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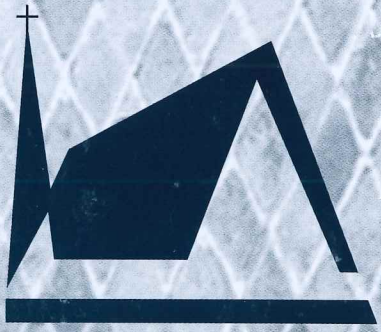

# CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY

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# CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY


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# Sacramental Hymnody in American Lutheran Hymnals During the Nineteenth Century

Peter C. Cage

"If all our records were destroyed, from our hymnals alone the future historian might learn, at least approximately, the religious, intellectual, and doctrinal history of our Church."[1] A. J. Weddell's words are as true today as they were in 1866. Using his claim as a starting point, this article investigates what can be learned specifically about the sacramental life of the Lutheran church in America by an investigation of the hymnody of the nineteenth century? In the Lutheran church, which embraces its Reformation and confessional heritage without embarrassment, one would expect to find a Christ-centered, incarnational emphasis that confesses Christ Jesus really present to forgive sin and save in His appointed means of grace.

Yet, the question of what constitutes the sum and substance of Lutheran sacramental theology has not always been answered so clearly or with the same emphases by the various strains of Lutheranism in America. Add to the mix the question of language and the reality that faithfully translating hymnic doctrine from old German hymns into English was a difficult and time-consuming task. An attractive and practical alternative was to borrow from existing English hymnody in hopes that it would adequately approximate Lutheran doctrine while giving the people something to sing. How will this American hymnody compare with the hymnody of the earliest Lutherans? If the church sings what she believes, then her hymnody should reveal to some degree what she finds being given in baptism, the Lord's Supper and absolution.

## Context and Caveats

But perhaps we have already assumed too much. What if the congregation does not sing? Wilhelm J. Mann, at the time a pastor in

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[1] A. J. Weddell, review of Frederick M. Bird and Beale M. Schmucker's *Hymns for the use of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* in *Evangelical Review* 17 (April 1866): 211. For a general overview of "Lutheran Hymnody in North America" in the period covered by this study, see R. Harold Terry's article by that name in *Hymnal Companion to the Lutheran Book of Worship*, edited by Marilyn K. Stulken (Philadelpia: Fortress Press, 1981), 93-99.

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Philadelphia, offered the following lament on the state of worship practice in what he called the "left wing" of American Lutheranism:

> To the influence of Puritanism certainly must be attributed the absence, in most of our Lutheran churches and worship in this country, of all those forms by which she is in Europe distinguished from the Reformed. In many places we find *instead of the altar simply a table;* instead of the gown and bands, a plain black coat; *no baptismal font,* no crucifix, no paintings, much less the symbol of light, frequently no steeple, no bells; in short, everything which is supposed to have the least leaning towards Romish customs or superstitions, however innocent, appropriate, and beautiful in itself, is carefully excluded.
>
> Everything is tried by the spiritualizing rule of reason, and subjected to the plummet of the purest, most exact, sanctimonious utility, before being adopted. On this account, and also because individual will and taste strongly predominate, we find but few traces of liturgies; all prayer is to be extemporaneous; *singing is not engaged in by the congregation at large; the old German chorals have not been transferred to the worship of our American Lutheran Churches.* These have introduced the idyllion melodies used among the English, in which the objective character retires just as much before the subjective expression of feeling, as is the case with most English hymns when compared with the great German Church-hymn.[2] (emphasis added)

Suspicious of the barest hint of Romanizing tendencies and increasingly ignoring its distinctiveness from Reformed confessions, Mann believed

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[2]Wilhelm J. Mann, *Lutheranism in America: An Essay on the Present Condition of the Lutheran Church in the United States* (Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakiston, 1857), 26-27. Since Mann (1819-1892) was a defender of the Augsburg Confession, his opposition to S. S. Schmucker's Definite Platform (1855) in this essay is apparent already in his Preface. Mann identifies with the "centre" of Lutheranism (The Synod of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States, the Joint Synod of Ohio, and the Tennessee Synod) between the extreme poles of Schmucker's General Synod and the "strict" Lutheranism of the "right wing" Missouri and Buffalo Synods. Later a leading theologian and one of the founders of the General Council, Mann was once a pastor of a German Reformed congregation, president of the Pennsylvania Ministerium (1860-1862, 1880), and professor at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia (1864-1891).

the "left wing" of Lutheranism had compromised its claim to catholicity while "spiritualized" reason and "sanctimonious" utility became the yardstick for what was considered churchly. Even the Reformation heritage of Luther's "singing church" had gone the way of the untranslated German chorale as congregations, unhindered by confessional identity, chose their own way in a new land. The more subjective hymn typified by the English Isaac Watts (1674-1748) or Charles Wesley (1707-1788) replaced the more sturdy and objective proclamation of the German hymn.[3] Even the sacramental furnishings of the church reflected this shift from the objective to subjective; a church with a mere table in place of an altar and no baptismal font makes, even unintentionally, a clear confession of its Christology. Thus, one wonders whether these churches sang hymns with strong sacramental content?

Accordingly, this survey begins with several caveats. First, not all hymnals, nor hymns in hymnals, are created equal or used equally. A glance at any modern hymnal shows that just because a hymn is placed in a collection does not guarantee that it will be sung at church or in the home. A hymn used often in one congregation may lay dormant in the next. Without a "play list" from individual churches indicating what was actually used from service to service, especially at baptism or the Lord's Supper, it is virtually impossible to determine which hymn texts most informed the sacramental piety of a given local congregation. In some sense then, inspecting the sacramental hymnody of a given hymnal gives only an artificial perspective of a church's sacramental piety. At best, the hymns will show the theological bent of the individual(s) who had the most influence in assembling the hymnal.

A further consideration is that, within the hymnals themselves, not every hymn with sacramental language would necessarily be included in the "Means of Grace" section of the hymnal. This means that some

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[3]Louis F. Benson, *The English Hymn: Its Development and Use in Worship*, reprinted from the 1915 edition (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1962), writes of the use of English hymnody and the Anglicizing of Lutheran worship in his section on "English Hymns in the Lutheran Church (1756-1859)," 410-420. The omnipresence of the Watts and Wesley legacies in Lutheran hymnals of this period indicates the trend to appropriate available evangelical hymnody without concern for whether or not it embodied Lutheran doctrine. See also Carl F. Schalk, *God's Song in a New Land: Lutheran Hymnals in America* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1995), 61-62, who contends that Lutheran hymnody never recovered from their influence.

sacramental material could be neglected in this study since the entire hymnal is not in view. Yet, even a hymnal's "Table of Contents" with its descriptive title (for example, "Ordinances," "Means of Grace," or "Sacraments"), its placement of sacramental hymnody in relation to other topics, and the number of hymns offered gives some indication of at least the editor's bias. The pastor and congregation, on the other hand, will use their ultimate veto power to either adopt or cast off hymnal material regardless of what the editor intended.

This survey of sacramental hymnody also considers the broad movements that swirled about the American religious scene. Carl Schalk lists rationalism, unionism, and revivalism as the most influential forces that shaped American Lutheran hymnody, especially in the first half of the nineteenth century.[4] One can predict the effects on sacramental hymnody of a rationalism that looks to reason while downplaying or ignoring the mystery of a God hidden in means. The Prussian Union of 1817, which forced Lutheran and Reformed intercommunion, extended across the ocean to American hymn books resulting in the effective surrender by some Lutherans of the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper to a Calvinistic notion of "spiritual presence."[5] Likewise, revivalism, in its American flowering on the expanding frontier, also appeared in sacramental hymnody with its skewed anthropology that focused on man's activity over against God's.

This study will follow Schalk in using the *Geistliche Lieder,* also known as the Babst hymnal of 1545, as a standard against which all subsequent Lutheran hymnals can be measured since it contained of the core hymnody of the Lutheran Reformation. Distinguished by a preface written by Luther himself the year before he died, the Babst hymnal contained eighty-nine texts, plus an appendix with forty more texts. It included the following specifically sacramental or catechetical hymns of

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[4] Schalk, *God's Song,* 67-68 with examples from the various hymnals of that period throughout the chapter.

[5] *Das Gemeinschaftliche Gesangbuch* (1817) and *Neues Gemeinschaftliche Gesangbuch* (1849) were both "common books" for use in both Lutheran and Reformed churches in America. With rationalism blurring confessional differences and making them seem unimportant, and congregations of different confessions sharing the same worship facilities, recourse to a shared hymnal seemed most practical. See Schalk, *God's Song,* 75-79, and Carl F. Schalk, editor and translator, *Source Documents in American Lutheran Hymnody,* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1996), 48-52.

Luther: "Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam" (baptism), "Aus tiefer Not" (Confession and Absolution), and "Gott sei gelobet" (Sacrament of the Altar).[6]

## Importing Confessional Lutheranism: Buffalo and Missouri in Brief

Examples of German Lutherans who came to America with a strong confessional identity intact are the Buffalo and Missouri Synods. J. A. A. Grabau's *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Kirchengesangbuch* (1842) and C. F. W. Walther's *Kirchengesangbuch* (1847) serve as models of a self-consciously and intentionally imported confessional hymnody.[7] Both of these German hymnals produced in America contained text only (no music) and reproduced the confessional core of the Babst hymnal.[8]

Grabau's 1842 hymnal for the Prussian immigrants of the Buffalo Synod does not have a table of contents, but uses the church year followed by a roughly catechetical outline in which the sacramental hymns are located. This hymnal uses an arrangement that includes prayers and liturgical orders and other material mixed in with the hymns throughout the book.

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[6]Schalk, *God's Song*, discusses the historical importance of the *Geistliche Lieder* on 25-26 and lists selected hymns from the hymnal in Appendix A on 227. Contemporary hymnals of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod include translations of *Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam* in *Lutheran Worship* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1982) [*LW*], number 223, *Aus Tiefer Not* in *The Lutheran Hymnal* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1941) [*TLH*], number 329 and *LW* number 230, and *Gott sei gelobet TLH* number 313 and *LW* number 238.

[7]*Evangelisch-Lutherisches Gesang-buch, worin die gebraeuchlichsten alten Kirchen-Lieder Dr. M. Lutheri und anderer reinen Lehrer und Zeugen Gottes, zur Befoerderung der wahren Gottseligkeit ohne Abaenderungen enthalten sind, fuer Gemeinen, welche sich zur unveraenderten Augsburgischen Confession bekennen*, 2., verm. Ausgabe (Buffalo: Brunck u. Domedion, 1848). This hymnal was originally published in 1842, three years before the organization of the Buffalo Synod. See Schalk, *God's Song*, 125-128 and *Source Documents*, 66-69 for a full discussion of the hymnal. *Kirchengesangbuch fuer Evangelisch-Lutherische Gemeinden ungeaenderter Augsburgischer Confession darin des seligen D. Martin Luthers und anderer geistreichen Lehrer gebraeuchlichste Kirchen-Lieder enthalten sind* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House). The first edition was 1847. See Schalk, *God's Song*, 128-132 and *Source Documents*, 70-73 for a full discussion of the hymnal.

[8]Schalk, *God's Song* presents a bar graph of the "Occurrence of Selected Hymns from the Babst Hymnal (1545) in American Lutheran Hymnals" in Appendix E that indicates that the Missouri and Buffalo Synod hymnals were the most conscientious in transmitting the core Reformation hymnody to nineteenth-century America.

For example, in the section on baptism it prints Luther's "Order of Baptism" followed by directions to turn back to the church year section for the "Baptism of Christ" for Luther's baptismal hymn "Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam" (number 62). The separate section on baptism (XXIV) contains eight hymns. After a brief section on confirmation is the section *Von der Buss, Beichte und Absolution* (XXVI) containing nineteen hymns, including *Aus tiefer Not* (number 304). After an intervening section of hymns on the "Justification of the Poor Sinner Before God" is the section for the Lord's Supper (XXVIII), with ten hymns including Luther's "Gott sei gelobet" (number 329).

The sacramental fare in Missouri's *Kirchengesangbuch* of 1847 is listed in its table of contents under the heading of *Katechismuslieder*, which follows sections on the church year and "The Word of God and the Christian Church." Each of the six chief parts is represented, including six hymns for baptism, two for absolution, and seventeen for the Lord's Supper. The Missouri collection includes Luther's "Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam" (number 186), "Gott sei gelobet" (number 195), and "Aus tiefer Not" (number 214), though this last hymn is located under the separate section on *Buss und Beichtlieder* rather than in the section for absolution.

From his place in the center, Mann's 1857 evaluation of the "strict Lutherans" of Missouri and Buffalo is evident in his back-handed compliment:

> In like manner do we regard it as a mistake, that their just and commendable attachment to the good old ways and customs should incline some of the brethren to deal somewhat unjustly with whatever is new. As an instance of this we refer to the Hymn Book [of the Buffalo Synod]. . . . Highly as we value the old and unadulterated treasures of the hymns of our Lutheran Church, we yet believe that the gracious gifts which the Lord has bestowed upon our Church in our own time are also deserving of notice. But in this too we only regard the *ultra* opinion as a mistake, and an act of injustice against the Church and her members. . . . Wise moderation and the utmost precaution in the application of whatever is new, is proper, yea, even a duty. That, however, these brethren lay too much stress upon the principle of sound doctrine, on mere

> orthodoxy, on the letter, does not appear from the actual condition, order, activity, and self-denying labors of their congregations.[9]

Mann offered wise counsel that anything new need not automatically be dismissed, but also shows that his concern for "sound doctrine," was not as passionate and serious as the brethren from Saxony and Prussia. Indeed, Mann had no scruples about having pastors from German Reformed churches occupy Lutheran pulpits when a "suitable opportunity presented itself." Yet even Mann drew the line with those "loose" Lutherans who would "even invite the avowed enemies of infant baptism into their pulpits." This disconnect between doctrine and practice naturally translated into his ideas about a proper hymnal. Since Mann could not see going the way of the Missouri Synod who "admit none but the hymns composed by Lutherans into their collection," he applauded the Pennsylvania Ministerium's *Deutsches Gesangbuch* of 1849 because it contained a "goodly number of the best church hymns of German Reformed authors."[10] This leads well into an investigation of the sacramental theology of the hymnals of other Lutheran church bodies during nineteenth-century America to see how flexible they could be with "sound doctrine" and at what point, if any, their toleration of an alien Reformed theology found its limit.

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[9]Mann, *Lutheranism in America*, 84.

[10]*Deutsches Gesangbuch für die Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche in den Vereinigten Staaten* (Philadelphia: L. A. Wollenweber, 1849). According to Edward C. Wolf "Lutheran Hymnody and Music Published in America 1700-1850: A Descriptive Bibliography," *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly* 50 (Winter 1977): 175, the *Deutsches Gesangbuch* was jointly sponsored by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania and the New York and West Pennsylvania synods and offered a well-rounded selection of German hymnody from the Reformation through the early 1800s. See also Schalk's description of this hymnal, known as the "New Pennsylvania Hymnbook," or the "Wollenweber book" in *God's Song*, 135-138. Schalk makes reference to a series of articles in *Der Lutheraner* (1850) in which this new hymnal was criticized by the Missouri Synod for altering the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, omitting some hymns and deleting stanzas in others. One hymn that was altered was Luther's *Christ unser Herr zu Jordan kam* (number 282), which did not please William M. Reynolds. In Reynolds's review, "The New German Hymn-book," *Evangelical Review* (April 1850), he objected to changes in the last verse of the hymn since he preferred Luther's "smoothness and beauty" to the editorial committee's effort. Yet, Reynolds did not object to the omission of the second, third, fourth, and sixth stanzas of Luther's hymn, stating "we think that their great length is the great fault of German hymns generally," 75-76. Mann, *Lutheranism in America*, 90.

### Hymnals to 1816: Williston, Quitman, and Henkel

Ralph Williston, a former Methodist serving as pastor in the English Lutheran Church in New York, compiled *A Choice Selection of Evangelical Hymns* in 1806.[11] Despite his claim that "No doctrine . . . will be found in this selection, which is not accordant with the doctrines taught in our church," he seems unfamiliar with or unconvinced by Lutheran doctrine.[12] This is borne out by the following samples from the "Ordinances" section near the end of the hymnal which contain four baptismal and six eucharistic hymns. From the section on baptism:

> He sits upon the eternal hills, With grace and pardon in his hands,
> And sends his cov'nant with the seals, To bless the distant heathen lands.
>
> "Repent and be baptized," he saith, "For the remission of your sins";
> And thus our sense assists our faith and shows us what his gospel means.
>
> Thus we engage ourselves to thee and seal our cov'nant with the Lord
> O may the great Eternal Three in heaven our solemn vows record.[13]

In this hymn the real action is going on in heaven, parceled out by some sovereign Lord rather than in the earthly water He has connected to His promise. Divine monergism also suffers as "our sense assists" God, and man does his part to "seal our cov'nant." In a hymn for the Lord's Supper, Calvin's imprint stands out with the words, "How can heav'nly spirits rise, / By earthly matter fed" (number 385:1). The inclusion of such language diminishes even the most fervent effort to put the best construction on other less overtly offensive material. As Benson remarks of this collection, "neither its arrangements nor contents suggest Lutheranism."[14] Even with more earthy language like, "The flesh of thy Redeemer eat; / Drink with the wine his heavenly blood, / And feast on the Incarnate God" (number 386:2), the incarnate certainty of God's

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[11]Ralph Williston, *A Choice Selection of Evangelical Hymns from Various Authors: For the Use of the English Evangelical Lutheran Church in New-York* (New York: J. C. Totten, 1806).

[12]Schalk, *Source Documents*, 38.

[13]Number 378:2, 3, and 5.

[14]Benson, *The English Hymn*, 143.

proffer of forgiveness by means is undone by the theology of the other hymns in this bland collection. Frederick M. Bird, in his survey of Lutheran Hymnals in a series of articles in the 1865 *Evangelical Review*, is too gentle when he writes of the hymnal, "The whole plan and temper of the work . . . are Presbyterian, Methodist, cosmopolite English, Broad Church, anything else, as much as Lutheran. The authorship of the hymns shows this."[15] It is no surprise that just a few years later, in 1810, Williston took his congregation into the Protestant Episcopal Church.

Frederick Quitman (1760-1832), a convinced rationalist, was the driving force behind *A Collection of Hymns, and a Liturgy* (1814), which became the official hymnal of the New York Ministerium.[16] The separate sections on baptism (XXIII) and the Lord's Supper (XXIV) are placed near the end of the table of contents right before hymns for "Particular Occasions and Circumstances" (for example, Morning, Evening, New Year). There are four baptismal hymns in this collection, but, as Benson points out, consistent with Quitman's rationalistic aversion to the doctrine, he excised the section on "The Trinity" from Williston's earlier hymnal.[17] Thus Quitman's collection makes no reference to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and even in his baptismal section uses mostly the names "God" or "Lord." Quitman's antagonism to confessional Lutheran doctrine is apparent enough with text like, "Let plenteous grace descend on those / Who, hoping in his word / This day have publicly declar'd / That Jesus is their Lord" (number 382:2). In a hymn for the baptism of children, the high Arminian regard for the power of human strivings after God is evident in such texts as, "Lord! What our ears have heard/Our eyes delighted trace/Thy love in long succession shown/To ev'ry virtuous race" and "Thy cov'nant may they keep," which give fallen sinners credit for their god-ward longings and commitments (number 383:1, 3).

Quitman's section on the Lord's Supper contains twelve texts. Schalk believes that Quitman's liturgical section clearly shows his rationalistic and deistic leanings. The Lord's Supper becomes a "Memorial of Christ's death and a means of improving his disciples in their attachment and obedience to his divine religion."[18] This is evident in the following hymn:

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[15]Frederick M. Bird, "Lutheran Hymnology," *Evangelical Review*, Vol. XVI (January 1865), 33.

[16]See Schalk, *Source Documents*, 44-47 and *God's Song*, 68-75.

[17]Benson, *The English Hymn*, 414.

[18]Schalk, *Source Documents*, footnote 7, 47.

Ye foll'wers of the Prince of Peace Who round his table draw!
Remember what his spirit was, What his peculiar law.

And do you love him? do you feel Your warm affections move?
This is the proof which he demands, That you each other love.

Let each the sacred law fulfill Like his be ev'ry mind;
Be ev'ry temper form'd by love And ev'ry action kind.

Let none, who call themselves his friends, Disgrace the honour'd name;
But by a near resemblance prove The title which they claim.[19]

This is nothing more than exhortation to moral improvement, completely divorced from the means that alone can accomplish it. Of course, when the Lord's Supper is reduced to a memorial meal for a departed Savior (for example, "'Eat, drink, in mem'ry of your friend!' / Such was our Master's last request" [number 388], "This feast was Jesus' high behest / This cup of thanks his last request" [number 389], and "And, to refresh our minds, he gave / These kind memorials of his grace" [number 392:2]) nothing is given or received except misdirected religious hankerings for some benevolent deity ("Come, let us join our souls to God," "Come, let us seal, without delay / The cov'nant of his grace," "Thus may our rising offspring haste / To seek their fathers' God / Nor e'er forsake the happy path / Their youthful feet have trod" [number 386]). Certainly for Quitman, Christ was not present in bread and wine and the forgiveness of sins was obviated by the promise of human potentiality.

Paul Henkel (1754-1825), from a family noted for its pronounce orthodoxy during a time when much of American Lutheranism was adrift from its confessional moorings, produced one German (1810) and one English hymnal, the *Church Hymn Book* (1816).[20] His family's industrious printing office in New Market, Virginia, the Henkel Press, published these texts for the Tennessee Synod. Henkel did not try to translate the German chorales into English so we find none of Luther's sacramental hymns. Their absence is filled by over 300 hymns from

[19]Number 391:1, 3-5.

[20]*Church Hymn Book, consisting of newly composed hymns, with an addition of hymns and psalms, from other authors, carefully adapted for the use of public worship, and many other occasions by Paul Henkel* (New-Market: Solomon Henkel, 1816).

Henkel's own pen, some of which Benson describes as "nothing more than didactic prose broken up into short phrases that serve as lines of verse."[21] Henkel's concern for the teaching function of hymnody is underscored even if they lack artistry.[22] The table of contents lists: 33. On Christian Baptism (four hymns); 34. Baptism of those of riper years (three hymns); 35. On Confession of Sins (four hymns); 36. For the Holy Communion (eleven hymns).

In Henkel's hymnal, baptism is often related in Old Testament terms of sealing God's covenant:

> God did to father Abrah'm say I am a God to thee
> And I will bless thy race and thee Shall be a seed for me.
>
> Thus Abrah'm b'lieved the promise true and gave his sons to God
> As water seals the promise now, It then was seal'd with blood.
>
> Its offspring then were circumcis'd To' none, but just the male:
> But male and female are baptiz'd; Baptism is the seal.
>
> Then as the water is appli'd, And God his gifts impart;
> The creature then is sanctifi'd, And circumcis'd at heart.[23]

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[21]Benson, *The English Hymn*, 415.

