

CTQ

Vol. 68 No. 3/4
July/October
2004

Concordia Theological Quarterly



CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY

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

Editor: David P. Scaer

Associate Editors Lawrence R. Rast Jr.

Book Review Editor: William C. Weinrich

Members of the Editorial Committee: Charles A. Gieschen,
Richard T. Nuffer, Timothy C. J. Quill, Dean O. Wenthe

Editorial Assistant: Annette Gard

The Faculty:

Chad L. Bird	Richard E. Muller	Klaus Detlev Schulz
Carl C. Fickenscher II	Richard T. Nuffer	Harold Senkbeil
Daniel L. Gard	John T. Pless	William C. Weinrich
Charles A. Gieschen	Timothy C. J. Quill	Dean O. Wenthe
Arthur A. Just Jr.	Lawrence R. Rast Jr.	Roland Ziegler
Cameron A. MacKenzie	Richard C. Resch	
Walter A. Maier	Robert V. Roethemeyer	<i>Emeriti in Residence:</i>
Walter A. Maier III	Douglas L. Rutt	Daniel G. Reuning
Kurt E. Marquart	David P. Scaer	Harold H. Zietlow
Naomichi Masaki	Peter J. Scaer	Melvin Zilz
Eric J. Moeller	Randall A. Schroeder	

Concordia Theological Quarterly is indexed in *Religion Index One: Periodicals* and abstracted in *Old Testament Abstracts* and *New Testament Abstracts*. CTQ is also indexed in the *ATLA Religion Database* (published by the American Theological Library Association, atla@atla.com, www.atla.com) and the *International Bibliography of Periodical Literature on the Humanities and Social Sciences* (www.gbv.de).

Manuscripts should conform to the *Chicago Manual of Style* and are subject to peer review and editorial modification. Please accompany manuscripts with a computer disk version, preferably in Microsoft Word. Unsolicited submissions should be original unpublished works and will *not* be returned unless accompanied by self-addressed envelopes and sufficient return postage.

Concordia Theological Quarterly is published in January, April, July, and October. The annual subscription rate is \$15.00 within the United States, \$20.00 U.S. in Canada, and \$35.00 U.S. elsewhere. All changes of address, subscription payments, and other correspondence should be sent to *Concordia Theological Quarterly*, 6600 North Clinton Street, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46825. The *Quarterly* is printed and shipped by Concordia Publishing House, Saint Louis, Missouri. The website is at www.ctsfw.edu/ctq/.

CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY



Volume 68:3/4

July/October 2004

Table of Contents

The Trinity in the Bible.....	195
Robert W. Jenson	
Should a Layman Discharge the Duties of the Holy Ministry?	207
William C. Weinrich	
Center and Periphery in Lutheran Ecclesiology.....	231
Charles J. Evanson	
Martin Chemitz's Use of the Church Fathers in His Locus on Justification.....	271
Carl C. Beckwith	
Syncretism in the Theology of Georg Calixt, Abraham Calov and Johannes Musäus.....	291
Benjamin T. G. Mayes	
Johann Sebastian Bach as Lutheran Theologian.....	319
David P. Scaer	
Theological Observer.....	341
Toward a More Accessible CTQ	
Delay of Infant Baptism in the Roman Catholic Church	

Book Reviews	347
<i>Baptism in the Reformed Tradition: an Historical and Practical Theology.</i>	
By John W. Riggs	David P. Scaer
<i>The Theology of the Cross for the 21st Century: Signposts for a</i>	
<i>Multicultural Witness. Edited by Albert L. Garcia and A.R.</i>	
Victor Raj.....	John T. Pless
<i>The Arts and Cultural Heritage of Martin Luther. Edited by Nils</i>	
Holger Peterson et al.	John T. Pless
<i>Fundamental Biblical Hebrew and Fundamental Biblical Aramaic. By</i>	
Andrew H. Bartelt and Andrew E. Steinmann.....	Chad L. Bird
<i>Intermediate Hebrew Grammar. By Andrew Steinmann..</i>	
Chad L. Bird	
<i>Counted Righteous in Christ. By John Piper.....</i>	
Peter C. Cage	
<i>The Contemporary Quest for Jesus. By N. T. Wright. Charles R. Schulz</i>	
<i>The Free Church and the Early Church: Bridging the Historical and</i>	
<i>Theological Divide. Edited by D. H. Williams.....</i>	
Paul G. Alms	
<i>Pastoral Theology in the Classical Tradition. By Andrew Purves</i>	
.....	James Busher
<i>Music for the Church: The Life and Work of Walter E. Buszin. By Kirby</i>	
L. Koriath	D. Richard Stuckwisch
<i>Under the Influence: How Christianity Transformed Civilization.</i>	
By Alvin J. Schmidt.....	James Busher
<i>Participating in God: Creation and Trinity. By Samuel Powell</i>	
.....	Timothy Maschke
<i>Doing Right and Being Good: Catholic and Protestant Readings in</i>	
<i>Christian Ethics. Edited by David Oki Ahearn and Peter Gathje</i>	
.....	John T. Pless
<i>The Human Condition: Christian Perspectives through African Eyes.</i>	
By Joe M. Kapolyo	Saneta Maiko
<i>Christ's Churches Purely Reformed: A Social History of Calvinism.</i>	
By Philip Benedict.....	Cameron MacKenzie
<i>The New Faithful: Why Young Christians Are Embracing Christian</i>	
<i>Orthodoxy. By Colleen Carroll</i>	
Armand J. Boehme	

Indices for Volume 68	381
------------------------------------	------------

The Trinity in the Bible

Robert W. Jenson

Is the doctrine of Trinity in the Bible? By the canons that the modern West has enforced, clearly it is not. Modernity has demanded Descartes' "clear and distinct ideas" in all fields. With respect to a doctrine, this is a demand for properly formulated and univocal propositions. For the formulated doctrine to which we usually refer as the doctrine of the Trinity to be in the Bible, it must therefore appear there in the conciliar and traditional propositions as formulated, or in propositions logically equivalent to these. But of course nowhere in the Bible do we find the propositions that there are in God one divine nature and three persons, or that the Father eternally begets the Son, or that the Spirit is equally to be worshipped and glorified, or indeed any of the chief propositions of the doctrine formulated by the councils; nor do we find plausibly equivalent propositions.¹

It is important to recognize that this canon of modernity controls theological movements that are otherwise very different, some of which may not be aware how much they belong to modernity. For present purposes, I will distinguish what I will call historicism and the equally

¹We do indeed find *judgments* equivalent to many judgments made by propositions of Nicene doctrine; see the justly celebrated article by David Yeago, "The New Testament and Nicene Dogma: A Contribution to the Recovery of Theological Exegesis," *Pro Ecclesia* 3 (1994):152-164. Not all propositions state judgments, and judgments can be otherwise made than by propositions.

The Rev. Dr. Robert W. Jenson is Senior Scholar for Research at the Center of Theological Inquiry, Princeton, New Jersey and is the co-founder/editor of the journals Dialog and Pro Ecclesia.

modern movement I will call modern biblicism.² Both, to repeat, suppose that if we are to find the conciliar doctrine of Trinity in Scripture it must be there in so many words. But from this point, historicism and modern biblicism move differently.

Historicism is the belief that understanding something's history and understanding the thing itself are the same. But the conciliar doctrine of Trinity reached its formulation at the end of a history that continued past the writing of the last books of the Bible. Thus, since whatever approaches to a doctrine of Trinity appear in the Bible are one stretch of history; and the conciliar doctrine appears at the end of a longer and so different stretch of history, the two cannot in the judgment of historicists be the same doctrine.

So far the general position of historicism. Within that general position, there are again two possibilities. Some historicists take the supposed post-biblical status of the doctrine of Trinity as liberation from what they anyway regard as an absurd doctrine. Others will say things like I used to, that while the doctrine of Trinity is indeed not in Scripture, it is a proper development from things that are in Scripture—and indeed I might still say this in certain contexts, but have come to see that it is but a small part of the truth.

Modern biblicism also comes in two varieties. Some, determined to argue that the doctrine of Trinity is after all in Scripture, scabble around in the Bible for bits and pieces of language to cobble together into a sort of Trinity-doctrine—usually with intellectually lamentable and indeed sometimes heretical results. Others, like many American Evangelicals, take the same tack as some historicists, and say if the doctrine of Trinity is not in Scripture we need not worry overmuch about it—we never understood it anyway.

²There is of course the quite different biblicism of the great tradition, which I by no means wish to question.

You will gather that I think all of these paths misguided, and indeed misguided in fundamentally the same fashion. I hope to persuade you that the doctrine of the Trinity is indeed in the Bible.

And now let me ask the same question again, fishing this time for a different kind of wrong answer. Is the doctrine of Trinity a biblical doctrine? Many will answer that it is, but that it is found in only part of the Bible. That is, it will be assumed that the doctrine of Trinity is a New Testament doctrine but not an Old Testament doctrine, that it is what separates Christians from old Israel, that it is the new revelation that they lacked and that Judaism still lacks. Indeed the doctrine of Trinity is often taken—whether with rejoicing or regret—as the supremely supersessionist doctrine, the truth whose revelation relegates Judaism to the past.

Against all these errors, allow me to propose the following. The doctrine of the Trinity is indeed in Scripture, *if* one abandons modernity's notion that statement in so many words as formulated is the only way that a doctrine can appear there. Moreover, the doctrine appears in the New Testament *and* in the Old, severally and jointly. The present essay will be mostly about Scripture, concentrating precisely on the Old Testament, and then at the end about the conciliar doctrine of Trinity.

The church has her own way of reading Scripture. There are others, and it will bring the church's way into sharper profile, if we contrast it with at least one other. The most important other way of reading is of course that of rabbinic Judaism. The earliest church and rabbinic Judaism are alike in that both, more or less at the same time and for analogous reasons, added a second volume to old Israel's Scripture. The church added the collection of Gospels and Epistles we call the New Testament; rabbinic Judaism added the collection of rabbinic dicta we call the Mishnah.

Judaism's second volume is a compilation of the oral Torah, of handed-down divine guidance for life. Rabbinic Judaism then reads the old Scripture from the viewpoint of this new volume. Thus rabbinic Judaism reads the Old Testament fundamentally as Torah; the narrative provides the context. This is obviously a perfectly possible way to read the Old Testament, but it is not the church's.

The church's second volume, the New Testament, is fundamentally narrative and comment on the narrative. The church then reads the Old Testament from the viewpoint of *this* new volume; and accordingly reads the Old Testament fundamentally as narrative, with Torah and wisdom and prophecy providing the moral and spiritual context. There are, of course, still other ways of reading Scripture, but I do not need to go into them for my purpose, which is simply to point up that the church has her own way, and that this way is to read the whole Bible as one long narrative.

This narrative is of God's history with his people, from creation to fulfillment. Since we are in this essay concerned with the doctrine of Trinity, it is the narrative's display of God that now most directly interests us. And it is an obvious question but one too often not asked: How *would* a narrative display the reality of God?

How, for example, would it show that God is merciful? Not primarily by pronouncing the proposition, "God is merciful," though in appropriate contexts it can do that too, but by telling and pondering his merciful behavior. Or by recording prayers uttered by his people on the way, prayers for mercy which are answered. Or by telling of people of faith whose trust in God's mercy was justified. Along the way, the Bible also, of course, puts the words "God" and "merciful" together in various ways, sometimes even in the explicit proposition, but this is secondary to its primary narrative way of showing that God is merciful.

So how would a narrative tell us that God is three persons? Not by the proposition "God is three persons,"

which indeed never appears in Scripture, but by telling a history of God with us that displays three enactors of that history, each of which is indeed other than the other two and yet is at the same time the same God as the other two. In my writing on these matters, I have used a phrase developed from Tertullian's language: in God, I like to put it, there are three *dramatis personae Dei*, three persons of the divine drama, and I will use that expression in the following. What Scripture does, also in the Old Testament, indeed especially in the Old Testament, is to tell the drama of God with his people, showing three *personae* of the drama, each of which is other than the other two and is the same God as the other two.

The Father takes less looking. In the name "Father, Son and Spirit" the "Father" is the God of Israel in a particular connection: he is the God of Israel insofar as Jesus addresses him as "Father," thereby making himself out to be a unique Son. That the Father, that is to say, the God of Israel in a certain relation, appears as agent in the Old Testament is not problematic; the whole of Israel's Scripture is about the doings of the God of Israel, whom Jesus called Father. It is the Spirit and the Son that may be thought problematic.

The Spirit first. Hebrew *ruach*, like Greek *pneuma*, is the wind of life; it is living persons who have spirit. Spirit is at once the life of the one whose spirit it is, and the liveliness that blows out of him to agitate others. In Scripture, as the Lord indeed himself lives, and as he blows on creatures to stir them into life, he has indeed his Spirit. And this Spirit is everywhere in the Old Testament: stirring up country boys to take command of Israel's forces and liberate her from oppression; falling upon unexpected victims to make them prophets, that is, spokesmen of that word of God which will accomplish what it intends in the world; and generally blowing things about as *Spiritus Creator*, as the wind which keeps the creation moving toward its fulfillment.

Clearly, the Spirit is very much a *persona* of the story that Scripture—and again precisely the Old Testament—tells of

God. Is he then God? To be, as the creed says, worshipped and glorified equally with the Father and the Son?

He is the life *of* God and the enlivening power blowing *from* God; thus the Father and he are in the Old Testament narratives clearly two *personae* of the narrative. That he is just the same God as the Father, I will develop using the analogy between his Spirit and our spirits, for in the case of this one of the Trinity, the analogy with phenomena of human existence is in fact close.

Although my spirit, as it goes out from me, as my life impacts the lives of others, is in one way an other than me, if you ask someone whom my life has moved and changed who did that to him, he will simply reply that Jenson did it. He will not mean that I used my spirit as an instrument; he will simply mean that I did it. If my spirit has changed him for the worse, if—to adapt some Old Testament language—it is “an evil spirit from” Jenson that has blown upon him, he will not allow me to say that it was not me who harmed him but only my spirit. And if my liveliness has enlivened him in good ways, I will not want him to say, “Oh well, you did not help me. It was your spirit.” So in close but of course still imperfect analogy, those whom the Spirit of the Lord blows about in the Old Testament narratives know themselves impacted not by some instrument of the Lord or even by some aspect of the Lord but simply by the Lord himself.

The Son’s presentation in the Old Testament is even more clearly a matter of a *plot*-structure displayed both by the Old Testament’s total narrative, and by many of its individual incidents. We must consider first some of those incidents.

We begin with the story of Moses and the burning bush. Moses is at Horeb. The narrative begins, “There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush....” This figure, “the angel of the Lord,” is recurrent in Genesis and Exodus. In the burning-bush narrative, he is *introduced*

as clearly an other than the Lord, as related to the Lord prepositionally, as the messenger "*of*" the Lord. But when Moses responds to the angel, it turns out to be *God* who speaks to him "out of the bush." Is the angel God or another than God? Plainly, in the narrative he is both.

Or again, Hagar and Ishmael are sent away into the desert. She and the child weep, God hears their distress, and "the angel of God" speaks to her "from heaven." The angel first refers to God in the third person, "God has heard the voice of the boy." But then without any break in his speech or formula of citation, the angel says "*I* will make a great nation of him." So who is the angel? He is one who simultaneously refers to God in the third and first persons.

In the very next chapter there is perhaps the most remarkable of the angel-of-the-Lord histories, the *Akedah*, the near-sacrifice of Isaac. There is a previously published article of mine in which analysis of this narrative is the centerpiece. But I cannot here do entirely without it. Abraham is about to offer Isaac when the "angel of the Lord" called to him out of heaven." Abraham answered. Then the angel said, "Now *I* (the pronouns make it clear that this is still the angel) know that you fear God (still third person reference to God), since you have not withheld your son ... from *me* (and suddenly the reference to God is in the first person). Here the first and third persons occur in the same sentence. To all these stories compare John 1: the word is *with* God and just so *is* God. The angel like John's *Logos* is both another than God and by virtue of the character of his otherness is God.

The initial situation in the angel-stories is that there is God in heaven and humans on earth. The division is transcended in that the angel of God intervenes from heaven—or the supernatural bush—and establishes himself as a *persona* of the story occurring on earth. But once the angel's presence in the created story is established, the angel speaks and acts as God in the first person.

Nor is the angel of the Lord a unique phenomenon in the Old Testament. There is "the name of" the Lord, which the Lord puts on earthly locations, at which locations Israel is to find the Lord himself. There is the "glory of" the Lord, which inhabits the Temple without displacing God from his heavens, yet to which the prayers and sacrifices of Israel are directed as to God.

Initially for that Presence in the Temple, the rabbis developed the concept of the *shekinah*, the "settlement" of God within the life of his people. The desert pillars of fire by night and smoke by day, which accompanied the people on their journey were—the rabbis taught—the *shekinah*, as was the awful presence for which the Tabernacle was a sort of sedan chair, as was the space in the empty throne in the Holy of Holies. The *shekinah* was the presence of God *within* the life of Israel, of precisely that God who remained the author and judge of Israel's life. There is indeed a famous and often cited rabbinic *aggadah*, that when God would bring back Israel from exile, and with them bring the *shekinah* back to his Temple, he would rescue *himself*.

We are, I think, both historically and systematically justified in taking all these patterns of Old Testament narrative together, as displaying the same fact about God, that he is as the same God an agent within the life of Israel and the one who determines that life from without it. There is a metaphor I often use to evoke this fact, which I hope you will allow me: the *shekinah* and the angel and the Name and whatever other similar narrative patterns we may find in the Old Testament display God as a *persona* in Israel's story—of which he is simultaneously the author. Indeed, that the Lord is at once the author of Israel's drama and a character within it is something more than a metaphor; since creator and author are such closely related notions. In a sense close to the literal meaning of the terms, in the Old Testament—and in Scripture as a whole—God is at once the author of his people's history and one of the enactors within the history that he authors. Which is precisely what the

doctrine of Trinity initially means by saying he is Father and Son.

And now there is a whole other aspect of the Son's reality in old Israel. God said through the prophet Jeremiah (31), "... for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn." And in the same chapter he says that the love which is thus enacted is "eternal" (עולם). Here it is Israel as a whole who appears as a sort of *shekinah* in and for the world. Nor is this by any means the only Old Testament instance of such a pattern of language. One may of course say that "Father/Son" language in this connection is metaphorical, and that עולם does not quite mean what other languages mean by "eternal"; that it is not quite a doctrine of the Son's eternal generation that appears in Jeremiah and elsewhere. But one may still consider what the relationship between the Lord and Israel must be for such metaphor to be appropriate.

I have been concerned to show the presence of the doctrine of Trinity in the Old Testament. What then happens in the New Testament? I suggest: two things.

First, the *shekinah* appears as an individual Israelite. On the one hand, the pattern we discerned in the appearances within Israel of the Angel of the Lord or of the Name or the Glory sheds its anonymity and lives in Israel as one with a name and an ancestry and an earthly calling, with a mother and an executioner. On the other hand, the calling of Israel as a nation to be Son and *Logos* for the nations, is taken up and fulfilled by this same individual Israelite, who in respect of this calling is all Israel. Although the Word who speaks through the prophets is, as the fathers all insisted, Jesus Christ, he does not through the prophets introduce himself in that way. The New Testament tells of his self-introduction.

The Son's shedding of anonymity pertains also to the Spirit. The notion of spirit has in itself a fatal openness to hijacking. We need not scour the religiosity of Israel's

environs for example; we can simply observe the flood of "spirituality" with which America is inundated and the regular invocation also of biblical language by the swimmers. For indeed there are spirits of all sorts on the loose, and they cannot always be sorted out by the phenomena they release. Why is one outbreak of glossalalia a gift of the Spirit, and another demonic possession? Perhaps they look very much alike. The spirits need to be judged, and Paul's criterion of judgment is unequivocal: it is whether or not a spirit confesses that same one individual male Israelite prophet and rabbi and healer as the one and only Lord.

And then second, with the appearance on the stage of the *shekinah* in his own human identity, the New Testament can provide the drama of God with—to continue the metaphor—its playbill. It can *list* the *dramatis personae dei*: they are the "Father, Son and Holy Spirit" of the baptismal mandate, and of the less compressed formulas that appear on every page of the Epistles. Indeed, it can then use this listing as the proper name of the one God, the next and last biblical phenomenon to which I wish to draw your attention.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that each of the three nouns, "Father, Son and Spirit" has its proper biblical meaning only in its relations to the other two; they are, after all, the *personae* of the one God's dramatic existence. "Father" therefore gets none of its import by projection of earthly fatherhood. The "Father" of the triune name is so called strictly as the Father of the next-named Son, who in turn is so named strictly as the Son of the just-named Father; and both namings are possible and mandated strictly because Jesus notoriously addressed the God of Israel as his "Father," merely thereby making himself out to be the unique Son of the God of Israel—and thereby in turn getting himself crucified. And the "Spirit" of the triune name is so called strictly as the Spirit who lives in the relation between this Father and this Son.

Thus and by the by, such coinages as "Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier," are not equivalent to "Father, Son, and Spirit" and indeed have no semantic relation at all to the triune name. The triune God indeed creates, redeems and sanctifies—but every putative God putatively does the same. Moreover, the triune God is Creator not as the Father but as the Father with the Son in the Spirit, and is Redeemer not as the Son but as the Son before the Father in the Spirit, and is Sanctifier not as the Spirit but as the Spirit uniting the Father and the Son.

I have spent most of this essay on the Bible. Now I must much more briefly turn to the formulated conciliar doctrine. What does it do that the Bible does not? Two things.

First, it formulates the plot of the biblical God-story in the most compressed possible form. The so-called trinitarian relations of begetting and being begotten and breathing and being breathed are slogans for the action of the divine *personae* in Scripture's narrative. The Father begets the Son, and the Son goes forth from the Father. Just so, the Father has no origin, but is the origin of all else. The Spirit is the breath of the Father, who rests upon the Son. Just so, the Spirit gives himself to the Father and the Son, to be the love that unites them. What is all this? It is the Bible in a nutshell—or as I will say in a moment, almost the Bible in a nutshell.

Second, over against certain dogmas of our culture, the formulated doctrine of Trinity insists that the God-story whose plot it renders is the story of God *himself* and not merely the story of God's adaptations to us. If the three are roles, *dramatis personae*, the life enacted through these roles are all there is to God; there is no deeper reality of God lurking in the background. If on the cross it is decided that the Father forgives even those who crucify the Son, then that decision stands eternally as the very actuality of God.

Classically, this last point was formulated by the doctrine of the economic and immanent Trinities. The

economic Trinity is God as the story told in Scripture; the immanent Trinity is God in himself. But then the very point of the doctrine is to provide language with which to say that the immanent Trinity lives no other plot than that displayed in the economic Trinity, that when you are taken into the story told in Scripture, you are taken into God himself.

Finally, it would not be a systematic theologian writing this essay if he did not have at least one proposal to make that goes beyond what is established in the tradition. It will be noted that the classically stipulated innertrinitarian relations, "begetting" "being begotten," "breathing," and "proceeding," are all, as the tradition explicitly says, "relations of origin." The Father is the unoriginate Origin, and the Son and Spirit are distinct hypostases in and by their different originatings from him. I am not the only contemporary theologian to have complained that this plot-summary does not adequately mirror the actual plot of the biblical drama of God. For in Scripture God is not merely or even predominantly the Origin of all things; he is at least equally the Eschatos, the upsetting Goal of all things, the Coming One who will create anew and overturn the orderings of this world. The Bible's drama of God is an eschatological drama; but this is not apparent in the traditional doctrine of trinitarian relations, which proposes an exclusively protological and not at all eschatological plot for the biblical story.

We need to think of relations of futurity as also constitutive of God's triune being. Both testaments provide many of them, which may perhaps be summed up by saying that the Spirit, as he is in the work of the economic Trinity the Spirit of Freedom, so in the immanent Trinity he liberates the Father and the Son to love each other.

So, also from this last point of view, is the doctrine of Trinity in the Bible? Yes indeed, and there is more of the Trinity in the Bible than has yet been recognized in the formulated doctrine.

Should a Layman Discharge the Duties of the Holy Ministry?

William C. Weinrich

The following essay was first delivered to the LCMS Council of Presidents on April 12, 1998, and subsequently published in *Mysteria Dei: Essays in Honor of Kurt Marquart*.¹ However, the exploding use of laymen in the LCMS for the exercise of pastoral functions, including that of the administration of the Lord's Supper, and the influence this practice is having also in discussions concerning the nature and extent of theological, pastoral education provide cause for issuing this article again.

I do not think it unfair to say that much explanation and discussion in the LCMS today concerning the church and the ministry is misinformed, misguided and misleading, and at times simply disingenuous. An example of this was the answer given in the Q & A section of the February 2006 *The Lutheran Witness* (vol. 125, no. 2; pg. 28. The section was entitled "Who May Consecrate the Elements?" and a certain A.A. Missouri asks a question about "who is allowed to bless the wafers and wine for distribution at Communion." A.A. suggests that in foreign lands "a lay minister can bless the elements," but that in America "only an ordained minister has this privilege." We will not quibble with the deep incognizance of A.A. on the matter; after all, he is asking a question, seeking clarification. The problem is with the *author incognito* who provides the response. After giving a correct, if somewhat *pro forma*, reminder that the effective

¹Paul T. McCain and John R. Stephenson, eds., *Mysteria Dei: Essays in Honor of Kurt Marquart* (Fort Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 2000), 345-59.

The Rev. Dr. William C. Weinrich is Professor of Patristics and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

power of the sacrament is the Word of God, the author continues:

It should be noted that while under normal circumstances it would be the ordained pastor who administers the sacrament, it may not be possible for some congregation because of remote location, the lack of available pastors, or some other valid reason to have such a person available to administer it. In view of this, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has established a program for the preparation of lay ministers, who serve under the supervision of ordained pastors and who, by the agreement and calling of the congregation, provide many pastoral services among them, administration of the sacraments and the necessary pastoral care that accompanies it.

To be sure, space in *The Lutheran Witness* does not provide for any kind of extended explanation. However, this response could hardly be more tendentiously misleading. Might it have been interesting to A.A. Missouri to learn of Augsburg Confession, article XIV, and be introduced to the notion of the dominical institution of the pastoral office? Might it be interesting to A.A. Missouri that the Lutheran tradition, including that of the LCMS under Walther, did not know, nor did it allow the administration of the Lord's Supper by an unordained pastor? Despite all the discussion within our synod of the rights and powers of the congregation, Walther did not allow this practice, nor did he provide justification for it in circumstances where such a practice might have been in existence (such as among the followers of Vehse). In fact, A.A. Missouri is kept in the dark about the principal theological and pastoral concerns that motivated the Lutheran church since its inception in the Reformation. What is recommended to him is a recent innovation which despite all talk to the contrary has no significant roots in the theology and practice of the Lutheran Church, including the LCMS.

Yet, in a recent article Samuel H. Nafzger provides an *apologia* for "the lay performance of pastoral functions" and the entire Tendenz of the article is to suggest that "the lay performance of pastoral functions" arises naturally out of Lutheran thinking, specifically that of Walther.² Nothing could be further from the truth, unless one suggests that the "talk" and the "walk" of Walther were at considerable variance. Typical of LCMS discussion, Dr. Nafzger begins with a review of the Stephanite controversy in 1839. From within that controversy the view did arise that laypersons could celebrate the Lord's Supper. Those who held to this view were followers of Vehse, and these Nafzger calls the "lay faction." Nafzger rightly notes that this idea was held by the Vehse faction, but this idea and practice was precisely what Walther himself never advocated let alone allowed. Present practice in some districts of the LCMS is much closer to that advocated by Vehse and the "lay faction" than it is to Walther. However, one can review the sources for himself/herself, and it is much to be hoped for that they are reviewed, along with the question of what actually took place in practice within our history and what was in fact allowed and promoted in practice. That is, methodologically, what is the relation between theological argument and claim and the practice which arises from and is reflective of that theology? I think that were one honestly to review the evidence, one would conclude that to speak of "the lay performance of pastoral functions" on the basis of the guiding and determinant LCMS documentation is wholly inaccurate and misleading.

The ensuing article attempts to outline the underlying theological and pastoral rationale for the thoroughgoing refusal of the Lutheran heritage to allow a layperson to administer the Lord's Supper, and briefly to describe the corresponding practice. At the moment, however, I would like to make a few preliminary comments:

²Samuel H. Nafzger, "The LCMS on the Lay Performance of Pastoral Functions," *Issues in Christian Education* (Spring 2004): 23-29.

1) The discussion of church and ministry within the LCMS has for a very long time, and certainly at present, been bedeviled by a political question of power rather than a theological question arising from the Gospel itself. Nothing could be more illustrative of this than a recent "model convocation" held under the title "Who's in Charge Here?" Frankly, such a question has nothing to do with the Bible or the Lutheran Confessions. Although his summary of the history is a little skewed, Dr. Nafzger notes correctly enough that the episode concerning Martin Stephan raised issues concerning the authority of laity over pastors.³ This indicates that sometimes history clarifies, at other times history obfuscates. It might be suggested that the LCMS is obsessed over the Stephan affair and has allowed this singular event to becloud its capacity to consider the issue of church and ministry with more equilibrium. For this it is recommended that the LCMS come into greater awareness of the nineteenth-century confessional Lutherans, including those whom LCMS apologists are inclined to dismiss (Vilmar, Löhe, Stahl) and including those not usually mentioned in the "blacklist" of Missouri's early history (Theodosius von Harnack, Theodor Kliefoth, Claus Harms, G. C. A. von Harless, to name a few). This would have the salutary effect of lifting the LCMS out of the four walls of its own specific and limited history.

