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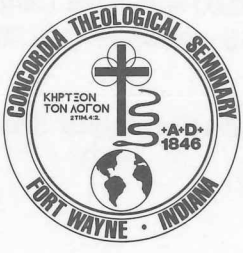

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Hymnody as Teacher of the Faith

Richard C. Resch

Hymns are teachers. In every period of church history the great minds have commented on this subject and often their words have included caution. The teaching influence of hymnody is important because, more often than we might realize or like to admit, both young and old learn about matters such as theology through the texts which they sing. St. John Chrysostom made this assertion:

> When God saw that the majority of men were slothful and that they approached spiritual reading with reluctance and submitted to the effort involved without pleasure, wishing to make the task more agreeable and to relieve the sense of laboriousness, He mixed melody with prophecy so that, enticed by the rhythm and melody, all might raise sacred hymns to Him with great eagerness. For nothing so arouses the soul, gives it wing, sets it free from the earth, releases it from the prison of the body, teaches it to love wisdom and to condemn all the things of this life, as concordant melody and sacred song composed in rhythm.[1]

St. Basil the Great added this observation:

> Now the Prophets teach certain things, the Historians and the Law teach others, and Proverbs provides still a different sort of advice, but the Book of Psalms encompasses the benefit of them all. It foretells what is to come and memorializes history; it legislates for life, gives advice on practical matters, and serves in general as a repository of good teachings. The Spirit mixed sweetness of melody with doctrine so that inadvertently we would absorb the benefit of the words through gentleness and ease of hearing. O the wise invention of the teacher who contrives that in our singing we learn what is profitable, and that thereby doctrine is somehow more deeply impressed upon our souls.[2]

Basil was describing a hymn according to God's model, the psalm. Such singing is not a mindless activity; it is rather an activity that teaches the mind. Luther stated: "When setting forth their theology, the prophets did it not as geometry, not as arithmetic, not as astronomy, but as music, so that they held theology and music most tightly connected and proclaimed the truth through psalms and songs."[3]

Obviously hymns will teach truth to hearts and minds if it is truth that is being sung. Just because of the inherent power of music, however, hymns have frequently been used in the history of the church as teachers of things which are clearly the antithesis of truth. For example, we learn from Athanasius that Arius used songs, specifically one called "Thalia," to carry his heretical teaching concerning the nature of Christ to the people.[4] Likewise Tertullian speaks words of caution concerning two very different types of psalms: "The psalms also come to our aid, not the psalms of that apostate, heretic, and Platonist, Valentinus, but those of the most holy and illustrious prophet David. He sings among us of Christ, and through him Christ indeed sang of Himself."[5]

Centuries later Luther commented on what had happened to the church's song under the papacy:

> There are splendid, beautiful songs and music, but these are used to adorn all sorts of impure and idolatrous texts. Therefore, we have unclothed these idolatrous, lifeless, and foolish texts, and divested them of their beautiful music. We have put this music on the living and holy word of God in order to sing, praise, and honor it. We want the beautiful art of music to be properly used to serve her dear Creator and His Christians. He is thereby praised and honored and we are made better and stronger in faith when His holy word is impressed on our hearts by music.[6]

Three hundred years later, unfortunately, Samuel S. Schmucker not only returned to the use of "impure, . . . idolatrous, . . . and foolish texts," but also abandoned the churchly music of Luther in favor of any popular form of the day including the songs of revivalistic tent- meetings. Here is one of many texts included in Schmucker's *General Synod Hymnal* of 1832 which teach "decision theology":

> *Today, if you will hear His voice,*
> *Now is the time to make your choice;*
> *Say, will you be forever blest,*
> *And with the glorious Jesus rest?*

Behold, He's waiting at your door!
Make now your choice; O halt no more!
Say, sinner, say, what will you do?
Say, will you have this Christ or no?[7]

Here is another song from the same "Lutheran" hymnal which is no way Lutheran:

My former hopes are fled,
My terror now begins;
I feel, alas, that I am dead
In trespasses and sins.

Ah, whither shall I fly?
l hear the thunder roar;
The law proclaims destruction nigh,
And vengeance at the door.

When I review my ways,
I dread impending doom;
But sure a friendly whisper says,
"Flee from the wrath to come."

I see, or think I see,
A glimm'ring from afar;
A beam of day that shines for me,
To save me from despair.

Forerunner of the sun,
It marks the pilgrim's way;
I'll gaze upon it while I run,
And watch the rising day.[8]

The singing sinner is left to identify the "glimmering" and "beam" that he *thinks* he sees. The song is here teaching the sinner about despair and misses the opportunity to teach about the Lord of the cross who has dealt with man's despair. Of what good is it for the Christian or the non-Christian to sing such a text?

Now again, one hundred and fifty years after Schmucker, much of the church seems willing to give up anything for the sake of numerical growth, even if it is at the expense, which it usually is, of

spiritual growth. Surveys become respected tools that discover what hymns people really want to sing. Since most of those hymns are not in Lutheran hymnals, the church must look elsewhere.

According to Dave Anderson, the most popular book meeting this need in the Missouri Synod is his publication of 1984, *The Other Song Book.*[9] It is difficult to consider this songbook as a hymnal in the traditional sense until one realizes that it is being used as such and that people are learning from it. What are they learning? As with Schmucker's hymnal, one hardly knows where to begin; whole discourses could be written on the didactic influences of these collections. Much of Anderson's book is experiential religion. Immediate revelation is taught in "He walks with me and He talks with me"(#261).[10] The centrality of feeling is taught in these examples: "Let us feel His love begun" (#260); "O let us feel His presence" (#188); "Feel the oneness that He brings" (#223); "Feel the faith swell up inside you" (#242). Synergism, blatant and subtle, appears throughout *The Other Song Book*: "I have decided to follow Jesus" (#87); "Accept Him with your whole heart, Oooo" (#242); "If you want joy, you must sing for it; if you want joy, you must shout for it; if you want joy, you must jump for it" (#205). Mantra-like texts of praise round out this book as the individual, the congregation, and even a synod are encouraged to feast on the theology of glory.

Music seems so harmless. Erroneous words dressed up with notes seem possessed of innocence. But it is a deceptive innocence that over the years has often proven an enemy within. The devil is the great deceiver, and it is obvious to anyone who looks carefully that one of his favorite disguises is the "innocence" of the church's singing. The guardians of doctrine, even if they can spot an error miles away in teaching, preaching, and writing, have not always been watchful of the church's sung confession. Pastors and parents are part of that guardian group who have heard children singing without listening to their words. These are people who care deeply about what the child grows up believing but do not perceive that song is a teacher of belief. This disjunction is most evident in the double standard exemplified in the usages of the vacation Bible school, the Sunday school and, all too often, even in the parochial

school.

What are children learning today about their faith from the songs which they sing? Could it be that most pastors have no idea? With so much on his mind that seems of greater importance, the pastor willingly delegates his responsibility to anyone who will accept it. Music leaders pressed into service without guidance often choose musical material on the basis of these two rules: (1.) Children must be able to learn it and love it immediately. (2.) Parents should see that their children are enjoying themselves. To accomplish these ends leaders turn to sources other than the official hymnals of the church.

In this way we miss a pivotal opportunity to teach a true understanding of who we are as Lutherans to the age group most open to learning. The teaching of our ethos does not start as adults, and yet we often wait until our members are adults before we treat the hymnal seriously. We give very young children songs that are mostly irreverent, trivial ditties. We give teenagers different songs based on whatever the informal musical trend is of the decade, which has nothing to do with the Lutheran prayerbook. Because of what we give them, children learn of a church that is quite different from the one which we hope they will call their own as adults.

Catechesis has its beginnings in the sung truths of those members of the flock who are just learning to walk. The greatest minds in church history have told us that this is the case; but the church, especially in recent times, is reluctant to acknowledge this fact. As a result, ecclesiastical song is teaching whatever is easy and popular, with little or no regard for the content and long-term consequences. Also overlooked is the responsibility which we have as pastors, teachers, and parents to make the most of the years when children are most open to learning such matters. It is easier to teach liturgy and hymnody to children before they reach the sixth grade than it is to teach it to any other age-group in the church.

Matters of worth are never learned without effort. If a child sees a teacher loving and exalting a subject, the child will work, no matter how much effort it takes, to learn what that teacher cares about so deeply. The problem is that children rarely see their

teachers exalting matters of worth. Children know when they are being included in important and, indeed, sacred things. They also know when adults treat sacred matters lightly in their presence, but then have a different standard for themselves.

When pastors teach these matters as a part of preparation for confirmation, they are often frustrated by the response of apathy or perhaps outright rebellion. The pastor may not realize something that is clear to the whole class: all of a sudden the church is doing a turn-about. Now there is a seriousness about something that has been a mere game for as long as the youngsters can remember. Making the transition from one standard to another proves problematic. It is surely telling that those who argue for a musical double standard in the church never discuss "how," in fact, a transition can be made from the enticing standard of childhood to the substantive standard of adulthood. It is difficult to defend an approach when the starting point is misrepresentation.

A youth is saying by his apathetic response in class that the church has chosen *the* most awkward time in his life to become serious about musical-liturgical matters. This is the time when he is most self-conscious about the use of his voice in any kind of public singing. This is the time when he is most aware of how his peers view him. The age is past when he will freely join in and learn whatever the teacher loves. But the main, unspoken reason is that long ago he started forming opinions on these matters based on what he thought his church was. Now the pastor is telling him something quite different.

To put it another way, waiting until the age of confirmation to teach worship practice affects not just hymnody and liturgy, but also the teaching of the faith. Pastors may have to change a theology which has been learned within the walls of the church itself. Many a pastor is puzzled by the presence of so much foreign theology in his parish. He sees evidence of it in all age-groups and cannot understand whence it is coming since the people in question are in church every Sunday.

The mystery is often easily solved by a look at all of the music in a person's life. A growing segment, indeed, of today's secular

world is concerned about the teaching power of words set to music. Even in that realm, to be sure, the cause is not a popular one because it goes against the flow of the times and deals with something that most people want to believe is harmless. Alan Bloom has warned in his book *The Closing of the American Mind* that the music of our time is one of its most powerful teachers. He focuses on a most serious aspect of the problem when he says that the major authority figures in a child's life (parents, pastors, teachers, etc.) have no idea what a child is learning from the music in his life. In many cases it is being piped directly to the child's brain quite privately by means of the walkman.[11] The concern in the secular world about these matters is, without a doubt, well-founded. What is sad and quite incredible is that in the church, where teaching influence is of the greatest importance, there is either silence or a quiet acceptance. In this area, in fact, the church is not just in neutral gear but in reverse with her foot to the floor. It would appear that she no longer believes that her practice teaches.

Prosper of Aquitaine, Luther, Walther, Sasse, and many others have wisely cautioned the church about such things down through the centuries. Their cry was *lex orandi lex credendi*, which is to say that the practice of the church teaches the church. Wilhelm Loehe said in his *Three Books about the Church* that the true faith is not only expressed in the sermon but also prayed in the prayers and sung in the hymns of the church. He said that through the church's practice people learn without even noticing it. In this way the practice of the church serves the church as a holy weapon of defense and offense in the Lord's battles. Prayerbooks or hymnals are living books of proof and instruction.[12] We are ignoring the lessons of history, the wisdom of the church fathers, and an important part of the commission of our Lord to "teach all things whatsoever I have commanded you" when we allow our practice to misrepresent us.

One of the main ways in which Lutheranism is being misrepresented is through a theology of glory in hymnody. Hermann Sasse called this theology "the prevailing theology of Christendom" and warned that today we have a gospel that men fashion for themselves.[13] The sad result is that the theology of the cross, which by its nature has always been a mystery to the world, is becoming more

and more of a mystery to the church, even the Lutheran church. The profoundly beautiful, yet puzzling wisdom of the cross is not the main teaching in the church. Instead, it appears as if the church is choosing the easy route, and clearly the cross has never been the easy route. According to Luther these two opposing theologies of the cross and glory are no less than a matter of true and false doctrine.[14]

Since, then, both true and false theology are taught quite effectively through hymns, it follows that the church is clearly obligated to pay close attention to how the faith is being taught through the sung word. The proposal of this essay, therefore, is a very simple two-part plan which is not at all new but may seem new to many because of how far our worship practice has strayed from the basics. It is a plan in which our sung confession will be consistent with our spoken and written confession. (1.) The first step is to use our hymnals. (2.) The second step is to teach our hymnals.

Part One: Using Our Hymnals

Recently many in the LCMS have begun to advocate a fresh, creative approach to weekly worship. It is often an attempt to avoid being labeled a church "on automatic" whose worship is dull and in a rut. The movement is encouraged by a popular resource produced by Concordia Publishing House with the theologically bankrupt title of *Creative Worship*. In the parishes where this movement prevails all manner of weekly creativity gives the impression that someone is hard at work keeping worship alive. As well as denying the creative power of the one who is truly at work in Christian worship (the Chief Shepherd, not the undershepherd and his staff), this movement sends worship leaders scurrying about weekly to any resource that will accomplish crowd-pleasing feats. The bottom line of this on-going, creative compilation is not what is being taught but how it is being received.

A wise, old professor once told the author: "Never speak of challenging people when you are planning worship, because every minute of earthly life holds some kind of challenge, and the last thing people need is to have someone with a private agenda deciding how they will be challenged when they come to be fed by their

Lord." For the sake of the person in the pew it would be good if more of today's students of theology and church music heard such sound pastoral advice and took it to heart. A stable worship practice is needed now more than ever. It is worth noting that, while Lutheran hymnody and liturgy is somewhat difficult to learn, as are most things of worth, it is far more difficult for the person in the pew to learn new material every time he comes into the church. One sad result of creative worship is that people are not learning anything. For the sake of "freshness" the memory is disallowed its function. Thereby is the fact ignored that the church has always learned by rote through a week-after-week and year-after-year practice that taught the memory of the faithful.

Hymnals, moreover, unite a church in practice and belief. What is the future, then, of a church body where increasingly its hymnals sit untouched in the pew-racks of its congregations? What is its future when all of its congregational singing comes from printed bulletins and supplemental books? Eventually, of course, its unity in practice and belief will suffer. We do not have to wait long or look far to see evidence of increasing disunity in our church. Twenty years ago it would not have been necessary to defend and encourage the use of Lutheran hymnals in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. However, several developments have changed the status and use of our hymnals since that time.

1. The use of three hymnals within the Missouri Synod since 1978 has split the synod three ways and opened the door for yet further division in practice. According to a recent survey, *The Lutheran Hymnal* is the most frequently used hymnal in 32% of its congregations, *Lutheran Worship* in 49%, and *Lutheran Book of Worship* in 7.9%[15]

2. The same survey revealed that supplemental hymnals are the most frequently used hymnals in 11% of synodical parishes, an alarming 8.6% more than in 1989. This increase means that approximately two hundred and fifty parishes abandoned (or, at least, significantly decreased) the use of any distinctively Lutheran hymnal in the course of a single year.

3. The computer and in-house copy machines have turned the

local parish into its own publishing house—lacking, however, any process of doctrinal review.

4. Recent programs from sources that "market" the church blatantly place hymns and other church music in the realm of entertainment and manipulation. Cantor Paul Westermeyer of Northwestern Seminary has written: "I expect that the vision of the church as Disneyland and entertainment will increase over the next years; this perspective is being argued not only from television evangelists, but also from leaders of large and successful mainline churches."[16]

5. It is well-known that much of the church-growth movement considers any distinctively Lutheran hymnal a barrier to growth. Such a hymnal is too heavy in a literal sense, and its hymns are too heavy doctrinally. There is a fear that people will not return because the music is not "user-friendly." (It is worthy of note that the concerns of the church-growth movement always relate to numerical growth, not spiritual growth.)

6. The music of evangelicalism surrounds us. It is teaching—through radio programs, concerts, compact discs, television, the walkman—an ethos foreign to that of Lutheranism and its hymnals. For many Lutherans this music is the main teacher of matters spiritual outside of the worship hour.

It is clearly essential, therefore, that pastors and musicians teach the Lutheran faith effectively through a consistent Lutheran practice utilizing a Lutheran hymnal unfettered by the trends of the times and the whims of individual leaders. Traditional Lutheran hymnals may have flaws, but for the most part they are trusty collections of songs which have served our confession well. They bring together solid musical and poetic expressions of Lutheran theology from the past and the present. It is important that we all confess and learn the same thing, so long as this thing be the biblical and Lutheran truth.

Part Two: Teaching Our Hymnals

We have already spoken of the importance of teaching a Lutheran ethos to the young, but a few points may be added. There was a time, not too long ago, when an orthodox pastor had all of the

teachers in his parochial school on his side in this undertaking. Such unanimity is now, unfortunately, history. There was also a time, not too long ago, when a pastor could count on the musicians of the church to be its best teachers of Lutheran practice. Such is still the case in some parishes, but their number, sadly, is on the decline. Thus, the pastor may at first find himself alone in his understanding of the principle of *lex orandi lex credendi*. But as he daily and consistently imparts this understanding through every aspect of his pastoral practice, the worship at the center of the church's life will serve as a beautiful and painless teacher of the faith. All pastors make decisions on a weekly basis about the resources to be used from the hymnal. However, when the hymnal becomes an integral part of pastoral practice, the decisions become daily ones—decisions that reflect careful thought as to what is being proclaimed by a hymn in the school chapel or by a short liturgy at the bedside, decisions that always take into account where the church is in her progression through the church year, decisions that consistently treat the hymn as teacher of the faith even in the shortest devotion before a meeting.