[22]Schalk calls the collection "undistinguished" and discounts its influence as "most likely used only by a small number of congregations." Schalk, *God's Song*, 63. Schalk's discussion of the two Henkel hymnals (62-65) ends with his surmise that Henkel's hymnbook "had little, if any, effect on the general development of Lutheran hymnody in America, its use being confined largely to the Tennessee Synod, formed in 1820...." Bird, "Lutheran Hymnology," *Evangelical Review* 16 (April 1865): 199, "[Henkel's] productions might possibly edify a converted backwoodsman or a slave of the Uncle Tom type,—though we think this would be more readily done by the Campmeeting lyrics to which the Hardshell Baptists and sometimes Methodists greatly do incline,—but they never could come into anything like recognized use, among civilized people, in this nineteenth century. But Edward C. Wolf, "Lutheran Church Music in America During the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries" (Ph. D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1960), draws a different conclusion. Wolf says the related North Carolina Synod recommended this collection (with later editions in 1838, 1850 and 1857) for use in 1817 and adds, "This collection was of much greater influence around the middle of the century than at the time of its first publication, undoubtedly because its success had to wait for a larger number of English speaking churches," 358. According to Benson, these later editions included more hymns from non-Lutheran sources like "Watts and his school, Charles Wesley, and the writers of the Evangelical Revival, with Watts predominant," 415.

[23]Number 172:1, 2, 4, and 7.

Leaving aside its occasionally strained and sing-song rhyme, Henkel rightly stresses the reality of gifts being given in baptism "as the water is appli'd." These gifts are tied to the atonement with such words as, "The treasures Christ to us has will'd/For which he bled and died/Are by his ordinances seal'd/ Confirm'd and ratifi'd" (number 176:2). Henkel's Holy Communion hymns clearly confess the real presence and the salvific gifts given with:

> O bless the Saviour, ye that eat, With royal dainties fed.
> Not heaven affords a costlier treat, For Jesus is the bread!

And

> O! eat and drink with thankfulness, Partake the bounties of his grace.
> Receive what he will freely give Who died for you that you should live.
>
> O come ye then, partake the feast, O come and be the Saviour's guest.
> Though bread and wine appears but giv'n 'Tis life itself, come down from heaven.

Or

> Jesus this feast himself ordain'd, Great are the blessings here obtain'd.
> The choicest and the richest food, Is his dear body and his blood.
>
> He institutes this ordinance, This do to my remembrance:
> My body broke, my blood was spilt to take away your sins and guilt.
>
> But O! thy righteous will alone, That only O! that must be done.
> To drink this cup, this is the plan, To save the fallen race of man.

Conversely, one hymn also imports some lyrics that stress the Lord's Supper as a command to be obeyed, rather than chiefly as a means of grace. The following verse is very law-oriented:

> Lord here I am to do thy will, Incline my heart to thee.
> O! may I willingly fulfil [sic] What thou commandest me.

> To eat this bread and drink this cup, As thy bless'd orders are
> To work in me a living hope, Humility and fear.[24]

Unique and remarkable because it is largely the work of one man, Henkel's strong theology did not always translate smoothly into his sacramental hymnody. In his Preface he writes, "I am confident it contains no erroneous or injurious doctrine, but the real order and plan of salvation expressed in a plain, simple and familiar style."[25] If only his fine sacramental theology could have filtered more substantively into these often less than hymnic hymns. While glad for what the hymnal does contain, from a family with a tradition and reputation of strong confessionalism, one cannot help but to have hoped for more and better.

### From the General Synod—1828

The best indicator of the theological orientation of the General Synod, which was organized in 1820 as a loose federation of Lutheran synods, is that their *Hymns, Selected and Original* (1828) reserved a place for "In a state of Revival" hymnody in its table of contents.[26] Becoming the nearest thing to a common hymn book of English-speaking Lutherans, Benson assesses it:

> Its successive editions mark the progress of the Anglicizing process, and cover a period in which the ways of surrounding denominations prevailed over Lutheran traditions. The Hymnody itself is not Lutheran, but is drawn from the outside; it may rather be described as well within the lines of the Evangelical Hymnody, though somewhat heightened in color through revivalistic influences.[27]

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[24]Number 185:2; number 190:6, 12; number 190:3, 7, and 9; number 192:1-2, respectively.

[25]Henkel, *Church Hymn Book*, vi.

[26]General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, *Hymns, Selected and Original, for Public and Private Worship* (Baltimore: James Lucas and E. K. Deaver, 1832). Largely the work of S. S. Schmucker (1799-1873), who would have been only twenty-nine years old when the hymnal was first released, Benson reports (416) that the title was very misleading since the "original" material consisted of a trifling two hymns by Schmucker. The first edition was 1828 and a new edition was published in 1850. See Schalk, *Source Documents*, 53-61, and *God's Song*, 80-89, for his discussion of this "retrogression" in Lutheran hymnody.

[27]Benson, *English Hymns*, 418-419.

Not surprisingly, sacramental theology suffered in such an inhospitable context. Indeed, it *must* when the Christian is directed to where it is most sinfully natural for him to be directed, back into himself, rather than to the means of grace. Yet, ironically, the "Tabular View of Contents" of *Hymns, Selected and Original* is the first to use the title "Means of Grace" for its "sacramental" section. However, these "means of grace" include, after the word of God, hymns for "Prayer, private" and "Social" and "Public Worship" before it ever mentions "Baptism of infants," "Of adults," and "The Lord's Supper" (where the worshiper is also directed back to hymns 99 to 171 inclusive for additional hymns from the sections on "Christ" and the "Names and Character of Christ"). The section on "Means of Grace" is placed well after sections on "The Gospel Call" (XI) and "Christian Experience" (XV) but before "Particular Occasions and Circumstances" (XVIII) and end-time concerns. The section on baptism contains five hymns, three of which are from Quitman's collection. The section on the Lord's Supper contains fifteen hymns, eight of which are from Quitman's collection, including the omnipresent hymn of Watts, "'Twas on that dreadful, doleful night" (number 514).

One of the hymns for infant baptism is typical for what it does *not* say in its six stanzas. After beginning with the words, "Behold what condescending love Jesus on earth displays! / To babes and suckling he extends The riches of his grace!" (number 510), it cannot enumerate even one concrete benefit of baptism beyond the vague: "Young children in his arms he takes, and calls them heirs of heaven." The baptism of this hymn is short on the benefits of forgiveness, rescue and salvation, and thus devoid of tangible "riches." All baptism does here is bring a child to Jesus with a prayer that He should "form his soul for God."

The least offensive baptismal hymn is one for adults. Rebounding from Quitman's unrepentant rationalism, it confesses the Trinity and gives each Person a verse. Despite the compiler's use of borrowed Reformed vocabulary (sign, ordinance), some of the language is appealing:

> Father, in these reveal thy Son, In these for whom we seek thy face,
> The hidden mystery make known, The inward, pure, baptizing grace.
>
> Jesus, with us Thou always are, Establish now the sacred sign,
> The gift unspeakable impart, And bless thine ordinance divine.

Spirit divine, descend from high, Baptizer of our spirits Thou,
The sacramental seed apply, And witness with the water now.

Oh! That the souls baptiz'd herein, May now thy truth and mercy feel:
Arise and wash away their sin—Come, Holy Ghost, their pardon seal.[28]

Even if this hymn uses the emotion-centered jargon that the newly baptized adult may "truth and mercy feel," at least it appears to attach the forgiveness of sin to God's promise given in the sacramental mystery of water, an "unspeakable" gift imparted by God's command. Still, that Schmucker would be uncomfortable in suggesting this hymn for use at *infant* baptism is reason enough to question the motive of his editorial decision.

In one hymn for the Lord's Supper (number 513) the following musical questions are posed:

What heavenly man, or lovely God, Comes marching downward from the skies?
Array'd in garments roll'd in blood, With joy and pity in his eyes?

And then the answer: "The Lord! the Saviour! yes, 'tis he! / I know him by the smiles he wears!" While perhaps confessing the two natures of Christ, it suggests that Christ's coming in the Supper is in a manner more glorious ("marching downward") than hidden in the humble means on the altar. The stanza below, though weak by Lutheran standards, suggests that the author considers *something* to be happening in the Supper, even if his native theology rejected the supernatural and incomprehensible character of the Sacrament.

Whence flow these favors so divine? Lord! why so lavish of thy blood?
Why for such earthly souls as mine, This heavenly wine, this sacred food?[29]

Nonetheless, this is a confession that even Calvin could make when the last verse says: "Then let us taste the Saviour's love / Come, Faith, and feed upon the Lord." Likewise, a Calvinist-friendly confession of souls

[28]Number 512:3-6.
[29]Number 513:4.

rising to heaven for communion could find room in the texts: "E'en now we mournfully enjoy / Communion with our Lord / As though we every one / Beneath his cross had stood," and "By faith his flesh we'll eat / Who here his passion show / And God out of his holy seat / Shall all his gifts bestow" (number 518:2- 3). This is no sturdy confession of Christ present now on the altar in bread and wine, but an encouragement for the Christian to go elsewhere, to the cross or up to the heavenly seat, where God has not promised to be present to forgive.

Another noteworthy attribute of some of the Supper hymns is the graphic depiction of the sufferings of Christ. Phrases like "And seen him heave, and heard him groan, And felt his gushing blood," (number 518:3), "His body torn with rudest hands" (number 525:3) or "His blood, that from each op'ning vein in purple torrents ran," (number 525:4) seem designed to cultivate sorrowful emotion rather than proclaiming the objective facts of what the Supper is and does. There is, however, a consistency with Schmucker's rejection of the real presence, for the communicant, if he is to receive any blessing from the sacrament, must receive by reflection on the work of the absent Christ. Nevertheless, these hymns lack a clear confession of Christ really present in the bread and wine to pardon sinners.

Schmucker's collection only masquerades as Lutheranism. His hymnal uncritically embraced its American setting to the detriment of a clear Lutheran Confession, and to the propagation of the American-shaped Lutheranism that he would so fondly advocate. As Bird, putting the most constructive face on it, said in his critique of Schmucker's 1841 edition: "Very good men sometimes do very bad deeds: our business is with the deeds, not the men."[30]

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[30]Bird, "Lutheran Hymnology," 206. In the summary of Carlton York Smith's "Early Lutheran Hymnody in America from the Colonial Period to the Year 1850" (Ph. D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 1956), Smith makes the odd claim that the predominant presence of Watts and his school over Wesley and the revivalists in the English Lutheran hymnals of the first half of the nineteenth century "seems to reflect the conservatism of the Lutheran church and its theology." Smith then asks the question whether or not the doctrine of the Lutheran tradition (which he boils down to a minimal: 1. Justification by faith. 2. The Trinity. 3. The Divinity of Christ. 4. The Scriptures as the only infallible rule of faith and practice. 5. The Real Presence in Holy Communion, plus the Lutheran tendency "to emphasize the person and function of Christ while Calvinists are more concerned with the sovereignty of God") was adequately covered in the change to English texts chosen

## Books of the General Synod

The 1860s saw the General Synod diminished by the organization of the General Synod of the South and the General Council. Still, the General Synod came out with various editions of different hymnals. We will discuss two. The *Book of Worship* was issued in 1871, but drew heavily from the old 1852 edition of *Hymns, Selected and Original* previously discussed.[31] Schalk claims that it was simply more of the same with "no significant improvement upon the earlier editions."[32] Benson writes, "The hymns, both by omissions and additions, show growth in discrimination, but none toward churchliness."[33] An inspection of the table of contents shows perhaps an inching forward of the aptly titled section on "The Means of Grace" (VII), but, as a whole, this hymnal is a continuation of the past practices of the General Synod. Hymn sections on such First Article concerns as "God" (II) and "Creation and Providence" (III) begin the list. "Grace and Redemption" (V) covers Christ. The church year is a brief section near the end of the section on the "Church" (VI) and covers only major festivals (Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension and Pentecost), but even this is preempted by hymns for "Revivals" which appears prior. The direction of this hymnal is well established by hymns for the "Order of Salvation" (VIII) as well as the large section on "Christian Life and Experience" (IX), which goes on for more than 100 pages of hymns.

*Book of Worship* contains five baptismal hymns, three of which are taken over (with some editing) from the old *Hymns, Selected and Original*

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by the Lutheran church in America. As a specimen of sacramental hymnody, Smith uses Watt's communion hymn about the institution of the Lord's Supper, "'Twas on that dark, that doleful night." Smith rightly suggests: "Since Watts was of the Calvinistic persuasion, no hymn of his expresses the Lutheran belief of the Real Presence in the Holy Communion," but then from that datum, which Smith apparently considers close enough, he draws the odd conclusion: "From the above listing it may be seen that the hymns of Watts selected for use by the English Lutheran churches in America expressed most of the Lutheran doctrines," 281-287.

[31]*Book of Worship*, published by the General Synod of the Lutheran Church in the United States. (Philadelphia: Lutheran Board of Publication. Baltimore: T. Newton Kurtz, 1875). As near as can be discerned, the edition used in this study is a later edition of the 1871 original.

[32]Schalk, *God's Song*, 89.

[33]Benson, *English Hymns*, 561.

(evident by the inclusion of the hymn number from the old hymnal). One "new" baptismal hymn (no author given in the index) reads:

> Confiding in Thy truth alone, Here, on the steps of Jesus throne,
> We lay the treasure Thou hast given, To be received and rear'd for heaven.
>
> Lent to us for a season, we Lend him forever, Lord, to Thee,
> Assured that if to Thee he live, We gain in what we seem to give.
>
> Large and abundant blessings shed, Warm as these prayers, upon his head;
> And on his soul the dews of grace, Fresh as these drops upon his face.[34]

For a hymn on baptism, Christ's work and benefits given in baptism are summarily absent. This absence is typified by the bare imagery of the hymn itself as it speaks of the mere "drops" upon the face and the undefined "abundant blessings" and "dews of grace." The focus of the hymn centers on man's (the parents'?) actions of "we lay," "we lend him to Thee," "we gain in what we seem to give," in hopes that our "warm prayers" may serve to encourage God to reward our altruism in giving up this child to "live for Jesus."

This same approach, where Christ is seen as rather incidental to the work of His means of grace, is also seen in the section on the Lord's Supper. It contains nine hymns, with at least four having made a previous appearance in other General Synod hymnals. Again, Watts' "'Twas on that dreadful, doleful night" (number 262) is present with four verses. The following offering from James Montgomery (1771-1854), with a most un-Lutheran accent repeated in every stanza, blatantly regards man's noble "remembering" of Christ's passion as being more decisive for faith than by participating in it or receiving from it in any sacramental way.

> According to Thy gracious word, In meek humility
> This will I do, my dying Lord, I will remember Thee.
>
> Thy body, broken for my sake, My bread from heaven shall be;
> Thy testamental cup I take, And thus remember Thee.

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[34]Number 260:1-3.

Gethsemane can I forget? Or there Thy conflict see,
Thine agony and bloody sweat, And not remember Thee?

When to the cross I turn mine eyes, And rest on Calvary,
O lamb of God, my sacrifice! I must remember Thee:—

Remember Thee and all Thy pains, And all Thy love to me;
Yea, while a breath, a pulse remains, Will I remember Thee[35]

Even the vaguely sacramental language of body, blood, bread, and cup is swamped by the rampant subjectivism that defines faith as some kind of mental exercise, and the proclamation that Christ and real forgiveness are elsewhere, and merely to be "recalled." Another hymn likewise effectively removes Christ from His altar and puts Him in heaven: "From heaven, th' eternal mercy seat / On us Thy blessing pour," and "With this immortal food from heaven / Lord, let our souls be fed," (number 266:1, 2). All such language eliminates any bodily presence for the communicant at the altar. Left with only a memorial meal, there is no benefit to body and soul, other than that which the subject achieves for himself by reflecting on the historic work of the absent Christ.

Noteworthy in this hymnal is that its final two hymns in the section on the Lord's Supper are texts of a more "catholic" nature. Texts attributed to Thomas Aquinas and Bernard of Clairvaux both make an appearance in translation (numbers 267 and 268). Yet, taken with the omnipresent Reformed emphases, even this beautiful and suggestive Christian poetry by authors who believed in the real presence often speaks more generally about the Supper and could probably be understood as speaking just as much to mere "spiritual eating" as to the hidden realities on the earthly altar. From St. Bernard:

We taste Thee, O Thou living Bread, And long to feast upon Thee still;
We drink of Thee, the Fountain Head, And thirst our souls from Thee to fill.[36]

And credited to Aquinas (translated by Ray Palmer):

O Bread to pilgrims given, Richer than angels eat
O Manna sent from heaven, For heaven-born natures meet!

[35]Number 261:1-5.
[36]Number 267:3.

> Jesus, this feast receiving, We Thee unseen adore;
> Thy faithful word believing, We take, and doubt no more;[37]

Such hymns would take on richer meaning in company with more truly sacramental hymns, but do not teach with any sturdy clarity by themselves. Their inclusion here does not redeem the rest of the sacramental hymnody of this collection but certainly merits comment.

The General Synod's end-of-the-century *Book of Worship: Hymns and Tunes* (1899) is another hymnal devoid of Luther's sacramental emphasis.[38] Described by Benson as a

> modern collection, still strong in the XVIIIth century Evangelical Hymnody, and with more of the Anglican than the Lutheran hymns. In the tunes . . . parlor music type, as well as the Anglican, are largely represented; the German chorals more sparingly. The church year is much more liberally provided for, and the sacramental tone is somewhat higher.[39]

The sacramental hymnody in this hymnal is found in the table of contents under "The Church" and has baptism and the Lord's Supper listed under that heading in the midst of other hymns on "Her Foundation and Nature," "Her Ministry," "Missions," and "Triumph." The sacramental section is comprised of six baptismal hymns (with two coming from the older *Book of Worship*) and twelve for the Lord's Supper (with five coming from the *Book of Worship*, including the Bernard of Clairvaux, number 330, and the "Aquinas" hymn text mentioned above which remains untouched, but now has only Ray Palmer's name associated with it, number 326).

One "new" baptismal hymn, "Shepherd of Tender Youth," (number 317) by Clement of Alexandria (translated by Henry M. Dexter) makes no actual reference to baptism other than the presumably unstated principle that God brings little children to Himself through baptism.[40] Another

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[37]Number 268, from verses 1 and 3.

[38]*Book of Worship with hymns and tunes, published by the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States* (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1899).

[39]Benson, *English Hymns*, 563.

[40]This hymn, translated by H. M. Dexter, later appears as *TLH* number 628 under the heading of "Christian Education." Polack declares Dexter's effort "a rather free translation, if it can be called that, of one of our oldest Christian hymns, . . ." 450.

hymn making an appearance in English is, "I am baptized into Thy name," (*Ich bin getauft auf deinem Namen)* by the German Pietist Johann J. Rambach (1693-1735).[41] Using the language of Romans 6, it speaks of being "buried with Christ and dead to sin" and the connection that the baptized person has with Christ on account of baptism. But it also takes the focus too soon off Christ and puts it on the decidedly firm resolution of the baptized individual with

> I bring Thee here, my God, anew, Of all I am or have the whole;
> Quicken my life and make me true, Take full possession of my soul.[42]

Montgomery's hymn, "According to Thy gracious word" (number 324), maintains the emphasis on the subjective in the Lord's Supper with its repetitive, misdirected chorus of "I will remember Thee" discussed above. In hymn number 328, the congregation asks God to increase their sense of God's "body-less" presence with: "O God unseen, yet ever near / Thy presence may we *feel* / And thus, inspired with holy fear / Before thine altar kneel" (emphasis added). Another stanza (verse 3) focuses on the sacramental command rather than on the gift and its benefits with: "We come, obedient to Thy Word / To feast on heavenly food / Our meat the Body of the Lord / Our drink, His precious Blood," and so once more, even with a recognition of Christ as, in some respect, present, forgiveness of sins is removed as a purpose of the Supper. A more familiar hymn, though in different verse form, is present in John M. Neale's translation of "Draw nigh and take the body of your Lord" (number 324). With the completion of the first line, "And drink the holy blood for you outpoured" there is a confession of the real presence. Subsequent verses speak of eternal life being given, and hunger and thirst being satisfied in these "pledges of salvation here." This is certainly one of the more satisfactory hymns in the collection, but it suffers by standing next to so many other hymns that miss or detract from the incarnational, salvific realities presented to the Christian in the Sacrament.

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[41]This hymn, in an alternate form of the same translation by Catherine Winkworth, appears in *TLH*'s weak section on baptism (number 298), with stanzas 3 and 5 speaking highly of the baptized person's vows to obey God. *LW* number 224 has the hymn in a four stanza version, which is a slight improvement over *TLH*.

[42]From number 320:3.

### The General Council: A Glimmer of Hope

A brighter spot in the production of American Lutheran hymn books was the work done by the General Council which was formed in 1867 as a result of a rising confessionalism and as a response to the dissatisfaction with the weak American Lutheranism of the General Synod. The General Council published two hymnals, the *Church Book* (1868), which was considered by many to be the best English Lutheran hymn book created to that time, and the German *Kirchenbuch* (1877).[43] It is the German hymn book, the last major collection of German Lutheran hymns produced in America, which will be examined in this study.

The hymnody of this text-only hymnal of the General Council is organized around the church year. Immediately following the church year hymns are sections on *Kirche* and *Wort Gottes*. Then comes the sacramental section: *Taufe* (XIII), which has eight hymns (but also includes sub-sections with five hymns on confirmation and one on absolution[44]), and *Abendmahl* (XIV), with fourteen hymns. The reclaiming of all three of Luther's sacramental/catechetical hymns (*Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam*, number 219, *Gott sei gelobet* number 243, and *Aus Teifer Not* number 248) shows an incredible reversal of the decline of American Lutheranism at least for those who still worshiped in German. Gone are the simple four-line verses of the English ditty. Back are some of the long German hymns and an "emphasis on the original forms of the hymn texts . . . in rather direct contrast to the procedure in . . . *Deutsches Gesangbuch* of 1849."[45] In comparison to the intentionally confessional hymnody of Walther's and Grabau's hymnal efforts from mid-centruy, all but two baptismal hymns (numbers 223 and 226) can be found in either in Missouri's or Buffalo's hymnals. All but three of the Lord's Supper hymns (numbers 241, 245, and 247) can be found in Missouri's hymnal.

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[43]*Kirchenbuch fuer Evangelisch-Lutherische Gemeinden* (Philadelphia: J. L. File, 1885). The General Council's English *Church Book* is discussed with the *Kirchenbuch* in Schalk's, *God's Song*, 142-150, and *Source Documents*, 92-99.

