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Catholicity and Catholicism

Avery Dulles, S.J.

I am unable to gauge how a Lutheran audience will react to the theme of the present essay.[1] The whole subject might strike such an audience as an alien one, since Lutherans presumably look upon themselves not as Catholic but as Protestant. On the other hand, it must be kept in mind that the Augsburg Confession of 1530 three times asserts that Lutheranism is in full agreement with the doctrines and ceremonies of the Catholic Church.[2] Philipp Melanchthon, who called the Augsburg Confession a "catholic" document (*Apol.* 14.3), considers Lutherans as belonging to the Catholic Church, namely, "an assembly dispersed throughout the whole world" whose members "embrace and externally profess one and the same utterance of true doctrine in all ages from the beginning until the very end."[3]

A long line of Lutheran dogmaticians from Johann Gerhard to Wilhelm Stählin have continued to insist on the Catholic character of Lutheranism. In their recent textbook Eric Gritsch and Robert Jenson describe Lutheranism as a theological movement within the Church catholic.[4] Thus it cannot be taken for granted that Lutherans wish to be anything other than Catholic Christians.

In the twentieth century it has become necessary to distinguish between "Catholic" with a lower-case and an upper-case "c," the former being associated with the noun "catholicity" and the latter with "Catholicism." In the present essay I shall attempt to illumine this distinction and at the same time to show the close affinity between the two meanings of the term "catholic." In the concluding part of my essay, I shall give some indications of the relationship between Catholicism and Roman Catholicism.

I. Catholicity

Practically all Christians confess in the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in the holy Catholic Church," and in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, "I believe. . . in the Church, one, holy, catholic, and apostolic." These statements, rather than anything in the Scriptures, provide the direct foundation for the doctrine of the catholicity of the Church. Etymologically the term "catholic" means "according to the whole" *(kath' holou)*, hence universal, entire, complete. In the theological tradition catholicity has come to

connote the absence of barriers, unboundedness, transcendence. Whatever restricts or hems in is opposed to catholicity. But since there are many types of barriers or limits, there are also many types of catholicity. I like to speak of four, which I characterize under the rubrics of breadth, length, depth, and height.

A. *Breadth.* The dimension of catholicity most prominent in modern theological discussion is the quantitative or geographical. The Church is broadly inclusive because it is spread across the face of the globe and open to people of every race, nationality, language, and social condition. It comprises young and old, men and women, rich and poor, learned and unlettered.

Catholicity in this sense is opposed to every kind of sectarianism or religious individualism. Catholic Christianity is not the religion of an elect few, an elite, a heroic group of saints, and still less a master race. The gospel, according to the Catholic view, is intended to be believed and lived by ordinary human beings, including the great masses of humanity. Augustine repeatedly made this point in his tracts against the North African sectaries of his day, the Donatists. In our generation, Jean Daniélou has made a similar point. In his little book, *Prayer as a Political Problem,* he warns against the current tendency to exalt personal at the expense of sociological religion and to interpret the Christian community as a select vanguard of privileged souls. It is quite possible, he observes, for certain highly gifted and motivated individuals to swim against the stream and practice a kind of private religion with a minimum of social supports, but this cannot be the Catholic vision. For Christianity to function as a universal religion accessible to the weak, the poor, and the uneducated, institutional and cultural supports are needed. In the long run faith and culture cannot be at odds with each other.[5]

The theme of catholicity, therefore, brings us face to face with the complex problem of inculturation. The separation of religion and culture, according to Pope Paul VI, is one of the most serious problems of our time.[6] The problem has been aggravated by the secularization of Western culture and by the need of Christianity to find a home in many non-Western cultures that remain largely untouched by Christian influences. The pluralism of cultures is seeping into the Church itself, so that Christianity is acquiring distinct expressions in each major sociocultural region, as was in fact recommended by Vatican II in its Decree on the Church's

Missionary Activity (*AG* 21-22).[7] According to the council, the Church is not bound in an exclusive way to any one culture, but can enter into communion with various cultures on their own terms (*GS* 58).

Does this multiple inculturation impair the catholicity of the Church? In earlier generations it might have seemed that the expansion of Christianity was indissolubly linked to the dissemination of the Christian culture of the West. But Vatican II marked an end to this cultural monism. The council emphasized that the riches of all the nations are to be brought to Christ, and that the legitimate differences between regional churches could contribute to the unity of the Church as a whole, rather than being a hindrance (*LG* 13). "The variety of local churches with one common aspiration," said *Lumen gentium*, "is particularly splendid evidence of the catholicity of the undivided Church" (*LG* 23).

To speak of internal differentiation being a contribution to unity could appear, initially, as a paradox. But on reflection it becomes apparent that unity is often enhanced by inner diversity. The unity of a complex organism, such as the human body, is deeper and more resilient than that of an amoeba or that of an inorganic mass of homogeneous matter. Even the atom, physicists tell us, owes its inner stability to the mutual attraction of opposed parts, such as the proton and the electrons. Theology tells us that God, who stands at the highest level of reality, is an indivisible union of mutually opposed relations, as students of the Trinity well know.

It should not be surprising, therefore, to find that the Church is a communion of variously gifted individuals and communities, bound together by relationships of mutual openness and complementarity. The capacity of the Church, with its profound inner unity, to break down the barriers between different peoples is repeatedly celebrated in the New Testament and in early Christian literature. Paul and his disciples speak eloquently of the Church as forging a community of love and compassion between rich and poor, free and slave, male and female, Jew and Gentile, Greek and barbarian. This does not mean that biological, economic, and sociocultural differences cease to exist, but only that these are taken up into a higher unity that prevents them from becoming divisive. From this perspective we can easily see why certain types of liberation theology, which exalt class warfare as the prelude to the classless society, have aroused suspicions among

Catholic churchmen and theologians. Wherever differences between groups in the Church become divisive, breeding suspicion, hatred, and violence, the catholicity of the Church is impaired.

The spatial or geographical catholicity of the Church, we may conclude, is a kind of reconciled diversity. It does not eliminate human and cultural differences, but harmonizes them as elements of a higher unity. Since the time of Ignatius of Antioch, theologians have frequently compared the Church to a choir of many voices, each bringing its particular pitch and quality to the whole, but striving not to create discord by singing out of tune.

The Church's catholicity in breadth is, of course, limited. Even if the Church is rather broadly defined to embrace all Christians, it still includes only a minority of the human race and, granted the present demographic tendencies, a diminishing minority. This fact constitutes an objection to the argument from catholicity found in many of the apologetics textbooks, but it helps to illuminate the true nature of catholicity, as understood in doctrinal theology. Catholicity is not a static possession to be measured by empirical statistics. The geographical or spatial catholicity of the Church is a dynamic reality, incompletely realized within history, and destined to be complete only at the eschaton. What can be said of the Church at any point in history is that it is capable of extending itself to other peoples and that it has an inherent tendency to do so.

B. *Length.* Catholicity in breadth, as I have been calling it, must be taken in conjunction with the other three aspects of catholicity. I therefore turn now to the second, catholicity in length. From the time of Augustine to the end of the Middle Ages theologians regularly spoke of catholicity in time, and Melanchthon echoes this idea. Thomas Aquinas, not untypically, states that the Church began with Abel and will last to the end of the world and, beyond this, into eternity. Understood in this way, catholicity puts Christians of each generation in communion with their forebears and descendants. They are linked with the apostles and, in a certain sense, with the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament. The classical theologians insist, likewise, that the Church will not cease to exist even at the parousia. It will simply change its form and become the heavenly, or triumphant, Church, the definitive communion of saints.

Vatican II recovered this dimension of catholicity for the Church in our generation. In *Lumen Gentium* it distinguished four stages of the Church's existence. Prefigured from the beginning of the world, preparation was made for it in the history of Israel, and it was constituted after the coming of Christ. At present it looks forward to its glorious fulfilment in eternity (*LG* 2).

Catholicity in time, since it establishes communion between different ages, involves a certain continuity. To assert such catholicity is to imply that the Holy Spirit is present to the People of God in every generation and, hence, to reject the extremes of archaism and modernism. Conservative Protestants, especially as represented by the sects, have tended toward archaism, idealizing the apostolic age and taking the Bible as the sole decisive norm. Liberal Christians have tended toward modernism, looking upon the present or the future alone as decisive. Catholicity, holding the middle position, looks upon tradition as continuously normative, so that the Church is able to speak and act authoritatively in every generation.

It has been objected that the Catholic position runs afoul of the fact of change. Catholic apologists of the Counter-Reformation, such as Caesar Baronius and Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, undoubtedly exaggerated the element of continuity, but their positions, in my judgment, rested on an inadequate concept of catholicity. In speaking of the spatial or geographical aspect, I have suggested that catholicity is not homogeneous but heterogeneous, that it is a unity in difference. Just as the Church's synchronic catholicity is enriched by the variety of cultural forms, so her diachronic catholicity calls for a responsiveness to the times and the seasons, all of which, as we remind ourselves in the liturgy of Holy Saturday, are subject to Christ as Lord of history.

Carrying this thought a stage further, one might speculate that each major period of church history has a special task or vocation of its own. The apostolic age laid the foundations once for all, but left many things unfinished. The patristic period established the basic structures of the Church's ministry, dogma, and sacramental life. The Middle Ages worked out with great subtlety and completeness the applications of the Christian faith to a given culture, that of medieval Europe. The modern period, taking up a broader missionary task, carried Christianity to all the continents. Our own age, it would seem, has the assignment to in-

carnate the gospel in the cultures of diverse peoples of non-European stock. Each age builds on the achievements of its predecessors but also has a distinct task that could not have been performed earlier. Thus the temporal catholicity of the Church, like its spatial or geographical catholicity, involves a unity in variety. The two catholicities differ insofar as time, unlike space, is unidirectional and irreversible.

C. *Depth.* The two types of catholicity thus far considered pertain to the extensiveness of the Church. The third aspect of catholicity, to which I now turn, is a matter of depth. Catholicity would lack something essential if it were only superficially received, like an external veneer or gloss. According to the classical tradition, beginning with Cyril of Jerusalem, the Church is catholic in part because of her capacity to save and transform human nature in all its aspects. It heals every ill, whether spiritual or bodily. It reaches the mind and the emotions, the will and the feelings. Christian faith would not be fully catholic unless it could permeate human nature and human culture. Catholic Christianity venerates the true, the beautiful, and the good. As a humanism, it fosters music and the arts, science and philosophy. The philistinism and bigotry of sectarian Christianity is the reverse of catholicity. Catholicity respects human freedom and the aspiration of humanity to rise to communion with the divine. It is prepared to find traces of holiness and grace even in paganism and infidelity.

To be catholic, in this third sense, is to favor a symbiosis of grace and nature, faith and reason, divine sovereignty and human freedom. The same God is recognized as creator and redeemer. Christ, the first-born of the dead, is also the first-born of all creation, the one in whom the whole of creation has its focus and meaning. Catholicity in depth makes contact with the natural and bodily aspects of creation and brings them back to God. It has implications not only for ecclesiology but for the theology of culture, for anthropology, and for cosmology.

D. *Height.* In surveying the three dimensions of breadth, depth, and length, I might seem to have exhausted the theme of catholicity, but I have omitted the most important feature of all. I have not even raised the question of whence the Church derives its wonderful capacity to extend itself to all peoples, to all historical eras, and to all aspects of human life. According to the Catholic understanding of Christianity, the source lies in God's self-communication through the twofold mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The catholicity of the Church, like its other properties (oneness, holiness, and apostolicity), eludes the grasp of empirical sociology. It is a mystery, having its source and completion in God, who is by nature absolute and transcendent. As I have mentioned, God is an interiorly diversified unity—a full communication of the divine nature from the Father to the Son, and from both, as one co-principle, to the Holy Spirit.

The Church has its universal unity from above. Its catholicity is a participation in the unlimited vitality of God himself. The divine life comes to the Church, in the first instance, through Christ. In him, the first-born of all creation, the divine plenitude is present in bodily form. He can penetrate all things, and be penetrated by them, because all things subsist in him as their origin and end, their Alpha and Omega.

If catholicity means fullness or wholeness—significations certainly present in the root-meaning of the term—it is closely connected with the recurrent biblical theme of fullness *(plērōma).* Teilhard de Chardin, one of the pioneers of twentieth-century cosmic Christology, made much of this biblical term. Reflecting on Christ as *plērōma,* Teilhard contended that the whole of creation comes to its completion by receiving the Christic energies of love.

The catholicity of the Church, grounded in that of Christ himself, is derivative and instrumental. The Church unites its members to one another because it gives them a participation in the union between the divine persons. So intimate and sublime is this union that it may be called "mystical." The Church is the mystical body of Christ, his Bride, and, according to another biblical metaphor, draws its life from him as do branches from a vine-stalk. Just as Christ is the fullness of God, so the Church is the fullness of Christ. In a certain sense it completes or fills up what is lacking in the individual humanity of Christ, extending his existence to many peoples and generations. The Church is, in the phrase of Teilhard de Chardin, "the consciously Christified portion of the world."[8] The mystery of Christ provides the norm of its catholicity, but because Christ really communicates his life to the Church, this norm is not simply extrinsic. The Church possesses within itself the norm whereby it is to be judged.

Illuminated from one side by the mystery of the Incarnation, the Church must also be contemplated in the light of Pentecost. As breathed forth from the risen Christ, the Holy Spirit is deeply infused into all the members and draws them together into communion without violating or infringing on their freedom and personal distinctiveness. The grace of the Holy Spirit penetrates our humanity and thereby elevates it so that we are made, in New Testament terminology, "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4). The members of the Church are drawn into a mysterious union that derives from the Holy Spirit, the bond of love within the godhead.

In the last analysis the catholicity of the Church cannot be explained either by Christ or by the Holy Spirit without reference to the other. The explanation must be comprehensively trinitarian. The triune God, who communicates himself in the Incarnate Word and in the Holy Spirit, is the source and ground, the norm and exemplar, of all catholicity.

In summary, then, there are four dimensions of catholicity: height, depth, breadth, and length. We may apply to it, by analogy, what Paul in Ephesians says of the love of Christ—that we must strive to comprehend its breadth, length, height, and depth even though it will always remain incomprehensible (Eph. 3:18-19). Even though catholicity, as a mystery hidden in God, surpasses human understanding, we must prayerfully seek to meditate upon its various aspects and dimensions.

II. Catholicism

Since the eighteenth century it has become common to contrast two main types of Christianity, the Catholic and the Protestant. Catholicism in this context is the type of Christianity that makes much of visible continuity in space and time and of visible mediation through social and institutional structures. Catholic churches are distinguished by three types of structure: creedal, liturgical, and governmental. *Creedal* structures include not only formal creeds and confessions, but all approved teachings and authoritative texts, such as dogmas, magisterial pronouncements, and canonical Scriptures. Under *liturgical* structures authors discuss authorized forms of prayer and worship, including particularly the sacraments. *Governmental* structures include the ministry of supervision *(episkopē),* which is preeminently exercised by

bishops as the office-holders who ordain and assign pastors, make laws, issue commands, judge offenses, and impose penalties. According to the Catholic view, the community is governed by a priestly hierarchy who, as successors of the apostles, rule with divine authority according to the maxim, "whoever hears you hears me" (Luke 10:16). Protestant churches, in this schematization, are those which emphasize not the visible social structures but the direct and immediate relationship of the individual believer to God. They tend to stress justification by faith alone and the freedom of the Christian to follow the inspiration of the Holy Spirit even at the price of conflict with the ecclesiastical authorities, whose powers are seen simply as a matter of human institution.

As many authors have noted, no church is exclusively Catholic or exclusively Protestant in this sense. Every church has both Catholic and Protestant elements, but some churches are conspicuous for the attention they give to one or to the other. The more "Catholic" churches would be those which particularly insist on the ancient creeds, on apostolic succession in the episcopate, and on the seven traditional sacraments. In this perspective the Roman Catholic may be viewed as the most Catholic of all Churches because of its strong institutional features. It has a greater body of defined dogmas and more centralized forms of government than any other comparable community. The Orthodox churches are also reckoned as Catholic in this sense. Anglicanism and Lutheranism, especially Scandinavian Lutheranism, are seen as bridge-churches combining some features of both Catholic and Protestant Christianity. The most "Protestant" churches, according to this schematization, would be those of the radical Reformation, such as the Anabaptists, and certain modern denominations and sects of the "low-church" variety, such as the Baptists.

In my own opinion, already indicated, there should be no dichotomy between Protestant and Catholic if the terms are used in this sense. A church can properly be both. The visible structures of mediation, when they function properly, do not prevent or replace personal faith and piety but, on the contrary, foster them. They facilitate and intensify personal communion with the Holy Spirit and, at the same time, assure that the gifts of individuals and groups contribute to build up the whole body in faith, hope, and charity.

III. Catholicity and Catholicism

We are now in a position to address the question raised at the beginning of this paper: What is the relationship between catholicity and Catholicism? I am personally convinced that without the structures commonly called Catholic (and, thus, without Catholicism), it is scarcely possible to manifest or maintain what in the first half of this lecture has been called catholicity. I shall even contend that the structures specific to Roman Catholicism are a signal aid to catholicity. To some extent this thesis has already been defended by the American Episcopalian scholar, John Knox. In *The Early Church and the Coming Great Church*[9] he argued that the Catholic movement of the second and third centuries was necessary to preserve the identity and unity of the universal Church under the double stress of persecution from civil authorities and internal heretical movements such as Gnosticism. He emphasized especially four structural elements produced through this movement: the canon of Scripture, the creeds, the episcopate, and the liturgy. Christianity, Knox contended, could not have survived as a distinct, internally united religion without these institutional elements. For any conceivable united Church of the future, he concluded, these or equivalent structures would be indispensable. I fully agree with Knox and would wish to make one further point: the episcopate cannot normally perform its unitive function for the universal Church unless it has a center of unity, namely, the Petrine office, which has been institutionalized as the papacy. If Knox had carried his investigation beyond the first three centuries, this additional point could hardly have been avoided. I shall now apply these assertions concerning Catholic structures more specifically to the question of how catholicity in its four aspects or dimensions is to be maintained.

A. *Breadth.* The Church in any period of history cannot be a universal community transcending social frontiers without unified leadership. The representative heads of local or regional communities have to be in communion with one another. A distinctive feature of the episcopal system is that the responsible leaders of local communities serve also as a kind of governing board for the universal Church. As the Church becomes more international and heterogeneous, the ministry of unity becomes more demanding. In our own time Christianity is becoming, for the first time in history, vitally incarnated in non-Mediterranean and non-European cultures. The various continents and subcontinents are devel-

oping their own ways of expressing the faith, worshipping the Lord, and practicing the Christian life. This pluralism is an enrichment, but it creates the risk that the Church might break up into cultural and political units that would for all practical purposes be autonomous and self-contained.

These factors, combined with the general turbulence of our times, create an increased need for strong structures of government to maintain the bonds of communion. In Roman Catholicism this is done through the collegiality of the bishops under the primacy of the Bishop of Rome, a leader whose office is enhanced by the promises of Christ to Peter. No other group of churches—such as the Anglican Communion, the Lutheran World Federation, or Orthodox Christianity—possesses anything comparable to the close-knit international communion that binds together Roman Catholics of every nation. No other communion has a living magisterium capable of committing the entire group in a definitive way, as the early church was committed by the councils.