Next to the catechism, the hymnal has traditionally been the most important book in teaching the faith. This teaching is done by putting doctrine into a hymnic form that is understood by everyone and is memorized through repeated use. The hymn is a form that applies doctrine to life. Until recently the faithful treasured their hymnals as their main devotional resource. Through a regular—often daily use—they often memorized more from their hymnals than they did from their Bibles. The hymnal was the Lutheran prayerbook; it was one of the main teachers of what it meant to be Lutheran. There seems to be a reluctance today on the part of many worship leaders to let people open the Lutheran prayerbook in worship. The increasingly common practice of printing all the hymn texts in the service-folder is one that leaves the hymnal sitting in the pew-rack untouched and unlearned. Worshippers cannot learn to love a hymnal which they never open. The printing of liturgies can be justified, but the printing of hymns that could be sung from the hymnal cannot. The faithful learn their way around a prayerbook by using it. Then they are more likely to turn to it in times of need and times of rejoicing; it serves them in both public and private

devotional life. So one very simple point in teaching from the hymnal is to let people use the book.

A second point is to use only one hymnal in a given parish. The practice of having different hymnals for the very young, for teenagers, for single's groups, for nursing homes, for home circle groups, for alternate contemporary services—to name a few possibilities—is a grave pedagogical mistake. It is also potentially divisive. What does this use of everything but the main hymnal in the life of the parish say about the main hymnal? Furthermore, pre-service sing-alongs of "hymns you like to sing" from non-Lutheran songbooks is an apology to visitors and members for the use of the Lutheran hymnal that will follow.

A third point is to encourage the use of the hymnal in the home. Concordia Publishing House has a commendable new resource called *At Home in Our Hymnal* which introduces this concept to families and shows them how to make use of the vast resources of the hymnal on a daily basis in the home. Eventually this process could lead to every family member having his own personal copy of the hymnal, which he uses daily and then brings with him to corporate worship. Older members can help younger ones to learn the hymnal by pointing out the appropriate place in a child's hymnal so as to guide him through the worship service. Suggestions from the pastor go a long way toward changing attitudes and practice.

A fourth point is to make certain that all leaders in the parish understand that the hymn is a teacher of doctrine. This role sets it apart from its common status as a pleasurable but insignificant filler which is inserted on the way to something important. A *kerygma-didache* understanding of the hymn on the part of these key people in the life of the parish is crucial in making the practice of the parish consistent with what comes from the pulpit. The application of *lex orandi lex credendi* knows no age limit. Very young children are able to learn bits and pieces of what we hope will be their prayer-book for the rest of their lives. In fact, the prime years in which to lay the foundation of a Lutheran ethos are the early years. Any problem of standards in teaching has little or nothing to do with the children. It is and always has been a problem of adults not understanding the long-term influence of the role which they are to

exercise as teachers.

A fifth point is to enlist the efforts of the choirs in the parish. Voices are the best teachers of other voices. Choirs which are encouraged and nurtured in their role as teachers of the church at worship are comfortable and often zealous in their work of leading the parish in the singing of hymns and liturgy. Included, of course, is the joyful work of children's choirs; their function is no different than that of adult choirs. In fact, the place to start a reformation of practice is with the children, for they are the present and the future church.

A reformation may, indeed, be needed. Luther observed, "Without the theology of the cross, man misuses the best in the worst manner."[17] Such misuse has befallen the hymn; it is now used in the service of the theology of glory. Such hymnody has as its starting point man—man's decision, man's experience, man's sacrifice, man's sincerity, man's desire to appease through service, man's self-satisfying triumphalism which delights in a custom-made theology. Hymns that have man as a starting point will also have man as an ending point. Even though Christ may be mentioned along the way, He will not be at the center of the text. The theology of glory has found a great teacher in the hymn. It would be difficult, indeed, to find a more effective teacher. One does not have to look far to see the results of this teaching campaign in the modern church.

Even in the LCMS, as previously noted, hymnals which take man as the starting point have already assumed dominance in 11% of its parishes. This percentage does not begin, of course, to represent all the parishes which use such material without yet according it dominance. Much less does this percentage reflect the use of such material with the children of synodical parishes. Hymns have been involved in reformations of the church. Both Luther and C. F. W. Walther used hymnals to aid the reformations which they fostered. In the early nineteenth and now in the late twentieth century hymnals expressive of unbiblical theology have played a major role in creating the need for reformations.

The theology of the cross also has a great teacher in the hymn.

In this respect the Lutheran church has been uniquely blest. Our Lord has seen fit to lavish upon this communion theologians, poets, and musicians of unequalled quality who have taken as their starting point what God has done for man in Christ. The theology of the cross is well exemplified by Luther's assertion: "Man hides what is his in order to conceal it, but God conceals what is His in order to reveal it."[18] The Lutheran church has been blessed with writers who have believed the theology of the cross and who have been able to impart its profound truth through verse and song for use even by the young. This is a wondrous gift from God and should be seen as such. It is a gift that transcends culture and time. It is a wealth of instruction in the theology of the cross that has been handed down to us today. There is such richness, for instance, in just four lines of Paul Gerhardt:

> He whom the sea and wind obey
> Doth come to serve the sinner in great meekness.
> Thou, God's own Son, with us art one,
> Dost join us and our children in our weakness.[19]

Gesenius (1601-1673), too, proves the point:

> Oh, what a wondrous off'ring!
> See how the Master spares His servants, and their suff'ring
> And grief for them He bears.
> God comes down from His throne on high
> For me, His guilty creature,
> And deigns as man to die.
>
> My manifold transgression,
> Forgiven, harms me none
> Since Jesus' blood and passion
> For me God's grace has won.
> His lifeblood all my debt has paid;
> Of hell and all its torments
> I am no more afraid.[20]

In our own century Martin Franzmann bears witness to the same truth:

From the cross Thy wisdom shining
Breaketh forth in conqu'ring might;
From the cross forever beameth
All Thy bright redeeming light.[21]

These are but three examples of the many Lutheran hymns of sublime beauty that teach the theology of the cross. It is true that such hymns are more difficult textually and musically than expressions of the theology of glory—as we should expect, for they are expressions of divine truth. They are well-crafted confessions carried by worthy music which we have a life-time to learn and use, confessions that our grandparents used, and confessions that we hope our grandchildren too will be given the opportunity to use. Such hymns are to us both gifts and teachers.

Endnotes

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17. *LW*, 31, p. 41.

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20. *Lutheran Worship*, 367, stanzas 2 and 3.

21. Ibid., 328, stanza 4.

The Origin and Meaning of Εὐαγγέλιον in the Pauline Corpus

Andrew J. Spallek

With the advent of any new body of knowledge a correspondingly new vocabulary must be devised to convey that knowledge precisely and concisely. The advent of Christianity was no exception. As the young Christian church came of age in the Mediterranean world, terminology had to be developed in order to communicate its precious message to outsiders. Technical terms began to emerge in apostolic preaching. One of the most basic of such terms is the name given to the message of salvation through Jesus Christ, εὐαγγέλιον.

Part One of this study will examine the origin and usage of εὐαγγέλιον in the Greek world and in Judaica, including the gospels and Acts. Part Two is an overview of the way in which Paul uses the term. Finally, Part Three will attempt to address the questions as to the content and origin of the messages to which Paul refers as εὐαγγέλιον.

I. The Origin and Meaning of Εὐαγγέλιον

A. The Usage in Non-Biblical Greek

The basic meaning of the term εὐαγγέλιον is "that which is proper to an εὐάγγελος."[1] An εὐάγγελος, or εὐαγγέλιος, is "a giver of glad tidings."[2] Εὐαγγέλιον thence develops two related senses. From the standpoint of those to whom an εὐάγγελος comes, that which is proper to him is the good news. But to the εὐάγγελος himself, that which is proper to him is the reward that he receives as the bearer of that good news. Thus, the oldest known example of εὐαγγέλιον (Homer, *Odyssey* 14, 152-153, 166-167) means "reward for good news."[3] There is no trace of this meaning in Pauline usage unless it would be for the statement in 1 Corinthians 9:14 that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel, but this association is dubious. The context in which Paul places this statement is that of cultic temple worship. Furthermore, Paul identifies it as a command of the Lord, probably referring to Luke 10:7, where Jesus instructs His disciples that "the laborer deserves his wages."[4]

The second meaning of εὐαγγέλιον, the message of good

news, is certainly that which is primarily taken over by Paul in the New Testament. It should be noted that the singular is not often used in this sense in extra-biblical literature. It is usually the plural, εὐαγγέλια, that means "glad tidings." Too much importance should not be placed upon this phenomenon, but perhaps the Christian emphasis is upon the singular, unique, authentic gospel in contra-distinction to other false or less important εὐαγγέλια.

The coming of the herald of glad tidings in the ancient world was quite an unmistakable sight. Usually bringing news of victory in battle, his face would shine. His spear would be decked with a laurel, his head would be crowned, he would be swinging a branch of palms. He would raise his right hand and call out "Χαῖρε . . . νικῶμεν."[5] This announcement, "we are victorious," is the common point which governs both Septuagintal and Pauline usage of εὐαγγέλιον. Victory, or the peace which attends it, is said to bring σωτηρία to the people. Its association with the concept of "salvation" further facilitated the transference of εὐαγγέλιον to the theology of the New Testament.

In order to thank the gods, but also to hold them to their gift, the recipients of the εὐαγγέλιον would offer sacrifices. The phrase εὐαγγέλια θύειν is first found in Isocrates.[6] The concept of sacrifice in response to the gospel is found in Paul only indirectly in his theology of giving, especially perhaps Romans 12:1, where Paul encourages his readers to offer their own bodies as living sacrifices to the God who has revealed His gospel to them. Thanksgiving in general as a response to the gospel is prominent in Paul.

From the specific usage of εὐαγγέλιον as news of victory in battle, a generalization was made. The word εὐαγγέλιον came to mean any important good news, even of a political or private nature. This development is clear from a passage in Philostratus which indicates that Nero ordered εὐαγγέλια to be offered after his success in the games. Some cities misunderstood and believed that he had been victorious in war and taken some Olympians captive.[8] The use of εὐαγγέλιον in this sense became so popular that a caricature appears in Aristophanes in which a sacrifice is offered at the εὐαγγέλιον that anchovies had become cheaper.[9]

A component to the understanding of εὐαγγέλιον under present discussion is the concept that it "does not merely declare salvation; it effects it."[10] The message itself is the cause for rejoicing and sacrificing. For this reason the messenger runs swiftly, trying to be the first to bring the precious message. A messenger can be punished for his neglect, "for he has deprived the recipients of their good fortune."[11] Bad news would purposely be suppressed. Sometimes, for political reasons, false εὐαγγέλια were circulated,[12] in which case the messenger carrying the true message could have been said to have run in vain. Perhaps therein lies a backdrop to Paul's mention of another (false) gospel in Galatians 1:6-7. One can graphically imagine the image of a messenger, ill with exhaustion, having run in vain (Galatians 2:2) because the recipients have accepted a different εὐαγγέλιον.

Eventually the term εὐαγγέλιον came into use in the imperial cult. The striking calendar inscription from Priene of about 9 B.C. proclaims that all time should be reckoned from the date of the birth of Emperor Augustus, because "the birthday of the god was the beginning of εὐαγγέλ[ιον] on his account."[13] Gerhard Friedrich also quotes inscriptions announcing the εὐαγγέλια of the emperor's coming of age and his ascension to the throne. Clearly Friedrich's statement is accurate: "the New Testament speaks the language of its day."[14]

B. The Usage in the Septuagint and Judaica

The substantive is rare in the Septuagint, never appearing in the neuter singular. The plural is used in 2 Kings 4:10 (2 Samuel in the Massoretic Text) in the sense of a messenger's reward for the good news which he thought that he was bringing, although in this case the "reward" turned out to be death. The neuter plural or feminine singular (the reading is uncertain) appears in 2 Kings 18:22, meaning "reward for good news." In the entire passage of 2 Kings 18:19-27, which describes the reporting to David of the news of Absalom's death, the substantive is used three times (the other two occurrences referring to the actual message) and the cognate verb appears four times. It is ironic that in both of these passages, the "good news" is really sorrowful news for the recipient. One other occurrence of the substantive is 4 Kings 7:9 (2 Kings in the Massoretic Text), where

it refers to actual good news (the defeat of the Syrians).[15] In all of these places, εὐαγγέλια translates the Hebrew *b'sōrāh*. The noun in the Septuagint is always used in the secular sense.

Although the noun is rare in the Septuagint, the related verb occurs frequently: nine times in Kings; six times in Isaiah; three times in the Psalms; and once each in Joel, Nahum, Jeremiah, 1 Chronicles, and 4 Maccabees. Unlike the noun, the verb εὐαγγελίζω is used both in the secular and religious sense, always translating the Hebrew *bsr*. Apparent cognates of *bsr* are an Arabic verb meaning "to be joyful (as at the birth of a son)" and an Ethiopic verb meaning "to bring a joyful message."[16] Because of 1 Samuel 4:17, where the *m'bhassēr* proclaims bad news (the defeat of Israel, loss of the ark, and death of the sons of Eli), and of 1 Kings 1:42 and Isaiah 52:7, where the message is characterized as "good" by the addition of *tōbh*, it has been conjectured that the basic meaning of *bsr* is simply "to bring a message." Friedrich, however, maintains that such is not the case. The joy of the message is contained in the root *bsr*. Since the message came to be associated with the battlefield and news of victory, every messenger from battle came, by extension, to be called a *m'bhassēr*, even if the message brought bad news.[17] By far the most predominant use of *bsr*, as of εὐαγγελίζω, is the proclaiming of good news, especially news of victory.

Most significant for the understanding of Paul's use of εὐαγγέλιον and εὐαγγελίζω is its appearance in the Psalms and Isaiah. In Psalm 39:9 (LXX; Psalm 40 MT), the good news that is proclaimed to the congregation of Israel is that of the righteousness of God. Psalm 67:11 (LXX; Psalm 68 MT) announces the victory of God over His enemies. It is Psalm 95 (LXX; Psalm 96 MT), however, that touches most upon New Testament usage. Verse 2 enjoins people to "εὐαγγελίζεσθε His salvation," literally, to tell the good news of His salvation." There is a sense of urgency here that is more fully developed in Isaiah. "A new era begins also for the nations. For Yahweh is a God of the Gentiles as well as Israel."[18] But this phraseology also parallels the inscriptions from the Roman imperial cult regarding the ascension of the emperor as the beginning of glad tidings and salvation.

It is especially Isaiah, however, who provides the New Testament writers and speakers with the theological charge of εὐαγγέλιον and εὐαγγελίζω. Isaiah 40:9 and 52:7 announce the coming of the Redeemer King into His kingdom.[19] But the message of the evangelist is always that of the sender, the Lord Himself, as Paul points out in citing the latter passage at Romans 10:15.[20] The messenger's authority when proclaiming the gospel is that of his commission. In Isaiah 60:6 it is the Gentiles who come streaming into Jerusalem to honor the Redeemer King and to proclaim the salvation (LXX) of the Lord. This is clearly a messianic reference. It is above all Isaiah 61:1, however, that provides the springboard into the evangelism of the New Testament. The messianic age begins with the fulfilment of this prophecy. Jesus claimed to constitute its fulfilment in Luke 7:22 and Matthew 11:5. The "gospel" is one of forgiveness by means of God's favor, His grace alone. The "gospel" is also God's righteous vengeance which defeats evil and is therefore a source of comfort for His people. This message became the heart of Paul's εὐαγγέλιον.

The messianic nature of these passages was emphasized in rabbinic Judaism. The coming of the *m'bhassēr*, the "evangelist," becomes the focal point, for his coming means the beginning of the messianic age of heaven on earth. "Everything depends on his appearance and on his act of proclamation."[21] There is no unanimity among the rabbis concerning his identity. Sometimes he is Elijah, sometimes an unknown figure, sometimes the Messiah himself.[22]

C. The Usage in the Gospels and Acts

We have already seen that Jesus applied Isaiah 61:1 to Himself and, in so doing, ushered in the messianic age. But it is interesting to note that the ἄγγελοι are the first New Testament εὐάγγελοι. Gabriel tells Zechariah the good news about the upcoming birth of John. An angel tells the shepherds the good news of the birth of the Messiah, the Lord. Thus, Mark can include both the events surrounding John and those surrounding Jesus in what he calls the "gospel of Jesus Christ" (1:1). Elsewhere in the gospels the content of the εὐαγγέλιον is not specified, except that it is the "gospel of the kingdom of God." The reader is expected to be familiar with its meaning and content. In the Book of Acts Luke

makes it clear that the gospel is the Lord Jesus Christ. Once he quotes Paul identifying "the gospel of His grace (20:24)."