2) In considering the question of the pastor and the laity it is absolutely crucial to attend well to how Luther argues (and with him AC V). Luther imbeds the ministry of preaching and the sacraments *within* the "order of salvation." Within this order the pastor is given the tasks to preach and to administer; the people are given the tasks to

³I think the evidence suggests, however, that the Vehse group promoted this aspect of the discussion. Most of the Saxons had other kinds of questions, such as whether they as a group were still "church" (since they had followed a false prophet), whether their pastors were still pastors, and whether they could call pastors apart from the legitimating agencies they were familiar with in Germany.

hear and to receive (Paul: "faith comes through hearing; Augsburg Confession V: "in order that we might receive such justifying faith..."). To put this in theological terms: justification of the sinner is by grace through faith, that is, justification of the sinner is by preaching/sacraments through hearing/receiving. The church arises from such preaching and sacraments because preaching and the sacraments are themselves constituted in the salvific work of Christ. From the perspective of this evangelical order it must be said that the office of preaching and the sacraments is prior to the church, just as preaching is prior to hearing, administering is prior to receiving, grace is prior to faith.

3) We should attend to the words of John Gerhard that the work of the Word and the work of the minister ought not nor can not be separated. The orthodox Lutheran fathers spoke of the *potestas ordinata*, that is, the ordered power which is at work in the church. God does not work abstractly. He works concretely, that is, through persons. It is simply remarkable and telling that often, as in Dr. Nafzger's article, the institution of the pastoral office by Christ is mentioned, only to demote its significance. Much is made of the fact that while some (Vehse, Höfling) claimed that the pastoral office was of human churchly institution in order to maintain good order in the church, Walther maintained that the office was of divine institution. But, as Nafzger reminds us, Walther maintained that God has instituted the pastoral office *merely* for the sake of good order; it is "merely an arrangement."⁴ This is a very different understanding than that of Luther for whom the order for which the pastoral office was instituted was the order of redemption, not the order of a sergeant-at-arms. Are we really to believe that Christ said "He who hears you

⁴Walther distinguishes this "mere arrangement by which the common rights are to be administered" from a "special power of a preferred estate." The language indicates to what extent the categories of rights and the specific issues of the Stephanite controversy had infested the discussion.

hears me" (Lk. 10:16) and "As the Father has sent me, so do I send you" (Jn. 20:21) in order to ensure that there is no raucus in the assembly? In our discussions of the pastoral office and its relation to the people, it would be well were the LCMS seriously to consider the meaning of the fact that the pastoral office was a dominical institution through which Christ places his own ministry within the church. This reality, testified throughout the New Testament, is the true place to begin deliberation about church and ministry, not the historically contingent demands of the Stephanite controversy.

With an increasing consistency the LCMS refers to itself, the CTCR, its synodical resolutions to argue issues that are the common possession of the church universal. The claim that synodical resolutions testify to what the LCMS holds the Bible (and the Confessions) to say is at once the stuff of all organizations and the stuff of sects. We have a broad and rich theological heritage within the Lutheran church. At basis, the following article is a plea that we become more conversant with it.

The Historic Lutheran Approach to the Question

Historically, Lutheranism has answered the question of whether or not a layman should exercise the duties of the Office of the Public Ministry with a definite "No." The biblical basis for this answer included 1 Cor. 4:1 ("This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God") and Eph. 4:11 ("And the gifts [of the Ascended Lord] were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers"). The basis in the Lutheran Confessions is Augsburg Confession XIV: "Nobody should publicly teach or preach or administer the sacraments in the church without a regular call." When C. F. W. Walther observed that "in the case of the Lord's Supper no genuine case of emergency can arise" and so "almost all orthodox Lutheran theologians declare that no layman should administer holy

communion," he was simply reflecting the common opinion of Lutheran exegetical and dogmatic tradition.⁵

To be sure, in cases of "necessity" a layman was allowed to preach and to baptize, although necessity in the case of the celebration of the Lord's Supper was virtually denied. But the notion of "necessity" simply upholds, rather than from time to time negating, the fundamental interest and concern of the Lutheran position. We turn, therefore, to the rationale for Lutheranism's response to the question.

Rationale

What is the basic rationale, what is the line of argument that leads Lutheran discussion of this issue to the reference of Eph. 4:11; 1 Cor. 4:1; and AC XIV? Let us begin with a quote from the Large Catechism of Martin Luther (Explanation to the Third Article) :

Where God does not cause the word to be preached and does not awaken understanding in the heart, all is lost. This was the case under the Papacy, where faith was entirely forgotten ... and no one recognized Christ as the Lord or the Holy Spirit as the Sanctifier.... What was lacking here? There was no Holy Spirit present to reveal this truth and have it preached.... Therefore, there was no Christian Church, for where Christ is not preached, there is no Holy Spirit to create, call and gather the Christian Church.⁶

We can perceive in this quotation the underlying argument of AC V: God has instituted the office of preaching and the sacraments *for the purpose of faith*, that

⁵C. F. W. Walther, *The Congregation's Right to Choose Its Pastor*, trans. Fred Kramer (Fort Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary, n.d.), 107.

⁶*The Book of Concord : The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, in collaboration with Jaroslav Pelikan, Robert H. Fischer, and Arthur C. Piepkorn. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), 416.

there might be a Christian Church, *in order that* (ut) there might be a royal priesthood and that that priesthood might be served with the gospel through ongoing preaching and administration of the sacraments. Not surprisingly, Luther can claim that the office of the pastor was established and instituted in the atoning death of Christ:

I hope, indeed, that believers, those who want to be called Christians, know very well that the spiritual estate has been established and instituted by God, not with gold or silver but with the precious blood and bitter death of his only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:18f.). From his wounds indeed flow the sacraments. He paid dearly that men might everywhere have this office of preaching, baptizing, loosing, binding, giving the sacrament, comforting, warning, and exhorting with God's word, and whatever else belongs to the pastoral office. For this office not only helps to further and sustain this temporal life and all the worldly estates, but it also gives eternal life and delivers from sin and death, which is its proper and chief work.⁷

From such a statement we can see that the *necessity* of the office is not only a question of public, outward order in the church. The ministry is not to be viewed as a result or function of the collective will of individual Christians in a particular congregation. Rather, the necessity of the office arises from the necessity of faith for the justification of the

⁷Martin Luther, "A Sermon on Keeping Children in School" (1530), trans. Charles M. Jacobs, vol. 46 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Robert C. Schultz (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), 219-20. When Luther writes "that men everywhere might have this office ...," he is not referring to the common priesthood and asserting that each Christian possesses the office and therefore may exercise it. Rather, he is saying, in perfect agreement with AC V, that Christ instituted "the spiritual estate" in order that men everywhere might hear this preaching, be baptized, have their sins forgiven, receive the Body and Blood of Christ, etc. As always for Luther, the common Christian *receives* the gifts of God; he is not the administrator of them.

sinner. That is, the necessity of the office arises from the will of God that there be a royal priesthood constituted in faith, as a result of the means of grace that the Office of the Holy Ministry was instituted by God to administer. There can be no hearing of faith if there is no preaching of Christ. There can be no reception of the sacraments if there is no administration of the sacraments. Augustana V puts it in classical terms: "In order that we might obtain this justifying faith, the ministry of teaching the gospel and of administering the sacraments was instituted."⁸ That there be justifying faith, and with that faith a royal priesthood, is the necessary rationale for the existence of the office of the ministry that is entrusted with the duty to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments. Thus, the Office of the Ministry is Christ's ministry in the church, and consequently, the Ministry is the stewardship of the mysteries of God. Consequently, the Office of the Ministry is an office of grace.⁹

To understand and to appreciate Lutheran discussion on the ministry, it is crucial to keep in mind the fundamental truth that justifying faith is necessary for salvation. This truth explains why Luther, and all Lutherans, have insisted that the church has the right to choose, to call, and to ordain pastors. The church may not be robbed of the office that is instituted by God to give out the very word and sacraments through which the Spirit calls, gathers, and enlightens the church. Precisely because the royal priesthood is constituted in faith, and lives from the preached word and the administered sacraments, it has not only the right, but also

⁸AC V condemns the Anabaptists who believe "the Holy Spirit comes to men without the external word, through their own preparations and works."

⁹This rationale, confessionally articulated in AC V and foundational to the entire Reformation agenda, makes utterly problematic the claim that the pastor exercises his office "in the name" of the congregation. If the ministry is essentially Christ's ministry, it is evidently "in his Name" and for the benefit of those who hear in faith.

the obligation, to call and to ordain pastors. The mandate of the Lord that there be pastors in the church is then not only a divine law to be obeyed by the church, but even more, a divine gift and promise by which the Lord places into his church the means by which he wishes to redeem and to bless by continuing to speak the forgiveness of sins and to give himself over in bread and wine. Not to allow God's institution to exist, in the midst of the church is not merely an act of disobedience, but a refusal to allow God's own evangelical order, through which he works his way through the gospel. Typically, in Lutheran sources, such as already in the *Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope*, Eph. 4:8-12 is referenced, where Paul writes that the ascended Christ gave gifts to men, namely, apostles, pastors, teachers, etc.

Christ places men into the Office, through a rightly ordered call (which, of course, means both ordination and call). These men are to preach and to administer the sacraments. Those called and ordained are the instruments of Christ, the ministers of Christ, through whom he continues to speak, to baptize, and to give his body and blood. Commonplace and pervasive in traditional Lutheran discussion is the claim that the pastor's ministry is the *ordinary* means through which God speaks and works in the church.¹⁰ Almost invariably, the classical writers speak of the word and sacraments *together with* the minister. Typical of such discussion is that of John Gerhard:

Indeed, the distribution of his body and blood in the sacred supper is to be attributed to Christ himself, although no longer immediately as at the first supper, but it is executed mediately through the ministers of the

¹⁰When Lutheran sources say that "ordinarily" the pastor preaches and administers the sacraments, they refer to the "order," also called "economy," of God by which and through which he works his work of salvation. "Ordinarily" does not have the temporal meaning "usually" or the circumstantial meaning "under normal circumstances."

church, through whose ministry the power of his promise is efficacious. When they distribute the consecrated bread and the consecrated wine, then he himself at the same time distributes to those partaking of his own body and blood in, with, and under the consecrated bread and wine. Indeed, the action of Christ and of the minister neither can nor ought to be separated.¹¹

Hollaz writes that "the present-day dispensers of the sacrament of the supper are the ordained ministers of the church who consecrate the external elements by their prayers to God and by the words of institution pronounced *in persona Christi*, and they distribute these to those communing."¹²

Or again, "The ministers of the church distribute the bread and the wine to those partaking, through whose ministry Christ, as the author of the supper, proffers his body to be eaten and his blood to be drunk."¹³

Of course, in these discussions there are also the usual anti-Donatist disclaimers, such as that of Gerhard: the minister does not have "some subjectively inherent natural power" as the instrumental cause, but rather because it pleased God "to bring the external word as a cause acting instrumentally." In other words, it is according to God's will that the word be preached through ministers as through instruments. Nonetheless, as Gerhard's argument continues, what the Scriptures attribute to the ministry of word and sacraments, "we also attribute to ministers, preachers of the word and ministrants of the sacraments, not by reason of

¹¹Johann Gerhard, *Loci Theologici*, ed. Eduard Preuss (Berolini: Gust. Schlawitz, 1867), 4:10. Locus 21, "Concerning the Holy Supper," Chapter 4, "Concerning the Minister or Dispenser of this Sacrament," Paragraph 16.

¹²David Hollaz, *Examen Theologicum*, "De Eucharistia," Q.3.

¹³Hollaz, Prob. c.

their person, but by reason of their ministry, insofar as they preach the word and administer the sacraments."¹⁴

Martin Chemnitz provides an evangelical rationale for the fact that the minister who preaches and who administers the sacrament should be called and ordained. It was so that the faithful might know that Christ has chosen and placed into office a particular person to be minister. So crucial was this point that Martin Chemnitz, both in his *Loci Theologici* and in his *Enchiridion on the Ministry*, begins his discussion with two claims: 1) that no one "without a special and legitimate call" should on their own initiative and personal judgment undertake the office of teaching in the church; and 2) that "the churches must not and cannot with profit hear those who do not have the testimonies of a lawful call." This is said to be "certain from the word of God," and Chemnitz references Jer. 23:21; 27:14-15; Rom. 10:14-15; and Heb. 5:4.¹⁵ This does not contradict the fact that all Christians are priests as is indicated by 1 Pet. 2:9 and Rev. 1:6; 5:10. For, argues Chemnitz, while all are priests by virtue of faith, not all are teachers.¹⁶ The ministry of priests is "among themselves" and is referenced in Rom. 12:1 and Heb. 13:15-16.¹⁷ The ministry of teachers is "in the church" and is

¹⁴John Gerhard, *The Theological Commonplaces of John Gerhard: Commonplace XXIII, On the Ministry of the Church*, trans. Richard J. Dinda. Imprint (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, n.d.), 749.

¹⁵Martin Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, trans. J.A.O. Preus (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989), 3:698; Martin Chemnitz, *Ministry, Word, and Sacraments: An Enchiridion*, trans. Luther Poellet (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1981), 28.

¹⁶Luther often says that priests are born, that is, through baptism, while ministers are made, that is, through call and ordination. See Martin Luther, "Concerning the Ministry" (1523), trans. Conrad Bergendoff, vol. 40 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Conrad Bergendoff (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), 18.

¹⁷Rom. 12:1: "I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship"; Heb. 13:15-16: "Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to

referenced in 1 Cor 12:7-8, 28; Eph 4:12.¹⁸ Rather, legitimate call and ordination locates where God has willed to place his voice and his hands. It is a typical Lutheran interest to locate God's evangelical activity at a particular place and time, so that faith knows that it is in fact hearing God's voice, and not some other voice, and is receiving from God's hand, and not some other hand.¹⁹

In discussions such as that of Chemnitz there is no abstract reference to God's "absolute power," that is, to the divine power inherent in the word. Reference is always made to the "ordered power" of God, that is, to the means and instruments that God in fact has placed in the church, and to which he has attached his promises. As Chemnitz puts it, "God himself deals with us in the church through

God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God." The ministry of the common priesthood is "among themselves," that is, through their various vocations in the world.

¹⁸Chemnitz, *Loci*, 3:698; *Enchiridion*, 29. 1 Cor. 12:7-8: "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit ..."; 1 Cor. 12:28: "And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, then healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various kinds of tongues"; Eph. 4:11-12: "And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ."

¹⁹This classic, orthodox Lutheran argument that "the action of Christ and of the minister neither can nor ought to be separated" (Gerhard) must be kept in mind when one meets the Platonizing separation of the function of preaching and the called preacher himself. The dogmatic distinction between the work of the Word of God (*in abstracto*) and the work of the minister (*in concreto*) was intended to exclude Donatist ideas. Only those who engage in functional enthusiasms interpreted this distinction to entitle them to the separation. For such an enthusiasm, see John F. Brug, "The Meaning of *Predigtamt* in Augsburg Confession V," *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* 103 (2006): 29-45.

the ministry, as through the ordinary means and instruments."²⁰

"Necessity"

When, therefore, we wish to discuss traditional Lutheran understanding of the idea of "necessity," we must keep in mind the two basic postures that have just been briefly delineated: 1) God wills the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments so that there may be justifying faith; 2) God has instituted the office of preaching and the sacraments, which is ordinarily, that is, by way of a divine ordering (institution narratives!), exercised by called and ordained servants of the mysteries of God.

A "necessity" is therefore not determined essentially by any particular set of circumstances, no matter how unique, strange, or difficult. Necessity only arises when the office of preaching and administration of the sacraments cannot function through the ordinary instrumental means, because no called and ordained minister is present or can be acquired. This is why in many discussions, Lutheran authors list almost ridiculously extreme cases of necessity, not because such circumstances in themselves constitute a necessity, but because it would be in such types of circumstances that a called and ordained minister most likely would not be available.

Typical of such a discussion is that of Tilemann Heshusius, who is quoted by Walther. An emergency exists when no regularly called minister is available (*nicht haben*

²⁰Chemnitz, *Enchiridion*, 29. Both "the minister as well as the church have sure proofs that God wants to use this very person (*italics added*) for this his ordinary means and instrument, namely the ministry." In this way, every minister of the word "can apply to himself (*italics added*) the statements of Scripture" and the "divine promises" in them that pertain to the apostolic ministry of gospel and sacrament. Chemnitz refers to a considerable number of passages: 2 Cor. 5:19; 13:3; Isa. 59:21; Matt. 10:20; Luke 10:16; John 1:23; 1 Thess. 4:8; (*Loci*, 3:699; *Enchiridion*, 30).

kann), such as in the following circumstances: in prison for the truth; danger of ship wreck; living among the Turks; living among the Papists where there are no true pastors; living among the Calvinists, Schwenkfelders, Majorists from whom one must be separated; or under a tyrannical pastor who refuses to preach and to proffer the sacrament.

In such extreme circumstances, God's divine order that the office of Christ be exercised by publicly called and ordained ministers is rendered inoperable by unforeseen or unwanted ad hoc circumstances. Nonetheless, historical contingency may not hinder nor forestall God's will to redeem through the forgiveness of sins and the bestowal of eternal life in the sacrament.

Therefore, the office of preaching and of the sacraments is to continue, through the exercise of the office by one not called and ordained, for it remains God's will to save. When, therefore, no ordained minister is available for the foreseeable future, Christians may assign the functions of the public office to one not called and ordained. It is important, however, to note that even in these cases, the Lutheran divines made it clear that the one who is functioning as the de facto pastor needs to be called and ordained as the pastor.

However, at this point there is a difference of opinion among Lutheran writers, indicated by Walther's statement of the matter: "in the case of the Lord's Supper no genuine case of emergency can arise" and that "almost all orthodox Lutheran theologians declare that no layman should administer Holy Communion."²¹ There is, of course, universal consensus that in cases of necessity a layman may preach and may baptize. The reason why preaching and baptism may be done by a layman is said to lie in the necessity of preaching and baptism for faith and salvation. Preaching and baptism are required to obtain justifying faith, and therefore, in their case, necessity knows no law.

²¹Walther, *Congregation's Right*, 107.

The word must be preached and baptism must be administered for God's will to save to be accomplished.

However, and this is the opinion of the vast majority of Lutheran writers, the Lord's Supper is not necessary for faith and for salvation and therefore, there is not, nor can there ever be, any necessity that allows for the suspending of the divine order by which only called and ordained ministers administer the supper. Here too we may use the discussion of John Gerhard, since his reasons are repeated by most other writers:

That the administration of the sacred supper properly is given to the ministers of the church is clear from the following reasons: 1) because the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments are conjoined, which are the external signs and testimonies of the evangelical promise; 2) because the ministers of church are the "servants of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. 4:1; Titus 1:7), among which the sacrament of the dominical supper is eminent; 3) because the administration of baptism is ordinarily given to the ministers of the church to whom it was said: "teach all nations, baptizing (Mt. 28: 19); therefore also the administration of the eucharist. [However] never in case of necessity is the administration of the holy supper to be committed to a layman (*privato*), since in this matter there is a difference from baptism. For baptism is a sacrament of initiation but the holy supper is a sacrament of confirmation. Concerning the necessity of baptism, Christ testifies in John 3:5: "unless one shall be born from above in water and Spirit he shall not enter the Kingdom of God." Whenever therefore water is available, baptism can and ought be administered by a layman, but there is no use of the holy supper which exists in an equal measure of necessity. Therefore, when there is no supply of

ordained ministers of the church, this statement of Augustine holds, "believe and you have eaten."²²

The majority of Lutheran theologians to some extent repeat Gerhard's content in denying that a layman ought ever administer the Lord's Supper. C. F. W. Walther was certainly no exception, nor for that matter did the Missouri Synod historically as a whole concede that the Lord's Supper may be administered in the church by a layman, at least not until recently. Note Walther's reasons why this is so:

The reason is that in the Lord's Supper no genuine case of necessity can arise. For the Lord's Supper is the sacrament of confirmation or strengthening. Baptism, however, is the sacrament of initiation or consecration, and the proclamation of the gospel, together with absolution, the means by which faith is engendered. This alone is the reason why the orthodox teachers of our church were opposed to a layman ever administering holy communion. In this they follow the principle: where the salvation of people is in danger unless one breaks the order, then it should also be broken, for our souls are not there for the sake of the order, but the order there for the sake of our souls, namely, for the sake of our salvation; but wherever the welfare of souls is not endangered by strict observance of the order, there also the order is not to be broken. But whoever maintains that a layman has indeed the ability to impart baptism and absolution, but not the Lord's Supper, does not know what he is saying.²³

²²Johann Gerhard, *Loci Theologici*. Ed. Eduard Preuss (Berolini: Gust. Schlawitz, 1867), 4:11. Locus 21, "Concerning the Holy Supper," Chapter 4, "Concerning the Minister or Dispenser of this Sacrament," Paragraph 17.

²³Walther, *Congregation's Right*, 107; see also C. F. W. Walther, *Americanish-Lutherische Pastoraltheologie*, 5th ed. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1906), 175. Others who argue similarly include Joh.

Other reasons are adduced why a layman ought not administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Among these are the following: 1) that, although a necessity for the supper does not exist, a faithful desire for the supper suffices before God in place of the actual partaking of the supper (W. Rohnert); 2) that the requirement of ongoing pastoral care is a beneficial concomitant of partaking of the Lord's Supper (Chr. Löber; many others)²⁴; 3) that divisions are easily introduced into the church when someone other than the ordained minister celebrates the supper (Walther); 4) that since the partaking of the supper is a public confession of faith, only that one who is the recognized public minister should administer the supper (Walther, others).

However, as the last statement of the Walther quote above makes clear, the fact that the Lord's Supper *should not* be administered by a layman in any circumstance, is not to be understood to suggest that a layman *can not* administer the Lord's Supper because of the lack of some intrinsic power necessary for the consecration and administration of the sacrament of the altar. Therefore, one can find some orthodox Lutheran theologians who do admit of necessity also for the Lord's Supper. A convenient listing of Lutheran writers who hold to this opinion is given by Walther in his

Andrew Quenstedt, David Hollaz, Joh. Benedict Carpzov, W. Rohnert, Christian Löber, Theo. Lätsch.

²⁴Christian Löber, *Evangelisch=Lutherische Dogmatik*, 2nd ed. (St. Louis: Verlag von Fr. Dette, 1983), 565: "No one should partake of the Holy Supper unless he should beforehand examine himself, 1 Cor. 11:28. Therefore, for the sake of order it is also not desirable that anyone administer the sacrament other than that teacher who watches over the souls and who will give an account of his ministry, Heb. 13: 17." See *Verhandlungen der elften Jahresversammlungen des Westlichen Districts der deutschen ev.=luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio u. a. Staaten im Jahre 1865* (St. Louis: Aug. Wiebusch u. Sohn, 1865), 67, thesis 23: "The administration of the Holy Supper presupposes the existence of a Christian congregation and the private care of souls" (author's translation).

Pastoral Theology and in the *Proceedings of the Northern District* (1880, pp. 28ff): M. Chemnitz, Johannes Corvinus, Johann Gallus, Tilemann Heshusius, Johannes Fecht, Deyling, Caspar Brochmand, Zach. Grapius.²⁵ However, again it is important to recognize that when these Lutheran thinkers maintain that necessity also exists for the Lord's Supper, they are really arguing another point, namely, that the inherent power of the supper lies in the divine word, and not in any power bestowed by ordination to the pastor. This is an important point to keep in mind as these issues are discussed. This point is made clear from the *Proceedings of the Northern District*:

From this listing of witnesses one should see clearly how the Lutheran Church has unanimously on the basis of the divine word made the essence, the efficacy and power of the holy sacrament dependent only upon the order and institution of God, not however in the least upon that which human persons as instruments do.²⁶

Other Possibilities?

Given contemporary practices and attitudes in some places, it is interesting to note what the early history of the Missouri Synod allowed and in fact practiced, especially since the missiological and evangelistic context of the early LCMS is similar to the situation today, where the existence of many unchurched persons challenges the paucity of Lutheran congregations and clergy. This situation is especially evident in the *Proceedings of the Western District* (1865), which give an extensive defense for the

²⁵Walther, *Pastoraltheologie*, 177ff.

²⁶*Verhandlungen der fünfundzwanzigsten Jahresversammlungen des Nördlichen Districts der deutschen ev.=luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio u. a. Staaten versammelt zu Adrian, Michigan vom 9. bis 15. Juni A. D. 1880* (St. Louis: Druckerei des „Lutherischen Concordia=Verlags“, 1880), 32 (author's translation).

establishment of the "traveling preacher" (*Reiseprediger*).²⁷ Corresponding to the rationale discussed above, the *Proceedings* develop the argument that in the Western regions, and especially in view of the vigorous effectiveness of Methodist preaching, there exists an emergency situation that justifies the temporary abrogation of the divine order that preaching and the sacraments be done only by an ordained minister. Note the sequence of thought in the following theses:

Thesis 8: Just as all orders of God in the New Testament are not laws but gracious institutions of God for the salvation of souls, so also the order of the public preaching office.

Thesis 9: Love is the queen of all laws, much more of all orders, that is, in cases of necessity love has no law, much less an order (Matt. 12:7; Rom. 13: 10).

Thesis 10: Emergency situations exist in which also the order of the public preaching office neither can nor should be maintained (2 Moses 4:24-26).

Thesis 11: A situation of necessity exists when through a legalistic obedience to an order, souls would be lost rather than saved, that is, that love would be injured through such obedience.

Thesis 12: In a case of emergency the abrogation of the divine order should exist only so long as the situation of necessity exists.

Thesis 13: Without preaching of the word of God there is no grace possible and without baptism is faith among the grown-ups in constant danger of suffering

²⁷*Verhandlungen des Westlichen Districts*, 60-63. The Western District at the time included the entire synod west of the Mississippi River. One should also note that the *Proceedings* of the Western District are closely related to the views of Walther himself who was regularly present at its meetings, and frequently was the essayist at them. See C. F. W. Walther, *Essays for the Church*.

shipwreck in times of temptation. And as regards the children, baptism is for them the only means of grace (Rom. 10:14; Mk. 10:15, 16).

The conclusion of this argument is that there should be Lutheran "traveling preachers" and that if "he is to save the lost souls and lead them to Christ, he must also baptize"; and again, "that a traveling preacher must in addition to preaching the word also administer baptism."²⁸ However, such an arrangement did not suggest that a traveling preacher should administer the sacrament of the altar, since "the administration of the supper presupposes the existence of a Christian congregation and the private care of souls" (Thesis 23). It would also be well to note that these "traveling preachers" were men who today would be known as "missionaries at large," not merely lay ministers. The full explanation of Thesis 23 is instructive for the respect these early Missourians had for the divine order, and for the proper exercise of pastoral care in relation to the Lord's Supper:

Since the traveling preacher does not possess the required knowledge of those who come to the Lord's Supper (*Abendmahlsgäste*), and since on account of the press of time he can not prepare them for the Holy Supper, therefore he should also not distribute the Holy Supper, since he could under these circumstances easily administer the Supper to one unworthy. This order should therefore be maintained, so that there might be the intention to establish the divine order, so that the traveling preacher may not become a vagrant, but may be called by the people as soon as possible and be made a true preacher and pastor of souls (*zu einem wirklichen Prediger und Seelsorger*). Therefore, as soon as he has acquired their trust, he should allow himself to be called by the small gathered congregations (*von den einzelnen*

²⁸*Verhandlungen des Westlichen Districts*, 60-63 (author's translation).

gesammelten Gemeindlein), nonetheless with the understanding that they not hinder him from receiving and serving as many such small congregations as he can, in order to form from them a parish.²⁹

Such an understanding made little, if any, room for contingent arrangements for ongoing pastoral oversight and care by persons not ordained. Indeed, Thesis 24 of the *Proceedings of the Western District* asserts that "there may be no arrangement made that becomes an ongoing order and through which the abrogation of the divine order of the public preaching office is effected." The explanation to the thesis makes clear that with the establishment of the traveling preacher there is no introduction of the notion of licensure (*kein sogenanntes Licensirungsweseneinführen*).³⁰

The same argument against the *Licenzwesen* is made fifteen years later in the *Proceedings of the Canada District* (1880). In these *Proceedings* the question is asked about the practice of a student working in a vacant congregation. The *Proceedings* decisively distinguish this practice from that of licensure, since not the student, but the nearest ordained clergyman, is "the actual vacancy preacher." The student is only a "helper" (*Aushilf*) in the congregation, since "the actual vacancy preacher" cannot do everything. It is allowed the pastor to allow the student to preach, but this occurs over a period of time only because the student is "representative of the actual vacancy preacher." It is further inquired whether such a student may in cases of extreme necessity administer the Lord's Supper to one who is ill. The answer falls within the thought and practice we have met throughout: There is no necessity for the holy supper as there is for baptism. However, the following is added:

A student may distribute the holy supper only in such a circumstance in which any Christian could administer it,

²⁹*Verhandlungen des Westlichen Districts*, 67-68 (author's translation).

