 21-24). We do the same.
2. Sin, however, is not to be taken so lightly. It is not the transgression of an impersonal absolute. nor is it merely a matter of selfishness. It is a direct affront to God, His holiness, and His loving communication.
3. Moses, by breaking the tablets (v19), signalled the end of the relationship between God and Israel. Either God and man are in a relationship on God's terms — according to His law — or they will not be related at all.

C. God silences all voices that sing other than His praise.

1. The stark reality of separation from God stops every mouth (Ro 3:19) — also ours.
2. God's judgment finally comes, stopping mouths in death (v20). Note that God gives man what he wants. If man acts as if there were no word, no law, from God, God withdraws His word and loving presence. When Moses broke the tablets, that did not destroy the law, any more than when the people "broke" the law. But, as a result of their breaking the law, they are cut off from the source of life, God Himself.

II. God threw it.

A. So obedience could be upheld.

1. God had brought the Israelites out of Egypt (32:11) so they could be His kingdom of priests and holy nation (19:5-6). Now they had failed.
2. God "threw the book" at His Son, who was "made under the law" (Ga 4:4) to obey in the place of Israel and all other men.

B. So His glory could be manifested.

1. Moses pleaded that God preserve the people for the sake of His own honor (32:12).
2. God "threw the book" at His Son because He had passed over former sins. In Christ's propitiating work, God took sin seriously and saved man with the law intact. Thus, God showed Himself to be righteous, even though men fell short of His glory (cf. Ro 3:23-26).

C. So the promise could be kept.

1. Moses reminded God of the promise of descendants and land which He made to the patriarchs (32:13).
2. God's Son "throws the Book" to us sinners. In it we read not only of earthly blessings and divine commandments; we especially find in it the message of what great things He did to save us. By this Gospel the living God gives us life, in and with the forgiveness of our sins (the law's stranglehold on us is *broken*). By this Gospel Christ dwells with us and leads us, just as He guided Israel (Ex 23:20; 32:34).

Conclusion: Sin *is* serious. God stops self-righteous mouths by throwing the book at sin. But when we see how God threw the book at His Son — and how

Christ throws the Book to us — our mouths can only be *opened* in praise.

K. Schurb
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SECOND-LAST SUNDAY IN THE CHURCH YEAR
Jeremiah 8:4-7
November 13, 1983

Introduction: The "con" artist hustles people with offers "too good to be true." They know the truth, but their greed gets the better of them. They fall prey to such schemes and end up saying, "How could I have been so stupid?" Stupidity is of the heart as well as the head. Our text serves as a warning:

Stamp Out Spiritual Stupidity

I. Not man's wicked way.
   A. Stupidity in Judah.
      1. The text is part of Jeremiah's "temple sermon" (chs. 7-10), a warning against illusions of security based on the outward possession of the temple (cf. 7:4).
      2. Wickedness — a stupidity, too.
         a. Though people routinely correct their mistakes (v4) and birds routinely migrate on time (v7a,a), Judah did not heed God's voice (vs7c-9). This is not how God made things. It is ridiculous.
         b. This refusal to recognize the truth about God and self (v6a) brought about a pitifully false outlook (v5b), and a lasting desertion of the L rd of reality (v5a). Every man actively and eagerly pursued his own foolish way of death (v6c). Not only is this sin; it is stupid.
   B. We are no better. Not that we consciously decide to say "no" to God; we simply ignore Him in everyday life.
      1. For many, work becomes the great preoccupation and the source to which they look for sustenance and security.
      2. For others, entertainment is the problem. Radio and television can have a stupefying effect. They can distort one's view of reality and drown out God's voice.
      3. Modern people foolishly settle for shallow solutions — as in Jeremiah's day (8:11).
   C. Judgment shows our stupidity.
      1. Jeremiah had preached it in the verses just before the text (7:30-8:3).
      2. We must be reminded of it, too (2 Cor 5:10). God will call us to account, and all fantasies must then collapse (cf. Lk 19:15ff).

Transition: In the text even God eyes the scene with incredulity. He asks why men are so stupid, so wicked, so unwilling to take His way of life (vs5-6). This concern shows His grace.

II. But God's wise way.
   A. God, the Judge, is not stupid.
      1. God is utterly realistic. Men will never find their way back to Him. So He comes to men.
      2. Jesus came prudently — and, by consistently acting on the basis of His knowledge, He succeeded in His mission (cf. the forms of *sakal* in Is 52:13 and Jr 10:21). He Himself bore the judgment for all wicked

human stupidity. For this reason God raised Him up and reversed His judgment against all men (cf. Is 53:11-12).

B. He disabuses us of our stupidity.
   1. Not only is Jesus' work "impressive" to God; the message that God gave Himself leads us to trust Him for everything.
   2. It is wise to believe the Gospel, because it is our true window on the reality of our relationship (*shalom*) with God (1 Jn 3:19-20).
   3. God nurtures our wisdom and faith, in His lavish grace, by bringing us the reality of pardon continuously in the Gospel and sacraments (so we do not fall back into *constant* deception and stupidity).
   4. Hard as it is to say "no" to temptation, it is wonderful to be able to affirm something so true, so basic, and so vital for our very lives. We say "yes" in penitence (cf. the introit for the day). It becomes a "natural" thing for us. It is a return to our baptism.

Conclusion: Penitence looks forward, too. It is the best preparation for judgment, since it comes to grips with the great realities — our wickedness and God's grace — with which the judgment will be concerned. It is the wise thing to do (cf. Jr 31:34).

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THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Jeremiah 23:2-6
November 20, 1983

This pericope does not relate specifically to the eschatological emphasis which has traditionally dominated the last Sunday in the church year, being a prophecy of the first coming of Christ and the consequent nature of the New Testament church (already here on earth prior to its glorification). The main connection between the passage and the day's general theme is presumably located in the references to the *perpetual* security of the church (vs 4, 6). By virtue of the first coming of Christ the church will endure to the end of time and beyond to all eternity — secure not only from the enmity of devils and men in this world, but also from the wrath of God which will be poured out in scalding torrents upon this world at the second coming of Christ. Another connection between the pericope and the day is that the righteousness and security of the church of which this passage speaks (vs 4, 6), although now hidden from the eyes of men, will be made manifest to all on the last day. The eschatological orientation of verse 2,moreover, is noted below.