B. *Length.* The firm structures of mediation characteristic of Catholicism are vitally important for maintaining a sense of continuity through historical change. Without them Christianity could well be a movement, but it would scarcely be an enduring society of believers who continue to profess and practice the apostolic faith. Catholics today are bound to the Church of apostolic times by approved forms of prayer and worship, by sacramental liturgy, by confessional formulas, by canonical scriptures, and by enduring structures of ministry, especially the episcopacy. Roman Catholics look particularly to the see of Rome as a historic and symbolic link to the apostles Peter and Paul. Thanks to its adherence to these visible forms, the Church can remain recognizably one community of faith in spite of the radical cultural shifts that have occurred. Catholicity in time is today imperilled by the acceleration of change, which threatens to erode the sense of unity with the past. The Catholic structures are more needed today then ever to maintain the apostolicity of the Church and of its faith.

C. *Depth.* Catholicity, as we have noted, requires that Christianity save and sanctify the human in all its dimensions. This is ordinarily accomplished through linguistic, artistic, liturgical, and sacramental forms that affect people at a level below that

of reflective consciousness. The characteristically Protestant concern with the Word of God, when played off against sacrament, and with hearing as opposed to seeing and feeling, can result in an intellectualistic impoverishment of Christianity.[10] Catholicism, with its social and sacramental structures, provides for what we may call the evangelization of nature, art, culture, and society. Where Christianity is severed from its cosmic and corporeal embodiments, the natural and the human tend to assert themselves in disruptive ways. Thus Puritanism (which tends to reject the natural) and neo-paganism (which exalts it) have given rise to one another. Catholicism, harmoniously uniting the extremes of spirit and matter, better assures what I have called Catholicity in depth. By retaining the symbolic and liturgical forms that open up new worlds of affectivity and meaning, Catholicism has rich resources for sustaining the devotional and comtemplative aspects of life. It prevents the Church from degenerating into a mere system of ideas or into a human coalition held together by pragmatic considerations.

D. *Height.* Finally, Catholicism helps to achieve and preserve communion with God as he makes himself present through Word and Spirit. According to the Catholic understanding, there can be no authentic mysticism, no effective ascent to the divine, that is not mediated through the Incarnation, with its human and bodily dimensions. God comes to us through the humanity of Jesus Christ, and that humanity is perpetuated and made accessible through the visible, institutional Church. The Church presents us with the inspired Scriptures, which have century after century demonstrated their power to kindle faith and religious commitment. She also proclaims Christ through her ministry of word and sacrament. The preaching office and the priestly ministry by no means replace Christ. Present in the power of the Holy Spirit, he himself is at work through his ministers. By receiving the word, the sacraments, the pastoral guidance from the Church we receive Christ himself, and are thus brought into communion with God.

In a longer essay it would be necessary to discuss a further point to which I can only allude very briefly—the dangers inherent in Catholic institutionalism. The structures can become rigid and oppressive; they are subject to abuse. Dogma can be used to coerce assent; sacraments can be understood in superstitious and magical ways; hierarchical authority can be tyranically exercised. The Roman see, commissioned to promote and safeguard Catholic

unity, can be either too permissive or too restrictive. Against such possible deviations Catholic-type churches, including Roman Catholicism, must provide remedies. Vatican II spoke of the Church as being in continual need of reformation, and it called attention to the resources for reform and renewal within the Catholic heritage. Thanks to the Scriptures, prayer and sacramental life, a vivid Christian sense can permeate the whole body of the faithful, and the Holy Spirit can raise up in the Church charismatically gifted individuals filled with the authentic spirit of the gospel. Such saintly and prophetic figures have rarely been lacking to the Church.

It will be for my audience, rather than for me, to judge to what extent Lutheranism is and wills to be "catholic" with a large or small "c." Lutheran churches, some more than others, retain many of those doctrinal, sacramental, and ministerial structures that are commonly called Catholic. Like all other churches, however Protestant or Catholic they are thought to be, the Lutheran community and mine face essentially the same problem: that of making the institutions better manifest and sustain the qualities that should always distinguish the Church of Christ—one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.

ENDNOTES

1. Many of the ideas of the present lecture are expounded more fully in my recently published book, *The Catholicity of the Church* (Oxford: Clarendon; New York: Oxford, 1985).
2. See Avery Dulles, "The Catholicity of the Augsburg Confession," *Journal of Religion,* 63:4 (Oct. 1983), pp. 337-54.
3. Philipp Melanchthon, "De Appellatione Ecclesiae Catholicae," *Postilla Melanthoniana,* in *Corpus Reformatorum,* 24, cols. 398-9. Cf. *Apology* 7-8:10
4. Eric W. Gritsch and Robert W. Jenson, *Lutheranism* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), pp. vi and 207.
5. Jean Daniélou, *Prayer as a Political Problem* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1967), chap. 1.
6. Paul VI, *On Evangelization and the Modern World* (1975), no. 20.

7. Documents of Vatican Council II are referred to in parentheses by their abbreviated Latin titles:
   AG: Ad Gentes, Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity.
   GS: Gaudium et Spes, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World.
   LG: Lumen Gentium, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church.
8. Émile Rideau, *The Thought of Teilhard de Chardin* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 597.
9. John Knox, *The Early Church and the Coming Great Church* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1955).
10. Paul Tillich wrote: "The lack of the arts of the eye in the context of Protestant life is, though historically understandable, systematically untenable and practically regrettable." *Systematic Theology,* 3 (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1963), p. 201.
11. In the closing pages of my article, "The Essence of Catholicism: Protestant and Catholic Perspectives," *Thomist* 48 (1984), pp. 607-33, I consider how Vatican Council II attempted to guard against heteronomy and other distortions to which Catholicism is subject. See especially pp. 627-33.

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The Sacramental Presence in Lutheran Orthodoxy

Eugene F. Klug

For Luther the doctrine of the Real Presence was one of the crucial issues of the Reformation. There is no way of understanding what went on in the years following his death, particularly in the lives and theology of the orthodox teachers of the Lutheran church, unless the platform on which Luther stood is clearly recognized. Luther had gone to the Marburg colloquy of 1529 with minimal expectations. In later years he reflected on the outcome of that discussion with Zwingli, noting that in spite of everything there had been considerable convergence except on the presence of Christ's body and blood in the Sacrament. These thoughts are contained in his *Brief Confession concerning the Holy Sacrament* of 1544. "With considerable hope we departed from Marburg," Luther comments, "because they agreed to all the Christian articles of the faith," and even "in this article of the holy sacrament they also abandoned their previous error" (that it was merely bread), and "it seemed as if they would in time share our point of view altogether."[1] This result was not to be, as history records.

With all the might that was in him Luther protested loudly throughout his life against any diminution of Christ's body and blood in the Sacrament.[2] Probably none of Luther's works played as large a role as did his famous "Great Confession" of 1528, the *Confession concerning Christ's Supper.* Herman Sasse, like many others, is duly impressed by this work and by the ardor and absolute fixedness with which Luther remained glued throughout his life to the words of Christ, "This is my body." Sasse notes how Luther emphasizes unquestioning dependence on Christ's words. Not even an angel from heaven should be allowed to divert us from the simple meaning which they have. They "are the words of life and blessedness" to everyone who receives Christ's body and blood with trusting faith.[3] Held by Scripture's absolute clarity in all references to the Supper, Luther argues that, when Christ instituted the Holy Supper, He clearly did not have a figurative purpose in mind. "If Christ had intended to institute a Supper in which, not his body and blood, but a likeness of his body and blood were present, he would properly have left us the old Mosaic supper with the paschal lamb," observes Luther, for such a lamb would quite wonderfully, almost automatically, represent His sacrifice of Himself for sinners.[4]

How clearly Christ had taught the doctrine of the Real Presence! This is Luther's stance, "See, then, what a beautiful, great, marvelous thing it is, how everything meshes together in one sacramental reality," states Luther in humble viewing of the whole sacramental action which Christ has commanded for His church. Luther had little concern for the precise "moment" of the Real Presence. Neither the so-called consecrationists, nor the distributionists, nor the receptionists, nor any other such breed, can claim him for their side. "The words are the first thing," Luther says simply, "for without the words the cup and bread would be nothing. Further, without bread and cup, the body and blood of Christ would not be there. Without the body and blood of Christ, the new testament would not be there. Without the new testament, forgiveness of sins would not be there. Without forgiveness of sins, life and salvation would not be there."[5] So this is the issue, the hinge on which all things turn, "since all this constitutes one sacramental reality," says Luther.

Luther's teaching on the Sacrament is the platform on which his spiritual heirs stood. Among the foremost of these was Martin Chemnitz who, even before he made his contribution to the Formula of Concord, had already written definitive studies dealing with the Lord's Supper. Most significant was a book devoted entirely to the Supper, *De Coena Domini*.[6] Martin Chemnitz stands in the gap between the time of Luther and the so-called orthodox Lutheran fathers or theologians of the seventeenth century. This year, 1986, marks the four hundredth anniversary of the death of the indisputable champion of Lutheran theology in the generation after Luther.[7] Without Chemnitz's hand on the rudder it is hard to imagine how the good ship of Lutheran theology (and the Lutheran church itself) could have survived.

In the dedicatory introduction to *The Lord's Supper* Chemnitz pinpoints what he considers to be the main issue in the sacramentarian controversy. Nobody should be allowed to tamper with a person's last will and testament, specifically Christ's! "For we must not believe," says Chemnitz, "that the testator willed anything other than what he expressed in his words," and "men often err" when they attempt "to read the mind of the testator," instead of what he actually said.[8] The plain and irrevocable rule ought to be "what the doctors of the law teach should be done in the case of the will and testament of any good man" and specifically and especially "in the case of the last will and testament of the very Son of God."[9]

For Chemnitz the reality of Christ's body and blood in the Sacrament is beyond quibble for the reason that the words of institution "are the words of the last will and testament of the very Son of God and not a game or place for exercising the mind by dreaming up unending interpretations that depart from the simplicity and proper meaning of the words."[10] "Even the civil laws regard such a will as so sacred that they have determined that those who have made any profit at all from the will for themselves shall be deprived of it, and their inheritance. . .taken away from them as being unworthy, on the grounds that they have departed from the will of the testator."[11] "Scripture itself uses this argument," says Chemnitz, that the rule which applies in civil law ought surely hold all the more, with highest respect, in the case of Christ![12] No one dare "to depart from the meaning of the words in one direction, when it is perfectly clear that the testator held to another." This is how the law reads. "For to what purpose are the words used except to demonstrate the will of the speaker?"[13]

"The heart of the whole controversy," says Chemnitz, "the question at issue," is this: "What is it which is present in the Lord's Supper which is distributed to those who eat, which we are commanded to take and receive, not just in the way it seems best to each individual, but by eating and drinking?" "Is it only common bread?" "The real truth of the matter" is that Christ affirms clearly the special gift, under the visible elements of bread and wine, of His body and blood. "For in regard to what is present in the Lord's Supper, what is distributed, what those who eat receive orally, He has pronounced and affirmed: 'This is My body, which is given for you. This is My blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins.'"[14] "The question," says Chemnitz, "is not what the power of God can do and what kind of presence and communication seems more outstanding and effective to us, but the question concerns the words of the last will and testament of the Son of God, which words. . .in their proper and natural meaning speak clearly and explicitly of the Supper which is observed among us here on earth."[15]

According to Chemnitz, the words of institution manifest a threefold eating (and drinking) in the Lord's Supper.[16] First, there is simple physical eating, and it is manifest "that the substance of the bread in the Eucharist is eaten in this natural way." Secondly, there is the sacramental eating of Christ's body, not in a visible, perceptible manner, but truly and substantially nonetheless. This

is the very heart and nub of Christ's testament, and it is not in any way suggested by the Savior that this eating is figurative or imaginary. True, "we are not able to demonstrate or understand how this takes place," but that it takes place "in a manner in which is known to Him alone" is hinged to Christ's solemn words. It is a truth made especially plain in the *manducatio indignorum* or *impiorum*, the fact that the unbelieving and unworthy communicants are guilty of the body and blood of Christ, for they do not receive it worthily, that is, by faith, failing to discern Christ's body and blood.

Thirdly, there is "the spiritual eating of the flesh and blood of Christ," says Chemnitz, something that "can take place either outside of or within the celebration of the Lord's Supper" as "our faith embraces and lays hold of Christ" and "applies to itself His benefits which He merited for us by the giving of His body and the shedding of His blood." This spiritual eating and drinking, however, must not divert us from the truth of the other two kinds of eating, the physical and sacramental, into a mystical reverie that leaves the elements behind. "In the Lord's Supper," says Chemnitz, "the spiritual eating must not so turn our mind and faith away from this celebration of the Supper which is taking place in the gathering of the congregation that in our meditations we are carried beyond the heaven of heavens," for the fact simply is "that the Son of God Himself in this distribution and reception of His body and blood is also giving, applying, and sealing to you all those benefits He gained for us by the giving of His body and the shedding of His blood." This is Christ's solemn seal.[17]

The instituting word of Christ was for Chemnitz the linchpin holding everything together. How Christ could effect the giving of His body and blood in the Sacrament was of no concern. "We on our part simply believe this presence because it has the testimony of the Word of God," and no one "ought to dispute about the mode of the presence."[18] Like Luther he believed "that the ground for the presence of the body of Christ in the Supper" was to be found simply and fully "in the truth of the words of institution."[19]

Chemnitz always maintained that the words of institution should be repeated each time that the Sacrament is observed. But he rejected the notion that the officiating clergyman by mere reci-

tation of the necessary syllables and letters had "such power and energy" to cause the body to be present.[20] "This ground is very firm," that "what is not consecrated, though it be bread and cup, is food for refreshment, not a religious sacrament."[21] But the consecration harks back to Christ's empowering word, "even as Paul asserts that in the preaching of the Gospel Christ Himself speaks through the mouth of His ministers" and "in the same manner . . . brings it about that the Baptism is a washing of regeneration and renewal."[22]

Chemnitz, like Luther, retained a very high regard for the act of consecrating the elements, but never apart from the use of the Sacrament, distributing and receiving the elements as Christ had ordained. It was abhorrent to both of these giants of the Reformation to think that they, or anyone for that matter, could effect some sort of change in the bread and the wine by the liturgical repetition of words. Hermann Sasse is quite correct when he observes that "nowhere do dogmatics and liturgics affect each other more profoundly than in the question of the nature and function of the consecration."[23] The Lutheran church is a liturgical church, but it is also the church that knows that God's Word prescribes no specific form of worship as necessary. The enabling word and power in the Sacrament is Christ's. When the pastor consecrates the bread and wine in the midst of his congregation he is setting aside these elements for the use which Christ commanded. The questions of when the Real Presence begins, when it ends, what happens when a wafer is dropped or wine spilled are really irrelevant. "For the whole action of the institution hangs together" with the offering, receiving, and eating, says Chemnitz.[24] "When therefore the bread is taken, blessed, divided, offered, and received according to the institution, this action is not rightly said to be either before or apart from the use of the Supper, which has its bounds in the entire action of the institution."[25] Therefore, Chemnitz regards as "revolting disputes," triggered by scholastic pettiness, such questions as these: "what about those particles to which the use has not yet come, that is, which have not been distributed, received, and eaten?"[26] or what is it that "a mouse which gnaws the bread is eating?"[27]

We know the high reverence that Luther had for the consecrated elements.[28] But in no way can we conclude that either he or Chemnitz held extremist views concerning the *reliquiae,* the elements that remained when the Supper was over. The conclu-

sion simply is that, where the whole action was not complete, the elements that remained or were dropped or spilled were to be viewed as natural bread and wine only, nothing more. To state more than this would border on reservationism, the idea that the elements retain their divine character as hosts of Christ's body and blood. Neither Luther nor Chemnitz may be claimed for this misguided, albeit pious, notion that has persistently cropped up within Lutheran theology, usually as a result of so-called liturgical renewal.

Therefore, it is claiming too much to attach extremist views to Chemnitz and to say that he had the mind of Luther in so thinking. This is, however, the claim of Bjarne W. Teigen. In connection with Article VII (paragraph 126) of the Formula of Concord Teigen has concluded that the reason why Chemnitz is urging a proper veneration of the Sacrament is that "the consecration effects the Real Presence." According to Teigen, "there can be no question that Chemnitz believes that the consecration in a valid observance of the Supper achieves the Real Presence, and he could not for theological reasons accept the position that we cannot fix from Scripture within the Sacramental *usus* when the Real Presence of Christ's body and blood begins."[29] Teigen asserts that "throughout all his writings he [Chemnitz] assumes that the consecration effects the Real Presence" and that this consecration is the repetition of the *verba,* "the powerful creative words of Christ,"[30] "The end result of this doctrine is that the consecration has achieved the sacramental union."[31]

What Luther and Chemnitz refuse to try to do, that is, fix the moment of Christ's presence in the Sacrament, Teigen presumes to do for them. It is certainly asserting too much to say that Chemnitz "in all his writings assumes that the consecration effects the Real Presence." The only point in *The Lord's Supper* which remotely approaches such a claim is the passage in which Chemnitz states that "when the word or institution of Christ comes to these elements, then not only one substance is present as before, but at the same time also the very body and blood of Christ."[32] The context, however, does not support Teigen's assertion, nor does the rest of Chemnitz's beautiful treatment of the Sacramental Presence, which he, like Luther, always sees as running straight back to the Lord's instituting word, as the Formula of Concord states.[33]

No doubt Teigen is correct in stating that Article VII: 126 of the Formula "is placed at the end of the Sacramentarian antitheses only to disavow the charge that the true Lutherans were guilty of artolatry," or bread worship.[34] But it may rightly be questioned whether he has caught the concern of the confessional writers for the proper veneration of the Lord who gave the Sacrament when he places all who disagree with his own consecrationism into the same bundle with "the Sacramentarians and the Melanchthonians who did not believe that the consecration effected the sacramental union."[35]

It is an unfortunate dispute, one which undoubtedly ought not have arisen in our day. To attach Luther's and Chemnitz's names to the standard is even more unfortunate. They consistently refrained from attempting to explain how or when Christ effected the sacramental union, though the fact of it in every proper celebration of the Supper they defended tooth and nail. This has always been the stance of the Lutheran church since the time of Luther. In his dogmatics notes W. H. T. Dau wrote: "Since the bread and wine in the Eucharist, owing to the institution of Christ, are sacramentally united with His body and blood, every communicant receives the body and blood of Christ, and it is impossible for any communicant not to receive them."[36] Charles Porterfield Krauth in his monumental work, *The Conservative Reformation and Its Theology,* concurs: "*When* He [Christ] speaks, we know it is done. The mathematical point need not concern us. We know the sacramental moment."[37] In attestation Krauth quotes the passage already cited from the Formula of Concord (VII: 74,75.), and he states in conclusion:

> In a word, unless the sacramental action is entire, as Christ ordained it, His sacramental presence will not be vouchsafed; if it be entire, His presence is given from its beginning to its end . . .Christ Himself knows the end from the beginning. At the beginning, middle, and end of the Supper, the minister need not fear to assert, nor the people to believe, the very words of Christ, in their simplest literal force. It is not *going to be* but *is,* when Christ says it is.[38]

In his concise, helpful *Enchiridion,* a handbook of Christian doctrine written for the laymen as well as the clergy, Chemnitz directly addresses the question of whether the body and blood of Christ are to be thought of as present if the consecrated elements are

neither distributed nor received. His answer zeroes in on the complete action ordained by Christ in the Sacrament: "Therefore, when the bread is indeed blessed but neither distributed nor received,... it is surely clear that the whole word of institution is not added to the element, for this part is lacking, 'He gave it to them and said, Take and eat.' And when the word of institution is incomplete there can be no complete Sacrament."[39] Chemnitz thereupon cites an analogous situation in baptism: "In the same way it is also not true Baptism, if the Word is indeed spoken over the water, but if there is no one who is baptized."[40]