³⁰*Verhandlungen des Westlichen Districts*, 68 (author's translation).

namely, when a sick person is so terribly attacked by temptation and anxiety that he believes that he must have the sacrament and can not be comforted otherwise, since there was no possibility of acquiring a regularly called and ordained preacher.³¹

Conclusion

The exegetical, dogmatic, and pastoral tradition of the Lutheran heritage admits of no circumstance that justifies the use of unordained laymen for purposes of preaching, baptizing, and administration of the holy supper. This tradition does recognize the requirement of preaching and baptizing in cases of necessity, that is, when no ordained minister is available, nor can be acquired. Although, in the abstract, non-ordained men possess the ability to administer the sacrament of the altar, only in the most extreme cases, and then only by a minority of Lutheran teachers, is allowance made for the actual administration of the sacrament by a layman, since there exists no case of necessity for the supper.

³¹*Verhandlungen der fünfundzwanzigsten Jahresversammlungen des Canada-Districts der deutschen ev.=luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio u. a. Staaten im Jahre 1880* (St. Louis: Druckerei des „Lutherischen Concordia=Verlags“, 1880), 16-17.

Center and Periphery in Lutheran Ecclesiology

Rev. Charles J. Evanson

The Task

The subject is the center and periphery in Lutheran ecclesiology. First, we must comment concerning our terminology. Although the designations "center" and "periphery" have come into general usage in the English language—and doubtless the same may be said of such roughly equivalent terms as *Zentrum*, *Peripherie*, *omkrets*, *kraštas*, and the like—their use with reference to ecclesiology needs clear definition. It is the term "periphery" that is a bit bothersome. We will need to consider carefully what constitutes peripheral status and what it denotes. That is not in every case easy to determine. According to common English usage, what is peripheral is likely be considered marginal. In that case, to say that something is peripheral is to say that it is of little importance, negligible. But that is not the only possibility. In more precise usage, "periphery" describes the line which marks the limit of a circle or other body. What is peripheral stands on or near this line, either on the inner or the outer edge. What is within the line which marks the periphery stands in close connection with the center and is always to be considered with reference to it. What stands outside the line, is less closely connected with the center, and it is therefore of lesser or even little importance.

At the present time, the term "ecclesiology" is used to describe any model of church membership, structure, and strategy which may be planned or adopted at any time and on any basis, without reference to traditional or even

The Rev. Charles Evanson is a lecturer in theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, deployed to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuania.

scriptural norms. Almost anything said about the church or the churches these days is called an ecclesiology, at least in so far as it has to do with a strategy for ecclesiastical action of some sort. Every challenge which confronts the church comes to be answered with an appropriate ecclesiological statement and strategy. In modern terms it could be called: "What the church ought to be doing and how it ought to be doing it." There are church growth ecclesiologies, mission ecclesiologies, eucharistic ecclesiologies, and a host of others. In some cases these ecclesiologies are the product of renewed study of earlier periods and the churches' response to the challenges of those periods. Historical continuity and catholicity are significant factors in some ecclesiological models, while in others the call to follow the Bible is understood to carry with it the imperative of radical disassociation with existing structures and ecclesiologies.

The Lutheran confessors did not look upon their ecclesiology as an innovation, the result of a long period of theological development, or the result of new insights into the nature of the gospel and the doctrine of justification. They understood and confessed their ecclesiology to be that of the church catholic as it was drawn from the word of God. This ecclesiology came to be articulated in Luther's lectures and writings, and then more formally and officially in the Augsburg Confession and the other official Lutheran Confessions. Therein ecclesiology was understood to be drawn from the clear teachings of the Sacred Scriptures. Unlike the English and Continental Reformed theologians, the Lutherans concluded that the church in this world is not committed by dominical mandate to a particular form of church order. They found no scriptural support for the notion of a divinely instituted ministry apart from the priestly ministry of Christ Jesus and the public ministry that he instituted and committed to the church, the *ministerium ecclesiasticum* or *ministerium docendi evangelii et porrigendi sacramenta*. This ministry they understood to be exercised

first by the apostles and today by those who have been rightly called and set in order to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments. Ordination is the rite by which one whom the church believes the Lord to have called to this ministry is set in order. The rite consists in the laying-on of hands (χειροθεσία) and prayer by those charged with the authority to do so. The rite both commits the ministry to the ordinand and confirms him in it.

The *ministerium ecclesiasticum* is *jure divino*; instituted by God; the grades within in it are understood to be of human origin, *jus humanum*.

Theologians of the churches of the Augsburg Confession have in every age produced important theological literature concerning ecclesiology. Much of it reflects the particular circumstances in which it was written and the differing ecclesiastical practices of particular Lutheran churches. The theologians could characterize even these divergent ecclesiastical practices as still standing within the spirit of the tradition of historical continuity and catholicity. Of course, this characterization is formed from a particular understanding of what historical continuity consists in, and to what καθ' ὅλην should be understood to refer. In the case of the Augsburg Confession, its signers and subscribers understood themselves to stand within the ecclesiological tradition of the western church even though they had disregarded specific provisions of the canon law with reference to church order. In fact, they claimed that it was their Roman opponents who have introduced novelties. This statement must be understood in terms of ecclesiology as well particular doctrines.

New situations and new problems brought the need for particular ecclesiological exposition. New models of church, put forth by Pietism, Rationalism, and the new understanding of the nature of the church that came with the advent of the new university-centered theology in Germany and elsewhere at the beginning of the nineteenth century, stimulated a re-appreciation and repristination of

the theology of the period of the classical dogmaticians. Concern also arose in of reaction to the increasing political and social unrest which became evident on the continent with the Prague Rebellion of 1848.

Other factors contributed to renewed interest in ecclesiology: among them, the establishment of the Prussian Union, the emergence of organized opposition to it, and the Lutheran emigration to North America and Australia. In the twentieth century the Faith and Order Movement, the establishment of the Lutheran World Convention and, later, the Lutheran World Federation were the occasion of fresh consideration of ecclesiology. Outside the Lutheran church, the establishment of the World Council of Churches, the new elucidation of a "Eucharistic Ecclesiology" in the Second Vatican Council, and the significant influence wielded by emigre Russian theologians called for consideration. The increasing involvement of Lutheran churches with other churches in ecumenical arrangements which call for partial or full fellowship, Eucharistic hospitality, and shared ministries also has had important ecclesiological ramifications. In order to maintain existing relationships among Lutheran churches, as well as to implement new arrangements with Anglican and Reformed churches, Lutherans seem to be trying to run in two or three different and even contradictory ecclesiological tracks at once.

The ecclesiastical course of the larger Lutheran churches in recent decades reveals ecclesiological developments unencumbered by traditional Scriptural and confessional norms. In modern existentialist thought the church simply dissolves, leaving a voluntary assembly free to order its life as it pleases. To the romanticists, there has always been a special fondness for the notion of ecclesiastical validity built upon a supposed "historic" episcopate with an unbroken succession of consecrations, a view for which there is insufficient evidence. Lutheran churches which could claim

a continuity of consecrations with the medieval church did not until the most recent time attempt to build an ecclesiology on that basis. Existentialism, Romanticism, and Episcopal-ism do not provide a sufficient foundation to protect the reordering of both church and ministry on the basis of the demands of a culture that is thoroughly secularized and whose attachment to the church is at most historical and sentimental.

Even among those who self-consciously wish to identify themselves as Lutheran, sufficient interpretative differences even between so-called "conservative" and "confessionist" biblical scholars and theologians preclude the possibility that even those who wish to remain Lutherans will be able to come to a common mind on church and ministry. Thus, even where theology has not wholly given place to sociology and anthropology, the defense of particular forms of ecclesiastical polity serves as an *opinion iustitae* asserted to be the only defensible Lutheran ecclesiology. Among those who call themselves "confessionists" there are "episcopalians" and "congregationalists" who hold to traditional norms, as well as supporters of the ordination of women to the priesthood, and their elevation to episcopacy, as well as the ordination of men and women of "alternative sexual preference."

The Basis of This Examination

We examine ecclesiology with special reference to its center and periphery. Lutherans have been more apt to distinguish between what is essential and what is non-essential, what is commanded—and therefore required—and what is *adiaphora*. Also employed are the categories of *esse/bene esse*, and even distinctions between what is absolutely necessary and what is necessary, but not absolutely. To study ecclesiology from the standpoint of center-periphery gives us an opportunity to consider familiar source material on the basis of different and unfamiliar criteria.

To say that a particular rite, tradition, or church practice is peripheral does not mean that we consider it a matter of indifference. Its status will be determined by where it stands with reference to the line that marks the periphery, whether inside or outside. Indeed, in so far as peripheral matters stand in essential, intimate connection with the center, they are of great significance. Their significance derives from that connection. That they are peripheral means that they are not of independent importance. They are not self-important. Their importance is determined by where they stand with reference to the center.

Ecclesiology and Ecclesia

The term "ecclesiology" derives from the Greek ἐκκλησία *via* the Latin *ecclesia*, indicating that at the heart of Lutheran ecclesiology is the doctrine of the church. If ecclesiology is the circle, then the church, the creature of the gospel, is understood to stand at its center. What stands within the outer periphery, in close connection with the center, derives its significance from it, and is usually spoken of as essential. What stands outside the periphery, is still of some little importance in so far as it is considered with reference to the whole, is deemed non-essential. Indeed, if the needed connection with the whole and its center is obscured or lost, what stands outside the periphery may come to be regarded as undesirable or even detrimental.

We begin with the center, with the church herself. The term is one for which Martin Luther shows no fondness whatever. In his opinion it has been thoroughly corrupted, and its meaning has become unclear. It puts the people in mind of a building made of stones, he writes, or of the pope and the elaborate ecclesiastical with which he is surrounded, but no one thinks of the church as a community of people made holy by the work of Christ.

If the words, "I believe that there is a holy Christian people," had been used in the Children's Creed, all the misery connected with this meaningless and obscure word ["church"] might easily have been avoided. For the words "Christian holy people" would have brought with them, dearly and powerfully, the proper understanding and judgment of what is, and what is not, church. Whoever would have heard the words "Christian holy people" could have promptly concluded that the pope is no people, much less a holy Christian people. So too the bishops, priests, and monks are not holy, Christian people, for they do not believe in Christ, nor do they lead a holy life, but are rather the wicked and shameful people of the devil. He who does not truly believe in Christ is not Christian or a Christian. He who does not have the Holy Spirit against sin is not holy. Consequently, they cannot be "a Christian holy people," that is, *sancta et catholica ecclesia*.

But since we use this meaningless word "church" in the Children's Creed, the common man thinks of the stone house called a church, as painted by the artists; or, at best, they paint the apostles, disciples, and the mother of God, as on Pentecost, with the Holy Spirit hovering over them. This is still bearable; but they are the holy Christian people of a specific time, in this case, the beginning. *Ecclesia*, however, should mean the holy Christian people, not only of the days of the apostles, who are long since dead, but to the end of the world, so that there is always a holy Christian people on earth, in whom Christ lives, works, and rules, *per redemptionem*, "through grace and the remission of sin," and the Holy Spirit, *per vivificationem et sanctificationem*, "through daily purging of sin and renewal of life," so that we do not remain in sin but are enabled and obliged to lead a new life, abounding in all kinds of good works, as the Ten Commandments or the two tables of Moses' law command, and not in old, evil works. That is St. Paul's teaching. But the pope, with his followers, has applied

both the name and the image of the church to himself and to his vile, accursed mob, under the meaningless word *ecclesia*, "church," etc.¹

Even today the word church is used in a wide variety of meanings, so it is necessary for us to make clear that ecclesiology has to do with the community of Christians, the body of Christ.² The classical expression of it is found in article VII of the Augsburg Confession:

Also they teach that one holy church is to continue forever. The church is the congregation of saints, in which the gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments are rightly administered.

And to the true unity of the church it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, that is, rites or ceremonies, instituted by men, should be everywhere alike. As Paul says: One faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, etc. (Eph. 4:5-6).³

Because it is the purpose of Augustana VII to speak of where the holy Christian people are to be found, that "located-ness" is necessarily described in terms of sensory phenomena; the church may be known primarily in terms of what is heard in the congregation, and secondarily by what is seen. The teaching of the gospel enters the ear, not the eye or the nose, and with reference to holy baptism, holy

¹Martin Luther, "On the Councils and the Church" (1539), trans. Charles M. Jacobs, vol. 41 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Eric W. Gritsch (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), 144-45.

²*Oxford English Dictionary* lists no less than eighteen definitions under the heading "church."

³*Concordia, or, Book of Concord : the symbols of the Ev. Lutheran Church : with indexes and historical introductions*, trans. and ed. W.H.T. Dau and F. Bente .(St. Louis, Mo. : Concordia Pub. House, 1922), Augsburg Confession 7.1-4 (hereafter cited in notes as *Triglott*).

absolution, and the sacrament of body and blood of Christ, it is Christ's spoken word that makes them what they are. The sheep hear the voice of their Shepherd through the voice of him who has been set in order to speak with the voice of the Shepherd. "For, thank God, a seven year old child now knows what the church is, namely, the holy believers and lambs who hear the voice of their Shepherd. For the children pray thus: I believe in one holy Christian church," writes Luther in the Smalcald Articles. What is seen may give the appearance of sanctity, but the eye is more easily misled than the ear: "...holiness does not consist in albs, tonsures, long gowns, and other of their ceremonies devised by them beyond Holy Scripture, but in the Word of God and true faith."⁴

Christ and the Church

Ubi Christus, ibi ecclesia. The definition of the church begins with Christ, because it is his saving work that brings it to life, and according to his promise he is always in the midst of his believers, always giving freely and fully what he alone has earned and is able to give by virtue of his cross and passion. The progression is Christ→gospel→church.

But where there is a holy, Christian church, there all the sacraments, Christ himself, and the Holy Spirit must be. Now if we are to be a holy Christian church and to possess the most important and necessary parts such as God's word, Christ, the Spirit, faith, prayer, baptism, the sacrament, the keys, the office of the ministry, etc., and should not also possess the humblest part, namely, the power and right to call some persons to the office of the ministry who administer to us the word, baptism, the sacrament, forgiveness, which in any case are available, and serve us through these, what kind of a church, I ask, would this be? What would happen to Christ's word when he says: "Where two or three are gathered in my

⁴Smalcald Articles 7.1-4 (Triglott).

name, there am I in the midst of them" [Matt. 18:20]? And again: "If two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven" [Matt. 18:19]? If two or three possess such power, how much more an entire church.⁵

It is in the midst of his congregation that Christ offers what he has obtained for sinners by his cross, and in his congregation he offers it in the preaching of the gospel and in the distribution in his supper. Without such offering and giving in the church, there could be no hope for man, for he cannot appropriate Christ's merit by the strength of his own spiritual efforts, his ardent passion and the strength of our heartfelt devotion. Forgiveness and salvation depend on no unreliable basis. What Christ has obtained at such great price on the cross, he offers freely in preaching and in the sacrament. It is there alone that it is to be sought and found. So Luther says in "Against the Heavenly Prophets" (1524):

We treat of the forgiveness of sins in two ways. First, how it is achieved and won. Second, how it is distributed and given to us. Christ has achieved it on the cross, it is true. But he has not distributed or given it on the cross. he has not won it in the supper or sacrament. There he has distributed and given it through the word, as also in the gospel, where it is preached. He has won it once for all on the cross. But the distribution takes place continuously, before and after, from the beginning to the end of the world. For inasmuch as he had determined once to achieve it, it made no difference to him whether he distributed it before or after, through his word, as can easily be proved from Scripture.

⁵Martin Luther, "The Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests" (1533), trans. Martin E. Lehmann, vol. 38 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Martin E. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 212 (hereafter cited in notes as *LW*).

...I will find in the sacrament or gospel the word which distributes, presents, offers, and gives to me that forgiveness which was won on the cross.⁶

The Center of the Doctrine of the Church

At the heart the doctrine of the church is the teaching concerning the person and work of Christ. Articles III through VIII of the Augsburg Confession progress from the person of Christ (article III) to his saving work (justification) (article IV), sacramental ministry (article V), the fruits of faith (article VI), holy church and her constitution (articles VII & VIII). That order is not unexpected, for the church is the fruit of the application of his saving benefits, the *corpus Christi mysticum*, of which he is the ever-living Head. The mystical body is manifested where Christ is present in the *corpus Christi verum*.

Here no distinction is made between church, gathered congregation, diocese, and national or territorial church body. Where Christ is present by the work of the Holy Spirit in the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments, he is completely present. The local gathering around the pulpit and altar is the church, *σῶμα Χριστοῦ*, wholly and completely. There is no place here for a *pars-et-tota* ecclesiology, whereby the local, diocesan, or even national gathering is only partially or derivatively church, needing the authentication of association within the larger whole. Nor is the any or every gathering of individuals made to be church by the voluntary decision of the individual members of become a congregation or church. Nor is a particular parish communion, diocese, synod, or other jurisdictional unit define itself as "a member of the Body of Christ" or as "holding membership in the Body of Christ, according to the so-called "branch" theory which

⁶Martin Luther, "Against the Heavenly Prophets in the Matter of Images and Sacraments." (1525), trans. Conrad Bergendoff, vol. 40 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Conrad Bergendoff (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1958), LW40:213-14.

turns churches into "churchlettes," which are incomplete in themselves and in essential need of outward association with the larger church, its form of ecclesiastical organization, and its spiritual leaders. The church is the bride of Christ, which he came to seek and call to himself and cleanse in preparation for final presentation, as the Apostle announces in the letter to the church at Ephesus (Eph. 5:25ff.). Here christology, eschatology, and ecclesiology all stand in closest connection.

The Church and the Churches

The individual or local assembly does not live in isolation. Every assembly of believers among whom the gospel is preaching without additions or omissions that corrupt it and among whom the sacraments are in like manner administered as the Lord has given them is the church, is one church. All the assemblies together are altogether one church. Unrepentant heresy requires separation, and baseless schisms are to be deplored; they are by nature and definition divisive. The church, however, is not divided. She is one. Where the word is rightly taught and the sacraments rightly given there is to be fraternal recognition of community and mutual submission out of reverence for Christ. That the ἐκκλησίαι are also ἐκκλησία is not a human achievement brought about by skillful negotiations and administrative manipulations, or even agreement on and implementation of a Quadrilateral and historic episcopacy. It is about the unity of believers in ἐκκλησία and the oneness of the ἐκκλησίαι that Christ prays in his high-priestly prayer. That unity is to be found in the reconciling work that he has accomplished by his saving death and resurrection, offered in the proclamation of the one gospel of Christ. The right preaching of that gospel communicates this praying, suffering, dying, and rising Lord and Christ with all that he gives by word and sacrament; consequently those who hear and harken to that

gospel are one church, regardless of the limitations of time and space. The particular ἐκκλησία lacks no gift or power which a larger or more complete ἐκκλησία must exercise with her or on her behalf. To each ἐκκλησία it is given both to proclaim and live by this gospel and to exercise the *potestas clavium* in conformity to the divine word. Each assembly has the authority to call its own pastor, however the responsibility for ordination is assumed by the minister who is authorized to ordain in all the churches, not by matter of divine right, but in token that there is one ministry of preaching and administering in the ἐκκλησία is attested and affirmed in all the ἐκκλησίαι.

The Background of Augustana VII

Behind the definition of article VII of the Augsburg Confession is more than a decade and a half of Luther's careful thought concerning the nature of the church. As early as the "Lectures on the Psalms" of 1513-1515, Luther speaks of the church as indiscernible to human sight, but known only to faith.⁷ He used this terminology long before the controversies of the opening years of the 1520s, though it was in the context of those controversies that he further developed his arguments. The church consists of believers, he declares, but it is not believers who form the substance of the church. Faith depends upon the word, which calls it to life and forever nourishes and sustains it. "The entire life and substance of the church is in the Word of God."⁸ Werner

⁷Gordon Rupp (*The Righteousness of God: Luther Studies* [London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1963], 317) credits Karl Holl with the insight that Luther's visible/invisible terminology is not the fruit of controversy with Rome, but is already evident in the early Psalms lectures. For example, "For Christ is concealed in the Church which is hidden from men but manifest to God"; "For the Church is invisible and is recognizable by faith alone."

⁸Martin Luther, "Ad Librum Eximii Magistri Nostri Magistri Ambrosii Catharini, Defensoris Silvestri Prieratis Acerrimi, Responsio Martini Lutheri." vol 7 of *D. Martin Luthers Werke: kritische*

Elert notes that, in a 1521 rejoinder to a Dominican antagonist, Luther employs terminology remarkably close to that used later in Augustana VII:

The gospel is the real organizing principle of the church. It begets the believers, gathers them, and combines them into a supra-individual unity. On the basis of this fundamental thought Luther, in his defense against Ambrosius Catherinus, develops a conception of the church which must be regarded as an exact anticipation of the seventh article of the Augsburg Confession (1521: 7,703-778). The church is built on the Rock Christ alone, With him it will remain in the Spirit (709, 25ff., 33). "It will remain perpetually" (*perpetuo mansura*), says the Augsburg Confession. It is the "communion of saints" (*communio sanctorum*) (712, 39)—"congregation of saints" (*congregatio sanctorum*) says the confession. Or the "holy congregation of the believers" (*sancta fidelium congregatio* (742, 34)—the "assembly of believers" (*Versammlung aller Glaubigen*). How can it be recognized? "For some visible sign must be given by which are to be gathered into one body for the purpose of hearing the Word of God" (*oportet enim aliquod visibile signum dari, quo congregemur in unum ad audiendum verbum dei*). Such signs are baptism, the bread, and, above all the gospel. "These are the three symbols, tokens, and marks of Christians.... For in these Christ wants us to be in agreement" (*Triae hanc sunt Christianorum symbola, tessare et characteres.... In his enim vult nos Christus concordare*) (729, 32ff.).⁹

Gesammtausgabe. (Weimar: Hermann Böhlau, 1883-), 721, line 12 (hereafter cited in notes as WA).

⁹Werner Elert, *The Structure of Lutheranism: The Theology and Philosophy of Life of Lutheranism Especially in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, trans. Walter A. Hansen (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1962), 259-60.

Immediately behind Augustana VII (and VIII) stands article XII of the Schwabach Articles, drawn up in 1529 by Luther, Melancthon, and others to concentrate and articulate Lutheran doctrine.

There may be no doubt that there is and abides on earth until the end of the world a holy Christian church, as Christ says, Matthew, the last chapter: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." This church is not other than the believers in Christ, who keep, believe and teach the articles and parts named above, and for this suffer persecution and martyrdom in the world; for where the gospel is preached and the sacraments used aright, is the holy Christian church, and it is not bound by laws and outward splendor, to place and time, to persons and ceremonies (author's translation).¹⁰

This definition is drawn in turn from Luther's more extended confession of the church in his "Confession Concerning Christ's Supper, 1528."

...I believe that there is one holy Christian church on earth, i.e., the community or number or assembly of all Christians in all the world, the one bride of Christ, and his spiritual body of which he is the only head. The bishops or priests are not her heads or lords or bridegrooms, but servants, friends, and—as the word

¹⁰*Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche*. 10th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), 61-62, *Augsburg Confession* 7. (hereafter cited in notes as BK): "Daß kein Zweifel sei, es sei und pleibe auf Erden ein heilige christliche Kirch bis an der Welt Ende, wie Christus spricht Matth. am letzten: Siehe, ich bin bei euch bis an der Welt Ende. Solche Kirch ist nit ander dann die Glaubigen an Christo, welche obgenannte Artikel und Stuck halten, glauben und lehren und darüber verfolgt und gemartert werden in der Welt. Denn wo das Evangelion gepredigt wird und die Sakrament recht gebraucht, do is die heilige christenliche Kirche, und sie is nit Gesetzen und äußerlicher Pracht an Stätte und Zeit, an Person und Gebärde gebunden."

"bishop" implies—superintendents, guardians, or stewards.

The Christian church exists not only in the realm of the Roman Church or power, but in all the world, as the prophets foretold that the gospel of Christ would spread throughout the world, Psalm 2, Psalm 19. Thus this Christian church is physically dispersed among pope, Turks, Persians, Tartars, but spiritually gathered in one gospel and faith, under one head, i.e., Jesus Christ. For the papacy is assuredly the true realm of Anti-Christ, the real anti-Christian tyrant, who sits in the temple of God and rules with human commandments, as Christ in Matthew 24 and Paul in II Thessalonians 2 declare; although the Turk and all heresies, wherever they may be, are also included in this abomination which according to prophecy will stand in the holy peace, but are not to be compared to the papacy.

In this Christian church, wherever it exists, is to be found the forgiveness of sins, i.e., a kingdom of grace and of true pardon. For in it are found the gospel, baptism, and the sacrament of the altar, in which the forgiveness of sins is offered, obtained, and received. Moreover, Christ and his Spirit and God are there. Outside this Christian church there is no salvation or forgiveness of sins, but everlasting death and damnation; even though there may be a magnificent appearance of holiness and many good works, it is all in vain. But this forgiveness of sins is not to be expected only at one time, as in baptism, as the Novatians teach, but frequently, as often as one needs it, till death.¹¹

¹¹Martin Luther, "Confession Concerning Christ's Supper." (1528), trans. Robert H. Fischer, vol. 37 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Robert H. Fischer (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1961), LW 37:368.

Notae Ecclesiae—The Essential Marks of the Church

In Augustana VII, the church is taught, confessed, and defined, its duration is stated, and its outward marks are noted, although nowhere in the text are they described as outward marks or *notae*. She is an assembly or convocation of believers which has existed, exists at the present time, and will continue to exist for all time. This assembly is outwardly identifiable on the basis of what is heard in the assembly (i.e., the teaching or proclamation of the gospel of and about Jesus) and observable on the basis of the sacramental activity which goes on within the assembly (i.e., baptism and the sacrament of Christ's body and blood offered to communicants for forgiveness of sins, oneness with himself and the Father, and the foretaste of heaven). Baptism, the holy supper, and confession and absolution will be more thoroughly describe in articles IX-XII.

Where these marks are found, there the church is to be found, because there the person of Christ and the fruit of his saving work are made present by the Holy Spirit, working faith and gathering a faithful, believing people. The manifestation of the church is not prior to or independent of preaching and sacraments, as though they could be listed among a number of activities with which the church appropriately occupies herself. Nor can we posit that the church as institution authenticates and validates preaching and the sacrament. The presence of the church is tied to the marks of preaching and the sacraments by virtue of their dominical designation as the means of Christ's saving presence. The proclamation of Christ gathers the church, just as during his earthly ministry Christ gathered the people to himself by opening his mouth and speaking. *Ubi Christus, ibi ecclesia*. Christ does not go about without his church; where the Head is, there too are the members of the body.

The pure teaching of the gospel and the right administration of the sacraments are essential to the true oneness of the church, for they are constituent to that

oneness. As there is one Lord, proclaimed in the gospel as Son of God and Son of Man, so too there can be only one baptism, baptism into his death and there can be only one sacramental banquet, which is his very body and blood for forgiveness, life, and salvation. There cannot exist alongside them a gospel which proclaims a different Christ, some other baptism for some other purpose, and a supper that is something other than his body and blood for is given for some purpose other than eating and drinking. That these are described as "gnug" and "satis" does not mean that together their proper outward observance represents a minimum standard beyond which everything is permitted. The terms are rather to be understood as a confession that the preaching of the gospel and the right use of the sacraments do fully what God has given them to do—to bear witness to the church's oneness. God has given no other outward sign which does this, and those that men have instituted, described as ceremonies ("Ceremonien, von den Menschen eingesetzt," "ritus aut ceremonias ab hominibus institutes") have no such power, and therefore it is not necessary that they be kept uniformly in every place. Melancthon does not here specifically identify any such human ceremonies.

Generally included among human ceremonies and traditions is every instance in which there is no clear dominical institution. Thus, human traditions might include pious and commendable practices that have been handed down from one generation to another, even from the apostles themselves, which we continue to use. However, we must confess that they do not bear witness to the true unity of the body of Christ in the sense that the *notae ecclesiae* do so, nor is that their purpose. Thus, their uniform use in all places cannot be an absolute necessity. And, on the other hand, their disuse also cannot be uniformly required. The marks of the church stand at the center; human traditions stand outside the circle that marks the periphery of the

church. They gain some importance from their association with the church, but they are by no means essential.

The Needs of the Church

Peripheral and yet essential are those things that define the church, In "Das eyn Christliche versamlung odder gemeune recht und macht habe, alle lere tzu urteylen und lerer zu beruffen, eyn und abzusetzen, Grund und ursach aus der schriff" (1523), Luther notes first what a Christian congregation is and where it can be found. It is recognized by the presence of a sure mark, the preaching of the pure gospel. For this reason, and since the soul of man requires it, when bishops and others refuse to provide for the ordination of preachers the right to do so must be taken from them and given to the community of Christians.

Thus we conclude that where there is a Christian congregation which has the gospel, not only does it have the right and power, but it is obligated by its responsibility for the salvation of the souls brought to Christ in baptism, to shun, flee, dismiss, and withdraw from the authority now exercised by the bishops, abbots, cloisters, foundations, and all such, since one sees clearly that they teach and lead contrary to God and his word. Therefore it is certain and sure and well-founded and one can depend on it that it is a divine right and necessary to the salvation of souls that such bishops, abbots, cloisters and whatever pertains to their rule be deposed or shunned.¹²

The congregation cannot continue without preachers/teachers. When and if ordained priests cannot

¹²Cf. Martin Luther, "That A Christian Assembly Or Congregation Has The Right And Power To Judge All Teaching And To Call, Appoint, And Dismiss Teachers, Established And Proven By Scripture." (1523), trans. Eric W. and Ruth C. Gritsch, vol. 39 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Eric W. Gritsch (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970), LW 39:308-309.

otherwise be gotten, the congregation itself must call into the holy ministry capable men whom God has equipped and gifted for the office of teaching the gospel and administering the gospel sacraments. According to the usual order, the minister of ordination should be the bishop. Otherwise, the minister of ordination is to be one who already possesses the office of the ministry. The newly ordained then takes up ordering of others into the *ministerium ecclesiasticum*. A preacher so ordained may not only preach, but also baptize, celebrate mass, and assume the cure of souls.