[44]Nicolaus Selnecker's *Wir danken dir, O treuer Gott* is found in *TLH* number 321, where Selnecker's strong second stanza *Durch's Beicht'gers Mund sprichst du: Mein Kind, Dir alle Suend' vergeben sind* is translated less directly as "Thy servant now declares to me: 'Thy sins are all forgiven thee.'"

[45]Schalk, *God's Song*, 148. See footnote 11 on the Pennsylvania Ministerium's *Deutsches Gesangbuch* of 1849.

The sacramental hymns in the *Kirchenbuch* show a preference for sixteenth and seventeenth century texts, although there are also a few from the eighteenth century (from as late as 1767) in the baptismal section. The hymnal is apparently not concerned about being current, but in recapturing the treasure of the German hymn for a German-American church that had lost it for so many years.

## Conclusion

Charles Porterfield Krauth in *The Conservative Reformation and Its Theology* observes how even those who find the Lutheran teaching of the Lord's Supper repugnant cannot but help to occasionally speak in its way:

> How New Testament-like, how Lutheran have sounded the sacramental hymns and devotional breathings of men whose theory of the Lord's Supper embodied little of its divine glory. . . . When they treat of sacramental communion, and of the mystical union, they give evidence, that, with their deep faith in the atonement, there is connected, in spite of the rationalizing tendency which inheres in their system, a hearty acknowledgment of the supernatural and incomprehensible character of the Lord's Supper.[46]

In the nineteenth-century hymnals of American Lutheranism featured in this study, we have seen glimpses of this in a phrase here or a verse there. Often, however, what was sung in one verse was taken away in another. Rationalism tried to remove the holy mysteries and substitute reasonable ordinances in their place. Unionism ignored real confessional differences. Revivalism pushed Christ aside to focus on the individual and his religious experience. Each of these necessarily eroded the confession of Christ, the understanding of the atonement and so the sacraments. Surrounded by all these forces, it is predictable that their influence found a way into the church's sacramental song.

It is in the self-consciously confessional hymnody of the Missouri and Buffalo Synods, churches whose identity was more firmly in place and fiercely guarded, that we find hymns not as susceptible to those influences. Confessionally-minded Lutherans were reluctant to give up

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[46]Charles P. Krauth, *The Conservative Reformation and Its Theology* (Philadelphia: The United Lutheran Publication House, 1913), 656.

their strong German hymnody and so were able to maintain their comparatively stronger christological center with its sacramental crown. Even groups moving towards a more confessional stance like the General Council, with their fine English (1868) and German (1877) hymnals, were literally confessional "on paper" as they recaptured the core hymnody of the Reformation, but theirs was a strange and unwelcome voice against the drive of American Lutheranism.

The American Lutherans had a different sensibility when it came to the importance of the sung confession. It suggested that nearly *anything* can be sung, even if it is false and misleading and robs Christ of His glory, as long as it is easy, familiar, and short. It is this kind of "flexibility" that brought in the empty sacramentology of the Reformed tradition into modern Lutheran hymnals, proving that borrowed hymns lead to borrowed doctrine. How is it that English song writers like Watts and Wesley, for whom the incarnate reality of the sacraments was not of central concern, could make such lasting inroads with hymns that could never be mistaken for Lutheran, but were received uncritically by those searching for any material in English?

Perhaps Benson's summary, written at the beginning of the twentieth century, still makes the point today, no longer in connection to old immigration concerns, but to the aspirations of the confessional movement.

> The English-speaking congregations wished to use the hymns of their American neighbors, and even in adopting for church use the version of German hymns by Miss Winkworth, Mills, Massie and others, they have been followers rather than leaders. American Lutheranism presents a curious case of an immigrant Church merging its inheritance and traditions in its new surrounding until spurred by the pressure of new immigrations to recover what it had lost. And it may be that the real Lutheran influence on American hymnody lies in the future.[47]

Well-intentioned pastors can hold out their preference of sacramental hymnody, but the democratically aware people in the pew will often decide what gets sung. Of course, there will always be pockets where the great Lutheran inheritance is competently taught and embraced by

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[47]Benson, *English Hymns*, 562-563.

grateful congregations who rejoice in their rich sacramental theology in song. But this will only be the case if the hymnody is taught to each generation at the same time that new hymnody is encouraged and critically evaluated for appropriateness in the Divine Service. It may well be that the "real Lutheran influence on American hymnody lies in its future," but only if it consciously recovers and makes use of what is always tottering on the brink of extinction—its vigorous confession of the incarnate God serving His church of all time with His means of grace. In this way "future historians" who study our present and future hymnals may judge "at least approximately" our place in the doctrinal history of our church.

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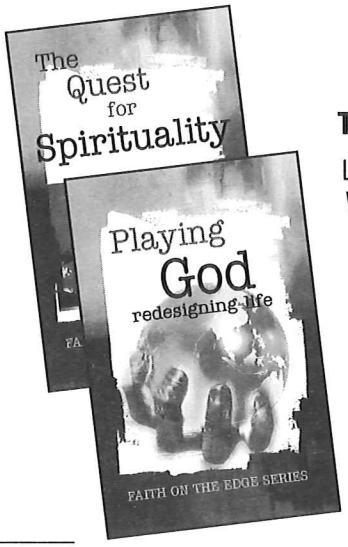


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# Bach and the Divine Service: The *B Minor Mass*

**Paul W. Hofreiter**

## Introduction

Bach gives us hope when we are afraid;
he gives us courage when we despair;
he comforts us when we are tired;
he makes us pray when we are sad;
and he makes us sing when we are full of joy.[1]

This quote from Uwe Siemon-Netto's article, "J. S. Bach in Japan," aptly introduces us to the subject of Bach and the Divine Service, for indeed, many of those gifts offered humankind in the Divine Service are alluded to in this quote: hope, courage, comfort, prayer, and song. If Bach's music, particularly his cantatas, passions, masses, and other church music, has this remarkable effect on the listener in these modern times, it may be deduced that there is something more profound occurring than simply one being "moved" by a composer from the past. It is the goal of this paper to offer some explanation as to how one of Bach's final statements of faith offers one "with ears to hear" a reflection through word and music of the Divine Service. In these times of heterodoxy and questioning, Bach offers through his music a theology that Luther himself proclaimed, boldy and without apology. If one approaches the *B-Minor Mass* from this Lutheran perspective, light may be shed on the Divine Service as seen in the *B-Minor Mass*.

One must, thus, inquire, why does Bach have such a remarkable impact on theologians, musicians, laypersons, agnostics, and atheists alike? This "fifth evangelist," a term that has been applied to Bach, seems to have a universal effect on both believers and non-believers.[2] This universality may be understood best in connection with Bach's confessional Lutheran orthodoxy.

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[1]Uwe Siemon-Netto, "J. S. Bach in Japan," *First Things* 104 (June/July 2000): 17.

[2]Nathan Söderblom (1866-1931) referred to Bach's music as "the fifth Gospel," George B. Stauffer, *Bach – the Mass in B Minor* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1997), 16.

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Until the recent past, musicologists believed that Johann Sebastian Bach was mainly focused on his so-called abstract works – the *Musical Offering* and the *Art of the Fugue* – during his final years. The assumption was that Bach no longer felt inclined to compose church music or other music that might have related to his Christian faith. In recent times, however, scholars have concluded that Bach was also preoccupied with the completion of his *B-Minor Mass* during and after this period of experimentation.[3] Bach, or the *Thomaskantor*, today known worldwide for his cycles of cantatas for the liturgical year, appears to have devoted himself to a summary of all he believed and represented as a Lutheran and musician by completing a setting of the Latin mass he had begun in 1724.[4] The irony is, of course, that it is now no longer possible to support the claim that the aging composer lost interest in expressions of faith as he concentrated on more "esoteric" matters of mathematical and abstract forms. The *B-Minor Mass*, BWV 232, thus became for Bach and for all of humanity his *magnum opus*, for the *B-Minor Mass* transcends the potential limitations of functional church music and is, in essence, a living, breathing proclamation of the gospel of Christ.

Why did Bach spend his final energies on a musical statement of faith that adheres solely to the Latin text of the Mass, rather than reaching into the treasure of extra-biblical poetry he had used in his earlier compositions dealing with the things of Christ?[5] After all, his cantatas and passions abound with such texts. It is from these works that one may become intimately acquainted with Bach as an expositor and interpreter of Scripture, as one observes the manner in which he frequently utilized poetry to offer explication of Scripture. However, in the *B-Minor Mass*

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[3]"There is general agreement among specialists today that Bach assembled the B-Minor Mass during the last two years of his life. In the most recent scholarly assessment of his late activities, the Mass is assigned to the specific period August 1748-October 1749 . . . In [what is termed as] the 'new' chronology of [his] final decade, the Art of Fugue is moved back to the early 1740's. The B-Minor Mass, by contrast, emerges as one of Bach's final projects. It may have been his very last." Stauffer, *Bach*, 41, 43.

[4]The first non-parody music that found its way into the final version of the *B Minor Mass* was the *Sanctus*, composed for Christmas of 1724.

[5]It is not the purpose of this study to discuss Bach's failing health or eyesight, nor is the historical background of the church mass relevant. The emphasis, instead, is on the fruits of his creative labor as a summative theological and musical statement connected with Christology and eschatology.

we still find Bach offering commentary and explication, but through different means. In this monumental work, the musical and compositional devices employed supplant the roles previously afforded by commentary in the "libretti" for the cantatas. The music itself offers the commentary on the word as contained in the Latin text, as Bach presents movement after movement of momentum via the various stylistic compositional idioms available to him. His genius, in an entirely unselfconscious manner, simultaneously summed up the era in which he composed while opening the doors to a new era of musical thought, as he concentrated on a solely confessional, orthodox Lutheran interpretation of the Latin text.[6] The "high Baroque" cannot get higher than this extraordinary work with its comprehensive statement of faith. Perhaps this is one reason the impact of the *Mass* was and is still so profound; perhaps "abstract" may still be applied in describing this work in terms of the transcendental realm; and perhaps the composer's *Musical Offering* and *Art of the Fugue* were, besides being remarkable compositions unto themselves, the groundwork necessary for Bach's completion of his *Mass* as the summation of his musical art. While Bach had always used his remarkably skillful technique as a composer in his church cantatas and passions to offer musical depiction of the meaning in the text, in this last work one discovers that it is purely and solely his compositional technique that offers such clarity to the doctrinal positions he believed and confessed. Even in the dawn of the twenty-first century, there is still no doubt as to what Bach believed. If nothing had remained of his corpus of musical compositions but the *B-Minor Mass*, Bach would most likely still be perceived today as a Lutheran and a musical genius.

The *B-Minor Mass*, even in this so-called "post-Christian" era, still resonates among Christians and non-Christians alike. Our Lord is using this work as a "means of grace"—if one may be permitted to place a musical composition so wedded with the word as this in the realm of

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[6]Of course, two areas in the Lutheran version of the Latin text distinguished it from the Roman Catholic version in Bach's time. In the *Domine Deus* section of the *Gloria*, the Lutheran text declares *Domine Fili unigenite Jesus Christe* ***altissime*** ("O Lord God, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, **the most high**"). Rome does not include *altissime*. The other area is in the *Sanctus* where the Latin text is rendered by Lutherans as *Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria* ***eius*** ("Heaven and earth are full of **His** glory"). The Roman version states *gloria* ***tua*** ("**Your** glory"). See John Butt, *Bach Mass in B Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 48, 57.

grace.[7] I am not for one moment suggesting that the work itself is a sacrament. But grace there is in this *Mass*, as the composer skillfully weaves into the fabric of the work, by means of compositional techniques, the various distinctive theological emphases found in Lutheranism, such as a high Christology, justification and sanctification, law and gospel, the sacraments, *theologia crucis*, *simul iustus et peccator*, the *finitum capax infiniti*, and eschatological hope. It is Bach's emphasis on the *eschaton* that most remarkably reflects the Divine Service.

Thus the question arises, what did this work mean to Bach himself, and why does this work have such a profound effect on performers and listeners even today, including those who are not Christians? Bach scholar Christoph Wolff explains it from one viewpoint: ". . . as he grew older, the Mass in B minor must have seemed to him to be a bequest to his successors and to the future; the concern to complete and perfect it preoccupied him virtually till his dying breath."[8]

Wolff applies this statement to Bach's preoccupation with his place in history, particularly, as he states, "in the microcosm of his own family."[9] But perhaps a more compelling case may be made theologically in discovering an emphasis on eschatological hope infused throughout the *B-Minor Mass*. Bach, in his autumn years, found solace in finishing what he had begun in 1724. Thus Bach, in his valedictory statement of faith, offers the listener the whole of the objectivity of orthodox Lutheran theology by means of the use of compositional gestures and techniques.[10] As we shall see, for Bach, the *eschaton* was a central emphasis in his setting of the *Mass*, and Bach appropriates this emphasis as a component of the Divine Service, connected specifically with the *Gratias tibi* ("We give thanks to You") and the *Dona Nobis Pacem* ("Grant us peace").

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[7]See discussion below in the excursus, "Music: Not as Sacrament, but Sacramental."

[8]Christoph Wolff, compact disk notes, *J. S. Bach – Mass in B Minor*, Archiv 415514-2, 12.

[9]Wolff, notes, *J. S. Bach*, 12.

[10]The *B Minor Mass* may or may not have been Bach's final composition, but it was, indeed, his final systematic, summative, musical explication of his theological beliefs and was most likely completed after *The Musical Offering* and *The Art of the Fugue*.

## The Genesis and Chronology of the *B-Minor Mass*

The earliest music that eventually found its way into the completed *Mass* actually dated from 1714. Bach's Cantata BWV 12, *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen,* was composed for the Third Sunday after Easter while Bach was at Weimar.[11] While this music would be transformed into the *Crucifixus* for the *B-Minor Mass,* as reworked sometime between 1747-1749, Bach certainly did not intend, at the time of the composition of BWV 12, that this chorus would become the music utilized for a future *Missa tota.* The significance of this transformation will be discussed below in connection with Bach's use of parody as theological statement.

Thus it was not until 1724 in Leipzig that Bach created a musical setting of a portion of the Latin text that would eventually be incorporated into the *B-Minor Mass.* This *Sanctus* movement was composed for Christmas Day of that year.[12] In terms of the Ordinary of the Latin Mass, Bach was aware of the eucharistic significance and use of the text. One may surmise that the 1724 setting was intended for liturgical use.

Nine years later, in 1733, Bach composed a setting of the *Missa* (that is, the *Kyrie and Gloria* from the Ordinary) in hopes of receiving an appointment to the Dresden court.[13] It appears that Bach was restless at Leipzig, as he poured his creative energies into a dedicatory composition for Friedrich August II. Perhaps Luther's term, *Anfechtung,* could be applied to the composition of the *Kyrie*—one can only speculate.[14] But history produced what is known as the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* settings of the *B-Minor Mass,* though Bach did make subtle changes in certain parts of the *Gloria* when he later reworked the material into the larger *Missa tota.* It is likely that the *Missa* was performed at Dresden. However, despite

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[11]Alfred Dürr, compact disk notes, *Das Kantatenwerk, Sacred Cantatas Vol. 1, BWV 1-14, 16-19,* Teldec 4509-91755-2, 1972, 35.

[12]Albeit different allocations of choral parts.

[13]For a complete rendering of this story, see Butt, *Bach Mass,* 7-9.

[14]"*Anfechtung* is a proper synonym for the life of the Christian lived in faith. It is a bridge that brings the realities of revelation from the Biblical history into the personal life of the Christian," David P. Scaer, "The Concept of *Anfechtung* in Luther's Thought," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 47 (1983): 28. Bach's motivation for composing the *Kyrie* movement, in particular, might have been associated with his dissatisfaction with his Leipzig position. After Bach had composed the three *Kyrie* movements, it is fathomable that the eschatology contained in the *Gloria* might have been formulated.

the substantial scope and expansive nature of the music Bach composed for the *Missa*, it appears the composer was still not thinking of this music as part of a potential complete mass setting.[15]

For the next fourteen years there seems to be little indication that Bach continued to work on the *Mass*. In terms of rethinking the work as a *Missa tota*, it was not until 1747, three years before his death, that Bach began work on the *Credo*. It appears that this is the period in Bach's life when he became preoccupied with offering a theological statement that would represent the culmination of his life's work. In the *Credo* section of the *Mass*, which Bach titled *Symbolum Nicenum*, much of the musical material is derived from earlier compositions, though in such a fashion that the compositional unity of the completed *Mass* is never compromised. It was also within the years 1747-1749 that Bach assembled the final movements of the *Mass*: the *Osanna in excelsis*, the *Benedictus*, the *Agnus Dei*, and the *Dona Nobis Pacem*.

Thus it is clear that the period in which Bach was contributing music to the work that would become the *B-Minor Mass* spanned from 1714 (if one includes the music from Cantata BWV 12) through 1749. It appears that the tension between the "not yet" and the "now" may apply not only to theology, but the act of musical composition as well. Perhaps Bach was acutely aware of this connection as he sought to complete this work "to the glory of God alone."[16] Conceivably, the comfort offered through the text of the sections of the *Mass* he completed in his final years likewise provided eschatological hope for the composer.

### Bach's Use of Parody as Theological Statement

During the Baroque period it was standard practice to borrow music from one's own output as well that of other composers. There were no concerns of copyright infringement. On the contrary, the use of another composer's material arranged or transcribed for other musical purposes was even viewed as eulogistic. For Bach this technique of musical composition was no exception as he arranged the music of other

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[15]"Quite clearly the *Missa* should be viewed as a complete and independent work with its own proportions and unifying elements." Butt, *Bach Mass*, 92.

[16]Bach's autograph score at the conclusion of the final movement, the *Dona Nobis Pacem*, indicates *fine* and *DSG* (*Deo Soli Gloria* ["To God Alone the Glory"]). See Stauffer, 46-47.

composers for his own purposes on occasion.[17] This principle was also one method of learning the craft of musical composition.[18]

With the constraints frequently placed on Bach in his weekly production of cantatas and other music, it is not uncommon to discover Bach borrowing from earlier pieces. This technique is referred to as "parody," a compositional technique that was prevalent during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Bach utilized it to perfection.

However, the use of parody in the *B-Minor Mass* was not a shortcut for Bach. In the case of the *B-Minor Mass*, Bach's use of parody sheds light on the deeper theological emphases contained and encountered in the final version. The music he borrowed from earlier works was originally wedded to a biblical or literary text and, in a singular way, conjoined with the meaning the composer wished to convey in the relevant section of the *Mass* where the music was applied anew. Hence, the theological meaning inherent in the original version found its manifestation in the final version employed in the *Mass*. To this one instance one may perhaps apply the saying that is usually reserved solely for theology: "that which is hidden shall be revealed" (Mark 4:22), for with Bach's prudent attention to detail and his emphasis on the *theologia crucis*, his christological articulation through musical expression, this application of the Scripture may not be totally inappropriate. Here are a few examples of parody. They may help shed some light in viewing the *B-Minor Mass* as a reflection of the Divine Service.

The first instance of parody may be found in the *Gratia agimus tibi* movement of the *Gloria*. The original version was a setting of the chorus, *Wir danken dir, Gott* from Cantata BWV 29, composed in 1731. The original text in German is nearly identical to the *Gratias* in the *Mass*:

BWV 29

*Wir danken dir, Gott, wir danken dir,*
*Und verkündigen deine Wunder.*

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[17]For instance, the three Vivaldi instrumental concertos that Bach arranged for organ.

[18]It is believed that the blindness Bach suffered late in life was perhaps on account of his copying of scores by other composers as means of self-instruction when he was a child. This was a frequent nighttime activity which he performed with inadequate light.

We thank Thee, Lord, we thank Thee,
And we marvel at all Thy wonders.[19]

BWV 232
*Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.*
We give Thee thanks for Thy great glory.[20]

While there are subtle changes, the essence of the original remains the same. Discussion is necessary regarding the manner in which "thanksgiving" fits into the scheme of the *Missa tota*, particularly as Bach interprets this "thanksgiving" eschatologically, and in the context of the Divine Service. This will be addressed later, for one may discern the significance of Bach's utilization of this same music for the *Dona nobis pacem* in concluding the *Mass*.

Another significant instance of parody also occurs within the *Gloria* in the *Qui tollis*. Here Bach looks back to his Leipzig Cantata BWV 46 of 1723, *Schauet doch und sehet, ob irgendein Schmerz sei*. The mood of the original chorus translates placidly as Bach infuses his music into the Latin text:

BWV 46

*Schauet doch und sehet, ob irgend ein Schmerz sei*
*Mein Schmerz, der mich troffen hat. Denn der Herr*
*hat mich voll Jammers gemacht am Tage seines grimmigen Zorns.*
Look ye then and see if there be any sorrow like to
that which is done to me. Wherewith God
hath afflicted my soul, the day that knew His terrible wrath.[21]

BWV 232

*Qui tollis peccata mundi,*
*miserere nobis.*
*Qui tollis peccata mundi,*
*Suscipe deprecationem nostram.*
Thou who takest away the sins of the world,

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[19]Dürr, notes, *Das Kantatenwerk*, 108.

[20]The Latin text is derived from the orchestral score of Bach's *B Minor Mass* (London: Edition Eulenberg, Limited, no date); the English translation is derived from *J. S. Bach Messe en Si/H-Moll-Messe*, conducted by Philippe Herreweghe, Harmonia Mundi HMC 901614.15, 1998.

[21]Dürr, notes, *Das Kantatenwerk*, 116.

have mercy upon us.
Thou who takest away the sins of the world,
Receive our prayer.

Christ could well have stated the text found in BWV 46 as He approached, was nailed to, and was lifted upon the cross. Thus, as Jesus Christ is raised so that the sins of the world may be forgiven, Bach perceptively observes the association between the original text of BWV 46 and the Latin *Qui tollis*, replete with the original instrumentation that includes two flutes. As suggested by Robin Leaver, flutes in the New Testament indicate mourning and sorrow (see Matthew 11:17), thus the connection of Christ's sorrow with the sorrow of humanity, though Christ's sorrow is a sorrow unto death that the world might have life.[22] Herein is no "mourner's bench," but an objective reality expressed via objective means such as a falling triad motif. What other device but a descending triad would make sense? The "Divine Triad" is active throughout eternity for the sake of salvation and Bach's masterful understanding offers the listener entry into the realm of objective truth.

It is believed that the opening *Credo* of the *Symbolum Nicenum* was taken from a chorus, *Credo in unum Deum* in G, composed circa 1747-1748. While there are no supporting documents for proof, one must trust the scholars on this.[23] Certainly Bach was considering, at this point in his life, an extensive confessional proclamation.