The speaker being quoted in verses 2-4 (as already in verse 1) is the Second Person of the Trinity whom Jeremiah calls "the LORD" (vs 1b, 2a, 2f, 4e), applying to Him the Divine Name to which God alone is entitled (cf. my remarks on Numbers 6, *CTQ*, XLVII, pp. 38-41), as well as denominating Him "the God of Israel" (v 2a). For it is clearly God the Son who, in accord with the general usage of both Old and New Testaments, figures here as the Shepherd *par excellence*, or Good Shepherd, of the church (e.g.,Eze 34:23; Zch 13:7; Mt 26:31; Jn 10:11, 14; He 13:20; 1 Pe 2:25; 5:4; Re 7:17), from whom all ecclesiastical officials receive their authority (Jn 21:16; Ac 20:28) and to whom they are responsible (He 13:17; Ja 3:1). This accountability is stressed in verses 1-2 as God the Son charges the religious leaders of the Old Testament church with failing to "attend" (using the verb *paqad*) to its members (by teaching false doctrine, setting an evil example, neglecting pastoral duties, etc.), thereby causing many of them to fall away from saving faith in the Messiah. (The scattering and driving

away and the gathering of which these verses speak ought to be taken figuratively, like the "shepherds," the "flock," the "pasture," and the multiplication mentioned here.) In consequence, God the Son threatens to "attend" Himself to His insubordinate subordinates (again using *paqad*, but now investing the word with a negative connotation by way of an artful contrast with its prior use). Thus, those religious leaders of Israel who remained impenitent — like all men who have died in their sins — were consigned to eternal punishment at the time of their death and will hear this sentence confirmed by Christ on the last day (cf. Mt 25:31-46; 2 Th 1:7-10).

In verse 3 God the Son promises that He Himself will someday bring people from all nations of the world in increasing numbers ("they will be fruitful") into His church (cf. Jn 10:16). It will always be a minority group in the world ("the remnant"), but it will include all those whom God elected in eternity to salvation ("nor will any be missing," v 4d; cf. Jn 10:14, 26-29). The Lord will accomplish this worldwide extension of His church by giving new spiritual leaders to the church (v 4a) to comfort terrified men with the good news that Christ has assuaged the wrath of God against mankind and has already decisively defeated the devil and all his allies (v 4b-c; cf. my study of 1 John 1-2, *CTQ*, XLVI, pp. 44-46). These spiritual leaders are the men whom we call the apostles and their successors as pastors (the Latin word for "shepherds") of the New Testament church (cf. Jr 3:14-17; Jn 21:16; Ac 20:28), so long as these pastors remain faithful to the pure doctrine of the prophets and apostles (cf. Eph 2, *CTQ*, XLVI, pp. 62-65).

In verses 5-6 God the Father ("the LORD," v 5) seconds the testimony of His Son (cf. Jn 8:14-18), enunciating more distinctly the basis of the developments described already, namely, the saving person and work of the King *par excellence*. He was to be, on the one hand, true God, since the Father states in a uniquely emphatic way ("this is the name by which He is to be called," v 6c) that this King is entitled to be called by the Divine Name (v 6d). Yet He was also to be true man, a descendant (*tzemach*, "sprout") of David. (The word *tzemach* refers not to one of many branches, but rather to a distinct new growth from a seed or, as in this case, a root. This word had become a technical term for the Messiah in Old Testament times [Is 4:2; Zch 3:8; 6:12]; even as "days are coming" [v 5] and "in His days" [v 6] were customarily used in prophecy to refer to the Messianic era of human history — that is, what we should call the present New Testament era.) Since He is true man, the King of Kings was able to serve as our substitute in keeping the law of God perfectly ("a righteous sprout," v 5c; *hiskil*, "act wisely," v 5d) and in suffering the punishment deserved by the sins of men. Since He is true God, this substitutionary enterprise was sufficient to "establish justification" (*mishpat*, v 5d) on a universal scope, a "righteousness in the earth" (v 5d), that is, a righteousness imputed to all the people of the world. In other words, because a man is also "the LORD," His work constitutes "our righteousness" (v 6d; cf. Is 61, *CTQ*, XLVI, pp. 307-309; Is 42, pp. 309-312). This imputed righteousness is the very basis of the salvation ("shall be saved,""shall dwell in safety," v 6a-b) of the church (the names "Judah" and "Israel" being applied by synechdoche in both testaments to the church in general).

Introduction: On a restaurant menu a "kingsize" steak is the amplest piece of meat available. A "kingsize" box of detergent is the largest on the shelf, and a "kingsize" mattress is the roomiest of beds. The term "kingsize" derives its significance, of course, from the traditional position of kings as the most important people in the world, who could afford and expect the biggest and best of everything. Not all kings, to be sure, were of equal importance. Philip II of

Macedon was a sovereign of special significance, but his son, Alexander the Great, made his lustre seem pale by comparison. Pepin the Short was a monarch of moment in European history, but his son, Charlemagne, was of much more consequence. The most important ruler by far, however, in all of human history, is the King of whom Jeremiah speaks in the text, Jesus Christ, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Jesus Christ is truly

A Kingsize King

I. As to His Person.
  A. His lineage.
    1. According to His human nature.
      a. He is descended from an illustrious monarch — David, second king of Israel (v 5).
      b. He is not unique among kings, however, in this respect.
    2. According to His divine nature (vs 2, 4e, 6c-d, 8).
      a. He is eternally begotten by God the Father.
      b. He is absolutely unique among kings in this respect.
  B. His character.
    1. He is wise (v 5; cf. Pr 8, *CTQ*, XLVII, pp. 49-51, especially point II.B.2.b).
    2. He is righteous in a unique way (v 5).
      a. All other kings — like us and all other human beings since the fall — have been conceived in sin and sin constantly.
      b. He was conceived without sin (by virtue of His deity and virgin birth) and never sinned.

II. As to His Work.
  A. He condemns sinners.
    1. Specifically pastors who mislead His church or neglect its care (vs 1-2).
    2. Generally all sinners, even all Christians (with respect to the "old man" within us).
      a. We have all strayed from the path laid out by God's word (cf. Is 53:6).
      b. We have thereby forfeited God's presence and His protection from spiritual predators (Satan and eternal death).
    3. Ultimately, on the last day, all those without faith in His saving work (cf. Mt 25:31-46; 2 Th 1:7-10; 2 Pe 3:3-14).
  B. He saves sinners (v 6a-b).
    1. By imputing to Himself all the sins of all people and so suffering
      a. An ignominious death on the cross.
      b. The full measure of God's wrath (Mt 27:46).
    2. By imputing to all men His perfect righteousness (v 6d; Ro 5:15-19).
  C. He gathers and tends His people.
    1. He gathers them (v 3).
      a. Through the proclamation of the Gospel.
      b. From all peoples of the world.
    2. He tends them (v 4).
      a. Calling qualified men to the pastoral office of the New Testament church (v 4a).
        (1.) First directly in the case of the apostles.
        (2.) Now indirectly through the divine call of His church.
      b. Defending His people from all enemies (v 4b-d, 6b).

Douglas McC. Lindsay Judisch

Book Reviews

THE WORD OF GOD: A GUIDE TO ENGLISH VERSIONS OF THE BIBLE. Edited by Lloyd R. Bailey. John Knox Press, Atlanta, 1982. Paper. 228 pages.

Eleven scholars have pooled their resources to evaluate nine Bible translations available to English-speaking people since World War II. While each review of an English version provides the historical data surrounding its production, some reviews are more valuable than others as they show at least an awareness of certain implicit presuppositions of the translators. The matter of the plethora of translations is a critical one on both professional and lay levels. This study was needed, even if each essay does not reach its goal with the same success. No evaluations of the American Translation and Philipps, are included. Since parishioners are bound to pop up in Bible class with anyone of these Bibles, the pastor, whether he likes it or not, had better be aware of the general directions of these translations.