The evangelical and scriptural justification for such a course of action is clear to Luther. John 6:45, Psalm 45:7, 2 Cor. 4:13, and Psalm 116:10 teach that where a Christian finds himself isolated and without Christian companions, he must himself take the work of preaching and teaching the gospel upon himself. If, however, other Christians are present, he should not arrogate to himself the office of preacher, but let the office be filled by those called and selected to serve.¹³ Although this course of action gives the appearance of not heeding the existing spiritual authorities, the breach is only apparent. Bishops and abbots who do not fulfill their duty do not truly represent the apostles.

In "De Instituendis ministris Ecclesiae" (1523).¹⁴ Luther is prepared to press his case further. Papal ordination is not to be desired even if available, since the Roman bishops act as though the priesthood were their own creation and subject in every respect to their regulation. Those whom they ordain are not ordained according to the purpose of Christ, for they are not ministers of gospel and sacrament but mere mass-priests. Ordination was first instituted on the

¹³Luther, "That a Christian Assembly...", LW 39:311.

¹⁴Martin Luther, "Concerning the Ministry" (1523), trans. Conrad Bergendoff, vol. 40 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Conrad Bergendoff (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1958), LW 40:3-44.

authority of the Scriptures, and it is to be held in honor as the highest of all church offices, since the whole church depends upon the preaching of the gospel. In addition, the papal ordination is to the office of offering Christ's body and blood as a sacrifice before God.

*Supportive Notae Ecclesiae—On the Councils
and the Church*

In addition to the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments, Luther speaks in his later writings of other marks or signs of the church in this world. In *On the Councils and the Church* (1539), Luther describes seven "principal possessions" by which the present of the holy Christian people can be seen or heard. First, they possess the holy word of God (which, however, is not found in all places in the same measure). Where that word is preached, believed, professed, and lived there can be no doubt that the *ecclesia sancta catholica* is present. Further, they have the sacrament of holy baptism, the sacrament of the altar, and the public exercise of the office of the keys (the proper use of Matthew 18:15-20), which Christ has given not to the pope but to the church. Fifth, among them ministers are called or consecrated (i.e., ministers are set in order to preach and administer the sacraments. We note among them the presence of bishops, pastors, or preachers who publicly and privately administer the four possessions already noted. Although this administration is the common possession of the whole church, it is entrusted to particular men with the approbation of all. They take the place of the apostles, evangelists, and prophets who went before them, and they will continue to do so, for the church shall abide until the end of the world. Luther notes that except in emergencies only men who have been adjudged to be competent and have been called are to exercise this office. Others are to receive baptism, absolution, and the sacrament and are to be called Christians, but they are not qualified to exercise the Office of Supervision. The sinfulness of the minister does not impair the word he proclaims or the sacramental gift

God offers men through his sacramental ministry. Recipients too may be sinners. The church, the people of God, has a particular way of dealing with sinners: it reproves them and makes them holy. Sixth, where one sees and hears the Our Father prayed and taught, or the Psalms or other spiritual songs are sung in accordance with the word of God and the true faith, together with the use and teaching of the *Symbolum Apostolicum*, the Ten Commandments, and the Catechism, there the church is present. Finally, the Christian people are outwardly known by their bearing of the holy cross and every form of misfortune, trial, and persecution from the world, the devil, and the flesh. All this they bear with humility and patience, as did their Lord.

Luther characterizes these seven "possessions" as "First Table" marks of the church, having to do with the first three of the Ten Commandments. There are also marks according to the "Second Table," such as the honoring of parents and superiors, the Christian nurturing of children, love toward the neighbor, personal chastity, self-control, sobriety, and gentleness, etc. None of these may be considered reliable signs of the presence of the church in the same sense as the so-called "first Table" possessions, for Jews and the heathen are often better known for their charitable work than are the Christians

The devil too has his own word and sacraments and his own bishops, which are a caricature of God's word, sacraments, and ministry. By means of them he intends to turn men from God's word, sacraments, and ministry to his own, which are far more impressive and attractive than God's. Some, however, are able to discern the emptiness of the devil's rites, and then mistakenly assume that God's sacraments and ministry are just as empty and can never be more than mere signs and marks of profession. However, the church's words, sacraments, and offices are not merely

outward signs; the Lord himself has instituted and ordained them, and through them the Holy Spirit is pleased to work .

Against Hans Wurst

In "Against Hans Wurst" (1541), Luther again enumerates outward marks or proofs of the presence of the holy church. He responds to the question: "Where is the church?" in the face of the Roman assertion that their church is ancient and original, and that Luther and his followers have departed from it. He presents the following "proofs," which are framed polemically. First, we possess the same baptism as the church has had from the beginning; ours is not a new and different baptism from that of the ancient church, while Rome introduces new baptism, because the old one has lost its effect. Second, our sacrament of the altar is not different from that which was instituted by Christ himself and given to the church. Third, we have the same ancient keys which Christ gave to the church, and we use them in the same way as the ancient church used them. Fourth, it cannot be questioned that we have the office of preaching and the word of God and have added nothing to it:

We invent nothing new, but hold and remain true to the ancient word of God, as the ancient church had it. Therefore we are, together with the ancient church, the one true church, which teaches and believes the one word of God. So the papists once more slander Christ himself, the apostles, and all of Christendom when they call us innovators and heretics. For they find nothing in us but what belongs to the ancient church—that we are like it, and are one church with it.¹⁵

Fifth, we believe, confess, and sing the ancient *Symbolum Apostolicum*. Sixth, we have not invented a new Psalter and

¹⁵Martin Luther, "Against Hanswurst" (1541), trans. W. P. Stephens and Eric W. Gritsch, vol. 41 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Eric W. Gritsch (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), LW 41:196.

do not pray a different Our Father from that which has been prayed from ancient times. Seventh, like the ancient church, we hold temporal rulers and authorities in honor and do not require that they be subject to our lordship or kiss our feet, as the Pope requires. We live as obedient subjects and pray from those who are in authority over us. Eighth, as did the ancient church, so too we honor and uphold marriage for the procreation of children and the prevention of carnal uncleanness. We have been faithful to the ancient way, while the Pope and his party have not. We neither invented or devised the estate of marriage, and just as surely we do not forbid it. Ninth, we have experienced the same hardship and tribulation as our brothers and sisters in Christ in all the world. It is the pope and his cardinals and monks who condemn, damn, and murder us. Tenth, we have done no such things to our enemies. "But as Christ, the apostles, and the ancient church did, we endure, admonish, and pray for others. And, indeed, we do this publicly in church, in the litany and in sermons, just as Christ our Lord did and taught and as the ancient church also did, so that in this we all act according to the ancient practice of the ancient church."

Further, Rome has introduced satisfactions and indulgences, holy water as a new baptism. These are all signs of apostasy. Further signs that she is a new, heretical church which has replaced God's sacraments with man's include the introduction of pilgrimages and other work to obtain forgiveness, the withholding of the cup from the laity, and the doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass. These too are signs—in this case signs and marks of a new church which prefers man's works to God's works.¹⁶

¹⁶Martin Luther, "Against Hanswurst," LW 41:195-201.

**A Closer Look at the Supportive *Notae Ecclesiae*:
The Place of Ordination and the Holy Ministry**

The additional or supplementary marks or signs of the presence of the church in this world are essential as supportive of the central marks of the church. Luther begins at the center and moves outward from it. Preaching, holy baptism, holy absolution, and the sacrament of the altar are not dispensable. Therefore, neither the holy ministry, which has been instituted by Christ for the purpose of preaching and administration, nor the solemn conferral of the ministry is dispensable. The one holy, Christian church abides forever, and the chief outward marks of it, the pure teaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments—according to Christ's institution—are both eschatological and eternal in a sense in which other marks are not. The discernible outward marks of God's activity gather the Christian community, directly minister the fruits of Christ's saving work in the community. In addition to this, they provide a foretaste of the final fulfillment in the life to come. Preaching points toward and finds its fulfillment in the endless theologies sung by the saints before the throne of God and the Lamb. The sacrament of the altar is the earnest of the heavenly supper and anticipates its fulfillment in the banquet of the Lamb in his kingdom which has no end. The baptized rejoice forever in the life-giving waters which flow through the heavenly Jerusalem whose streams make glad the city of God.

Preached gospel and the sacraments stand at the center and remain there as marks established and commanded by Christ and furnished with his promises. Agreement concerning these marks or outward signs is essential; other marks apart from these are not essential to the unity of the church ("...dann dies is gnug zu wahrer Einigkeit;" "ad veram unitatem ecclesiae satis est"), agreement as to their form is not required, because it is not necessary that traditions and ceremonies instituted by men be everywhere the same. Preaching and the sacraments are not counted

among such traditions and ceremonies, given their dominical institution and the gifts imparted through them.

Other marks or *notae* are essential to the life of the church in this present world, but in the end of days they will pass away. Augustana article V confesses that the "Ministerium docendi Evangelii et porrigendi Sacramenta," i.e., the apostolic, sacramental ministry, was instituted so that man might obtain through the preached word and the sacraments the faith that justifies, and that thereby the Holy Spirit might produce faith according to God's purposes in those who hear the gospel. These stand at the center. They are never merely Christian activities with which the congregation or community is provided with an opportunity to identify itself as a social organization. Still less are they religious rites by which the community "actualizes" or "concretizes" herself. The church does not go away between its outward assemblies; she abides forever, but apart from the *notae* the church is not manifested

The episcopal and priestly ministries are not in themselves a manifestation of the church. The ministry of teaching the gospel and administering the sacraments, together with the calling and setting of men in order within this ministry in the church, both of which Luther identifies as marks of the church in this world, exists for the sake of the gospel. They will come to an end with the passing away of this present world. So too, the ever-present cross, which Christ calls his disciples to carry and which weighs so heavily on the true church in this world, will finally be lifted, along with the sufferings of Christians. Further, these are not in themselves means by which the merit of Christ's passion and death are offered to his people. The ministry exists for the sake of the gospel and the sacraments, and ordination exists for the sake of the ministry. In this sense it is not improper to speak of them as peripheral to the church and gospel, within the circle.

The Nature of the Supportive Marks of the Church

What is peripheral is not necessarily dispensable. Luther and the Lutheran Confessions take both the ministry and ordination to be essential. They are essential periphery. They are peripheral, but they stand within the circle of which church, gospel, and Christ are the center. They are in no sense *adiaphora*. The particular canonical form of a rite or ceremony may be an *adiaphoron*, although the rite itself is needful because of its close connection with the center. The *Smalcald Articles* provide us with an example:

If the bishops would be true bishops, and would devote themselves to the church and the gospel, it might be granted to them for the sake of love and unity, but not from necessity, to ordain and confirm us and our preachers; omitting, however, all comedies and spectacular display of unchristian parade and pomp. But because they neither are, nor wish to be, true bishops, but worldly lords and princes, who will neither preach, nor teach, nor baptize, nor administer the Lord's Supper, nor perform any work or office of the church, and, moreover, persecute and condemn those who discharge these functions, having been called to do so, the church ought not on their account to be deprived of ministers.

Therefore, as the ancient examples of the church and the fathers teach us, we ourselves will and ought to ordain suitable persons to this office; and, even according to their own laws, they have not the right to forbid or prevent us. For their laws say that those ordained even by heretics should be regarded as ordained and remain so, as St. Jerome writes of the church at Alexandria, that at first it was governed in common by priests and preachers, without bishops.¹⁷

¹⁷Smalcald Articles, Part III, Article X, 11-3 (Triglott).

The Place of the Ministry

What is peripheral is what is not in itself of the substance of the church, the community of the holy Christian people. The church is an article of faith. She is known only by her marks, and she cannot be discerned on the basis of supposed evidences of antiquity or sanctity, or a traditional or even biblically sanctioned form of ecclesiastical order and polity. Here the primary organ of discernment is the ear of man into which the word of God is spoken, for it is the spoken word of the preacher that gathers the church around itself, and it is the word that makes baptism and the sacrament of Christ's body and blood and speaks the word of absolution. God's word is never apart from God's Spirit; both together do what God intends. The preacher or celebrant whose mouth God employs speaks a word and administers a sacrament to which he personally adds nothing, but he stands in the closest possible connection with the Lord who makes use of him. "Every minister should glory in this, that he is an instrument of God through which God teaches, and he ought out to doubt that he is teaching the Word of God."¹⁸ What Melancthon says in *Apology* VII/VIII with specific reference to the ministry of unworthy men surely applies also to those who are not unworthy: "For they do not represent their own persons, but the person of Christ, because of the church's call, as Christ testifies (Luke 10:16), 'He who hears you hears me.' When they offer the Word of God or the sacraments, they do so in Christ's place and stead."¹⁹ So too, Luther's description of the true, Evangelical

¹⁸Martin Luther, "Lectures on Titus," trans. Jaroslav Pelikan, vol. 29 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and Walter A. Hansen (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1968), LW 29:3.

¹⁹*Apol.* VII/VIII, 28: "...quia repraesentant Christi personam propter vocationem ecclesiae, non repraesentant proprias personas, ut testatur Christus: Qui vos audit, me audit. Cum verbum Christi, cum sacramenta porrigunt, Christi vice et loco porrigunt" (BK, 240).

Mass in *On the Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests* (1532):

Here everything is done, first of all, according to the ordinance and command of Christ, so that it is offered and given to the church under both kinds on the basis of the words of Christ: "Take, eat, this is my body," etc., and "Do this in remembrance of me." The pastor does not receive it only for himself, as the pope's sacrilege does. He also does not sacrifice it to God for our sins and all kinds of needs, as the pope's sacrilege does. He does not give it to us and he also does not sell it to us as a good work to reconcile God, as the pope's sacrilege does, having made such a blasphemous commercial affair of it; rather, he administers it to us for the comfort and strengthening of our faith. In this way Christ is made known and preached. Here there can be no avarice or idolatry. Here we surely have the intention of Christ and of the church. Here we do not have to be concerned whether the pastor is speaking the words secretly or whether he also is effecting conversion or whether he, too, believes, for we hear the words of institution publicly and say them along with him in our hearts. And the institution of Christ (not our action or the chrism) effects a change or gives us the body and blood of Christ. If the pastor does not believe or doubts, we do believe. If he blunders in speaking the words or becomes confused and forgets whether he has spoken the words, we indeed are there, listen to them, cling to them, and are sure that they have been spoken. For this reason we cannot be deceived, and because the ordinance and true faith are present, it must be certain that we are receiving the true body and blood of Christ. God be praised and thanked, that I have lived to see the true Christian mass and the pure Christian usage of the holy sacrament.²⁰

²⁰Martin Luther, "The Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests," *LW* 38:208.

The Holy Ministry and Ordination

The holy ministry stands within the periphery as necessary for the teaching the gospel and the administration of the sacraments. It derives its status from its close connection with them. And men must be set in place in this holy ministry in a fitting manner. According to Apology XII, 11-12, if ordination is interpreted correctly, i.e., in relation to this ministry of the word, there will be no objection to calling the rite of laying-on of hands a sacrament. The church has the mandate to institute ministers, knowing that God approves and is present in it. Further, according to Augustana XIV.

Concerning Church Order they teach that no one should publicly teach in the church or administer the sacraments unless he be regularly called.²¹

Questions may remain concerning the precise meaning of such terms as *offentlich lehren*, *publice docere*, *ordentlich Beruf*, and *rite vocatus*. The authors of the Pontifical Confutation understand that the terms are used to refer to traditional Ordination practices:

When, in the fourteenth article, they confess that no one ought to administer in the church the word of God and the sacraments unless he be rightly called, it ought to be understood that he is rightly called who is called in accordance with the form of law and the ecclesiastical ordinances and decrees hitherto observed everywhere in the Christian world, and not according to a Jeroboitic (cf. 1 Kings 12:20) call, or a tumult or any other irregular intrusion of the people. Aaron was not thus called. Therefore in this sense the Confession is received; nevertheless, they should be admonished to persevere

²¹Augsburg Confession, XIV (*Triglott*).

therein, and to admit in their realms no one either as pastor or as preacher unless he be rightly called."²²

Nothing is mentioned in Article XIV about the manner by which those to be set in order are called to the ministry, but ordination/confirmation is identified as the specific act or acts by which this is to be done. By virtue of its connection with the ministry, this rite stands within the periphery. Further, were the bishops willing to faithfully discharge their office and act for the benefit of the church and the gospel, then the usual canonical form of ordination too would stand within the circle. However, they neglect the office conferred upon them and are not only unwilling to ordain those who wish to proclaim the gospel and administer the sacraments properly, they also cast them out and persecute them. Under these circumstances, ordination can and should be conferred without the bishops. Ordination stands within the periphery so long as it is a proper ordering to the ministerial office which Christ has given to his church, and episcopal ordination according to the ancient pattern and the canons also stands within the periphery when and if it retains its connection with the center. Under the terms of the situation described in Smalcald Articles, III, X, the connection between the episcopal office and the center has been severed, and an alternative to it is found by making priests the ministers of ordination. The ministry is important for the sake of the gospel and the sacraments; ordination is important for the sake of this ministry; whatever importance may be assigned to episcopal ordination has derivative significance. The later dogmaticians equate bishops and superintendents as church officials charged with the responsibility of ordination. At the same time, they recognize no essential distinction between

²²J. Michael Reu, ed., "The Confutatio Pontificia," in *The Augsburg Confession: A Collection of Sources* (Chicago, Ill.: Wartburg Publishing House, 1930), 357.

them and others in the public ministry.²³ Thus the special office of bishops is peripheral to the office of the ministry itself. It is derived from it and represents a particular instance of it.²⁴

Ordination itself is not to be omitted excepting in most exceptional circumstances; both order in the church and the example of the ancient church require it. It is not to be denied that in it "the gifts of the Holy Spirit which are necessary for the discharge of the duties of the ministry of the church are conferred and increased."²⁵ No provision is made for the temporary conferral of the ministry upon men who are called to be "lay-ministers" or to serve in

²³"...we commit ordination to the bishops or superintendents alone, who are called bishops, not only with respect to the flock intrusted to them, or their hearers, but also with respect to other preachers, viz., presbyters and deacons, the oversight of whom has been intrusted to them; yet meanwhile, we do not recognize any such distinction between bishops and presbyters, as though the former alone, according to a divine right and the appointment of the Lord, have a right to ordain preachers, from which the rest of the presbyters have been excluded in such a manner that they cannot administer the rite of ordination even when necessity demands, as when bishops are not present or are neglecting their duty; but we say that, according to an ecclesiastical custom, introduced for the sake of good order, the power of ordaining has been left to the bishops, although from their presbyters have not been purely or absolutely excluded." Johann Gerhard, *Loci Theologici*, ed. Eduard Preuss (Berolini: Gust. Schlawitz, 1867), 6:106. Locus 21, Section 12, Paragraph 154 as cited in Heinrich Schmid, *The Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Verified from the Original Sources*, trans. Charles A. Hay and Henry E. Jacobs (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1889), 610.

²⁴Bernhard Lohse, *Martin Luther's Theology :Its Historical and Systematic Development*, Roy A. Harrisville, trans. and ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 296.

²⁵Gerhard separates the grace of ordination from the grace of reconciliation. The conferral is ascribed to the prayers of the church and presbytery. Johann Gerhard, *Loci Theologici*, 6:112. Locus 21, Section 12, Paragraph 165.

specialized "Church Growth" ministries or of deacons and vicars authorized to preach and administer the sacraments in one or more places for a specified period of time, but without the requisite period of theological and spiritual formation, and the regular call of the church and ordination.

Among the *adiaphora* can be enumerated such things as the church's yearly calendar, the setting of particular times for divine service, the church building and all its furnishings, including the altar, pulpit, font, candlesticks and candles, bells, priestly vestments, etc. Luther includes here such practices that have a natural, good effect, as when we teach our children to say grace at the table and other pious practices. Specific provisions for such practices are not laid upon the church as divine commandments which need to be fulfilled in a particular manner. Such usages differ from place to place. Indeed, on occasion the church had done without specific provisions with regard to when and where divine service was to be held, and with respect to the regulation of ecclesiastical vesture. They are among those things which we do not need to do without. They are usages and ceremonies that have no power to hallow a man in soul or body, and yet they may be considered outwardly necessary, useful, suitable and good to use. With regard to them one should be governed by reason and concern for others not set about to introduce disruptive novelties.

Lutheran departure from the usual form of law, ecclesiastical ordinances and decrees in the matter of Ordination did not come early. It was not until May 14, 1525, candidate Georg Römer of Wittenberg was ordained in the first ordering into the ministry of an Evangelical/Lutheran candidate not previously ordained according to the traditional pattern by a Roman bishop. This ordination was by no means a precipitous act. Luther had laid his groundwork slowly and carefully. In his treatise "Auff das ubirchristlich, ubirgeystlich und ubirkunstlich buch Bocks Emszers zu Leypczick Antwortt D.M.L. Darunn

auch Murnarrs geselln gedacht wird" (1521),²⁶ he had inquired into the nature—real and hypothesized—of episcopal authority and jurisdiction and the relation of the sacramental priesthood to the universal priesthood of believers. The priest who celebrates the mass and consecrates the bread is the messenger and servant of the whole church, the common priesthood which all in the church possess.²⁷ Such a priest ministers and serves on the basis of his call, and no one is to undertake the office without a call, except under extraordinary, emergency conditions.²⁸ In "Wider den falsch genantten geystlichen stand des Babst und her bischoffen" (1522),²⁹ Luther had reacted against his condemnation and excommunication by calling the ministry of the Roman pope and his bishops into question. He contended that they do not hold and exercise their office according to the requirements or example of the New Testament episcopacy.³⁰ The consideration of the action by which men are rightly set in order in the holy ministry occupied Luther throughout his life, and it is a continuing subject of discussion among Lutherans down to the present day.

Already in the sub-apostolic era, the presence of factionalism in congregations, along with the increased presence of Gnosticism, Montanism, and a variety of

²⁶WA 7:621-688.

²⁷Martin Luther, "Answer to the Hyperchristian, Hyperspiritual, and Hyperlearned Book by Goat Emser in Leipzig—Including Some Thoughts Regarding His Companion, the Fool Murner." (1521), trans. Eric W. and Ruth C. Gritsch, vol. 39 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Eric W. Gritsch, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970), LW 39:156-63.

²⁸Martin Luther, "Answer to the Hyperchristian, Hyperspiritual, and Hyperlearned Book....," LW 39:174.

²⁹WA 10¹¹:105-158.

³⁰Martin Luther, "Against the Spiritual Estate of the Pope and the Bishops Falsely So Called" (1522), trans. Eric W. and Ruth C. Gritsch, vol. 39 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Eric W. Gritsch, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970), LW 39:278-80.

heretical movements, made clear the need for regularity and proper order in the apostolic ministry. Irenaeus of Lyons writes that those bishops should be heard to whom the care of the churches had been committed — those who hold to the same doctrine of salvation (*Adv. Haer.*, 5:20). He had earlier stated that the apostles themselves had instituted these bishops to succeed them (3:3). No heretic could rightly present any apostolic credentials, Tertullian notes; only in apostolic churches would the voice of the apostles truly be heard (*De Praescr.* 32:36). When this approach was not able to carry the weight laid on it, Augustine of Hippo, in his anti-Donatist writings, provided a formulation of the doctrine a intention and a distinction between valid and invalid ministries, with valid or invalid sacraments issuing from them.

If ordination and ministry are run straight from Augustine's anthropocentric definitions, problems are not solved; they multiply. The unity of calling-ordaining-sending is broken, and the unity of the act of ordination dissolves, so that questions that admit to no conclusive solutions now appear concerning what constitutes a valid ordination, a valid ministry, valid sacraments, and at what point in the rite the conditions for validity are satisfied. Without prior theological agreement between the opposing parties assertions about the validity or invalidity of ordinations in which the minister of ordination is a minister to whom the right has simply been delegated, to say nothing of the status of so-called "lay-ministries" and the ordination of women, the assertions will be ignored.

Luther and the Lutherans frequently state their preference for the continuation of the office of the bishop as a matter of traditional practice as long as it is recognized as *jus humanum* and is exercised in accordance with its central purposes of teaching, directing, and serving. Although in certain cases selected individuals from the community were invited to participate, ordination did not become a strictly congregational act carried out without the laying-on of hands and prayer by one or more ministers of the church. In

place of bishops, the Germans and their spiritual descendants overseas got superintendents and church presidents, who served as administrators and inspectors. The reintroduction of episcopal titles does not appear to have brought with it any deep reappraisal of the office. The Scandinavians kept the title. Johannes Bugenhagen was at least partially successful in fulfilling the purpose for which he was sent to Copenhagen in that traditional episcopal order was maintained there, although those who succeeded the papal bishops had not previously been consecrated as bishops. In any case, the new bishops stood in apostolic succession in the sense that was important to the Lutherans: apostolic doctrine, faith, and practice were maintained through the ministry of those set in order to proclaim the gospel and administer the sacraments in the churches. In this case, episcopal ministry stands within the periphery because of its connection with the center. Outside the circle is the notion of a succession of consecrations from the time of the apostles, for which there is no compelling historical evidence.

Outside the high-church movement, Scandinavian bishops, like their German cousins, seem to have understood their office in terms of the function of superintendence. The decision of the Swedish Church Order of 1571 with reference to church order stands within the Reformation tradition, both in its statement that the laying-on of hands goes back to the apostles and its recognition that the separation between bishops and priests is not apostolic in origin. It maintains episcopal ordination within the periphery by commending its wholesome effects and its use by the Holy Spirit for the good of the church.

Contemporary Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox studies have given careful attention to the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch, who instructs the congregation gathered around the ministers and bishop: "...let us reverence the ministers as Jesus Christ, and so also the bishop, holding the place of the

Father, and the presbyters as God's Council, the Council of the Apostles" (*Ad Trallianos* 3:1; cf. *Ad Symr.* 8:1-2). Nicholas Afanasiëff sees the Fathers as a witness to a "Eucharistic Ecclesiology" based upon his understanding of the structure of the primitive church as "spiritual" rather than "institutional." He relies much on Rudolf Sohm's *Kirchenrecht*.³¹ John Meyendorff uses this ecclesiology as the basis of "Church and Ministry."³² This "Eucharistic Ecclesiology" resulted in major reformulation of ecclesiology in Vatican II.³³ Major problems remain. This new approach bears some similarity to the ecclesiology of the Lutheran reformers. However, it is unable to assert

³¹Nicolas Afanassiëff, "The Church that Presides in Love," in *The Primacy of Peter*, ed. John Meyendorff (London: Faith Press, 1963), 57-110.

³²John Meyendorff, *Catholicity of the Church: Church and Ministry for an Orthodox-Lutheran Dialogue* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1983), 49-64.

³³Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, "The Ecclesiology Of Vatican II" *L'Osservatore Romano: Weekly Edition in English* (23 January 2002): 5: "What do we mean today by 'Eucharistic ecclesiology'?... The first point is that Jesus' Last Supper could be defined as the event that founded the Church. Jesus gave His followers this Liturgy of Death and Resurrection and at the same time He gave them the Feast of Life. In the Last Supper he repeats the covenant of Sinai—or rather what at Sinai was a simple sign or prototype, that becomes now a complete reality: the communion in blood and life between God and man. Clearly the Last Supper anticipates the Cross and the Resurrection and presupposes them, otherwise it would be an empty gesture. This is why the Fathers of the Church could use a beautiful image and say that the Church was born from the pierced side of the Lord, from which flowed blood and water. When I state that the Last Supper is the beginning of the Church, I am actually saying the same thing, from another point of view. This formula means that the Eucharist binds all men together, and not just with one another, but with Christ; in this way it makes them 'Church.' At the same time the formula describes the fundamental constitution of the Church: the Church exists in Eucharistic communities. The Church's Mass is her constitution, because the Church is, in essence, a Mass (sent out: 'missa'), a service of God, and therefore a service of man and a service for the transformation of the world."

strongly the relationship between center and periphery, since the New Testament is *apriori* ruled out as an adequate basis for a theology of order and office, but it should be noted that this approach avoids many of the problems of an institutional ecclesiology, questions of "validity" and legitimacy of succession.

Final Observations

Order and polity are by no means matters of indifference. For Lutheran ecclesiology, Christ stands at the center, as always he must. He is the word made flesh. Where Christ is, there is his word and Spirit, as always—always together. By means of the word of and about the Christ, the Spirit gathers the church, the קהל יהוה, the ἐκκλησία, the σῶμα Χριστοῦ, which he is never without, the *communio sanctorum*, the communion of those made holy by preaching and the sacraments.