Chemnitz never entertained any doubts about the power of Christ to effect the Real Presence of His true body and blood—simply because it was the Lord of heaven and earth Himself who had spoken the words of a solemn testament. Like Luther Chemnitz sensed that God was too small in people's minds when they found a logistical problem in trying to explain how Christ, who ascended to the right hand of God, could give His body and blood at many places and times on earth in the Sacrament. Such people were putting a lid on Christ's almighty power and denying "that He did not know or have at His disposal another, heavenly mode, by which He might be present in the Supper in His body and blood."[41] Was Christ according to His human nature perched in a heavenly pear tree? "The articles of our faith," says Chemnitz, "declare that Christ ascended to heaven in His body not as little birds, leaving the surface of the earth, sit in the top of a tree, nor as Elias was taken up into heaven, but in such a way that He sat down at the right hand of God the Father Almighty." We need to remember that "the right hand of God is not a circumscribed place or a particular seat or region in heaven by which Christ is limited, circumscribed, and enclosed," for "Scripture calls it the right hand of the majesty and power of God."[42] Let God be God, Chemnitz is implying in the vein of Luther. "Should He, then, not be able to do with His body and blood what He declared and ordained in express words in His testament?"[43]

The orthodox theologians to a man followed Luther and Chemnitz in their teaching on the sacramental presence. John Gerhard, for example, like his forebears, held that the instituting words of Christ are to be taken *kata to reeton,* "according to their genuine, literal, and natural meaning." These words point to "the true, real, and substantial presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Supper."[44] We call this presence *sacramental,* states Gerhard,

"because the celestial object in this mystery is bestowed and presented to us through the medium of external sacramental symbols; it is called *true* and *real* to exclude the figment of a figurative, imaginary, and representative presence; *substantial* to exclude the subterfuge of our opponents concerning the merely efficacious presence of the body and blood of Christ in this mystery; *mystical, supernatural,* and *incomprehensible,* because in this mystery the body and blood of Christ are present in a worldly manner," nor "in a corporeal and quantitative manner."[45]

Leonhard Hutter stresses the point that Christ's intention is obviously to present His body and blood as the seal of His will in the Sacrament and that He indeed has the power so to do.[46] John Quenstedt underscores the presence of "the very substance of the body of Christ" in the Sacrament at the same time that he dismisses any consideration of the body of Christ being present in a gross "physical, local, and circumscriptive" manner, much as Luther had done before him.[47] David Hollaz notes that there is a distinction to be observed "between the general and special presence" of Christ in this world.[48] The first has to do with His promise to uphold all things by the might of His power and omnipresence; the second has to do with His specific promise to give His body and blood in the Supper. Moreover, Hollaz distinguishes carefully between the spiritual eating of Christ by faith, which "is common to all times," and the sacramental eating of Christ's body and blood which "is peculiar to the New Testament."[49]

John Gerhard devoted a major portion of his treatment of the Lord's Supper to the consecration, but he did not allow it to be set apart and above that which Christ had also commanded, that the elements be distributed and that they be eaten and drunk.[50] Quenstedt saw the consecration as consisting first in the "separation of the external elements from a common and ordinary use," secondly, in "setting them apart for sacred use, as appointed in the Holy Supper, by solemn prayers and thanksgiving," and thirdly, "in the sacramental union of the bread and wine with the body and blood of Christ."[51] One might wonder, in view of the last point, whether Quenstedt, after all, was supportive of the view dismissed above that by the consecration the Real Presence is effected. The fact, however, is that he concurred fully with the position which his uncle, John Gerhard, had expressed in his treatment of the meaning of the consecration. Gerhard rejected the

idea that the mere "recitation of the words of institution" had "such power as to make the body and blood of Christ present." Instead, Gerhard (and so Quenstedt) believed "that the presence of the body and blood of Christ depends entirely upon the will and promise of Christ depends entirely upon the will and promise of Christ, and upon the perpetually enduring efficacy of the original institution."[52] It is by virtue of that word, Christ's promise, that the nature of the Sacrament is what it is, the true body and blood of the Lord; and neither unbelief nor, for that matter, faith plays any role in the Real Presence, according to Gerhard.[53]

It was the work of John Baier, the *Compendium Theologiae Positivae,* that Walther edited, re-published, and then used for the teaching of his dogmatics classes. Baier identified Christ Himself as the *causa efficiens principalis* which made the Sacrament what it is. It was the Lord's great love and kindness towards us which occasioned His institution of the Supper. Thus, Christ's institution must be seen as the impelling principal cause when one seeks the reason of the Real Presence; and in relation to this ordaining word of Christ the consecration, which is used in the celebration of the Supper ever since that time, must be seen as the lesser impelling cause, tied as it is to Christ's command and promise.[54]

"We could multiply testimony," says Krauth after quoting at some length from the Lutheran theologians whom we have cited and several others in addition.[55] But Krauth chooses not to continue, having shown convincingly that "no great dogmatician of our Church, who has treated of the Lord's Supper at all, has failed to protest in some form against the charge we are considering."[56] The "charge" to which he refers is that the Lutherans taught consubstantiation. This accusation Krauth lays to rest as absurd, and the same for any charges of transubstantiation or impanation. No Lutheran theologian worth his salt ever taught anything other than the true sacramental presence of Christ's body and blood.

The matter of the Real Presence, as we have shown, was very dear to Luther. It is dear to every earnest Christian to this day. Christ's enabling word is always the key to this great article of faith. Luther consistently led simple hearts to look in the right direction for the source of the Sacrament's power. In his treatise on *The Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests* of 1533 he wrote: "So, it is not by our doing, speaking, or work that bread

and wine become Christ's body and blood, much less is it by the chrism or consecration; rather, it is caused by Christ's ordinance, command, and institution.'"[57] Therefore, when we come to the Sacrament, "we hear these words, 'This is my body,' not as spoken concerning the person of the pastor or the minister but as coming from Christ's own mouth, who is present and says to us, 'Take, eat, this is my body.'" Then, as regards the officiant, Luther explodes in his somewhat impetuous style: "For our faith and the sacrament must not be based on the person, whether he is godly or evil, consecrated or unconsecrated, called or an imposter, whether he is the devil or his mother, but upon Christ, upon his word, upon his office, upon his command and ordinance.'"[59] It is because of the treasure which Christ in His love and kindness left us in the Sacrament that Luther shouted out from the bottom of his heart and soul in a later letter that directly reflected on the foregoing treatise: "I love it with all my heart, the precious, blessed Supper of my Lord Jesus Christ, in which He gives me His body and blood to eat and drink also orally with the mouth of my body, accompanied by the exceedingly sweet precious words, 'Given for you, shed for you.'"[60]

ENDNOTES

1. *LW* 38, 301.
2. *LW* 35, 45ff. cf. e.g., *The Blessed Sacrament of the Holy and True Body of Christ* (1519).
3. H. Sasse, *This Is My Body,* p. 109.
4. *LW* 37, 264.
5. Ibid., 338.
6. This book which was first published in 1570 has recently been translated into English by J. A. O. Preus and published by Concordia Publishing House (1979). It itself was the fruit of Chemnitz's early *Gutachten* in the Albert Hardenberg case. Chemnitz had written this theological opinion for Joachim Moerlin, his close friend and supervisor of the Brunswick church territory. Together with Tilemann Hesshusius, Moerlin demonstrated Hardenberg's deviation from Augsburg X on the Lord's Supper; his views were those of Zwingli and the Calvinists. The result was Hardenberg's dismissal from his pulpit in Bremen.

7. In recent years there has been a considerable revival of interest in Chemnitz and his works. His study on the Lord's Supper has already been mentioned. In addition, now nearing completion is an English translation of his rightly famous *Examen Concilii Tridentini* as *An Examination of the Council of Trent,* translated by Fred Kramer and published by Concordia Publishing House. Two volumes are presently in print in this *magnum opus.* Individual studies on the theology of Chemnitz are also available, e.g., E. F. Klug's *From Luther to Chemnitz on Scripture and the Word,* originally released by J. H. Kok in the Netherlands and now available from Concordia Theological Seminary Press, Ft. Wayne.
8. *The Lord's Supper,* p. 19.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid., 27.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid., 83.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., 39.
15. Ibid., 43.
16. Ibid., 58
17. Ibid., 58-64 *passim* for this whole paragraph. Chemnitz was well prepared for the sterling chapters he wrote on the Lord's Supper in his answer to Trent (*Examen Concilii Tridentini,* completed during the years 1565-1573) through the work which he had done in the Hardenberg case and on his book, *The Lord's Supper.* With obvious reference to that book Chemnitz states in his *Examen:* "We have explained all this in a repetition of the sound doctrine of the presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Supper in an adequate treatise." *(Examination of the Council of Trent,* II, 223.)
18. *Examination of the Council of Trent,* II, 224.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid., 225.
22. Ibid., 229.
23. Hermann Sasse, *We Confess the Sacraments* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1985), p. 113.
24. *Examination of the Council of Trent,* II, 248.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid., 252.
27. Ibid., 256.
28. Cf. Sasse, *We Confess the Sacraments,* p. 134, for the report concerning Luther's somewhat dramatic behavior after spilling the chalice's contents on the floor of the church at Halle.
29. *A Lively Legacy,* edited by Kurt Marquart, John Stephenson, and Bjarne W. Teigen (Concordia Theological Seminary Press, Ft. Wayne, 1985), p. 167.

30. Ibid., 168.
31. Ibid.
32. *The Lord's Supper,* p. 156.
33. FC VII: 75: "For the true and almighty words of Jesus Christ which he spake at the first institution were efficacious not only at the first Supper, but they endure, are valid, operate, and are still efficacious.... For where His institution is observed and His words are spoken over the bread and cup, and the consecrated bread and cup are distributed, Christ Himself, through the spoken words, is still efficacious *by virtue of the first institution,* through His word, which He wishes to be there repeated."
34. *A Lively Legacy,* 170.
35. Ibid.
36. *Doctrinal Theology,* II, 74.
37. Krauth, *op. cit.,* 822.
38. Krauth, *op. cit.,* 824.
39. *Ministry, Word, and Sacraments,* trans. Luther Poellot (St. Louis: Concordia, 1981), p. 121.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid., 125.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
44. Quoted in H. Schmid, *Doctrinal Theology of the Lutheran Church,* p. 561.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid., 562.
47. Ibid., 563.
48. Ibid., 565.
49. Ibid., 567.
50. Ibid., 572.
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid., 574.
53. Ibid., 576.
54. J. Baier, *Compendium Theologiae Positivae,* III, 491f.
55. Cf. Krauth, *op. cit.,* 771.
56. Ibid.
57. *LW* 38, 199.
58. Ibid.
59. Ibid., 200
60. Quoted in F. Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics,* III, 374. Pieper's translation is more vivid than that which is found in the American Edition, *LW* 38, 227.

Toward a New Lutheran Dogmatics

Lowell C. Green

Doctrinal theology has traditionally been the heart of theological education and practice in the evangelical Lutheran church. At certain times in history, dogmatics, which is the science of Christian doctrine, has been especially strong—during the Reformation period, in Lutheran orthodoxy of the seventeenth century, during the nineteenth-century reawakening, and during the first half of the present century. However, concern for sound doctrine has lately been less prominent than concern for vigorous activity and practice. "Let's not have ivory-tower theories but let's save souls;" or "Let's get out and fight for social justice." Nevertheless, as my old teacher John C. Mattes used to say, "You can't act right if you don't think right!" And there is much uneasiness in "conservative" as well as "liberal" circles that all is not well. We desperately need an up-to-date doctrinal system in order to regain a satisfactory perspective for the teaching and work of the church. But it is widely lamented that there is no adequate dogmatics book.

Some would argue that the *Christian Dogmatics* of Francis Pieper is still adequate. This argument possibly presupposes that a dogmatics book is normative rather than deliberative. This is dangerously akin to the notion that certain biblical commentaries have so correctly grasped the meaning of the inspired texts that such commentaries are to be the norms as to how a given scriptural text should be interpreted. In evangelical Lutheran thought, not even the symbolical books are allowed to dictate the meaning of a biblical passage, let alone the pronouncements of private authors, prominent churchmen, or even parliamentary assemblages.

Moreover, although Pieper's was the greatest dogmatics text ever written in North America, it had certain human weaknesses even when it was written, its English translation is not always reliable, and it is no longer up-to-date. It commands our respect and commends itself to our use, but it can no longer be our sole text of Christian doctrine. The reasons for this conclusion will appear several times as we proceed in the present essay. The chief concerns of Francis Pieper were that the doctrine of God be soundly taught, that the centrality of Jesus Christ as true God and true man be maintained, that the importance of the means of grace

be underscored, that the distinction of Law and Gospel predominate, and that the church always be mindful of pure doctrine. These must continue to be our chief concerns as we seek to preserve his contribution while we wrestle with the new problems of a new day.

A sound system of dogmatics must relate properly to the following five factors: (1) it must be soundly biblical; (2) it must stand in an historcial perspective (tradition; the Creeds and Confessions); (3) it must be contemporary and enter into dialogue with several modern attacks or confirmations of the faith once delivered; (4) it must present the truths of the Christian faith in a systematic whole (else it is not a dogmatics at all) and, in so doing, must be wary of the intrusions of human reason and philosophy; (5) finally, it should be practical and relevant to the proclamation and activity of the church today. In regard to the last point, it might be recalled that, prior to the nineteenth-century Reformed theologian Schleiermacher, systematic theology had included the application of the sacred truth. It has only been in the last century and a half that homiletics, catechetics, liturgics, and pastoral methods have been separated from dogmatics. At the present stage in history a new dogmatic system would do well to incorporate brief discussions of the doctrinal foundations of these practical disciplines of the theological curriculum. For example, a catechisation of the Ten Commandments must wrestle with the difficult problem of how to explain the words, "We should fear and love God." Should Law and Gospel be combined so that "fear God" would mean to hold Him in loving and filial reverence, or should they be distinguished so that "fear God" would mean to dread the Law and "love God" would mean to cling to the promises of the Gospel? This issue needs to be discussed today.

I. The Problems of Writing Prolegomena

The most important part of a dogmatics book is the prolegomena, in which the over-arching problems of the theological point of departure, the confessional stance, the attitude toward the Scriptures, the systematic approach, and the manner in which God is to be considered, as well as the way in which Law and Gospel are to be distinguished, must all be dealt with as the groundwork is laid for the system as a whole. Carl Stange underscored the crucial nature of prolegomena when, after publishing the first

volume of his own dogmatics, he decided not to conclude the work as other tasks occupied his time; he stated that everything was contained in the first part and that the unfolding of several doctrines could be dispensed with when the prolegomena were available. Robert Preus demonstrated the importance of a good start when he published his impressive study of the prolegomena of the old Lutheran dogmaticians.

Dogmatics must be biblical but should not be biblicistic. The difference, stated as briefly as possible, is that biblicism is an approach to biblical studies in which the proper context is overlooked, appropriate methods of interpretation are omitted, and the interpreter tries to jump back across the two millennia which separate us from the writers of Holy Writ. Nor should dogmatics be "Biblical Theology," even when the latter is carried out properly. The disciplines of "Theology of the Old Testament" and "Theology of the New Testament" belong to those departments of the theological institution, whereas dogmatics belongs to systematic theology. It is unfortunate that many teachers of dogmatics are actually biblical scholars rather than systematicians.

Dogmatics must be systematic. This fact does not mean that dogmatics should be philosophical; in fact, it should be carefully distinguished from philosophy. But it does mean that the task of the dogmatician is to present the truths of the Christian faith as a connected whole. Generally European theologians have made more successful systematicians than North Americans. Americans often have trouble maintaining a systematic stance without the intrusion of human reason or philosophy. The difficulty of presenting the truths of the Christian faith in a connected whole is increased by the practice of some larger American seminaries where the dogmatics course is parcelled out among a number of different professors, so that Professor A teaches only prolegomena, Professor B teaches Christology, and Professor C handles the doctrine of the church and the ministry. It is hard to see how Professor C can properly teach the Real Presence in the Lord's Supper if he has not thoroughly worked with Christology, or how Professor B can appropriately make Christology the center of a system of which he hardly is conscious if he does not struggle with the preliminary problems or has never taught the prolegomena. And Professor A is in the position of someone who goes to a movie and then leaves early without finding out what happened.

II. The Underlying Principle

What shall be the underlying principle of the entire dogmatic system, as it is to be presented in the prolegomena? We can only point out several general possibilities in this essay and leave a detailed presentation for fuller treatment in a book. However, reference can be made to several possibilities. That principle might be theocentric or it might be anthropocentric. It might be a person or it might be a thing. There has been a widespread tendency, especially among Fundamentalists and some conservative Lutherans, to propose the doctrine of the Sacred Scriptures as the underlying principle of dogmatics. In spite of the fact that such a procedure has many factors to commend it, we cannot go that way. The Holy Scriptures must, indeed, receive total acceptance; furthermore, they must be the source and norm for our theology. But they cannot be made the underlying principle, that is, the chief factor of Christian doctrine. The Scriptures have been given by inspiration of God, it is true; but God Himself must be the chief factor and the underlying principle of dogmatics.

This fact means that a dogmatic system which claims to represent the posture of Luther and of the Lutheran Confessions must start out with the doctrine of God, hidden in the majesty of the Law *(Deus absconditus)* and revealed in the Jesus of the Gospel *(Deus revelatus).* This approach rules out the rationalistic derivation of a doctrine of God through Dionysian philosophy, as practiced in the Middle Ages. This method, traditional in older Lutheran dogmatics, set up a doctrine of divine attributes in order to determine what God was like. Through the *via eminentiae* superior qualities of man were referred to God, with the inevitable conclusion that God possessed these qualities in the superlative: God was all-wise (omniscient), all-powerful (omnipotent), etc. Through the *via negationis* negative qualities of man were found reversed in God: God was sin-less, death-less, change-less, etc. Through the *via causalitatis* God was said to be made known through His works such as creation; the Creator of such a remarkable universe had to possess certain qualities such as power, majesty, beauty, wisdom, etc. This procedure is objectionable for several reasons. (1) At best, it is the peering into the things that God has not chosen to tell us and is, therefore, an act of disobedience. (2) It sets aside God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ and substitutes an action of reason and is, therefore, almost an act of idolatry. (3) It obscures the contrast between God Hidden

and Revealed, between Law and Gospel. Since no Dionysian philosophy can penetrate the wonder of God made man and since nothing can be added to the Gospel that Christ has not revealed, this methodology can only add to the Law. And since it claims to be a "revelation," it lends an inappropriate weight to the Law and tends to compete with the revelation of God in Christ. (4) Since the attributes of God that are thereby derived do not tend to distinguish between majestic qualities and merciful qualities of God and since the grace of God in Christ is not included in this procedure, the balance of Law and Gospel is disturbed. (5) Since attributing something to God is human work, the theologian tends to be "creating God" (cf. *Deus ex machina*). The value of such activity as a good work is questionable. (6) Since the lists of attributes derived from reason are supported with biblical "proof texts," sound hermeneutics is offended and proper doctrine of Scripture is done violence.