Bruce Metzger, who is associated with the Revised Standard Version, was chosen to review it. This is hardly fair, and his essay does not really go beyond tracing its editorial development with a few remarks on the aesthetics of translation. An outside reviewer certainly would have provided a more thoroughly critical evaluation. A more penetrating review is provided by Roger A. Bullard on the New English Bible. Thus, for example, the translation of Job is criticized for "allowing our scholarly instincts to reconstruct hypothetical translations." While psalm headings are removed, non-original rubrics are inserted in the Song of Songs. The "mighty wind" of Genesis 1:2 was understood as Bullard points out, as the "Spirit of God" in exilic times. Such a critical but still appreciative critique should set the standard for all of the other essays. Unfortunately, this is not the case.

The New Jewish Version is reviewed by Keith R. Crim. It is difficult to say from his writing whether he is a Christian or a Jew. This may be beside the point; however, it would have been enlightening to see how Jewish scholars handle pericopes that Christians have virtually made their own. This is not an argument for an official Christian translation or for forcing the New Testament back on the Old Testament, but the reviewer could have greatly enhanced his essay by at least pointing to the problems.

Barclay M. Newman, Jr., reviewer of the New American Standard Bible, does exactly this. Under the heading of "Translation Distortions," he subcategorizes "Attempts at Harmonization" and "Reading the New Testament into the Old Testament." It is hard at times not to agree with Newman that NASB translators have deliberately changed translations to, as he says, "upgrade the image of God." The Jerusalem Bible seems to be little more than an English rendering of the French forerunner. Significant problems do not surface in the review.

W. F. Stinebring in his review of Today's English Version seems caught up on what the Jews could or could not have believed in references to the doctrine of immortality traditionally seen in Psalm 23 and Job 19. Instead of offering a profuse statement of gratitude for being asked to contribute his essay, he might have used his space more profitably in trying to locate a general direction in the translation.

James Smart, in an incisive article of regretfully only four pages, dispatches the Living Bible with a few short blows. These translators have taken liberties beyond the bounds of decency. A woman who was a sinner (Lk 7:37) becomes a

prostitute. Theophilus (Lk 1:1) becomes "Dear friend who loves God." Theologically problematic is John 1:17 where "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" becomes unacceptably "For Moses gave us only the Law with its rigid demands and merciless justice, while Jesus Christ brought us loving forgiveness as well." Smart points out that "law" here refers to the Torah as God's written revelation and not as God's condemning will. Smart's own verdict on the Living Bible is priceless: "What is astonishing about the circulation of this book is that it is being bought mainly by people who in the past have been concerned that they should have an 'infallible' Bible."

A friendly and persuasive review is provided for the New American Bible by Walter Harrelson. Thus in Genesis 3:6 it is made clear that Adam was with Eve (Hebrew: *immah*, "with her") when she took and ate the fruit. The RSV and NEB do not make this clear. My own misconception about the incident was cleared up. It was not that she ate of the fruit privately and then convinced her husband to do the same, but this was an act of joint responsibility.

The review of the New International Version makes note of the commitment of the translators to the principle of Biblical inerrancy and unity as a factor in translation. Michael Totten, an LC-MS pastor writing in a previous issue of the CTQ, has pointed out that this translation definitely promotes false views on conversion and baptism by a deliberate readjustment of the texts.

There is no doubt that our readers will find this volume stimulating. In Latin there is a proverb that the translator is a traitor — an overstatement, to be sure, but still a warning that it would be better for the pastor to check through the original before preaching. Some translations are downright dangerous. The pastor should have no difficulty in presenting translation problems to the congregation through the Bible class. This collection of essays should provide some interesting discussion and could even boost attendance.

David P. Scaer

THE WORD OF TRUTH: A SUMMARY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE BASED ON BIBLICAL REVELATION. By Dale Moody. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1981. Cloth. 628 pages. No price noted.

Moody's credentials certainly suggest that he is well equipped to provide this one-volume dogmatics within the context of the Baptist religion and more recent religious thought. As a forty-year professor at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, he brings a wealth of theology and experience to his task. His first chapter, a prolegomenon, discusses various historical approaches to the establishment of Christian truth. The remaining chapters cover revelation, God, creation, man, sin, salvation, Christ, church, and the consummation. The place of Christology after soteriology must say something.

Any contemporary dogmatics, to be contemporary, must make use of certain exegetical advances and move from merely quoting Bible passages to recognizing the various pericopes in their original settings. For example, Moody does an admirable job of locating such forms as hymns and confessions. He also focuses on the unique theological contributions of the individual books and authors. Pauline, Petrine, and Johannine motifs are handled separately.

Refreshingly, he hesitates to provide quick dogmatical conclusions where he finds the exegetical evidence inconclusive. Systematicians rush too fast to their

conclusions, and the exegetes frequently do not even have the word "conclusion" in their vocabulary. Moody strikes a pleasant and hence appealing balance for the reader who wants a dogmatic conclusion but not when exegetical study is insufficient.

But the strong point can also be the weakest, at least in certain places. A book with "Biblical Revelation" in the title should normally be expected to come to some sort of firmer position on Biblical inspiration. Matters are here hopelessly confused when inspiration is introduced by a discussion of ecstatic prophecy, a topic quite independent of what the church has commonly called Biblical inspiration. Inspiration is not adequately defined when the Bible is recognized as a book superior to ecclesiastical traditions.

At other points the reader is left guessing. Why does Moody say that the church accepts the virgin conception rather than the virgin birth. Here it seems that Moody holds to the traditional church position in that he clearly says that "there was no human father in Nazareth." But is the distinction between virgin conception and birth all that meaningful and helpful? Since Moody is Baptist, his positions on Zionism, millennialism, baptism, and the Lord's Supper are not surprising. His strong point is making use of the most recent exegetical findings in coming to his dogmatic conclusions. Convincing is the parallel drawn between 1 Timothy 3:16 and 1 Peter 3: 18-19 as the description of Christ's descent into hell. In general, however, His Christology (e.g. resurrection) might have been more historically and theologically developed.

Moody is somewhat aware of Missouri Synod history, but since the former Synod president is referred to in the index as J.A.D. Preuss (sic!) and the seminary president as Robert Preus, he probably does not know that they are brothers. It is too glibly stated that the Reformers "adopted the dictation theory of biblical inspiration" and that the recent synod controversy meant the reinstitution of "the pre-scientific and pre-critical views of the Reformation" (p. 46). In spite of these lapses, Moody has presented dogmatics with the refreshing breeze of exegesis. His method here is impressive.

David P. Scaer

LUTHER AS INTERPRETER OF SCRIPTURE: A Source Collection of Illustrative Samples from the Expository Works of the Reformer. Compiled and Provided with Introductions by Hilton C. Oswald and George S. Robbert. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1982. Paper. 126 pages. $8.95.

MARTIN LUTHER: Companion to the Contemporary Christian. Edited by Robert Kolb and David A. Lump. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1982. Paper. 110 pages. $8.95.

Both volumes have been prepared by the publishing house of Missouri Synod to assist congregations and their pastors in making the five hundredth anniversary of the Reformer's birth more significant. *Luther as Interpreter* takes portions from the American Edition of Luther's works and arranges them around fourteen subjects, including righteousness, justification, Trinity, predestination, and Christ and the Old Testament. The fifty some volumes of *Luther's Works* in the American Edition are really for pastors. Here is something for the person who wants to taste Luther's thoughts here and there.