Christ, Spirit, church go together, and therefore stand together at the center. Everything else is peripheral to these: holy ministry and the ordination by which men are set in order within that ministry. In a derivative and supportive sense, ministry and ordination are marks of the church, for they have been given to the church by the church's Lord for the sake of the gospel, its proclamation and its administration in the sacraments. The giving of it is described in Matthew 28 and its parallels. It is given first to the apostles, Christ's designated שליחים³⁴ who, in addition to the ministry of making disciples of all nations by baptizing and teaching, are given this special office by which they are enabled to do works normally predicated only to God, so

³⁴Karl Heinrich Rengstorff, "ἀπόστολος," "ψευδαπόστολος," and "ἀποστολή" in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 1:407-44.

that they not only heal the sick and cast out demons, but also raise the dead and speak words to which God has uniquely bound himself, as described in the Acts of the Apostles. This special endowment is not passed on to succeeding generations in the apostolic ministry. It is here that the designation "Apostolic Succession" has any significance in Lutheran ecclesiology. Those who stand in succession carry on the work which Christ describes as μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη (Matt. 28:19). This mandate Christ has given to the community, which the pure prophetic and apostolic word, proclaimed by those called and set in order in the apostolic ministry, gathers around him.

Admission to this public ministry of teaching the gospel and administering the sacraments comes through the call of God, mediated by the church, and the solemn rite of ordination. As the ministry must stand in the service of the word for the sake of the church's life and growth, so ordination must stand in the service of this ministry. It exists for the sake of the ministry in the church, that the church, the body of Christ and his body mystical might be known among men on the basis of the *notae ecclesiae*.

Those called to ordain ministers act on behalf of the community of believers. They are themselves ministers of the word (*Divini Verbi Ministri*) called by a variety of titles to serve episcopal functions in the churches. Articles XIV and XXVIII show preference for both the episcopal title and the provisions for oversight which the canons envision. Nowhere is continuity of consecrations seen as integral to this. In any case, Rome would not consider complete any form of *episcopate* that does not include submission to the "Apostolic See." In any case the form of election and succession is a subsidiary matter which stands on the outer periphery of ecclesiology.

Although the church may institute grades of function within it, the church's only ministry is the ministry which her Lord has given her—the *Ministerium Ecclesiasticum* is the ministry of teaching the gospel purely and administering

the sacraments as Christ have given them to be administered, delivered first to the apostles for the church to continue in every age until the parousia. It is by this ministry that the fruit of Christ's redemptive work comes to and among men.³⁵

³⁵It is apparently the derivative status of the holy ministry that some dogmaticians have sought to articulate the distinction between center and periphery by asserting that the ministry is necessary to the church, but not *absolutely* necessary. Minimalists may use such statements to work great mischief, contrary to the intentions of those who formulated the distinction. Luther, with those who subscribe the Augsburg Confession and the other confessional writings, clearly affirms that the holy ministry is necessary for the church and that admission to it is through the rite of ordination, including the laying-on of hands and prayer by the church's designated representative. Other ordination ceremonies may be employed, so long as they are neither inappropriate or unduly ostentatious. Under no circumstances should ordination be sought or received from the Pope or his bishops, for they are unfaithful to the ecclesiastical offices which they hold, introduce novelties to the catholic faith, make unscriptural and unnatural demands upon candidates, and proscribe the proper exercise of the office of the public ministry.

Martin Chemnitz's Use of the Church Fathers in His Locus on Justification

Carl Beckwith

Lutherans have always recognized the value of studying the early church fathers. Whether Martin Luther or Johann Gerhard, C.F.W. Walther or Hermann Sasse, one finds a considerable familiarity with and appreciation of the church fathers. In his important study on post-Reformation Lutheranism, Robert Preus explains, "The Lutherans were convinced that the church fathers were worthy of being read directly, although critically, 'dividing the straw from the gold.'"¹ The Lutherans appealed to the fathers, according to Jacob Preus, because they "were part of the 'heavenly witnesses,' men standing before the judgment seat of God and bearing witness to their faith."² By using the testimony of these heavenly witnesses, the Lutherans demonstrated the continuity of their teaching with the church catholic.

When it comes to studying and teaching the fathers, Martin Chemnitz stands out among all the Lutheran reformers. Indeed, J. A. O. Preus declares that Chemnitz is "the best informed and equipped student of patristics that Lutheranism has ever known."³ When we look at Chemnitz's work, we discover a variety of ways in which he used the fathers. In his exhaustive *Examination of the Council*

¹Robert D. Preus, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1970-73), 1:36; Aegidius Hunnius, *Operum Latinorum* (Frankfort am Main: Impensis Iohan. Iacobi Porssij bibliopolae, 1608) vol. 2, col. 226, quoted in Robert D. Preus, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, 1:36.

²J. A. O. Preus, *The Second Martin: The Life and Theology of Martin Chemnitz* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1994), 252.

³J. A. O. Preus, "The Use of the Church Fathers in the Formula of Concord," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 48 (April-July 1984): 99.

Dr. Carl Beckwith is assistant professor of religion and Greek at Thiel College, Greenville, Pennsylvania.

of Trent, he offered numerous testimonies from the fathers to demonstrate the novelty of certain Roman teachings and customs.⁴ He used the fathers to defend the Lutheran understanding of the eucharist against the Sacramentarians in his *On the Lord's Supper*.⁵ Finally, he constructively engaged the thought of the fathers in his masterful *The Two Natures in Christ*.⁶ In the following essay, we will look at his use of the fathers in his *Loci Theologici*.⁷ These lectures, primarily delivered to future pastors, give us a unique opportunity to see how a faithful Lutheran, committed to *sola Scriptura* as the only rule and norm for doctrine, makes positive use of the fathers in the theological formation of his students. In order to appreciate Chemnitz's pedagogical method, we will limit our examination to a close reading of

⁴For some scholarly remarks on Chemnitz and Trent, see, among others, Eugene Klug, "Chemnitz on Trent: An Unanswered Challenge," *Christianity Today* 17 (August 31, 1973): 8-11; Fred Kramer, "Chemnitz on the Authority of the Sacred Scripture: An Examination of the Council of Trent," *Springfielder* 37 (December 1973): 165-175; Arthur Olsen, "Martin Chemnitz and the Council of Trent," *Dialog* 2 (1963): 60-67.

⁵See G. L. C. Frank, "A Lutheran Turned Eastward: The Use of the Greek Fathers in the Eucharistic Theology of Martin Chemnitz," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 26 (1982): 155-171.

⁶A handful of scholarly articles have documented Chemnitz's constructive engagement of the fathers. See, among others, Paul Strawn, "Cyril of Alexandria as a Source for Martin Chemnitz" in *Die Patristik in der Bibelexegese des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999), 205-230; Francis J. Watson, "Martin Chemnitz and the Eastern Church: A Christology of the Catholic Consensus of the Fathers," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 38 (1994): 73-86; Robert Kelley, "Tradition and Innovation: The Use of Theodoret's *Eranistes* in Martin Chemnitz' *De Duabus Naturis in Christo*," in *Perspectives on Christology: Essays in Honor of Paul K. Jewett*, ed. Marguerite Shuster and Richard Muller (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 105-125.

⁷There is a fine article on Chemnitz's use of Irenaeus in the *Loci*. See James Heiser, "The Use of Irenaeus's *Adversus Haereses* in Martin Chemnitz's *Loci Theologici*," *Logia* 7 (Epiphany 1998): 19-31.

the locus on justification. Here we might expect Chemnitz to be rather dismissive of the fathers since they failed consistently to articulate Scripture's clear teaching on the *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*. Yet, it is precisely here in this disputed locus where we observe Chemnitz, the pastor and teacher, engaging the heavenly witnesses who have gone before him, faithfully and critically "dividing the straw from the gold."

Locus XIII: Justification

Martin Chemnitz begins his locus on justification by warning that if this article is "obscured, adulterated, or subverted," it is not possible to retain the purity of any other article of faith.⁸ If the theologian wishes to retain the purity of this article or any other article of faith, he must, insists Chemnitz, properly distinguish between law and gospel. A detailed review of the word "gospel" in Scripture and by classical authors reveals the relative agreement among both sacred and profane writers on the meaning of this word. The scriptural understanding of gospel, explains Chemnitz, is "the doctrine of gratuitous reconciliation or of the benefits of the Mediator."⁹ The considerable amount of exegetical work

⁸*Loci Theologici, Pars Secunda, De Loco Iustificationis*, 200b (Preus, 443a): "Imo his Locus est tanquam arx et praecipuum propugnaculum totius doctrinae et religionis Christianae, quo vel obscurato, vel adulterato, vel subverso, impossibile est puritatem doctrinae in aliis Locis retinere." Hereafter cited only as *De Loco Iustificationis*. Since neither Chemnitz's manuscript nor Preus' translation incorporates line numbers, I have chosen to identify the page and column in which the quoted text appears. Therefore p. 200b corresponds to page 200, right column. The manuscript used throughout is Martin Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici, De Coena Domini, De Duabus Naturis in Christo, Theologiae Jesuitarum*, facsimile edition (Sterling Heights, Mich.: Lutheran Heritage Foundation, 2000). I use my own translations but cite the corresponding page and column in the Preus translation for the reader's convenience.

⁹*De Loco Iustificationis*, 203a (Preus, 445b): "Doctrina de gratuita reconciliatione, seu de beneficiis Mediatoris, appellatur Evangelium."

done in Chemnitz's first chapter prepares the reader for chapter two and his initial comment on the church fathers.

Justin, Tertullian, Clement, and Epiphanius incorrectly offer a chronological or linear understanding of law and gospel. For them, the natural law justified people before the time of Moses, the mosaic law from the time of Moses to Christ, and the gospel from Christ forward. The scholastics refined this view arguing that the law and gospel, which coincide with the Old and New Testament respectively, differ according to time, precepts, promises and sacraments. For them the old law was external and motivated by fear, whereas the new law is internal and a matter of love. The scholastic error has its roots, Chemnitz notes, in Eusebius of Caesarea, Augustine, and Jerome. Using various statements by these theologians, Chemnitz demonstrates how they link the commandments in the New Testament to the gospel, confusing the distinction between law and gospel. While it is true that their doctrine of the gospel consists of the gratuitous promise of the remission of sins for the sake of Christ, they add to this meaning our new obedience or good works and obscure Scripture's clear teaching that a person is justified by faith alone apart from the works of the law (Rom. 1:17, 3:21).

We can, at this point, begin to see Chemnitz's chief criticism of the fathers. The failure to distinguish between law and gospel confounds the article of justification (reconciliation) by not properly distinguishing it from the article of sanctification (renewal). Both the scholastics and the early church fathers failed to maintain a correct distinction between our reconciliation with the Father on account of the Son's redeeming work and the renewal or newness of life brought about by the Holy Spirit in the justified person. Toward the end of the chapter, Chemnitz explicitly warns, "it is necessary that the benefits of Christ, on account of which we receive remission of sin and are received unto eternal life, are distinguished from the

benefits of sanctification, or renewal, which follow justification." Such a distinction must always be maintained. Chemnitz continues, "We are not justified because of this [renewal], that is, we do not receive the remission of sins nor are we received unto eternal life because of the newness of life that follows [our justification], although it too is a benefit of Christ."¹⁰ For Chemnitz a proper order must be maintained and preserved between justification and sanctification. It must be clearly taught that following the person's justification, the Holy Spirit renews and sanctifies him and the fruit of good works "which God prepared in advance" follow (Eph. 2:10). At the same time, Chemnitz instructs Lutherans that the justified person is never without the Spirit's renewal (cf. Titus 3:5).¹¹ The principal point in

¹⁰*De Loco Iustificationis*, 207a (Preus, 450a): "Et hic necessario illa beneficia Christi, propter quae accipimus remissionem peccatorum, et acceptamur ad vitam aeternam, discernenda sunt a beneficiis sanctificationis, seu renovationis, quae sequuntur justificationem. Propter haec enim non justificamur, hoc est, non accipimus remissionem peccatorum, nec acceptamur ad vitam aeternam, propter sequentem novitatem, licet sit beneficium Christi."

For a similar comment, see *De Loco Iustificationis*, 208a (Preus, 451a): "Et qui disputant, Evangelium proprie dictum, non tantum continere promissionem gratiae; verum etiam doctrinam de bonis operibus. Tales quid dicant, non intelligent. Hoc modo enim discrimen Legis et Evangelii confunditur, quod Paulus ita constituit, Roman. 3. v. 27. Lex fidei et Lex operum: et transformatur Evangelium in legem." ("There are those who dispute that the gospel, properly speaking, contains not only the promise of grace but also the doctrine of good works. They do not understand what they are saying. For in this way the distinction between law and gospel is confounded, which Paul set forth in Romans 3:27, the law of faith and the law of works: and the gospel is transformed into law.")

¹¹Chemnitz's point is that while a logical distinction exists between our reconciliation (justification) and renewal (sanctification) they are not temporally distinct. That is to say, the justified person is at no time not also renewed by the Holy Spirit. They are, however, logically distinct and that distinction must be preserved if the article of justification is correctly understood. The article of justification concerns the promise of the gospel, which is the remission of sins for the sake of Christ. Faith is the instrument and means by which that

this matter, argues Chemnitz, is that "the true and clear distinction between law and gospel be determined and diligently retained."¹² Only when a proper distinction is maintained between the law and the gospel can the articles of justification and sanctification be preserved.¹³

Martin Chemnitz's most thorough discussion of the fathers occurs in the fourth part of his locus under the heading "Controversies." Given the importance of the

promise is applied to us; not, insists Chemnitz, the Spirit of renewal or works of love. It would simply be illogical to suggest that our justification depends on our renewal since that renewal results only from our justifying faith. Chemnitz explains his point more fully in the next section of the Locus when he outlines the teachings of Gropper, Pighius, and Vicellius. See *De Loco Iustificationis*, p. 227b-228a (Preus, 473b-475a); cf. also the discussion on grace toward the end of the Locus. The best and most concise explanation of Chemnitz's point, however, occurs in the *Enchiridion*, paragraph 164: "Likewise, though making alive, or renewal, is always with justification, yet they are not to be mixed or mingled with each other, for justification is one thing, renewal another. And though they cannot be separated according to difference in time, yet, in the order of significance or nature, justification precedes and renewal follows, which does not come in the nature of justification but is its fruit or consequence." See, Martin Chemnitz, *Ministry, Word, and Sacraments: An Enchiridion*, trans. Luther Poellot (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1981), 79.

¹²*De Loco Iustificationis*, 206b (Preus, 449a): "Ideo principale caput in hac quaestione est, ut constituatur, et diligenter retineatur verum et illustre discrimen Legis et Evangelii."

¹³Chemnitz quotes Luther's famous words: "Whoever knows well how to distinguish between law and gospel should give thanks to God and should know that he is a theologian. In temptations I certainly do not know it as I ought. You should distinguish the righteousness of the gospel from the righteousness of the law as diligently as heaven is distinguished from earth, light from darkness, day from night ... and would that we could separate them even farther." Martin Luther, "Commentary on Galatians (1535)," trans. Jaroslav Pelikan, vol. 26 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and Walter A. Hansen (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1963), 115 (hereafter cited in notes as LW).

article of justification for the Reformers and Chemnitz's initial comments on the fathers, we might expect him to be dismissive of them on this disputed article of faith. This, however, is not the case. In the preface to this section on controversies, Chemnitz explains how he intends to proceed. He will first discuss the distortions to the doctrine of justification found in the Old Testament and then turn to the New Testament. In a lengthy third section he will review the distortions to this article that occurred in the church after the New Testament period. Here Chemnitz further divides his discussion into three parts: the Gnostics, the apostolic fathers, and the church fathers. He explains:

This consideration should be added that even great saints, disturbed by thoughts of reason and the law, entertained certain wanderings of the mind on this article. Particularly of note are the ecclesiastical writers, who, when occupied with controversies on other articles, were not always attentive and circumspect in their treatment of the doctrine of justification. On numerous occasions many unfortunate statements (*incommode dicta*) were carelessly made on this article, which caused the long and gradual departure from the purity of this doctrine.¹⁴

When we arrive at the section on the fathers, Chemnitz again characterizes their teachings on justification as "unfortunate statements" ("*de incommode dictis Patrum*").¹⁵ He repeats himself explaining, "when they [the fathers] were involved in controversies on other articles of

¹⁴*De Loco Iustificationis*, 217a (Preus, 462a): "Addatur et haec consideratio, quod saepe etiam magni sancti cogitationibus rationis et Legis turbati, hallucinationes quasdam in hoc Articulo habuerunt. Praecipue autem, quomodo Scriptores Ecclesiastici, dum certaminibus de aliis Articulis occupati sunt; saepe non ea, qua decet, diligentia et circumspectione tractant doctrinam Iustificationis. Et qua occasione saepe multa incommode dicta in hoc articulo ipsis exciderint: quae postea occasio fuerunt, quod a puritate huius doctrinae paulatim longius recessum est."

¹⁵*De Loco Iustificationis*, 224b (Preus, 469b).

faith, they failed to deal with the doctrine of justification carefully and circumspectly." Occupied by other controversies, the fathers, Chemnitz continues, "carelessly made many unfortunate statements that later on furnished the occasion for a long and gradual departure from the purity of this article."¹⁶ Despite the numerous improper, unfortunate, and ill-considered ("multa improprie, incommode et incircumspecte")¹⁷ statements regarding justification, our purpose is not, warns Chemnitz, to expose their errors disrespectfully: "we shall not criticize the lapses of those by whose labors we have been helped and whose gray hairs we ought to honor."¹⁸ The unfortunate statements made by the fathers do not call for ridicule but rather for diligence in preserving the purity of the article of justification. If these saints, adept in the study of theology, are susceptible to unfortunate statements, how much more must we be? By discussing the unfortunate statements found in the fathers we will learn how to better preserve

¹⁶*De Loco Iustificationis*, 224b (Preus, 469b): "cum certaminibus de aliis Articulis occupati essent, saepe, non justa diligentia, et circumspectione, doctrinam Iustificationis tractarint. Saepe etiam, cum alio respicerent, multa incommode dicta ipsis exciderunt, quae postea occasionem praebuerunt, quod a puritate huius articuli paulatim longius discessum est."

¹⁷Preus retains Chemnitz's alliteration in his translation rendering it "imprecise, inadequate, and injudicious." The problem here is that the reader fails to notice Chemnitz's consistent characterization of the statements by the fathers as "unfortunate" (*incommode*). Preus variously renders *incommode* as unfortunate, inadequate, unfelicitous, and imprecise. In order to preserve Chemnitz's argument, I have translated *incommode* as unfortunate throughout.

¹⁸*De Loco Iustificationis*, 224b (Preus, 470a): "ideo lapsus illorum non exagitamus, quorum laboribus adjuvamus, et quorum canitiem revereri debemus." Chemnitz continues, "sed has commonefactiones eo referimus, ut exemplis illis admoniti, eo simus et cautiore, et diligentiores, in conservanda doctrinae puritate, ne quacunqu[e]m] etiam occasione eius inclinationem faciamus."

and present the doctrine of justification to those who incorrectly cling to such statements.¹⁹

Given Chemnitz's prefatory comments on the fathers and his restatement of them, it is fair to characterize his attitude toward the fathers as one of esteem and discernment. He seeks to correct the fathers according to Scripture whenever they make "unfortunate statements," all the while remembering their many labors and tremendous contribution to Christian doctrine. Moreover, a rejection of their unfortunate statements on justification is not a rejection of their contribution to the faith. Indeed, we may be surprised to observe the great lengths Chemnitz is willing to go in order to explain why such statements were made. At every turn, Chemnitz seeks to put the best possible construction on the statements made by the fathers, criticizing rather those who zealously clung to these

¹⁹We should note here the similarity between Chemnitz's comments and Luther's own view of the fathers. In his *Lectures on Genesis*, Luther wrote, "But this also has a bearing on our firmly holding the conviction that there were really six days on which the Lord created everything, in contrast to the opinion of Augustine and Hilary, who believed that everything was created in a single moment. They, therefore, abandon the historical account, pursuing allegories and fabricating I don't know what speculations. However, I am not saying this to vilify the holy fathers, whose works should be held in high regard, but to establish the truth and to comfort us. They were great men, but nevertheless they were human beings who erred and who were subject to error. So we do not exalt them as do the monks, who worship all their opinions as if they were infallible. To me the great comfort seems to lie rather in this, that they are found to have erred and occasionally to have sinned. For this is my thought: If God forgave them their errors and sins, why should I despair of His pardon? The opposite brings on despair—if you should believe that they did not have the same shortcomings that you have. Moreover, it is certain that between the call of the apostles and that of the fathers there is a great difference. Why, then, should we regard the writings of the fathers as equal to those of the apostles?" Martin Luther, "Lectures on Genesis," trans. George V. Schick, vol. 1 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1958), LW1:121.

unfortunate statements and those toward whom these comments were directed.

The Church Fathers and Justification by Faith

The initial problem in the early church, notes Chemnitz, is the lack of a technical understanding of terms like "to justify" ("iustificare"), "righteousness" ("iustitia"), "to be righteous" ("iustus"), and "grace" ("gratia").²⁰ Quite often the imprecise use of these terms resulted in understanding Paul's teaching on justification as renewal. Chemnitz's principle concern emerges immediately. He explains: "Although this meaning in itself was not false or impious and it seemed that the improper use of this word [i.e., justification] had no unfortunate consequences, nevertheless because of this the doctrine of Paul was gradually obscured."²¹ Chemnitz diverts blame from the fathers to

²⁰In his *Treatise on the Reading of the Fathers or the Doctors of the Church*, Chemnitz encourages discretion in using the commentaries of the fathers when they are discussing vocabulary. For example, since Augustine did not possess an adequate knowledge of Hebrew, he understood words like "to justify," "righteousness" and "grace" in a slightly different way than does Scripture. See *Loci theologici*, "De Lectione Patrum," 6a (Preus, 33a). Chemnitz makes a similar point in the introduction to the *Loci*. He points out how the ancients departed from the natural and proper meaning of words like "justification" and "grace." He proceeds once again to offer the example of Augustine. See *Loci Theologici*, "De Lectione Patrum," 16a (Preus, 46b). Luther makes a similar point concerning the Psalm commentaries of Augustine and Hilary of Poitiers in Martin Luther, "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany That They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools (1524)," Albert T. W. Steinhäuser, rev. Walther I. Brandt, vol. 45 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Walther I. Brandt (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1958), LW 45:361 and Augustine's understanding of Hebrew in Martin Luther, "Lectures on Genesis," LW 1:263.

²¹*De Loco Iustificationis*, 224b-225a (Preus, 470a): "Quae sententia licet per se nec falsa, nec impia erat, et ideo catachresis illa nihil

their interpreters, namely the schoolmen, who imprudently used their statements, expanded on them, and completely obfuscated Scripture's teaching on justification and sanctification.²²

As already mentioned, a significant confusion occurred in distinguishing law and gospel. Even if we wished to speak charitably, explains Chemnitz, "the statements are unfortunate" ("incommoda dicta sunt").²³ As a result, either good works are required for salvation, or if a distinction between law and gospel is made, it follows the understanding of Clement, who argues that the law prohibits evil deeds while the gospel prohibits evil intentions.²⁴ Chemnitz demonstrates his point by offering examples from Theophilus of Antioch, Tertullian, Irenaeus, Clement, Cyprian, Origen, Eusebius, Hilary, and Chrysostom. These fathers erred, insists Chemnitz, because "they did not assign the doctrine of good works to its [proper] locus and position as the fruits of faith, but often mixed it with the article of justification itself." Here again it

videbatur incommodi habere; tamen sensim inde subsecuta est obscuratio doctrinae Paulinae."

²²In the section on the vocabulary of justification, Chemnitz shows how Augustine interpreted *iustificare* to mean sanctification and taught that our justification resulted from our renewal in good works. Chemnitz does not blame Augustine for his improper use of this word but rather typically blames the schoolmen, which, in this case, are Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas. See *De Loco Iustificationis*, 229ff (Preus, 475ff).

²³*De Loco Iustificationis*, 225a (Preus, 470a).

²⁴*De Loco Iustificationis*, 225a (Preus, 470b). Chemnitz paraphrases Clement of Alexandria ("Stromatum," in *Patrologiae Graecae*, ed. J. P. Migne, vol. 9 [Paris: Apud Garnier Fratres, 1890], col. 495-512, *Stromata* 7.12.314-317 [hereafter cited in notes as PG]) as, "Lex prohibet tantum malas actiones: Evangelium vero etiam malas cogitationes" ("The law prohibits only bad deeds but the Gospel prohibits also evil thoughts." Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325*. [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, n.d.], 2:542-546 [hereafter cited in notes as ANF]).

is worth noting Chemnitz's criticism. Did the fathers fail to distinguish between justification and sanctification because they were poor exegetes? The answer is no. Chemnitz continues:

And because they saw that when the gratuitous reception to eternal life is preached among profane men a great sense of security follows, neglect of good works, and the dissolution of a person's whole life is brought about. Therefore, in order to restrain this sense of security, they kindled and urged an ardent and efficacious (so it seemed to them) zeal for good works and often bent the article of justification toward works and merits, burying Christ and his benefits.²⁵

Chemnitz proceeds to cite Chrysostom, Hilary, and Clement. From John Chrysostom we read, "God enters into a kind of agreement with us: Give alms and I will give you eternal life."²⁶ Similarly Hilary of Poitiers declares, "This blessed eternity must be earned by our effort."²⁷ The lengthiest quote comes from Clement of Alexandria, explaining the meaning of the words, "Your faith has saved

²⁵*De Loco Iustificationis*, 225a (Preus, 470a): "Doctrinae bonorum operum non tribuerunt suum locum et gradum, tanquam fructibus; sed in ipsum Articulum Justificationis saepe immiscuerunt. Et quia viderunt apud homines prophanos sequi magnam securitatem, neglectum bonorum operum et totius vitae effrenem dissolutionem, ex praedicatione gratuita acceptionis ad vitam aeternam. Ut igitur securitatem reprimere, et studium bonorum operum eo ardentius et efficacius (ut ipsis videbatur) excitare et urgere possent, saepe inflexerunt Articulum Justificationis ad opera et merita, sepulto Christo et beneficio ipsius."

²⁶Chemnitz gives the following citation which I was unable to confirm: John Chrysostom, *Homily 37 on Matthew*.

²⁷Hilary of Poitiers, *Sur Matthieu*, Ed. Jean Doignon, Sources chrétiennes 254. (Paris :Éditions du Cerf, 1979), 254:176, *In Matthaeum* 6.5.11-12 (hereafter cited in notes as SC): "de nostro igitur est beata illa aeternitas promerenda." Chemnitz also cites *In Matthaeum*, 4.2.24-25 (SC 254, p. 122).

you" (Mt. 9:22, Mk. 5:34, Lk. 7:50). Clement argues, "we do not understand this in the absolute sense that those are, or are going to be, saved who in some way or another believe, unless they have also done the works that follow."²⁸ Although the fathers tried to overcome the smugness of Christians by preaching good works, their efforts resulted in the corruption of the article of justification. As such these statements by the fathers cannot, insists Chemnitz, be excused or defended as they are "exceedingly unfortunate" ("valde incommode").²⁹

Related to the preaching of good works was the practice of public satisfaction for sins. These spectacles further promoted the idea of merit and righteousness by works. In Chemnitz's estimation, the fathers show an excessive amount of admiration for outward discipline and natural human powers. The positive value given our own works in meriting something that contributes to our salvation seriously hindered the clear teaching on justification. As Chemnitz has noted, these teachings were often the result of attempts to curb the smugness of Christians neglecting good works. By trying to arouse and encourage these smug Christians, the fathers often perverted the distinction between justification and sanctification. Chemnitz explains, "the true doctrine of repentance, grace, faith, and the gratuitous remission of sins was to a great extent obscured. The fathers failed to notice this because of their excessive zeal for discipline."³⁰ These unfortunate statements, while on a certain level well intended, built the foundations for Pelagianism. Chemnitz purposefully does not identify the

²⁸"Stromatum," PG 9, col. 330, Stromata 6.14.283; ANF 2:505. Preus incorrectly cites *Stromata* VI.6 (471a).

²⁹*De Loco Iustificationis*, 225a (Preus, 471): "Haec non possunt aliter mitigari, vel defendi, nisi quod sunt valde incommode dicta."

³⁰*De Loco Iustificationis*, 226b (Preus, 472a): "Et inde vera doctrina de poenitentia, gratia, fide et gratuita remissione peccatorum non parum obscurata fuit. Id quod Patres, prae immodico zelo disciplinae, non animadverterunt."

fathers as Pelagian but duly notes how their statements led to such errors and should therefore never be defended.

At this point, Chemnitz directs his attention to the positive statements made by the fathers regarding justification. He assumes that God in all historical periods raises up witnesses who defend his word against errors and restores the purity of his teachings.³¹ From his historical vantage point, Chemnitz observes how God kindled the genuine teaching of his doctrine on justification in the early church.³² For Chemnitz two examples are obvious. The first occurred with the Montanists and the Novatians, who, asserts Chemnitz, denied any repentance or remission of

³¹Luther makes a similar assertion in his commentary on Psalm 45:5 (Martin Luther, "Psalm 45 (1532)," trans. E. B. Koenker, vol. 12 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, [St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955], 222-23): "Saint Hilary lived at a time when righteousness was deeply humiliated and the truth was thoroughly damned, when hardly two sound bishops maintained their churches and the madness of Arius had seized all the other churches. Then truth and righteousness lay completely prostrate, and yet Christ came and drove off the Arians with their heresy, and the truth remained unshaken. So it was in the case of the Pelagians. So today the Sacramentarians and Anabaptists have debased this righteousness and truth of ours, and there will be many others like them. Therefore arm yourselves with these promises that Christ will be a successful fighter in us, and you will witness miracles performed by the right hand of Christ, which now seems to be weak. Thus our cause has passed through a number of definite threats, and if we look back, we see only miracles that would have been simply incredible before they took place. Christ has directed all these things so marvelously."