It must be the axiom of a sound Lutheran dogmatic system that we cannot know anything about God except what He has chosen to make known to us. Other world religions have some knowledge of the Law, but only Christianity has the Gospel. Since the doctrine of the Law does not attain its full significance until the Gospel teaches us that God's Son took upon Himself the full weight of the Law and, since the decisive point with respect to the Law is that its power to condemn was checked by the deed of Good Friday, only Christianity has an adequate understanding of the Law. However, the Law in itself is not a true revelation of God because it presents God the Judge rather than God the Savior. The veil has not truly been pulled aside until God has shown me that He has reconciled me to Himself in Christ; since this is the message we call the Gospel, revelation (in its specific sense) does not take place aside from this message of redemption in the Gospel. Therefore, the Law (which is called revelation in a general sense) is not revelation in that same specific sense.

Because there is a questionable tendency to allow a doctrine of the Holy Scriptures to be equated with revelation, a special caution is necessary. We must beware of a doctrine of the Scriptures which obscures the distinction between Law and Gospel or the distinction between Old Covenant and New Testament. The primary revelation of God was not a book but a person, the God-Man. The divinely inspired book is the record of the revelation of God in Christ (2 Cor. 5). Since the Lutheran Confessions point

out the necessity of distinguishing Law and Gospel, not all parts of the Bible are of equal importance. Certainly, the civil and ceremonial laws which have been done away are no longer relevant to the Christian, notwithstanding attempts of modern liturgiologists to build principles of worship upon Old Testament practices.

The inspired, infallible, and inerrant Holy Scriptures are the source and norm of dogmatics. However, one must beware of a biblicistic *sola scriptura,* which was taught neither by Luther nor by the Lutheran Confessions. The teachings of our Christian faith were explicated in the course of thousands of years of doctrinal development, in which the Holy Spirit faithfully led the church to new understanding of sacred truth. There is no warrant for ignoring the creeds and confessions of the church and subjecting the flock of Christ to the vagaries of subjectivistic interpretations of the Bible. The hundreds of sects and cults of our day are a poignant warning against unhistorical, uncontextual biblicism.

The Sacred Scriptures must be interpreted according to the soundest hermeneutical methods and instruments available. There is no reason why we should follow a false legalism in which the hermeneutical methods of some previous age must circumscribe our work today. Whether it be rabbinical methods or even those of Luther, old methodologies must not stifle modern capabilities.

An important principle in Lutheran hermeneutics is the distinction between the Old Covenant, or Old Testament, and the New Testament. This is an insight which Reformed writers have avoided and, since most commentaries for students limited to the English language are of Reformed authorship, it is an insight that is being lost among Lutherans in America. Such clichés as type and antitype, as well as the concepts associated with such terms as *Heilsgeschichte,* covenant, and dispensationalism, tend to blur the Lutheran distinction concerned and to confound Law and Gospel. The clearest presentation of the distinction between the Old and New Testaments is given by Martin Chemnitz in his *Examination of the Council of Trent* (I:iv:6ff).

III. Views and Concepts Requiring Treatment

No previous work in Lutheran dogmatics has devoted enough attention to that philosophy which is characteristic of our country, American Pragmatism. Through John Dewey it down-graded

past values and educational methods and imbued our schools with "Progressive Education" or Instrumentalism, in which the child cannot learn from the past but learns only through his own experience. The loss of foreign languages and classical studies, as well as the idea of extracting truth from one's own consciousness (in contrast to the Third Article), together with the vogue of using "workbooks," has come from Deweyism. Furthermore, Dewey's rejection of any traditional values, particularly the Ten Commandments, and his claim that what is right and moral is what works for me ("pragmatism") have had profound impact upon American morality and immorality. His pupil, Shailer Mathews, applied progressive principles to religious education. This procedure led him to reject Biblical history, since "the experiences of previous generations have no relevance to the present frame of reference." Thus, the Dick-and-Jane story replaced Abraham, Joseph, and David in the Sunday School curriculum, and the futility of memorizing the catechism, Bible verses, and selected hymn stanzas seemed evident. Applied to church extension, church growth, and synodical programs, American Pragmatism suggested that the validity of a method was determined by its workability. Our purpose here is not to make negative criticisms or value judgments of any other sort, but by means of selected examples to make the reader aware of philosophical rivals to biblical teaching on the American scene, secular and ecclesial.

American Pragmatism has been neglected by systematic theologians nurtured only by European thinkers. The contrary is true of Existentialism, a distinctively European philosophy, whose impact on American thought has perhaps been exaggerated. Kierkegaard, Bultmann, and even Tillich were more European than American. Nevertheless, we must not ignore this school of thinking. Existentialism is basically the repudiation of history, with reality existing only in the present moment; since Americans sometimes lack a strong historical consciousness, they are vulnerable to such an approach. It eradicates the value of the cumulative experiences of Christianity, whether in history, creeds, or liturgies; it wants to be fully contemporaneous, instantaneous, and pragmatic. Its offshoot of demythologisation in the interpretation of the Bible is perhaps visible even among "conservatives" when a passage such as Acts 1:8, "Ye shall be witnesses of Me," is shorn of its historical context—the commission of the apostles as eyewitnesses to the incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus—and is given a certain "timeless" quality (at odds

with the concept that God became man). Thereby, every Christian is a "witness," not because he has seen Jesus in His earthly ministry, nor even because he "witnesses" to the saving work of Christ accomplished in Palestine, but because he testifies to his own inward religious experience. This is not a far cry from Bultmann's insistence regarding Easter that it is irrelevant whether Christ rose from the dead historically; the only thing of importance is the question, "Is He risen (existentially) in me?" A hermeneutical procedure which does away with the problem of historical facticity to concentrate upon an internal experience is the essence of Bultmann's program of demythologisation, whether it is practiced by a "liberal" or by one who claims to support the inerrancy of the Scriptures.

A very insidious influence on Lutheranism in America has been the "covenant" thinking of Calvinists, Puritans, and other Reformed thinkers. It has influenced our course in such diverse forms as the notion of the "manifest destiny" of the American people (as the New Israel, the New Chosen People of God), the bitter experiences of anti-German persecution during World War I, the use of the Scofield Reference Bible with its dispensationalism and the related emergence of Jehovah's Witnesses, various approaches to the interpretation of the Old Testament, Zionism and American aid for Israel (including Arab resentment and the oil embargo), and the new ecumenical liturgics. The *Statement on Communion Practices,* published by the LCA and ALC in 1976 and later adopted by both, declared that the theme of the covenant was central to their interpretation of the Bible and their concept of worship and sacramental fellowship. And the notion that the Divine Service is a "celebration" on the part of God's covenant people is not lacking in the Missouri Synod. Its implications for "worship" as a human work and for freedom in establishing altar fellowship is obvious. The use of the NIV Bible reinforces the concept of God as "Sovereign Lord," the Reformed concept of "covenant," and the Bible as the "law" for God's "covenant people." Covenant notions underly such hymns as 241, 332, 492, 495, 544, and 567 in the *Lutheran Book of Worship.*

These are several examples of recent thinking in America where careful attention to ideological suppositions will help the theological student, pastor, or theologian to detect danger spots. Lutheranism in North America is situated in a *diaspora.* Lutheranism is not an isolated religion; it is an entire culture. The

question needs to be dealt with again and again: To what extent can Lutherans accommodate themselves to the strains of Puritanism, pragmatism, and autonomous culture in the surrounding world? In the above lines, the attempt has been made to show that Lutheran dogmatics is not some achievement of the past, but is the very contemporary act of thinking through the faith which is believed in dialogue with the world about us. The starting point is the treatment of the prolegomena to dogmatic theology.

The Curious Histories of the Wittenberg Concord

James M. Kittelson with Ken Schurb

Like many other confessional documents of the sixteenth century, the Wittenberg Concord has a curious history. In fact, it has two curious histories, because its *Entstehungsgeschichte* and its *Nachwirkungsgeschichte* appear to contradict one another. With respect to the one, Ernst Bizer (its most recent serious student) flatly calls the Wittenberg Concord a compromise between Luther and the South German reformers. With respect to the other, its most salient section was included *expressis verbis,* in the Formula of Concord!

One question naturally poses itself: how can a single, relatively brief document be at the same time a compromise with some of Luther's bitterest opponents in the Sacramentarian Controversy and still be enshrined in the one confession that most clearly marked Lutherans as distinct from all other anti-Roman reformers on just the issue in dispute? Oddly enough, the answer to this question must begin by affirming the truth of both parts of the apparent contradiction. The Wittenberg Concord *was* a compromise when it was signed in 1536. By the same token, it *does* have a rightful place in the Formula.

I. The *Entstehungsgeschichte*

There are a number of reasons for arguing that the Concord was a compromise. Perhaps the most powerful of these is that it comes as such a surprise in light of the Sacramentarian Controversy that preceded it. The bitterness that developed between Wittenberg and the South German/Swiss connection is legendary. While Luther and his colleagues engaged in condemnation of the "sacramentarians," as he called them, they in turn tried to restrain themselves in public. But in private they could be equally hostile. Wolfgang Capito from Strasbourg scornfully referred to Lutherans as "the 'breadifiers' of God" *(impanati Dei)* and, when Martin Bucer tried to bring the Swiss into the Concord, Heinrich Bullinger (Zwingli's successor at Zurich) replied by inventing a new Latin verb, *bucerisare,* which may be roughly translated as "to shilly-shally."[2]

Perhaps the tenor of relations between the two sides is best captured in the following exchange between Zwingli and Luther at Marburg in 1529.

> *Zwingli:* It is for you to prove that the passage in John 6 speaks of a physical eating.
>
> *Luther:* You express yourself about as poorly and carry the argument forward about as well as does a walking stick standing in the corner.
>
> *Zwingli :* No, no, no! This is the passage that will break your neck!
>
> *Luther:* Don't be so sure of yourself. Necks don't break so easily here. Remember you are in Germany and not in Switzerland.[3]

It is common these days for historians, theologians, churchmen, and even confessionally orthodox clergy to bemoan the violence of these exchanges and rightly so. (It is, after all, not necessary to engage in *ad hominem* attacks simply to defend one's own position.) This hand-wringing has also, however, led to an unfortunate tendency among the ecumenically-minded in particular—to overlook, downgrade, or distort the real theological differences that lay between the two parties. They were, in fact, in utter disagreement, and the more they talked the greater the disagreement became.

This fact of fundamental disagreement makes the Wittenberg Concord all the more surprising. The doctrinal gulf between the two parties deserves, therefore, to be emphasized. Although, as everyone knows, a person's understanding of the words of institution has many theological ramifications, just two issues will suffice to show how deeply the disagreement ran; these are the place of John 6:63 in understanding the little word "is," on the one hand, and the doctrine of the incarnation, on the other.

John 6 in general and John 6:63 in particular provided *the* enduring bone of contention between the two sides. As is common knowledge, it was the centerpiece at the Marburg Colloquy. Luther began the proceedings by declaring that the burden of proof lay on Zwingli, Oecolampadius, and their party. They replied, in essence, by trying to shift the burden of proof back to Luther.

There is metaphor, such as "I am the vine," at other places, they said. Luther refused to be ensnared. There the debate at Marburg began and there it ended.[4]

But the argument about John 6:63 has a much more ancient lineage than just the exchanges at Marburg. It began, in fact, long before there was any such thing as a Sacramentarian Controversy, and it began on both sides. Indeed, the two rival positions were staked out before there was even a reform movement.

The South German side may be more interesting because it appears to reach back further in time than does Luther's. The tendency to spiritualize the words of institution is already evident in the late Middle Ages with figures such as Wycliffe and Hus and in the Northern Renaissance with Erasmus and many others. But it is also evident in one of the parties to the Sacramentarian Controversy. Conrad Pellikan, the eminent Hebraist, reported that he came to visit Wolfgang Capito in 1512 and found him in a state of near despair. Capito had read Wycliffe's condemnation of transsubstantiation and found that he agreed with it. He could not escape the conclusion that the body and blood were spiritually "but not really, corporeally, or substantially" present in the bread and wine.[5]

Pellikan did not mention John 6:63 in his account. But it is no accident that the very first exchange between the Strasbourg theologians and Luther on this issue does. The goad was Andreas Carlstadt, who passed through Strasbourg after having been ejected from Saxony. Carlstadt's theology of the Eucharist was so aberrant as to be unworthy of study, but his visit—and the thirteen books he published on the subject—disturbed Bucer's and Capito's parishioners. They then wrote both Zwingli and Luther for clarification and advice. After rejecting Carlstadt's opinion, they described their own. Their words to Luther are most revealing: "The bread and the cup are external things and, however much the bread may be the body of Christ and the cup his blood, they nonetheless provide nothing for our salvation, seeing that the flesh, in sum is of no profit. But on the contrary, this is the only thing that brings salvation: to remember the Lord's death." Here is both the reference to John 6:63 and the view of the Lord's Supper as a memorial. And the fight had not even begun.[6]

Luther's position, too, was already well-formed. As early as 1519, when he found himself accused of being a Hussite or Bohemian, he remarked in passing that John 6:63 in no way applied to the declaration of Jesus, "This is my body," "This is my blood." In an *Explanation of Certain Articles on the Holy Sacrament* he insisted "that the Lord is saying nothing about the sacrament in this passage. On the contrary, he is talking about faith in the Son of God and the Son of man, who is Christ." A few lines later he declared, "These [particular] Bohemians I regard as heretics. May God have mercy on them!"[7] Five years before his future opponents appealed to it, Luther had concluded that this very passage of the Scriptures could not be brought to bear upon the words of institution.

It might be argued that here Luther was merely trying to distance himself from Hus, even though he did not condemn all Hussites. Happily, he repeated himself in 1522, still two years before the Sacramentarian Controversy. His friend Paul Speratus asked him for an opinion about the teaching that the bread and the wine were only symbols of Christ's body and blood. Then (and again in 1523 when he responded to much the same question from Margrave George of Brandenburg-Ansbach) the issue was whether to venerate the consecrated bread and wine. On each occasion Luther gave the same answer. In their sacramental use the bread and wine were Christ's body and blood, but whether one venerated them was indifferent. No one was to be compelled to do so or not to do so. Nonetheless, he insisted, those who "contort the little word 'is' into 'signifies'" did so "frivolously and unsupported by the Scriptures."

The disagreement over the applicability of John 6 to the words of institution was, therefore, long-standing. At least for Luther, it also involved far more than what communicants received at the Lord's Supper. Oecolampadius, for instance, joined Zwingli in depending on John 6:63 for his understanding of the words of institution. But he added that, because Christ was resurrected and seated at the right hand of the Father, he could not be physically present in the elements of the Lord's Supper. To Luther, such an argument amounted to "mere physics." On the contrary, he replied, "the Word says first of all that Christ has a body, and this I believe; secondly, that this same body rose to heaven and sits at the right hand of God; this too I believe. It says further that this same body is in the Lord's Supper and is given to us to eat. Likewise I believe

this, for my Lord Jesus Christ can easily do what he wishes, and that he wishes to do this is attested by his own words."

If nothing else, Oecolampadius convinced Luther that any argument against the simple meaning of the words of institution turned on assumptions that came from human logic. In addition, Luther saw that any of these assumptions could then be turned against other articles of the Christian faith, such as the incarnation. As he put it, "We hold the flesh of Christ to be very, indeed absolutely, necessary. No text, no interpretation, no use of human reasoning can take it away from us."[8]

For Luther, the core issue in the Sacramentarian Controversy was the understanding of human flesh itself and the power of the Word to penetrate it. To his mind the great error came in the argument that, according to John 6:63, physical things could not, by their nature, carry spiritual benefits. In a work prepared for the Frankfurt book fair in spring of 1527, he insisted that "everything our body does outwardly and physically is in reality and in name done spiritually if God's Word is added to it and it is done in faith. Nothing can be so material, fleshly, or outward but that it becomes spiritual when it is done in the Word and in faith. 'The spiritual' is nothing more than what is done in us and by us through the Spirit and faith, whether the object with which we are dealing is physical or spiritual." By contrast, he argued, "Our fanatics. . .think nothing spiritual can be present where there is anything material and physical, and they assert that the flesh is of no profit [John 6:63]."[9] For Luther, the incarnation itself was at stake in the debate over the words of institution.

The Sacramentarian Controversy therefore had roots that were both long and deep. There can be little wonder that it should be marked by real bitterness and profound suspicion. After the Diet of Augsburg, Bucer (who had come to think of it as a verbal misunderstanding) visited Luther at Coburg. Luther was so unforthcoming that all Bucer could report to his colleagues was that "we will have to swallow much from this man" for the sake of concord![10]

But Luther had good reason to be suspicious of Bucer. In addition to certain unwelcome alterations he had made in Luther's *Postil* and Bugenhagen's *Exposition of the Psalms,* Bucer had not especially distinguished himself in the eyes of the Lutheran

participants at the Marburg Colloquy. Osiander's report on Marburg contains near-prophetic words on the Monday discussion he and Brenz had with Bucer and Hedio:

> We brought Bucer to the point where he admitted that Christ's body was in the Lord's Supper and was given to believers in and with the bread; but [he said] it was not given to unbelievers, for this reason: Christ called only the bread which he gave to believers his body and did not at all mean the bread given to unbelievers. At this point we said a new controversy would arise, yet not as vehement as the previous one. We expected that because of this debate we would perhaps still reach an agreement. However, Bucer, after he joined his companions, was dissuaded from his point of view and again apostasized![1]

Considering that Bucer, even in his most conciliatory moment at Marburg, still would not grant that unbelievers receive the body and blood of Christ, one must conclude that the Wittenberg Concord was an unlikely document.

II. The Compromise

The behavior of those who reached the Wittenberg Concord also suggests that it was a compromise. To summarize the events briefly, the two parties were to have met at a halfway point between Strasbourg and Wittenberg, but Luther kept pleading his age, weakness, and illness until finally the South Germans came all the way to Wittenberg itself. When they arrived, they learned that Luther would not receive them. Abruptly he did so, but then equally abruptly he terminated the first day's meeting. When the southerners at last had the opportunity to present their views, Luther turned to his colleagues, asked if they were acceptable, and then—abruptly once more—declared that they were in concord. Bucer and Capito wept.

The Wittenberg Concord was obviously a compromise from the South German point of view. In sum, the South Germans signed a confession that says not a word about the Lord's Supper as a memorial and that ignores the issue of what constitutes "the spiritual." It is also apparent that they wanted some sort of agreement far more earnestly than did the Wittenbergers. They made the initial approaches. They persevered over the six years that elapsed since Augsburg. And they made the long trip to Witten-

berg. More significantly, they signed an agreement that explicitly included the *manducatio indignorum,* and they ignored John 6:63 (perhaps studiously so) both in their oral presentation and in the written statement that everyone signed.

The text did speak of a sacramental union and even clarified what this term meant: "that is, they [Bucer and his associates] hold that when the bread is distributed *[porrecto]* at the same time the body of Christ is present and truly offered *[exhibere]*".[12] The Wittenberg Concord, then, followed Luther's insistence in the preceding negotiations, namely, that what was done with the bread in the sacrament was likewise done with the body of Christ. The Concord maintained this thought by indicating that the bread was the body of Christ as it was *offered,* and before it was received.[13] Most striking of all, though, were the words, "as Paul says, the unworthy also eat *[indignos manducare].* Thus, they hold that the true body and blood of Christ are distributed also to the unworthy, and that the unworthy eat, where the words and institution of Christ are retained."[14]

But Luther also compromised. Specifically, he did not insist that the South Germans explicitly disassociate themselves from their earlier interpretation of John 6:63. H. G. Haile, in his excellent recent study of the mature Luther, even suggests that Luther so wanted concord that he feigned intractibility during the final months precisely in order to wring concessions from the other side.[15] Interestingly, the reformer began the proceedings at Wittenberg by demanding that the South Germans expressly repudiate Zwingli, but he did not finally force them to do so. Rather, he satisfied himself with a condemnation of anyone who taught that the elements were "mere bread and wine," a teaching that the Swiss never held.