The opening chorus of Cantata BWV 171, *Gott, wie dein Name, so ist auch dien Ruhm*, was transmuted as the second movement of the *Symbolum Nicenum*. This movement of the cantata, written for the New Year's Day 1729, was already based on an earlier work about which little is known.[24] The texts of the original and the Latin are as follows:

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[22]Robin Leaver, "Eschatology in the Theology and Music of Bach," delivered on January 19, 2000 at Concordia Theological Seminary's Thirteenth Annual Symposium on The Lutheran Liturgy. Two other significant instances of flute writing as solos occur in the *B-Minor Mass*—in the *Domine Deus* and the *Benedictus*. In the case of the latter, the element of sorrow is evident. However, in the former, one must analyze the movement to understand that the central point of the *Domine Deus* is the section in E-minor that explains the purpose of the incarnation in the title applied to Christ: *Agnus Dei*; only then may the *Qui tollis* ensue.

[23]See Stauffer, *Bach*, 48, and Butt, *Bach Mass*, 50-51.

[24]Gerhard Schulmacher, compact disc notes, *Das Kantatenwerk, Sacred Cantatas Vol. 9. BWV 163-182*, Teldec 4509-91763-2, 1987, 32.

BWV 171

*Gott, wie dein Name, so ist auch dein Ruhm bis an der Welt Ende.*
God, as Thy Name is, so is Thy praise to where the earth doth end.[25]

BWV 232

*Credo in unum Deum, Pater omnipotentem, factorem coeli et terrae, visibilium omnium et invisibilium*

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

The text of the opening chorus of BWV 171, significantly, is followed by this aria:

*Herr, so weit die Wolken gehen,*
*Gehet deines Namens Ruhm.*
*Alles, was die Lippen rührt,*
*Alles, was noch Odem führt,*
*Wird dich in der Macht erhöhen.*
Lord, as far as clouds in Heaven
Spreads Thy glory and Thy Name.
Ev'ry creature drawing breath,
Ev'ry soul from birth to death,
God Almighty magnifieth.[26]

When viewed together, the texts from BWV 171 discuss God's creation, thus the first article of the Nicene Creed is inferred in the 1729 setting. This New Year's Day cantata makes reference to new things. Could Bach have made a connection to the first article as beginning or creating anew? The Almighty Maker "magnifieth" all aspects of His creation from birth to death. Could Christ, the first-born of all creation (begotten, not made), here be viewed by Bach as well, making central the second article in terms of christological significance? That Bach favors the use of this material for the second movement of the *Credo* may be determinative.

Sketches for the duet *Ich bin deine, du bist meine* ("I am yours, you are mine"), BWV 213, from 1733, are not extant. However, Stauffer and Butt agree that this music was incorporated into the second article, the *Et in*

[25]Schulmacher, notes, *Das Kantatenwerk*, 94.
[26]Schulmacher, notes, *Das Kantatenwerk*, 94.

*unum Dominum* section of the *Symbolum Nicenum*.[27] The significance of this Butt considers instructive. Its close imitation is ideally suited to the paired text of the love duet and it was clearly this element—its "two-in-oneness"—that also rendered it appropriate for a text dealing with the second element of the Trinity, Jesus Christ.[28]

Of course, the title of BWV 213 is derived from the Song of Songs 2:16 and 6:3. Without offering detailed analysis of how various theologians have viewed this Old Testament book, it cannot be disputed that the intimacy inherent in these verses serves as appropriate expression of the intimacy of the Father and the Son. Christ, who is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3), is depicted in this duet by means of canonic imitation, a brilliant touch on Bach's part in terms of the text of the entire movement:

> *Et in unum dominum, Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum. Et ex Patre natum ante omnia secula unigenitum. Et ex Patre natum ante omnia secula. Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero. Genitum non factum, consubstantialem Patri, per quem omnia facta sunt. Qui, propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem, descendit de coelis.*
> And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God of God, light of light, true God of true God; begotten not made; consubstantial with the Father; by Whom all things were made. Who for us men, and our salvation, came down from heaven.

One of the most fascinating utilizations of parody may be found in examining Cantata BWV 12 mentioned previously. The music of the opening chorus of the cantata, *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen*, was infused into the *Crucifixus* text of the *Symbolum Nicenum*. Chromaticism during the Baroque period could represent death, satan, evil, and the like. The technique of "ground bass" or "chaconne" drives the point home even further. It is the repetition of this bass line with its harmonic implications that may represent the aspects of temporality and eternity on the cross. The eternal sacrifice of Christ, the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8) is made more poignant by each repetition. The

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[27]See Butt, *Bach Mass*, 52-53, and Stauffer, *Bach*, 48.
[28]Butt, *Bach Mass*, 52.

prophets prophesied the event. No theology of glory could interrupt the divine will of God.

The texts are interconnected not only by the elements of emotion, but also by the "sign of Jesus," the cross itself:

BWV 12

*Weinen, Klagen,*
*Sorgen, Zagen,*
*Angst und Not*
*Sind der Christen Tränenbrot,*
*Die das Zeichen Jesu tragen.*
Weeping, lamenting,
Worrying, fearing,
Anxiety and distress
Are the tearful bread of Christians
Who bear the *sign of Jesus.* (italics added)

BWV 232

*Crucifixus etiam pro nobis, sub Pontio Pilato*
*passus et sepultus est.*
He was crucified also for us, suffered under
Pontius Pilate, and was buried.

While the earlier cantata was describing the disciples' sadness at Jesus' departure as indicated in the gospel reading (John 16:16-23), the tears and sighing (as musical motif) become an important characteristic in the ensuing *Crucifixus.* In addition to the chromatic ground bass, the death of Christ is depicted through the use of falling vocal lines and the reappearance of the flutes.[29]

The *Et expecto* movement of the *Symbolum Nicenum* is derived from the second movement of Cantata BWV 120, *Gott, man lobet dich in der Stille.* The music in this instance goes through a less subtle transformation than is the case with the other parodies. The texts for the original cantata and the *Et expecto* are as follows:

[29]See discussion regarding the use of flutes in connection with the *Qui tollis* of the *Gloria,* 228-229.

BWV 120

*Jauchzet, ihr erfreuten Stimmen,*
*Steiget bis zum Himmel 'nauf!*
*Lobet Gott im Heiligtum*
*Und rehebet seinen Ruhm;*
*Seine Güte,*
*Sein erbarmendes Gemüte*
*Hört zu keinen Zeiten auf!*
Shout ye, all ye joyful voices,
Mounting up to Heaven climb.
Praise ye God on high enthroned,
Let your song be full entoned;
His compassion,

Show to us in richest fashion,
Ceases not thru endless time.[30]

BWV 232

*Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum.*
*Et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen.*
And I await the resurrection of the dead,
And the life of the world to come. Amen.

Connections abound between the earlier text and the Latin: "Mounting up to heaven climb" (BVW 120), "the resurrection of the dead" (BWV 232), "Ceases not thru endless time" (BWV 120), "life of the world to come" (BWV 232). The final section of the third article of the Nicene Creed offers the "shouts" from the earlier text by use of the trumpets and drums. Here Bach creates a more succinct music than is the case with the earlier version while expanding the inner harmonic movement. As will be discussed later, the waiting for the life to come has hints of realized eschatology from a christological perspective even though the Christian is still in the mode of inaugurated eschatology.

There is an important hermeneutical element present in this transition from cantata to mass as well. One of the texts used for this cantata is Psalm 65:1, which states, "Praise is awaiting You, O God, in Zion; And to

[30]*Das Kantatenwerk, Sacred Cantatas Vol. 7, BWV 119-137* (Teldec 4509-91761-2, 1982), 76.

You the vow shall be performed." Though Psalm 65:2 does not appear in the cantata proper, still one reads, as surely did Bach, "O You who hear prayer, To You all flesh will come." There is no uncertainty as to Bach's understanding of this psalm text in terms of eschatological hope. In the original cantata, Psalm 65:1 is sung meditatively as a solo aria rather than joyful exposition with chorus and orchestra. It is only through an understanding of the destiny of "all flesh" in terms of the *eschaton* that one would offer such a unique setting of this text.

It is also possible that other sections of the *Mass* found their origin in earlier music. However, the issue is not how much music Bach "borrowed" from himself in setting the *Missa tota.* Considering the multifarious styles available to Bach, it appears the *Thomaskantor* was able to create an extensive work with thematic and stylistic unity despite the fact he chose ancient and modern compositional techniques in his application of the texts. The stylistic and compositional unity was never compromised in this work, as his musical genius and proclivity for theological statement were undeniably sparked in completing the *B-Minor Mass.*[31]

**Excursus - Music: not as Sacrament, but Sacramental**

Without Christ there is no salvation. Christ comes to His own through word and sacrament. It is through these means that grace is imparted. David Scaer has stated, "The Father is the Lover, Jesus is the Loved One – the Beloved. When Love hits the cross, Love moves through the cross into grace. Through the sacraments we participate in Jesus."[32] The origin of the sacraments is indicated further by Scaer: "The sacraments have their origin in Christ's death. With two angels at his side, one angel holds

[31]"Johann Sebastian Bach, in a final flash of inspiration close to the end of his life, had found a decisive way of assuring that posterity would understand that his last and greatest church composition, despite its protracted and sporadic gestation extending over a full quarter-century (virtually the entirety of his career in Leipzig), was indeed an emphatically unified whole: a single, profoundly monumental, yet integral masterpiece." Robert L Marshall, *The Music of Johann Sebastian Bach – The Sources, the Style, the Significance* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1989), 189.

[32]David P. Scaer, classnotes transcribed by the author from "Grace and Sacraments," Spring Quarter 1993, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

the baptismal font to catch the water flowing from His pierced side as the other collects the blood."[33]

If salvation is God's activity in our life through these means of grace, there can be no salvation apart from them. However, the premise of the remaining section of this excursus is that the *B-Minor Mass* is the word set to music, music of absolutely transcendental character; and while one could not presume to say that the notes of Bach are "God-breathed" in the sense the Scriptures are, they are certainly inspired. Saint Paul proclaims, "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God."[34] Law and gospel are inherent in the Latin text as well as Bach's setting. (All one needs know is the translation of the Latin in one's own language!)

Is it not possible that what the yearning, even unregenerate humanity senses in the *B-minor Mass* is eschatological hope, the "not yet" in which Christians hope and believe? Is it not possible that the unregenerate person could hear this *Mass* and proclaim, "I must be baptized!"?

From *Symbolum Nicenum*:

*Confiteor unum baptisma in remissionem peccatorum.*
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins.

This is not to infer that music is a sacrament. Jesus did not institute music or singing as a sacrament, though he did participate in the singing of a hymn [or hymns] on the night in which he was betrayed.[35] It is possible that one of the texts he sang might have been Psalm 118, which contains Martin Luther's favorite verse, "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD" (17).

However, Luther called music *Frau Musica*,[36] and in his preface to Johann Walter's 1538 "Glory and Praise of the Laudable Art of Music,"

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[33]Scaer, "Grace and Sacraments" classnotes.

[34]Romans 10:17.

[35]See Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26.

[36]Peter Brunner states, regarding *Musica*, "Thus the Musica, which lays hold of the word, and the word, which is clad in the Musica, become a sign of that peculiarly uncommon, unworldly, exuberant, overflowing element of Christian worship, which is something stupendous and something extremely lovely at the same time. . . it is singularly appropriate to this pneumatic presence that the word joins hands with the Musica and the latter becomes the audible form in which the word appears." *Worship in the Name of Jesus* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1968), 273.

Luther penned this preface in the form of a poem, putting "his words on the lips of *Frau Musica*."[37] The following excerpt offers insight into Luther's understanding of music:

> But thanks be first to God, our Lord,
> Who created her [music] by his Word
> To be his own beloved songstress
> And of *musica* a mistress.
> For our dear Lord she sings her song
> In praise of him the whole day long;
> To him I give my melody
> And thanks in all eternity.[38]

Luther obviously viewed music with high regard. His statement, "I place music next to theology and give it the highest praise," is one of his most famous. The Reformer composed hymns and motets. He saw inherent in the craft of musical composition the connection with law and gospel.[39] In praising Josquin's music he stated, "What is law doesn't make progress, but what is gospel does. God has preached the gospel through music, too, as may be seen in Josquin, all of whose compositions flow freely, gently, and cheerfully, are not forced or cramped by rules, and are like the song of the finch."[40]

As related to the Latin text of the Mass, Peter Brunner's statement might apply, particularly in correlation to Bach's setting:

> The word form of this poetry would be incomplete if the words were merely spoken; they insist on being sung. The word's real essence is first attained when it is seized by the musically animated tone. Since "a song involves a being native to two worlds," this

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[37]Carl Schalk, *Luther on Music – Paradigms of Praise* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1988), 35.

[38]Schalk, *Luther on Music*, 36.

[39]Luther also made this statement of criticism regarding a contemporary organist using the language of theology: "That *lex ira operatur* (the law works wrath) is evidenced by the fact that Joerg Planck plays better when he plays for himself than when he plays for others; for what he does to please others, sounds *ex lege* (from obedience to the law) and where there is *lex* (law) there is lack of joy; where there is *gratia* (grace) there is joy." Schalk, *Luther on Music*, 23.

[40]Schalk, *Luther on Music*, 21.

> composition first achieves completion when its text is clad in melody.[41]

Bach's *B-Minor Mass* more than meets the criteria Luther, Brunner, and other theologians demand of music. While this work was not composed for liturgical use in its final form, it is a picture or portrayal of the liturgy, and the listener is even drawn to the never-ending heavenly liturgy. The "not yet" of eternity is present in this work, but so too is the "now" of the human condition. Thus theological counterpoint is interlaced throughout the *Mass* offering the listener glimpses of both inaugurated and realized eschatology.

Music, just as in all aspects of human existence, is brimming with emotional/intellectual contrast and paradox.[42] Major and minor keys, so-called masculine and feminine themes, contrapuntal textures and techniques, faster and slower *tempi*, all reflect the tensions and resolutions of our human condition. The *sense* of stern warning inherent in the law and the *sense* of comforting grace inherent in the gospel are mirrored in music, whether the composer is aware of this or not. While music *itself* may not be salvific in the purely biblical sense, nonetheless the created order reflects the glory of God. Certainly the created work of His created ones reflects the judgment and mercy paradox, just as nature mirrors those same dichotomies. As Paul Gerhardt states in one of his hymns:

> Evening and morning,
> Sunset and dawning,
> Wealth, peace, and gladness,
> Comfort in sadness
> These are your works and bring glory to you . . .
>
> Ills that still grieve me
> Soon are to leave me;
> Though billows tower

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[41]Brunner, *Worship*, 272.

[42]The next several paragraphs of the essay are a paraphrase and development of an earlier, unpublished essay entitled, "Quests for Reconciliation and Peace: Twentieth-Century Music as Reflection of Theology" (1995). The introduction compared Bach's *Gloria in excelsis* and *Dona nobis pacem* with the corresponding sections in Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*. The formulation of that discussion spawned the idea for the topic of this current essay.

And winds gain power,
After the storm the fair sun shows its face . . .[43]

It is most probable that all human beings, at some point in their lives, have heard a piece of music and responded by way of tears, or contrition, or renewed strength, or repentance, or joy. While there may be a multitude of techniques that a composer might employ (albeit subconsciously in most cases) which might symbolize this sense of "law and gospel," most composers are likely unaware of these unique traits inherent in their music. There is the instinctive aspect of creativity to consider, and perhaps this instinct is truly inspiration. Perhaps God is, in some fashion, touching this or that composer. Of one thing one can be assured, the creativity itself is gift from the Creator meant as a gift to His creation. In its purest form, the art will glorify the One from whom all creativity originates.

Thus music may be viewed as a *reflection* of theology, if not a sacrament. From a compositional perspective, I cannot help but ponder that the creative activity of the Christian, and, more specifically, Lutheran composer, must reflect that activity that has already been revealed through the word and sacrament. Surely for Bach this was the case, for one may even observe these characteristics in his instrumental music. Michael Marissen states, "According to Lutherans, especially seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Lutherans, the true purpose of music, including instrumental music, even apart from its liturgical use, was to glorify God and to uplift people spiritually by turning their minds to heavenly matters."[44]

Of course, more specifically, Bach's church music has inspired Christians and those outside of the faith since his death in 1750. One need only mention the case of Felix Mendelssohn who, upon rediscovering Bach, was inspired to reexamine the matter of his own faith. His own oratorio, *St. Paul*, is the fruit of this rumination.

Even the redoubtable Johann Goethe—who, despite his poetic genius, did not subscribe to Christianity's view of redemption—could hardly contain himself in response to his initial exposure to Bach's music.

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[43]Paul Gerhardt, *Evening and Morning*, from *Lutheran Worship* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1982), number 419, from stanzas 1 and 3.

[44]Peter Marissen, *The Social and Religious Designs of J. S. Bach's Brandenburg Concertos* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 116.

Goethe states: "I said to myself, it is as if the eternal harmony were conversing within itself as it may have done in the bosom of God just before the creation of the world. So likewise did it move my inmost soul, and it seemed as if I neither possessed nor needed ears, nor any other sense—least of all the eyes."[45]

Uwe Siemon-Netto cites a startling but fathomable phenomenon when he states:

> Twenty-five years ago when there was still a Communist East Germany, I interviewed several boys from Leipzig's *Thomanerchor*, the choir once led by Johann Sebastian Bach. Many of those children came from atheistic homes. "Is it possible to sing Bach without faith?" I asked them. "Probably not," they replied, "but we do have faith. Bach has worked as a missionary among all of us."[46]

More incredulous is what Siemon-Netto states next, though through the eyes of faith, all things are possible. He states: "During a recent journey to Japan I discovered that 250 years after his death Bach is now playing a key role in evangelizing that country, one of the most secularized nations in the developed world."[47]

Bach as evangelist indeed! But while the *B-Minor Mass* is not a sacrament, it has imparted and will continue to impart grace by hearing if one has ears to hear. Bach certainly did. If one desires to be baptized upon hearing this work, or if a Christian remembers his baptism, could this work thus be termed "sacramental" with a lower case "s"? Perhaps one could be so bold as to proclaim, "through the *B-Minor Mass* we participate in Jesus," not because the *Mass* is a sacrament, but because Christ is truly present through His word presented in Bach's *Mass*. Bach the preacher offers his "congregation" a perfect sermon, and better yet, a fully developed liturgy that reflects the Divine Service and causes one to reflect on the eternal heavenly liturgy. The listener can reject God's grace, but one cannot earn it. If Bach's music is responsible for the salvation of any human being, it is due to the work of the Holy Spirit in drawing the person to Christ through the word. Thus Bach could proclaim, "To God alone be the glory."

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[45]James, *Music of the Spheres*, 190.
[46]Siemon-Netto, "J. S. Bach in Japan," 15.
[47]Siemon-Netto, "J. S. Bach in Japan," 15.

## Eschatological Hope in the Mass as Discerned in its Final Formal Structure and its Connection to the Divine Service

Some scholars and musicologists classify Bach's *B-Minor Mass* as "church" music. This is not true in the utilitarian sense, for Bach certainly never conceived of the entire work for liturgical use nor could the *Mass* serve well in that capacity. While sections of the composition may be befitting for liturgical use, the scope of the work is utterly too imposing for use in the Divine Service. If the work was not intended to function in a utilitarian sense, then what is its *raison d'être*? Laurence Dreyfus has stated,

> . . . for Bach, thinking in music was a necessary consequence of a belief in its divine origins. Since his innovative powers of invention expanded rather than rejected music's traditional forms of representation, Bach's compositional stance was entirely consonant with theological orthodoxy, at the same time that no available theological language within theology or music could adequately come to terms with it.[48]

Bach's creative process in the composing and assembling of the *B-Minor Mass* focused on the central Christology in the Latin text. Scaer writes: "The One who comes to us as a humble babe in Bethlehem invites us to believe that He has come from above."[49]

Contained in the Latin text is this very essence of truth. The various movements of the mass each convey Christ's presence among us in one way or another. This discourse will now focus on specific areas of the *B-Minor Mass* that point to an eschatological reality as contained in the Divine Service.[50]

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[48]Laurence Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 243.

[49]David P. Scaer, *Christology*, Confessional Lutheran Dogmatics, Vol. VI (Fort Wayne: The International Foundation for Lutheran Confessional Research, 1989), 9.

[50]For a decidedly Reformed interpretation, see Calvin R. Stapert, *My Only Comfort – Death, Deliverance, and Discipleship in the Music of Bach* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 2000), especially 42-48, 87-101, 217-225.

*Use of Major and Minor Modes as Means of Theological Interpretation*

Bach's use of major and minor keys is informative. While one cannot offer a systematic explanation of this shifting of modes, suffice it to say that those sections of the work that depict the *Christus Redemptor* theme and inaugurated eschatology are generally in a minor key, while those that represent the *Christus Victor* theme and realized eschatology are generally in a major key.[51] This is not to imply that the *Christus* and eschatological themes are always convergent, however.

Nevertheless, it is not that simple, for Bach the theologian intuitively understands the tension between the "now" and the "not yet" as may be discerned in the *Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris* solo from the *Gloria*. This, too, is in the key of human suffering, B-minor. Why did Bach assign this key and mode to this text? This cannot be approached unless the focus is christological. In His ascension, Christ takes our flesh to the right hand of the Father, though we are still awaiting the glory to come. Thus, redeemed humanity is torn between two worlds, and it is only in the Holy Supper that we have this glimpse of the glory that is to come at the last day. Those who are not Christian are also torn between two worlds: the world of sin and that of redemption. In terms of those who are members of the Body of Christ, Bach's theological interpretation suggests that we have been raised with Christ as He takes His seat at the right hand of the Father, for in the *Et Resurrexit* Bach creates a D-major "dance" inherited from the earlier *Gloria* and *Cum Sancto Spiritu*. But B-minor makes its way back into the central portion of the *Et Resurrexit* as Bach arrives at the text, *sedet ad dexteram Dei Patris*. This is consistent with Bach's christological perspective. Christ is true God and true Man.

The other minor key sections of the *Mass* depict the reality of human existence in awaiting the consummation of the age. For example, in the opening *Kyrie eleison*, one cannot help but be drawn into, and even participate in, the angst-filled cry for mercy in the introduction. This introduction is immersed in the "now," yearning for the "not yet"; however, the peace that is promised in Christ inaugurates the eschatological reality. Bach then succeeds these universal, primal shouts, with controlled expressions of mercy by means of five-part contrapuntal texture. (The second *Kyrie eleison*, in a strictly polyphonic ancient style

[51]See *Qui tollis, Et incarnatus est, Crucifixus, Agnus Dei* and *Gloria, Gratias agimus tibi, Cum Sancto Spiritu, Et resurrexit, Et expecto.*

and also in a minor key, is then constrained because of the gentle and lyrical *Christe eleison* that precedes it. The plea for mercy is thus less active and more passive as one awaits the "arrival" of the gospel within the context of the Divine Service, and in terms of the *B-Minor Mass*, the knowledge of Christ through the word contained in the text.)