³²Not only was it necessary for God to rescue the article of justification in the early church, but in the introduction to the *Locus*, Chemnitz explains how God allowed "insidious teachings" to follow Luther's work on justification. God did this for our great benefit, explains Chemnitz, "so that in the future we might be both more diligent and more cautious." *De Loco Iustificationis*, 201b (Preus, 443b): "Et has insidias Deus ingenti beneficio in lucem protraxit, ut in posterum simus et diligentiores et cautiores."

sins to those who lapsed after baptism. While they eventually softened their position, the Novatians denied any hope of grace and remission of sins to the lapsed. When confronted with this heresy, the fathers corrected their statements according to Scripture. Chemnitz explains:

The fathers recalled on this occasion what they had not noticed before when they were overly concerned with discipline. They began to consider more carefully the scriptural meaning of sin, repentance, grace, faith, remission of sins, etc. They retracted the many unfortunate statements they and others had made that supplied the seeds for Novatianism and corrected their statements according to the norm of the word of God.³³

To be sure, a certain amount of historical revisionism is present in Chemnitz's comments. For our purposes, however, his attitude toward the fathers and the length to which he is willing to go to avoid simply rejecting their labors is remarkable. Even more noteworthy, perhaps, is the method Chemnitz attributes to the fathers. They retracted their unfortunate statements and corrected them according to Scripture alone. That is to say, they put aside any tradition that may have arisen because of their statements and returned to the only rule and norm of doctrine, God's word. This is quite an important point made here by Chemnitz. When the fathers taught something contrary to Scripture and that teaching led others to distort the word of

³³*De Loco Iustificationis*, 226b (Preus, 472b): "Patres hac occasione admoniti, id quod antea, cum tantum in disciplinam intenti essent, non animadverterant, coeperunt sententiam Scripturae de peccato, poenitentia, gratia, fide, remissione peccatorum, etc., diligentius inspicere, et multatum sua tum aliorum incommode dicta, quae prae buerunt seminaria Novatianismo, retractarunt, et ad normam verbi Dei correxerunt." See also, Martin Chemnitz, *Examination of the Council of Trent*, trans. Fred Kramer, 4 vols. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1971), 1: 1:256-58.

God, they retracted their casual statements and clung to the Scripture alone.³⁴

A second divine intervention occurred when the righteousness of faith was obscured by extravagant statements on free will that diminished original sin, endorsed the sufficiency of the law, and commended the perfection of the righteousness of works.³⁵ At this time, God permitted Pelagianism to rise up and disrupt the church nearly to the point of its collapse. Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine rose to this challenge. Chemnitz writes:

[They] acknowledged what they had not noticed before, namely that the many words which they and others had carelessly spoke for such a long time when they were so intent on exciting zeal for good works did not agree with the analogy of faith.³⁶

The encounters with the heretics taught the fathers a significant lesson. Chemnitz explains, "just as they should not do evil that good may come of it, so they should not teach falsely in order that the truth might be defended and retained."³⁷ In their effort to curb the smugness of believers, the fathers emphasized works and discipline, distorting the

³⁴This very idea is echoed by Melanchthon at *Apology* XXIV.95 (*The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, in collaboration with Jaroslav Pelikan, Robert H. Fischer, and Arthur C. Piepkorn [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959], 267, *Apology* 24.95 [hereafter cited in notes as Tappert]).

³⁵*De Loco Iustificationis*, 227a (Preus, 472b): "Ita postea cum de libero arbitrio, extenuatione peccati originalis, de possibilitate Legis, et perfectione iustitiae operum, imo supererogatione multa, magis oratorie et hyerbolice, quam pie et vere in Ecclesiis declamarentur, et iaceret ibi obscurata doctrina de iustitia fidei..."

³⁶*De Loco Iustificationis*, 227a (Preus, 472b).

³⁷*De Loco Iustificationis*, 227a (Preus, 473a): "Sicut enim non sunt facienda mala, ut eveniant bona: ita non sunt tradenda falsa, ut defendantur et retineantur vera." Cf. Gen. 50:20.

purity of the doctrine of justification. These distortions led to heresy and forced the fathers to reconsider their unfortunate and imprecise statements.³⁸ Quoting Augustine, Chemnitz says, "Many points pertaining to the catholic faith have been stirred up by the heat of the heretics' restlessness, so that we have had to defend these points against them, consider more diligently, understand more clearly, and preach more powerfully."³⁹ When we read the fathers, we keep this in mind by discerning the context governing their writing. If they wrote before a particular controversy, then we read their words accordingly. We do not disparage them for speaking casually on a subject before they had the opportunity to reconsider their statements in light of heretical distortions. At the same time, the fathers retaining extravagant and dangerous language after a controversy and after the opportunity to consider and define matters more circumspectly and according to Scripture should be censured.⁴⁰

The disputes with the heretics forced the fathers to return to Scripture and the correct and proper teaching on justification. Chemnitz explains, "when they were led to discuss those passages which possess the *sedes doctrinae* of the matter, then the very clearness of the divine revelation proved incontestably to them the need to explain more

³⁸For more examples, see *Loci Theologici, Pars Prima, De Humanis Viribus, seu de Libero Arbitrio*, 179 (Preus, 242b).

³⁹*De Loco Iustificationis*, 227a (Preus, 473a); *Patrologiae cursus completus, series Latinae*. Ed. J. P. Migne, vol. 41 (Paris: Migne, 1845), col. 477, Augustine *Civitate Dei* (*On the City of God*) 16.2 (hereafter cited in notes as PL): "Multa ad fidem catholicam pertinentia, dum haereticorum callida inquietudine exagitantur, ut adversus eos defendi possint, et considerantur diligentius et intelliguntur clarius, et instantius praedicantur, et ab adversario mota quaestio, discendi existit occasione, etc."

⁴⁰In this regard, J. A. O. Preus gives the example of Chemnitz's treatment of John Cassian and his semi-Pelagianism. See, J. A. O. Preus, "The Use of the Church Fathers in the Formula of Concord," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 48 (April-July 1984): 101.

rightly and properly this doctrine."⁴¹ Further along in the Locus and beyond the section we are here dealing with, Chemnitz explains that although the fathers generally used the word "justification" to mean "an infusion of good qualities" (referring to sanctification) they were also at times "convinced by the clear testimonies of Paul" and understood "the true and genuine meaning of the word."⁴² It was clear to Chemnitz that a great variety of opinions existed among the fathers and that the discriminating reader would use Scripture to separate the "straw from the gold."⁴³ As Luther insists, it is the prerogative of God alone to establish articles of faith, not the words or opinions of the fathers.⁴⁴ When the fathers properly articulate and defend the clear teaching of Scripture on justification or any article

⁴¹*De Loco Iustificationis*, 227a (Preus, 473a): "Quando vero deducuntur ad tractationem illarum sententiarum, in quibus sedes est huius doctrinae, tunc ipsa evidentia divinae patefactionis ipsos convincit, ut rectius et commodius doctrinam illam explicant. Sicut in commentariis Origenis, Ambrosii, Chrysostomi, Augustini, et aliorum hocprehenditur." As can be seen from the end of this quote, Chemnitz names the commentaries of Origen, Ambrosiaster (not Ambrose of Milan), Chrysostom, and Augustine.

⁴²*De Loco Iustificationis*, 235a (Preus, 482b).

⁴³Chemnitz does not provide patristic support of this point but it is abundant. See, for example, Clement of Alexandria who says that it is the heretics who rely on the opinions of men instead of Scripture. Clement of Alexandria, "Stromatum," PG 9, col. 529, *Stromata* 7.16.321. See also, Caius the Presbyter, *Against the Heresy of Artemon or Little Labyringth*, III (As quoted in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*. Ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. 2nd Series (Grand Rapids: Wm.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1952), 1:248, Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 5.28.13 [hereafter cited in notes as *NPNF* 2]; Tertullian, *Against Marcion*, I.18.3 [*ANF* 3:284] and *Apology*, 17.2-3 [*ANF* 3:31]; Hilary of Poitiers, *On the Trinity*, I.18, et passim [*NPNF* 2 9:45]).

⁴⁴Smalcald Articles, III, 2.13-15; cf. II, 2.15. For patristic comments along these lines, see their various comments on passages like Psalm 118:8, Jeremiah 17:5, or 1 Cor 3:21.

of faith, we rightly cling to their statements as the evangelical tradition of the church catholic.⁴⁵ When their statements stray from Scripture, we do not simply reject them and set them aside but first determine why such statements were made. By determining the context of their teachings, we learn how to better defend the word of God in our own day. By learning from their mistakes and seeing how no good can come from evil, we better protect ourselves from compromising God's word to accomplish a fleeting and seemingly good thing in our own day.

In the end, Martin Chemnitz's approach to the fathers is one of esteem and discernment. He appreciates and makes use of their contribution to Christian doctrine, their guidance in theological terminology, and their many struggles to defend God's word against the heretics. When the fathers fail to distinguish between law and gospel, distort the articles of justification and sanctification, or overemphasize works and discipline, Chemnitz seeks to understand why such statements were made. He does not see their shortcomings as an opportunity for ridicule but rather as a call for diligence that we not repeat their mistakes in our defense of God's word. When we reverently and faithfully approach the fathers, we do so knowing they

⁴⁵Chemnitz offers numerous citations from the fathers on justification by faith. See, for example, *De Loco Iustificanti*, 235a (Preus, 482b), 285-286 (Preus 541-543); *Ministry, Word, and Sacraments: An Enchiridion*, trans. Luther Poellot (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1981), 78, para. 161; *Examination of the Council of Trent*, trans. Fred Kramer, 4 vols. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1971), 1:505-513.

sought only to confess the faith that leads to everlasting life. Just as we pray today for brotherly correction when we stray from God's word, so too we correct these heavenly witnesses when they stray from the only rule and norm for doctrine, God's inspired and inerrant word.

Syncretism in the Theology of Georg Calixt, Abraham Calov, and Johannes Musäus

Benjamin T. G. Mayes

The question, "What is syncretism?" presents itself repeatedly to the contemporary church. If one consults a theological dictionary, one may discover that in seventeenth-century German Lutheranism a large controversy on syncretism took place. One theological dictionary says, "Syncretism refers in particular, to the irenic movement arising from an effort within the Lutheran Church in the seventeenth century toward inter-confessional union, the sole final result of which was the moderation of the theological spirit. Syncretistic controversies is a phrase summing up the conflict waged between the partizans and opponents of the movement."¹

The Syncretistic Controversy in seventeenth-century German Lutheranism was waged essentially by three groups. The first, led by Georg Calixt (1586-1656), professor at Helmstedt, sought to overcome the split in the western church that took place at the Reformation. The second group, led especially by Abraham Calov (1612-1686) and the theologians of Wittenberg and Leipzig, sought to oppose Calixt by employing a vigorous polemic and proposing the

¹Paul Tschackert, "Syncretism, Syncretistic Controversies" in *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1911; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1952). 11:219. The article in *Schaff-Herzog* is an abridged translation, with an anti-Calov slant, of the same author's articles "Synkretismus" and "Synkretistische Streitigkeiten" in *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, 3. Auflage (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1905), 19:239-262 (hereafter cited in notes as RE³). The articles offer a good summary of the history of the controversy.

The Rev. Benjamin T. G. Mayes is an editor at Concordia Publishing House and a doctoral candidate at Calvin Theological Seminary.

introduction of a new Lutheran Confession, the *Consensus Repetitus Fidei Vere Lutheranae* ("Repeated Consensus of the Truly Lutheran Faith").² Though the *Consensus Repetitus* never became a legally-binding confessional document, the Wittenberg-Leipzig view on syncretism won the day. The official union of the Lutheran and Reformed churches was delayed until the beginning of the nineteenth century in Prussia.³ The third group, led by Johannes Musäus (1613-1681) and the theologians of Jena, along with Philip Jakob Spener and others, also opposed Calixt and syncretism, but refused to support the *Consensus Repetitus*. Musäus' views on the Syncretistic Controversy found expression in Johann Wilhelm Baier's (1647-1695) *Compendium Theologiae Positivae*, a work which was used by the Missouri Synod as her first dogmatics textbook and which thereby has become the classical position on syncretism within the Missouri Synod.⁴

Research for this paper began with the hypothesis that Calov's *Consensus Repetitus* would supply the decidedly Lutheran response to syncretism. Careful study, however,

²*Consensus repetitus fidei vere Lutheranae*, in *Consilia Theologica Witebergensia* (Frankfurt am Mäyn: Balthasar Christoph Wust, 1664), 928-995.

³See Joh. Heinr. Kurtz, *Lehrbuch der Kirchengeschichte für Studierende*, vol. 2, part 2, (Leipzig: August Neumann, 1887), 31-34.

⁴"Der Calixtinische Synkretismus," *Lehre und Wehre* 23 (1877): 83, outlines the distinction between seventeenth-century "syncretism" and nineteenth-century "unionism": "First, regarding the correct understanding of the whole matter, one must not overlook here the difference between the *current Union* and that which was the ideal of the syncretists. While we have in the Union a fusion of *two* ecclesiastical bodies into *one* church under *one* church government, by which the various confessions of the churches concerned are in actuality nullified, syncretism, on the other hand, lets each church exist in its separate position and with its separate confession and demands from these churches only a mutual recognition and patient bearing of their respective doctrinal deviations as different, *non-church-divisive opinions*."

showed certain weaknesses in Calov's argument. Of further note is that this response was not unique; Musäus and the theologians of Jena had the same reaction toward Calov's confession. As such, this article intends to make an examination of the three main positions in the syncretistic controversy as represented by Calixt, Calov, and Musäus (whose views are summarized by Baier).

Georg Calixt was born in 1586 at Medelbye, a town in Schleswig, some one hundred miles north of Hamburg. The son of a pupil of Melanchthon, Calixt was educated in Helmstedt by the humanist Caselius and other students of Melanchthon. He studied philology and philosophy from 1603-1607, turning then to theology with a special emphasis on patristics. From 1609 to 1613 he became acquainted with the Reformed and Roman Catholic churches during travels he made in Germany, Belgium, England, and France. In 1614 he was appointed professor of theology at the university in Helmstedt and remained there till his death in 1656.⁵ His professional activity lasted throughout the Thirty Years War, "when the hatred of the confessions toward each other had reached its height."⁶

Though history remembers him for detaching moral theology from positive (dogmatic) theology and for using the analytical method in systematic theology (as opposed to the synthetic method used in the construction of *Loci Communes*), Calixt is most famous for his "syncretism."⁷ In the midst of the Thirty Years War and the Catholic Reformation, his main goal was to bring about *Kirchen-Frieden*, ecclesiastical peace. He saw the Reformation as being an unfortunate occurrence which could have been avoided, if only all parties of the dispute had acted with more tolerance and calmness.⁸ To heal the schism, Calixt

⁵Paul Tschackert, "Calixtus, Georg," *Schaff-Herzog* 2:348.

⁶*Schaff-Herzog* 2:348.

⁷*Schaff-Herzog* 2:348-349.

⁸Heinrich Schmid, *Geschichte der synkretistischen Streitigkeiten in der Zeit des Georg Calixt* (Erlangen: Carl Heyder, 1846), 122. The

proposed a colloquy of Protestant and Catholic theologians who would give proofs of their church's respective positions in a "calm and dispassionate" manner. Both sides would have to recognize two principles. First, what Scripture teaches is undeniably true. Second, what the church teaches is undeniably true. Only where both of these principles are fulfilled can the two sides come to agreement.

Due to his language of "two principles," *duo principia*, Calixt did not escape the accusation of having a romanizing view.⁹ In reality, however, his view was more nuanced. According to Schmid, Scripture is, for Calixt, the only and highest theological *principium*. Tradition, on the other hand, is nothing other than the testimony of the church concerning the doctrine she has received from Scripture. Thus tradition *per se* has no independent authority in the way Scripture has. Furthermore, Calixt differentiates between the main principle and subordinate principles. Holy Scripture belongs in the first class, tradition belongs in the second. Schmid summarizes: "Holy Scripture is and remains the only place at which revelation is deposited. But tradition is, first of all, nothing other than the testimony of the church concerning the doctrine which she has taken from Scripture. Accordingly it is *per se* not a *principium*, but only a *testimonium*."¹⁰ However, Holy Scripture contains the promise that Christ would keep his church in the truth (Jn. 16:13). Thus Calixt concludes that the doctrine of the church is and must be the true doctrine, and this true doctrine is and must be the doctrine of Scripture. In this way, Calixt can speak of tradition (the doctrine of the church) as being a *principium secundarium*, "because it has its dependence on Holy Scripture," or a *principium subordinatum*, because it is

following summary of Calixt's position is from Schmid, *Geschichte*, 121-133.

⁹Schmid, *Geschichte*, 133.

¹⁰Schmid, *Geschichte*, 133.

subordinated to Scripture and receives from Scripture its power and meaning.¹¹ Calixt's distinction between Scripture and tradition can be summarized with the following five theses:

1. Scripture, he says, is *autopistoi*. It is believed for its own sake, it need not appeal to any further testimony for its authority. Tradition, however, only has authority in so far as¹² it is derived and dependent on Scripture.
2. A single clear passage from Scripture suffices as proof of a doctrine. From tradition, however, we must produce the unanimous testimony of many—the testimony of creeds and individual teachers—if our proof is to be valid.
3. Proof from Scripture can never be lacking. Proof from tradition has a place only where we are dealing with heretics.
4. Proof from tradition is thus added, not because proof from Scripture is *per se* not sufficient and powerful enough, but only because with it the heretics can be disproved more quickly.
5. Proof from Scripture is understandable for everyone. Proof from tradition is only applicable among the educated.¹³

Thus Calixt's view of Scripture and tradition cannot simply be dismissed as a romanizing two-source view. He aimed to stay with the Reformation principle of *sola scriptura*, and thus responded to charges of romanizing by

¹¹Schmid, *Geschichte*, 134. See also Calixt, *Gründl. Widerlegung* I. §. 35, 82. *Diss. de myst. tr. th.* 19.

¹²Due to his insistence that the early church's tradition is in actual fact the true doctrine derived from Scripture, Calixt could have perhaps strengthened this to a *quia*: "because it depends on and is derived from Scripture."

¹³Schmid, *Geschichte*, 135.

saying that also the Reformers had looked to the testimony of antiquity as a proof (though not the main one) of their position.¹⁴ However, a difference between the Reformers and Calixt can perhaps be seen in his assumption that the unanimous doctrine of the early church can be known and used as a theological principle. Drawing a conclusion from passages such as John 16:13, Calixt states, "Wherever the unanimous testimony of the church can be shown for a doctrine, that doctrine is thereby proved to be irrefutably true." Other Lutheran theologians did not share this conclusion.¹⁵

The statements above help to clarify why Calixt further claims that the doctrine of the Lutheran church is none other than that of the early church.¹⁶ This statement can work two ways. It can say, "What the Lutheran church believes is true and can be found in the writings of the early church." Or it can mean, "The *doctrine* of the Lutheran church is *limited* to that which can be found in the writings of the early church." That is to say, the early church can be used as a testimony of an independent system of faith (the former view), or it can be used as a norm to make a distinction between the various beliefs of the Lutheran church (the latter view). Schmid states:

Either he must have placed on his opponents the demand that, since they recognized the doctrine of the Lutheran church as agreeing with the doctrine of the early church, they would have to admit immediately the falsities of their own doctrine—and such an admission he could have never expected—or he must have hoped that if only the recognition could be attained that the doctrine of the early church was the norm by which the truth of a doctrine could be recognized, then a point

¹⁴Schmid, *Geschichte*, 136.

¹⁵Schmid, *Geschichte*, 136.

¹⁶Schmid, *Geschichte*, 139.

would have been won from which an understanding between the two confessions [Lutheran and Roman Catholic] could be attained. And the latter is the case. He indicates here already that if the doctrine of the early church were recognized as the *typus* of the true doctrine, as it is in truth, then thereby all the [other] doctrines which were added later to the doctrine of the early church would appear less essential.¹⁷

Aside from his view of Scripture and tradition, Calixt also used the concept of the *articuli fidei*, the "articles of faith," to further his goals of ecclesiastical peace. Already in 1626, Nicolaus Hunnius had written his *Diaskepsis Theologica de Fundamentalī dissensu doctrinae Evangelicae-Lutheranae, & Calvinianae, seu Reformatae*,¹⁸ a foundational work for later Lutheran dogmatics with respect to the classification of articles of faith.¹⁹ Hunnius defines an article of faith as "a part of Christian doctrine through which we are led to

¹⁷Schmid, *Geschichte*, 139-140. "Entweder mußte er an die Gegner die Zumuthung stellen, daß sie, indem sie die Lehre der luth. Kirche als eine mit der der alten Kirche übereinstimmende Lehre anerkannten, die Unwahrheit ihrer eigenen Lehre geradezu eingestehen sollten. Und ein solches Geständniß durfte er nicht erwarten. Oder er mußte hoffen, daß wenn einmal zur Anerkennung gebracht sey, daß die Lehre der alten Kirche die Norm sey, an welcher die Wahrheit einer Lehre erkannt werden könne, damit ein Standpunkt gewonnen sey, won welchem aus leichter eine Verständigung der beiden Konfessionen erzielt werden könne. Und das Letztere ist der Fall. Er deutet hier schon an, daß wenn man die Lehre der alten Kirche für den Typus der wahren Lehre anerkenne, wie sie es denn in Wahrheit sey, dadurch alle die Lehren, welche an die Lehre der alten Kirche sich erst angereicht hätten, als minder wesentliche erschienen."

¹⁸Wittenberg, 1626. Translated by Richard J. Dinda and Elmer Hohle as *Diaskepsis Theologica: A Theological Examination of the Fundamental Difference Between Evangelical Lutheran Doctrine and Calvinist or Reformed Teaching*, (Malone, TX: Repristination, 1999). The Dinda-Hohle translation will be the edition referenced.

¹⁹Robert Preus, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, 2 vols. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1970-72), 1:145.

eternal salvation."²⁰ The articles of faith, then, are divided into fundamental and non-fundamental articles, and the fundamental articles are subdivided into primary and secondary. A primary fundamental article, according to Hunnius, is "a part of Christian doctrine which one cannot not know and yet keep safe his faith and salvation."²¹ That is, one must both know it and believe it to be saved. A secondary fundamental article is one "which can indeed remain unknown but yet which cannot be denied while faith and salvation are kept safe..."²² Finally, a non-fundamental article is "a part of Christian doctrine which one can not know and deny while keeping his faith safe." As examples of the latter, Hunnius notes the fall and permanent rejection of some angels, man's immortality before the Fall, the visibility or invisibility of the church, and others.²³ In addition, Hunnius divided primary fundamental articles into those that are constituting and those that are preserving. "An establishing article is a part of doctrine that without means causes faith. A preserving article is a part of doctrine that necessarily lies beneath the immediate cause of faith."²⁴ By using these distinctions, Hunnius was able to contradict the Reformed argument that there was an agreement in fundamentals between the Lutheran and Reformed churches.²⁵ Of course, the main test of the distinctions lies in how the actual articles of faith are categorized. The same categories can be used by different authors with vastly different results.

In contradistinction to Nicholas Hunnius, along with Abraham Calov and Johannes Musäus, the list of articles necessary for salvation according to Calixt is significantly

²⁰Hunnius, *Diaskepsis*, 27.

²¹Hunnius, *Diaskepsis*, 28.

²²Hunnius, *Diaskepsis*, 31.

²³Hunnius, *Diaskepsis*, 32.

²⁴Hunnius, *Diaskepsis*, 28.

²⁵Hunnius, *Diaskepsis*, 4.

smaller. To be precise, Calixt holds that the Apostles' Creed contains all the articles that must be known and believed for salvation. Calixt reasons from his understanding of the function of the creed as a summary of the entire saving doctrine. If the Apostles' Creed contained all of saving doctrine at that time, it must still contain all of saving doctrine today.²⁶ Likewise, "it follows ... that the greater number of doctrines which were added in later eras cannot be necessary articles of faith in the same sense as those articles listed in the apostolic symbol."²⁷ That is to say, "...the Apostolic Symbol is completely sufficient for the listing of the articles of faith necessary for salvation."²⁸ More precise definitions and defense of these articles are always to be expected, to be sure, and this is precisely the function that the rest of the ancient creeds play. They add no new doctrines to the Apostles' Creed, but merely help to explain the doctrines therein.²⁹

Whereas Hunnius and those who follow him use the language of primary and secondary fundamental articles and non-fundamental articles, Calixt speaks of "antecedent, constituent, and consequent articles," a distinction traceable to Bonaventure.³⁰ Antecedent articles are those articles that human reason and perception can know without special revelation. Constituent articles are the articles that actually constitute faith. These are the articles all must know and believe in order to be saved. Finally, the consequent articles are all those doctrines which follow as a result or derivative of the constituent articles.³¹ As noted above, the main test of

²⁶Schmid, *Geschichte*, 147.

²⁷Schmid, *Geschichte*, 147. "...so folgt daraus weiter, daß die größere Anzahl von Lehren, welche in späterer Zeit hinzugekommen sind, nicht in gleichem Sinne nothwendige Glaubensartikel seyn können, wie die im apostol. Symbol verzeichneten."

²⁸Schmid, *Geschichte*, 149-150.

²⁹Schmid, *Geschichte*, 147.

³⁰"antecedentia, constituentia, et consequentia." Schmid, *Geschichte*, 156.

³¹Schmid, *Geschichte*, 157.

the distinctions lies in how the actual articles of faith are categorized. What is important is where an author assigns the various articles and how those categories function. For Calixt, the "consequentia" have been the cause of most of the church's controversies.³² This is especially to be regretted, since only the "constitutentia" are articles of faith and necessary for salvation. Other articles are not articles of faith at all.³³ In essence, no controverted article could be a fundamental article for Calixt. By assigning all the controversies of the Reformation to the "consequent articles," Calixt essentially denied that all the theological issues raised by the Reformation—justification, election, the sacrament of the altar, baptism, confession—were fundamental articles of faith. To his Lutheran contemporaries, who saw the Reformation as the recovery of the gospel from "popish errors, abuses, and idolatry,"³⁴ Calixt's view attacked the heart of the gospel.

Calixt, convinced that all three confessions—the Lutheran, Reformed, and Roman Catholic—hold to the tenets of the Apostles' Creed, states that there is a communion of faith that exists between them.³⁵ Surprisingly, however, Calixt does not see this communion as grounds for external unity between the divided churches. Before an external union could be effected, there would also of necessity have to be unity on the doctrines that are *related to* the fundamental articles of faith.³⁶ "The confessions [the churches] are especially not agreed in the doctrine of the

³²Schmid, *Geschichte*, 158.

³³Schmid, *Geschichte*, 158.

³⁴*The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, in collaboration with Jaroslav Pelikan, Robert H. Fischer, and Arthur C. Piepkorn. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), 501, *Formula of Concord*, "Solid Declaration," 2.1 (hereafter cited in notes as Tappert).

³⁵Schmid, *Geschichte*, 167.

³⁶Schmid, *Geschichte*, 175.

sacrament of the holy supper, which above all is to be 'a public sign and testimony of common love and unity.' As long as the regrettable disagreement lasts, so long, Calixt recognizes, the division of the confessions must remain."³⁷ In fact, before there can be an external ecclesiastical union, unity in all doctrines must be achieved. Here Calixt makes a distinction between the kind of fellowship that exists between the churches. Since there is agreement on all the fundamental articles (the Apostles' Creed), a virtual fellowship (*communio virtualis*) between the churches already exists, though not an actual and external fellowship by the sacrament ("communio actualis et externa per sacramentum").³⁸ From this it appears that Calixt's goal was to create *Kirchenfrieden*, ecclesiastical peace, not *Kircheneinigung*, an external church union—at least not at first.³⁹ His goal was to find unity between the churches, not to hide the existing divisions.⁴⁰

Calixt's distinction between the two kinds of fellowship is significant. Note well that the virtual fellowship exists between the concrete churches as such. Calixt's contention is not that there is an invisible fellowship of true believers scattered wherever the gospel and sacraments are distributed, but that there is a virtual fellowship between the concrete Lutheran church, the concrete Reformed church, and the concrete Roman Catholic church. Calixt's goal was to blunt the edge of all condemnations. The churches can exist separately, but they must not condemn

³⁷Schmid, *Geschichte*, 175. "Die Konfessionen sind insbesondere nicht einig in der Lehre von dem Sakrament des h. Abendmals, welches doch vor allem 'ein öffentlich Zeichen und Zeugniß der gemeinen Liebe und Einigkeit' sein soll. So lange dieser beklagenswerthe Zwiespalt fort dauert, so lange, erkennt Calixt an, müsse auch die Trennung der Konfessionen fortbestehen."

³⁸Schmid, *Geschichte*, 178.

³⁹Schmid, *Geschichte*, 180.

⁴⁰Schmid, *Geschichte*, 179.

each other. This view, of course, was contrary to the Lutheran Confessions,⁴¹ as well as the Council of Trent.