Luther further compromised by agreeing to some phrasing with which many Reformed theologians later thought they could live. Specifically, he signed a confession that declared "that with the bread and wine the body and blood are truly and substantially present, offered, and received." In this regard, it is important to note the word "with," a word that would cause no end of trouble in the debate over the *Variata.* In addition, Luther signed a confession that failed to give a complete definition of "the unworthy." It stated that these "partake for judgment" if they presented themselves "without repentance and faith."[16] The unanswered key question was, what did the respective sides mean by "faith"?

Bucer's public explanation of the Wittenberg Concord, which he delivered in Strasbourg on June 22, provides a starting point for answering this question. He distinguished three types of people: the "altogether godless" (who ordinarily would not even present themselves for the Lord's Supper, but would receive only bread and wine if they did), unworthy communicants, and worthy communicants. The second group stands out as the most interesting for present purposes. They

> believe the words of the Lord, who here offers his body, and receive the sacrament with such faith as to receive likewise the sacramental object *[rem Sacramenti],* yet they do not worthily *[digne]* estimate this gift of God. By this indignity they render themselves guilty of the Lord's body and blood. . . and they do receive it because they embrace the Lord's words and institution; but they do not eat truly *[revera],* as Augustine says—i.e., they do not fully enjoy *[fruuntur]* this quickening food, which they do not let sink sufficiently into the mind.

Bucer said these unworthy communicants were like those who "hear the Gospel and appropriate the salvation in it, but as they do not sufficiently examine it or meditate upon it, but let it slip from mind, they rob themselves of the word."[17]

To Bucer, then, one could believe the Lord's words and thus "embrace" His institution, yet not be worthy because one did not show appropriate concern for God and salvation. It is important to note that Bucer was not simply trying to insist that faith in the sacrament should be genuine faith, as opposed to mere head-knowledge. In his written report on the Wittenberg negotiations he described the unworthy as those who "are possessed not merely of mind and reason—which of course recognize there nothing but bread and wine—but of faith also. But because they receive it without true dedication of heart, and therefore without that living and saving faith which appropriates for itself the boundless grace of God, they are consequently guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. . ."[18] How one responded to the gift of God was crucial. An inadequate response could not only destroy faith but also, in effect, distort the character of faith which was present![19]

By contrast, for Luther the sacrament *was* the Gospel. One who believed the words of Christ's institution (especially "given and

shed for you for the forgiveness of sins") was a Christian, no matter how weak his faith or how halting his response, for faith was, first and foremost, the empty sack into which God poured His blessings. But Bucer could declare that "a large number of those who exercise faith in the ordinance of the Lord fail to discern the Lord's body, and so receive the Lord's body in this sacrament unworthily."[20] The contrast between Bucer's and Luther's sacramental theology remained basic.

Great eagerness to come to an agreement nonetheless carried the day. It is worth reemphasizing that this eagerness was not unilateral. The Lutheran negotiators, if somewhat more careful, seemed as willing to come to terms as their South German counterparts. At one point Bucer had affirmed that communicants who had faith in the Lord's institution but failed to show "true and life-giving faith" did receive the body and blood. Bugenhagen then seized the opportunity and asked him, "So it could rightly be said that the unworthy receive the Lord's body?" Yes, Bucer happily responded, provided the words and institution of the Lord were observed.[21] But this proviso meant something quite different to Bucer than it did to the Lutherans. There is no escaping the conclusion that both sides compromised by virtue both of what they did say and what they tacitly agreed not to say in the Concord.

III. *Nachwirkungsgeschichte*

How could a document like this—one that clearly leaves room for at least a certain sort of Reformed position—make its way into the Formula? Certainly, the Formulators wished to include everyone they possibly could. After all, they were seeking concord and not yet another fight, another round in the *rabies theologorum* of which Melanchthon so bitterly complained. Still, as in the *condemnamus,* the Formulators were also willing to condemn contrary teachings and, in particular, those they ascribed to Calvin.

There is consequently far more to the Wittenberg Concord's place in the Formula than the Formulators' desire to be as inclusive as possible. The first factor is obvious. They pictured the Formula as a true elaboration of the Augsburg Confession, and they did so for political as well as confessional reasons. In turn, the *Invariata* is viewed as simply an elaboration on the three Ecumenical Creeds and therefore a summary of the Scriptures. Structurally, the Wittenberg Concord was therefore something of a skip-

step between the Augustana and the Formula. It was just a notch below the other documents that appear in the Book of Concord as separate entries. Perhaps it should be viewed as a further explanation of but one point of the Augustana.

The formulators had good reason to include the Wittenberg Concord in just this way. Perhaps its most important theological feature, to them, was the insistence on the *manducatio indignorum,* at least in form. As previously indicated, this had been a major concession on the part of the South Germans, particularly surprising in light of the conversation Osiander and Brenz had with Bucer at Marburg in 1529. Evidently, it was of such great moment to the formulators that it dwarfed other aspects of the Wittenberg Concord by comparison. For example, the Formula quoted the section of the Concord on the sacramental union, but not in full. The German text omitted the clarification cited above.[22] Significant as agreement about the sacramental union was, the formulators apparently thought they could assert the standard Lutheran understanding of the real presence even more forcefully by hurrying on, as it were, to the most salient point of all: the *manducatio indignorum.*[23]

Of course, Chemnitz, Andreae, *et al.,* were trying to demonstrate the consistency of the Lutheran position from previous years as a response to the crypto-Calvinists of their day. Luther's situation in 1536 was somewhat different. He faced the anything-but-hidden Bucer, and he had good reason to continue to be suspicious of him even after the ink was dry on their signatures. Such is also in the nature of a compromise. Yet relations between the two sides were warm, to say the least. Capito began shamelessly to court Katie Luther's favor, even to the point of sending her a golden ring. He also suggested that one of Luther's sons might be sent to Strasbourg to study theology under himself and Bucer. These two in fact sent one of their students—a certain Johann Marbach—to study with Luther and Melanchthon. Capito and Bucer even announced plans to publish an edition of Luther's works from one of Strasbourg's many presses.[24] There is a sense in which the two sides exchanged hostages, or at least Strasbourg sent its share.

Secondly, Bucer was scrupulously faithful to the terms of the Wittenberg Concord, at least as he understood them. It is true that Luther had occasion to chide him about some of the word-

ing Bucer used in his desperate maneuvering to bring the Swiss into the agreement. Nonetheless, at least to his colleagues in Strasbourg, Bucer repeatedly insisted "that the body and blood of Christ are present, offered, and received with the bread and wine, and truly and substantially so."[25] In so doing, Bucer did carefully underline that the body and blood were not locally included in the bread and the wine as "food for the body." Third, Bucer was not only at pains to observe the Concord in Strasbourg. Nine months after the Wittenberg negotiations, Melanchthon, in a letter he wrote from the famous theolgian's conference in Smalkald, noted that the Concord had come up briefly in the discussions there. "Bucer spoke plainly and clearly concerning the mystery, affirming the presence of Christ," Melanchthon reported. He added that Bucer's testimony was so powerful that it satisfied everyone present, including the stricter brethren.[26]

Perhaps Bucer was *merely* being scrupulous. If so, he was carrying out two other provisions of the agreement. One specified that "it is necessary on both sides to refer this matter to other preachers and authorities," because "it is not allowable for us to come to terms concerning an agreement before we have referred it to the rest." Then all concluded by declaring, "we have the hope that, if the rest, on both sides, would so agree, there would be complete harmony" among us.[27]

The point is simple: Bucer was both being faithful to the Wittenberg Concord and beginning a work by which it captured Strasbourg for *all* the Lutheran confessions. To be sure, John Calvin came to the city shortly and left a few years later still unconverted. But he did leave with a profound distaste for Zwingli.[28] It must also be granted that those of the Reformed persuasion found a home in Strasbourg for years to come. But in 1563 the city drove Gioralomo Zanchi and Peter Martyr Vermigli, the originators of Calvinist orthodoxy, from the theological faculty of its Academy, and in 1598 it subscribed to the Formula of Concord. In sum, the Wittenberg Concord helped make Strasbourg officially Lutheran.[29]

But how did it do so? One way was through Marbach, who was sent to Wittenberg to study, returned to Strasbourg, and became the president of the Company of Pastors until his death in 1581. His controversy with Zanchi between 1560 and 1563 is the major event in this story. There is no need to rehearse the

details of this conflict here.[30] The point is that the Wittenberg Concord played a very important role in Marbach's victory over Zanchi and, therefore, over Reformed conceptions of the Lord's Supper within Strasbourg. In just this regard most of the debate between the two seems odd from the perspective of a modern theologian and the student of the confessions. They staked out their respective doctrinal positions quickly and clearly and never moved from them. Instead (and in addition to the usual name-calling) the argument turned to who—Marbach or Zanchi—genuinely represented the true tradition of Strasbourg's Reformation. Consequently, they quickly began rummaging through the writings and documents left behind by the previous generation of reformers in much the way some scholars treat these very same documents today. The Wittenberg Concord was naturally one of the documents that came under scrutiny.

Why, it should be asked, did Marbach and Zanchi choose to debate the issues between them in this peculiar way? One answer to this question is that by now everyone knew the straightforward theological and biblical arguments by heart. Historical theology, therefore, provided the natural grounds for the struggle between the two traditions, just as (in many respects) it does today.

But there is also a more immediate answer to this question. It concerns the audience. In sum, Marbach and Zanchi were not really addressing one another or even other theologians. They were addressing the Senate and XXI, Strasbourg's highest ruling body. These men tended to think in terms of tradition and law; they made it abundantly clear on a number of occasions that they were not theologians and had no wish to become embroiled in theological arguments, which they regarded themselves as incompetent to judge. As a result, Zanchi was forced to have recourse to the *Confessio Tetrapolitina,* a confession whose writing almost no one celebrates.

The Tetrapolitana was the confession that Bucer and Capito were forced to compose at Augsburg in 1530, when Melanchthon would not agree to their signing the Augustana. Now, over thirty years later, Zanchi was resurrecting this document, and Strasbourg's politicians found it acutely embarrasing. The wording of their final decree is eloquent on just this point: "By this confession [the Augustana] and by the Wittenberg Concord we wish to take our stand. We wish to hear no more about the Tetrapolitana Confession, whether praise of it or criticism." The Wittenberg Concord had won.

Explaining exactly why it won is more difficult than establishing that it did, in fact, carry the day. There is, however, a sentence in the decree just quoted that provides an important clue. The authorities began by declaring, "The Senate and XXI signed the Augsburg Confession in 1561;"[31] that is, just as the struggle between Marbach and Zanchi was beginning. Indeed, they had done so when they subscribed to the Naumburg Declaration of that year. In the aftermath of this decision both Zanchi and Martyr were also forced to sign the *Augustana Invariata,* although they did so *ut pie* (or *ut recte*) *intellecta.* But all this information only leads to one more question: why, with the Augustana (to which Marbach repeatedly referred) to back them, should the authorities bother to declare that they were standing by the Wittenberg Concord too?

The answer to this question says something about the genius of the Wittenberg Concord. Its concluding section contains the following statement: "Since, however, all profess that in all articles they want to hold and teach according to the Confession and Apology of the princes professing the gospel, we are especially anxious that harmony be sanctioned and established."[32] In sum, Strasbourg's theologians—not the politicians, but the theologians —had already subscribed to the Augsburg Confession nearly thirty years earlier. Moreover, given the date (1536), they had signed the *Invariata.* Therewith they themselves had, in effect, repudiated the Tetrapolitana. Unconsciously, they had also made it exceedingly difficult for Reformed theologians of the generation after Calvin to find refuge in the *Variata,* as Martyr's and Zanchi's discomfort well illustrates.

Conclusion

On the same day that the Wittenberg Concord was struck, Melanchthon reported the proceedings to a friend. Little has been accomplished, he declared. Basic disagreements persisted.[33] In evaluating this judgment, it must be borne in mind that this same Melanchthon is the one who would (inadvertently, I think) use the little word, "with," in the *Variata.* He is the same man who would be accused (and perhaps rightly) of "Crypto-Calvinism" by the generation that followed. Is it possible that he saw that the Wittenberg Concord *was* a compromise? Is it possible—at least from the point of view of the Gnesio-Lutherans—that he was led astray by it?

At the moment (and pending further discussion and research) I think the answer to both questions is yes. But what about Luther? He was no fool. Surely he knew that the Concord was a compromise in terms of its literal wording. If he was a fool and if he did not know that the Concord was a compromise, then why did he watch Bucer so carefully after the agreement was reached? His feelings by no means matched the near euphoria that can be documented on the side of the South Germans. Rather, when he encountered Bucer at Gotha a year later, he chided the Strasbourg theologian for the concessions he was now apparently willing to make in order to bring the Swiss into concord. Luther knew that Bucer would *bucerisare.* But, of course, such things are the very essence of compromises.

Yet there was something else at stake, and Luther may well have known it too. The "something else" was tradition, of which Tevye so eloquently sings in "Fiddler on the Roof." At this very moment Luther was himself in the midst of creating tradition. He was creating it through his catechisms, through the visitations, through the newly-reinstituted disputations, through the pastors he was training, and—yes—through the Wittenberg Concord. In this document he had at least (until the present) stricken John 6:63 from Lutheran discussions of the Lord's Supper, and he had obtained agreement to the *manducatio indignorum* in so many words.

Luther certainly did not know that young Marbach (whose doctoral disputation he chaired) would become the president of the Company of Pastors in Strasbourg. He had no idea that the Augsburg Confession would become part of the German constitution after Passau in 1552, and that henceforth all the Reformed in Germany would struggle to be included within the terms of the Augustana. He did not know that Marbach, after consultations with Brenz that grew into the *Confessio Wirtembergica,* would become *the* Lutheran representative to the second sitting of the Council of Trent! But he did know in 1536 that he was getting old and that it was time to replace himself. Why else would he remark, "My head is like a knive with all the steel worn off. There is only iron left. It won't cut, and neither will my head"?[34] Luther, who regretted that he had not studied enough history, may well have guessed that tradition would secure a battle that sheer theological argumentation had not.

To summarize, the powerful place of tradition explains how the Wittenberg Concord could be both a compromise in 1536 and a bulwark in the creation and adoption of the Formula a generation later. It should be added, if only as food for thought, that tradition is not just something that floats in the air. It is something that is created and recreated by every generation. In Old Testament times it was created and recreated first by the spoken word, and this we call "oral tradition." Soon it was written down, and this was a written tradition. Now it is passed along by churches and seminaries in what is both oral and written tradition.

One final comment seems appropriate. Its purpose is to bring this treatment full circle and (perhaps) to set the tone for reflections that may follow. One of the bases for the ecumenical discussion today is a largely unstated assumption that debates such as the Sacramentarian Controversy are part of the past, belong to the past, and should not shackle the present. But the curious histories of the Wittenberg Concord reveal this to be a naive assumption. Tradition is not just something that is old, moldy, and bothersome. It is alive, present, and the means by which we define who we are. Here, I cannot avoid being reminded of words from one of the Basel theologians after the Concord was signed and in response to pressure from Capito to join in it. He wrote, "It is possible for the concord of the church to exist along with disagreement and a variety of words and symbols."[35] Even the exhortation to set aside doctrinal differences has a long tradition. Doctrinal questions therefore remain matters of principle.

ENDNOTES

1. Ernst Bizer, *Studien zur Geschichte des Abendmahlsstreits im 16. Jahrhundert* (Darmstadt, 1962). Also see Walther Kohler, *Zwingli und Luther: Ihr Streit uber das Abendmahl nach seinen politischen und religiosen Beziehungen,* II Band: *Vom Beginn der Marburger Verhandlungen 1529 bis zum Abschluss der Wittenberger Konkordie von 1536,* Quellen und Forschungen zur Reformationsgeschichte, Band 7 (Gutersloh, 1953), pp. 432ff. The most important part of the Wittenberg Concord can be found in FC SD VII 13-16 *BKS,* pp. 977-78 (Tappert, pp. 571-72).

2. See James M. Kittelson, *Wolfgang Capito: From Humanist to Reformer* (Leiden, 1975), p. 149. On Bullinger's comment, see Traugott Schiess, *Briefwechsel der Gebrüder Blaurer,* 2 (Freiburg, 1910): 308, cited by Wilhelm Pauck, *The Heritage of the Reformation* (Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1950), p. 89.
3. *WA* 30III, 123; 145 (*LW* 38, 25-26, 64).
4. *WA* 30III, 112-14 (*LW* 38, 16-17).
5. See Kittelson, *Capito,* pp. 19-20.
6. *WABr* 3, 383. Their words to Zwingli were likewise revealing. Since the flesh profits nothing, they said, bread and wine could suffice to constitute the sacrament *(ad sacramenti rationem)* in the Lord's Supper. They brought up the analogy of baptism, in which water is the sole element. *Corpus Reformatorum* 95, 247. Thus, Bucer and Capito were already conceptualizing "sacrament" as the controlling *genus* of which baptism and the Lord's Supper were mere *species.* Such a conceptualization became one of the standard Reformed responses to Lutheran assertions of the real presence and remained so long after the Reformation era.
7. *WA* 6, 80.
8. *WA* 30III, 130 (*LW* 38, 44).
9. *WA* 23, 189; 193 (*LW* 37, 92; 95).
10. Cited by Johann Wilhelm Baum, *Capito und Butzer, Strassburgs Reformatoren* (Elberfeld, 1860), p. 474.
11. *LW* 38, 71-72 (*WA* 30III, 150).
12. *CR* 3, 75. The Wittenberg Concord is translated in Henry E. Jacobs, *The Book of Concord,* vol. 2: *Historical Introduction, Appendixes and Indexes to the Book of Concord; or, the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Philadelphia, 1908), pp. 283-87. Here, see p. 285.
13. See *WA* 38, 299. Edward F. Peters has contended that Bucer's formulation of the axiom "nothing has the character of the sacrament apart from the use" first made its way into Lutheran theology with the Wittenberg Concord. See his study, "The Origin and Meaning of the Axiom: 'Nothing Has the Character of a Sacrament Outside of the Use'" (unpublished Th.D. dissertation, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1968), especially pp. 14ff.
14. *CR* 3, 76; Jacobs 2:285.
15. H. G. Haile, *Luther: An Experiment in Biography* (Garden City, N.Y., 1980), pp. 123-47.
16. *CR* 3, 75-76 (Jacobs 2:284-85). The *Variata* text may be found in *BKS,* p. 65.
17. Jacobs 2:289-90 (*CR* 3, 80-81).
18. *Commonplaces of Martin Bucer,* trans. and ed. by D. F. Wright (Appleford, England, 1972), p. 360. Hermann Sasse was trying to grasp Bucer's conception with a standard, and probably inadequate, tool when he characterized Bucer as ascribing mere *fides historica* to the *indigni.* More accurate is Sasse's formulation of a few lines earlier: that the unworthy, "though

believing the words of Christ, do not have the real, saving faith.'' Hermann Sasse, *This is My Body: Luther's Contention for the Real Presence in the Sacrament of the Altar* (Minneapolis, 1959; revised ed., Adelaide, South Australia, 1977), p. 251.