In regard to the remaining non-Pauline books of the New Testament, the term εὐαγγέλιον appears twice in Hebrews, four times in 1 Peter, and three times in Revelation. No new nuances in meaning or origin are provided by these passages.

II. Εὐαγγέλιον in Paul

The Apostle Paul uses the noun sixty times in his epistles. The verb is used twenty-one times excluding the variant reading at Romans 15:29. The distribution is as follows:

Book	Noun	Verb
Romans	9	3
1 Corinthians	8	6
2 Corinthians	8	2
Galatians	7	7
Ephesians	4	2
Philippians	9	0
Colossians	2	0
1 Thessalonians	6	1
2 Thessalonians	2	0
1 Timothy	1	0
2 Timothy	3	0
Titus	0	0
Philemon	1	0

In the course of these occurrences Paul uses εὐαγγέλιον or εὐαγγελίζω in the absolute sense (with no significant explanation or qualification) forty-eight times (59% of the time). He qualifies it in some way as the gospel of Christ fourteen times (17%). Thirteen times Paul gives a minor explanation, such as "gospel of peace" or briefly tells what the gospel effects in its hearers (16%). In five places Paul uses the term with a major explanation or exposition of the gospel (6%). In only one instance (1 Thessalonians 3:6) does Paul use the term in a secular sense (1%). It is plain that Paul, like Matthew, Mark, and Luke, expects his readers to identify the εὐαγγέλιον readily. Where explana-

tion is given, it is for emphasis or review. It is largely from those six percent of Pauline usages where a major explanation is given that we must piece together Paul's definition of εὐαγγέλιον.

The question of the source of Paul's meaning of the term εὐαγγέλιον is impossible to answer with certainty. Paul certainly was familiar with rabbinic messianic expectations, which would suggest familiarity with εὐαγγελίζω. That these prophecies or expectations were fulfilled in Christ was revealed to him by the Lord Himself. It would be easy to bridge the gap from messianic language of the Septuagint to Christ, especially since Paul had access to those who had personally heard Jesus explicitly bridging that gap. Perhaps Paul also had access to a written source of the quotations of Jesus that included His application of Isaiah 61:1 to Himself. In any case Paul had the assurance of direct revelation. The generalization from verb to noun was a simple one for Paul, especially since the Graeco-Roman world used εὐαγγέλιον routinely. Indeed, Paul could make use of metaphors and allusions that took into account the current secular use as well. Of course, it is possible that Paul simply adopted a term that the infant church had already designated as its name for the proclamation of Christ.

III. Paul's Definition of Εὐαγγέλιον and Its Origin

There has been some debate concerning the question of whether it was Paul or someone else who established the term εὐαγγέλιον in the vocabulary in the New Testament. This debate is clearly superfluous to the question of what Paul meant by εὐαγγέλιον. It has been established that the term in secular usage meant "good-tidings," usually concerning victory in battle or a significant birth. Theological use in the Old Testament took on a decidedly messianic sense. By a combination of these two meanings, with heavy emphasis on the theological, Paul refers to a gospel which is entirely familiar to his readers. Paul does not have to define the term for his readers. He tells them truths about the gospel, describing it in the process. It works faith (Romans 10:16; 15:16). It is the message of peace (Ephesians 2:17). But such statements do not reveal Paul's definition of εὐαγγέλιον.

This study does not seek to describe "Paul's gospel." It instead seeks to define what Paul means by the term εὐαγγέλιον. To this end two passages are of primary importance: Romans 1:1-6 and 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. Second Timothy 1:10 and 2:8 also contain a brief statement of the content of the gospel. These statements are not meant to be complete expositions of the εὐαγγέλιον. The death of Jesus is not mentioned in Romans 1:1-6. The incarnation is not mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. Clearly the heart of the εὐαγγέλιον is the message of the saving work of Jesus. Anything connected with that event can be called gospel.[23] Indeed, the heart of the gospel is Christ Himself. Yet there are some specific components to that which Paul calls εὐαγγέλιον.

In Romans 1:1-6 Paul emphasizes the "promised" nature of the εὐαγγέλιον. The gospel that was promised by the prophets of God was fulfilled in His Son, who was in fact born a descendant of David, according to the promise. The term "prophets" in this passage should probably not be taken too specifically, but rather in the sense of "all Old Testament writers."[24] An important component to the definition of εὐαγγέλιον is the fact that the gospel is none other than that which had been promised beforehand by God. The term προεπαγγείλλομαι is used elsewhere in the New Testament only at 2 Corinthians 9:5. The object of this promise is Christ Jesus, born "according to the flesh." The incarnation is another component of Paul's definition of εὐαγγέλιον.

The resurrection of Jesus is of primary importance to Paul's definition of εὐαγγέλιον. This point is stressed in 1 Corinthians 15:1-11, but it also receives emphasis in Romans 1. The resurrection is extremely important to Paul because it was the *resurrected* Christ that had revealed Himself to Paul on the road to Damascus. This experience was the event that absolutely confirmed the messiahship of Jesus. Paul had certainly known of Jesus before His death. As a Pharisee Paul had surely made it his business to know. Paul had thought, of course, that the "interference" of Jesus would cease with His death. Paul was dismayed to learn that "the Way" had survived this event. Some of the followers of Jesus claimed validity for their sect by virtue of the resurrection of their rabbi. To the Pharisee Saul this claim was unbelievable. "God had cursed

Jesus by death on the cross."[25] But in a moment all was changed. When Jesus appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus, no longer could Paul deny the resurrection. If he could not deny the resurrection, he could not deny the messiahship of Jesus. Thus, the resurrection is the turning point, the point at which Jesus is revealed to be the Son of God after all and, therefore, a vital component of the εὐαγγέλιον. Furthermore, it was the event on the road to Damascus which set Paul apart for the εὐαγγέλιον of God. Once Paul had been simply a Pharisee ("separated one"); now Paul is a "Pharisee" ("separated one") unto the εὐαγγέλιον.[26] Jerome Murphy-O'Connor has listed three identifying characteristics that a Pharisee would see in Jesus: a claim to messianic sonship, a rejection of the absolute authority of the law, and a claim to resurrection.[27] It is interesting to note that the first and third of these are affirmed in Paul's definition of εὐαγγέλιον in Romans 1:1-6. The alleged repudiation of the law is not affirmed because the allegation is inaccurate. Romans 5-6 especially go on to point out the accurate relationship between Christ and the law.

The emphasis on the resurrection of Christ is also prominent in 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 and 2 Timothy 2:8. Once again the resurrection is the guarantee of salvation, the key to unlocking the gospel. Also prominent is the role of the Scriptures in the εὐαγγέλιον. In 1 Corinthians 15:4 the εὐαγγέλιον states that the death and the resurrection of Jesus took place κατὰ τὰς γραφὰς, "according to the Scriptures." This is a point of crucial importance. Not only was the birth of Jesus foretold, but so also do His death ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ("for the sake of our sins") and His resurrection occur in accordance with the word of God. As in Romans 1, the heart of the εὐαγγέλιον is rooted in the Scriptures. This fact is also implied in 2 Timothy 2:8, where the resurrected Christ is designated as "from the seed of David," a designation rooted in prophecy. All three of Paul's "definitions" of the εὐαγγέλιον (Romans 1, 1 Corinthians 15, and 2 Timothy 2) share the emphasis upon the resurrection of Christ and the scriptural foundation for the saving work of Jesus.

There is no discrepancy in that 1 Corinthians 15 mentions neither the incarnation nor the birth of Christ, while Romans 1 makes no

mention of the death of Christ. The death of Jesus is implied in His resurrection. The incarnation is implied in His death and burial. All of the elements are present and can be inferred from the resurrection. Paul's definition of εὐαγγέλιον, therefore, can be stated as follows: God's promised act of salvation accomplished whereby He sent His Son to be incarnate, of the seed of David, to die for our sins, and raised Him from the dead as a guarantee of that salvation. Anything connected with this truth is, for Paul, εὐαγγέλιον. "'Gospel' is Paul's personal way of expressing the Christ-event, the meaning that the person, life, ministry, passion, death, resurrection, and lordship of Jesus of Nazareth had and still has for human existence."[28] But, for Paul, εὐαγγέλιον is not simply a formula of words; εὐαγγέλιον is God in action. "The gospel does not merely bear witness to salvation history; it is itself salvation history."[29] The εὐαγγέλιον is the δύναμις of God for the salvation of all who believe (Romans 1:16).

The origin of the εὐαγγέλιον is of primary importance to Paul for determining its genuineness. Especially important to understanding the question of origin is the relationship of the concept of tradition (παράδοσις) to that of revelation (ἀποκάλυψις). The scope of the present study prevents an in-depth analysis of this question, but the basic relationship can be ascertained. In Galatians 1:11-12 Paul vehemently defends the gospel which he proclaims as one given him, not by men, but by the direct revelation of Jesus Christ. Reconciling this statement with that of 1 Corinthians 15:1-11, which speaks of a gospel which Paul had received and passed on to the Corinthians, has proved difficult to some. For Paul, revelation and tradition have complementary functions. Tradition provides a way of expressing that which is revealed; revelation serves as a norm of tradition. Seyoon Kim expresses this relationship as the "distinction between essence and form."[30] According to Kim, Paul is referring to the former in Galatians 1:12 and to the latter in 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. The essence of the gospel was received by Paul on the Damascus road, but the tradition, or traditional formula, "unfolds" the gospel. It provides a formalized method of communicating that essence.[31] Kim errs, however, in ascribing a normative role to the tradition itself.[32] It is not the tradition that is normative, but it is the revealed gospel

contained in the traditional formula that is normative. The revealed gospel is always that which is normative. Anyone who proclaims anything other than it is anathema (Galatians 1:8), whether it would be Paul, another apostle, or even an angel from heaven.[33] In the same way any means of proclaiming the revealed gospel is gospel. "Old Testament 'proof texts' become gospel if they are related to the gospel. The tradition of I Corinthians 15:3f. is gospel even though Paul received it by oral tradition while the gospel itself came to him by revelation and not by oral transmission."[34] Therefore, tradition stands in the service of the gospel, and not vice versa.[35]

We cannot be certain of the specific origin of the παράδοσις utilized by Paul. According to the material of Acts, there are two main possibilities. Either Paul received this tradition from the first apostles (specifically Peter), or he received it in Damascus. Most scholars have assumed that this information was handed down to Paul when he went up to Jerusalem to meet with Peter (Galatians 1:18).[36] The term ἱστορῆσαι, translated "meet," actually means "visit for the purpose of coming to know someone or something."[37] But the verb in Hellenistic usage had come to mean "come to know someone."[38] Some think that this is not a strong enough term to convey the meaning of Paul's acquiring the very specific catechetical information of Pauline tradition. A. M. Hunter favors the theory that this "tradition" represents, rather, an early Christian baptismal creed of the church in Damascus.[39] This creed would have been handed down to Paul preceding his baptism there by Ananias. According to Hunter, this formula represents a Palestinian, rather than a Hellenistic, tradition, but was handed down to Paul in a Hellenistic *milieu*.[40] In the end, actually, it makes little difference where Paul received the παράδοσις of 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. Its origin is in the church of Jerusalem, and it represents the same gospel as that which Paul received by revelation on the road to Damascus.

Conclusion

The origin of the term in the Greek world was tied to a message of "glad tidings," usually of a victory in battle or the birth of an important child. In the Septuagint εὐαγγελίζω was used to translate forms derived from the root *bsr*. Old Testament usage

progressed from secular to theological and specifically messianic use. Paul may have taken up the term from the Old Testament, or he may have adopted it directly from the early church. But he must have also had in mind the secular meaning of the term when employing its use.

That which Paul meant by the term can be summed up as God's promised act of salvation accomplished whereby He sent His Son to be incarnate, of the seed of David, to die for our sins, and raised Him from the dead as a guarantee of that salvation. Paul received this gospel by direct revelation from the risen Christ on the road to Damascus and subsequently. However, Paul made use of traditional formal expressions of the gospel when they served his purpose of communicating that truth. Therefore, Paul used tradition to serve the εὐαγγέλιον.

Endnotes

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A Review of "A Common Calling"

Editorial Note: In March of 1992 the Lutheran-Reformed Committee for Theological Conversations produced a report entitled "A Common Calling: The Witness of Our Reformation Churches in North America Today." In a letter of 15 October 1992 Dr. Alvin L. Barry, President of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod requested the departments of systematic theology of Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne and Concordia Seminary in St. Louis to evaluate this report and its ecclesiastical significance. The Department of Systematic Theology of Concordia Theological Seminary adopted such an evaluation on 29 January 1993, and on 13 March its members met in Terre Haute with the corresponding department of its sister-seminary, which had by then also formulated an evaluation. In the course of the joint meeting the two departments discussed and endorsed both of the aforesaid evaluations and adopted a common summarizing response addressed to the president of the synod. Two days later, on 15 March, the secretary of the Department of Systematic Theology of Concordia Theological Seminary dispatched, then, to the synodical president its individual evaluation of "A Common Calling" in conjunction with an appropriate covering letter. In accordance with subsequently agreed arrangements as to publication, the following four documents are hereby presented to the readers of the *Concordia Theological Quarterly*: (1.) the presidential letter of 15 October 1992, (2.) the common summarizing response of 13 March 1993, (3.) the departmental covering letter of 15 March 1993, and (4.) the review of "A Common Calling" officially adopted on 29 January 1993 by the Department of Systematic Theology of Concordia Theological Seminary. [The Editors.]

I. The Presidential Letter of 15 October 1992

The Office of the President
The International Center
The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
St. Louis, Missouri
October 15, 1992

Dr. John F. Johnson
Dr. Robert D. Preus
Dr. Michael Stelmachowicz

Dear Brothers in Christ:

As you are aware, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has accepted a report from the Lutheran-Reformed Committee in regard to full communion between the ELCA and three other Reformed church bodies in America. No doubt you are also aware of the very serious consequences such proposed full communion will have for our relationship with the ELCA.

Since the Commission on Theology and Church Relations is busily engaged in a host of other important activities, I would like to request that you gentlemen assign the task of responding to this statement to your respective departments of systematic theology. I would very much appreciate it if each of your systematics departments prepares a formal response. I would like to receive a response no later than February 1993. I would respectfully suggest that the following points be considered:

(1.) In light of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, is this document a faithful application of our historic Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper? Provide full documentation from Scripture, confessions, and our church history to demonstrate any conclusion reached in this regard.

(2.) If accepted by the ELCA, what would this proposal mean in regard to the identity of the ELCA as a "Lutheran" church body? To what extent is Lutheran identity normed and formed by the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, particularly in light of the Formula of Concord?

(3.) What consequences would this proposal have, if accepted, in regard to the relationship between the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America? What consequences would the proposal, if accepted, have for issues such as closed communion and other related pastoral concerns?

Alvin L. Barry

II. The Common Response of 13 March 1993

The systematics departments of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, have reviewed

each other's documents and agree to the theological substance of the other's. In addition, in our meeting of 13 March 1993 at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Terre Haute, Indiana, we discussed large matters which lie behind the document ["A Common Calling"].

The ACC approaches the church mainly as a socio-historical community. The means of grace are not primary in defining the church as in Augsburg Confession VII. The historic confessions appear to be the transient expressions of the faith of the respective communities and not a summary and exposition of the divinely-given Scriptures. The ACC assumes the Reformation faith as a socio-religious phenomenon of which the Lutheran and Reformed confessions were complementary expressions.

In summary, we wish to point out that the ACC uses the Lutheran Confessions in a way that is in conflict with their self-understanding. Thus, the Book of Concord as a faithful witness to the life-giving truth of God's word is lost. What is finally important about this is not merely that the truth is lost, but that in losing the truth salvation is lost.

III. The Departmental Letter of 15 March 1993

Department of Systematic Theology
Concordia Theological Seminary
Fort Wayne, Indiana
March 15, 1993

President A. L. Barry
The International Center
The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
St. Louis, Missouri

Dear President Barry:

Your letter of 15 October 1992 asked the systematics departments of both seminaries to offer written reviews of "A Common Calling" for your use. Enclosed please find the review which was produced by our systematics department. This review document was adopted by our own department on 29 January 1993.

On 13 March 1993 the systematics departments of both seminaries

met for a joint evaluation of "A Common Calling," and we are in agreement regarding it. We studied both reviews and we support each review's observations and conclusions. A summary cover letter was composed at the March 13 meeting, and this will be submitted on behalf of both departments by the St. Louis systematics department.

We deeply appreciate the opportunity to participate in the theological labors undertaken by our synod, and we will gladly respond to any similar requests you may wish to forward to us. May the Lord continue to bless your work and give you wisdom as you counsel with the dialogue participants.

Sincerely,
Alan Borcherding,
Secretary

IV. The Opinion of the Department of Systematic Theology

As a matter of our scriptural and confessional principles, we commend the efforts of Christians to reach consensus and unity among themselves. At the same time the results of inter-Christian dialogue require close examination.[1] This is especially true when two church traditions, such as the Lutheran and the Reformed, have for more than four centuries defined their respective positions in distinction to the other. Their positions on christology, baptism, the Lord's Supper, sanctification, and election have not only been noticeably different, but each has used the other as antithesis in explaining its own position. As official representatives of their churches, the framers of ACC ["A Common Calling"] offer the "unanimous recommendation" that on the basis of this document "full communion" be established between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Reformed Church in America, and the United Church of Christ (63). With a stroke of the pen the obstacles which each denominational tradition saw in the other are removed.