Calixt's greatest enemy, Abraham Calov, was born in 1612 at Mohrungen, Prussia (about sixty-two miles south of Königsberg), and was educated in Thorn and Königsberg. In the course of his career he lectured in theology at Königsberg and Rostock before finally being called as professor of theology at Wittenberg in 1650. His opposition to Calixt and his followers was consistent, all the way to his death in 1686. One of the main "anti-syncretistic" writings of the time was the *Consensus Repetitus Fidei Vere Lutheranae*,⁴² which, according to Johannes Kunze, "is undoubtedly in its essence the work of Calovius, in its first as well as in its final form."⁴³ An examination of the *Consensus Repetitus* will demonstrate why Calixt's opponents objected to it.

⁴¹Consider, for example, Tappert 311, Smalcald Articles 3.6.4: "Especially do we condemn and curse in God's name those who...", as well as the condemnation statements in AC V, VIII, IX, X, XII, XVI, XVII, and throughout the *Formula of Concord*.

⁴²*Consensus repetitus fidei vere Lutheranae, in illis doctrinae capitibus, quae Contra puram & invariata Augustanam Confessionem, aliosque libros Symbolicos in Formula Concordiae comprehensos, scriptis publicis hodieque impugnant. D. Geogius Calixtus, Professor Helmstadiensis, ejusdemque complices, in Consilia Theologica Witebergensia. Das ist/ Wittenbergische Geistliche Rathschläge Deß theuren Mannes Gottes/ D. Martini Lutheri, seiner Collegen, und treuen Nachfolger/ von dem heiligen Reformations-Anfang/ biß auff jetzige Zeit/ in dem Namen der gesampten Theologischen Facultät außgestellte Urtheil/ Bedenken/ und öffentliche Schrifftten/ In Vier Theilen/ von Religion- Lehr- und Glaubens-, Ministerial- und Kirchen-, Moral- und Policy-, Matrimonial- und Ehe-sachen/ und allerley darbey vorfallenden Casibus, Ordentlich zusammen gebracht/ Und zur Ehre Gottes/ Erhaltung der reinen Lehre/ und Nutz der Evangelischen Lutherischen Kirchen/ auff vielfältiges Begehren abgefertiget/ von der Theologischen Facultät daselbesten (Frankfurt am Mäyn: Balthasar Christoph Wust, 1664), 928-995.*

⁴³Johannes Kunze, "Calovius, Abraham," *Schaff-Herzog*, 2:352.

The *Consensus Repetitus*, printed as a diglot (Latin and German in parallel columns), is arranged according to the articles of the Augsburg Confession with two extra prefatory articles. Under each article there are usually three to five "points," each of which is composed of three parts. The first part, introduced with the words "profitemur & docemus" (we profess and teach), gives the positive statement of the doctrine being confessed. The second section, introduced with "rejecimus" ("we reject"), lays out the doctrine being condemned. The final section of each point, introduced with "sic habent verba" or "sic docet" ("thus teaches"), gives quotations from Calixt and others, showing that their doctrine is included under the condemnation of the "rejecimus" statement.

The first article of the preface, dealing with the relationship of the church and her confession, is labeled, "Totius negotii fundamentum" ("the foundation of the entire matter"). The "profitemur" of this article is noteworthy:

We confess and teach that the Christian evangelical, or Lutheran, church—in which in these last times from the great mercy of God, by the faithful work of that most excellent and pious hero, Dr. Martin Luther, the purity of the divine word has shone forth out of the horrendous shadows and darkness by which it was oppressed under the papacy—is the true church of God, in which the gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments are rightly administered.⁴⁴

⁴⁴*Consilia Theol. Witebergensia*, 928. "Profitemur & docemus, Eccl. Christ. Evang. seu Lutheranam, cui postremis hisce temporib. ex maxima Dei clementia, fideli opera, summa pietate praediti & prestantissimi herois, D. Martini Lutheri, et tenebris horrendis & plusquam Cimmeriis, quibus sub Papatu oppressa fuerat, puritas verbi divini affulsit, veram esse Dei Ecclesiam, in qua Evangelium recte docetur, & recte administrantur Sacramenta."

Rejected, then, are all those who accuse the Lutheran church of having no fewer errors than the "Papistic and Calvinistic" churches.

Point two continues by stating that "we" do not condemn individuals or whole churches outside of the Holy Roman Empire that err due to simplicity without blaspheming against the truth of divine doctrine. But we *do* condemn "fanatical opinions," false teachers and blasphemers, such as the Papists and Calvinists. The idea that a teacher could defend Papist or Calvinist doctrine and retain the foundations of salvation (*fundamenta salutis*) is explicitly rejected. Calixt is quoted as saying that all those who believe in the creed, be they Lutheran, Roman Catholic, or Calvinist, and walk according to the Spirit, not the flesh, will be saved. Calixt is also quoted as saying that the *fundamenta salutis* in the Lutheran, Roman Catholic, and Reformed churches are *integra* (whole and complete).⁴⁵ Calov rejects these views of Calixt.

Point three states that the ecumenical creeds do not contain all the fundamental articles necessary for a person to know for salvation.⁴⁶ Point four states that just as the ancient church created symbols to refute heretics, so also "in our times" it is necessary to have additional symbols. The Lutheran Confessions are such symbols, through which our churches condemn and are separated from the Papists and other heresies that arose thereafter (the Calvinists). Rejected is the view that the only heretics are those who expressly deny a part of the Apostles' Creed and that other points are merely side issues.⁴⁷

The second prefatory article of the *Consensus Repetitus* deals with Scripture and emphasizes the *sola Scriptura*

⁴⁵*Consilia Theol. Witebergensia*, 929.

⁴⁶*Consilia Theol. Witebergensia*, 929.

⁴⁷*Consilia Theol. Witebergensia*, 930-931.

principle. The Scriptures need no testimony of the fathers in order to be recognized as God's word. Verbal inspiration is upheld. He rejects the view that the unanimous testimony of the early church fathers is equal to the truth of Scripture.⁴⁸ Against Calixt's use of Vincent of Lerins' famous dictum, "*quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus*," the *Consensus Repetitus* states that the Scriptures are clear even apart from the five ancient patriarchal churches, and that Vincent was an anti-Augustinian, Pelagian monk, and thus of no authority. Finally, Scripture is the only theological principle. The *Consensus* rejects all views positing two sources of theology, as well as Calixt's belief that the fathers, though not a second principle, are a *secondary* principle. Finally, the view that the Scriptures are obscure is rejected.⁴⁹

Under every article of the Augsburg Confession, errors in the theology of Calixt and other syncretists are delineated and rejected. It is beyond the scope of this essay to examine all of these, but the article corresponding to articles VII, VIII, and XXVIII of the Augsburg Confession ("On the Church") deserves special attention. For the *Consensus Repetitus*, the church is principally the society of faith and the Holy Spirit in hearts, though it has external marks: the pure gospel and sacraments. Calvinists and Papists, however, are not the true church, nor are they members of the true church. Calixt's view, which saw the Lutheran, Reformed, Roman Catholic, and Greek churches as being four branches, families, or parties of the one church, is rejected. Also rejected is Calixt's view that what the four churches believe in common is true, but what they believe alone is false.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ *Consilia Theol. Witebergensia*, 933. "Rejicimus eos, qui docent, pro verbo Apostolico & scriptura explicata habendum esse, quod Doctores veteris Ecclesia in scriptis quae adhuc superant, uno ore docent & tanquam Apostolicum se accepisse tradunt, & praeter scripturam, quam implicitam Traditionem dicunt, dari scripturam explicatam & resignatam, quae sit Traditio Ecclesiastica."

⁴⁹ *Consilia Theol. Witebergensia*, 934-936.

⁵⁰ *Consilia Theol. Witebergensia*, 968-970.

Point two of this article states that the Lutheran confession is the catholic faith. "Catholic," then, cannot be defined as that on which the Lutherans, Calvinists, and Papists are agreed.⁵¹ Point three is comparatively long, a fact which may indicate its importance within the *Consensus Repetitus*. It states, in agreement with the text of the Preface to the Book of Concord, the Smalcald Articles, and the Treatise, that there can be no fellowship with the Papists. Calixt's statement that no dogma of Trent is harmful unless it militates against the Apostles' Creed is rejected.⁵²

As noted above, many other doctrines of Calixt and his allies are identified and rejected. A few examples will show what kinds of doctrine Calov rejected as heretical. Under the article corresponding to articles IX and XIII of the Augsburg Confession the sacraments in general are discussed. Sacraments are defined as "visible rites mandated by God with the added promise of grace."⁵³ What is striking about this definition is the lack of a physical, earthly element. The *Consensus* proceeds to set the number of Old Testament "sacraments" at two—circumcision and the paschal lamb—and the number of New Testament sacraments also at two—baptism and the Lord's Supper. Rejected is the statement that "it is not possible to understand from Scripture what a sacrament is, or what properly constitutes a sacrament, and hence how many truly and properly are sacraments."⁵⁴ Calixt's position was that a definite number of sacraments could not be proved from either the Bible or the early

⁵¹*Consilia Theol. Witebergensia*, 970.

⁵²*Consilia Theol. Witebergensia*, 970-971.

⁵³*Consilia Theol. Witebergensia*, 972.

⁵⁴*Consilia Theol. Witebergensia*, 972. "Rejicimus eos, qui docent, quid Sacramentum sit, vel quia proprie Sacramentum constituat, & proinde quot vere & proprie Sacramenta sint, ex Scriptura non posse intelligi."

church fathers, a view that can be found in the Lutheran Confessions.⁵⁵ Calov rejects this position.

In the article on the Lord's Supper, corresponding to articles X, XXII, and XIV in the Augsburg Confession, Calov denies that John 6 speaks of the sacrament of the altar.⁵⁶ The ubiquity of Christ's flesh outside of the Lord's Supper is professed.⁵⁷ Whereas Lutheran ministers function in the stead of Christ, Papist and Calvinist ministers do not, but are "antichrists."⁵⁸ Calov does not, however, discuss the question of whether or not the Papists and Calvinists have the true body and blood of Jesus in their Eucharist.

The overall tone of the *Consensus Repetitus* is one of confidence. Calov is absolutely certain that "the true church of Christ" is none other than the Lutheran church. This confidence may have been one of the reasons, however, that the *Consensus* never received legally confessional status. The *Consensus* was opposed not only by the Syncretists, but also by anti-syncretists such as Johannes Musäus and the theological faculty of Jena. Paul Tschachert notes some of the reasons the *Consensus* was opposed by anti-syncretists: Not only did it condemn some of the odd positions of Calixt and his school as un-Lutheran and heretical, but it also made Calov's theological opinions (*theolegoumena*) into churchly dogma, which would brand one who disagreed as a heretic. Among these theological opinions were: the view that Old Testament believers knew the doctrine of the Trinity; that infants brought to baptism have actual faith; and that Christ is present to all believers according to his human nature even outside of the sacrament.⁵⁹ Though these views may have been prevalent among Lutherans, the opponents of the *Consensus* did not see them as articles of faith divisive of church unity. Thus the *Consensus Repetitus*

⁵⁵Apology of the Augsburg Confession, XIII:2.

⁵⁶Consilia Theol. Witebergensia, 976-977.

⁵⁷Consilia Theol. Witebergensia, 979.

⁵⁸Consilia Theol. Witebergensia, 979.

⁵⁹RE³ 19:255.

proved to be unsuitable for the Lutheran church and so was never accepted as a new Lutheran confession. Nevertheless, to Calov belongs the distinction of being the leader of the fight against syncretism. Throughout his life, he never stopped fighting against syncretism, even when ordered to keep silence about the matter. Even if his solution was untenable, his courage may be admired.

If Calixt and Calov are examples of the extremes in the syncretistic controversy, then Johannes Musäus (1613-1681) is an example of a mediating position. Though accused by Calov of syncretism,⁶⁰ Musäus did not approve of the irenic overtures of Calixt, but, indeed, opposed Calixt and other syncretists.⁶¹

For Musäus, everything depends on how the *fundamentum fidei* (the foundation of faith) is understood. Arguing as had Nicolaus Hunnius, Musäus stated that the Calvinists do not agree with the Lutherans on which articles of faith are fundamental. The Lutherans hold all those articles as fundamental that Scripture says are necessary for salvation and those that are necessarily derived from the

⁶⁰RE³ 19:248. "'So ist denn', klagt Calov, 'aus dem Conventu wegen der Jenensium, die Calixto favoriert, nichts geworden.'"

RE³ 19:260. In the late 1670s Calov began attacking Musäus publicly in sermons, disputations, and writings, accusing him of syncretism, since he opposed the *Consensus Repetitus*. Since Musäus seemed to have thwarted Calov's objections against the syncretists, "he must have been worse than they were."

⁶¹RE³ 19:250, 254, 260. The faculty of Jena agreed in 1662 with the Wittenberg and Leipzig faculties in stating that it was wrong for the Lutheran Church in Hessen to drop the public condemnation of the Reformed and Roman Catholics from the divine service. In 1664, Jena joined many other Lutheran faculties in protesting the syncretistic measures of the elector of Kurbrandenburg (Berlin). Likewise, in 1679, the faculty of Jena officially renounced syncretism, though Tschachert implies they may have been forced to do this.

former.⁶² Calixt, on the other hand, with his division of articles into *antecedentia*, *contituentia*, et *consequentia*, holds that derivative articles of faith (*consequentia*) are not fundamental. In so doing, he agrees with the Reformed.⁶³ If Calixt is correct in his distinction of the articles of faith, then all the other non-constitutive doctrines become matters of indifference. Musäus, however, defines as fundamental not only those articles of faith that are saving, but also those that are edifying. Musäus wrote:

But more rightly do our theologians accept the foundation of faith and the fundamental articles of faith more widely in the same way as declared, and state that for the true peace of the church and entering into fraternal concord, consensus is required in *all parts of Christian doctrine* that constitute the foundation of faith or have a necessary connection with [the foundation]. Or, to restate the matter, consensus is required in all fundamental articles of faith, whether they exist and are said *per se* positively and directly, or by reason of another, indirectly and negatively. Which is the same [as to say], consensus is required in the entire Christian doctrine, which is useful for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness, that the man of God be whole [*integer*] and ready for every good work.⁶⁴

⁶²Schmid, *Geschichte*, 409.

⁶³Schmid, *Geschichte*, 410.

⁶⁴Schmid, *Doctrinal Theology*, 410-411, quoting Musäus' *Questiones theol. de syncretismo et scriptura s.*, 36. "Verum rectius Nostrates theologi fundamentum fidei et articulos fidei fundamentales in latiori, eoque modo declarato sensu accipiunt, statuuntque, ad veram ecclesiae pacem et concordiam fraternam ineundam requiri consensum in omnibus doctrinae christianae partibus, quae fundamentum fidei constituunt, aut cum eo necessariam quandam connexionem habent, sive, quod eodem redit, requiri consensum in omnibus articulis fundamentalibus sive per se positive et directe sive ratione alterius indirecte et negative tales sint et dicantur, quod idem est, atque requiri consensum in tota doctrina christiana, quae utilis est

Like the theologians of Wittenberg and Leipzig, Musäus denied that there can be unity between the divided churches on the basis of the early church creeds. Unlike Calixt, he stated that there is a *dissensus fundamentalis* (fundamental dissent) and thus he rejected Calixt's aims for theological tolerance.⁶⁵ While there may be individuals within the Reformed and Roman Catholic churches who are believers in Christ, these churches as such are not united in Christ. As for individuals, we cannot make judgments on their hearts, but must judge according to their confession. Therefore we cannot act as if we are unified as long as they cling to their false confessions.⁶⁶ In Musäus' discussion of *Kirchenfriede* ("ecclesiastical peace") and the articles of faith, he is in line with Calov's doctrine and that of Nicolaus Hunnius.⁶⁷

In the doctrine of the church, however, Musäus, and the Jena school with him, differs with both Calixt on one hand and Calov on the other. The most readily available source for exploring Musäus' systematic theology is the *Compendium Theologiae Positivae* of Johann Wilhelm Baier. Baier, Musäus' son-in-law and disciple, was asked by Ernest the Pious of Saxony to compose a brief dogmatics text to replace Leonhard Hutter's antiquated *Compendium*. The book, which appeared first in 1686, is characterized by its dependence on Musäus' writings. It is, for the most part, a compilation of Musäus' writings, and, due to its conciseness

ad doctrinam, ad redargutionem, ad correctionem, ad institutionem, quae est in iustitia, ut integer sit Dei homo ad omne opus bonum apparatus."

⁶⁵Schmid, *Doctrinal Theology*, 412.

⁶⁶Schmid, *Doctrinal Theology*, 412-413.

⁶⁷See Baier, *Compendium Theologiae Positivae* (Berlin: Gust. Schlawitz, 1864), 28-39, Ch. 1, § 27-34 (Baier's *Compendium* is an epitome of Musäus' theology). Abraham Calov, *Systema Locorum Theologicorum* (Wittenberg, 1655), 1:774-791. Nicolaus Hunnius, *Diaskepsis Theologica*, trans. Dinda and Hohle (Malone, TX: Repristination, 1999), 4-32.

and clarity, Lutheran universities have used it since the seventeenth century.⁶⁸ In 1879 The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod republished the work, together with additional quotations from Lutheran theologians compiled by C. F. W. Walther. It was the basic dogmatics text at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, before the publication of Pieper's *Christian Dogmatics*.

This essay does not intend to discuss the place of Musäus' ecclesiology in the history of doctrine. Some aspects of his ecclesiology, however, are noteworthy in relation to the syncretistic controversies of the seventeenth century. Considering the church militant, Baier distinguishes between the church as it is considered properly and precisely, that is, true believers in Christ, and the church as it is considered improperly and *per synecdochen* (by way of synecdoche), that is, the whole group of true believers together with hypocrites and evil people.⁶⁹

The attributes of the church are those of the creed: one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.⁷⁰ The church, considered properly, is without division (*una*). When it comes to the church's *external* unity however, there must be the same confession of faith and participation of the sacraments before there can be unity.⁷¹ Next, the church is catholic, not only by having orthodox doctrine, but also by being universal with respect to places, peoples and nations, persons, and time. "That is to say, that by virtue of its institution it is not bound to a certain place, people or nation, but is *diffused through all peoples* in the entire world, or at least is *being diffused*."⁷² This point is one that

⁶⁸Johannes Kunze, "Baier, Johann Wilhelm," *Schaff-Herzog*, 1:420.

⁶⁹Baier, part 3, chapter 13, §2.

⁷⁰Baier, part 3, chapter 13, §11.

⁷¹Baier, part 3, chapter 13, §13.

⁷²Baier, part 3, chapter 13, §15 & §15 (c). "Sive, quod vi institutionis non sit ad certum locum, populum aut gentem alligata; sed toto terrarum orbe *per omnes populos ac gentes diffusa*, vel certe *diffundenda*..."

contradicts both Calixt and Calov. Whereas for Calixt the church catholic was to be found at a certain time (the early church) and in certain nations (the chief patriarchal churches), and for the *Consensus Repetitus* the church catholic seems to be identical with the Lutheran church, for Baier, "catholicity" transcends time, place, persons, and nations.

This does not mean, however, that particular, concrete groups cannot be considered "church." Baier states that the church diffused throughout the world has many different groups who can (rightly) claim for themselves the name and definition of "church."

Namely, the faithful themselves are diffused throughout the world, nevertheless in order to be united here and there by certain bonds, they coalesce into certain *congregations* and constitute them: insofar as they use *one ordinary and complete ministry*, which is distinct from the ministries of other congregations.⁷³

These groups of believers, each united by one ministry, are particular churches. Baier goes on to state that Scripture's promise to the church that it will endure forever (e.g., Matthew 16:18) does not apply to any *particular* church, but only to the church viewed *absolutely*, that is, the church universal.⁷⁴ In these particular churches, true believers *everywhere* have fellowship with non-saints, both hidden and

⁷³Baier, part 3, chapter 13, §19. "Nempe fideles ipsi ita diffunduntur per orbem terrarum, ut tamen hic atque illic certis vinculis uniti, in *congregationes* quasdam coalescant, easque constituent: quatenus *uno ministerio ordinario* atque *integro*, sed ab aliarum congregationum ministeriis *distincto*, utuntur." Note that for Baier the boundaries of particular churches are not geographical (local congregation) as much as they are ministerial. Groups of congregations that use a ministry which is complete and distinct from the ministry of other congregations is an *ecclesia particularis*.

⁷⁴Baier, part 3, chapter 13, §20.

*manifest sinners. When this happens we use the term ecclesia per synecdochen.*⁷⁵

Since no particular church is free of non-saints, does that mean that all churches are equally pure or equally corrupt? Baier answers, "no." A church where the saints, pure doctrine, and pure practice hold sway (even though non-saints are mixed in) is "Christ's church simply and absolutely." On the other hand, when non-saints, false doctrine, and false practice hold sway in a church, this is an "corrupt church."⁷⁶ In this way Baier distinguishes between a true or pure church (*ecclesia vera seu pura*) and a false or impure church (*ecclesia falsa seu impura*), without implying that an *ecclesia vera* is completely perfect and without fault.⁷⁷ A "pure, true church" can thus be described as one that has everything which must be believed for salvation and done for holiness of life, in which spiritual sons of God are born, who are joined to Christ their head in one body through true faith.⁷⁸

Now, although many groups are rightly called "churches of Christ," nevertheless adding them all together does *not* constitute the one, catholic or universal church.⁷⁹ Unlike Calixt, Baier (and Musäus) do not see the catholicity of the church as something the church lacks, which can only be achieved by external unity. Next, whereas the *Consensus Repetitius* had said it did not condemn individuals or whole churches outside of the Holy Roman Empire that err due to simplicity,⁸⁰ Baier went further, stating that if the word of God is preached and baptism is kept whole (*integrum*), then

⁷⁵Baier, part 3, chapter 13, §21.

⁷⁶Baier, part 3, chapter 13, §22.

⁷⁷Baier, part 3, chapter 13, §23.

⁷⁸Baier, part 3, chapter 13, §24. For evidence of Walther's dependence on Baier, see Lawrence R. Rast Jr., "Catholicity and Missourian Orthodoxy," in *Lutheran Catholicity*, The Pieper Lectures Volume 5, John A. Maxfield, ed. (St. Louis: Concordia Historical Institute and the Luther Academy, 2001): 58-82.

⁷⁹Baier, part 3, chapter 13, §26.

⁸⁰*Consilia Theol. Witebergensia*, 929.

spiritual sons of God can be born also in corrupt churches.⁸¹ Like Calixt, Baier (and Musäus) are willing to see individuals within other churches as being Christians. For Baier, however, this willingness does not lead to indifference concerning a church's doctrine and practice. For Baier, true particular churches can be distinguished from false ones⁸² by the marks of the pure preaching of the word and the pure administration of the sacraments.⁸³ As a warning, Baier notes that it is possible that one day there will be no true particular church. In fact, this has been divinely predicted (Rev. 12:14f.; 13:12f.; 17:2f.; Luke 18:8; 2 Thess. 2:11).⁸⁴ Finally, Baier declares that syncretism, the union of disagreeing parties, is opposed to the true unity of the church.⁸⁵

To summarize, whereas Calixt posited a *Glaubensgemeinschaft* ("fellowship of faith") between particular churches, Baier, following in the footsteps of Musäus, posited a *Glaubensgemeinschaft* among individual believers wherever they might be, but *not* with the Roman Catholic and Reformed churches. Whereas the *Consensus Repetitus* equated the Lutheran church with the true church of God without explanation of what those terms meant, Baier carefully defined the Lutheran church as a "particular church," which happens to be the only one currently giving expression to the *una sancta ecclesia* (the one holy church) by means of pure preaching and sacraments.⁸⁶

⁸¹Baier, part 3, chapter 13, §27.

⁸²Baier, part 3, chapter 13, §28.

⁸³Baier, part 3, chapter 13, §30.

⁸⁴Baier, part 3, chapter 13, §29.

⁸⁵Baier, part 3, chapter 13, §37.

⁸⁶Harry Mathias Albrecht, "Das ekklesiologische Ringen des Johannes Musäus," *Union-Konversion-Toleranz*, ed. Heinz Duchhardt et al. (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 2000), 50, 52.

The theological positions at play in the syncretistic controversies of the seventeenth century and the struggles of those times have much to teach contemporary Lutherans. Lutherans can learn much from Georg Calixt, Abraham Calov, and Johannes Musäus, both positively and negatively. Calixt was wrong on his understanding of the ancient creeds. The Apostles' Creed was never meant to be an exhaustive list of fundamental doctrines. Calixt was also mistaken when he considered the doctrinal issues of the Reformation to have only a secondary or non-fundamental importance. On the other hand, a one may also respect Calixt's assumptions about ecclesiastical union, namely that there must be unity of doctrine and practice before there can be external ecclesiastical union. This viewpoint seems to be lacking in modern ecumenical dialogue.

From Abraham Calov, one may conclude that the attempt to make certain *theologoumena* ecclesiastical dogma was imprudent, if not plainly wrong. Calov's aggressive vilification of his opponents serves as a negative example of theological discourse. On the other hand, Calov was right in spotting an error which, if unchecked, would have overturned the Reformation. Calov had the courage to lead the fight. Even if his love for the truth led him to excesses, he may be respected for the fact that he fought against falsehood.

From Johannes Musäus one may learn how to distinguish the controversial point from the non-essential, how to act as a churchman in both defending the truth and not placing a stumbling-block before others unnecessarily. Musäus' importance has continued beyond his own day in the fact that his doctrine, epitomized by Baier, was taught to a generation of LCMS pastors. From this fact, Musäus' position on syncretism and ecumenism can be seen as the classical position of the Missouri Synod.

An article on "The Syncretism of Calixt," appearing in 1877 in the pages of *Lehre und Wehre*, summarizes the history of the syncretistic controversy and gives readers a biblical

way of looking at syncretism and unionism: The church is called to preserve true doctrine and to fight against false doctrine (1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:13; 1 Tim. 6:13-14; Prov. 1:6; Tit. 1:9; Phil. 1:27). The church is also called to avoid false prophets and to warn others about them (Matt. 7:15; Rom. 16:17; Jer. 23:31; 2 Thess. 3:24; Tit. 3:10; 2 John 10). Christ and the Apostles rebuked false doctrine (Matt. 16:6; 23:23f.; 23:2; 7:15-23; Gal. 1:8-9; 2:4; 5:4, 10, 12; 2 Peter 2:1). The also named names and rebuked false *teachers* (*nominal-elenchus*) (1 Tim. 1:10; 3 John 9-10; Rev. 2:15; Mt. 23:23f.). These are not isolated examples, but are examples to be followed by the church (Phil. 1:27). The Lutheran Confessions also condemn false doctrine. Unity is based on doctrine (1 Cor. 1:10). Love and peace cannot be used as a rationale to compromise doctrine (Matt. 10:34; Luke 12:51; 1 Cor. 13:6; Zech. 8:19; 1 Cor. 9:19-22).⁸⁷

Calixt's goal was ecclesiastical peace. Instead of hatred between Lutherans, Catholics, and Reformed, he wanted only love. Like Luther, however, Calov and Musäus however, saw the danger in love at the expense of doctrine. "We are surely prepared to observe peace and love with all men, provided that they leave the doctrine of faith perfect and sound for us. If we cannot obtain this, it is useless for them to demand love from us. A curse on a love that is observed at the expense of the doctrine of faith, to which everything must yield—love, an apostle, an angel from heaven, etc.!"⁸⁸ His conclusion?

⁸⁷ "Der Calixtinische Synkretismus," *Lehre und Wehre*, 23 (1877): 8-15, 55-57, 76-89, 116-119. The article focuses mainly on Calixt's theology and a refutation of the same. The article is anonymous, and was "submitted by request of the Cleveland pastoral conference."

⁸⁸Martin Luther, "Lectures on Galatians 1535: Chapters 5-6," Tr. Jaroslav Pelikan, vol. 27 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and Walter A. Hansen, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), 38.

Therefore doctrine and life should be distinguished as sharply as possible. Doctrine belongs to God, not to us; and we are called only as its ministers. Therefore we cannot give up or change even one dot of it. Life belongs to us; therefore when it comes to this, there is nothing that [they] can demand of us that we are not willing and obliged to undertake, condone, and tolerate, with the exception of doctrine and faith, about which we always say what Paul says: 'A little yeast, etc.' On this score we cannot yield even a hairbreadth.⁸⁹

⁸⁹Martin Luther, "Lectures on Galatians," 37.

Johann Sebastian Bach as Lutheran Theologian

David P. Scaer

Bach at the Apex

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) represents the high point of a period noted for its musical productivity. Even had the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries not seen the outpouring of scientific advancements that it did, the music of that period would sit aside as a special one. Take Bach out of the musical equation and that period would still have been extraordinary in terms of musical productivity. Heinrich Schütz, Georg Philipp Telemann and Dietrich Buxtehude were in Germany, and Henry Purcell and William Boyce were in England. Standard fare for suburban mall Christmas music is Bach's contemporary *Landsmann*, Georg Friedrich Händel's familiar "Hallelujah Chorus" from *Messiah*. Bach's sons left an amazing legacy, but they could not emerge from their father's shadow. They were great, but their father was the greatest.