The three duets that sing of Christ's presence and mercy are in major keys.[52] High Christology in these gentle movements is represented by the use of occasional parallel thirds and sixths (symbols of the Trinity and Man, respectively). In addition, in the first version of *Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum* we perceive the violins "coming down from heaven" (on a descending dominant seventh chord, creating the momentum–built on thirds–whereby the Word becomes flesh and dwells among us) where the text reads *descendit de coelis*, thus representing not only the incarnation but the eventuality of the real presence in the Holy Supper.[53] This same gesture of descending violins is again offered at the phrase, *Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine et homo factus est.* In the second version, with a text revision due to the later addition of the separate *Et incarnatus est*, Bach's assignment of the text coordinates with the descending violins at the phrases, *(Deum) de Deo vero*, and *et qui propter nostram salutem descendit de coelis.* Within the context of this major key duet, these two instances Bach modulates to minor keys, representing the necessity of divine intervention for the sake of the sin of the world. B-minor makes a reappearance with the texts (*ex Patre natum*) *ante omnia saecula* and the first pronouncement of *Deum de Deo.* Thus, Christ's incarnation is a "minor key" event, though a "major key" event for the sake of humanity.

The most intense solo in the entire work is the *Agnus Dei* in G-minor. This angular music makes strong use of imitation between the alto voice and the violins, creating a bridge between humanity and divinity as

[52]See *Christe eleison, Domine Deus, Et in unum.*

[53]In Bach's first version of the *Symbolum* Nicenum, the *Incarnatus est* text was subsumed by the *Et in unim Dominum Jesum Christum* duet and followed directly by the *Crucifixus.* In the original manuscript, there is an inserted page with the newly composed choral *Et incarnatus est.* This leaf actually interrupts the previous page's four measure introduction to the *Crucifixus* which is then continued on the leaf following the insert. Bach then reallocated the text for the second version of *Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum.* See *Johann Sebastian Bach – Mess in H-Moll* (facsimile of the composer's manuscript), (Basel: Bärenreiter Kassel, 1983), 110-113.

Christ offers his body and blood for the salvation of humankind. The jagged and chromatic nature of the music in the aria demonstrates the profound reality that Christ has, indeed, participated in our humanity in all its anguish and death. The pause in measure 34 on the word "sin" is a reflection on the moment of death in the midst of Jesus' thirty-fourth year. There is no mistake for Bach in the understanding of the purpose and reason for Christ's death. But as this music is both angular and dissonant, the rising and falling of the voice and violin parts in antiphonal imitation occur on *qui tollis peccata mundi* and *miserere nobis*. The interval relationships of these rising and falling motifs revolve around sevenths, real or implied by harmonic means. Could these sevenths represent God's perfect sacrifice by which all are made new, or that there is nothing a person can do to earn salvation (a sixth would connote the number of man)? Why else embrace these two textual phrases with such intervallic consistency? As well, these rising and falling motifs occur repeatedly, perhaps depicting the matter of confusion as to which state the listener really finds himself. Are we in the past, present, or future, regarding the matter of salvation? In terms of the liturgical moment in the Divine Service, we have received, or are receiving the body and blood of our Lord as an eschatological moment. In terms of the *Mass* as a work unto itself, the listener is aware of the reason for Christ's incarnation. This is a *present* moment. While liturgical connections should not be taken lightly, Bach, in offering final touches on this major opus, presents his most expressive music in this movement preceding the final *Dona nobis pacem*.

Perhaps this music is so powerful because this moment of death seems to have a correlation to our own impending death. Joseph Ratzinger states:

> But now the relevance of the christological question begins to become apparent. The God who personally died in Jesus Christ fulfilled the pattern of love beyond all expectation, and in so doing justified that human confidence which in the last resort is the only alternative to self-destruction. The Christian dies into the death of Christ Himself. . . . Man's enemy, death, that would waylay him to steal his life, is conquered at the point where one meets the thievery of death with the attitude of trusting love, and so transforms the theft into increase of life. The sting of death is extinguished in Christ in whom the victory was gained through the plenary power of love

unlimited. Death is vanquished where people die with Christ and into Him.[54]

*Time and Timelessness – the Temporal and the Eternal*

There are moments in hearing Bach's work when the listener is simply awestruck by the sheer majesty of the movements of exaltation in the *Mass*.[55] This type of response creates an element of timelessness because the sounds Bach has produced are so remarkably transcendental that one is not thinking of the "here and now," but is focusing on the "not yet," or at least the hope for realized eschatology. Why does this occur?

The answer might be derived from an understanding of the nature of time and eternity in the christological event. Herman Sasse states,

> The death of Christ is indeed a unique historical event. As with every actual event in earthly history, it is unrepeatable. But at the same time, like the Exodus from Egypt commemorated in the Passover, it is also God's redemptive act, something that stands outside of earthly time, which does not exist for God. Rev. 13:8 calls Christ "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" [KJV]. He is the Crucified not simply as *staurotheis* (aorist, which signifies a single event) but as the *estauromenos* (perfect, which means that what happened continues in effect. . . . From this we may see that with God a "temporal" event can be "eternal."[56]

> The celebration of the Lord's Supper as the church's divine service has become the counterpart of the divine service that takes place in heaven. . . . Thus in the Lord's Supper the boundaries of space and time are overcome: Heaven and earth become one, the incalculable interval that separates the present moment of the church from the future kingdom of God is bridged.[57]

It must be emphasized, once again, that it is not being suggested that the hearing of the *B-Minor Mass* is efficacious in the manner in which

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[54]Johan Auer, Jospeph Ratzinger, *Dogmatic Theology: Eschatology – Death and Eternal Life* (Washington, District of Columbia: The Catholic University Press, 1988), 97.

[55]See *Gloria, Gratias agimus tibi, Cum Sancto Spiritu, Credo in unum Deum* (II), *Et resurrexit, Et expecto, Sanctus, Osanna, Dona nobis pacem.*

[56]Hermann Sasse, *We Confess the Sacraments* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1985), 30.

[57]Sasse, *We Confess the Sacraments*, 92-93.

Sasse is discussing the Sacrament. However, it is the opinion of this writer that Bach's work is an illustration, reflection, and representation of the earthly and heavenly liturgy. In that sense, the matter of timelessness inherent in the process of hearing the work might be understood. Once again, if the central emphasis in Bach's musical gesture is Christ, then one may proclaim with Sasse, "We may never forget that the presence of Christ, His divine and human nature, is always an eschatological miracle in which time and eternity meet."[58]

Do time and eternity meet in the hearing of the *B-Minor Mass*? Yes, in the sense of inaugurated eschatology. Luther stated, "For here one must put time out of one's mind and know that in that world there is neither time nor hour, but that everything is an eternal moment."[59]

The yearning for eternity is certainly present in the music, if not eternity itself. Bach portrays eternity with such grandeur that the earthly things of our temporal existence are supplanted. However, the theology of the cross is an ever-present factor as well, reminding each listener that our existence on this planet is both contrapuntal and paradoxical. Thus, as we experience Bach's setting of the gospel of Christ, we are pulled via the contrapuntal tension both musically and theologically.

*The Connection between the "Gratias" and the "Dona Nobis Pacem"*

The most significant connection between the Divine Service and the *B-minor Mass* may be discerned in these two movements. With the *Dona nobis pacem*, Bach chose to conclude the entire *B-minor Mass* with the same music he had parodied from *Wir danken dir* in the *Gratias agimus tibi*. This connection is the most salient of theological emphases in Bach's mind, for the connection between the theology of his early work on the *Mass* and his culminating activity may be discerned as two separate texts related to each another and to the eschatological themes in the *Mass*—the opening of the *Gloria* and the concluding *Dona nobis pacem*, respectively:[60]

> *Gloria in excelsis Deo,*
> *et in terra* ***pax*** *hominibus bonae voluntatis.*
> Glory to God in the highest,

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[58]Sasse, *We Confess the Sacraments*, 137.

[59]Werner Elert, *The Structure of Lutheranism* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1962), 515-516.

[60]See James, *Music of the Spheres*, 190.

and on earth peace, good will toward men.

*Dona nobis* ***pacem.***
Grant us peace. (emphases added)

Bach most certainly viewed these texts both in their historical and liturgical contexts. For Bach, the announcement of peace in the proclamation of the heavenly host recorded in Luke 2:14 was the same peace contained in the eucharistic activity of Christ in the sacrament. The source of peace and reconciliation prayed in the conclusion of the *Mass* is the same as that announced at Christ's birth. The atoning work of Christ on the cross, the undisputed core of Bach's theology, is seen as the source of peace—that is, the forgiveness of sins—in the angelic proclamation to the shepherds on the night that Christ was born in Bethlehem. Heaven and earth were joined through the Incarnation in the womb of Mary, and continue to be joined throughout the ages because of God's salvific activity through Jesus Christ.

Bach devotes a hundred measures of music to the opening textual phrase of the *Gloria*—*Gloria in excelsis Deo*—in a royal and celebrative D major *Vivace*, 3/8 meter dance. However, the crux of the movement occurs as the choir devotes seventy-six measures in a serene, but confident, 4/4 meter stating the reason for singing this glory to God—*et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis*. Bach develops this material, interweaving the text and thematic motif contrapuntally and crescendos to a climactic and pronounced conclusion. This glory to God and peace on earth are interpreted by the composer as the foremost revelation of reconciliation and peace.

Bach creates a profound musical connection between the birth announcement of Christ and the invocation of peace at the conclusion of the *Mass* in his choice of musical material for the latter of the two. Contained within the *Gloria* section of the *Mass* is the choral movement, *Gratias agimus tibi*:

*Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.*
We give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory.

The connections of the glory of God, peace, and thanksgiving (ευχαριστια), are made evident through Bach's use of precisely the same musical material employed in the *Gratias agimus tibi* in the concluding *Dona nobis pacem*, thus, another parody, but the most significant in the entire *Mass*. The opening assured, but reflective, ascending bass line of

this choral fugato, also in D major, is transformed within a brief forty-six measures into a regal, majestic and confident statement—of thanksgiving the first time, and peace in concluding the entire work—which is not only imperative in tone, but actualized. For Bach specifically, the theological emphasis may be discerned as *Christus pro me*, a personal reconciliation between God and the human being Johann Sebastian Bach. While the *Christus pro nobis* is most certainly the church's corporate proclamation of and response to that which has been proclaimed to us by God through His word, Bach discerns a personal appropriation to every Christian. For this study, the significance is also applicable, potentially, to those outside of the faith, for "God with us" is a reality, the knowledge of which is dependent on the activity of the Holy Spirit in the midst of faithful preaching of His word and reception of His sacraments. Baptism is available to all that have ears to hear, as is the Holy Supper, the knowledge and meanings of which are present in this *Mass* in its very musical explication.

One may unambiguously observe in Bach a theology of reconciliation and peace between God and humanity—and that at a personal level—because of Christ's atonement. While Bach's peace is indeed a "here and now" actuality by means of inaugurated eschatology, chiefly through Christ's activity in the church's liturgy and eucharist, he is, in his compositional gesture, awaiting a "new heavens and new earth" (Revelation 21:1) when eschatology will be realized in all its fullness and when "we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:1-3).

For Bach, the main focus in the *Mass* appears to be the "peace which passes all understanding" expressed in the incarnation. Through the liturgical service of the eucharist, God continues to offer the forgiveness of sins, faith, and peace to human beings. The forgiveness of sins, the peace from above, the reconciliation of God and sinful humanity, are all present in the *Mass*. While the Lutheran emphasis on the two tables of the law—love of God and neighbor—is a natural interpretive component in all of Bach's music, Bach expends his interpretive compositional energies in this late work on a redirection of the statement of corporate forgiveness in Christ, *Christus pro nobis*, to that of the individual in Christ, *Christus pro me*. Christ's birth, which the angels announced, continues to herald to us this good news of salvation, forgiveness, and peace. The final statement of peace in the *Mass* is made with the understanding that this peace comes through the body and blood of our Lord in His Holy Supper. The thanksgiving implied in the *Gratias* is directly applied to the

peace which *has* come in the eucharist, the peace which gives hope in the anticipation of the "not yet." This is the very glory of God in the "now."

Thus the meaning inherent in the *Et in terra pax, Gratias agimus tibi,* and *Dona nobis pacem* all relates to the inaugurated eschatological realm where Christ dwells among His people through the Incarnation and the Real Presence in the Holy Supper, even as the hope for realized eschatology is reinforced.

*Et Expecto*

Our greatest Christian hope in the *Mass* is expressed in the *Et expecto* section of the *Symbolum Nicenum,* for it is here that eschatology is artlessly represented in the text which, when wedded to Bach's music, propounds a resplendent aural depiction of this Christian hope. This chorus is accompanied by the usual forces with the addition of trumpets and timpani. While this is not the first time Bach has utilized this instrumentation, it is the first time that the trumpets act as heralds of the "resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come" (though one may find a corollary in the opening of the *Gloria in excelsis,* which certainly has a connection with the hope for the resurrection). It is here that Bach shows his greatest ebullient self. Is it possible that for Bach this section of the Creed had the most meaning in terms of his own perspective on the Divine Service? In his last years, this element of Christian hope must have had a profound impact on the composer.

*Sanctus*

As indicated before, Bach's first actual textual/compositional contribution to the *B-Minor Mass* was the towering *Sanctus* written for Christmas Day in 1724. The text for the *Sanctus* from Isaiah 6:1-4 and its liturgical connection as announcement of Christ's presence was certainly understood by the composer in relationship to Luther's setting of "Isaiah, Mighty Seer, in Days of Old" from his *German Mass*:

> Isaiah, mighty seer, in days of old
> The Lord of all in spirit did behold
> High on a lofty throne, in splendor bright,
> With flowing train that filled the Temple quite.
> Above the throne were stately seraphim;
> Six wings had they, these messengers of Him.
> With twain they veiled their faces, as was meet,
> With twain in rev'rent awe they hid their feet,

And with the other twain aloft they soared,
One to the other called and praised the Lord:
"Holy is God, the Lord of Sabaoth!
Holy is God, the Lord of Sabaoth!
Holy is God, the Lord of Sabaoth!
Behold, His glory filleth all the earth!"
The beams and lintels trembled at the cry,
And clouds of smoke enwrapped the throne on high.[61]

The significance of Bach setting the Latin *Sanctus* for Christmas Day cannot be overstated. The angelic hosts, so important to the announcement of Christ's birth in Luke 2:13-14, are portrayed with an unprecedented majesty not encountered again in Bach's output until the opening chorus of the *Gloria* composed in 1733. This joyful dance connects significantly with the *pleni sunt coeli* section of the *Sanctus* (same key, meter [3/8], and tempo). The incarnational reference from the Christmas story cannot be mistaken. Scaer states, "In Lutheran theology God is not remote but is rather so close to man that the Incarnation is understood as a real expression of what God is like."[62]

However, the glorified Christ seated at the right hand of the Father is in view as well when examining Revelation 4:8-9 and its similarity to the above-mentioned Isaiah passage:

And the four living beings, one by one of them having each six wings,
Around and within are full of eyes, and they have not rest day or night saying,
Holy holy holy
Lord (the) God (the) Almighty,
The [one who] was and (the) is and the coming one.

This picture of worship in heaven includes all Christians . . . those in their temporal state and those in eternity.[63] In both the Isaiah and Revelation accounts, the Seers view angelic creatures celebrating and proclaiming the holiness of the Triune God. Holy is the Father, Holy is

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[61]*Jesaia, dem Propheten,* Martin Luther (1520). See *The Lutheran Hymnal* [hereafter *TLH*] (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1941), #249.
[62]Scaer, *Christology,* 27.
[63]Revelation 5:13 and following.

the Son, Holy is the Spirit. In John's vision the creatures "have not rest day or night" as they declare the glory of God. However, the church of God on earth has the opportunity to join the praises of the hosts of heaven in singing this ceaseless *Sanctus* hymn! Participation in this hymn assures the body of Christ of its participation in the praises of heaven, and therefore the participation in eternity itself. It behooves one to recall that while Isaiah's vision of the Divine Presence was in the context of the Temple *cultus*, Saint John's vision connotes a cosmic Divine Presence where all of creation will ultimately join in the never-ending hymn. The omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience of God are decidedly affirmed within the christological context.[64]

In this liturgical act all are singing the same "new song," for Christ as the New Song in his never-ceasing salvific offering comes to us in the Holy Supper, as those in eternity are celebrating Christ's "real presence" in the realm of what we—in our current perception—view as realized eschatology. Bach's setting of the *Sanctus* for Christmas Day reflects the incessant eternal glory of God as expressed by Isaiah and Saint John as well as the "Glory to God in the highest" as announced to the shepherds by the heavenly host. The eternal and the temporal are conjoined in the incarnation (while inaugurated and realized eschatology are concurrently implied), as Bach's music portrays this conjoining in all its grandeur.

Scaer's statement offers theological rumination on the incarnation: "Lutherans hold that all of the very Godhead Himself became flesh in Jesus. . . . On the one hand He rules heaven and earth from His mother's arms, but on the other He is completely dependent upon her for His life and sustenance."[65]

Thus, Bach's *Sanctus* setting of Christmas Day of 1724 alludes to God's presence in the world through the incarnation while concurrently serving as liturgical statement of the Real Presence of Christ through the sacrament. In terms of what this means eschatologically, John Stephenson states:

> The confession of the real presence which culminates in FC SD VII unfolds untrammeled realized eschatology in Jesus Himself and

[64]Unpublished paper by the writer, "The New Song: Music in the Heavenly Liturgy (A Theology of Musical Composition for the Late 20th Century)," 11-12.

[65]Scaer, *Christology*, 49, 61.

> inaugurated eschatology in the communicants nourished by Him: Christ's body and blood, present on His altar throne and given His faithful for the impartation of forgiveness, life, and salvation.[66]

The listener in the "now" yearns for the "not yet" in hearing this effulgent *Sanctus*; but in a real sense, the "not yet" is being offered when understood in the context of the Divine Service. Thus this earliest contribution to the *Missa tota* is one of the most poignant moments in the entire work.

*Summary*

Werner Elert once wrote, "The eye of faith will see the beauty of the world as the conquering of demonic darknesses. Its ear will hear inexpressible things in music–things that are of divine origin."[67]

Bach's ear indeed heard these inexpressible things, things "of divine origin." It is our privilege in our time to have access, not to an antiquated, obsolete piece of music that has no relevance to our time, but to a timeless masterpiece . . . timeless because the very essence is Christ. Again, Elert:

> Just as justification places the individual before the hereafter, so the idea of the kingdom places the world before the hereafter. The world is time—time as flight. Our entire consciousness of being in the world has dissolved in time. "But what crossing over is," says Luther, "experience teaches us. For we cross over every day.[68]

Thus Bach could proclaim, in unison with Luther and all who have believed and will believe, "All to the praise of Him who is the Master of all beauty. All praise sung by faith at the present time is but a beginning of the eternal hymn."[69]

This eternal hymn is indeed the liturgy, the Divine Service in all its essence. Just a few years before his death, Johann Sebastian Bach was compelled to complete a mass he had begun almost a quarter of a century before because, as a Lutheran, he was conveying through sound a musical representation of the Divine Service. This was not a utilitarian mass

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[66]John R. Stephenson, *Eschatology* (Fort Wayne: The Luther Academy, 1993), 30.
[67]Elert, *Structure*, 461.
[68]Elert, *Structure*, 507.
[69]Elert, *Structure*, 517.

intended, in its complete form, as a vocal and instrumental offering for Saint Thomas Church in Leipzig. While some of the movements were performed at various times in his career as a church musician, the entire *B-minor Mass* was never performed *in toto* during Bach's lifetime.

### Conclusion: *Eschatos* for Bach

Whether apocryphal or not, it has been transmitted throughout the last 250 years that Bach, afflicted by blindness in his last two years, died as he was in the midst of dictating a chorale.[70] While the circumstances are sketchy, and scholars disagree on which hymn text Bach was considering in this final chorale, it is significant in any case in terms of Bach's view of eschatology. The two possible texts are either *Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein* ("When in the hour of deepest need") or *Vor deinen Thron tret'ich* ("Before your throne I step"). In either case, Bach's final moments, as he dictated—probably from the keyboard—were focused clearly on that which he believed and professed throughout his life.[71] Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht has stated that Bach's music displays:

> [S]trong evidence of Bach's belief in God, and it is this aspect of the piece that emerges more important than its objective purposes, musical expression, or public intent. The chorale reveals far more than its immediate reason for existence; it also exhibits the strong personal faith behind Bach's life and creative identity. It is as if Bach were saying: "God is the reference point of my Life, and though I am a wretched human being, I am united to Him through the mercy of Christ.[72]

The first and last stanzas of *Vor deinen Thron tret'ich hiermit*:

*Vor deinen Thron tret'ich hiermit,*
*O Gott und dich demütig bitt:*
*Wend dein genädig Angesicht*
*Von mir betrübtem Sünder nicht.*

*Ein selig Ende mir bescher,*

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[70]For an enlightening article regarding this topic, see Christoph Wolff, "The Deathbed Chorale: Exposing a Myth," *Bach - Essays on His Life and Music*, 282-294.

[71]See Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht, *J. S. Bach's "The Art of the Fugue" – The Work and its Interpretation*, translated by Jeffrey L. Prater (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1993), 30-37.

[72]Eggebrecht, *Bach's "The Art of the Fugue,"* 32.

*Am jüngsten Tag erwecke mich,*
*Herr Daß ich dich schau ewiglich:*
*Amen, amen, erhöre mich!*[73]

Before Thy throne my God, I stand,
Myself, my all, are in Thy hand;
Turn to me Thine approving face,
Nor from me now withhold Thy grace.

Grant that my end may worthy be,
And that I wake Thy face to see,
Thyself for evermore to know!
Amen, amen, God grant it so.[74]

Thus Bach, in his final moments of consciousness, was in the midst of the "not yet," yet confident that, in his compositional activity, he awaited the "now" in which he hoped and believed.[75]

In the Bärenreiter Kassel edition of the *B-Minor Mass*, a facsimile of Bach's complete manuscript, Alfred Dürr's commentary begins by offering a publication history of the score. He states:

> When the Zurich publisher Hans George Nägeli decided to undertake the first publication of Bach's B minor mass, he invited subscriptions in the following words: "Announcing the greatest musical work of art of all times and peoples."[76]

Today, Nägeli's statement still rings true. The work is the greatest composition in the corpus of western art music, but it also offers the greatest statement of doctrine and faith in music history.

In examining this facsimile score in Bach's own hand, which represents the *Thomaskantor's* style of manuscript from 1733 through his final years, one may discern the composer's faltering handwriting. However, the one thing that permeates and persists throughout the 188-page score without wavering is the record of Bach's faith. This faith may be discerned in the very compositional process as one observes the inscriptions at the

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[73]Eggebrecht, *Bach's "The Art of the Fugue,"* 33.

[74]Peter Washington, *Bach* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997), 127.