As striking as this proposal is to Lutherans in the United States, this is not a new phenomenon for either tradition. Lutherans and the Reformed were by governmental decree joined into what is common-

ly known as the Prussian Union in 1817. Many Lutherans left Germany for America and Australia to escape this union and to maintain their Lutheran identity. As this is part of the heritage of both the ELCA and the LCMS, this matter is not to be lightly considered, as it, in effect, passes a judgment on our fathers. More recently the remaining Lutheran churches in Germany were brought together with this Prussian Union by the Leuenberg Concord. The explicitly Reformed churches also were part of the agreement. The Leuenberg Concord is favorably cited by the ACC, and much of the ACC argumentation depends on it. We offer these historical references not to excuse ourselves from seriously considering the ACC proposal, but to obligate ourselves to a careful review of the arguments offered for fellowship between Lutheran and Reformed church bodies in the United States. We cannot escape the significance of our history and our fathers who shaped it. To do otherwise would be to trivialize the personal sacrifices upon which our Lutheran church in America is built.

Several approaches are open to us in reviewing this kind of document. So that our review can be as accessible as possible, we are posing three analytical questions to determine whether these actions bringing American Lutheran and Reformed churches together are justified. (1.) Are the ELCA and the Reformed bodies as close to one another as the ACC claims? That will be determined by each church body according to their established procedures for ratifying such actions. Each church without interference from any other church determines its own procedures in resolving this or any matter. The LCMS honors this principle, as others do in regard to us. (2.) Is the conclusion reached by the ACC supported by the theological explanations offered in the document itself? Are the theological reasons for fellowship between the Lutherans and the Reformed really convincing? Every theological document invites this scrutiny. (3.) Does the theology of ACC agree with the theology of Scripture and the Lutheran symbols when it recommends fellowship between these churches? As mentioned, we cannot involve ourselves in the decisions of others churches, but we must make a decision for ourselves. If necessary, we shall raise a confessional witness. Nothing less can be expected of a confessional church. For what other reasons do we have confessions at all? As stated, questions 2

and 3 will provide the outline for our response.

Confessional Commitment and Ecclesial Diversity (II)

The fundamental understanding of ACC that the confessions are not regarded as doctrinal statements is quite striking, since we have traditionally understood them to be doctrinal statements. This is presupposed by the oath to the confessions required in the constitutions of our congregations and the ordination vows of our pastors. We have insisted that this vow be made *quia*; that is, the confessions are binding because they are a correct exposition of the word of God.

The Authority of the "Story"

The confessions are seen by the ACC as the stories of their respective communities. They are a history of what our respective communities have believed and not definitive doctrinal statements correctly reflecting the Scriptures. The idea that the Lutheran Confessions are authoritative doctrinal documents with authority derived and dependent (*norma normata*) on the Holy Scriptures (*norma normans*) is simply not an item. Considering the confessions as "our story" can be described as a kind of narrative theology. Confessions are understood not in relation to the Scriptures, but the community. This approach in handling confessions as stories of each religious community is not explicitly stated in the ACC, but characterizes the entire document.[2] It is self-evident that the ancient creeds as well as the sixteenth-century confessions were produced by the church. The problem is that ACC sees their value as a derivative of the community's life of faith. This approach allows and assumes that the confessions are adjustable as the community changes. Allowing doctrines to change according to the circumstances of the community makes them, in effect, what we have called adiaphora (Formula of Concord-Solid Declaration X:9).[3] Under the ACC view, changing circumstances permit and even demand that we change our confessions.

Complementary Correctives

In the Lutheran-Reformed proposals we are dealing now with a theory of "complementary correctives"; that is, each community

offers a feature which the other lacks or has kept undeveloped. Presuming that confessions are texts of religious communities reflecting what each community believes at a given time and place, Lutherans and Reformed have something to offer each other. This idea of complementary correctives applies especially to how Lutherans and the Reformed understand their official doctrinal documents. Thus we are dealing with a root and not a peripheral problem. How we understand doctrine, doctrinal statements, and confessions determines the framework for all that we believe.

ACC acknowledges the different approaches taken by the Lutheran and Reformed to their confessional documents. Whereas Lutherans emphasize the permanent nature of their confessions, the Reformed are more likely to emphasize the "shaping role" of the community (23). Each religious community, in the judgment of ACC, requires the corrective activity of the other.[4] Our preliminary judgment is that the ACC favors the Reformed approach. These documents may have historical value to tell us what people once believed, but they do not state permanent truths. Thus, from the start ACC regards both the Lutheran and Reformed communities and their confessional documents as substandard, requiring the complementary correctives of the other for a fuller expression of the truth. By acceding to this assumption, the Lutherans have, in effect, surrendered not only their understanding of their confessions as permanent statements of the truth, but also the claims which these confessions make for themselves as authoritative doctrine derived from the Scriptures as the word of God. This idea of authoritative doctrine simply does not come into play in ACC.

The ACC approach presupposes that doctrines are constantly developed by the church in its context as it reengages its historic texts. This is precisely Schleiermacher's understanding of church confessions, as he was able to develop his dogmatics from citations from Lutheran, Reformed, and Anglican confessions in the way similar to the one suggested by the ACC. Thus, when we call the ACC approach new, we mean that it is new to us, but not to the vast Protestant world which, with Schleiermacher, sees theology as a community product. By contrast, the LCMS requires that our churches conform their teaching and practice to the Scriptures and

the fixed doctrinal content of the historic texts of the Lutheran Confessions. For the LCMS these confessional texts have more than sociological value because they are statements of divine truth. Clearly this is not the approach of the ACC.

In its theory of complementary correctives ACC relies on a philosophical theory of interpretation. It assumes that texts, including religious documents, are the language of a specific historical community. Basing the ACC upon a current epistemological theory of text and community is problematic, since it mandates sweeping and probably irreversible changes on the mere authority of today's theory. Thus, the fundamental basis from which the ACC operates is open to question, since it arbitrarily picks one of several possible theories for understanding religious documents and provides no theological justification for this procedure.

It is again apparent that the flexibility of local custom operative under the principle of adiaphora has been presumed by ACC to apply to doctrine. This model is probably rooted in the "cultural-linguistic" theory of doctrine launched by George Lindbeck.[5] It would have been helpful if the authors of ACC had clarified their relationship to the originators of such theological and philosophical theories. The ACC authors could hardly suggest that a particular philosophy be raised to the level of dogma, for others would have the right to offer other theories for understanding religious documents. The end result is that we could be left at sea with any number of competing philosophical theories and any idea of confessional subscription is lost. The ACC approach to interpreting the confessions supposes that the meaning and not merely the application of the historic confessional texts is contained in how the reader's religious consciousness interacts with the text.[6] Quite bluntly, each person's reaction to the confessions and not their original historical settings determines their meaning. To be fair, the ACC limits the acceptable reactions to the Lutheran and Reformed communities, but this is arbitrary. Given the ACC principles, why not open the discussion first to Roman Catholicism and then to non-Christian religions for their reactions? With this approach confessions become merely what certain people believe at a given time without any absolute claims to the truth. Applying this theory to the

Apostles' or Nicene Creeds would be devastating.

Satis Est

Ordinarily it would be important to fine-tune the concept of *satis est* beyond what is hinted at (26-28). This is especially so in defining what is meant by "gospel." For a long time in Lutheran circles debate has centered in whether *satis est* of Augustana VII ("it is sufficient for the true unity of the Christian church that the gospel is preached") refers to the totality of Christian doctrine or only to the Second Article, *id est*, the "simple" news that Christ died for sins. An analysis of ACC shows the most fundamental step, genuine agreement on the definition of the gospel in the narrow sense, has simply not been reached. When the definition of the gospel in the narrow sense has been agreed upon, clearly and in print, then it will be time to discuss the scope of agreement needed for union.[7]

The Condemnations (III.1)

ACC repeatedly declares that the historic condemnations between the Lutherans and the Reformed no longer divide their church bodies. Indeed, the representatives of those four denominations certainly have the right and perhaps the duty to come to this conclusion and make it publicly known, if they find that the evidence warrants it. Likewise the LCMS has a similar obligation in stating its conclusions after its theologians have examined the evidence brought together in the ACC. We can say now that the LCMS cannot agree that evidence put forth by the ELCA authors warrants the conclusion that the condemnations should be withdrawn.

Sixteenth-Century Lutheran Condemnations

ACC repeatedly makes the point that Protestant churches, since they lack a counterpart to Roman Catholic canon law, have no formal procedure for anathematizing false doctrine and similarly Protestant churches lack a clear procedure for lifting condemnations (29, 31, 32).[8] If our procedures are compared to the Roman and Orthodox churches with their popes, patriarchs, and councils, this is obviously true. But theologians with once unacceptable opinions have changed their opinions and been accepted by Lutherans. The

impression cannot be given that some churches because of previous opinions are thereby permanently condemned. For example, the alliance of the earliest Wisconsin Synod with a non-Lutheran church in Germany was changed and it entered into the Synodical Conference. The purpose of LCMS participation in dialogues is to come to agreement on as many issues as possible with other churches, even where total agreement is not reached. Certainly in this sense condemnations can be removed.

In addition, ACC makes too much of the point that the early (1529-1537) Lutheran confessional documents preceding the Formula of Concord do not often condemn non-Lutheran groups by name. The catechisms were to instruct the unlearned in the rudiments of Lutheran theology, and thus one could hardly expect that the names of adversaries would be listed and their positions refuted. Luther's Large Catechism was originally a series of sermons, and the Small Catechism had devotional as well as doctrinal purposes. The Augsburg Confession and its Apology were intended to show points of agreement and disagreement with respect to the papal church, while the Smalcald Articles were to define the Lutheran position with respect to an anticipated council, and the Treatise was to clarify the Lutheran stance regarding the papacy and its bishops. Nonetheless, matters concerning other churches are addressed.

Unless the Roman Catholic party understood themselves as addressed in these confessions, they would not have responded formally with the Confutation of the Augsburg Confession. In turn Melanchthon would not have further responded with the Apology and Treatise. Each party knew it was being addressed. This was the very reason for these confessional documents.

It is small wonder the ACC authors could find few formal anathemas against Reformed theological positions in the pre-1577 Lutheran Confessions. But this point should not be conceded too soon. Note should be made of this phrase in Augustana X: "The contrary doctrine is therefore rejected." This was specifically directed against the Reformed position on the Lord's Supper, because the Lutherans were interested in not antagonizing the Roman Catholics on the Lord's Supper (Apology X) and distanced themselves as far as possible from the Reformed. The importance of this

anonymous condemnation in Augustana X is seen in that Melanchthon removed it from the infamous *Variata*, so not to offend the Reformed. Subsequent history demonstrates that the *Variata* served this purpose well. The *Variata*, without a condemnation of the Reformed, was favored by the Reformed and the Lutherans looking for accommodation with each other. The Reformed knew very well that they were singled out in Augustana X, even if their name was not spelled out.

The ACC engages in the questionable and annoying procedure of counting anathemas to ascertain the permissibility of union. This procedure has no more validity than expounding biblical theology by counting words. It can be called a kind of "confessional fundamentalism."

ACC's treatment of the condemnations in the Formula of Concord is similarly troublesome. It implies that the anathemas of the Council of Trent precipitated the condemnations found in the Formula of Concord (31). Also it claims that such condemnations were related to the need of territorial laws (presumably under *cuius regio eius religio*) to define religious boundaries (32). To put it kindly, the former assertion is unprovable and the latter is demonstrably false. It is well known that the political aspect of the Formula came from the rulers' desire for peace among their subjects by settling numerous theological controversies. No serious scholar of the history leading up to the Formula of Concord would assert that the desire of the states and princes to define their territories was the cause for rejecting Reformed theology. Later, when the Prussian and Saxon princes embraced the Reformed or Roman Catholic faiths, often for political purposes, the Lutheran Confessions remained in force in their lands. Reformed princes schemed and finally succeeded in getting Lutherans to recognize the Reformed faith, but it took over two centuries before they officially succeeded.

ACC is profoundly disturbing when it emphasizes that the sixteenth-century condemnations of the Formula, for example, were not intended to divide the church (29) or to attack the Reformed (31). At first glance this may seem to be true. But on closer inspection it becomes apparent that they were intended to divide. The Lutherans knew that their faith and doctrine required that the

Reformed positions be condemned and rejected. Without the Reformed positions, the Lutherans would have been under no compulsion to defend or even state their doctrines. The insinuation is simply not true that the Lutherans were less than firm in rejecting Reformed theology (30). The ACC arrives at this untenable position by pointing to the comparatively few explicit anathemas against the Reformed. To do this it has to overlook that Articles VII-VIII in the Formula, on the Lord's Supper and Christ, are thorough and clear repudiations of the Reformed position. To its credit, ACC takes note of the strong unofficial mutual condemnations of Lutherans and Reformed as found in writings of theologians (30, top), but it quickly dismisses these as ultimately inconsequential as these are not formal confessional documents. They were not strictly unofficial, however, because these theologians were writing for their churches as much as for themselves.

Without discounting the value of what these Lutheran and Reformed theologians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have written about the positions of the others, we do not have to base our arguments on their mutual condemnations. Formula VII-VIII serves our purposes well, as it was intended to define and describe the Crypto-Calvinist theology in its various forms. It then demonstrated that Crypto-Calvinism was blatantly false and was destroying the Lutheran faith and churches. Both hidden and public forms of Calvinism were equally repugnant to the Lutherans. Thus, we do not have to go beyond our confessional documents to make our case, although we would happily bring in the writings of our Lutheran theologians to show that substantive differences separated them from the Reformed.

The sentence preceding the list of rejected "Sacramentarian" ideas in Formula VII states the case well (Solid Declaration VII:112):

> Therefore we reject [*verwerfen, reiicimus*] and condemn [*verdammen, damnamus*] with heart and mouth as false, erroneous, and deceiving all Sacramentarian opinions and doctrines which are inconsistent with [*ungemäss*], opposed to [*zuwider*], or contrary to [*entgegen*] the doctrine set forth above, based as it is on the word of God.[9]

ACC (32) badly misconstrues the historical context for this statement. As is often the case in ACC, this statement is interpreted in a purely formal way by emphasizing the purpose of the Formula to defend Lutherans rather than attack Calvinists. This is untenable, since the Lutheran defense was accomplished precisely by attacking Calvinistic theology. This is quite obvious to everyone reading Formula VII-VIII. The Lutheran positions on the Lord's Supper and Christ are set forth only by demonstrating that Calvinism is contrary to the Scriptures and hence must be regarded as false doctrine. The Lutherans had no choice but to defend themselves by showing that Lutheran pulpits were being taken over by Calvinists whom Lutherans regarded as false teachers. Subscription to the Formula was required of all pastors and teachers to compel these Calvinists posing as Lutherans to conform to the Lutheran doctrine or be removed as false teachers.

This was a matter of life and death for the Lutheran faith and not merely a matter of formal condemnation. Humanly speaking, Lutheranism was on the verge of extinction, because of the threat of Calvinistic infiltration into the Lutheran ranks. Without knowledge of this history, one simply does not understand the Formula. It simply cannot be proven that the Formula fails to condemn Reformed sacramentology formally. It does. The only way around this problem is to show that the Reformed churches today no longer believe what the Formula says about their theology. We would welcome this, but the ACC certainly gives no indication that this has happened. In fact, its insistence on complementarity seems to discourage it, as without the Reformed view the Reformation faith would be judged to be incomplete.

Status of the Historic Condemnations Today

"Under the same gospel there will still be different emphases, even different modes of thought, in which the whole of the gospel message will find its expression" (33).[10] It is apparently assumed that each tradition contributes to "the whole of the gospel message." There is an unresolved tension between the principle of "complementary correctives" and historic condemnations.

ACC repeatedly asserts that the historic condemnations no longer

divide Lutheran and Reformed churches.[11] To the document's credit, it concedes that differences remain significant, and accordingly the authors do not advocate erasure of the differences. But the reasons for letting differences remain under one umbrella, so to speak, remain problematic.

The ACC proposes two tests for the removal of condemnations: (1.) if a position is no longer perceived as excluding the other side, or (2.) if the other side does not recognize itself as under condemnation from the position, the condemnations no longer apply (33). These are indeed helpful considerations, but insufficiently specific for resolving the problem of condemnations. Are there levels of condemnation? Do some condemnations intrinsically prevent union? Might some condemnations be allowed to remain while union is enacted? More basically, this approach allows for each denominational family by its own decision to remove itself from the condemnation of the other. In a sense each church, Lutheran and Reformed, is a defendant pleading its case before the other. Now, with ACC, each church becomes its own prosecutor, jury, and judge. Taken to its logical extreme, there would be no need for interdenominational dialogue. It is only necessary that a church consider itself accepted by the other.

Lord's Supper and Christology (III.2)

The methodology employed in this section by the authors of ACC is noticeably different from previous procedures. Previously the discussion depended on counting and tabulating the anathemas in the official confessional documents, a somewhat simplistic approach as we intimated above. Now suddenly the significant confessional condemnations hardly play a role. Counting condemnations is no longer in vogue. The focus now shifts to generalizations about tendencies in the history of theology.