Martin Luther: Companion to the Contemporary Christian contains essays by eight pastors who interpret the Reformer's thought and direct it to contemporary church situations. Here is something quite different than a

slavish, paper-and-paste approach in making Luther quotations match current concerns. Armand J. Boehme in "Christian Living in the World" makes Luther sound like a living voice. Did you know that Luther opposed monopolies, price manipulations, false bankruptcies, undercutting the competition, falsifying weights, and deceptive packaging? He also did not oppose interest on loans, just the loan sharks.

In "Nourished with His Body and Blood," Charles J. Evanson sees Luther's doctrine on the Sacrament as hardly exhausted by the visible word concept, derived from St. Augustine. Falsely understood it leads to an increasingly infrequent celebration of the Supper, never contemplated by Luther. Arnold Krugler offers a direct Christology of Luther in "Your Brother is the Eternal God." Herbert C. Mueller, Jr., catches Luther's anthropological concept, seemingly often misunderstood, that the sinner is righteous to and before God. Anniversaries force us to turn back to the pages of our past history. Both these books reopen the past, and both are well suited for lay discussion groups within the congregation.

David P. Scaer

THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY: An Introduction. By Vincent Bruemmer. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1982. Paperback. 306 pages. Index. $16.95.

A text of this kind, "aimed at introducing theology students with no previous knowledge of philosophy, to some of the basic equipment of conceptual inquiry," has some obvious potential, also for those in general who engage in the theological task from day to day. It represents the distillation of lectures by the author as professor of theology and philosophy at several universities, among them Utrecht, Harvard, Oxford. He aims at guidance for the student, or the reader, in the task of dealing with the nature of concepts and conceptual inquiry — thus the thought process and the articulating of it. Bruemmer sets down as basic the proposition that to try "to deal with conceptual questions, with no regard for questions of fact and of meaning, would lapse into futile theorizing" (p. 3). In Christian faith one accepts certain things as true not merely because they are verifiable through empirical happening, but because of the respected authority on which these teachings are based, specifically the Word of God. Four themes are carried through: first, conceptual inquiry itself and its guidelines; then, evaluative (or axiological) concepts; next, the epistemological task of knowing or understanding why we believe what we believe; and finally the ontological realities themselves, such as God's existence, a reality basic to the whole of Christian belief. The reader must be prepared to stretch mental muscles to follow Bruemmer, as well as to sit in judgment of some of the theological presuppositions with which he works, among which will be areas of disagreement. Nonetheless the text will be a challenge to the thoughtful individual who is willing to put forth more than the usual effort in dabbling with philosophical categories.

E. F. Klug

CHRISTIAN ETHICS IN THE MODERN AGE. By Brian Hebblethwaite. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1982. 144 pages. Paper.

Brian Hebblethwaite's book is an attempt to seriously consider the objections to Christian moral teaching, to trace them back to major themes in eighteenth and nineteenth century philosophy, and to distinguish for discussion the main lines of criticism advanced by twentieth century moralists. Hebblethwaite rightly notes that for a long time it was believed that morality without religion was impossible. But now secular moral philosophers not only defend and explain morality divorced from religion, they also attack Christianity and Jesus on moral grounds. Hebblethwaite believes any version of Christian ethics must now defend itself on two fronts: (1) It must be able to resist the criticisms and meet the objections of its critics. (2) It must prove itself to be more adequately moral than any rival view. Therefore the author ends the book with a sketch of what a specifically Christian ethic might be.

Hebblethwaite first considers the objections to Christian ethics raised by Hume, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Marx, and Freud. Then he moves to investigate more recent critics such as Bertrand Russell and Walter Kaufmann. He then tests the adequacy of such Christian moralists as Barth, Bonhoeffer, and Reinhold Niebuhr. He mounts a probing inquiry into situation ethics and liberation theology, finding the former unable to grasp the structure of morality and the latter in danger of succumbing to Marxist social revolution at the expense of personal values. The strength of his book is that at the end of most of these chapters he lays out the critic's specific objections which the Christian apologist must address and overcome if he is to gain a hearing in the world.

Hebblethwaite expresses the dilemma in modern ethics by rephrasing Plato's Euthyphro dilemma: Is something good because God commands it, or does God command it because it is good? Either goodness is arbitrarily what God commands, so that, if God commanded something monstrous, that would be by definition good; or God commands something that is already good independently of Himself, in which case the moralist need not bring God into the picture. The author resolves the dilemma by saying "human goodness itself reflects the goodness of God. God is its source and goal." So we have two mutually correcting sources of good — human nature as God created it and God's revelation of Himself. On this basis, Hebblethwaite rejects Kierkegaard's teleological suspension of the ethical. Divine revelation cannot contradict or suspend the ethical. Hebblethwaite believes, therefore, that the human experience of goodness should be allowed to illuminate and correct religious revelation-claims because natural human morality is itself a reflection of the image of God in man. The two are seen to be mutually compatible, because it is the same divine nature that is reflected, however hazily, in human goodness. Since divine revelation has often been misunderstood and misapplied through the years, reasons Hebblethwaite, Christians should take moral criticism of their ethics seriously and be corrected by "human experience of goodness."

The reader will find the book to be a concise overview of the criticism of Christian ethics since the early nineteenth century. It tells us where ethics has come from and why it has moved in the direction it has. However, one will find the author's own solution inadequate, incomplete, and unable to break out of the buzzing confusion of modern subjectivism.

David Witten
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GOD'S WORDS. By J. I. Packer. Inter-Varsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1981. 223 pages. Paper. $4.95.

J. I. Packer, also author of the popular *Knowing God* and *God Has Spoken*, is professor of historical and systematic theology at Regent College in Vancouver. In his latest book *God's Words*, Packer has taken seventeen key words of the Bible and expounded them in his usual devotional yet scholarly manner. The word studies cover most of the range of dogmatics — revelation, Scripture, sin, faith, justification, election, sanctification, death, etc. Much of Packer's material first appeared in the now defunct magazine *Inter-Varsity*. It comes from an era in which biblical word-study was in its hey-day of popularity as a way into theological understanding. The weakness in such an approach is that it does not allow each Biblical writer to be appreciated in his own right as a theologian but superimposes the perspective of one writer upon another.

In an age of skepticism and indifference, the reader will appreciate Packer's conservative approach, especially on such doctrines as revelation, inspiration, canonicity, the devil, justification, and death. Likewise, Packer is keenly aware of the many distortions that exist in the modern mind and seeks to correct them. The popular idea of faith, notes Packer, "is of a certain obstinate optimism: the hope, tenaciously held in face of trouble, that the universe is fundamentally friendly and things may get better. 'You've got to have faith,' Mrs. A. urges Mrs. B.; all she means is, 'keep your pecker up' " (p. 129). Likewise, the Biblical doctrine of fellowship has been replaced with a secular idea of fellowship as a jolly, social get-together. The Trinity is often viewed as "a difficult and unimportant abstraction, a piece of antique theological lumber that is valueless today" (p. 44) and election is seen to be unedifying because it has been the source of so much dissension. Anyone trapped in this modern mindset will find Packer's book to be a fountain of living water.