[75]Bach suffered a stroke, never recovering, and succumbed six days later.

[76]See introduction by Alfred Dürr to the Bärenreiter edition of Bach's manuscript score, 10.

beginning of the 1733 *Missa*, the *Symbolum Nicenum*, and the *Osanna/Benedictus/Agnus Dei/Dona Nobis Pacem* section, the initials, *J. J., Jesu juva* (Jesus help). Inscribed on the final pages of the *Missa* and the *Dona Nobis Pacem* is *D S Gl, Deo Soli Gloria* (To God alone be the glory).

The *B-Minor Mass* is a musical testimony to that which Christ has done out of His love for us. Bach's experience of the *eschaton* in his liturgical devotion found its expression in this extraordinarily profound work. One who does not believe cannot appreciate the theological wonders contained in this masterpiece, but the appreciation of and love for the work itself can create a yearning for the marvelous things the *B-Minor Mass* professes. The Christian, while appreciating these wonders, is more deeply drawn into the theological reality it espouses. For the Lutheran, the clear delineation of the Divine Service may be deduced from the opening "Lord, have mercy" to the final exclamation, "Grant us [thy] peace." Johann Sebastian Bach has offered us a taste of the heavenly liturgy in his *B-Minor Mass*. To God alone be the glory!

# *Oratio, Meditatio, Tentatio*: What Makes A Theologian?

John W. Kleinig

What makes a theologian? Teachers of theology could hardly get a more unsettling question than that. No matter where we came from, people in our churches are increasingly critical of the system of theological training that has traditionally been used in the Lutheran church.[1] We know this system well, for we are all, in some way, products of it. While the actual curriculum differs from church to church, it always follows the same basic pattern. The three academic disciplines of biblical, historical, and systematic theology lead to the practical discipline of pastoral theology. First we deal with the theory; then comes the practice of theology.

Those who teach theology may be happy with that system of study, but many members of our churches are uneasy with it and the pastors that it produces. You know what they say. Our graduates do not know how to minister spiritually to people. They are out of touch with the modern world and unable to relate to it positively. They are impractical theoreticians who do not know how to deal with real people and their real needs. They are unable to work together with others as part of a team. Worst of all, they lack the basic skills needed to lead congregations, whether it be in administration or organization, leadership or communication, counseling or conflict management, evangelism or church planting.

All these criticisms come to a head in hard times, like now, when money is short and resources are limited. Can we afford to spend so much money on a system of pastoral training that does not produce the right kind of pastors? Do we, in fact, need academically trained pastors? If we do need to have such pastors, should we not revamp the whole curriculum around pastoral theology as the key discipline, or in some other way? Is our way of doing theology inappropriate in our post-modern context?

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[1]This paper was presented at the ILC Theological Seminaries World Conference: Preparing Lutheran Pastors Today on April 4, 2001.

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Now there is, no doubt, some truth in these criticisms and some value in the counterproposals given. I, however, hold that the problem is far deeper than that. Both we and our critics assume that we humans somehow produce theologians. From this it then follows that, if only we could get the system of training right, we would invariably turn out good pastors. But is that in fact so? What makes a theologian? We all know that the best trained person, with complete mastery of all branches of theology and with all the right pastoral skills, can turn out to be a poor pastor, and a bad theologian—and vice versa! What then makes a pastor?

Luther was a theological educator who thought hard and long about the learning of theology. At various times he touched on it from different points of view. While he, of all people, valued the liberal arts as the foundation for a good theological education, he knew that, by itself, even the best curriculum, taught by the best theologians, could not produce a good pastor. Something else was required. Learning theology was a matter of experience and wisdom gained from experience. To put it in modern terms, the right practice of evangelical spirituality in the church, the practice of the *vita passiva*, the receptive life of faith, makes a theologian.[2] In theology, as in life, we have nothing that we have not received and continue to receive (1 Corinthians 4:7).

Luther developed this insight in a number of different ways. In a lecture on Psalm 5:11, from around 1520, he asserted, rather bluntly, that a theologian was not made by "understanding, reading or speculating," but by "living, no rather by dying and being damned."[3] Later in his table talk from 1532, he added that like medicine, theology was an art that was learned only from life-long experience. He refers to himself as a pastor and claims:

> I did not learn my theology all at once, but had to search constantly deeper and deeper for it. My temptations did that for me, for no one can understand Holy Scripture without practice and temptations. This is what the enthusiasts and sects lack. They don't have the right

[2]Luther's use of this term and its implications have been investigated by Christian Link, "Vita Passiva," *Evangelische Theologie* 44 (1984): 315-351; Oswald Bayer, *Theologie* (Guetersloh: Guetersloher Verlagshaus, 1994), 42-49; and, most comprehensively, Reinhard Hütter, *Suffering Divine Things. Theology as Church Practice*, translated by Doug Stott (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000).

[3]Martin Luther, *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, 58 volumes (Weimar, 1883-), 5, 163, 28-29. Hereafter abbreviated as *WA*.

> critic, the devil, who is the best teacher of theology. If we don't have that kind of devil, then we become nothing but speculative theologians, who do nothing but walk around in our own thoughts and speculate with our reason alone as to whether things should be like this, or like that.[4]

There you have it, as starkly and offensively as only Luther could put it: "the devil is best teacher of theology." He turns a pastor into a true teacher of theology in the school of life, the university of hard knocks. No, I must correct myself. That is not quite right. He turns students of theology into proper theologians by giving them a hard time in the church. Theological training therefore involves spiritual warfare, the battle between Christ and Satan in the church. Conflict in the church is the context for learning theology.

In 1539, Luther developed these insights most fully and powerfully in his famous *Preface to the Wittenberg Edition* of his German writings.[5] In this preface he outlines "a correct way of studying theology," a way that he himself had learned from much practice in it, "the way taught by holy King David" in Psalm 119. Despite his language, Luther does not, as we would expect, propose a theological curriculum, or even a method for the study of academic theology. Rather, he describes his own practice of spirituality that he himself had learned from singing, saying, and praying the Psalter. Yet even that is misleading. He does not advocate a particular method of meditation, but outlines the actual dynamics of spiritual formation for students of theology. This involved the interplay between three powers, the Holy Spirit, God's word, and Satan. Luther claimed that the dynamic interaction between these three forces was so powerful and effective that those who submitted to it, "could (if it were necessary) write books just as good as those of the fathers and councils."[6]

As Martin Nicol has shown, Luther distinguished his own practice of spirituality from the tradition of spiritual foundation that he experienced as a monk.[7] This tradition followed a well-timed, ancient pattern of

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[4]*WA* 1, 147, 3-14; *Luther's Works,* American Edition, 55 volumes, edited by J. Pelikan and H. T. Lehmann (Saint Louis: Concordia and Philadelphia: Fortress, 1955-1986), 54: 50. Hereafter abbreviated as *LW.*

[5]*WA* 50, 657-661; *LW* 34: 283-288.

[6]*LW* 34:285.

[7]Martin Nicol, *Meditation bei Luther* (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1984), 19, 91.

meditation and prayer. Its goal was 'contemplation,' the experience of ecstasy, bliss, rapture, and illumination through union with the glorified Lord Jesus. To reach this goal, a monk ascended in three stages, as on a ladder, the ladder of devotion, from earth to heaven, from the humanity of Jesus to His divinity. The ascent began with reading out aloud to himself a passage from the Scriptures to quicken the affections; it proceeded to heartfelt prayer, and culminated in mental meditation on heavenly things, as one waited for the experience of contemplation, the infusion of heavenly graces, the bestowal of spiritual illumination. Four terms were used to describe this practice of spirituality: reading, meditation, prayer, and contemplation.

In contrast to this rather manipulative method, Luther proposed an evangelical pattern of spirituality as reception rather than self-promotion. This involved three things: prayer (*oratio*), meditation (*meditatio*), and temptation (*tentatio*)[8]. All three revolved around ongoing, faithful attention to God's word. The order of the list is significant, for unlike the traditional pattern of devotion, the study of theology begins and ends here on earth. These three terms describe the life of faith as a cycle that begins with prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit, concentrates on the reception of the Holy Spirit through meditation on God's word, and results in spiritual attack. This in turn leads a person back to further prayer and intensified meditation. Luther, therefore, did not envisage the spiritual life in active terms as a process of self-development but in passive terms as a process of reception from the Triune God. In it self-sufficient individuals became beggars before God.

In this address I will use Luther's preface to the Wittenberg edition to explore what he has to say about the making of a theologian. I think that we have much to learn from him about the spiritual formation of pastors. What he proposes about the study of theology could free us from the straight jacket imposed on us by so many unhelpful, perhaps even false, antitheses. These result in the separation of pastoral theology from academic theology, the separation of systematic theology from liturgical theology, the separation of private spirituality from corporate worship, the separation of subjective spiritual experience from objective revelation, and the separation of the private life of a pastor from his public role.

[8]My understanding of these terms and their significance depends on the careful analyses done by Nicol (*Meditation*, 91-101); Bayer (*Theologie*, 55-105), and Huetter (*Suffering Divine Things*, 72-76).

### The Things That Make A Theologian

*Prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit*

Luther asserts that the study of theology has to do with the gift of eternal life. No human teacher can teach us about that, because no human teacher can give us eternal life. Nor can we gain eternal life for ourselves by using our reason to reflect on our experience of God or even to interpret the Scriptures in the light of our personal experience. In fact, if we attempt to gain eternal life with God through rational speculation and spiritual self-development, we will commit spiritual suicide. Those who use their reason and their intellect to make a ladder for their ascent into heaven, will, like Lucifer, plunge themselves and others into hell instead.

But we have no need to climb up by ourselves into heaven. The Triune God has come down to earth for us. God has become incarnate for us, available to us externally in our senses, embodied for us embodied creatures in the ministry of word. We have access to him through His word. The sacred Scriptures not only teach us about eternal life; they actually give us eternal life as they teach us. We also have "the real teacher of the Scriptures," the Holy Spirit, who uses the Scriptures to teach us the things of God. Luther, therefore, advises the student of theology to give up trying to fabricate a theological system based on human reason and experience. Instead he should learn theology by praying for the gift of the Holy Spirit as his instructor. He says: ". . . kneel down in your room and pray to God with true humility and earnestness, that through his dear Son, he would give you his Holy Spirit, to enlighten you, lead you, and give you understanding."

Two things are remarkable in this piece of advice: the Trinitarian dynamic of this prayer for the Holy Spirit, and the repeated request for the bestowal of the Holy Spirit. As beggars who kneel before our great benefactor, we are drawn into the Triune God and share in His work here on earth.

It would be all too easy to misapply these words of Luther, as some Pietists and Charismatics do, by advocating a method of spiritual exegesis. Luther, however, does not here reject the careful reading, grammatical analysis, and literary exegesis of the Scriptures, in favor of reliance on the direct mental guidance by the Holy Spirit. He does not claim that through prayer and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit the

reader receives special insights into the text of the Scriptures, its true meaning. Rather, Luther presupposes that God the Father grants His life-giving, enlightening Holy Spirit through His word. So the student of theology prays for the enlightenment, guidance, and understanding that the Holy Spirit alone can give through the Scriptures.[9] He prays that the Holy Spirit will use the Scriptures to interpret him and his experience so that he sees himself and others as God does. In this way he trusts in God's word as a means of grace, the channel of the Holy Spirit.

The study of theology, then, is based on prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit turns would-be masters of theology, spiritual self-promoters, into humble, life-long students of the Scriptures. Apart from the Spirit and His empowerment, people know nothing about eternal life. Without His illumination, the teaching of the Scriptures remains mere theory without any reality. Prayer for God's ongoing bestowal of the Holy Spirit through Jesus and the ongoing reception of the Holy Spirit makes a theologian. In short, the Holy Spirit makes a theologian and this is a life-long undertaking.

Now if Luther is right, we teachers of theology need to promote the work of the Holy Spirit and role of prayer for the Holy Spirit in the study of theology. We dare not down play the importance of prayer just because it is not a means of grace, nor dare we dismiss prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit as a Pentecostal aberration. Like the apostles in Acts 6:4, we need to devote ourselves to prayer and the ministry of the word, for the study of theology depends on the ongoing reception of the Holy Spirit through both of these.

*Meditation on the written word*

Luther claims that in the study of theology, prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit needs to be accompanied by continual meditation on the Scriptures.[10] The reason for this linkage is that "God will not give you His Spirit without the external word." The Scriptures are the God-breathed, inspirited word of God. The same God who inspired them with His life-giving Spirit uses them to inspire and energize us with His Spirit. The word of God is the means of grace, by which God the Father grants

[9]One may see Gunnar Wertelius, *Oratio Continua* (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1970) for a discussion on the relationship between the work of the Holy Spirit and the practice of prayer, 285-298.

[10]One may see John W. Kleinig, "The Kindled Heart: Luther on Meditation," *Lutheran Theological Journal* 20 (1986): 142-154.

His Holy Spirit through His dear Son. The Holy Spirit is therefore received through meditation on the word. The Spirit comes to us through the word so that He can do His work on us and in us through the word. No word; no Spirit. Likewise, no prayer; no Spirit.

When Luther speaks about "the external word," he criticizes two other kinds of meditation, both of which deny the incarnation.[11] On the one hand, he is critical of the method of meditation that he learned as a monk. It used the Scriptures as a kind of spiritual spring-board for the prayer of the heart and the mental or visionary appropriation of heavenly insights. On the other hand, he is equally critical of the enthusiastic practice of meditation on the inner word of the Holy Spirit, spoken in the hearts of God's people. In contrast to both these ways of learning theology, Luther advocates meditation on "the external word." It is the embodied word, spoken from human lips, written with human hands, and heard with human ears. Like the light of the sun, the word is out there, addressed to us by a pastor, written in a book, enacted in the divine service.[12] So, since the focus of meditation is on the external word, it basically involves spiritual extroversion rather than spiritual introversion. It is indeed a matter of the heart, but not only of the heart. The way to the heart is from the outside through the ears. In meditation we hear inwardly what is spoken to us outwardly.

This understanding of God's word as the physical means for His bestowal of the Holy Spirit led to two profound changes in the practice of meditation for Luther. First, whereas he had been taught as a monk to regard meditation as mental act, a state of being marked by inward, silent reflection, he realized that Christian meditation was primarily a verbal activity. The person who meditates speaks God's word to himself and listens attentively to it with his whole heart "to discover what the Holy Spirit means in it." In this he was influenced by his study of the psalms in Hebrew rather than in Latin.[13] He discovered that all the Hebrew words for the practice of meditation in the Psalter had to do with various

[11]Luther uses the term "the embodied word" (*das leiblich Wort*) as a synonym for the external word. Oswald Bayer explores the significance of these terms in *Leibliches Wort* (Tuebingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1992), 57-72.

[12]For the close connection between the external word and the ministry of the word, see Norman Nagel's essay on "*Externum Verbum*: Testing Augustana 5 on the Doctrine of the Holy Ministry," *Lutheran Theological Journal* 30 (1996): 101-110.

[13]One may see Siegfried Raeder, *Grammatica Theologica* (Tuebingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1977), 262-268.

forms of vocalization and sub-vocalization, ranging from speaking to murmuring, chattering to musing, singing to humming, muttering to groaning. A person who meditates therefore listens attentively to God's word as it is spoken personally to him. He concentrates exclusively on it; he speaks it to himself again and again; he reads and rereads it; he compares what it says with what is said elsewhere in the Bible; he chews at it, like a cow with its cud; he rubs at it, like a herb that releases its fragrance and healing powers by being crushed; he concentrates on it, physically, mentally, and emotionally, so that it reaches his heart, his core, the very center of his being. He receives what God says to him and gives to him in His word.

Secondly, in his teaching on meditation, Luther derives the private devotional life of the student from his involvement in public worship. He says:

> Thus you see how David constantly boasts in Psalm 119 that, day and night and always, he would not speak, compose, say, sing, hear, and read anything except God's word and commandments. For God will not give you his Spirit without the external word. So be guided by that, for it was not for nothing that he commanded that it should be written, preached, read, heard, sung, and spoken externally.

Luther does not envisage the practice of meditation as an inward, mental activity, but as an outward ritual enactment. As such it was inspired by the liturgy and derived from the enactment of God's word publicly in the divine service. God commands the church to preach, read, hear, sing, and speak His word, so that He could thereby convey and deliver His Holy Spirit to His people. That external proclamation and enactment of God's word determines how the student of theology meditates.[14] Just as the Scriptures are read in the Divine Service, so he reads them out aloud to himself as he meditates on some part of them. Just as the psalms are sung there, so he sings them to himself. Just as God's word is preached there, so he preaches it to himself. Just as God's word is spoken there, so he hears it addressed personally to himself.

[14]While Bayer highlights the public character of meditation and its practice for Luther (*Theologie*, 88-92), Hütter (*Suffering Divine Things*, 73), rightly emphasizes its connection with church practices. Both recognize that Luther's practice of meditation was closely connected with the singing and praying of the psalms in public worship.

Luther therefore advocates the practice of liturgical meditation on God's word, the exercise of liturgical piety.

All this has, I hold, important implications for the way that we learn theology in our seminaries. The whole life of a seminary should revolve around daily worship, the be-all and end-all in the receptive life of faith. Both teachers and students need to be disciples of God's word as it is spoken and enacted in worship. How can we have a Lutheran seminary where the curriculum does not issue from the divine service and lead students and teachers back into it? How can we properly model and teach our students the art of meditation except in corporate worship? They will most certainly not become good preachers of God's word unless they have first become meditative listeners of it. The fruit of meditation, as Luther recognized, is the preaching and teaching of God's word.[15]

*Temptation by Satan*

Luther claims that the right study of theology culminates in experience. Both he and his teachers agreed on that. But they disagreed on what they experienced and how. The monastic tradition of meditation held that the proper practice of meditation led to the experience of contemplation, the experience of union with the glorified Lord Jesus. In contrast to them, Luther taught that the receptive study of the Scripture in prayer and meditation led to the experience of God's word, the experience of its efficiency, its creativity, and its productivity. Strangely, the power of God's word, the power of the Holy Spirit at work in and through the word, is discovered and experienced most clearly in temptation.[16] Thus Luther says: "Thirdly, there is temptation, 'Anfechtung.' This is the touchstone that teaches you not only to know and understand, but also to experience how right and true, how sweet and lovely, how powerful and comforting God's word is, wisdom above all wisdom."

The kind of experience that Luther describes differs quite radically from what we would normally regard as a spiritual experience. It is the experience of the impact of God's word on us and its effect in us. We experience the word of God. While this experience begins with the conscience, it touches all parts of us and integrates the whole person,

[15]*LW* 14,296, 302-303.

[16]See Andrew Pfeiffer, "The Place of *Tentatio* in the Formation of Church Servants," *Lutheran Theological Journal* 30 (1996): 111-119, and Steven A. Hein, "Tentatio," *Lutheran Theological Review* 10 (1997-98): 29-47.

mentally, emotionally, and physically. The Spirit-filled word attunes us to God the Father by conforming us to His dear Son. We do not internalize it in us and assimilate it to our way of being; no, it assimilates us and makes us godly. We do not use it to make something of ourselves; it makes us theologians.

In temptation the student of theology experiences for himself the righteousness and truth of God's word with his whole being, rather than just with the intellect; he experiences the sweetness and loveliness of God's word with his whole being, rather than just with the emotions; he experiences the power and strength of God's word with his whole being, rather than just with the body. Temptation is therefore the touchstone for the assessment of any theologian; it reveals what is otherwise unknown. Just as a pawnbroker uses a touchstone to test the presence and purity of gold in a coin or a piece of jewelry, so temptation tests and proves the reality of a person's spirituality.

When Luther speaks of temptation in this preface, he uses the word in a special way. In this case he does not refer to the enticement by the devil to sin, nor even to his condemnation of the sinner. The use of the German word "Anfechtung" indicates that it involves some kind of attack upon the person. Luther makes it clear that this happens in the public domain; it involves public antagonism and opposition to those who are pastors or about to become pastors. It is an attack upon the ministry of the word. The devil does not attack the office of the ministry as such, because it can serve his interests if it operates apart from God's word and His Holy Spirit; his concern is for the source of empowerment in the office, the operation of the pastor by faith in God's word and the power of the Holy Spirit. That he will not allow at any cost, for it is his undoing.

As long as any pastor, or any student of theology, operates by his own power, with his own intellect and human ideas, the devil lets him be. But as soon as he meditates on God's word and so draws on the power of the Holy Spirit, the devil attacks him by stirring up misunderstanding, contradiction, opposition, and persecution. The attack is mounted by him through the enemies of the gospel in the church and in the world. All this happens to stop the work of God's word in the student of theology. As soon as God's word is planted in his heart, the devil tries to drive it out, so that he will not be able to operate by the power of the Holy Spirit. The large number of laments in the Psalter indicate that this is quite normal.

They show how the ministry of the word produces enmity and opposition; it arouses the ire of the enemy.

But paradoxically these attacks are counter-productive. Luther says: "For as soon as God's word shoots up and spreads through you, the devil persecutes you. He makes you a real teacher (of theology); by his attacks (temptations) he teaches you to seek and love God's word."

Thus the attack of the devil on the student of theology serves to strengthen his faith because it drives him back to God's word as the only basis for his work in the church. In the face of an attack by the devil, he cannot rely on his own resources; he cannot depend on the affirmation of his theology by the world or even by the church. His own spiritual weakness and his lack of wisdom make him rely on the power of the Holy Spirit and the wisdom of God's word, "wisdom above all wisdom." Through temptation the student of theology becomes a theologian; he learns the theology of the cross; more correctly, the spirituality of the cross.[17] He does not experience the glory of union with his heavenly Lord, but knows the pain of union with Christ crucified. He bears the cross together with his Lord and suffering with him in the church.

If we heed what Luther has to say about the role of the devil in the spiritual formation of theologians, we will realize our seminaries are spiritual battlegrounds, contested places, rather than spiritual oases, places of refuge from temptation. We will also be able to help our students understand why they and their families come under such concerted attack at certain points during their course of study. We may even welcome these attacks. They show that God is truly at work with us, making true theologians out of us and our students.

## Conclusion

The life of faith is the *vita pasiva,* the receptive life. In it we do not make something of ourselves, God fashions and forms us. This is so also for pastors. We do not make theologians; God does. He creates them by calling them to be ministers of His word, just as He called the apostles. He trains them in His church through what is done to them there and through what they suffer there. He makes theologians through the gift of the Holy Spirit, the power of His word, and the opposition of the devil.

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[17]One may see Gene Edward Veith Jr., *The Spirituality of the Cross* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999).

While this makes things easier for us in some ways as teachers of theology, it also makes things even more difficult for us, because we will never be able to construct a foolproof system of training for the production of good pastors. Yet that is what is expected of us, and it is all too easy to own that expectation. At best, we can establish a curriculum that is consistent with the divinely instituted dynamic for spiritual formation, foster a community that promotes its operation, and model how to keep on learning by living the receptive life of faith.