19. The response of the communicant had been important to Bucer and Capito even when they wrote to Zwingli in November, 1524 (see note 6 above). They said, ''If we rightly eat the bread, etc., thus we will have been so occupied in thinking of [Christ's] death so as not to have leisure [*vacaverit*] to think what the bread is or what is under it'' (*CR* 95, 247).
20. Bucer, *Commonplaces,* p. 361. For Luther's emphasis that the sacrament is the gospel, see Sasse, *passim.*
21. D. F. Wright put it well: ''Bucer's distinction here between unworthy believers and ungodly unbelievers. . .enabled an agreed statement to be reached between Luther and Bucer without an abandonment on Luther's part of his stress that the virtue of the sacrament did not depend on the worthiness of the recipient or a denial on Bucer's of his established insistence that apart from faith there is no reception of Christ's body and blood.'' Bucer, *Commonplaces,* p. 373, note 9. W. P. Stephens held that Bucer's central idea in connection with the ''unworthy'' was predestination. Bucer insisted ''that only the elect (the pious) may consume the body of Christ; for he accepted that in the elect there were degrees of faith and that some might, for a period, lapse. The elect, therefore, could be unworthy but not impious.'' *The Holy Spirit in the Theology of Martin Bucer* (Cambridge, 1970), p. 255. G. J. van de Poll, *Martin Bucer's Liturgical Ideas* (Assen, 1954), p. 91, also emphasized predestination as Bucer's ''starting point,'' one that went unrecognized by the Lutherans at Wittenberg.
22. See above, the text corresponding to note 12. It does not appear that with this omission that the formulators were retreating from the idea that the body of Christ is present as the bread is offered and before it is received. They did quote these words of the Concord: ''The body and blood of Christ are truly distributed [*dargereichet; porrigi*] to the unworthy. . .'' (SD VII 16). The Formula further implied this understanding in its assertion that the ''use'' is the entire action of consecration, distribution, and reception (SD VII 86).
23. The *manducatio indignorum* was just as sensitive an issue in the second half of the century as it had been in the first. The Formula of Concord quoted words of Beza and Vermigli who claimed that the *manducatio oralis* and the *manducatio indignorum* were ''two hairs of a horse's tail and an invention of which even Satan himself would be ashamed.'' (Tappert trans., p. 582; SD VII 67.)
24. Capito lost no time. He wrote his first ''follow-up'' letter on June 13 (*WABr* 7, 432-34).

25. *CR* 3, 78-79 (Jacobs 2:288). This is a repetition of the Concord's very words (see the text corresponding to note 16 above), which, Hermann Sasse noted, certainly implied the *manducatio oralis,* "for what else could 'offered, and received' mean?" Sasse was somewhat amazed that Bucer was willing to agree to this Lutheran formulation, but he concluded that Bucer must have agreed to the words in a "Lutheran" sense: "If Bucer did not understand them in that way, he should have demanded another formulation, as he did in the case of the *manducatio impiorum*" (Sasse, p. 250; compare p. 247.). Likewise, Bucer further explained, "when the Lord said while offering the bread, 'take and eat, this is my body,' etc., it is clearly evident that he commanded them to receive from him and eat with the bread also his own true body, not only a figure or imagining of it" (*CR* 3, 80; Jacobs 2:289).
26. *CR* 3, 292.
27. *CR* 3, 76 (Jacobs 2:285).
28. See the rather sympathetic description of Calvin's eucharistic theology and his Strasbourg period in Brian A. Gerrish, *The Old Protestantism and the New* (Chicago, 1982), pp. 111-17, 251-54.
29. Interestingly, the Formula of Concord, occupied as it was with crypto-Calvinism, never extensively treated Bucer's concept of the "unworthy." It did touch upon the issue with its affirmation that those who are weak in faith are nonetheless worthy communicants (SD VII 69) and with its corresponding rejection of the idea that "true believers. . .who fail to meet their own self-devised standard of preparation, may receive this sacrament for judgment" (SD VII 125). The antitheses also rejected the positing of certain distinctions among the unworthy so as to deny that hypocrites received the body and blood of Christ (SD VII 123).

    The Formula also did not particularly address itself to the situation common today when church visitors present themselves for communion, namely, that they claim to believe in Christ as Savior but deny the real presence, i.e., they do not believe the words of institution. This is the opposite, as it were, of Bucer's idea that one could believe the words, but not be a true Christian. See Lowell C. Green, "Article VII: The Holy Supper," *A Contemporary Look at the Formula of Concord,* ed. by Robert D. Preus and Wilbert H. Rosin (St. Louis, 1978), p. 221, and the sources cited there.
30. For the aspect of the dispute on predestination, see James M. Kittelson, "Marbach vs. Zanchi: The Resolution of Controversy in Late Reformation Strasbourg," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 8 (1977): 31-44.
31. Proces verbaux des Senat et XXI (Archives municipales de Strasbourg): 1563, ff. 75v. . See Kittelson, "Marbach vs. Zanchi," pp. 41-42, note 33.
32. *CR* 3, 76 (Jacobs 2:285). Sasse said, "we can only wonder how Bucer could accept it [the Wittenberg Concord], especially since its acceptance included the acceptance of the Augsburg Confession" (p. 250). Hastings Eells,

Bucer's twentieth-century English language biographer, reached a similar conclusion. He, however, stressed that the Wittenberg Concord was a diplomatic victory for the Lutherans because it effectively drove a wedge between radical Zwinglian theologians and more moderate ones like Bucer. See Eells, *Martin Bucer* (New Haven, 1931), pp. 203-204.

33. *CR* 3, 81.
34. WATr 6, 301.
35. Cited by Kittelson, *Capito,* p. 161.

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Theological Observer

FEMINISM IN THE CHURCH: THE ISSUE OF OUR DAY

From time to time an issue arises which is truly of fundamental importance, that is, raises questions the answers to which present not only different but mutually exclusive understandings of reality. Feminism is such an issue, and the questions it is raising and the answers it is giving concern the very heart of a Christian understanding of reality. The Eastern Orthodox theologian, Thomas Hopko, has struck the right note of urgency and significance (*Women and the Priesthood,* p. 190):

> The question of women and the priesthood is but one important instance of what I see to be the most critical issue of our time: the issue of the meaning and purpose of the fact that human nature exists in two consubstantial forms: male and female. This is a new issue for Christians; it has not been treated fully or properly in the past. But it cannot be avoided today. How we respond to it, I believe, clearly demonstrates what we believe about everything: God and man, Christ and the Church, life and death. It is, in a manner of speaking, our particular issue for controversy: our gnosticism or Arianism, our Origenism or iconoclasm. It is the issue of our time, the issue that inevitably comes to every age and generation.

Hopko reminds us of a couple of things which must be remembered if confessional, orthodox Christian thinkers are going to address feminism with the requisite vigor and accuracy. (1.) Hopko likens the importance of the present situation to that of gnosticism and Arianism. That is, feminism is raising questions which touch *essential* Christian understandings. This point is worth repeating because it is necessary for orthodox theology correctly and clearly to isolate and to define the nodal points of Christian doctrine affected by the rise of feminism. Issues such as the ordination of women (and, to a lesser degree, that of women suffrage) are not in themselves the essential issues being raised. They are symptoms of underlying dislocations in the way (primarily Western) Christians have come to think about certain Christian doctrines. We are not talking primarily about issues of practice but about issues of substance which are reflected in practice.

(2.) Secondly, the issues raised by feminism are new. It will not suffice merely to appeal to Bible passages or to accuse people of breaches of public doctrine. As Hopko rightly says, orthodox thinkers will have to break new ground and explicate new ramifications of "old" doctrines if the issues raised by feminism are to be addressed with success. The rapid, almost uncontested, acceptance of feminist presuppositions and arguments in the church is evidence of how utterly unprepared the church was (and still is) to offer a coherent *conceptual* alternative to feminist claims. Churches and theologians (especially Protestant ones) which have not simply capitulated are often reduced to a biblicistic proof-texting of traditional postures. It is important to understand that the issues raised by the heightened self-consciousness of women in our society and churches will be a long-term problem. We must address the questions

with a seriousness of purpose and with a tenacity and clarity of thought which frankly has not been required in the church for a long time. For there is one new factor in this debate which distinguishes it from any controversy since perhaps the early Middle Ages; the predominant formative presuppositions and values of our culture and society are *against* traditional and confessional Christian patterns of thought and practice and are *in favor of* the feminist claims. In this new battle we will be struggling against major cultural and societal forces. What this will mean in practice is that often even self-consciously conservative Christians—even those absolutely opposed, for example, to the ordination of women—will nevertheless harbor presuppositions gleaned from their democratic, egalitarian surroundings which leave them in fact *conceptually* impotent to answer feminist assertions. For example, it is not uncommon within Missourian circles to hear strong words against women's ordination and suffrage by persons whose views concerning church and ministry express precisely those democratic, egalitarian presuppositions upon which the feminist cause bases its claims. This *new* issue may very well demand that we rethink and reassess some of *our own* most cherished ideas.

What, then, are some of the central issues raised by feminism and to which the church has yet to give cogent response? What are some of those conceptual areas in which the church must reassert a clear Christian vision of human life as life under God and the good Creator and Redeemer? The more I read and think about present feminism in the church, the more I realize that in terms of its position vis-a-vis its environment, the church of today has more in common with the church of the second century than it has with the church of the sixteenth century. In the second century the church had especially to work out the ramifications of its belief in God as the Creator of the world. The most important consequence of belief in God the Creator was the necessity of believing that the Creator was also the Redeemer and that the creation in its *fleshly nature* was the object of God's creative and redemptive work. That is, belief in God as the Creator of the flesh implied the incarnation (enfleshment) of God's eternal and creative Word as Redeemer and the resurrection of the flesh as the goal of God's redemptive purposes. Thus, the doctrines of creation, incarnation, and resurrection gave expression to a vision of human existence that asserted that human life *in the flesh* was meaningful and bore within it ultimate reality. Therefore, what one did in the flesh and the configurations of fleshly existence were not matters of indifference. Rather, it was precisely through the contours of fleshly existence that God revealed Himself and His final purposes. Hence, it was through the history of Israel (its bondage, its exiles, its exodus, its kings and prophets, its temple, etc.) that God revealed His judgment and His grace, the foretastes of the final condemnation of sinful flesh and the final resurrection to life of holy flesh. God, the Creator of the world, was so ordering Israel's (fleshly) history that His creative will (to make man after His own image and likeness) was being fulfilled through His redemptive work. Ultimately in the incarnation of the Word through whom all things were made (John 1:3) God the Word did bring into being that one "true man" in whom mankind's fleshly life indeed perfectly revealed God and His final will. The configurations of Jesus' life, therefore, were the perfect revelation of what it means to live according to God's will, that is, to live in such a way as to participate in the restoration of human life. Finally, as the community of the baptized the church lives *in its fleshly dimensions* as the image of redeemed humanity. That is, the church

in its concrete life (including its liturgical structure) reflects and must reflect the *creation* of God which in the church's Head has been renewed and restored in which then in the body of the church finds its renewal and restoration in the ecclesial life of the faithful.

It is in these areas—creation, Jesus as the incarnate Word, and the church as participation in the restored creation, or simply stated, creation and new creation in Jesus the incarnate Word—that we find the greatest errors in feminist theology and at the same time the greatest confusion even within orthodox circles. Let us look at a couple of ways in which these issues arise within contemporary feminist literature. Thomas Hopko has correctly identified a critical question which requires an answer: why does human nature exist in two consubstantial forms, male and female? This question requires an answer because it is not uncommon to find the view that to be human is something other than to be male or female. To be human does not imply that one is male or female; the notion "human" is both prior and transcendent in relation to the notion "male human" or "female human." One, so it goes, is human first and male or female second. In other words, "maleness" or "femaleness" are accidental qualities which do not define one's essential being as a human person. We may note, for example, how this division between "personhood" and concrete human existence as male or female permeates a discussion by an evangelical scholar from Wheaton College (Gilbert Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles,* p. 208):

> The transforming power of the gospel needs to be applied to individual lives and to the way Christians relate among themselves. Fragmentation and divisions constitute massively successful weapons in Satan's arsenal directed against the people of God.... From the moment of our birth, a fallen society presses us into compartments and niches that become our private prisons for life. The concept of sex roles is one of those bondages from which the gospel can set us free. Nowhere does the Scripture command us to develop our sex-role awareness as males or females. It calls us—both men and women—to acquire the mind of Christ and to be transformed in His image. Both men and women are called to develop their "inner man," which means their basic personhood in cooperation with the Holy Spirit.

Here in all clarity is the radical separation between "basic personhood" ("inner man") and people as male or female persons. One's "basic personhood" is transformed, not one as male person or as female person. The particularity and concreteness of human existence is here shorn of all relation to the gospel and its transforming power; that is, there is a fundamental separation between fleshly human existence (creation) and the redemption of the Gospel. This disjunction between the "real" self or person and one's fleshly self (which certainly involves maleness or femaleness) is a modern version of that gnosticism which denied the identity of the Creator and of the Redeemer. Indeed, this author comes perilously close to identifying maleness and femaleness as part of that fragmentation and division which Satan uses to place us into bondage. In effect, then, this "evangelical" attempt to advocate egalitarian ideals in the church harbors a virtual denial of God as the good Creator and a disparagement of the fleshly existence of the mankind which was created as male and female (Gen. 1:27).

The same implicit docetism is frequently applied also to the incarnation of Christ. Paul Jewett, for example, argues that God's incarnation in the form of male humanity is theologically indifferent and took that form only because the strongly patriarchal society of Israel made it fitting for God to act in that way (*The Ordination of Women,* p. 55). Again, despite the subtleties of Jewett's argument, the concretion of the incarnation of Christ, that is, His incarnation as male can only be theologically indifferent if maleness and femaleness are themselves devoid of theological meaning. The idea, then, that Jesus could have been incarnated as a female without any change of theological significance and that His incarnation as a male was exclusively a cultural accommodation on God's part contains within it a disparagement of the actual created order and finally allows for no positive theological understanding of the sexual differentiation within humankind! Furthermore, to assert that the concrete and specific contours of Jesus' earthly life are theologically indifferent is to call into question the revelatory character of Jesus' earthly existence, for that which is devoid of theological significance and is only an accommodation to fluctuating cultural patterns cannot be the perfect revelation of God's unchanging will and of the final restoration of "true man."

In contrast to a scholar like Jewett, the early church was convinced that if the eternal Word became flesh, then the earthly life of Jesus was in every way purposeful and revelatory. What Jesus said and what Jesus did, therefore, were paradigmatic for the life of His church. Not to see His life in this way was to separate the life of those incorporated into Christ from the concrete history of Jesus given us in the written gospels. Very early, therefore, the church argued that women could not be pastors because Jesus Himself had not allowed them to minister in this way. Jesus' apostolic band had been all male, and because this Jesus was the eternal Word incarnate, the revelation of true humanity, His behavior was determinative; it was typic for ecclesial life at all times and in all places. Thus, for a father like Epiphanius (c. 380 A.D.) the very fact that never in the Old or in the New Testament is a woman a priest is sufficient to prove that women are not to be priests; for it was in this history, recorded in the canonical prophetic and apostolic books, that God was revealing His will and His way. This line of argument, sometimes depreciated in our circles as "Roman Catholic," in fact has deep patristic roots and rests upon a theologically profound relationship between the life of Jesus and the continuing life of the church, Christ's body.

We may briefly note two further areas in which the Church must elicit both new thought and some reassessment. (1.) We must adopt a critical posture toward contemporary ideas of equality and "rights." When a writer like Jewett speaks of "partnership of the sexes" as the Christian ideal, of woman as the equal of man, and of women having the freedom and the right as persons to respond to God's call to priesthood just as men do, he is not speaking out of the Bible but on the basis of the West's understanding of human autonomy and natural rights. The common claim that women are endowed with equal abilities, with equal intelligence, and the like and, therefore, are arbitrarily oppressed when a particular avenue of service and authority is closed to them (namely, the pastoral ministry) does not—again—take seriously the actual physical and fleshly differentiation within humankind. This differentiation within humankind implies a non-reciprocal relationship *within* an organic human unity. The creation story

of "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh" does not allow for a definition of personhood based on the assertion of an autonomous free will and the development of inner potentialities.

(2.) Absolutely deleterious in the present debate concerning the ordination of women is the purely functional understanding of the pastoral office so popular in Missourian circles today. The idea that the ministry of preaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments is simply the public exercise of rights and duties given to all Christians fails to take seriously the Christological dimension of the office, which has its functional basis in the work of Christ but which has its "ontic" basis in the person of Christ. If we take seriously what we have said above, namely, that the specific character of Jesus' incarnation as male has theological significance, then the direct derivation of the pastoral office from the priesthood of *all* believers (which certainly includes women) will have to take on some precision. It is not, quite frankly, enough to appeal in this matter to the prohibitions of Paul—not because they are not determinative for us—for they are. However, we are in a struggle for the minds and hearts of Christian men and women, and these prohibitions must be placed into a theological context which makes them meaningful (not just abstract law) and which allows them to be seen as blessing and not as arbitrary suppression. It is necessary to begin thinking about the "ontic" character of the priestly office, and this in spite of Roman Catholic aberrations in the matter. In the words of absolution the minister says that by virtue of his office he forgives sins, that is, by virtue of the office he is *in loco Christi,* who is the forgiver of all sins. What are the implications of these words for the doctrine of the ministry?[2] Certainly popular talk of the pastor as enabler, administrator, and the compiler of inventories of spiritual gifts has no answer to this question.

The church's final word cannot be simply "No!" to women who seriously desire to consecrate themselves and their efforts to Christ. It is imperative that the church develop ministries and even offices in which women would excel. I am sure, for example, that on many occasions a woman's comfort and advice to another woman is much more helpful and pertinent than is the counseling of a male clergyman. Be that as it may, the energies of Christian women ought not be squandered by a too narrow interpretation of their proper role in the church. We, too, must be aware of what might be indeed merely cultural accretion, and in such cases we must be honest enough to acknowledge it, lest the truly essential witness of the church be brought to naught.

Endnotes

1. The disparagement of the sexual differentiation of humankind into male and female as having no theological significance lies at the base of much defense of homosexual behavior. If the true "person" is transcendent in regard to sexual differentiation, obviously the love between "persons" need have no regard to the accident of sexual differentiation. In this case, the love between two "persons" one of whom happens to be male and the other of whom happens to be female is no different from the love between two "persons" both of whom happen to be male or both of whom happen to be female.

2. When the "ontic" character of the pastoral office is considered, questions such as the validity of the ministry of a woman pastor immediately arise. Hermann Sasse noted that women cannot be priests; therefore, any "priestly" duties performed by a woman is by definition invalid. Now it has for a very long time been a confessional commonplace to note that the power of the Word always is attached to the Word itself and not to the person. This view is clearly expressed already in the third century when the question arose whether immoral or heretical bishops administered valid sacraments. Against the Donatists, it was asserted that the ethical or doctrinal failings of bishops did not hinder the validity or efficacy of the sacraments they administered, because essentially it was Christ's administration and His work has its own inherent validity and cannot be compromised by sinful men. However, it should be noted that in the present debate concerning women in the pastoral office, the question is not whether the sins of the pastor affect validity. Sinfulness is itself accidental and does not have its own substantial being. However, if we take seriously, as I think we should, the incarnation of Jesus, that is, if we think that the fact that Jesus was incarnate as a male is theologically significant, then perhaps we should answer differently when speaking about one who stands "in the stead of Christ," the true High Priest. The organic relationship between the person and work of Christ and Christ's sacramental working through the office of the ministry is the issue here.