Assertions of Historic Commonality

The ACC begins its discussion with the Marburg Colloquy of 1529 (35), when, in fact, enormous differences had been established in the early 1520's. Marburg only brought matters to a head. It did not create them. In discussing Marburg, the ACC authors bypass the

well-documented impasse there having to do with very basic theological and methodological assumptions. It was not that disagreement was limited to only one article. Rather, the other articles were not even discussed and then only hastily subscribed. Luther noted that the Sacramentarians were of a "different spirit," and later history confirmed that the rift was deeper than a minor disagreement over the Lord's Supper. Likewise, the numerous and extensive works of Luther, not to mention his opponents, are ignored. The antithetical methodologies, which result in real differences (37, top), are dismissed with almost a slight of hand with the comment that "most of these pairs may look complementary to us rather than mutually exclusive" (37). This approach in dismissing significant evidence can only be done when doctrinal truth is viewed as a dialectical process of continuously emerging and subsuming viewpoints. This is what is identified throughout our response as "complementary correctives."

What the Lutherans and Reformed are said to have historically held in common is plainly and obviously mistaken (37). They did not agree upon the fourfold *sola.* For example, how could the Reformed hold to *sola scriptura* if they openly claimed that biblical doctrines could be judged by the canons of reason? Lutherans and Reformed again obviously did not concur in the importance of word and sacrament. The Reformed designated them to be means of grace in a sense different from the Lutheran view. Both words, "means" and "grace," had different meanings for each. Putting them together as the "means of grace" only compounded the confusion.

The Unresolved Tension

The ACC assertions on what Lutherans and the Reformed agreed as to the theology of the Lord's Supper conveniently ignores their profound differences, which for over four centuries both sides have recognized. The ACC conclusion that today there is a diminished awareness of the historic theological concerns regarding the Lord's Supper (38) should be a call for renewed study of these differences and not for fellowship. Can ignorance ever be used as a basis for church fellowship? But this is exactly what the ACC suggests.

Once again, ACC asserts that the Lutheran and Reformed

positions are complementary (39). Moreover, ACC asserts that these differing theologies are mutually required to forge a complete theology of the Lord's Supper. Here again the principle of "complementary correctives" in which each side contributes to a full understanding is introduced as principle of theology. This assertion that the Lutheran and Reformed churches are merely different appearances of a basic Reformation theology is only asserted and never demonstrated. Such an assertion cannot be a basis of theology.

Predestination (III.3)

The ACC condenses the treatment of predestination to the simple sentence that "God's will is to save" and then declares that Lutherans and Reformed agree that God wants to save fallen humanity. Undoubtedly this is true. It overlooks the point of difference on teaching a predestination to perdition. The ACC rightly states that Lutherans maintain a genuine and efficacious election in eternity and that in Formula of Concord XI they condemn the teaching of predestination to perdition (48).[12] This statement is of historic importance to the LCMS and it certainly receives our approval.

The status of the Calvinist teaching of double predestination is another matter. ACC tries to isolate the sixteenth-century instances of double predestination to the final edition of Calvin's *Institutes* and to Beza and Zanchi. Yet the position in the final edition of Calvin's *Institutes* cannot be waved aside so quickly, because it is rejected by the Lutherans in Formula XI. ACC locates the solidification of the double predestination doctrine in seventeenth-century Calvinism and not in Calvin. Then it proceeds to argue rather persuasively that double predestination has nearly disappeared from the Reformed theological commitment (48-49). We applaud any Calvinistic de-emphasis on an election to perdition, if it is a studied and deliberate opinion.

In the ACC treatment of predestination, the method of attempting to locate specific condemnations is conveniently reintroduced as a yardstick to determine if agreement and fellowship are allowed between two groups. Unless their names are specifically mentioned, they are not included in the condemnations. We have addressed this

principle above and simply cannot agree to it. By using this principle ACC asserts (49) that the Reformed and Lutheran confessional polemics were not aimed at each other. But whom else does ACC suppose they were addressing? Each knew that the other was addressing it and responded with appropriate polemic. We do not want to get bogged down in the question of who was addressing whom, even though it is silly even to suggest that people were shooting salvos hoping to find a distant target. Regardless of the condemnations' historic targets, these confessional and theological assertions are directed to those who disagree.[13] That is good enough. Current trends among the Reformed in de-emphasizing an election to perdition are reassuring, but these changes must be formalized. Since the ACC is intent on establishing theology by its unique approach of "anathema counting," a method which excludes "trends" as a standard of measurement, a formal removal of the anathema is required. Consistency demands no less of ACC.

The ACC participants come to this summary: "Rather than being divided over the doctrine, both sides seem to be united in an equally lukewarm endorsement and an equal embarrassment over any form of predestinarian teaching as part of their theological commitment" (50). From our perspective, it is well for the Reformed to back-pedal from the claim of predestination to reprobation taught by Calvin in his final *Institutes* and such confessional documents as the Westminster Confession. The ACC description of the ELCA representatives' "lukewarm endorsement" and "embarrassment" is unsettling. ELCA "embarrassment" over a Lutheran teaching could be seen as embarrassment to the LCMS.

Conclusions

1. The new confessional hermeneutic or method of studying the confessions whereby doctrinal systems are treated as world-views pointing to the same primal theological root has no basis in Scripture.

2. Until the crucial terms are defined, we are unable to ascertain whether even the most elementary agreement has been reached. These terms include "law" and "gospel" (to draw the distinction

between them), "grace," "salvation," "real presence," and "confession of faith."[14]

3. Completely contrary to the Formula of Concord is any idea that Lutheran and Reformed theologies are two centers or foci within the totality of "Reformation theology." This is a presumption of the ACC authors without any support from the Formula, any of the other Lutheran Confessions, or of the confessors themselves. Of course, the inevitable conclusion of making Lutheran and Reformed theologies two centers or foci in the theology of the Reformation is that both are regarded as necessary to present a complete "Reformation theology," a point we have made above and which needs repetition, as it is so basic to the formulation of ACC. Not only is this contrary to the Formula, but such thinking was foreign to the confessors. In addition, it must be rejected for reasons of history. The ACC reads an approach into the sixteenth-century documents which was not only foreign to the authors, but unknown to them. The LCMS simply cannot accept the presumption of the ELCA participants that Lutheran and Reformed confessions are complementary nor the reasoning leading to this conclusion. Thus, the very basis for these discussions is as invalid as their conclusions.

4. The approach used in ACC of seeing Lutheran and Reformed positions as complementary theologies within the totality of Reformation theology is nothing else than "begging the question," with the conclusions already present by implication in the purpose. This new kind of confessional hermeneutic which makes two opposing positions complementary assumes the conclusions before examining the evidence. Even before the discussions began, this approach to the confessions of both churches determined the conclusion that both churches had positions which could complete the other. Agreement between the Lutheran and Reformed churches was established even before the participants began their conversations, and the true function of the participants was to draft an agreement to expedite fellowship. Methodologically the conclusions were inevitable, and perhaps in a sense they were predestined.

Appendix: Summary of Issues Regarding ACC

The subservience of theology to church-politics is evident in major

fallacies like the following:

1. *Invitation to Action* is endorsed despite its claim that "those churches that have subscribed to the Reformed Confessions have always taught and still teach the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist" and that the difference between Lutherans and Reformed is only about the "mode" of this presence, which difference should not be divisive (114-115).[15] This flatly contradicts Formula VII (Solid Declaration VII:1-8);[16] it is, in fact, the position of John Calvin: "Everyone with a sound and correct judgment, who possesses also a calm and well-ordered mind, will admit that the only dispute concerns the mode of eating."[17]

2. Therefore ACC (33) expressly contradicts and disavows the understanding of the Formula of Concord regarding Augustana X.

3. As for the "biblical and historical studies [having] established new parameters for the appreciation of each other's heritage and contribution" (45), the real import may be gauged from *Invitation to Action*: "There has arisen the historical-critical approach to the Bible with negative effects on the way Lutherans have traditionally argued their position on the Lord's Supper."[18] "In most contemporary exegesis the words 'body' and 'blood' are interpreted increasingly not as substances but as saving event (*Heilsereignis*)."[19]

4. The Roman and Anglican problem of the "validity" of "ministries"—apart from the pure gospel and sacraments—is a pseudo-problem (see Augustana VII).

5. ACC misunderstands Augustana VII's "gospel" as "the doctrine of justification" (p. 26), as though it were only one of several articles. The gospel is all articles of the faith (with the exception of law [Formula V]) with justification as the *central* rather than the *sole* article.

6. ACC seems totally innocent of any serious critique of the *Leuenberg Concord*. The latter's most basic and calamitous flaw may well be the opposition between "justifying faith" (*fides justificans*) and "dogmatic faith" (*fides dogmatica*).[20]

7. Slippery assertions about the symbols' "language" not being "the exclusive expression" of the truth seem to have the intent of

disarming the "in content or in formulation" (*rebus et phrasibus*) obligation stated in the Preface to the Book of Concord.[21]

8. The notion of the historic differences not really being "divisive" in the Lutheran intent expressly contradicts a number of deliberate assertions of the "Rule and Norm" of the Formula of Concord. For example, the Augsburg Confession (as properly understood in the Formula of Concord) is our symbol which "distinguishes our reformed churches from the papacy and from other condemned sects and heresies."[22]

9. The attempt to accommodate the dogmatic and confessional differences under the umbrella of the "full range" of the biblical witness (44ff.) assumes a historical-critical view of Holy Scripture which fundamentally undercuts all the sacred mysteries of faith and renders all creeds and confessions meaningless.[23]

10. It is an axiom that two or more churches entering upon church (altar and pulpit) fellowship thereby become *one communion, one church.* It follows that by full communion with Zwinglian-Calvinist churches (Reformed Church in America, Presbyterian Church [U.S.A.], U.C.C.), as proposed by ACC, the ELCA would formally and officially become part of a union church.

Endnotes

1. The following pages are a review of "A Common Calling: The Witness of our Reformation Churches in North America Today," The Report of the Lutheran-Reformed Committee for Theological Conversations, March 1992, hereafter referred to as ACC; references to pages will be put in parentheses. Throughout this review the pronoun "we" refers to the members of the Systematics Department of Concordia Theological Seminary (Fort Wayne) and others who have provided valuable contributions.

2. ACC states regarding the printed text of a confession: "But the text can serve such a [regulative] function only insofar as the community 'construes' the text in a particular manner, i.e., identifies some pattern(s) which will serve as the regulative or formative paradigms. There is a complex dialectic at work in the interaction between authoritative text and believing community.

The text provides the authoritative shaping patterns, but the community must construe those patterns into an effective regulative whole" (22-23).

3. Our assumption that the scope of these considerations includes doctrine is based upon the list of differences noted on page 14 (top), where "fundamental theological differences" leads the list.

4. "When Lutherans finalize and repristinate the theology of the sixteenth century they need the corrective witness of the Reformed tradition concerning the continuing need for reformation and a fresh appropriation of the church's faith. When Reformed Christians overemphasize the primacy of the contemporary situation they need the corrective witness of the Lutheran focus on the authority of the ecumenical creeds and Reformation confessions" (23). If the scope of this assertion were confined to genuine adiaphora and modes of implementation, a measure of validity might be granted. However, no such qualification is attached to their claim.

5. George A. Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984).

6. Ibid., especially chapter 6.

7. See number 4 in the appendix attached to this review. Also see Eugene F. A. Klug, "A Critique: Leuenberg Concord, Section IV" in *Von der Wahren Einheit der Kirche*, ed. by U. Asendorf and F. W. Künneth (Verlag Die Spur, 1973), pp. 197-204. Klug highlights the problems raised by hiding behind "a common understanding of the Gospel" (201) and the abuse of *satis est* perpetrated by the Leuenberg Concord (203).

8. In the following discussion the term "anathema" will be utilized to indicate the tendency of ACC to reduce a "condemnation" to that which would be found in formal canon law.

9. Theodore Tappert, ed., *The Book of Concord* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), p. 589.

10. Nowhere in the entire document is the term "gospel" defined. Since it recognizes that Lutherans require agreement in the gospel, how can the definition of the gospel be omitted? The approbation given to the statement from the Leuenberg Concord ("in the gospel we have the promise of God's unconditional ac-

ceptance of sinful man" [52]) is most unsettling.

11. The ACC approach probably originates in the notion that competing systems of doctrine are entirely compatible, since they merely arise from different life contexts. Note Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, trans. H. R. Mackintosch and J. S. Stewart (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1928), pp. 107-108 (Prop. 24, Postscript); and Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine*, chapters 2-3.

12. Though it does not materially change the argument, it should be noted that the ACC portrayal of Luther's *Bondage of the Will* is especially careless. Dating from 1525 (not 1523), it can hardly be called the work of a "young Luther." He was over forty years old and well past the turmoil surrounding his "discovery of the gospel." In later years he exalted it as one of his best works.

13. Mormons were not named in the Heidelberg Catechism. Does the document then permit union with Mormons?

14. We have to ask where the ACC stands concerning these claims by Calvin in his *Institutes* of 1559: God's grace restrains open wickedness (II.III.3). The gospel is not a different way of salvation than the law, but a confirmation of the law (II.IX.4). Justification is the seal of election (III.XXI.7. Summary). God predestined Adam to fall as an act of providence (III.XXIII.7). The physical elements in the Lord's Supper provide an analogy of nutrition which directs us to reflect on Christ's life-giving benefits (IV.XVII.3). The doctrine of ubiquity is a "monstrous notion," it is "madness" "to mingle heaven and earth," and "the whole Christ is present, but not in his wholeness" (IV.XVII.30).

15. *An Invitation to Action: A Study of Ministry, Sacraments, and Recognition*, ed. James E. Andrews and Joseph A. Burgess (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984).

16. Theodore Tappert, ed., *The Book of Concord*, pp. 568-570.

17. John Calvin, *Theological Treatises*, trans. J. K. S. Reid, Library of Christian Classics, XXII (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954), p. 326.

18. *An Invitation to Action*, p. 122, citing Carl E. Braaten, *Principles of Lutheran Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), p. 95.

19. *An Invitation to Action*, p. 123, citing *Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue: Report and Recommendations* (Cincinnati, Ohio: Forward Movement Publications, 1981), p. 17.

20. See Tuomo Mannermaa, *Von Preussen nach Leuenberg* (Hamburg: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1981), p. 48.

21. Tappert, p. 13.

22. Tappert, p. 504.

23. See the following items: (1.) E. Käsemann, *Essays on New Testament Themes* (Naperville, Illinois: Allenson, 1964), pp. 95-107; (2.) the discussion in the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A., *The Function of Doctrine and Theology in Light of the Unity of the Church* (New York: Division of Theological Studies, Lutheran Council in the U.S.A., 1978), pp. 76-93; (3.) Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, *Convention Proceedings* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1981), p. 160, Resolution 3-20.

The preceding opinion and appendix were submitted to and accepted by the Department of Systematic Theology of Concordia Theological Seminary on January 29, 1993.

David Scaer
Robert Preus
Kurt Marquart
Richard Muller
Alan Borcherding
Eugene Klug (Professor Emeritus)
Ulrich Asendorf (Guest Professor)

Books Received

Elizabeth A. Castelli. *Imitating Paul: A Discourse of Power.* Literary Currents in Biblical Interpretation. Louisville: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1991. 176 pages. Paper. $15.95.

Richard K. Fenn. *The Secularization of Sin: An Investigation of the Daedalus Complex.* Louisville: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1991. 208 pages. Paper. $14.95.

Kenneth Cragg. *The Arab Christian: A History in the Middle East.* Louisville: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1991. xii + 336 pages. Cloth. $29.95.

Howard L. Rice. *Reformed Spirituality: An Introduction for Believers.* 224 pages. Paper. $14.95.

Thomas H. Groome. *Sharing Faith: A Comprehensive Approach to Religion Education and Pastoral Ministry. The Way of Shared Praxis.* San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1991. xiii + 569 pages. Paper. $49.95.

David A. Rausch. *Communities in Conflict: Evangelicals and Jews.* Philadelphia: Trinity International Press, 1991. x + 204 pages. Paper.

Lorenzo Valla. *The Profession of the Religious and the Principal Arguments from the Falsely-Believed and Forged Donation of Constantine.* Translated and edited by Olga Zorzi Pugliese. Renaissance and Reformation Texts in Translation 1. Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 1985. viii + 74 pages. Paper.

Ochino Bernardino. *Seven Dialogues.* Translated with an Introduction and Notes by Rita Belladonna. Renaissance and Reformation Texts in Translation 3. Ottawa, Canada: Dovehouse Editions, 1988. xlviii + 96 pages. Paper.

Nicholas of Cusa. *The Layman on Wisdom and the Mind.* Translated with an Introduction and Notes by M. L. Fuehrer. Renaissance and Reformation Texts in Translation 4. Ottawa, Canada: Dovehouse Editions, 1989. 111 pages. Paper.