The Lutheran reader will note a number of weaknesses. For example, one should never discuss sanctification without clearly showing that it is always a return to justification. Justification is the legal basis of sanctification. Justification makes sanctification possible by removing sin's lawful right to rule the sinner. When Christ directed the woman caught in adultery, "Go and sin no more," He was commanding her to live the new life of holiness, but her sanctification would only be possible provided she grasped the liberating hope of justification ("Neither do I condemn you"). In an age where holiness movements take people beyond justification to some higher blessing, one would have hoped that Packer would have emphasized that to grow in Christ means to realize more and more that we are sinners, a realization which will always drive us back to the cross and justification.

Providing the reader can work around some of the Reformed bias, this book should prove to be a valuable aid to both layman and pastor. Accompanied with a copy of the Lutheran Confessions in the other hand, the book could be ideal for Bible study.

David Witten
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A HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP: An Outline of Its Development and Forms. By William D. Maxwell. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan. $7.95.

The book accomplishes what it claims it will do; it gives a concise outline of

Christian worship from the earliest times down to 1963. The little volume has undergone nine impressions since it was first published in 1934. The author is limited in a paper back of 183 pages, but within those pages he does a creditable job of giving the reader an overview of two millennia of Christian worship. Chapters include "Primitive Worship" (to the third century), "Liturgical Forms in the West," "Liturgical Forms in Churches of the Reformation," and "The Christian Cycle of Prayer" (minor offices).

The book reads well. The author spends a good deal of time on the analysis of the various masses that have developed in the churches of different rites. He is a Reformed minister in the Church of Scotland with definite liturgical and eucharistic interests. He gives adequate time and space to Luther and the German reformers. Lutherans will find, however, that he does not always understand our theology. He is definitely unhappy with Luther's *Formula Missae* (1523) and *Deutsche Messe* (1526) and much prefers Bucer's (Reformed) Stassburg Mass. Yet, all in all, there is much to learn from Maxwell, even about our Lutheran worship and its development. The bibliography is extensive.

George Kraus

CHRISTIAN STEWARDS: CONFRONTED AND COMMITTED. By Waldo J. Werning. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri, 1982. 186 pages. Paperback. $8.95.

Flowing from Dr. Werning's extensive experience as parish pastor, district and synodical executive, and seminary development officer, this book offers a solid Lutheran Biblical foundation for Christian stewardship, resulting in a practical approach to stewardship education in the local parish. In a day when much stewardship has degenerated into fund-raising, it is refreshing to read a grace-oriented Biblical education approach of giving "from" God's love in Christ rather than a shallow "methods" approach of giving "to" a budget or crisis needs. Werning provides theological roots with a discussion of the new man-old man struggle, God's judgment and grace in the message of Law and Gospel, and the qualities of the Christian steward living the sanctified life based on faith in Christ's atoning death and victorious resurrection from the dead.

Werning then takes a total view of stewardship which included significant items not normally covered in stewardship literature — caring for our bodies in terms of health, nutrition, and physical fitness; identifying and using our abilities and spiritual gifts for the edification of the body of Christ; managing the earth and material possessions in our daily lives; and using our financial resources to carry out the worldwide mission of Christ's Church. The book is written from the perspective of "church-growth" principles, particularly as they reflect Biblical emphases on spiritual growth through the Word of God and outreach from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. Dr. Donald McGravran of "church-growth" reputation writes the foreword. The section on spiritual gifts fits within this context. Finally, the book contains several practical sections on how to organize a parish with stewardship as a primary emphasis, how to organize a stewardship committee and follow a monthly planning cycle, and how to evaluate a congregation's stewardship understanding level. The practical materials probably come from a number of settings in the author's experience but are intended to flow out of the theological underpinnings which form the book's greatest strength.

This new book belongs on the shelf of every pastor and thoughtful lay leader as a stimulus to careful Biblical stewardship development in our parishes. It

should form the basis for serious stewardship discussion in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as we face the world of the 1980's and beyond.

Stephen J. Carter

ORDINATION RITES PAST AND PRESENT. Edited by Wiebe Vos and Geoffrey Wainwright. Studia Liturgica, Mathenesserlaan 301c, 3021 HK Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 1980. Paper. 151 pages.

Though Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the more apparently divisive issues among Christians, the entire matter of ordination even with the same denominational families is much more slippery. Everybody from Anabaptists to the Roman Catholics ordain, and generally with great fanfare, but there is great disagreement on what it is and where it came from. While *Ordination Rites* is not going to provide the once-and-for-all-time answer, it brings together several essays that will shed light on the issue. The essays were originally presented at the seventh congress of the Societas Liturgica in Washington, D.C., in August 1980. The real problem is tracing the roots of the current practice of Christian ordination, even though the current practitioners are hardly of one mind as to what it may be.

Lawrence A. Hoffmann of the Hebrew Union College addresses the question of whether the Jewish rabbis may have practiced something resembling ordination during the early Christian era. If Hoffmann's theory is right, Christians will have to look elsewhere than first-century Judaism to find the origin of their ordination. This Jewish scholar claims that an analogy with Christian ordination forced some scholars to see in Judaism something which really was not there. At this point it could be asked why perhaps an attempt was not made by the congress organizers to find ordination's roots in the Old Testament, as is often done in the presentation of Baptism.

A most useful essay is offered by Edward J. Kilmartin of Notre Dame, "Ministry and Ordination in Early Christianity against a Jewish Background." He finds a number of attitudes to the matter present in the New Testament. The commissioning of the eleven disciples as teachers of a fixed body of material is found in Matthew 28:20. While a charismatic type of authority is posited for the early Pauline communities, a presbyterial order modeled after the Jewish diaspora communities is recognized in 1 Peter 5:1-5. Third John reflects the conflict between a patriarchal-pneumatic community and an emerging monarchical church under Diotrephes. Acts 13:1-3 resembles the Jewish *shaliah* institution, where the Spirit motivates the community to act. The *shaliah* ceremony did not, however, use hands. In Acts 14:23 the appointment of elders by Paul and Barnabas shows that ordination was taking place in some communities within a liturgical setting. In Paul's speech to the Ephesian elders his mention of the Holy Spirit may reflect an earlier service of ordination. The 1 Timothy 4:14 and 2 Timothy 2:6 references indicate that ordination was already an established custom before these epistles were written. Kilmartin favors for these pericopes an ordination performed by the presbyters, rather than an ordination which conveyed the office of presbyter. This reviewer is not entirely persuaded here. Given in ordination, according to Kilmartin's interpretation, is not so much the office as the power and love, i.e., the charism, to carry out the office. 1 Timothy 6:11-16 with its mention of confession before witnesses also is derived from an ordination rite. The Pastoral Epistles show a merging of the episcopal and presbyterial forms of church polity in which the bishop is ordained by the elders and remains part of the college of presbyters. (The practice of the LCMS, where district presidents emerge from the ministerium and still remain

part of it, certainly bares a strong resemblance to Kilmartin's assessment of the early church situation reflected in the Pastorals.)