William C. Weinrich

Book Reviews

ENLIGHTENMENT AND ALIENATION: AN ESSAY TOWARDS A TRINITARIAN THEOLOGY. By Colin Gunton. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1985. 176 + ix pp.

Can the Christian faith speak meaningfully to the problem of alienation which so preoccupies much of modern thought? Is it possible to move beyond the world view of the Enlightenment without returning to a naive understanding of reality? What is the relationship of philosophy and theology? Can human words be the Word of God? In this book Colin Gunton wrestles valiantly with these questions, with some success. However, like Pickett's charge at Gettysburg, his attempt falls just short. Gunton summarizes the thesis of his book as follows (p. 153):

> The argument of this book is that much modern thought, and Christian thought in particular, is *not* using its own intelligence, but is giving uncritical allegiance to the thoughts of others, and in particular those of Immanuel Kant.

In a survey of philosophers and theologians ranging from Plato to Polanyi, from Aquinas to Barth, Gunton documents his views. His summaries are very helpful in giving main trends of thought, though at times they are overstated or incorrect. For example, he uses Aquinas as an example of a theologian who stresses God's power (p. 65); Duns Scotus or William of Occam would have been far more appropriate. Further, he claims that Luther accentuated the differences rather than the continuity between the Old Testament and the New Testament. Anyone who has read Bornkamm's *Luther and the Old Testament* may well call this point into question, since Luther held, for example, that the doctrine of the Trinity is taught in the Old Testament. Also, Luther is portrayed as rejecting a part of the tradition by his doubts about the book of James. Gunton forgets that the book and others were questioned also by the early church.

Gunton demonstrates that the Enlightenment's stress on knowledge as objective and observable has led to the alienation and nihilism characteristic of modern thought. He further shows that the Enlightenment's desire to be free of all "prejudice" or presuppositions has led to the worst kind of prejudice—the kind which cannot recognize itself. This desire to be free of all prejudice has likewise cut off modern thought from its roots in tradition and has led, for example, to an arbitrary interpretation of Biblical texts as myths.

The solution to this modern problem of alienation is hinted at, according to Gunton, in the words of Michael Polanyi, Iris Murdoch, and Samuel Coleridge. Polanyi shows the personal element in science in his work *Personal Knowledge.* Murdoch demonstrates the horrible consequences of placing the will instead of the good as the main element of ethics. Coleridge's works point to the Christian teaching of the Trinity as the solution to the problems of perception, freedom, and interpretation so important in modern philosophy.

Gunton is to be praised for analyzing the philosophical sources of alienation and for seeking meaningful points of contact between theology and philosphy. Furthermore, he rightly sees the importance of Christology for reaching a proper understanding of reality. However, some important problems hinder him from a completely satisfactory solution.

First, when Gunton discusses the Trinity he does so almost exclusively in immanent language. Thus, when speaking of the Son he says (pp. 147-148):

> God as Son is God as he comes to expression only through the veil of a human life, the offence of a criminal's death and the intellectual scandal of a resurrection.

Again, speaking of the Spirit, he says, "...God as Spirit is God as a pair of spectacles, enabling us to see things as they really are and shall be" (p. 151). It is important to remember that the doctrine of the Trinity does not merely speak of how God acts toward us, but also speaks of who He is in Himself.

Second, Gunton's strong emphasis on the centrality of Christ in a Christian philosophy is mitigated by his use of Calvin as a mentor. It is to Calvin that he looks to understand the place of the Spirit; and in following Calvin he is led to that epistemological version of the *finitum non est capax infiniti* which is known as Barthianism (p. 152):

> The central place of the Bible in all this should now be plain. With the help of its human words, God may come to speech. As he comes to speech, the words exercise authority. . . . A doctrine of inspiration which understands the Scriptures as being enabled, ever and again, to speak the truth of God, need not have a narrow view of Scripture's unity nor need it dismiss the wealth of the achievement of the critical era.

In that this book seeks to grapple with the relationship between philosophy and theology, it is good. We Lutherans need to pay far more attention to this question. Gunton's stress on Christology is also appreciated, as his rejection of the view of grace as an "arbitrary divine choice of a few." But because Gunton looks for insight to Calvin, whose *finitum non est capax infiniti* is an alienation teaching, he is not completely successful. Perhaps the work of Gunton might lead some Lutheran to explore the philosophical insights and implications of Lutheran Christology.

Charles R. Hogg, Jr.
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ARMINIUS, A STUDY IN THE DUTCH REFORMATION. By Carl Bangs. Francis Asbury Press, Grand Rapids, 1985. Paper, $10.95.

Most Lutheran clergy have some acquaintance with Arminianism, given its prominence in American Protestant denominations of all stripes; but who knows anything about Jacob Arminius, after whom the theology was named? Readers of Carl Bangs' biography of the same will learn a great deal not only about

the man but also about his times (the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth), his church (Dutch Reformed), and his ideas (to wit, his rejection of Calvinism on the questions of free will, predestination, and the like). Bangs' study, first published in 1971 but now reissued in paperback with a six-page addendum, is an excellent example of presenting historical theology in the context of its times, for the picture that emerges of early Arminianism is that of an indigenous Dutch theology, drawing deeply upon humanist and biblical sources but forced to address an agenda shaped by the militant and international Reformed Protestantism to which the rising merchant class of Amsterdam had committed itself. Although Arminianism has flourished especially in its Wesleyan form, Bangs' work serves well to remind us that it emerged first in the late Reformation period as a variant of Reformed theology.

Cameron MacKenzie

A LIVELY LEGACY: ESSAYS IN HONOR OF ROBERT PREUS. Edited by Kurt E. Marquart, John R. Stephenson, and Bjarne Teigen. Concordia Theological Press, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1985. 212 pages. Cloth, $13.95. Paper, $11.95.

The idea of having a *Festschrift* to commemorate the sixtieth birthday of the president of Concordia Theological Seminary was conceived in the spring of 1984. Since the *Concordia Theological Quarterly* was planning a similar venture to commemorate his tenth anniversary as president and additional responsibilities arose, I found good excuses to exempt myself from serving as an editor or offering a contribution. After seeing the outstanding contributions and printing results I regret not having fully participated. The only consolation is that I have had the opportunity of seeing the final production and now offering a review. Each of the three editors had a separate responsibility. Dr. Teigen arranged the excellent printing done at Graphic Publishing Company in Lake Mills, Iowa. Dr. John Stephenson, then a vicar in Iowa and now a pastor serving in Lewiston, New York, edited the manuscripts with obvious great care. As several of the contributors are not native English-speaking scholars, it may be supposed that he did the translating or at least put some of the manuscripts into idiomatic English. The final product is uniformly good in regard to scholarship and style.

Gracing the cover is the coat of arms of the Preus family, which is regretfully not explained. A short biography of Dr. Preus is found on the back of the paperback edition. Two photographs are also included. Certain characteristics of the fifteen contributors can be noted. Four have served as seminary presidents (Henry Hamann, Bjarne Teigen, Martim Warth, Gottfried Hoffman), a fine tribute to a man now concluding twelve years in that position. Four have been students of Dr. Preus (H. Hamann, Eugene Bunkowske, K. Marquart, Dean Wenthe). At least ten have been teaching colleagues of Dr. Preus (E. Bunkowske, H. Hamann, G. Hoffman, Richard Klann, Cameron MacKenzie, Han-Lutz Poetsch, J. Stephenson, D. Wenthe, K. Marquart, Ulrich Asendorf). The writers come from North and South America, Europe (Germany, Norway, Sweden), Australia, and Africa, if one considers that Dr. Bunkowske spent the majority of his pastoral career as a missionary in that continent. Asia and the two poles are unrepre

sented. The writers come not only from the Missouri Synod, but also from the Independent Lutheran Church of Germany, the Hanover (State) Church, an affiliate of the Wisconsin Synod in Sweden, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the Lutheran Church of Australia, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil, and one independent congregation in Sweden. Six Lutheran seminaries are represented. Many of Dr. Preus's friends and admirers in evangelical circles wanted to contribute, but the editors evidently decided to keep the essays within the tradition of confessional Lutheranism of which Dr. Preus is recognized not only as its outstanding scholar but also as a twentieth-century pioneer in the revival of its study. The wide geographical and ecclesiastical background of the contributors and the diversity of topics point to the tremendous influence that the honoree has had on world confessional Lutheranism. The essays are not all of the same kind, but in their totality they demonstrate the vigor of confessional scholarship in our time. A word about each would be appropriate.

Dr. Asendorf surveys Luther's Advent sermons from 1514 to 1520. Dr. Bunkowske answers the oft repeated criticism that Luther was not a missionary in the modern sense of the term (a position put forth by Gustav Warneck), showing that the reformer was concerned about Moslem soldiers who were taken prisoners, to offer a concrete example. This was an opportunity for him to preach the Gospel to them. Dr. Seth Erlandsson expands on work done in connection with his doctoral thesis to show that the historical events alluded to in First, Second, and Third Isaiah could have occurred during the eighth century B.C. and thus asserts that unitary authorship for the book is, on historical-critical grounds, a defensible position. Both Hardt and Marquart take up the matter of objective justification, a matter of no little concern recently in our circles. Dr. Hardt in a most carefully researched essay (75 endnotes!) discusses justification at three levels: Luther, the up-to-now obscure debate between the seventeenth-century theologian Samuel Huber and the Wittenberg Faculty, and C. F. W. Walther. Huber held that all men were justified and that, if they persisted in unbelief, God reimposed His wrath against them. Marquart puts forth a doctrinal essay to represent the Lutheran position. His solution is that in Christ there is no wrath, but outside of Him it is a remaining reality. As this issue is so pertinent, both essays could serve as the basis for additional serious study to sharpen up the matter further. Certainly universal forgiveness and wrath are not equal realities in God. Law and Gospel do not reflect a divine ontology. Dr. Gottfried Hoffman of the Oberursel seminary tackles the problem of parents neglecting to have their children baptized in "The Baptism and Faith of Children." (The more common expression in English is "infant baptism," and this is obviously what the author or editors intended.) Fascinating is his description of infant faith, whose existence lies at the heart of whether infants should be baptized. Among modern writers Hoffmann is perhaps unique in tackling the issue. I would be hard pressed to find clearer descriptions of infant faith than those offered by Hoffmann. As Hoffmann points out, Luther, although he held to the objectivity of baptism as a means of grace, maintained that it would be mockery to baptize children if in fact it was certain that they did not believe. One is taken back a little by the writer's suggestion that children should be refused infant baptism if the parents are only desiring a civil ceremony for them. Hoffmann has directed his article specifically against pastors and parents who are abandoning infant baptism. Why then refuse them? In Europe infant baptism is more civil ceremony than it is in the United States, but the basic men-

tality of the people in both places is not that different. Is it really valid, as Hoffmann contends, to determine whether the parents are bringing the children to Jesus or to baptism? Does the motive of the parents really matter that much, as long as they are not ridiculers of the Gospel? No matter how one answers this question, every Lutheran pastor will greatly benefit from Hoffmann's discussion of the use of the Marcan pericope in the rite of baptism. No reference was made to Brinkel's *Fides Infantium,* a German dissertation which was the first and remains the best presentation of Luther's position. Two purely exegetical contributions are offered by two of Dr. Preus's current colleagues. Cameron MacKenzie understands Matthew 5:18 on the fulfilment of the Law as Christ's fulfilling all of the Old Testament. Against Rengstorf and Martin Hengel, Dean Wenthe defends the view that Jesus in His ministry adopted the posture common to rabbis of the time. This he does within the setting of the ancient world. This ranks as perhaps the most scholarly and currently biblical of all the contributions. Dr. Hamann tackles the modern political issue of apartheid and asserts that such issues may be matters of social concern but cannot become confessional matters, as they do, for example, among the Reformed, who do not operate with a two-kingdom doctrine as do the Lutherans. This essay, "Apartheid and *Status Confessionis,*" will raise a few eyebrows. Editors Stephenson and Teigen both concentrate on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper in Luther's theology and the Formula of Concord respectively. Poetsch offers an article on Jesus Christ against the background of contemporary views. Martim Warth presents a statement of Lutheran theology according to ten carefully organized theses relating to his situation in Brazil. Daniel Overduin gives a Lutheran appraisal of *in vitro* fertilization. Richard Klann discusses the philosophical influences, especially Aristotle's, on Luther and how he rejected them in favor of a theology based on the person and work of Christ.

The broad spectrum of topics published to honor Dr. Robert Preus demonstrates the wide influence he has on theology in the Missouri Synod and throughout the world. Through him our Lutheran heritage is richer. In their essays the contributors to this *Festschrift* have given an appropriate and lasting recognition.

David P. Scaer

RAISED IMMORTAL: RESURRECTION AND IMMORTALITY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. By Murray J. Harris. W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1983. 304 pages. Paper.

The New Testament concepts of immortality and resurrection are increasingly being considered by theologians as antithetical—with immortality usually coming out the loser. Immortality in the New Testament is regarded by some as a Platonic infiltration which erodes the "more biblical" idea of resurrection. In light of this perspective, the author "sets out to examine not only the New Testament data on resurrection and on immortality as separate themes, but also, and more importantly, the relation between these two ideas in New Testament teaching" (p. 2).

M. J. Harris is a respected lecturer, a former professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and the present Warden of Tyndale House at Cambridge. He

begins his task by systematically exploring the New Testament references to resurrection: "the resurrection of Christ," "the resurrection of believers," and "the general resurrection." Secondly, he discusses the immortality of God and man in the New Testament and contrasts this with Platonic thought. Harris concludes by examining several key pericopes that demonstrate resurrection and immortality to be "inseparable" and "complementary" ideas. His approach is technical; his work is aimed at scholars and students.

The treatment of these issues is refreshing and very commendable. Harris' careful exegesis asserts the historicity of resurrection predictions and narratives in the gospels. The polemical tone of his analysis indicates he is in constant dialogue with critical scholars who regard these predictions and narratives as literary creations. He boldly asserts that discrepancies in these narratives do not discredit the central fact or preclude harmonisation. Also worthy of note is his clear linking of Christ's resurrection with that of the corporate body of believers; both are part of a "single Easter harvest" (p. 114).

Harris' discussion of immortality and its relation to resurrection is probably what the reader will find most provocative. He postulates that man was not created immortal (it was only a "potential possession") since "immortality" implies the permanence and irreversibility of the immortal state" (p. 193). He discards the concept of "the immortality of the soul" and asserts that resurrection is the sole means of acquiring immortality. Especially helpful are his conclusions on the complementary nature of these two ideas (e.g., immortality guarantees that resurrection is a permanent state rather than just a temporary event).

A few criticisms can be raised against this otherwise very sound and insightful analysis. First, in distinguishing "spiritual" and "somatic" resurrection, Lutherans will be disappointed that the former is not specifically associated with baptism. Secondly, the author describes the changes that the spiritual resurrection effects as a "process of Christification" (p. 133). Although a "process" is initiated, it is more proper to say that a "state" of Christification is effected (i.e., all of the blessings of Christ's work become the believer's). Thirdly, the conclusion that "Paul derived his picture of the glorified state of the believer from his vision of Christ outside of Damascus" is simplistic (p. 124). What about the influence of Old Testament and non-canonical Jewish resurrection texts? The discerning reader will note other minor problems. This topic is an issue central to New Testament theology and our proclamation of the Gospel. The task Harris tackles in this book is broad and involved; the result is a fine example of solid evangelical scholarship.

Charles A. Gieschen
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LUTHER'S THEOLOGY OF THE CROSS. By Alister McGrath. Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1985. 199 pages. Cloth, $24.95.

I consider this book to be the most important contribution in this century to the study of Luther's theology of the cross. It surpasses in methodology

Walther von Loewenich's well known classic, *Luther's Theology of the Cross.* This book also informs the English reader of the most recent German scholarship on the Subject.

The central thesis of McGrath's book is that Luther's discovery of the new meaning of the "righteousness of God" instigated the complete recasting of his theology. This is what leads ultimately to the formulation of his theology of the cross. This makes sense in the light of Luther's struggle to understand the key concept of "the righteousness of God." Therefore, McGrath's book is an investigation of the development of Luther's doctrine of justification during the years 1509-1519.

The reader acquainted with von Loewenich's book can perceive in McGrath's a superior methodology. Von Loewenich begins with the concept of *Deus absconditus,* a concept that is not really the essence of Luther's thought and that in itself is problematic at best. From a historical and theological perspective it is best to begin with McGrath at the heart of the Reformation.

McGrath quite rightly places the early Luther in the *via moderna* rather than in the *Schola Augustiniana Moderna.* Luther commenced his work within the tradition of William of Ockham and Gabriel Biel. At the center of the *via moderna's* understanding of justification was its covenantal theology. Out of His absolute and absolutely free power God chose to accept certain actions of human beings. If human beings fulfilled their part of the bargain, God would keep His promise and grant His grace. McGrath provides a magnificent study of Luther's *Dictata super Psalterium,* showing that the *via moderna's* understanding of justification was at the center of Luther's thinking until 1515. Through this exercise we see more clearly Luther's struggle with the *iustitia Dei.* This struggle is grounded in the Aristotelian and Ciceronian concept of justice, according to which God deals with equity with everyone according to their just actions. McGrath demonstrates how Luther's problems of conscience are grounded in the uncertainty of the *via moderna* and in its understanding of justice. No one could be sure of his salvation in such a theological framework.

McGrath argues also that after 1515 Luther did not simply revert via Staupitz to the Augustinian theology of justification. There were two reasons for this development. The first was Luther's profound understanding of the incapacity of the human free will. In this understanding Luther went well beyond Augustine. The second was the fact that Luther had already developed his mature understanding of the *iustitia Christi aliena* (cf. his lectures on Romans). According to Luther's holistic understanding of man, man in his complete being is a *homo incurvatus in se* (man curved in upon himself). Thus he cannot become partially righteous. Justification must be extrinsic to him.

This book will not be the last word from McGrath. Throughout this study McGrath points for further explanations to his forthcoming *Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification* (3 vols., Cambridge). On the basis of this magnificent book on Luther's *theologia crucis,* we suspect that McGrath will quickly become a partner in dialogue with the confessional Lutheran tradition.

Albert L. Garcia

THE PAULINE CIRCLE. By F. F. Bruce. W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1985. 106 pages. Paper.

In contrast to the imaginative reconstructions used by critical scholars to give us a picture of the so-called "Johannine Circle," F. F. Bruce draws on the abundant witness of Paul's letters and the Book of Acts to produce brief substantiated sketches of the "Pauline Circle": Paul's co-workers, friends, and hosts. Originally written as successive articles for a journal, the first ten chapters of this slender volume include information on Ananias and the disciples at Damascus, Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, Luke, Priscilla and Aquila, Apollos, Titus, Onesimus, and Mark. The two concluding chapters overview the limited information concerning Paul's numerous other co-workers and hosts and hostesses.