What then can we do to promote the receptive life for students of theology? Here are seven brief concluding proposals.

1. The whole curriculum for the theological education needs to revolve around the worship of the community. This must be central to all that is done in a seminary, for in the divine service God's Spirit-giving word is proclaimed and enacted as it is read and sung, preached and prayed, spoken and confessed. In it we should sing and pray the whole Psalter, for it is the divinely inspired manual of Christian spirituality, in which God Himself teaches us how to pray, meditate, and resist the enemy.

2. We would do well to begin all our lectures with a word of God and prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

3. We need to be diligent in our own devotional life and help students to establish the practice of daily devotions, with an emphasis on meditation on God's word, prayer, and spiritual vigilance.

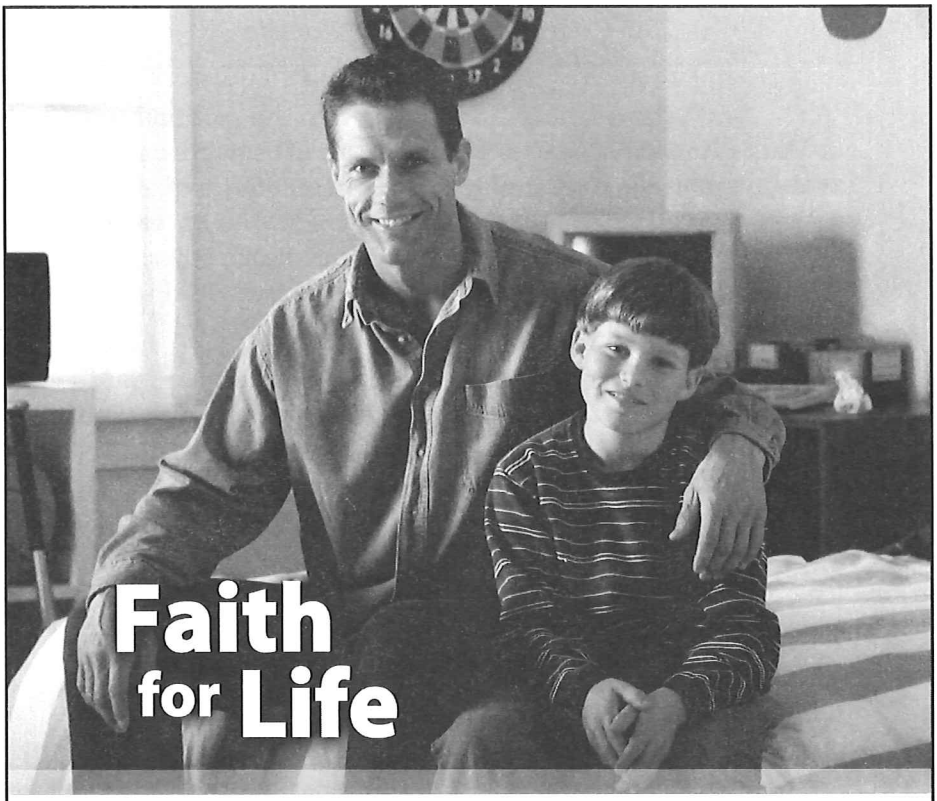
4. A course on Lutheran spirituality as the receptive life of faith could be made part of the curriculum. The accent in this should be on actual experience and personal practice rather than on theory. Any such course should cover the connection of personal piety with public worship, the practice of prayer, evangelical meditation of God's word, engagement in spiritual warfare, and the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of faith.

5. The study of theology needs to be understood as part of the battle between Christ and Satan in the church. The better we do our work as students of God's word, the greater the opposition will be. That is not a bad thing, provided that we deal with the conflicts in our community and in the lives of our students spiritually as attacks by the devil rather than merely as personal, doctrinal or psychological problems.

6. As much weight should be given to the spiritual formation of students as to their academic development. This happens through their involvement in the community and their acceptance of authority, their participation in public worship and interaction with each other, our pastoral care of them and their pastoral care of each other, our provision of spiritual direction and their practice of spiritual self-appraisal, our readiness to apologize and their willingness to forgive.[18]

7. The whole curriculum needs to focus on the use of God's word in worship and life and ministry as the means of the Holy Spirit, for as Luther says, "God will not give . . . his Spirit without the external word." Apart from God's word no one could ever learn theology. That is what makes a theologian.

[18]One may see the discussion on spiritual direction by Eugene H. Peterson, *Working the Angles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 103-131.

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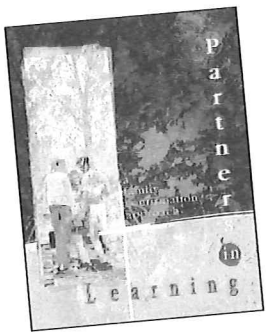


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# The Other Gospel of Neo-Pentecostalism in East Africa

Anssi Simojoki

## The Religious Landscape of East Africa

The Lutheran churches of East Africa, like other historic churches, increasingly have to live surrounded and besieged by a diverse, changing religiosity. The traditional position of mission work was one whereby long-established churches, with their historic mission organizations, were standing against old, crumbling African paganism, and backward Islam. This situation has changed decisively. Changes within Christendom contribute to the spread and fragmentation of the field of churches. In many areas, a veritable redistribution is taking place. Since Nairobi has been the gate to East Africa, religious plurality is the most diverse in Kenya. I have chosen six current religious factors in change:

1. Western churches have changed theologically, followed surprisingly swiftly by their established or integrated mission organizations. Together with the most significant ecumenical organizations, they have become channels for the values of liberal theology and western secularism into the African churches. The secularized liberal theology of Europe and North America has, for a long time now, trodden a separate path from classical Christianity. Whether we like to admit it or not—and usually we do not—the exponent of this parting of the ways within the church has for a generation been the question of the office of the ministry. The ordination of women has been item number one on the agenda of the Lutheran World Federation, for example, in Africa. Pure Lutheran doctrine is dragging far behind. Despite all their beautiful principles, the methods used on African church leaders to advance the ordination of women have been traditional: bribery, blackmail, and threats. The introduction of women's ordination has brought a new image of God and a new political theology into the historic churches, which diverges from biblical doctrine. This has brought a matching change in the definitions of right and wrong. They have been replaced by a post-modern and politically correct orthodoxy, which is familiar from the media, ambiguous in content, and very aggressive. It draws its strength from old neo-leftism, social Darwinism, feminism, and pluralistic Green ideology. In the Western world, this

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development moves hand in hand with a diminishing vision for mission and a waning missionary effort.

2. Islam is encountering Christianity from an entirely new perspective than before. It is being buttressed by millions of dollars from oil-rich Arab countries. The rise of Islamic fascism underlines its legalism, while its high moral values challenge Western immorality and lawlessness, still erroneously considered part of the Christian faith.

3. Oriental-type "New Age" religion has poured into the vacuum in the West, which secularization has created. With Hollywood and the rest of the entertainment industry in its engine room, its ideas and beliefs are spreading all over the world and leading the old paganism of traditionally Christian countries into a renaissance. In Africa, it has a genuine point of contact with the Hinduism of its Asian population, although the traditional attitudes of this ethnic group towards Africans will probably have been the most efficient obstacle to the spread of Hinduism. On the other hand, the white population is nowadays very receptive.

4. European ultramontanism is a fanatical movement within the Roman Catholic Church that submits itself absolutely to Rome and the pope (which, from a Northern European perspective, are *ultra montes*, beyond the Alps). This movement, which culminated in the papacy of Pius IX and Vatican I, has now become a global movement. The prerequisite for the spread has been the development of the electronic media. The movements of the pope can be followed in every corner of the world. Wherever he arrives, a well-prepared pilgrimage of hundreds of thousands, even millions of Christians gather to hear the head of the Roman Church deliver his often very general, moralistic message. This rise of the importance of the Roman Church has taken place against all the expectations and predictions of liberals. Some might still remember the passionate Hans Küng debate. Borrowing the strange utterance of the late Karl Rahner, Küng was not a radical Catholic, but a liberal Protestant, and he never became the new Luther envisaged by the media, nor did many of his like-minded fellow-Catholics. The present traditional and ultramontanistic papacy believed itself to be in such a powerful position that in the year 2000, after decades of ecumenical activity, it once more declared Rome to be the only true church. In principle, there is nothing

new here.[1] In Africa, too, the power and importance of the Church of Rome is enormous. In practice, it does not seem threatened by the immorality in parishes, for example, in the area of the celibacy of the priesthood, though recent scandals in North America and throughout the world may change this.

5. African syncretistic prophetic movements are a mixture of ancient African religiosity and the Bible. Their rise started in the 1920s after the churches borne by missionary work had already established themselves. These prophetic characters have included Isaiah Shembe in South Africa, Wade Harris in Côte D'Ivoire, Garrick Braid in Nigeria, the Nigerian *Aladura* healing movement (which later merged with Pentecostalism), Simon Kimbangu of the Congo, and the West Kenyan Zakayo Kivuli. The prophets have included both men and women. These different Zionic or *Roho* (Spirit) churches live in Kenya in the form of the Legio Maria and Roho Israel.[2]

6. Neo-Pentecostalism is currently changing Christianity very powerfully. The religion of salvation becomes a human-centered, voluntary program for the attainment of health, wealth, and success. The spread of a growing liberalism, and a fall in the cost of the mass media have significantly assisted the growth of Neo-Pentecostalism's Theology of Success. Praise and miracle meetings are weekly mass events in Kenya. On top of that, one is increasingly likely to come across them on television.

Just a few words about my choice of terms: I prefer "Neo-Pentecostalism" to the word "charismatic." "Charismatic" can be used to refer, correctly or incorrectly, to as many different things as a word such as "fundamentalism." In the absence of a precise definition, "fundamentalism" and "charismatic" mean absolutely nothing. In fact,

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[1]*Decretum Dominus Iesus*, August 6, 2000. Encyclica of Pius XII *Mystici corporis Christi* in 1943; Seppo A. Teinonen, *Suuntana ykseys.* Valikoima edumenisia asiakirjoja 1910-1967 (Helsinki, Finland: Kirjapaja, 1967), 74; Seppo A. Teinonen, *Uskonnot nykyhetken maailmassa* (Porvoo-Helsinki, Finland: Söderström, 1971), 149; John Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope: The Secret History of Pius XII* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1999), 275-277.

[2]Jonathan Hildebrandt, *History of the Church in Africa: A Survey*, second edition (Achimota, Ghana: African Christian Press, 1987), 214-215; John Baur, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa: An African Church History*, second edition (Nairobi: Paulines, 1998), 490.

they are misleading. To illustrate the point: I have personally encountered orthodox, confessional, charismatic Lutherans. As the ancient Romans said, *mirabile dictu,* or to quote the song, "Wonder of wonders and miracle of miracles." In short, one can be a Pentecostal, liberal, or Lutheran charismatic. In the same way, the classical Lutheran biblical faith is not *eo ipso* fundamentalism.[3] For this reason I consider it more helpful to use the term "Neo-Pentecostalism" in preference to "charismatic." I consider it to be an accurate description of the religious tide that is currently rising in East Africa. "Neo-Pentecostalism" also expresses the change in emphasis from traditional Pentecostalism with its focus on sanctification.

## "Come and Receive Your Miracle"

The Neo-Pentecostalism that is spreading with force in Africa has essentially changed in comparison to traditional Christian proclamation. The change is true also in comparison to traditional Pentecostal proclamation. This is in spite of the fact that it is a logical development from it. Instead of the gospel of the forgiveness of sins, the center is occupied by miracles and the improvement of the quality of life, along with temporal blessings from God. Nairobi, the Kenyan capital, is one central stage—though by no means the only—for this type of Christian proclamation in Africa.

A whole new genre of Christian literature has arisen to serve this new type of proclamation. It is best characterized by the term "deliverance." The original point of departure was the healing of the sick, hence, the uncountable healing ministries on the African continent. I am not referring to the holistic health programs of churches and missions, but specifically to miraculous healings.[4] On the continent where the

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[3]N. T. Ammerman commits this kind of terminological error confusing orthodoxy and fundamentalism in *Fundamentalisms Observed,* A Study Conducted by The American Academy of Arts and Sciences. The Fundamentalism Project, Volume 1. Edited by Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 1-65.

[4]A holistic church medical mission can be also called 'healing ministry' as in the Makumira Report of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania 1967; John Wimber, with Kevin Springer, *Power Evangelism: Signs and Wonders Today* (London: Hodder And Stoughton, 1985); John Goldingay, editor, *Signs, Wonders and Healing: When Christians Disagree* (Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity, 1989).

population is exploding, where corruption is undermining the national economies and preventing development, there is unlimited demand for inexpensive cures for illnesses—whatever form these may take. The focus on miraculous healings has been central to and consistent with Pentecostal theology. A draft for a Pentecostal dogmatics published in Norway calls the preaching of miraculous healings "the lost gospel," which Pentecostalism has returned to Christendom. The aim of a person who has been saved and who has received the forgiveness of sins is the baptism and anointing of the Holy Spirit. Its sign is considered particularly to be speaking in tongues. The reaching for the manifestations of the Spirit has produced a unique orgiastic liturgical tradition. A spiritual meeting starts with a warm-up. It is then taken by the power of praise to its climax, a kind of epiphany, in which heavenly forces break into the meeting place and take over both the collective and the individual. During this epiphany, supernatural forces are manifested in supernatural miracles, the most significant being the traditional speaking in tongues.[5]

The new message of deliverance has taken this process considerably further. Various miracles have taken the place of *glossolalia*. The range of miracles has also spread beyond the traditional expectation and promise of the healing of the sick to all areas of human life.

I see this development as the confluence of two channels. One has flourished in the program of the popular American television evangelists, the other spread forcefully from South Korea as early as the 1980s in the Theology of Success of Yonggi Cho, as he was then called. The effect of the Korean Theology of Success and mission funds in East Africa has been considerable. In both these channels there is a discernible change of emphasis from the gift of the gospel to the law of a volitional Christian life of wholeness.[6] In today's Kenya, several television programs offer

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[5]For more on traditional Pentecostalism, one may see E. Molland, *Konfesjonskunskap. Kristenhetens trosbekjennelser og kirkesamfunn* (Oslo, Norway: Forlaget Land og Kirke, 1961), 267-271; A. Somdal, *Tro og lære. Et forsøk på en samlet presentasjon av pinsevennenes tro og lære* (Larvik, Norway: Filadelfiaforlaget, 1990), 272-288. *Aladura*-movement in Nigeria stemmed from the disappointment with the results of the Anglican medical missions; Baur, *2000 Years*, 490.

[6]Methods to achieve temporal success and blessings: Paul Yonggi Cho, *Guds ord hade framgång* (Stockholm, Sweden: no publisher, 1978), 136-151.152-157 and Paul Yonggi Cho, *Skapande tro* (Bromma, Sweden: no publisher, 1976), 105-119. The author

performer-centered preaching of miracles from dawn till dusk. In newspaper advertisements, the final vestiges of modesty have been abandoned. For instance, before arriving at the meeting, the participant can cut a coupon out of the paper and mark on it the precise miracle that he or she needs in the meeting. In addition to health problems, one finds the middle-class issues of relationships, marriage, career development, and finances. There are also ministries that are entirely specialized in the needs of business people, the generation of income, and the problems of enterprise, which are to be solved by the power of the Spirit. Moreover, large bazaars have sprung up adjacent to the meeting grounds, where one can buy duty free or lightly taxed imports, typically electronics imported from the Arab Emirates. The world famous Pentecostal preacher, Reinhard Bonnke, is the representative of the most moderate wing on the African market, which is still concerned primarily with the proclamation of the gospel and the conversion of people.

If one is to believe advertisements on billboards and in newspapers, Nairobi alone is in a constant state of the pouring of the Spirit, the explosion of the Spirit, explosions of miracles, spiritual conflagrations, and total breakthrough. As well as phenomenal church attendance, "Nairobbery," as the city is also known, is sadly also the dwelling place of large scale and growing paganism, corruption, drunkenness, prostitution, unfaithfulness, and violent crime.

### The Methods and New Laws of Recurring Deliverance

One of the central concepts of the Neo-Pentecostalism of East Africa is deliverance. It is understood solely in terms of demonology. In short:

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emphasises, besides the word of God, Christian obedience, which is like a law according to which men live in God's kingdom. Christian obedience is manifested in the dutiful observance of beseeching, holiness, Bible studies, prayer, and witnessing. Obedience is a volitional attitude of life, rather than a gift given through the gospel. The influential German theologian Johann Tobias Beck (1804-1878) created a similar biblical and legalistic system. The faith was understood primarily as being a restoration of the biblical way of life. This is also the basic intention in Adventism, Anssi Simojoki, *Apocalypse Interpreted: The Types of Interpretation of the Book of Revelation in Finland, 1944-1995, from the Second World War to the Post-Cold War World* (Åbo, Finland: Åbo Akademi University Press, 1997), 85-111; Robert Kübel and Albert Hauck, *Beck, Johann Tobias* (Leipzig, Germany: J. E. Hinrichs'se Buchhandlung, 1897), 500-506.

the Christian is at every moment the target of the attacks of satan and evil spirits. Consequently, the life of the Christian is one of constant wariness and warfare against evil spirits. Because these attacks also always reach some degree of success, they manage to prevent the abundant, full life God wills for the believer.[7] Therefore, the life of the Christian—instead of the abundance willed by God—is ordinary, imperfect, burdened, and bound up in temptations, sins, poverty, disease, gluttony, marital problems, insomnia, evil spirits, and other influences. When the evil spirits are exorcised out of the Christian by a certain mass-meeting technique, they have been released, delivered into a life of abundance, in which spiritual and temporal blessings flow without hindrance. Such an exorcising deliverance activity as this, cursing evil spirits, is ongoing.[8] To carry it out, "anointed preachers," "men filled with fire" (and increasingly also women) are needed. Their titles are usually rather high church— preferably nothing lower than bishop. Their followers are "victors," or if the congregation has broken up in the quarrels between the leaders, "victors" and "achievers." To them, everything is possible, because they believe.

Deliverance Christianity comes with a new set of laws. Following them guarantees God's temporal blessings. The most important of these is tithing. The law of tithes is a revealing detail because it exposes the arbitrariness of their use of the Bible. Since the New Testament lacks a tithing law, Neo-Pentacostals derive it from the Old Testament by a rather tortuous route: because Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, Abraham's offspring are also under the same law. The New Testament era of grace does not abolish this law. Tithes are in actual fact "a

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[7]Περισσισσευειν/περισσευμα/περισσον are being translated with various words. Yet, "abundance" and "full/fullness" are the most important equivalents.

[8]The field of this literature extends beyond the horizon: T. L. Osborn, *How to Receive Miracle Healing* (Nairobi: no publisher, 1977); Symons Onyango, *Set Free From Demons* (Nairobi, Kenya: Evangel Publishing House, 1977); Gordon Wright, *In Quest of Healing* (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1984); Cal R. Bombay, *Sin, Sickness and God*, second edition (Nairobi, Kenya: Evangelical Publishing House, 1991); Peter Horrobin, *Healing Through Deliverance: Biblical Basis*, second edition (Tonbridge, Kent: Sovereign World, 1994); Peter Horrobin, *Healing Through Deliverance: Practical Ministry* (Tonbridge, Kent: Sovereign World, 1995); and Francis Wale Oke, *Victory in Spiritual Warfare* (London: Eagle Press, 1996). Kurt E. Koch, *Demonology, Past and Present: Identifying and Overcoming Demonic Strongholds*, translated from the German (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel, 1973), 133-161, employs the word "deliverance" in the context of exorcism.

commandment of the Lord." Even Luke 11:42 is interpreted to say that Jesus commended the Pharisees for their tithing of mint, dill, and cumin. If one neglects tithes, they are attached to "tithe redemption"—a fee for reopening the closed channel of blessing.[9]

Instead of new laws, a representative of traditional Christianity asks about the place of the sacraments and the office of the word in this Neo-Pentecostal teaching. Sacramental teaching is missing altogether. There is no place for baptism in the new style deliverance Christianity. Exorcism has completely lost its ancient place as part of the baptismal liturgy, and its connection to the church's teaching office—in just the same way as it disappeared out of the liturgies of the Scandinavian Lutheran churches at the turn of the previous century under the influence of the theology of Albrecht Ritschl and Johann Tobias Beck. Baptism is not even necessary for the Christian, according to East African Neo-Pentecostalism. In that respect the Quakers and the Salvation Army are no longer alone. It is enough to make a conscious decision of faith, come to the front, and raise a hand at the meeting. However, if such a person nonetheless wants absolute certainty of having become a Christian, he might be anointed with oil.[10]

The ministry is prophetic. Any thoughts concerning the church's historical continuum through doctrine, the sacraments, and the office are completely alien. The external call, *vocatio externa*, is unknown. The "anointed" preacher, "filled with fire," believes he or she has received a call directly from heaven. Such an internal call is confirmed by miracles worked by the preacher—or at least claimed by the preacher. They are considered incontrovertible proof of the divine origin of the call. Consequently, they also demand unreserved acknowledgement and obedience. The critic is easily seen as being on the devil's business, which is quite understandable in the frame of reference I have described.

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[9]George K. Adjeman, *Tithing Your Passport to God's Abundance*, forward by D. Oyedepo (Lagos, Nigeria: Dominion Publishing House, 1995).

[10]The author has interviewed Christians coming to the Lutheran Heritage Foundation centre in Karen, Kenya, who have attended these meetings and received impulses from there. Naturally, no names can be disclosed.

## The Syncretistic Frame of Reference

One of the sources of strength of the modern theology of success is its union with traditional African religion and the latter's expectations. This is true despite the fact that the original Neo-Pentecostal movements hail chiefly from North American Pentecostalism. Naturally, these features are not limited to Africa, but are more or less universal. However, on the African continent they offer a particularly apt explanation for the explosion of Christian miracle and success theology. At this juncture one must, of course, be careful about over-generalizations.

Africa has no tradition of anti-religious ideology, such as has been particularly strong in Europe and in Communist countries.[11] Instead of an atheistic vacuum, traditional African religiosity sees the world full of mysterious forces and spirits, with which it is necessary to learn to cope and to control if one desires to succeed. In Kenya, a pagan reaction of the ilk of the Mau-Mau uprising has found a new expression in the Mungiki movement. Traditional religion still bears a strong influence and causes worries for the government, which wants to have nothing to do with pagan beliefs that are considered primitive.