One observation by Kilmartin may be instructive. With the passing of the apostles, ordination for the church leaders becomes more prominent to secure recognition of church authority. By the second century a distinction between bishops and deacons was made, but what the nature of that distinction was is unknown. I Clement sees the bishop corresponding to Moses and the deacons to the Levites, and Ignatius uses the model of the Trinity with the bishop resembling the Father as first among the priests and the laity. No Scriptural precedent for this view can be established. By the third century bishops and deacons were chosen by the community, but unclear is whether presbyters were chosen by the bishops, the community, or both.

Kilmartin is listed as a Jesuit, but obviously he is hardly reading into the New Testament pericopes a Roman Catholic view. Though he feels no obligation to set forth one unified view for the New Testament, his summary conclusions are valuable in any current discussion: (1) The ministry derives from Christ's commissioning of His disciples. (2) The earliest human commissioning takes place within a liturgical setting of the community. (3) Later the presbyterium represents Paul in commissioning. (4) The rite authorizes the public proclamation and conveys a charism for this proclamation. (5) In the Pauline communities the charism is conveyed through laying on of hands, but in other communities it may simply indicate the right of public proclamation. No doubt this essay with its more than adequate notes provides immediately useful material for further discussion in the church.

Pierre-Marie Gy, as the author "Ancient Ordination Prayers," provides historical discussion on the earliest rites themselves. His valuable observation is that "ordination confers not only the ministry of sacraments, but also of the Word and pastoral tasks." This remark is noteworthy, when it is considered that Father Gy is Roman Catholic. (It certainly sounds Lutheran.)

Paul Bradshaw's "The Reformers and the Ordination Rites" is somewhat disappointing, as he handles Luther only briefly and gives the impression that the German Reformer should be viewed as simply another Protestant of that period. No evidence is shown in the notes that Bradshaw, an Anglican, is aware of the ample research already undertaken in this area. A final essay by W. Jardine Grisbrook, who is identified as "an Orthodox lay theologian" surveys more recent liturgical developments in the rite of ordination.

These essays open doors rather than provide a final conclusion. Certainly a comparison between Luther and the early church would be most welcome the next time the matter comes up for discussion.

David P. Scaer

KARL BARTH — RUDOLF BULTMANN: LETTERS, 1922-1966. Edited by Bernd Jaspert. Translated and edited by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1982. 192 pages. Cloth. $13.95.

Without question Bromiley is correct in observing that, more through their letter exchange than in any other way, the two giants Barth and Bultmann demonstrate how "an initial solidarity" between the two theologians eroded "until it is finally replaced by a rift that would have a decisive impact on theology for the rest of the century." (p. vii). Barth and Bultmann met very early, during the school year (1908-1909) when Barth was a student at Marburg. The letter

exchange began soon thereafter, but those that are extant today range between the years 1922 and 1966, thus covering the crucial years when the theological methodology of the two friends developed and held sway in theological circles. Friends they were and remained, but, though both owed their debt to existentialist presuppositions, they differed openly and radically on the demythologizing technique which Bultmann applied to New Testament studies. It is perhaps easier to get hold of this gulf between the two — and certainly quicker — by reading this letter exchange than by poring over their respective tomes or some secondary source written in critique of the two. In a long letter written on Christmas Eve, 1952, Barth in no uncertain terms lays it on the line that "the really irksome think about 'mythological thinking' turns out to be its 'objectifying,' " — that is, in the mind of Bultmann — for, says Barth, "I argue in opposition that you are obviously favoring a consistent 'subjectivizing' " (p. 106). Firmly Barth states that he cannot follow along. Yet he retains a sense of humor as he explains his rejection of Bultmann's methodology (p. 105):

> It seems to me that we are like a whale (do you know Melville's remarkable book *Moby Dick*? You ought to have a high regard for it because of its animal mythology!) and an elephant meeting with boundless astonishment on some oceanic shore. It is all for nothing that the one sends his spout of water high in the air. It is all for nothing that the other moves its trunk now in friendship and now in threat. They do not have a common key to what each would obviously like to say to the other in its own speech and in terms of its own element... The continuous offense that you take at me is obviously due to the fact that I do not adequately understand, and take seriously, existential philosophy, or its binding character as an axiom of all possible theological thought and utterance today. I have to admit the charge.

Barth denies the charge of dependence upon *any* philosophical canons of reason whatsoever, whether Kant, Hegel, or Schleiermacher, and yet admits that "occasionally I may cheerfully make use of existential categories," but without great "zeal," to the extent of feeling "any consequent obligation to that philosophical approach" (p. 105). Therein, of course, lies the key. Bultmann defends the existentialistic approach to the task of doing theology in the twentieth century; Barth disclaims any debt and yet engages in it anyway, as his stance over against the Biblical text has demonstrated. For him it remains merely a witness and record of the Word, but in no way the Word itself. That Word is to come as some sort of bolt out of the blue to effect the believer's encounter with God Himself. Through this revelational personal experience the believer becomes captivated by His existence. Whether Barth knew or not, he had his own brand of existentialism or *Erfahrungstheologie* ("experience theology").

There is something especially soul-revealing in personal letters. Bromiley has seen to it that the letters containing solid theological stuff are retained verbatim; those dealing with less consequential matters are summarized. Exceedingly interesting material is also appended — for example, the letter exchange with the German authorities that demonstrated Barth's opposition to Hitler's brand of socialism and the resulting expulsion of Barth from Fascist Germany in the mid-thirties. Indices provide the key to the topics covered by the two friends, one a confessed Reformed theologian, the other professedly "Lutheran," at least by background. The book is a worthy companion to the volume which appeared a year ago, *Karl Barth: Letters, 1961-1968.*

E. F. Klug

THE BIBLE IN BASIC ENGLISH. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England. No price given.

The Bible in Basic English has been with us since the early nineteen-forties. It is a translation — not a paraphrase — of the Word of God using 1000 basic words of the English language. This language was produced by C. K. Ogden of the Orthological Institute in England. A word list of 850 words enables one to give the sense of anything, said in English. In order to make the Bible translation more faithful to the original texts, some 150 extra words were added to the 850, thus giving a total vocabulary of 1000 words. These 150 words included 50 theological terms and 100 extra words that were essential to producing the present text.

Generally the translation is acceptable and refreshing. As with most Bible translations, one always profits by the fresh insights the translators bring to their work. One thought did strike the reviewer as he read the text: preachers might do well to read the *Scriptures in Basic English.* There is a marked tendency on the part of those whose craft is words to use words that are unnecessary. This present volume demonstrates the value of presenting the Gospel with a limited vocabulary. Since this reviewer works in a field of deaf ministries, he was doubly interested in the presentation of the Gospel with a limited vocabulary since sign language has a limited vocabulary. The Gospel is clearly and directly offered. Here are some examples:

> But if we are walking in the light, as he is in the light, we are all united with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son makes us clean from all sin [I John 1:7].
>
> Because Christ once went through pain for sins, the upright one taking the place of sinners, so that through him we might come back to God; being put to death in the flesh, but given life in the Spirit [I Peter 3:18].
>
> That is, that God was in Christ making peace between the world and himself, not putting their sins to their account, and having given to us the preaching of this news of peace [II Cor. 5:19].