The major strength of this work is the sound judgment and readable style which Bruce employs in weaving together scattered historical data from the biblical record and, where appropriate, other sources (e.g., Papias and Ignatius). Occasional speculations that go beyond the text either are judged by the author to be erroneous (e.g., Lydia was Paul's wife, Luke and Titus were brothers) or are offered to the reader with caution (e.g., "Is the 'Onesimus' of Philemon also the bishop in Ignatius' Ephesians?" "Was Apollos engaged in Alexandrian allegorization?" "Who baptized Paul or did he baptize himself?"). The discriminating reader will note some confusion in Bruce's Galatians 2-Acts 15 chronology (pp. 20-21, 24, 58-59).

These chapters by this recognized Pauline scholar are readily accessible to the interested layperson; they are short, contain minimal footnotes, and are almost bare of technical discussions, scholarly jargon, or critical presuppositions. *The Pauline Circle* would be a "safe" and helpful addition to a church library.

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THEOLOGY FOR A NUCLEAR AGE. By Gordon D. Kaufman. Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1985. 65 pages. Cloth.

Readers of such earlier works as *Systematic Theology: A Historicist Perspective* and *The Theological Imagination* will not fail to recognize the theses posited by Kaufman in this volume. Indeed, this little summary of the Ferguson lectures which the Harvard theologian gave at Manchester University in 1984 may serve as a primer for those desiring an initiation into his project for reconstructing the central concerns of Christian faith based on historical experience and the work of the imagination. According to the author, "we dare no longer assume that we know from authoritative tradition or past revelation the correct values and standards, i.e., the correct faith-orientation, in terms of which life is to be understood and decisions and actions are to be formulated." Consequently, it is no longer justifiable to do theology according to the principle of authority (the interpretation of Christian doctrine). Rather the theological task is to "seek to understand and interpret that supreme focus for human service and devotion, God, and that historical complex of images and metaphors which makes the

Christian conception of God and of humanity concrete and definite, namely, Christ." Kaufman's reconception of God is one that emphasizes His "humanness." The reconception of Christ which Kaufman advocates views Jesus as the supreme symbol of universal reconciliation and healing.

While these concepts have long been held by Kaufman and explicated elsewhere, what is distinctive about the present volume is the context in which they are placed. For Kaufman, the fact that nuclear weapons are poised for the destruction of life on earth mandates the radical re-thinking which his project champions. Never before in history has mankind had such knowledge or power to bring about his own destruction. This possibility, with the momentous change in the human situation which it induces, demonstrates the fragility of grounding our human world on "givens" in facts, doctrines, or values.

It is in tracing this context of the nuclear age that Kaufman offers something positive for his readers in the camp of Christian orthodoxy. While the reconceptions of God and Christ which he proposes must ultimately be repudiated, it is true that the church exists in a world threatened by nuclear confrontation. Theologians and pastors must be sensitive to the way in which that fact shapes reflection on questions of divine providence and human responsibility, eschatology, civil government, etc. The author's diagnosis of this new context for theology is challenging and helpful even if his prescription is toxic for biblical faith.

John F. Johnson
St. Louis, Missouri

BEGINNING TO READ THE FATHERS. By Boniface Ramsay. Paulist Press, New York, 1985. 280 pages. Paper, $9.95.

Patristic scholarship has not been very good at making the early fathers of the church accessible to the "average" layperson. That is a pity, for the early fathers are no less our fathers than Luther or Walther, and some recognition of the fathers seems necessary if our people are to have a sense of the church's true catholicity. *Beginning* is a nice correction to this situation. It is written with the beginner in mind and presupposes "no more knowledge on the part of the reader than that the Fathers existed and that their ideas might be important and perhaps even interesting." Since it is for the novice, this book uses clear and untechnical language and is free of bibliographical and scholarly footnotes and of textual and historical problems.

Rather, *Beginning* thematically introduces the thought of the fathers by presenting the *consensus patrum*. While Ramsay presents a balanced commentary, through generous selection of patristic quotations he allows the fathers to give expression to their own views. *Beginning* includes a discussion of standard patristic themes (God, Christ, church and ministry) but also discussion of other lesser known themes (martyrdom and virginity, monasticism, prayer, poverty and wealth).

While writing for the beginner, Ramsay hopes and expects that the reader will be spurred to further study. Therefore, the book includes a balanced select bibliography of secondary literature. More helpful perhaps is the section, "A Patristic Reading Program," which lists forty-one writings of the fathers which together would make a great introduction to the thought of the fathers. *Beginning* is highly recommended for the church library and for those interested in learning the rudiments of patristic thought.

William C. Weinrich

HEALING THE WOUNDED: The Costly Love of Church Discipline. By John White and Ken Blue. Intervarsity Press, Downers Grove. $11.95.

The subject of church discipline is neither new nor novel. It has been discussed, debated, and needed for years. Almost every denomination agrees with the principle, but few know how to implement discipline. The authors of this volume attempt to show the way. They present four concerns (p. 24):

> Corrective discipline when properly carried out should set us free from every fear save the fear of God and the fear of sin. . .we shall devote a chapter to each of these four concerns: reconciliation, church purity, restoration of sinners and freedom.

The chapters on each of the topics is thorough and amply illustrated from real life. The authors consider reconciliation the most basic of the four goals, meaning reconciliation with God and man. Yet here is the one stumbling-block this reviewer found as a Lutheran. While the reconciliation of Christ is mentioned and urged, it is obvious that the doctrine of justification by faith is not central to the discussion. One simply cannot discuss reconciliation without the cross and faith at the very center of the discussion.

In the chapter on church purity the authors make a questionable use of Ephesians 5:25-27 (p. 58):

> But the church is anything but pure. She would be a lot purer if corrective discipline were revived. The pre-eminence of reconciliation in corrective discipline in no way minimizes the need for a purified church. Holiness was not a bargain-basement price for the church's reconciliation. To Christ the purity of the bride cost his incarnation and death.

The authors go on to point to Christ as the one who makes the church (bride) holy and spotless. Yet one must interface the quotation above with the statement that Christ makes the church pure: "More than this he does to her something no human has been capable of doing to a fallen woman. He makes her clean, pure, holy" (p. 58). There is a confusion of justification and sanctification here: "She would be a lot purer if corrective discipline were revived;" and "He makes her clean, pure, holy." Christ has made the church totally, perfectly holy by His sacrifice; she cannot make herself more pure by her sanctification. White and Blue do, however, make a clear case against the church of our day—any denomination—that avoids the steps of Christian discipline. We should do well to heed their charge of spiritual negligence in this area of our practice.

In the chapter on restoration there is an unclear call to repentance. White and Blue describe repentance in this erroneous way (p. 69):

> That is they acknowledge their sinfulness and turn from it to godly behavior. Rebels see their folly and wrongness and abandon their insurrection. The fallen realize they are in the dirt, get to their feet and brush themselves off.

Repentance is not acknowledging sinfulness and turning to godliness; it is ackowledging sinfulness and turning to Christ the Crucified for forgiveness and renewal. The authors do not deny the doctrine of justification; but it does not hold the center stage in the entire discussion. Renewal and growth in sanctification takes place in the Christian's life on the basis of justification.

The chapter on freedom is excellent. Having rejected false notions of freedom, White and Blue give this description (p. 78):

> No, freedom is doing what you were designed to do, doing it with power and joy. As a creature formed by God you were designed to serve, love, enjoy and glorify God eternally. In being what you were designed to be you will find joy and freedom.

The authors present an exciting view of the freedom that comes when the Christian is reconciled, purified, and restored. In the church we often think only in terms of maintaining pure doctrine and integrity; the freedom that comes to the reconciled needs to be emphasized. However, the difficulty of mixing Law and Gospel again raises its head. When White and Blue say, "We firmly believe that only church discipline which is an extension of and part of the gospel itself is true discipline." (p. 81) The Gospel is pure grace; it is not partly church discipline. Church discipline comes under the Law not the Gospel.

The authors deal with the usual passages in the New Testament that are concerned with discipline, Matthew 18, Luke 17, Luke 24, and others. They offer some comprehensive case studies that are very effective in highlighting the problems we face and the solutions we seek in the church. They offer various steps and plans for implementing church discipline. One important factor is discussed that troubles all churches; pastors with years of experience have encountered it. When discipline is sought and attempted, the guilty party often transfers, moves, or joins another church—sometimes of the same denomination. It is a vexing and embarrasing problem that needs to be rectified. This reviewer highly recommends this volume for every pastor. It will make the pastor mutter, squirm, blush, get angry—with righteous anger, we hope. Church discipline has been a "step-child" far too long in the church of Christ; its use signals health, growth, freedom.

George Kraus

METAPHORS AND MONSTERS. By Paul A. Porter. Borgstroms Tryckeri, Motala, Sweden, 1983. 128 + xv pp. $13.95.

From antiquity the apocalyptic texts of the Old Testament have provided departure points for some of the most speculative exposition which can be witnessed in the history of the church's interpretation of Scripture. While the court narratives of Daniel 1-6, particularly in evidence in Sunday School literature, have not suffered that greatly, chapters 7 and 8 exhibit the most diverse expositions imaginable. What did the ancient readers of Daniel infer when they heard the prophetic portrait of "a he goat with a horn between its eyes, four horns and a little horn. . . ."? What nuances of meaning, if any, were conveyed along with the referential structure of the text?

Porter addresses these and related questions with a suggestive discussion of how metaphors function in various literary texts of antiquity. By using Max Black's conceptual framework as a grid for the analysis of Daniel 7 and 8 and by placing it parallel to certain Second Temple texts which also develop animal imagery, he is able to provide a larger set of hermeneutical considerations for the interpreter's task. Ultimately he proposes that the animal images offer us a "metaphor cluster in which each external metaphor becomes an internal metaphor in its own domain, and eventually interacts across its domain with other external metaphors" (p. 39). This leads into an inquiry for that "root metaphor" or "basic analogy" which holds the larger cluster in a meaningful and creative tension. Porter's answer, drawn from cognate examples and from his view of the text's structure, is that "shepherding" provides the overarching paradigm which organizes the metaphor cluster (pp. 118-21).

While this study assumes the standard critical dating and methodologies, there is much to benefit any student of the text who has puzzled over the precise meaning of these metaphors in their original context. It is particularly helpful in alerting the sympathetic reader to the range of connotations which attend the denotative function of language (sometimes referred to as the "unmarked" and "marked" meanings respectively). Just as Jesus could bring a cluser of ideas to bear on a key point by selecting the precise metaphor or image, so we should expect the ancient prophet to call forth multiple associations in such animal imagery. The challenge, of course, is to identify these more subtle forms of meaning with relative certainty. *Metaphors and Monsters* is a stimulating case study which also necessarily provides a methodological proposal on how this might be done. The author is to be commended both for raising this issue in conjunction with Daniel 7 and 8 and for the clarity that he brings to the methodological choices which his question required.

Dean O. Wenthe

THE BOOK OF JOB. By Normal C. Habel. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1985.

Norman C. Habel, Principal of Kodaikanal International School, Tamil Nadu, India, has made a significant contribution to the vast literature on Job. Particularly is the author to be commended for the manner in which he surpasses

the normal pedantic structure of many exemplars in the commentary *genre* by his constant sensitivity to the position of individual pericopes within the larger structure of Job and his consistent effort to integrate and interpret the canonical text in its present form.

Indeed, one of the first moves of the commentary is a sort of *apologia pro mea via* in which the integrity of the work is defended over against the common critical assumption that the prose prologue and epilogue were originally independent of the main discourse cycle. Here Habel ackowledges his debt to recent works such as Alter's *The Art of Biblical Narrative* and structuralism's stress on the final form of the text. His stated aim is to display the large configuration of the text: "Attention is given to framing techniques, envelope constructions (inclusio), chiasm, adaptation of traditional forms or formulae, wordplay, double entendre, and irony. Especially significant are the various ways in which repetition is employed to frame a unit, highlight a recurring motif (leitmotiv), focus on a pivotal image, or effect verbal irony" (p. 24). With this range of concerns, the commentary provides a rich exposition of the text. Each pericope is first translated with textual notes, then a discussion of the "design" ensues, and finally there is a description of the "message in context." By regarding the Book of Job as a unity, the author is able to propose a number of themes as unifying threads or motifs which run throughout the work. The importance, for example, of legal metaphors is rightly underscored (pp. 54-57). There is also a sensitivity to the way in which Job is continuous-discontinuous with other Old Testament literary patterns: "Job 23—Job's defiant quest and his bold protestation of innocence are not followed by the typical affirmation of trust in God found in lament psalms. Rather, Job closes with a cry of frustration because of his past experience of God's intransigence and intimidating tactics (vv. 13-16). Job wants to reach God and meet him face to face; he will not be satisfied with a bizarre night vision like that of Eliphaz (14:12-16)" (p. 348).

Two features of the commentary might raise some concern for classical expositors. First, the late date assumes standard critical reconstructions of Israel's literary history. Secondly, there emerges at times a tendency to analyze the book of Job almost *exclusively* in the literary-linguistic categories. While the insightful attention to these dimensions of the corpus is also one of the chief strengths of the study, the traditional reading of Job as more than a literary construct also has a legitimate place in the history of interpretation. If we are truly to merge our horizon with that of Job's, the full range of interpretative tools will be necessary. Habel's study has provided a high standard for those who seek to be sensitive to the poetic and literary nuances of this great work, which by any standard is epic in its proportions and eternal in its paradigm for Job's, and mankind's, experience.

Dean O. Wenthe

CHURCH FAMILY MINISTRY: CHANGING LONELINESS TO FELLOWSHIP. By Susan B. Lidums. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1985. 111 pages. Paper.

Family ministry in the church deserves priority attention in a society where fami-

ly needs abound. This practical book addresses family ministry in the local parish from a broad Scriptural perspective which links the family unit with the family of God as the body of Christ. The author dares to suggest that "family ministry touches all those in our midst in all of life at all stages - from birth through death in all life situations" (p. 40). Far more than a program, family ministry seeks to involve all of God's people in reaching out to each other in practical, caring ways as the family of God.

The book suggests a valuable nine-step process for developing a more intentional church-family ministry. Somewhat weak in emphasizing the foundational nature of marriage and in the treatment of marriage enrichment, this book nevertheless belongs on the shelf of every parish pastor and lay leader.

Stephen Carter

GLORY IN THE CROSS: FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT FROM THE PASSION OF CHRIST. By Gerhard Aho, Kenneth Rogahn and Richard Kapfer. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1985. 144 pages. Paper, $7.95.

One of the annual challenges for any pastor is to find a Lenten series that is faithful to the season and yet deals with this portion of the church year in a fresh and vibrant manner. Quite happily for anyone seeking such a series, one has been provided in this extremely useful and well-crafted little book. Gerhard Aho is Chairman of the Department of Practical Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne. Kenneth Rogahn is Pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church in St. Louis, Missouri. Richard Kapfer is Pastor of Memorial Lutheran Church in Ames, Iowa. What these three gentlemen have done is to take St. Paul's list of the fruits of the Spirit in Galatians and superimpose these virtues upon the Lenten season as well as Good Friday and Easter Sunday. The result is an extremely powerful and moving achievement, not just homiletically, but also liturgically.

In the first part of the book Gerhard Aho offers an extremely comprehensive exegetical and textual study and provides three sermon outlines and a page of sermon illustrations. There is more than enough material in these pages with which to build a meaningful sermon. According to the preface, the sermonic portion has been provided "for those who in the press of pastoral responsibility are looking for developed resources." There is no doubt as to the quality of Kenneth Rogahn's sermons. They are quite good. While using this series this past Lent, this pastor found it best to work through the first section of the book, read the homily, and then arrive at a sermonic result. Still, in a pinch these sermons will more than do.

Richard Kapfer's liturgies have been developed to go along with the fruit of the Spirit that is being treated at each particular service. Both myself and my congregation found these liturgies to be a welcome deviation from the familiar ones found in our hymnal. Kapfer also needs to be commended for so skillfully combining traditional Lenten hymns with other non-Lenten hymns that watch the particular theme of the worship service. The result is that worshipers are given an opportunity to be reacquainted with the riches of Lutheran hymnody. For those who will be seek-

ing a series for next year this should be an obvious choice. For those of us who have already used these resources we can only hope that this talented trio is at work on another one.

Martin A. Haeger
Peru, Indiana

TREATISE ON THE VIRTUES. By St. Thomas Aquinas. Translated by John A. Oesterle. University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, Indiana. 171 pages. $7.95.

There is a story told of St. Thomas that in Rome one of the popes was showing him the treasures which the church had begun to accumulate. The pope said, "Saint Peter no longer has to say, 'Silver and gold have I none.' " St. Thomas responded, "That may be true; but now he can no longer say, 'In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise and walk,' either!" I was reminded of that story when reading through Thomas' *Treatise on the Virtues*, translated by John A. Oesterle. Our day has multitudes of volumes written on theology. But few if any contemporary theologians can boast the same command of sources, depth of thought, and precision of expression that is seen in Thomas.

Treatise on the Virtues is a translation of Parts I-II, questions 49-67, of Thomas' *Summa Theologiae*. In these questions Thomas analyzes habits and virtues. Thomas defines the notion of habit, examines how habits arise, increase, or diminish, and how they may be distinguished. Then he considers human virtue as a species of habit, discusses intellectual, moral, and theological virtues, and the duration of the virtues after this life. In the context of his discussion of the theological virtues, Thomas speaks of the relation between faith and love. This discussion helps to shed light on his view that faith must be "formed" by love (Question LXII, Article 4), a view strongly rejected by Luther (*LW* 26, p. 88).

This book is not easy reading. It requires a great deal of time and careful reflection. Though the translator's footnotes help a great deal, the presentation of material in Thomas is very strange to the twentieth century reader. If some hardy soul is interested in Thomas' work, I recommend that he first read *Toward Understanding St. Thomas* by M.D. Chenu, especially pages 79-98. Chenu's work helps one appreciate the powerful arguments and careful expression in Thomas' work. It will greatly help to make this part of the work of the *angelus ecclesiae* more understandable.

Charles R. Hogg, Jr.
Akron, Ohio

SPIRITUAL DIMENSIONS OF PASTORAL CARE: WITNESS TO THE MINISTRY OF WAYNE E. OATES. Edited by Gerald L. Borchert and Andrew D. Lester. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1985. Paper, $11.95.

This *Festschrift* is a tribute to the Rev. Dr. Wayne E. Oates, a clergyman and professor of the Baptist Church. He has authored some forty-four books and two hundred

fifty articles, chapters, and pamphlets in this field. The last chapter describes his life, work, and contribututions, but we shall concern ourselves with the other chapters of the book. These deal with pastoral care and are authored by different writers.

The volume contains eight chapters on varying subjects concerned with the stated topic. Their quality likewise is varied. Some lead the reader to a more biblically based concept of pastoral care (much needed in our day); others stress the psychological, sociological, or political aspects of the subject. The reviewer appreciated the very first chapter by Edward E. Thornton: "Finding Center in Pastoral Care." In it the writer points the church back to its spiritual, biblical, pastoral moorings for the care of souls. The chapter the reviewer liked the least was chapter 7 by Howard J. Clinebell, Jr.: "Revisioning the Future of Spirit-centerd Pastoral Care and Counseling." The spiritual references were far too general, even vague; and the reliance on the secular disciplines was overwhelming. The church needs to grow in the world's disciplines, but it cannot lose its biblical base for the care of souls.

Generally the articles lacked specific application of the Gospel. All pastoral care must be centered on justification by faith. The forgiveness of sins by the subtitutionary atonement is the cornerstone of Christian pastoral care. For this reviewer there is a crucial need for such a text displaying justification as the centerpiece of soul care. The book is recommended reading for the pastor. One can learn from every chapter insights, examples, mistakes, and directions.

George R. Kraus