A Reformation Debate: Karlstadt, Emser, and Eck on Sacred Images. Three Treatises in Translation. Translated with an Introduction and Notes by Bryan D. Mangrum and Giuseppe Scavizzi. Renaissance and Reformation Texts in Translation 5. Ottawa, Canada: Dovehouse Editions; Toronto: The Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 1991. ix + 115 pages. Paper.

Barbara G. Wheeler and Edward Farley, editors. *Shifting Boundaries: Contextual Approaches to the Structure of Theological Education.* 328 pages. Paper. $19.95.

D. Moody Smith. *First, Second, and Third John.* Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. Louisville: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1991. viii + 164 pages. Cloth. $17.95.

Book Reviews

CALLED AND ORDAINED: LUTHERAN PERSPECTIVES ON THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY. Edited by Todd Nichol and Marc Kolden. Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 226 pages.

In the formation of the ELCA the ministerial office was left undefined to accommodate the "high" tradition of the LCA, historically leaning towards the Episcopal Church, and the "low" congregational polity of the ALC. It appeared that the "high" view of the LCA, with its historic roots in the old Pennsylvania Ministerium, was winning. Synod presidents were called bishops, and overtures were made to achieve mutual recognition of the ministries of ELCA and the Angelican communion. *Called and Ordained* provides no support for these initial impressions. Ten of the thirteen contributors are associated with Luther-Northwestern Seminary and thus, although *Called and Ordained* may not be representative of ELCA, it indicates that the "low" church heritage flourishes.

A blanket verdict on a book with various authors is inappropriate, but the *Tendenz* is clearly in the direction of a functional understanding of ministry. Editors Nichol and Kolden focus the direction of the book in two ways. Each of them brings one half of the book to a conclusion with an essay of his own (Nichol concluding the first section and Kolden the second). Then they join together to provide a summarizing essay as the final chapter.

The first seven essays are collected under the title of "Exegetical and Historical Perspectives." Roy Harrisville in "Ministry in the New Testament," accumulates multiple word studies and predictably concludes "that a certain fluidity attaches to the New Testament titles for functions and offices within the primitive church" (p. 7). Separating the Pastoral Epistles from the basic Pauline corpus conveniently removes evidence contradictory to his thesis. Ministry is defined not by office in the New Testament, but by function and goal. The choosing of the twelve, the sending of the seventy, and the three references to ordination do not come into consideration. Picking up the ball from Harrisville, Nestingen in "Ministry in the Early Church" details the precipitous fall of the church into the abyss of sacerdotalism after the apostolic era. "Ministry in the Middle Ages and the Reformation" by Jane Strohl sets forth the views of the Council of Trent, the Reformed, and the radical reformers. As nothing specifically about Middle Ages is said, one can only assume that the Council of Trent is supposed to represent them.

Robert Kolb, one of the two contributors from the LCMS, sets forth the view of Luther and Melanchthon that the ministry is "both the thing and the action that constitutes the thing and gives it purpose" (p. 52). His chapter differs from the tenor of the other essays. Pragman, the other

contributor from the LCMS, in his chapter on Orthodoxy and Pietism, points out that in the latter the distinction between the clergy and the laity is lost. The clergy are obligated to foster the spirituality of the laity so that the clergy become less necessary (p. 75). The resemblance of Pietism to Church Growth is striking! Pragman's is another worthwhile chapter.

Sundberg, writing on nineteenth-century European Lutheran thought, sees Luther as the source of Schleiermacher's teaching on the church (pp. 82-83). This idea must be challenged. The chapter on American Lutheranism offers surprises. For Krauth, the office of the ministry is derived from the universal priesthood of all believers and, quite logically, the call originates in the local congregation (p. 97). Matthias Loy (of the Ohio Synod), working with principles similar to Krauth's, concluded that in emergencies women could serve in the public ministry. Editor Nichol, this chapter's author, correctly notes that the decision to ordain women in the twentieth century was the natural conclusion from this principle (p. 100).

The second section, "Thematic Perspectives," has these chapters: "The Ordained Ministry" by Forde; "An Evangelical Episcopate?" by Burgess (the only contributor from ELCA not on the faculty of Luther-Northwestern Seminary); "The Office of Deacon in the Christian Church" by Rogness; "Getting Women Ordained" by Grindall; "The Pastoral Ministry" by Matinson; and "Ministry and Vocation for Clergy and Laity" by editor Kolden. Forde's contribution speaks of ordination to the office of the ministry neither as an extension of the congregation's authority (p. 125) nor as an infusion of grace, but as a gift which shapes the office (p. 131). Grindall's summary of the movement to ordain women is valuable in reminding us that, as late as 1969, the biblical arguments for the practice were not seen as conclusive (pp. 161-175). Women, then seeking ordination, found support not from biblical data, but from their changing place in society (p. 169). With women now constituting the majority of seminary applicants in ELCA, it is easy to forget that the vote to ordain them in the ALC convention of 1970 was 560 to 414, hardly satisfying the rule of what has been believed everywhere by everyone.

The subtitle of the book, *Lutheran Perspectives on the Ministry*, is misleading if it suggests that the wide variety of past and current Lutheran views is represented in *Called and Ordained*. Editors Nichol and Kolden are seeking "a common ground" for a Lutheran understanding of the ministry, not only in the organization of the essays, but also in the jointly authored concluding chapter. Their four proposals for a unified doctrine

of the ministry (pp. 220-226) require the primacy of the word of God and the theological priority of justification by faith, a variously defined office of oversight (e.g., bishop, president, superintendent), the freedom to establish and structure offices alongside the pastoral one, and flexibility in the definition of offices to fit the ecumenical movement. The goal here is not uncovering a doctrine, but fabricating one. We hope this word is not the last one to be heard on the ministry in the ELCA.

David P. Scaer

MARK. Revised Edition. By R. Alan Cole. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989.

GALATIANS. Revised Edition. By R. Alan Cole. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989.

With the proliferation of secondary literature in biblical studies we are seeing more publishers updating commentary series by replacing volumes or issuing revisions. These two volumes represent revisions by the original authors of two commentaries in the popular Tyndale New Testament series. R. Alan Cole, a lecturer at Trinity Theological College in Singapore, brings these studies which he originally compiled in 1961 (Mark) and 1965 (Galatians) up to date through completely rewritten introductions and bibliographies which take into account major trends and studies of the past twenty-five years. The revisions of the verse-by-verse commentary are less substantive; they consist mainly of citations of current secondary literature that supports or challenges Cole's previous exegesis.

Those familiar with this series know that its volumes are usually written by evangelical scholars who have a respect for the biblical text and its authority. Cole is no exception. Although he is conversant with critical scholarship, he carefully seeks to avoid many of its pitfalls (especially when it comes to the study of Mark). These two volumes, like the rest of the series, are tersely written exegetical commentaries directed to the informed layman, student, or pastor with a primary focus on the "final form" text, limited dialogue with secondary literature, few technical discussions, and minimal footnotes. Some reference is made to the original Greek with regard to etymology, but all words are transliterated. Lest the concerns below give the reader an unjustly negative perception

of these studies, it must be stated at the outset that both volumes are basically sound treatments of the text that bring many theological insights to light.

Cole's volume on Mark contains an inordinately long introduction (80 pages) for this type of series. In these opening pages he follows a long train of scholarship by espousing Markan priority and the two-document hypothesis without giving the reader nearly enough data to evaluate such a position. Yet he advocates and provides the historical support for traditional Markan authorship with probable Petrine influence. He perceives the historicity of this gospel as he postulates ". . . that Mark is designed to give a simple factual account of such events as were necessary for his purpose, within the loosest possible of chronological and geographic frameworks" (p. 56). Amid all the questioning of miracles by modern scholarship, Cole unwaveringly upholds the factual nature of these events. His understanding of the "gospel of the kingdom" in Mark is nondescript and too law-oriented with its emphasis on obedience (pp. 68-69, 112). The confessional Lutheran will also be disappointed with the author's symbolic interpretation of the Last Supper and lack of depth in discussing the cosmic nature of Jesus' passion in Mark. One of the most helpful parts of the introduction is Cole's discussion of the major motifs in Mark.

A number of positions are worthy of note in the Galatians volume. Cole begins his introduction by arguing for the South Galatian theory in spite of the evidence supporting a northern destination. An intriguing hypothesis is put forth (from Betz) that there was an element of "discouraged charismatics" in Galatia who then turned to heavily structured forms of ceremonial law to give spiritual assurance and to prevent liberty from becoming license. In his discussion of the central message of Galatians Cole downplays the forensic nature of justification in favor of a more subjective emphasis on a transforming faith-relationship: "Yet all of these stem from the new, totally transforming relationship with God in Christ which is enjoyed through faith, and Paul's word for this is 'justification,' which for him is no legal fiction, but a transforming spiritual experience" (p. 43). Although Cole claims that he does not confuse justification and sanctification, he does place emphasis on the "total change in our moral behaviour" that results from a relationship with God through faith in Christ (p. 122) and tends to overemphasize Paul's use of "experience" as support for the argument in Galatians. One glaring problem is Cole's understanding of Paul's use of the title "apostle" in a functional sense of being a missionary instead of as a distinct office; the

whole point of Paul's argument in chapter one is to assert his *formal* authority as "an Apostle of Jesus Christ" sharing the office of the twelve against those who had already undercut his *material* authority. Cole also betrays a lack of sacramental understanding as he claims that there is no clear association of the Spirit with outward ceremony after the early chapters of Acts and that baptism is a symbolic action (pp. 132, 154; his background is the Church Missionary Society of Australia). While Cole is sensitive to the use of Jewish exegesis and the language of the text, many Lutheran pastors will notice the absence of any discussion of the law-gospel distinction and the personal justification by faith that dominate Luther's impassioned treatment of this epistle.

Charles A. Gieschen
Traverse City, Michigan

THE HASMONEAN REVOLT: REBELLION OR REVOLUTION? By Steven L. Derfler. Ancient Near Eastern Texts and Studies, Volume 5. Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1989.

In this book Steven Derfler attempts to interpret the Hasmonean or Maccabean Revolt against Antiochus IV Epiphanes in the light of the religious, political, and economic milieu of Palestine in the second century B.C. Derfler distinguishes between a rebellion, in which the participants fight against oppression without designing a coherent plan to remedy the ills which they oppose, and a revolution, where such a plan is formulated. He concludes that the Hasmonean Revolt was a true revolution.

This book, unfortunately, is not substantial enough to cover its topic well. The actual content of the book is not commensurate with the number of pages it has; a rather spacious type font and hefty appendices have expanded what would have amounted to a pamphlet into a book. Derfler's sketch of Palestinian history in the second century B.C. is appropriate for a person desiring initial knowledge of this period, but the fifty-dollar price tag is unlikely to encourage many buyers from this audience. The specialist in the inter-testamental period will find Derfler's thesis interesting, but will be disappointed to see it so undeveloped. His distinction between rebellion and revolution appears only in the final eight pages, and its application to Hasmonean Judea is made only in the last two and a half pages. The numerous typographical errors are also quite unappealing.

James A. Kellerman
Chicago, Illinois

POSTMODERN THEOLOGY: CHRISTIAN FAITH IN A PLURALIST WORLD. Edited by Frederic B. Burnham. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989.

The essays in this volume were first delivered at a conference on "The Church in a Postmodern Age" in 1987. The six essayists present attempts to analyze the current academic world-view and propose ways for theologians to address our postmodern culture. The term "postmodern" is defined in the first essay (by James B. Miller of Carnegie-Mellon University) as denoting a twentieth-century world-view which has specific points of contrast with the "modern" world-view. The *modern* view of reality accepted the dualism of matter and thought, knowledge of the world as opposed to knowledge of moral principles. In this atmosphere science was generally acknowledged to deal with hard facts while theology was relegated to the realm of faith and myth. The *postmodern* view of reality has altered this dualism significantly. Miller explicates three characteristics of this postmodern outlook. The world is constantly in a process of development (process philosophy). The world is relative, for not even time and space exist absolutely (quantum mechanics). Objectivity in observation is impossible, for the observer is integrally related to the fact. All three of these developments point to a radical indeterminacy in our knowledge of reality. Many scholars are less quick to condemn religion and theology as mere myths and fictions, because they are now aware that the demarcation between "hard facts" and "mere beliefs" is no longer self-evidently clear.

Diogenes Allen (of Princeton Theological Seminary) claims that the "four pillars of the Enlightenment" are crumbling in our century. Until recently the following were assumed: there is no room for God in the universe, the basis for social relations is individual rights, progress is inevitable, and knowledge is inherently good. Allen claims that our society needs to be enriched by the biblical perspective.

George Lindbeck (of Yale University) laments the loss of biblical literacy in our culture. Biblical ignorance has caused an increasing lack of familiarity with the great literature and concepts which have undergirded our culture. Lindbeck believes that our highest service to society would be to raise the level of biblical literacy in our churches.

Sandra Schneiders (of the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley) insists that the message of the Bible must be brought to address contemporary issues by pursuing two correctives. The first, she claims, is the need to recapture the Bible from the historical-critical scholars who treat the Bible

as unintelligible to untrained readers. The second is to pursue feminist hermeneutics.

Robert Bellah (of the University of California in Berkeley) pursues George Lindbeck's thesis and agrees that Christians must remain faithful to their calling as Christians. Otherwise we shall never be able to contribute to the needs of our world. Rowan Williams (of the University of Oxford) also illustrates the profound relevance which the message of the Bible has for Western society.

These essays are well worth reading because they provide an illuminating discussion of our current intellectual climate. Each of these theologians engages contemporary society with an emphasis on the cultural value of restoring the Bible to a position of prominence in schools and churches. For these things we can be grateful to them. These essays are generally following the lead of Lindbeck in focusing on the linguistic dimension of this issue and, as such, are not dealing with contemporary issues on the basis of law and gospel. Such an apologetic, by way of Bible literacy, falls short of confronting our age with its sins and preaching to it the crucified and risen Lord.

Alan Borcherding

WHEN YOU FEEL INSECURE. By John P. Reed. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster-John Knox Press.

This volume is one in a series called "Resources for Living." John Reed is a former pastor who presently serves as the executive director of a counseling center. This volume focuses on the causes and cures of an individual's feelings of insecurity.

Reed writes that insecurity in today's world is based on shifts in the value systems of society and in the roles of the sexes. He believes that these shifts create a world in which important elements of living become ambiguous and uncertain. To create a greater sense of security, albeit a false security, people resort to one of four security blankets: materialism, healthism, addiction, or religious absolutism.

Reed discusses at length the irony that the thing which one needs most for security, "secure relationships with significant others," may be one's greatest source of insecurity. Fear of rejection prevents the real attachments for which one wishes. After an examination of the various defenses one uses to prevent attachments, Reed calls upon the reader to choose faith instead of defense. Reed maps out a "Path to Security" in his

final chapter. This book is written for lay-people seeking security in their lives. However, Reed uses psychoanalysis to explain and illustrate his message. Some may find this course of action confusing and difficult to follow. Even though Reed explains the technical terms in lay language, the reader spends too much time translating the concepts into personal terms. The pastor who is familiar with psychoanalytic theories or object-relation will enjoy this volume on security. Those who view insecurity as a symptom of a larger problem will have a difficult time completing this volume.

Joseph H. Barbour
Ballwin, Missouri

HOW FAITH MATURES. By C. Ellis Nelson. Louisville: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1989. 252 pages. Paper, $13.95.

C. Ellis Nelson is the well-known Christian educator who penned the classic *Where Faith Begins*. His current work, written after forty years of experience in the field, makes the Christian congregation central to his focus on how the life of faith develops. His key thesis is that the way in which a congregation works and worships together and the way in which members relate to each other form a dynamic situation of teaching and learning (p. 181). The chapter on congregational edification delineates his strategy.

Of particular value to those interested in an overview of current writers in Christian education and its related fields are Nelson's "Notes." His "Index of Names and Topics" and Scripture passages are also helpful resources. In sum, Nelson's book gives an insight into "mainstream" Protestant thinking on Christian education—in contrast to fundamentalism, which, he says, "cannot be thought of as an antidote to modern American culture" because of "its inflexible doctrines, especially its insistence on verbal inerrancy of the Bible" (p. 41).

Donald L. Deffner

UNAPOLOGETIC THEOLOGY: A CHRISTIAN VOICE IN A PLURALISTIC CONVERSATION. By William C. Placher. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster-John Knox Press, 1989.

William C. Placher tackles the problem of articulating the Christian message in the context of the university where "the danger that an imperialistic Enlightenment rationalism and liberalism will silence other voices

in the academy" (p. 167) is a reality. It is the aim of the author to move theologians beyond the perceived impasse between "revisionist theology" and "post-liberal theology."

According to Placher, "revisionist theology," represented most ably by David Tracy of the University of Chicago (especially in his *Blessed Rage for Order*), seeks to state the claims of Christian theology in a manner understandable and acceptable to non-Christians. Revisionist methodology begins with human existence. While the revisionist approach dominates most of contemporary academic theology in North America, it is challenged by the "post-liberal theology" represented by the "New Yale School" (in, for example, George Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine*, and Hans Frei, *The Eclipse of the Biblical Narrative*). "Post-liberal theology" sees itself engaged in a descriptive task, namely, the articulation of doctrine as the "rules" for Christian discourse. While Placher is no mere extension of his teacher, Hans Frei, his sympathies are with the "post-liberals."