The doctrine of justification through faith is also well treated:

> Being conscious that a man does not get righteousness by the works of the law, but through faith in Jesus Christ, we had faith in Christ Jesus, so that we might get righteousness by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law: because by the works of the law no flesh get righteousness [Gal. 2:16].
>
> For which reason, because we have righteousness through faith, let us be at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ [Rom. 5:1].

Generally the text is dependable. However, as with any translation, there will be disagreements with the handling of certain passages. The limitation of 1000 words does force a certain clumsiness on certain portions of the work. In Acts 16:31 "Have faith in the Lord Jesus . . ." seems to lack the punch of the usual imperative, "Believe in the Lord Jesus . . ." In Genesis 4:1 we read: "And the man had a connection with Eve his wife, and she became with child and gave birth to Cain." One teaching presented very clearly is the resurrection of Jesus. "And he said to them, Do not be troubled: you are looking for Jesus, the Nazarene, who has been put to death on the cross; he has come back from the dead; he is not here: see, the place where they put him!" (Mark 16:6). The translation 'has come back from the dead" seems clear and strong.

The translation is a work of a committee under the direction of Prof. S. H.

Hooke, Professor Emeritus of Old Testament Studies in the University of London. The volume is worth reading and owning if only for the sake of lessons learned in simplicity and economy of language.

George Kraus

NEW APPROACHES TO JESUS AND THE GOSPELS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL AND EXEGETICAL STUDY OF SYNOPTIC CHRISTOLOGY. By Royce Gordon Gruenler. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1982. Paper. 291 pages. $13.95.

The use of the phrase "new approaches" in the title accurately describes what the reader should expect to find here. Gruenler belongs to the new breed of evangelical scholars who are not only acquainted with the newer radical exegesis, but are also quite willing and able to use their procedures in the gospels. He first of all adopts Ludwig Wittgenstein's theory of language that words are to be understood not as having absolutely fixed meanings applicable in every situation, but that they are an extention of the person speaking them. Now, the argument is not that language is unstandardized to the point that no one knows what anyone else is saying. Rather, the idea is that speakers are creative in the use of words. These words are an extention of the speaker's personality. Secondly, Gruenler tentatively accepts certain results of Norman Perrin's conclusions about authentic words of Jesus. Perrin, a follower of Bultmann in exegetical method, operates with the principle of minimalism to designate those logia which can with some degree of certainty be attributed to Jesus and not to the early church. The principle of minimalism means that any words attributed to Jesus with parallels in rabbinic literature are not original to Him and were added by the early church. The theory is not without difficulty because scholars of the previous century operated with the exactly opposite principle that authenticity depended on finding such parallels. In any case, Gruenler for the sake of argument accepts the principle of minimalism. Taking the passages found to be authentic by Perrin, he then applies Wittgenstein's theory of language as reflecting the speaker's personality. These passages are identified as the core sayings of radical criticism. Right at this point Gruenler has done an original and ultimately useful task for exegesis and dogmatical theology. Even if the church had only a dozen authentic sayings of Jesus, could the church have a high Christology? Gruenler shows that it could. In these saysings, Jesus presents Himself as *the* One in whom God's kingdom has come. What type of person would go around using so prominently the pronoun "I" in His proclamation of God's activity? Gruenler then goes on to show that the more explicit sayings of Jesus, which Perrin dismisses because of his principle of dissimilarity, indicate the same Christology as the implicit sayings. The evidence indicates that all sayings come from the same person, i.e., Jesus. Though the approach of Gruenler comes across at first as being speculative, it is with great practical advantage for the church in its theology and preaching. Even in such apparently non-theologically productive passages as "Leave the dead to bury their own dead," there is an "astonishing originality of Jesus' concept of self and mission" (p. 61). What Jesus said and how He said it evidences a high Christology. In a practical sense, the preacher is given an exegetical procedure that will further open texts for preaching without resorting to cross-references to Paul or other

New Testament writers. The message of Jesus stands on its own merits in regard to the speaker and the content.

Gruenler has fascinating chapters on the methods of C. S. Lewis, I. T. Ramsey, Michael Polanyi, Gabriel Marcel, and particularly Tolkien. In the chapter, "Jesus as Author of the Evangelium: J. R. R. Tolkien," Gruenler discusses this English writer's deep understanding of language and concludes that Jesus' preaching by its own construction, style, and content created a spell on His audience. The people are drawn into the message by the message itself. This spell belongs to this message now preserved in the gospels. Something is lost when the message of Jesus is divided into abstract truths or dissected by criticism.

Though Gruenler presents a Christology formed from Perrin's minimalism, he is committed to seeing Jesus as the originator of the gospel message. From this commitment he handles in an appendix Robert Gundry's recent *Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art*, a book causing waves in evangelical exegetical circles. The appendix was written after the original manuscript was completed. Gundry, also an original theologian, gives the impression, according to Gruenler (and he seems to be right), of attributing too much of the gospel material to the evangelist and not to Jesus. Gundry has taken a principle of interpretation and carried it so far that the person of Jesus as the originator of the gospel becomes nearly superfluous. Gundry is also scored for not setting down a principle of distinguishing Matthew's contribution from that of Jesus. In this sense Gundry is judged to be more radical than the recognized and self-confessed radical Perrin.

Rarely is a really original theological book from a conservative or evangelical perspective published. Too often old battles are fought and older positions restated with a trifle more vigor. *New Approaches* ploughs new ground in a new way. Even the reader who is not caught up in current exegetical debates is going to find material here that will help him in understanding the gospel material.

David P. Scaer

CHURCH AND MINISTRY. Edited by Daniel Brockopp *et al.* Institute of Liturgical Studies, Valparaiso, Indiana, 1982. Paper. 137 pages. No price given.

These essays were given originally at the 1981 Institute of Liturgical Studies by three Lutheran, two Roman Catholic, and one Episcopalian theologians and address an issue which continues to be lively in Lutheran circles. Brief mention can be made of three essays. Havener addressed, quite successfully I believe, the relationship between the regular ministry and the presence of multiple gifts in the same church. Agreeing that the offices of the *episcopos* and *presbyteros* were the same, this Roman Catholic theologian suggests that in the pastoral epistles the *episcopos* as a separate office may be emerging. Ralph Querre (ALC) points out that Lutheran ordination liturgies have a more pronounced understanding of this rite than do contemporary Roman Catholic liturgies. Richard Neuhaus (AELC), provides his usual blend of stimulating and irritating assessments. While it is hard to follow his understanding of the church's obligation, always in an ecumenical context, to the body politic, his barbs always have a way of cleaning out the cobwebs.

David P. Scaer

THE READER'S DIGEST BIBLE. Reader's Digest Association, Pleasantville, New York. 1982. 798 pages. Standard Edition, $16.95. Deluxe Edition (leather-bound), $24.95.