Spirits are a constant source of danger and threat in a person's life. Reality as a sort of "Solaris" sea of mysterious forces offers what are in theory endless resources for controlling and altering one's life. Against this background, the observer may be better placed to understand the strong part played by satan and evil spirits in the proclamation of the miracle preachers. At the same time, the model of a reality loaded with

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[11]It is quite characteristic that such dictionaries as *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart (RGG). Handwörterbuch für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft. 4., völlig neu bearbeitete Auflage hrs. von H. D. Bentz, D. S. Browning, B. Janowski, E. Jüngel* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 1998) and *Handbuch religionswissenschaftlicher Grundbegriffe*, Hrsg. von Cancik, B. Gladikow, and M. Laubscher (Stuttgart-Berlin-Köln: Kohlhammer, 1988) consider demons and demon-possession solely in psychological terms. This is due to a secular immanent world view. Accordingly, demonology and the respective phenomena are considered as patterns of thought in pre-industrial societies. In a post-modern fashion, exorcism is criticised as a kind of power play and psychological subjugation. Demonology in the Bible and in the Early Church is erroneously ascribed to dualism. Lutheran baptismal exorcism is completely unknown; P. Habermehl in *Handbuch religionswissen* 2, 401-404 in accordance with Katharina Elliger. The question remains, however, how can such modern deliberate and industrialized acts of evil and atrocities as those under Bolshevism and Nazism be explained without the existence of the realm of evil?

supernatural forces offers a point of departure for the search for, and offer of, supernatural deeds.

The supernatural powers of life can be used for good or bad. That explains the ongoing existence of witches, the majority of whom are women. In western Kenya, witches are still burnt alive in their huts from time to time, in retaliation for the spells of black magic, which are believed to be quite real. A positive control and use of the same supernatural forces has been represented by the *mganga* medicine men, who, as the term indicates, have mainly been men.[12] In addition, there are soothsayers, prophets, priests of sacred places, herbalists, and rainmakers. The leader of a community, be it a family, a clan, or tribe, must be able to protect his own and to guarantee their well-being. In the field of politics, such expectations have created networks of dependencies, perks and services, which resemble the ancient Roman system of clients. Today, as everything is changing, the clear boundaries between different roles have also become murkier in many respects.[13]

Taking these traditional models as a point of departure, it is easy to apply the roles of the exorcist, prophet, healer, and rain or miracle maker to the roaring stage magnets of the mass meetings. The continent's cultural traditions set certain expectations, changes, and the demands for the religious leader as a prophet, fighter of evil, healer, and the guarantor of well-being. Instead of the Solaris of supernatural forces there is the force field of the spirit. Its possibilities in human life are limitless, as long as one learns to utilize them.

Along with the rest of the continent, East Africa has seen, and is constantly seeing, fragmentation of movements and the birth of new ones, caused by the strong leader figure. Of such a leader, who is a miracle-maker-cum-prophet, the expectations are, consequently, high. Christian and traditional role models become intertwined. In the *Roho*

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[12]Swahili: *Mganga*; Lloyd Schwantz, "Health and Healing in Traditional African Thought and Practice," The Makumira Report, February 1974, 37-46.

[13]Richard J. Gehman, *African Traditional Religion in Biblical Perspective* (Kijabe, Kenya: Kesho Publications, 1989; Nairobi, Kenya: East African Educational Publishers, 1993) 67-79; John S. Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion* (London-Ibadan-Nairobi: Heinemann, 1981), 65-76, 150-163, 164-174; John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (Nairobi-Ibadan-London: Heinemann, 1989), 75-91, 166-193, 194-203; Schwantz, *Health and Healing*, 37-46; P. Habermehl, "Exorzismus" in *Handbuch religionswissen* 2, 401-404.

*Israel* groups, which are particularly prominent in Western Kenya but also in the slums of Nairobi, High Church vestments are coupled with marching behind a flag *a la* the Salvation Army. Curiously, though, marching is often replaced by jogging incredibly long distances at a time, beating a drum and shaking a little sleigh-bell-like chime, *ad maiorem gloriam Dei*. The *Legio Maria* movement, which has attracted a very large following, has combined the traditions of the original church of the founder, namely Roman Catholicism, with the Old Testament and traditional culture. Of these, not the least significant is polygamy. After the death of the leader, the followers have sometimes prayed continually for days, expecting his resurrection from the dead—though with no success as yet. The communities continue their existence, limping along, or as if nothing had happened. The same feature is also familiar from various millenarian movements, whose predictions of the end of the world have been disappointed—but which, nonetheless, continue their existence. It would be intriguing to compare their experiences with the early church, for whom the proclamation of the hope of resurrection was absolutely central.

In summary, Africa has a great demand for the charismatic, prophetic religious leader, who can consolidate his or her position by means of miracles and promises of a secure life. Tradition provides a basis for a great readiness to believe and follow their message. The community's expectations can, in fact, force the religious leader onto a course of which he or she may have had no idea. Promises on the one hand, and expectations on the other, can create a self-perpetuating development, which, depending on one's viewpoint, can be called a vicious circle or some other kind of flywheel.[14]

Through the prophet figure, we are approaching traditional African paganism and sometimes also Islam, as in the *Mugiki* movement and some other, lesser known, groups.

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[14]According to a piece of research by the Daystar University, Nairobi (Stan Downes, Robert Oehrig, and John Shane, "Summary of the Nairobi Church Survey" [Nairobi, Kenya: E. M. Bassett Christian Outreach in a World-Class City, Daystar University College, 1989]) the church attendance was divided as follows: Roman Catholic services 30%, Anglican 8%, Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans and other traditional Protestant churches 36%, Coptic and Greek Orthodox 1.8%, independent African churches and groups 25%.

For reasons enumerated above, I see nothing miraculous in the high number of the miracle preachers. Moreover, there seems to be no ebb, cul-de-sac, or other end to its growth currently in sight. It is odd, however, that there seems to be no scientific observation of this activity. For instance, alleged healings are not compared with medical examinations; the real number of miracles is not counted, nor is that of their absence in the face of contrary claims, as happened in the case of Maurice Cerullo, who declared in India his thousands of listeners healed and who subsequently had to escape under police protection from the rage of the deceived crowd, because no one had been healed.

### Deliverance Theology and New Testament

Has the traditional mainstream of Christendom lost the gospel, or at least its essential part? After all, the New Testament holds promises of signs following the apostles (Mark 16:17-18). The disciples had the promise of doing greater signs than Jesus (John 14:12). So, is Neo-Pentecostalism returning something that is essential to the gospel, to Christian proclamation and work? Do we only have the "full gospel" after this necessary restoration?

The problems of the "deliverance theology" I have described above start already in its terms and concepts. In fact, available material is rather thin in comparison to the centrality of the doctrine in Neo-Pentecostalism.[15] The English word "deliverance" and its derivatives have been translated from two Greek word clusters: ρυσεσθαι and λυτρω. The sentence ". . . to rescue us from the hand of our enemies (KJV: Being delivered out of the hand of our enemies)..." in Zechariah's *Benedictus* (Luke 1:74; see also "salvation" and "saved" 1:70) has a wider meaning than freedom from the demons. In actual fact, only the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:13 is close to the meaning "deliverance theology" gives to the word "deliverance." Generally in the New Testament, "deliverance" means being set free from the powers of darkness, the coming wrath, evil people, and the persecution of Christians. Salvation and deliverance from the powers of darkness is only one shade in the broad range of meanings. Even then, it does not justify the continual

[15]King James Version: Mattew 6:13; Luke 4:18; 10:22; 11:4.27; 26:15, Acts 2:23; 7:35; Romans 4:25; 7:6; 8:21.32; 2 Corinthians 1:10; 4:11; Galatians 1:4; 2 Timothy 4:18; Hebrews 11:35-36; 2 Peter 2:7; Judah 3. New International Version: Matthew 6:13; Acts 7:35; Romans 4:25; 11:26; 2 Corinthians 1:10.

exorcism, firstly because the kingdom of darkness is more than the individual demonic attacks, and secondly because the question of baptism is intricately connected to it. Therefore, the nearest meaning is a once-for-all redemption. There is a christological hymn or confession in Colossians (1:12-23), which leads us to the center of baptismal theology (Colossians 2:6-15): "For he has rescued from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (Colossians1:13-14).

Here, then, the synonym of the word "redemption" is "the forgiveness of sins." According to the rabbinic Mishnah, the redemption of the Exodus was also a "forgiveness" as the releasing of the Hebrew slaves.[16] Αφιημι in the New Testament means the release from the slavery of sin to a heavenly inheritance. This deed of God is directly linked to baptism, as found in the main section of the Colossian epistle. "Redemption" or "deliverance" is the forgiveness of sins, righteousness, and holiness: "In (Christ Jesus) we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God" (Ephesians 1:7).[17]

"Redemption" in the New Testament also refers to protection from the last temptations, and to the final releasing at the second coming of Christ. Resurrection is the day of redemption for the Christian body.[18]

Therefore, deliverance or redemption has already taken place, once for all. At the same time, it is also eschatological, true according to hope—εν ελπιδι. Therefore, it must be taken possession of by faith. The theology of deliverance in the New Testament refers backwards to the once-for-all action of God in the salvation given in Christ; it is the forgiveness of sins and it will be fulfilled on the last day in Christ's second coming and the resurrection of the body. There is no biblical basis for the program of continual exorcism and miraculous healings described above. In that respect, the "deliverance theology" of Neo-Pentecostalism is one good example of how a theological term has got a secondary derivation from the biblical text, namely from the English translations,

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[16]In Acts 7:35 Moses is called λυτρωτης.

[17]Jukka Thuren Heprealaiskirje, *Paavalin kirjeet Filemonille, Kolossalaisille, Efesolaisille* (Helsinki: SLEY-Kirjat, 1992), 129-130. Romans 3:24; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Hebrews 9:15.

[18]Luke 21:28.; Romans 8:23.

without an accurate connection to the original text. The teachings of the Jehovah's Witnesses provide similar examples.[19]

### The Pure Gospel is at Stake

The power speculations and methods of Neo-Pentecostalism fatefully displace Christology and Christ's real presence in the church. With Christ, the forgiveness of sins and the sacraments are also pushed aside. Baptism, which is so central in the New Testament, has no place in proclamation and teaching.

When a Lutheran Christian puts forward such criticism as this, he will often meet with the clever-sounding, but biblically erroneous, claim that it is not the sacraments and doctrines that save, but Jesus! This kind of reasoning also lies behind the contemporary "Jesus First" ideology in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Jesus' Great Commission is directly bound with baptism in Matthew and Mark, just as in Luke and John it is bound with the preaching of repentance and the power of the keys. The Swedish systematician Hj. Lindroth returns in his dogmatics again and again to two New Testament passages, 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Ephesians 1:2-14. God's salvation in Christ was present already at creation, fulfilled on the cross and deposited in the body of Christ, εν Χριστω.[20] According to Paul, Christology is the organizing principle of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The same is true of the John's gospel. The gift of the Holy Spirit is given "in Christ."[21] The traditional Latin phrase arises out of this fact: *Ubi Christus, ibi Spiritus – ubi Spiritus, ibi Christus* ("Where Christ is, there is the Spirit—where the Spirit is, there is Christ").[22] We are sacramentally united with Christ precisely in baptism.

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[19]Goldingay, *Signs*, 180: "There remains, then, a worrying absence of mandate from the New Testament for undertaking the kind of healing ministry that Jesus, his immediate disciples, and the apostles did."

[20]Hjalmar Lindroth, *Kyrklig dogmatic 1-3. Den kristna trosåskådningen med särskild hänsyn till det eskatologiska motivet och den fräls-ningshistoriska grundsynen.* Studia Doctrinae Christianae Christianae Upsaliensia 12:1. (Uppsala: University of Uppsala, 1975), 2:71-97. The central Pauline term εν Χριστω has obviously been a crux for modern Bible translators. For example, the Good News translation systematically avoids the expression 'being in Christ' with other constructions. In this way the translation also distances itself from Saint Paul's central christological mysticism.

[21]2 Corinthians 3:17-18; John 14:18-20.23.

[22]Hermann Sasse, *Jesus Christus der Herr: das Urbekenntnis der Kirche.* In Statu Confessionis. Gesammelte Aufsätze und kleine Schriften von Hermann Sasse.

Baptism is directly connected to God and the Lord of salvation history: " . . . one body, one Spirit; . . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all . . ." (Ephesians 4:4-6). Because Jesus saves, His baptism saves (1 Peter 3:21), and *vice versa*.[23] The eucharist unites the believers with the body and blood of the Lord: "Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf" (1 Corinthians 10:16-17).

In the New Testament, the gospel is the gospel of God and also the gospel of Christ. Paul rarely uses the term "Kingdom of God," and when he does, it is with reference to the common tradition of catechetical teaching.[24] He does not define the gospel in his letters, but expresses summaries of it (Romans 1:1 and following, 1 Corinthians 15:1 and following), because the gospel is familiar both to him and to his readers. There is no essential difference between the "gospel of the Kingdom" and the "gospel of Jesus," because the proclamation of the gospel always and primarily points to Jesus. The gospel, then, does not contain things with which it would be a "full gospel," but the gospel is christological, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, by God's power. This gospel and its teaching is "the eternal gospel" (Revelation 14:6 and following), because it is lasting and immutable: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).[25]

The Lord's true presence was also the gospel, which Isaiah proclaimed[26] in his prophecy of the great feast, where the Lord who is present in Zion will be seen, who will destroy death forever: "In that day they will say,

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Band 2. Herausgegeben Von F.W. Hopf. (Berlin: Furche-Verlag, 1932), 39-40 (2 Corinthians 3:17).

[23]David P. Scaer, *Baptism*, Confessional Lutheran Dogmatics, volume XI (Saint Louis, Missouri: The Luther Academy, 1999), 110-111.

[24]Romans 14:17; 1 Corinthians 4:20; 15:50; Galatians 5:21; Ephesians 5:5; Colossians 4:11; 1 Thessalonians 2:12; 2 Thessalonians 1:5.

[25]Heprealaiskirje, *Paavalin kirjeet*, 129-130.

[26]Jerome translated the verb ευαγγελιζασθαι (Isaiah 52:7; 61:1-3) in LXX for his Latin Vulgata Version with "euangelizare." Modern translations, which have been under the influence of the historical-critical studies and their philosophical premises for a century and a half at least, or under the influence of nineteenth-century Biblicism, have remarkably diluted the connection between the Old Testament "gospel" and the New Testament "gospel" with various "good news" wordings.

'Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation'" (Isaiah 25:6-9).[27]

Theologically, we have to return time and again to the fateful split that had appeared earlier in Christendom, but which was crystallized in the Protestant catechisms and confessions of the Reformation. At this point, Lutherans on the one hand, and the followers of Zwingli and Calvin and the Anabaptists on the other hand, differed decisively, although the Calvinists opposed and persecuted the deniers of infant baptism. The dispute concerning Christ's true presence was in fact a dispute about the doctrine of Christ and the church. When the key passages of the New Testament were interpreted symbolically, from the basis of humanist philosophy, it came to bear upon the whole of Christian faith as "being in Christ." A rift opened as to cleave the deepest mysteries of the Christian faith.[28] Calvin, defending his symbolic doctrine, thought himself able to distinguish between the whole person of Christ and His natures, as if Christ were divided.[29]

This kind of distinction has, in its consistency, affected everything from the center to the fringes. The distinction between Christ and the Spirit leads onto the division of the gospel. There are two kinds of gospel in Adventism and the teaching of J. N. Darby and his followers, which in turn have influenced Pentecostalism. In Adventism, the watershed ran in the year 1844, after which the proclamation of the "eternal gospel" of the

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[27]Meticulous linguistic analysis of the passage in Franz Delitzsch, *Isaiah*, volume VII of *Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 436-441; Claus Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66: A Commentary*, translated by David M. G. Stalker (London: SCM, 1969), 45-46; G. Friedrich, "Ευαγγελιζομαι," in *Theological Distionary of the New Testament*, edited by G. Kittel, translated by G. W. Bromiley, volume 2 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1983), 707-725; W. Elliger, *Deuterojesaja 1. Biblischer Kommentar. Altes Testaments* begr. von M.Noth. XI,1. (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Erziehungsverein, 1978), 34-36; Hans Wildberger, *Jesaja. 2. Teilband Jesaja 13-27, Biblischer Kommentar Altes Testament*, Begr. Von M. Noth. Hrsg. von S. Herrmann und H.W. Wolff. X/2. (Neukirchener-Verlag, 1978), 899-900.

[28]Hermann Sasse, *Here We Stand: Nature and Character of the Lutheran Faith*, translated with revisions and additions by Theodore G. Tappert (1966; reprint, Adelaide, South Australia: Lutheran Publishing House, 1979), 118-130.

[29]Johannes Calvin, *Unterricht in der christlichen Religion: Institutio Christianae religionis*, Nach der letzten Ausgabe übersetzt und bearbeitet von Otto Weber. 3. Aufl. (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984), 26-30.

Advent church was due to begin. Darbyism distinguishes between the "gospel of the Kingdom," proclaimed to the Jews, and the "gospel of Salvation," which belongs to Christians. We have already encountered the idea of an ordinary gospel and the "lost gospel" of miraculous healings, or the gospel and the "full gospel," which is, however, offered emptied of the sacraments. The same division is found in the distinction between water baptism and Spirit baptism, in opposition to the "one baptism" of the New Testament: new birth by water and the Spirit (John 3:5). How many artificial explanations have been created to separate water from the Spirit! The church, the body of Christ, and the Kingdom of God move apart. Yet further, on innumerable occasions, the last days of the New Testament have been divided into "time" and the "end times," even though, according to Peter's sermon at Pentecost, the end times began when the Holy Spirit was poured out in Jerusalem. All in all, "being in Christ" is exchanged for "being in the Spirit" and only the Spirit.[30]

When Pneumatology, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, is lifted out of its inseparable connection with Christology, Christ's real presence, mediated and guaranteed by the means of grace, is exchanged for a type of epiphany spirituality, wherein experiences and signs interpreted by humans indicate the Lord's presence. What is especially dubious in these signs is that they lack the support of a disciplined biblical interpretation, and that they are produced by a certain lively method that appeals to the emotions. The error in these methods is that they aim to turn the singular events in salvation history into products that are repeated from time to time, meeting to meeting. The one, unique deed has its continuity in its effects, not in the accurate imitation of the deed. After all, we do not attempt a daily repetition of the incarnation or the crucifixion, either.[31]

The history of the church is full of reports of miracles. They follow the gospel, but they are not part of it, let alone a condition or a prerequisite. In the Sermon for Maundy Thursday in the Church Postil, Luther discusses the nature and function of genuine miracles, salvation, and that

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[30]For example, Cyrus Ingerson Scofield, editor, *The Scofield Study Bible*, Scofield Facsimile Series (New York: no publisher, 1917 edition); Simojoki, *Apocalypse Interpreted*, 71-78, 85-92, 94-98; Scaer, *Baptism*, 107-110.

[31]Kurt Marquart, "'Church Growth' as Mission Paradigm: A Lutheran Assessment," Luther Academy Monograph (Houston: Our Savior Lutheran Church, 1994), 54-56.

God's deeds linked to it are hidden in the means of grace.[32] Antiquity and Judaism knew of miracle makers and exorcists. Shamanism is making a forceful comeback. The miracles that occur within Shintoism, Islam or, say, in the Hindu cobra cult of Southern India, are beyond the scope of this paper. Miracle makers were also common in the Middle Ages, particularly as part of pilgrimage spirituality, and during the Reformation.[33] When he expounded the Eighth Commandment in 1518, Luther—who, as we saw, accepted the possibility that miracles are biblical—turned against such people who are especially guilty of bearing false witness about God and other people. According to the Reformer, among them were lawyers, heretics, scholastics, Thomists, and the preachers and performers of miracles. The latter bear false witness about God and His saints with their deceptive tales of miracles.[34]

We encounter the practical consequences of the denial of original sin in Neo-Pentecostal demonology. With the biblical doctrine of original sin, we can face seriously all the weakness and fleshliness, which burdens humanity from the cradle to the grave. When one loses a realistic biblical view of humans, one winds up either with an optimistic anthropology alien to the Bible, as in theological liberalism, or everything is demonized, as happens in Neo-Pentecostal miracle preaching. What the Bible calls nature, or the weakness of the flesh in a fallen humanity, is either brushed aside with a shrug, or seen as thoroughly demon-possessed; and in both cases, there is no serious individual responsibility. The doctrine of original sin, on the other hand, explains temptations, battles, falls, powerlessness—all as part of the reality of sin, which is lingering in the world for the time being. However, the gospel declares them beaten powers, although they have not yet been removed because Christ has not yet returned in heavenly glory to his own people. The sinful woman did not get an exorcistic deliverance treatment like the demon-possessed man in the land of the Gerasenes. Instead, Jesus forgave her sins (Luke 7: 36-50).

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[32]Martin Luther, Kirchenpostille, 3rd gospel Sermon, in *D. Martin Luthers Werke.* Kritische Gesamtausgabe, 98 volumes (Weimar: Hermann Böhlau Nachfolger Edition, 1883 and following), 10 I. Hereafter referenced as *WA.*

[33]Ronald C. Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims: Popular Beliefs in Medieval England* (New York: Saint Martin's Press, 1995).

[34]Albrecht Peters, *Kommentar zu Luthers Katechismen 1: Die zehn Gebote.* Herausgegeben Von Gottfried Seebass (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1990), 288-289; *Decem praecepta Wittembergensi praedicata populo, 1518. WA* 1, 505-514.

Humans are from conception and birth corrupted by original sin and under the power of Satan, though not satans themselves. There is a difference between slave owner and slave. The baptism transfers one from this darkness to Christ's kingdom of grace, where sins are daily forgiven. Hence, since the ancient church, the baptismal liturgy has included renouncing the devil, *abrenuntiatio*, and the driving out of the evil spirit, exorcism.[35] This miracle of eternal life is the greatest of all miracles, but it is only understood by faith. Beside it, everything is secondary. Before this miracle, when he beheld the tortured Christ, Isaiah, the prophet of the Lord's real presence, cried out, "Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" (Isaiah 53:1)

Who will cry it out and teach it pure, undiminished, trusting in its own power, everywhere in today's world? Liberal, politically correct missiology cannot do it because of its lack of God's word. The "other gospel" of Neo-Pentecostalism is not that message. "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring the gospel" (Isaiah 52:7).

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[35]Scaer, *Baptism*, 181-193. C. F. W. Walther and W. Löhe restored the orthodox Lutheran baptismal ceremony by returning *abrenuntiatio* and exorcism to their original places whence they had been removed under the influences from the Enlightenment. In Sweden and Finland these elements were removed as late as towards the end of the nineteenth century under the influence of A. Ritschl and J.T. Beck's Biblicist theology. Gustav Kawerau, "*Exorcismus*" in *Realenzyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche begr. Von J. J. Herzog*, 5. In dritter verbesserter und vermehrter Auflage hrs. von Albert Hauck (Leipzig, Germany: J. L. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1898), 695-700; Kawerau obviously does not comprehend Luther's realistic anthropology as he criticizes the Reformer's decision to include these same elements into the baptism of infants.

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