The value of this volume lies not in its conclusions, even though Placher's critique of revisionist theology is, for the most part, attractive. Rather Placher provides students and pastors with something of a reader's guide to the debates of North American academic theology of the seventies and eighties. However, the "reader's guide" is no substitute for engaging the works of Tracy, Lindbeck, Frei, and others covered in *Unapologetic Theology.*

John T. Pless
Minneapolis, Minnesota

INTRODUCING NEW TESTAMENT INTERPRETATION. Edited by Scot McKnight. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1989.

This volume is to introduce a projected seven-volume series. The "ultimate goal of each [volume] is to provide methods and principles for interpreting the New Testament" (p. 7). The series is "not for specialists, but for college religion majors, seminarians, and pastors who have had at least one year of Greek" (p. 7). Most importantly, the series is written by evangelicals for evangelicals. One appreciates the decision to have evangelicals, rather than other academic circles, identify and define pertinent issues. As James D. G. Dunn states in the introductory essay, the challenge for evangelicals is to be both evangelical and scholarly. He points out that evangelical interpretation without scholarship can be self-deceptive, while scholarship that "is not wedded to a recognition that these

words were heard speaking with Word-of-God authority" is merely "an interesting historical exercise, a fascinating antiquarian study" (p. 16).

The publication contains seven chapters, besides Dunn's introductory essay, of between sixteen and thirty pages each. The authors and essays, in order of appearance, are Warren Heard (Trinity Evangelical Divinity School), "New Testament Background"; Michael W. Holmes (Bethel College), "New Testament Textual Criticism"; Scot McKnight (Trinity Evangelical Divinity School), "New Testament Grammatical Analysis"; Darrell Bock (Dallas Theological Seminary), "New Testament Word Analysis"; Thomas E. Schmidt (Westmont College), "Sociology and New Testament Exegesis"; L. D. Hurst (University of California in Davis), "New Testament Theological Analysis"; and Craig A. Evans (Trinity Western University), "The Function of the Old Testament in the New Testament." The book has a select bibliography (listing only material available in English) but no index.

In general the essays provide valuable information and sound description of techniques necessary for proper interpretation of the New Testament. For example, McKnight's information on diagramming Greek sentences gives practical guidelines useful for more than just the new student of Greek. Bock's essay presents not only the values and techniques of word analysis but also a necessary caveat in regard to eight common fallacies. In this reviewer's opinion, Schmidt's essay on the burgeoning sociological study of the New Testament is the most helpful chapter. Noting the anthropocentric presuppositions in sociological analysis, he asks, "Should conservatives employ this method?" Despite reservations he "suggests that the answer is at least a qualified 'yes'" and then writes to substantiate his cautious answer (p. 117).

Evans' essay, "The Function of the Old Testament in the New," will raise the most theological questions (and objections) among evangelicals. Writing lucidly and forcefully, Evans explains how the New Testament writers often "resignified" (gave different meaning to) Old Testament passages. His conclusion is the following: "NT writers frequently found new meaning in OT passages. This happened, not because of careless exegesis or ignorance, but because of the conviction that Scripture speaks to every significant situation."

In conclusion, the book serves as a good introduction or review of basic issues in New Testament interpretation from an evangelical perspective. Each reader will question some opinions, but such debate will be part of the value of the book. One could also question two editorial decisions.

Why was the work of Joachim Jeremias not included in the select bibliography, even though it was considered one of the four representative approaches to New Testament theology (pp. 144, 197)? And why was "The Function of the Old Testament in the New" made the last essay (chapter 7)? The essay contains factual, theoretical, and theological material that needs evaluation before the preceding essay (chapter 6), "New Testament Theological Analysis."

Robert Holst
St. Paul, Minnesota

GETTING TO KNOW JOHN'S GOSPEL; A FRESH LOOK AT ITS MAIN IDEAS. By Robert A. Peterson. Phillipsburg, New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1989.

The book consists of thirteen chapters, eleven of which analyze the Gospel of John in topics. The first two chapters explain why and how John wrote the gospel. The remaining chapters cover such topics as Jesus' "I Am" sayings, His miraculous "signs," conflicting responses to Him, portraits of His person, His saving work, the Holy Spirit, and "last things." The book includes indices of Scripture and of topics but has no footnotes, bibliography, or, in general, references to scholarly Johannine literature. Each chapter ends with review and discussion questions. Peterson's target is "real people where they live," especially "adult Sunday school classes, home Bible study groups, and individual Christians" (p. ix.).

Peterson introduces his book by comparing the reading of John by people today to the encountering of modern civilization by a child found living with monkeys (p. 1). It is a monumental task to adjust to such an unfamiliar world. In this reviewer's opinion, the introduction illustrates the strength and weakness of the book.

One must appreciate Peterson's desire to explain what is "naturally unfamiliar," since the Gospel of John presents "a world of ideas radically different from our own" (p. 1). Devoutly written, the topical arrangement helps identify topics and group them for discussion. Unfortunately, in an introductory work, it also disrupts the Johannine logic and removes sayings, signs, and titles from important contextual nuances.

Equally serious, in a book designed to promote discussion, illustrations often do not fit the explanation. Often, without transition or little logical connection, an illustrative story from personal experience, the *Reader's*

Digest, or a devotional book follows exposition of Johannine material. From a pastoral point of view, indeed, some of the illustrations are undesirable. For example, it seems strange, as well as insensitive to Native Americans, to illustrate "the Father's protection of the Son" (John 7:30 and 8:20) by citing early American settlers who trusted God as they ventured west in covered wagons. Yet they "carried firearms to protect their families. Such a combination of trust in divine providence and responsibility to God should mark our lives as well" (p. 57).

As another example, the author compares the Paraclete vis-à-vis the disciples to a certain Adam Smithson. In a neighborhood plagued by burglaries, Mr. Smithson stayed up late on Friday nights (the time the burglar usually struck) hoping to catch the thief. One night he almost accidently swung his baseball bat at his oldest son who was sleepwalking. After taking his son to bed, he heard the thief enter the house and knocked him unconscious with one blow. "In a similar way the Holy Spirit is a friend of Christians and an enemy of the unsaved" (p. 119). Admittedly, the comparison will promote discussion.

Robert Holst
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PAULINE THEOLOGY: MINISTRY AND SOCIETY. By E. Earle Ellis. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989.

This volume employs the Pauline letters to address a number of very prominent issues facing the church today: "ministry," spiritual gifts, the role of women in the church, and ecclesial structure. At the conclusion of each portion of this study there is concern to show the continuing relevance of Pauline theology for the present situation of the church. Ellis is a seasoned scholar who is well-qualified to examine the entire Pauline corpus on this topic. He is currently research professor of theology at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and is widely recognized for his numerous contributions to the study of the New Testament.

Ellis begins his task with an intriguing discussion of Paul's eschatological dimension of ministry: ministry mediates the presence of blessings from the age to come into the present age through the work of the Holy Spirit. This idea is highlighted in the treatment of the corporate nature of the church, which is "in Christ" while the world remains "in Adam." Ellis states: "As a reality of the resurrection age Christian ministry has for Paul an evangelical Christ-imparting relationship to the community of the dying" (pp. 22-23). Furthermore, he affirms that, while the Christian is

not indifferent to societal needs, this obligation grows out of Paul's theology of ethics and not his theology of ministry.

The sections on spiritual gifts and the role of women in the church are not as thought-provoking and convincing. While it is commendable that Ellis argues solidly for the use of the Pastoral Epistles and other disputed epistles, a number of his conclusions from this corpus are troubling. For example, he asserts that Paul often separates the coming of the Spirit from baptism with water (p. 32). Secondly, he does not differentiate between the glossolalia of Acts 2 and that of 1 Corinthians 12-14 (pp. 114-115). Thirdly, he notes the validity of Paul's directives regarding male headship and woman's role in marriage, but sees texts regarding the role of women in the congregation as contextually directed at married women—particularly the wives of prophets—and not women in general. Lastly, Ellis emphasizes the priority that Paul gave to the charismatic basis of ministry and provides too sharp of a contrast between the early and later church. Some confusion about what Paul regards as the public ministry is present in this study and results more in a "functional" view of ministry than in an understanding of public ministry as "office." The conclusion of this book is a very balanced and stimulating treatment of historical questions regarding the early church's place in Greco-Roman society. The roots of the church in the synagogue and its relationship to the Roman *collegium* is perceptively presented.

This volume is eminently readable; Ellis writes in a lucid and terse fashion. The occasional change in type size and spacing, as well as the numerous subtitles, proved to be minor distractions. While this study provides stimulation to the interested reader on many critical issues facing the church today, it surely leaves room for further exposition of this aspect of Pauline theology.

Charles A. Gieschen
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FIRST AND SECOND TIMOTHY AND TITUS. By Thomas C. Oden. Louisville: John Knox Press, 1989.

Here is a commentary, not to supplant, but to supplement what the reader may already have in his library. It is a commentary that will escape the lash of the criticisms heard most frequently these days. The reference is to such comments as this caustic one by D. W. Cleverly Ford: "For the modern preacher, however, unlike his predecessors of more than a century ago, there is a pressing problem. The likelihood is that he will

have been trained in biblical criticism only to discover as soon as he begins his preaching ministry, how useless is a great deal of this learning in the pulpit he is called to occupy, and how unhelpful are the majority of Bible commentaries that embody it" (*The Ministry of the Word*, p. 200). Another example would be this remark by Michael Quoist: "Again I get the dreadful impression that God's Word is being massacred. I really resent people who insist on dissecting God in their laboratories, performing autopsies and presenting us with the bits and pieces of a cadaver" (*With Open Heart*, p. 219).

Oden's commentary appears in the series entitled "Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching." The "Series Preface" notes: "It is designed to meet the need of students, teachers, ministers, and priests for a contemporary expository commentary." The goal is laudable and one which Oden attains. He himself describes his "fresh approach" as characterized by constant reference to classic Christian interpreters of the Pastoral Epistles and by the topical organization of the material. It is oxymoronic but true, as the book amply demonstrates, that attention to "classic interpreters" of the past (and this includes patristic writers such as Chrysostom and Gregory the Great) makes for a helpful "*contemporary* expository commentary" (emphasis added).

The logical-thematic arrangement of the material, rather than a chapter by chapter treatment, is stimulating. Taking a cue from Oden's arrangement, one can line up the greetings of the three epistles in columns, following the pattern of a synopsis of the gospels. When this procedure was followed in a seminar which the reviewer conducted on the Pastoral Epistles, it proved to be a rewarding one.

It is refreshing to come across another contemporary scholar who accepts the Pauline authorship of the Pastorals. It is not so much of a surprise that Gordon Fee, in his recent commentary, defends the Pauline authorship (albeit involving an amanuensis) as it is that Oden should forthrightly state in his introduction: "This commentary will proceed on the assumption that all these epistles come from Paul's hand." Oden's defense of Pauline authorship is remarkable in that it represents a radical change of mind. From his "esteemed teacher" Fred D. Gealy (to whose acumen and erudition the reviewer can personally bear witness, having taken several of his courses at Perkins School of Theology in Southern Methodist University), he learned that a reasonable date for the composition of the Pastorals would be A.D. 130-150. Oden, however, now Henry Anson Buttz Professor of Theology at Drew University, has

changed his mind.

However, the great merit of the book is not limited to its acceptance and defense of Pauline authorship. The novel topical approach and the nature of the comment itself are the features that make this book a valuable tool. While gathering nuggets from the "classical" commentaries, Oden does not eschew pertinent personal references. He observes, for instance: "The key to the renewal of modern Christianity lies in being unashamed of the apostolic witness . . ." Then he gives a personal testimony: "Academic theology remains ashamed of this apostolic testimony. I teach in a seminary. I know how embarrassed we professors are about the gospel and how hard we work to try to make the gospel conveniently acceptable to the modern mind. We will do almost anything to get wider university applause" (p. 128). It is unusual to read something of that sort in a modern commentary. If this kind of directness appeals to the reader, Oden's commentary is for him. All of this commendation, obviously, is not to say that the reviewer accepts all of Oden's exegetical conclusions or hesitations—as, for instance, in conceding that baptism is being described as a means of grace when it is called "a washing of regeneration" in Titus 3:5 (pp. 36-37). The readers of this journal, however, will be confessionally and exegetically critical in adapting what they read.

H. Armin Moellering
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ESSENTIALS FOR BIBLICAL PREACHING. AN INTRODUCTION TO BASIC SERMON PREPARATION. By Al Fasol. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989.

Al Fasol, Th.D., of Southwestern Theological Seminary, writes that this book "was planned as a primer to introduce the beginning preacher, whether professional or lay, to basic instruction in biblical preaching" (p. 9). This goal he attempts to achieve in a mere 174 pages, including the index to the book. The result, unfortunately, does not accomplish the task. Instead, one is left with a sense that such a primer can never accomplish what it intends. Preaching, without a solid and extensive theological background, can only descend into synergism and moralism.

Nowhere is this truth more apparent than in the book's omission of any distinction between law and gospel. Fasol suggests (pp. 56-59) that the preacher first prepare the "central idea of the text" (CIT), roughly equivalent to Richard Caemmerer's "central thought" (*Preaching for the*

Church [St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959], pp. 84-85). The "CIT" is then developed into the "major objective of the text" (MOT), which is in turn developed into a "thesis" or present-tense application of the "CIT." The "MOT" can have either an "evangelistic objective," intending "to lead people to find Jesus as their Lord and Savior," or a "Christian life objective," defined in terms of consecration, ethics, doctrine, or support. Finally, the preacher develops a "major objective of the sermon" (MOS) or, in Caemmerer's terms, the "goal" of the sermon.

What is missing here? The first thing is the law of God as it applies to the human condition within the context of the sermon text. The second thing is the solution to the hopelessness of human existence. That solution is, of course, the gospel of Jesus Christ, the redeemer of the world. The mechanics of writing a speech are discussed, but the theological content of the proclamation of Jesus as Savior is not. Without this gospel the sermon becomes little more than a moralistic speech.

Characteristic of so-called "evangelical" preaching is the altar call or, in Fasol's terminology, the "invitation." Sermon conclusions "should make a transition to the invitation" (pp. 67-70). If, by chance, salvation by grace through faith should have been preached, it is nullified by this synergistic action. The means of grace are unimportant; the "invitation is the most crucial time of the entire worship service" (p. 69).

Within the context of his theological tradition, Dr. Fasol valiantly attempts to accomplish his stated purpose. For Lutherans, however, such a simplification of the preaching task will always fall short. If law and gospel are to be properly distinguished, substantial theological training must precede and accompany the preacher into the pulpit. Thus, we have rightly said with St. Paul, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

Daniel L. Gard

THE NARRATIVE UNITY OF LUKE-ACTS: A LITERARY INTERPRETATION: VOLUME 1: THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE. By Robert C. Tannehill. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986.

LORD OF THE BANQUET: THE LITERARY AND THEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LUKAN TRAVEL NARRATIVE. By David P. Moessner. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1989.

THE ROAD TO EMMAUS: READING LUKE'S GOSPEL. By Jan Wojcik. West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1989.

Unbeknownst to many, there has been a shift in Lukan scholarship in the last ten years. Traditional higher-critical approaches are giving way to what is commonly being called literary criticism, which does not engage in questions of Luke's assumed redactional purposes. For literary critics, Luke is not so much historian and theologian, as I. Howard Marshall proclaimed him to be in his book employing those words in its title, but rather he is a literary author writing excellent first-century literature. As a result, Luke the author's literary intentions serve his theological concerns, and the shape of the narrative is an important vehicle for telling the theological story of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

The rise of a literary-critical analysis of Luke shows the influence of some of the new hermeneutics being utilized with secular literature. A distinction is made in literary criticism between diachronic analysis, which views the text within time (within history), and synchronic analysis, which attempts to view the text detached from its historical circumstances. Diachronic analysis uses the text as a window to see beyond the text (i.e., the historical progression of the text, its sources, and its forms), whereas synchronic analysis views the text as a mirror that reflects only itself, only its own world view.

Redaction criticism is diachronic analysis. It attempts to comprehend the theological intentions of the evangelist through his use of sources. The evangelist is more editor than author, reworking sources and forms to express his own theological perspective. Redaction critics look through the text to see the editorial hand of the evangelist and the traditional sources that lie behind the text. They focus on the final product, but are primarily interested in the process that brought the text to its final point, paying closest attention to the activity of the author in the final stage of the diachronic process.

An example of synchronic analysis is composition criticism. This approach views the evangelist as creator of his own literary text apart from the influence of other texts. The composition is the creation of a single author who, although utilizing other traditions and sources, conceives of his work literarily as a unified whole. Here the evangelist is more author than editor.

Literary criticism ignores the historical process that brought the text into existence. It is not that literary critics are uninterested in history or that

they reject the historicity of the text. They do not feel, however, that the hermeneutical process is best served by analyzing the historical traditions behind the text. Rather they are interested in a synchronic analysis that focuses on the final product, considering the literary character of the narrative in its thematic and structural unity. It is not structuralism, which sees in the text a-temporal and trans-cultural patterns basic to the human condition, nor is it reader-response criticism, which disregards the intentions of the author, believing that "the meanings of the text are the production of the individual reader" (T. J. Keegan, *Interpreting the Bible* [New York: Paulist Press, 1985], pp. 170-171).