The Reader's Digest Bible is a condensation of the *Revised Standard Version.* The philosophy of this Bible is the idea that God and His inspired Scriptures were unprofitably long-winded. The editors who engaged in this condensation process believe that the Bible could greatly profit from a dose of tough-minded editing. This condensation venture of the Reader's Digest Association, which has had much practice in book condensation, has pared down the Protestant version of the Bible by roughly forty per cent; it is 480,000 words shorter. About fifty per cent of the Old Testament and twenty-five per cent of the New Testament have been cut out. The editors contend that nothing of significance was lost by this significant reduction. The editors thereby seem to be saying that they had a better understanding of what mankind needs than the Holy Spirit did!

This condensation Bible project was begun in 1976 with the approval of the National Council of Churches, which holds the copyright to the *Revised Standard Version.* As general editor the Digest recruited Bruce Metzger, Professor of New Testament at Princeton Theological Seminary, whose task it was to supervise the nine editors who did the pruning and condensing. Whole passages are squeezed to a minimum. A few passages were left untouched, as, for example, the Twenty-third Psalm. God's words to Moses out of the burning bush are boiled down by two-thirds. Violence certainly has been done to the beautiful language and thoughts of the Book of Psalms in this Bible. In the poetic books, chapter after chapter is hacked away. Half of the Book of Psalms has been removed. One reviewer said about the violence done to the Psalms that they could be better called "David's Greatest Hits." Many "immortal" verses have been shorn of their distinctive quality.

Because the chapter and verse numbers have been omitted, it will be difficult to find passages and chapters in this abbreviated Bible. It will also be difficult to ascertain now exactly what has been omitted by *The Reader's Digest Bible.* The choice of the *Revised Standard Version* with its mistranslation of key Messianic passages and its textual criticism favoring the Septuagint at the expense of the Hebrew Massoretic text will also reduce the appeal of this Bible to many Christians.

It has been the policy of the American Bible Society to print the Bible without comment, a policy which was also observed in publishing *Revised Standard Bible.* But the Digest Bible has added introductions to both the Old and New Testaments and their respective books. The views in the Old Testament especially favor the conclusions of the historical-critical method. These introductions would certainly deter many pastors from recommending this Bible, even if they had no objections whatever as to the manner in which God's Word has been reduced.

The Reader's Digest Association was prompted to undertake its condensation venture in order to encourage people to read the Bible who ordinarily would not wade through a book of about 1300 pages (versus the 767 pages which constitute the Digest Bible). Because of its length, therefore, the Bible is too little read. Relative to this matter the reviewer in *Time* wrote: "Undoubtedly so, but such people could use one of the readable modern translations of the real thing (such as the *Good News Bible* or *New International Version*) and skip the slow parts" (*Time*, October 4, 1982). This reviewer agrees with Patricia O'Brien's evaluation of the *Digest Bible*:

With due respect to the good intention of Reader's Digest, there's

something about squeezing the Word down to basics that is alarming. If the point of the Bible is to get the story of God across in 10 or 20 easy lessons, that would be accomplished easily enough. But most people who feel drawn to the Good Book see some splendid nuances in what they read; subtleties take thought and concentration to unravel. In this new version, the messages get plain and crisp. The Lord loses some grandeur, and the reader loses some awe.

One objective of the consensed Bible may have been to counter the growing religious illiteracy fostered by television. We doubt that the *Digest Bible* will counteract that problem. We disagree with the encomium of one of it editors who described this Bible as being "the most valuable version of the Bible available to today's readers."

Raymond F. Surburg

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH: BIBLICAL ORIGIN, HISTORICAL TRANSFORMATION, AND POTENTIAL FOR THE FUTURE. By Hans Schwarz. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, 1983. 382 pages. Cloth. No price given.

Hans Schwarz dedicates this theological monograph to his former colleagues at Trinity (Capitol) Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio. Though the work is an exegetical, dogmatical, and historical study of the doctrine of the church, it also attempts to provide a blueprint for its future existence. Schwarz has been recognized as belonging to the theology of hope movement. It is not surprising therefore that the church is understood as that symbol towards which all mankind (society) is striving. Thus he can speak of the people of God being separated not even by religious distinctions. The theology of hope is by definition universalistic, and it is difficult not to avoid seeing Schwarz's monograph in this light. The influence of Vatican II is easily recognized. The commission to Peter in Matthew 16 is seen as the church's foundation, but in more than one place the authenticity of these words of Jesus is questioned. The value of this study is that the doctrine of the church is discussed from theological, exegetical, and historical perspectives and can be considered useful from this perspective. These discussions can be enlightening, even if one's eschatology does not lean in Moltmann's direction. For example, do we really want to say that the church's task is to reform society (p. 318)? Peter is given the proper place in the establishment of the church, but the second printing might want to say that he denied, and not betrayed, Jesus three times (p. 34).

David P. Scaer

JUST AS I AM. By Harvey Cox. Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1983. Cloth. 159 pages. $10.95.

I was drawn to this autobiography since the author had been one of the shakers of religious foundations in the 1960's with his *The Secular City*. As with many of the "God is dead" theologians, Harvey Cox has slipped into oblivion. While these men were the theological rage a generation ago, there is hardly a theological student who would care to pursue their thinking with any seriousness today. *Just As I Am* may be the biography of a one-time theological revolutionary but as literature it is not atypical of the life story of Protestant divines.

(Lutheran pastors, unlike their Reformed counterparts, do not understand their lives and careers as *Heilsgeschichte* and are less likely to write these Gospel-like histories of themselves.) Such literature is fascinating because it reveals how a one-time revolutionary thinks of himself. Without claiming to be a literary critic in such matters, these stories all seem to read the same. The autobiographers seem to be obsessed with the influences of others in their theological development. These books are written versions of morning talk shows.

Cox goes back 250 years to pre-Revolutionary days to begin his story. He sees himself almost as a type of reincarnation of his Quaker ancestors, who helped bury, but who did not help defend, the American patriots slaughtered by the British in Paoli, Pennsylvania. It is almost like reading Matthew's geneology of Jesus. What would have happened if Cox had found anarchists and despots in his geneology? His Harvard doctoral dissertation, "Religion and Technology from the Renaissance to Present," seems to have had no influence on him and quite clearly on no one else. It did give him the credentials for his theological explorations. His Baptist Free Church spirit provided entrance into black churches and civil rights movements with Martin Luther King. He writes dramatically of his stay in a Williamston, North Carolina, jail for participation in the civil rights movement. A vivid description is given of the poor food and the eating of a cheese sandwich to break the fast. His stay could have been scarely more than a few days. It must have made an impression on him because he was terrified of the prospects of jail in Iran. No cause took him to Tehran. He was just changing places and unwittingly purchased tax-free booze for an anonymous person at the airport. He boarded an airplane to India before authorities were aware that an infraction had taken place. Such misdemeanors are not of salvific importance, but they do show that even the theologically prominent are really no different than the rest of us.

It is difficult to disagree with Cox's own assessment that he may have peaked too early when, in his early thirties; *The Secular City* in eleven translations became an international best seller. For the present he must continue to live off his past reputation. His *After the Secular City*, scheduled to appear in two years, will not change things. American preachers and theologians (non-Lutheran ones) have understood themselves as prophets to society, even when society is not listening to them. Cox belongs to this colonial American tradition.

David P. Scaer