The three books under review are examples of the new literary criticism as it is applied to the Gospel of Luke. The purest form of this hermeneutical approach is superbly presented by Robert Tannehill in the first volume of *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation*, dealing with the Gospel of Luke. The very title itself bespeaks the essence of this hermeneutical approach. The gospel is considered a unified narrative by a single purposeful author, and the interpretation that Tannehill offers is based on these assumptions about the gospel. The approach is not redaction criticism, nor is it historical criticism as we have come to know it in the past thirty years. Tannehill goes out of his way to distinguish himself from this hermeneutical tradition (p. 6):

> I am concerned with Luke-Acts in its finished form, not with pre-Lukan tradition. Furthermore, I do not engage in elaborate arguments to distinguish tradition from Lukan redaction of that tradition. Brief comparisons of Luke with Matthew and Mark are useful where there are parallel texts, for these comparisons help us to recognize the distinctiveness of the Lukan version. But detailed analysis of the changes and additions introduced in Luke would lead me away from my main task.

His main task is to engage in what he calls a variation of narrative criticism, but which is, in reality, a literary criticism that focuses on motif or thematic analysis. "It now appears to me," Tannehill writes on the opening page of the introduction, "that the author has carefully provided disclosures of the overarching purpose which unifies the narrative and that literary clues show the importance of these disclosures." He elaborates on page 3: "My concern with Luke-Acts as a unified narrative leads me to note many internal connections among different parts of the narrative. Themes will be developed, dropped, then presented again." That in a nutshell is Tannehill's main purpose, and the "commentary" on Luke

essentially unlocks the mystery of the author's disclosures and shows how the gospel is a series of independent, interlocking, parallel, complementary themes that all assist the reader-hearer to understand the theological significance of Jesus Christ for the life of the world.

Tannehill eschews the technical language of narrative criticism, that is, "author" (the real pen-in-hand writer, Luke the physician, companion of Paul), "implied author" (the "author" as he detaches himself from his own presuppositions and writes in this particular genre "which affirms certain values and beliefs and follows certain norms" [p. 7]), and the "narrator" (the internal voice who tells the story). An illustration could utilize the author of a biography about the founder of a small town in New Hampshire. This author was a real person with a history, family, and so on. He was also the "implied author" as he worked with the genre of biography. The "narrator" is the vehicle by which he told the story; he could have used the voice of the founder's son, or his wife, or a rival in the town. Sometimes the implied author and narrator are not the same, since some narrators may be "unreliable." For literary effect, the implied author may use as the narrator the jaundiced views of a rival to demonstrate the true character of the subject of the biography. A classic example is the use of Salieri as narrator in the movie *Amadeus*; his jealous admiration of Mozart's musical abilities reveals the essence of Mozart's character. For Tannehill, the narrator of Luke's Gospel is "reliable," and he refers to the "implied author" and "narrator" (whom he considers to be one and the same) as "Luke" even though he may not perceive this person to be the historical author. The only "technical" term that Tannehill uses is that of "reader," that is, the recipient of the gospel with his understanding of the literary consequences as the gospel unfolds. The term "reader-hearer" may be more accurate since the gospel was originally heard in the context of the liturgical assembly, and the hearer's understanding of the gospel would be dependent on the reading and interpretation of the gospel by the presbyter or bishop. This notion of reader is significant, for it recognizes that the gospels were written to be heard as well as read and that the literary construction of the gospel was meant to facilitate the understanding of the gospel by the "hearer-reader."

Tannehill is true to the stated purpose of his literary analysis of Luke's narrative. Although this book is essentially a commentary, it does not comment on Luke in a verse-by-verse fashion. Rather, each chapter traces a comprehensive theme in Luke. The titles of the chapters give a clear indication of how Tannehill organizes his commentary: "1. Previews of

Salvation"; "2. John and Jesus Begin Their Mission"; "3. Jesus as Preacher and Healer"; "4. Jesus' Ministry to the Oppressed and Excluded"; "5. Jesus and the Crowd of People"; "6. Jesus and the Authorities"; "7. Jesus and the Disciples"; "8. The Risen Lord's Revelation to His Followers." Tannehill's thematic tour of Luke is fascinating, his observations insightful and thought-provoking, and his linking together of certain passages revealing of Luke's literary purposes. What surprises here is that the methodology is not as objectionable as it is in most commentaries today, and one is able to savor Tannehill's ability to open up Luke's Gospel by tracing themes throughout the gospel. This book is for both the veteran and recent reader of Luke's Gospel, for both will benefit from Tannehill's insights. Of particular importance are his first and last chapters, which give the reader an overall glimpse of Luke's purpose. Tannehill's commentary may be read like a novel, for it is a narrative reading of Luke and flows smoothly from motif to motif. There are very few footnotes and little dialogue with the secondary literature. Instead, Tannehill offers us a delightful presentation of what the text says. We hear Luke speak or, better said, what Tannehill interprets Luke to say (which is often close to what we in our tradition would say Luke is saying). This book is, indeed, a refreshing departure from so much secondary literature today, where we hear what others say about Luke or what others say about what others say about what Luke says. This volume is a major book that will reshape the current understanding of Luke-Acts. Tannehill has a long and respected tradition of significant contributions to the literature in this area, but his place in the history of interpretation of Luke-Acts will be guaranteed by this first of two volumes.

David Moessner's contribution to a literary-critical analysis of Luke is entitled *Lord of the Banquet: The Literary and Theological Significance of the Lukan Travel Narrative.* Moessner's purpose is similar to Tannehill's, but Moessner is much more critical of the problems of the redactional-critical study of Luke's Gospel initiated by Conzelmann's ground-breaking *The Theology of St. Luke.* Moessner's book is more technical than Tannehill's, more in the genre of a doctoral thesis that engages in extensive dialogue with the secondary literature. (There are some interesting lacunae here; for example, how Moessner could ignore R. J. Dillon's *From Eyewitnesses to Ministers of the Word* is inexplicable, for many of Moessner's major insights were already expertly presented by Dillon). Moessner attempts to explain the theological significance of one large section of Luke's Gospel that has always puzzled Lukan scholars—

the journey to Jerusalem in 9:51-19:44. Most scholars throw up their hands in dismay as they try to discover some underlying structure here and ultimately consider this section aimless and rambling, pointing to the travel notices in 13:22 and 17:11 as the only ostensible structural reference points.

Moessner, however, takes on this difficult section to demonstrate Luke's internal purposes. He brings meaning to this section by discovering Luke's literary intentions. For Moessner, the reason why most have missed the point of the journey narrative is that they have neglected to observe Luke's literary skill in structuring this central section around specific themes. He describes his approach as a "literary-critical study of the relation of the ostensive form (a journey) to the content (primarily sayings of Jesus) in Luke 9:51-19:44" (p. 6). Moessner's interpretation of this section is thorough and erudite. This is his analysis of his procedure (pp. 7-8):

> In Part I we survey critical approaches to the form and content of the Central Section, concentrating on the "tide" produced by the "storm center" in Lukan studies . . . Moving to our own synthesis in Part II, we propose a fourfold Exodus typology based on the calling and fate of Moses in Deuteronomy as a heuristic principle for the plotted story in 9:51-19:44. This hypothesis is grounded on an intrinsic literary investigation of the prophet as the prime character model for the narrative world of Luke-Acts; second, on an extrinsic comparison of the Moses of Deuteronomy to the prophet Jesus of Luke 9:1-50 . . . Part III is the heart of the study, with evidence classified for Jesus as a prophet in 9:51-19:44. In order to provide an extrinsic literary-critical check on our hypothesis of a Deuteronomic-Exodus typology, the popular Deuteronomic notion of the role and fate of Israel's prophets in her history as it is expressed in Palestinian Jewish literature of the intertestamental period will be brought to bear on the text . . . Part IV will then apply the extrinsic literary comparison of the Moses of Deuteronomy to the Jesus of the Central Section. Our hypothesis will be corroborated when the Deuteronomistic popular view and the fourfold typological lines are seen to converge in the plotted story . . . Finally, in Part V we will draw some conclusions, explore the theological implications of these Lukan studies, and suggest some further lines for research.

As is evident, here too is a major work that is conversant with the primary text and the secondary literature, and it offers numerous insights into Luke's Central Section.

There are a number of reasons why this book is important for the Lutheran community. First, it offers a comprehensive typological study that is neither simplistic nor exaggerated in its claims. One may differ with Moessner's exegesis, but one cannot deny that his interpretation is carefully argued from the text and that the presuppositions that affect his exegesis are more literary than higher-critical. Carefully arguing from the text, he claims that the parallels between Jesus and Moses extend beyond their prophetic work of teaching and performing miracles, that Jesus is paralleled to Moses in that both suffer and die for the sake of the people: "'On account of' ([Deuteronomy] 1:37; 3:26) the people's intransigence, Moses must suffer the anger of the Lord, the anguish of being choked off from the land of promise, and thus ultimately die without the promised deliverance—all because of the sin of his people (1:37; 3:26; 4:21-22; cf. 9:18-20, 25-29; 10:10-11; 31:2; 32:49-52; 34:4)" (p. 57). Moessner is not convincing in his argumentation in this point, but he does carry forward the principle that the prophetic tradition is a suffering one, and Jesus the prophet is not only teacher and miracle-worker but also sufferer.

The second reason why this book is important for Lutherans is that it provides tangential support for a christological view of the ministry. Although Moessner does not extend the prophetic typology to the apostles, his argument could easily be carried beyond Jesus to the apostles, who were also teachers and miracle-workers and suffered a violent end. Luke-Acts may provide solid ground to those seeking biblical foundations for a christological view of the pastoral ministry.

Like Tannehill, Moessner offers another significant contribution to Lukan studies. There are provocative insights throughout this book and an amazing range of arguments which touch many of the current areas of debate in Lukan studies. Moessner will not have as major an impact as Tannehill in the popular arena because of the technical complexities of his argumentation, but he is nonetheless an expert witness to the value of literary-criticism in providing insights into one of the mysteries in Luke's Gospel—the structure and purpose of the journey narrative. One may disagree with Moessner's conclusions, but the Central Section is now cast in a whole new light thanks to Moessner's inquiry into its meaning for the gospel.

Finally, there is Wojcik's fascinating little book entitled *The Road to*

Emmaus: Reading Luke's Gospel. The word is "fascinating" because, while Tannehill and Moessner teach within seminary contexts, Wojcik writes as a professor of humanities at Clarkson University. Wojcik's analysis of Luke's Gospel is not bound by any theological presuppositions, and his interpretation applies literary-critical techniques used in the interpretation of English literature to the interpretation of Scripture without being bound in any way to an analogy of faith. It is an attempt not only to offer a fresh interpretation of Luke, but to discredit and, in some sense, ridicule orthodox interpretations through the centuries. The book revolves around the astounding thesis that the entire gospel is influenced by the passive verb *ekratounto* in 24:16. Wojcik says (pp. 2-3):

> This book is more or less about how that mysterious passive verb *ekratounto* has been translated and understood over almost 1,800 years of Christian biblical interpretation. Gnostic interpreters felt free to imagine any number of agents who could have done the holding. Orthodox interpreters in reaction have also imagined certain agents but carefully restrict the possibilities . . . Perhaps the riddle of the passive verb holds a key to interpreting this episode, Luke's Gospel, and the other Christian scriptures. One begins with the premise that many things, even in the orthodox gospels, are intended to remain provocative. "Gnosis," "magic," and "parataxis" refer to the other literary effects Luke uses to fill his narrative with the riddle of the passive verb.

For all intents and purposes, Wojcik's literary-critical analysis of Luke's Gospel is a gnostic one. The Emmaus story becomes his test case for this gnostic interpretation. It is a unique narrative in the gospels, it contains literary elements that suggest gnosticism (such as the theological passive in 24 [16, 31] and parataxis, wherein one communicates without using words), and it serves to "sum up the gnostic learning experience" (p. 7) foreshadowed in the Lukan prologue about certainty in the truth of what Theophilus has been taught. For Wojcik, "Theophilus becomes an idealized, implied reader in imitation of the two initially curious and eventually enthusiastic
disciples" (p. 7).

In actuality, as Wojcik's book carries out this fantastic thesis, there is little exegesis or interpretation. Rather, one sees the results of literary criticism taken to its extreme without an analogy of faith. In chapter one Wojcik explains with clarity and insight what literary critics mean by the "implied author" as it applies to the Emmaus story. He is expertly versed

in literary criticism and provides a perspective on the New Testament that could only come from a secular literary critic, as Wojcik's subsections suggest: "The Real Magician," "The Repertoire of the Implied Author," "Spoken Parataxis," "Written Parataxis," "Spoken versus Written Parataxis," and "A New Narrative Theology." In chapter two Wojcik offers what he calls "Strong New Readings," where he demonstrates how Luke learned his literary methods from the gnostics. Wojcik is not ignorant of the gnostic interpreters or the orthodox ones, as he demonstrates in the third chapter entitled "Critical Responses to Luke's Narrative Gnosticism." Wojcik is critical not only of the orthodox interpreters, but also of the higher critics and their father Schleiermacher. He articulates the key difference between diachronic and synchronic exegesis: higher critics as diachronic exegetes are interested in the composition of the text, whereas literary critics like Wojcik are interested in the text itself, the narrative. As he says of current biblical interpretation, "the narrative syntax does not appear as interesting to the commentator as the underlying or prior history which the surface meaning appears to aspire to reveal" (p. 97). Such observations are to be applauded.

Wojcik even acknowledges that the analogy of faith is important to the interpretation of the text. He says of Joseph Fitzmyer, who wrote the two-volume Anchor Bible commentary on Luke (p. 102):

> The reason why even a most discriminating biblical scholar such as Fitzmyer will also affirm faith is, of course, because he has faith. The reason why he will use the form of modern learned commentary in making his biblical interpretation is because its structure implicitly encourages a faithful affirmation. The minute discrimination of language leads logically to a "general understanding."

However, Wojcik does not write to affirm faith but to observe the hermeneutical process. As was said before, this book offers no real exegesis of the text, for exegesis is not its purpose. Wojcik, like many who are interested in hermeneutics today, is more fascinated with talking about the process of exegesis than actually doing it. This book will introduce the reader to the new hermeneutics of the day and give some very helpful insights into the relationship between the old, not so old, and new hermeneutics. It will also alert the reader to the real dangers of literary criticism outside the context of faith.

In conclusion, Tannehill, Moessner, and even Wojcik have contributed to Lukan studies. They cannot be ignored, and some very significant

insights may be gleaned from their work. Literary criticism has more to offer the orthodox exegete than higher criticism ever did, because it is ultimately concerned with the meaning of the text.

Arthur Just, Jr.

WORD BIBLICAL THEMES: 1, 2 KINGS. By T. R. Hobbs. Dallas, Texas: Word Books, 1989.

T. R. Hobbs is professor of Hebrew and Old Testament Interpretation in McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton, Ontario. He has a doctorate from the University of London. *Word Biblical Themes: 1, 2 Kings* is a companion to the volumes on 1 and 2 Kings in the Word Biblical Commentary Series. The usefulness of commentaries with their intensive study of the text is obvious. However, there is also great value in examining the book as a whole and studying the major themes found in this examination.

Hobbs has chosen to address six major themes in 1 and 2 Kings: kings, prophets, the people of God, the covenanted land, sin and judgment, hope, and the anger of God. Hobbs is aware that these are by no means the only themes running through Kings, but he sees them as some of the most valuable. The Book of Kings deals with a period of time which was important in the history of the people of Israel. The themes which the author has chosen help reflect the struggles, the growth, and the demise of the nation of Israel during this era. *Word Biblical Themes: 1, 2 Kings* can be a useful resource book for the parish pastor.

Jeffrey H. Pulse
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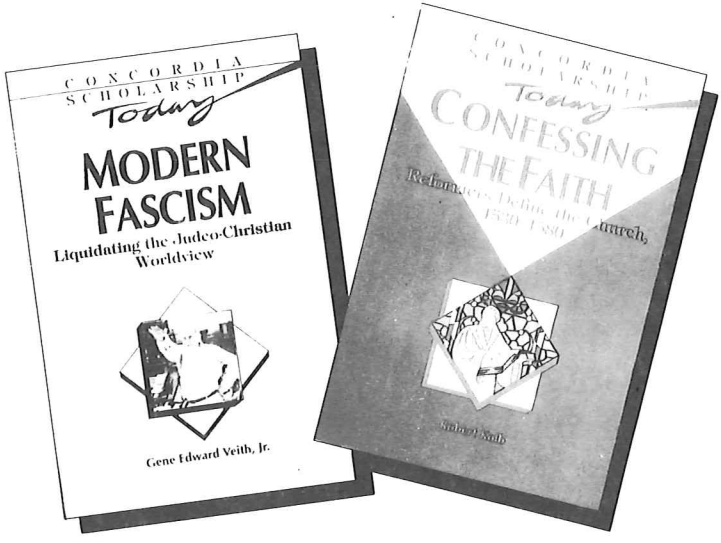
Two retrospective views with momentous implications for today.



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