With the Reformation attention to hymn singing, towns and princes soon supported their own organists, music directors known as Kantors, and choirs for their churches, courts, and special occasions like marriages and funerals. From the mid-1500s up through much of the 1700s rivulets flowed from small towns and courts into brooks, and brooks merged into streams and rivers, and the rivers flowed into an ocean, which ocean was a *Bach*, the German word for "brook." Johann Sebastian Bach, however, was an ocean in whose music we are drowned in God's own majesty. In the *Kyrie* and the *Sanctus* of his *Mass in B Minor*, we are dropped

The Rev. Dr. David P. Scaer is Professor of Systematic Theology and New Testament, and Editor of Concordia Theological Quarterly at Concordia Theological Seminary.

into the depths of God, dragged down by the waves into an ocean without shores.

Music is better described by its characteristics and its effects, rather than defined. Martin Luther said music was the handmaiden (*Frau*: wife) of theology, but it is not her only role. At times she can be tyrannical and take control of our whole being. Music can convert ordinary words into a force that captures our intellects and involves us in causes for which we otherwise have no moral commitment. It enters our being through the emotions and, like an invading army, it transforms our intellect and will. Many conversions made at evangelistic rallies result from music's effect on the emotions through which the will is stirred to make decisions for Christ. Remove the music and commitment soon evaporates. Music's ability to stir the emotions is not lost on high school and college administrations. Marching bands produce that elusive school spirit, which evolves into memories that later give birth to the school's loyal and generous alumni. It reinforces memories and in some cases makes memory possible. We remember a catchy song or hymn, but we would be hard pressed to produce the words without the music. Music gives content to nostalgia, engages our minds and intellects, and through its rhythms can take our bodies captive and has the potential to create exhaustion in both the performer and the hearer. Using biblical language, music makes it possible to love things with all our heart, soul, and mind. Over indulgence in music can only be cured by abstinence, but this only sharpens our desire for the pleasure of hearing it again. Music does not inform the intellect, but it can raise the intellect to heights of awareness and consciousness that raw thoughts by themselves cannot do.

Music is the theology's *alter ego*, or to go one step further, its better half. Cold theological statements become alive through music. This is certainly the case with Johann Sebastian Bach whose music preserved the older Lutheran

theology, which was being surpassed by Rationalism and Pietism in eighteenth-century Germany. Bach's music is the embodiment of the man and his faith. Through it we confront him in his inner soul.

All disciplines involve our intellects, wills and emotions in one way or another. Sciences like physics and chemistry address the intellect. Religion or faith involves our intellect and our emotions, but it approaches us through our wills where unbelief is conquered and faith created. Music cannot create faith, but in addressing our emotions, it shapes our religious sensitivities and raises faith to levels beyond the reach of the spoken or the silently read word. Words, sentences, and phrases are released from the mundane and the prosaic to levels of excitement, enjoyment and even dread. Mysteriously the same words attached to different kinds of music produce different effects and more mysteriously the same music played in different ways and tempos creates different outcomes. By itself music is not a source for pure intellectual ideas, but it transforms our intellects and often provides the same words with different and perhaps even diametrically opposing meanings.¹

The Mass: A Common Language for Different Faiths

The idea that the same words can have different meanings is recognizable when Bach's *Mass* is compared to those of others. A Mass consists of liturgical parts of the service of Holy Communion, which remain the same Sunday after Sunday in all churches with little or no variation. With occasional exceptions, a full Mass consists of a *Kyrie*, a *Gloria in Excelsis*, a *Credo*, a *Benedictus* with a

¹Klaus Eidam writes (*The True Life of J. S. Bach*, trans. Hyat Rogers [New York: Basic Books, 2001], 161): "Without a doubt, music is a mysterious thing: We cannot eat it, cannot wear it, cannot prove anything by it—considered purely as phenomenon, it is strictly useless.... The preoccupation with it has even given first to a whole branch of learning, musicology, though no music is produced through its efforts."

Hosanna, and an *Agnus Dei*. George Bernhard Shaw supposedly said that the Americans and British were two different peoples separated by a common language. Paraphrasing Shaw, the Mass is one set of words expressing different faiths. Identical texts set to different music by different composers create different interpretations and correspondingly different responses in the listeners. So theoretically Roman, Anglican (Episcopalian), and Lutheran Masses all use the same words, but because of religious traditions of their composers or their intentions, the music of each provides different interpretations of the same words. Though Bach wrote several masses, perhaps in hopes of improving his lot with his prince elector of Saxony who had converted to Catholicism to become king of Poland, their distinctively Lutheran character remains evident. Bach's ambition could not camouflage what he was.² He could not pass himself off as a Catholic. In his hands his great *B Minor Mass* delivers a distinctively Lutheran message which is quite different from one written, for example, by Mozart.

Things were not always like that. Masses sung according to Gregorian chant often have no known composers. Gregorian chant has its origins in Hebrew chant, a form with ancient roots still used in synagogues. This form may have provided the vehicle in which David composed the Psalms. Words were not set to music and music did not search for lyrics, but words and music emerged in one moment. In a Gregorian Mass words and music form a natural unity. Liturgies of the Eastern Orthodox Churches also demonstrate a similar unity of word and music. Their Divine Liturgy sung in the ancient Slavonic or modern Romanian, Russian, Bulgarian and Greek tongues will sound similar to the ear untrained to recognize these different languages. Since the chant remains the same,

²Christoph Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach* (New York and London: Norton, 2000), 367.

listeners do not come face to face with the ancient composers who remain anonymously hidden in the mysterious music. Like the Psalms of David, something is lost when the ancient liturgies are spoken and not sung.

The individualism of the West allows the person and character of the composer to find a place in his works from which he emerges when they are played. It does not take too long for the uninitiated to distinguish Bach from Handel. Though Bach's *Mass* uses words of ancient liturgy, it is recognizably Lutheran in distinction to the restrained Psalms tunes of the Reformed (which have no Masses) or the triumphal exuberance of the Anglican tradition, which reflects seventeenth, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British imperialism. Roman Masses cover a wider period of space and time and hence exhibit a greater variety from the grim and solemn to the operatic. Place the medieval hymn, *Dies irae*, into a Mass, and the afterlife becomes gloomy, murky and smoky like the ancient Greek Hades.³ Faure's *Requiem* breaks away from this tradition in picturing souls being released from the shades of death to a higher glory, but uncertainty remains until this happy conclusion. Mozart's *Requiem* is in parts grim and despairing, but his *Coronation Mass* is exuberant.

In something so standard as the Mass, the music places itself along side of the words and takes control. Music is no longer theology's handmaiden but its queen. Bach's *B Minor Mass* exhibits a wide range of experiences. In the *Kyrie* or *Sanctus* the listener views the vast expanse of the deity and finds himself falling into transcendent depths. Bach expresses a reality beyond himself, so that he too must step back in awe when confronted with God's "God-ness" in his own composition. In the *Expectio resurrectionem mortuorum*, he becomes the believer who confidently awaits the resurrection of the dead.⁴

³The *Requiem Mass* structure makes use of the *Dies Irae*.

⁴Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 440.

Bach's Complexity

Most music, including religious music, delivers the messages of their authors and composers in single, almost immediately recognizable melodies. A Gregorian Mass lacks musical range and imagination, but we can follow it and sing it, because only one voice carries the weight of the words and message. We like to sing the melody, because we recognize it. This is the way we sing hymns. Singing any of the other subsidiary parts of alto, tenor, and bass requires a trained ear and the capability to match our voices to what our ears hear. Failing in this, we sing along with the melody in the soprano, realizing that the ability to sing in harmony is not a gift all possess.

Bach presents a different challenge. He understands the power inherent in melody, but in many of his orchestral pieces, he assigns the thematic motifs to the other voices, a somewhat democratic approach in a declining medieval world. His music exhibits a complexity that addresses different parts of our emotional, intellectual and religious lives, if not at the same time, at least sequentially, so that we do not know where he has left us. In his *Saint Matthew Passion*, which, with the *Mass in B Minor*, can be considered one of the greatest pieces of music ever written, he uses two choirs and two organs in addition to the orchestra. Our attention is diverted from one choir to the other, from one voice to the other. In the *Kyrie* of Bach's *Mass* we find ourselves lost in the magnificence that can only be God himself and then in the *Christe eleison*, God becomes accessible in the sweet revelation of his Son. Then in the second *Kyrie eleison*, we confidently approach God, but now at a respectful distance. Bach does something similar in the *Gloria in Excelsis*. God's majesty is followed by a serene peace that envelops the world in the *Pax hominibus*. In one moment we are on earth as separated from our Creator by creatureliness and sinfulness and the next moment we are in heaven at God's right hand.

A diversified emotion brought on by one piece of music is comparable to waiting on a platform in Europe for the train. It slows in approaching, but does not stop. To get on the train we have to make a quick decision of what compartment door to open. As it passes the platform, we are uncertain through which door to board. Each compartment has its own attraction, but if we open one door, we have deprived ourselves of opening the other doors to see what they have to offer. So while Bach's music draws us mystically into a world which is uniquely his, it leaves us frustrated in knowing that at any one time we have not grasped its full significance. His music grasps us, before we can grasp it. When we do grasp it, we are uncertain whether we have grasped his intentions. When we listen to the same piece again, we hear something which we did not hear the first time and so we have to reappraise our first responses. Bach invades our insular world through different doors, often at the same time. We are at a loss at which entrance to greet him.

This experience resembles hearing and rehearing the Scriptures. No one hearing of any section exhausts its meaning. There is no re-hearing of the sacred texts, because each hearing uncovers something not heard before. We know the general plot of this or that biblical account or story, but each time we confront something which was not previously comprehended.

Similarly in listening to Bach, our intellects lose their self-confidence. What we thought we knew we really did not. Our minds are constantly adjusted and readjusted and frustration gives way to exhaustion and then to a heavenly pleasure, even in his secular works. Though his music and faith reach an unmatched union on earth (*and* perhaps even in heaven), most Bach devotees are captivated by his genius, not by his faith or at least they do not share it; however without his faith his devotees cannot count themselves among his disciples. They know him but not really. Musicologists can analyze his genius. Biographers attempt

to understand him in terms of the first half of the eighteenth century⁵ and he emerges an ordinary man, but in this ordinariness resided in miniature the mathematical harmonies of the universe in still unmatched musical complexities which he "turned into a glorious representation of heavenly music. Measure for measure, from beat to beat, one phrase to another, one complementary contrapuntal passage to another, heaven and earth are joined. Perhaps in heaven time will not be swallowed up into eternity and there will be time after all at least in terms of our music coming from the redeemed who are a part of the new creation."⁶ His compositions are as fixed and varied as the stars themselves, unity and diversity without contradiction. His mind was the universe in miniature. His *Mass* is the introduction to heaven and is heard there.

A combination of mathematical and musical genius still does not explain the man, because these characteristics by themselves might only produce advanced mechanical technique. Without coming to terms with his Christian faith as inherited from Luther's Reformation, our understanding of him cannot go beyond amazement at a technical genius. Leave his faith out of the equation and he is given to us without his soul and he remains remote. Keep his faith in the equation and Bach speaks to our inner being. Even the faithless, who have pushed the idea of divinity to the outer perimeters of their existence, can recognize the divine element in Bach. His music appeals to the universal

⁵Eidam notes that Bach's second marriage took place at home and not in the local Lutheran church. *The True Life of J. S. Bach*, 145. Whatever inconsistency may have driven him to this action, he may have been sensitive to the Reformed faith of his prince and his Pietistic wife who had no love of Bach and his music. There are reasons why people take the actions they do.

⁶Paul W. Hofreiter, from a communication by e-mail, December 17, 2001.

dilemma that cannot escape the questions of human misery and whether God really exists. Those who understand life only in terms of this world—what they can see, hear and touch—see even in Bach's most ordinary works something of the transcendental. Those for whom there is no God stumble over the divine clues in his compositions. So one who understood himself as a believer in Christ attracts non-Christians, simply because he opens the door to the *other* reality, the one not measured by space and time.⁷ This is even a great mystery as to why those who have not found God are drawn to the music of a man who found God in

⁷Two articles on Bach appeared side by side in *Lutheran Quarterly* 16 (Spring 2002). The first is by the highly respected Bach scholar Robert A. Leaver, "Johannes Sebastian Bach and the Lutheran Understanding of Music" (21-47). Leaver identifies certain motifs in Bach's compositions within the range of Lutheran theology. A second essay is by the equally erudite Michael Marissen, "On the Musically Theological in J. S. Bach's Church Cantatas" 48-64. In his conclusion, Marissen's notes that if we neglect either the words or the music in the cantatas, we have a diminished understanding of him. Agreed! "Accepting the idea that Bach's musical setting can theologically expand upon and interpret his librettos and need not involve downplaying the aesthetic splendor of his works. I would suggest, on the other hand, that insisting on exclusively aesthetic contemplation of Bach's music potentially diminishes its meanings and actually reduces its stature" (60). In another article Robert A. Leaver notes the contribution Walter E. Buszin made to the revival of Bach's music in the Lutheran church in well researched and deep felt article, "Walter E. Buszin and Lutheran Church Music in America," *Lutheran Quarterly* (Summer 2002): 153-94. Leaver includes a quotation from Buszin that without understanding the religious dimension in Bach's music, appreciation for it will soon be lost. "The world may enjoy Bach for aesthetic reasons only. For that reason Bach's days are likely numbered among the children of the world, for if the Gospel is foolishness to them, then in the end, Bach's proclamation of this Gospel, the 'new song,' will be but foolishness to them." Happily Buszin was more pessimistic than he had to be. Bach is more successful than ever; however sadly this success is more often outside Lutheran churches than in them. The hymnal currently in use in the Episcopal Church has a wide range of Bach arranged hymns which are totally lacking in their Lutheran counterparts.

everything and attributed his genius to God alone. When he penned S.D.G., *Soli Deo Gloria*, at the end of compositions, he meant it.

Bach as Distinctively Lutheran

In assuming his post as the cantor of St. Thomas Church in Leipzig, the great composer had to submit to a rigorous examination on Lutheran Orthodoxy. Town and church authorities were stridently opposed to Calvinism and Pietism, but after he died Leipzig fell under the pall of Rationalism. From his library it is evident that he was knowledgeable about the Lutheran faith in a way which few Lutheran clergy are today. This explains the breadth of his religious knowledge, but more than cold intellect was at work in assimilating facts. He enveloped the Reformation faith in a way that the professional theologians rarely do. If Luther had been given Bach's musical genius, the great Reformer would have been Bach. Perhaps the Reformation heritage today reaches more people through Bach's music than Luther's writings, though it is often unrecognized, discounted, or ignored by the scholars. Bach's world embraces God and Satan, heaven and earth, despair and joy, life and death, precision and ecstasy, but it is not one of dialectical uncertainty between irreconcilable forces. Precision does not translate into woodenness. Ecstasy does not evolve into uncontrolled fanaticism. Faith finds no room for unbelief. God offers Satan no armistice. Heaven ultimately will win and destroy hell. There is a "must" in God which requires that he will reign and reign alone. He shares his glory with no one—*Soli Deo Gloria*. Bach knew personal tragedy in losing his young wife and ten of his twenty children in death. Then came the disappointments of being denied prestigious positions. Fully aware of his genius, rejection was for him an additional burden. Even though Christians see no evidences of this victory in their own lives, they have no doubt that God will succeed and

vindicate the faithful. In this Bach has the Lutheran understanding of a Christian who knows himself as *simul iustus et peccator*. Like Luther, Bach is the man caught between heaven and hell, with an awareness of his own wretchedness for which relief can only come from God in Christ. It is almost as if Bach were the reincarnation of Old Testament Psalmists who struggled within the realities in which they know themselves as sinner as they waited for God to vindicate them. The Lutheran understanding of life contrasts with other options offered by the majority of Christian options, in which believers find satisfaction in their moral accomplishments and in measuring them, they are able to find the certainty of salvation. In the Lutheran view the real dilemma is not in the external world, which the Creator has made his own again in redemption, but the world as we meet it within ourselves. Bach is trapped within a Lutheran definition of himself. He cannot deny this definition out which he produces his music. In contrast, Mozart is not tied to his world. Bach is, and so he cannot help being Bach. Even in his so-called secular music, he is never detached from what he composes and so he is encapsulated in what he writes. He is rarely on the outside looking down upon a manuscript with his quill dipped in ink. His music is his autobiography. In the arias, he is the sinner who cannot escape the dilemma of his own sin and death, but he is at the same time he is the believer confident that God will come to his rescue. As much as Bach's music represents who he is and what he believes, it remains outside of him, scaffolding on which he can approach the glories of heaven and through its gates see Christ on the throne of his judgment. Thus in approaching death, he reworks and re-titles an older organ fugue into *Vor deinem Thron tret ich hiermit*, "Before your throne I now appear."

For Bach God is never a theological abstraction, but always the God-Man, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Mary, a faith which is expressed in the *Incarnatus est* and the ensuing *Crucifixus* of his *B Minor Mass*. Encapsulated here is the misery of human agony that can be felt by all who have

been brought down to the depths of sorrow. In the *Mass* this agony is experienced by the transcendent God who suffers under his own wrath so that his creatures may experience the joys of heaven. This agony is taken down to the level of every believer in *Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi*. Here the focus is on Christ as the sin bearer, but with the total awareness that the believer is responsible for this suffering. *Et sepultus est* is rendered inoperative by the unexpected *Et resurrexit* in which God accomplishes the victory for himself in Christ. In the *Expectio resurrectionem mortuorum*, the agony of the believer caught in his sin and his own death gives way to personal confidence that he will be raised from the dead with Christ whose resurrection becomes theirs.⁸ A Lutheran theology can be gleaned and has the power to create and confirm faith, but ironically the majority of his devotees and chief interpreters are not Lutheran and some not Christian.

Bach No Pietist or Rationalist

Luther initiated the era in which the modern world at last emerged from the medieval one. Bach lived as this process was coming to completion. With the Enlightenment giving birth to the French Revolution, the modern world was here to stay. Part of the developing modern age was a religious movement known as Pietism. At the August 2000 Bach Festival in North Conway, New Hampshire, a high school, college, and church music director introduced Bach's *Coffee Cantata* by saying that the strict Lutheran composer could let his hair down occasionally. He had confused Lutheranism with Pietism, which was widespread in Bach's Germany, and its Anglo-Saxon expression especially in New

⁸Of Bach's treatment of the Creed Leaver writes that it "is as much a significant theological statement as it is a profound musical one, symmetrically arranged around the center-pint of the *Crucifixus*, literally the theological *crux* of Christian, Trinitarian theology" (35).

England Puritanism from which it spread into the American psyche. Pietism is an internally directed form of Christianity resulting in an individualism and subjectivism in which believers rest their confidence in themselves and not Christ.⁹ In the wake of the Thirty Years War, which brought a devastation to Germany that was not known again until World War II, the Pietistic emphasis on Christian life and not its teachings offered a relief from the religious wars. It never denied the old Lutheran faith, but required stern behavior from its adherents. Pietists wallowed in the misery of their holiness and had no use for organ preludes and rarely used chorales and so were among Bach's opponents. While he could have been drawn into the Pietistic orbit, he remained safely outside of it and so he suffered from none of their religious self-absorption. Bach's alleged Pietism has been supposedly detected in his use of personal pronouns and possessives, "I," "me," "my," and "mine," especially in the arias of his cantatas and passions, in which he reflects upon his condition as sinner. Self-reflection over sin and death also characterizes the Psalms and is also part of the Lutheran view of Confession and Absolution. Bach never sees faith of the believers as a source or reason for salvation. Believers are never saved because of their holiness or piety as the Pietists proclaim, but because God has come to their aid. Bach had to contend with Pietistic rulers and clergy, but Pietism bridged the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, though it was submerged into private practice of religion and was not a dominant force in Germany's intellectual life. It gave way to the then emerging Rationalism which still dominates Western thought, especially in Germany. Not unexpectedly East German Communist authorities attributed Bach's genius, especially his mathematical precision in his music, to the influence of

⁹Though it is widely held that Bach absorbed Pietistic influences into his music, he demonstrates none of the self-absorbed life styles of the Pietists who had little use for the cantatas he produced. *The True Life of J.S. Bach*, 163-65.

the Rationalistic Enlightenment of which they saw themselves as the rightful heirs. What of Bach's heritage survived Pietism was ignored by Rationalism, which had no use for the older religion. Their theologians and philosophers had a natural explanation for every supernatural event. Bach's view that man was estranged from God and could only be saved by him also had no place in the Enlightenment's optimistic assessment of humanity.¹⁰ At the time of his death, a once dominant Lutheran Orthodoxy was losing its grip on the church, state, and university and would soon fall completely out of favor and never recover. Still, within Orthodox Lutheranism's declining years in Germany, Bach developed a unique musical form in which the Lutheran heritage is still preserved.

The Eternal Bach

Bach's biographers do not agree in their understanding of him and thus their scholarship has produced contradictory results.¹¹ He can be explained within the dimensions of his time, but not by them, and so he may qualify as a universal man. This may explain how his greatness only began to be appreciated about a century after he died. Like St. Paul, Bach was "born out of due time." Certain aspects of his genius, especially his technical organ skill, were recognized by his contemporaries, but now, three centuries later, societies honor him by preserving and presenting his music. Without interpretation, his music attracts and without translation, his music speaks in various languages to many nations and cultures. As I get older, I

¹⁰Eidam shows that Leipzig remained a haven of Lutheran Orthodoxy during Bach's life and that it was hardly a haven for Enlightenment thought which was gaining entrance in other parts of Germany at that time. *The True Life of J.S. Bach*, 163-65.

¹¹Eidam surveys these different interpretations. *The True Life of J.S. Bach*, xv-xviii.

think of family members, friends and acquaintances whom death has taken, but whose personalities were so compelling that in some sense they continue to live on and must live on. In listening to Bach, I feel I have met this extraordinary personality which was a unique combination of genius, technique, emotion and faith. *Something* as grand as this just does not appear and then vanish, but must be eternal. Nearly all theological systems beginning with Thomas Aquinas pay some attention to proofs for God's existence. These proofs are philosophical logarithms that impress only those with the intellect to discern them, but it is doubtful that they ever produce faith. Perhaps a better proof for God's existence would be Bach and his music. Listeners are ushered into the existence of a supernatural world over which God reigns unchallenged. His music is created on earth, but listeners find themselves lost in the depths of God as in the case of the first *Kyrie* or the *Sanctus* of his *B Minor Mass*. However, we are not permitted to remain submerged in divine solemnities. Like the old parachute jump at Coney Island, we are dropped into the depths of human misery in hearing the *Crucifixus* and *Et sepultus est*. Bach's *Mass* is unmatched in plummeting the depths of the opposing different realities found in human and divine experiences. Whereas his *Mass* fluctuates over the full range of human experiences from desperate wailing in the face of death to heavenly ecstasy in which life reigns forever, the *Saint Matthew* and *Saint John Passions* rarely escape the agony of human existence. In the *Credo* of the *Mass* release and relief from the *Crucifixus* and *Et Sepultus Est* are found in the exuberance of the *Et resurrexit*, but in Bach's *Passions* there is no divine intervention from human misery. Relief does not come from heaven, but in the word which God offers only to faith now. In contrast to the *Mass* in which believers are taken into heaven, the world of the *Passions* is for the most part the one-dimensional world which all, even unbelievers, know. Even for believers there is no light from a glorious heaven pointing the way to God's ultimate victory in the resurrection. Bach's hearers view the suffering

of Jesus and confess their own responsibility for it. Jesus' entombment is the final act. Mourners have no assurance other than what was given the Old Testament believers. Like Abraham and Moses, Jesus is sleeping with his fathers and so believers sing to him in the sleep of death. Bach is no agnostic, but believers must be content with God's word. Essential to his Lutheran understanding of life is that the severity of death and our despair cannot be mitigated. As much as we want closure to our problems and put the unpleasant behind us, we must wait for God's time. This fixation with the human condition may account for the appeal his music has for non-Christians. Of course, this is the mystery: Bach's genius is recognized, accepted, honored and even celebrated, but his faith which could see beyond the grave and which gave form to this genius is often unrecognized.

This faith propelled his genius to extraordinary heights and still gives his listeners a taste of the divine. At one point in his *Saint John Passion*, the gloom of death is broken with an announcement of God's victory in the rendering of the temple curtain and the opening of the tombs with the bodies of the saints coming out. Though this account does not appear in the Gospel of John, Bach extracts the passage regarding the earthquake from Matthew's account. In his presentation of Jesus as Judah's conquering lion with triumphal music to accompany the narrative, Bach interprets these events as God's victory over sin, death, and Satan. However, Bach does not proceed from victorious death to victorious resurrection, as might be expected, but instead lapses to the tomb of Jesus at which believers are left weeping. Many biblical interpreters avoid saying anything about this unique event at all, simply because they do not see how the *Christus victor* theme fits in with the events surrounding Jesus' death. Even with the horrible events of September 11, 2001, the contemporary person runs away from the reality of death. He/she would like to shun

funerals, pretend that he/she will not get old, and does all in his/her power to retard the ravages of old age with a proper regimen. Christians are not immune from this secular attitude to life. A majority celebrates Christmas and Easter but avoid Lent and Good Friday. Christmas is the birth of life and Easter its recovery. We can face life, but death is the insoluble enigma. Christian life defined must first be defined by the crucifixion. Removing death from any definition of our human existence creates a fanaticism. In his *Passions* Bach does not take the listeners beyond the tomb where Jesus' body is placed. We are left as weeping mourners at the grave with little more than the promise that God will in some way vindicate the dead Jesus. In the art world, the counterpart would be Michelangelo's *Pieta* in which Jesus' sorrowing mother holds the dead body of her son in her arms. All this is pathetic, but how better can we define ourselves and our world?

Summarizing Uniqueness

First, there is Bach's mathematical genius, which reached its apex in the *Goldberg Variations*. His musical scores appear in combinations that reveal a complex mind that ordinarily might only be acquired by advanced mathematical studies, but he was not trained in mathematics. Second, he challenges us by our trying to find out to what in the piece we should listen. Where is Bach taking us now? Each time we listen we hear something not heard before. On this account what we have already heard remains fresh and challenging. Third, in setting the biblical texts to music, Bach becomes our teacher. Interpretations of familiar Bible passages not previously obvious to us are uncovered.

Bach and Mozart: A Study in Contrasting Genius

Contrasting Bach with Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) permits us the opportunity to approach the genius of each, but the character of the Masses of each can hardly be confused. Mozart's music obviously contains

different characteristics because he belonged to the classical era and Bach to the baroque era. Other differences are profoundly theological. This becomes evident by the persons drawn to it. The late Swiss Reformed theologian Karl Barth, who strode across the twentieth century theological world like a colossus, made public his devotion to Mozart public, in a book later translated into English.¹² When I arrived in Germany in 1960, the table talk among theological students was Barth's obsession with the Salzburg musician. Barth's choice was amazing, since Mozart's commitment to Christianity is questionable. To commemorate the 200th anniversary of Mozart's death, his *Requiem Mass* was broadcast throughout the world. In the sermon, the Prince Archbishop of Salzburg paid him tribute, but concluded that the Roman Catholic church could not be certain of the composer's salvation. He was not alone in being more certain of Mozart's genius than his faith. He was baptized and died a Catholic, but he was also a Freemason, which, at that time, meant that he held that no one religion could claim a conclusive revelation of God. Mozart had given the church every excuse to excommunicate him, but in an enlightened age the church no longer did those kinds of things. He was born into a century of Reason, Enlightenment, and Revolution, but his commitment to these ideologies was no more than it was to Christianity. His Masses offered no conclusive evidence that he was a faithful son of the church. To him the greatest theologian of the twentieth century was drawn.

One may ask why Barth—who was neither a Catholic nor a Freemason—but a Reformed cleric and theologian, was attracted to Mozart. It may be that Barth found that Mozart's music made no claim on its listeners among whom Barth found himself. In the freedom of Mozart's music,

¹²Karl Barth, *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*, trans. Clarence K. Pott, foreword by John Updike (Grand Rapids Michigan: Eerdmans, 1986).

Barth had found a kindred spirit. Neither man had a commitment to their innate geniuses. Mozart's masses are no more statements of his faith than his *Magic Flute*, *Figaro* and his *Così fan Tutte* are statements of his political or philosophical leanings. Here was musical enjoyment for the sake of itself.¹³ Going from one form of music to another or to one activity or another was almost as if he was changing clothes. He wore them, but they were not part of him. He cared for his family, but he was not a family man. He was Catholic, but not really. In these inconsistencies a clear consistency is detectable. Who he was and where he was in life had little or perhaps nothing to do with the music he produced. Here is pure, unadulterated genius. His genius was virtually autonomous from the man who possessed it. It was as an object detached from his person rather an integral part of it. Demands of his genius took precedence over all his other devotions, but this detachment allowed gave him immunity from exhaustion. Musical genius belonged to Mozart, but he was not indebted to what was uniquely his or to a God may have endowed him with it. His compositions were neither a moral enterprise nor a religious crusade. For Luther music was the handmaiden of theology. For Mozart it was was his courtesan or lover, a favored mistress, with whom he was as free as she was to him. It was an "open marriage." His music reveals the man's genius, but not the man himself.¹⁴ Robert Frost composed a poem for the 1961 inauguration of John F. Kennedy. He described the first English colonists like this: "the land was theirs before they were the land's." New England was their

¹³Barth notes that, "the *Requiem* is not his personal confession and neither is *The Magic Flute*." *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*, 49.

¹⁴So Karl Barth (*Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*, 37): "Mozart's music is not, in contrast to that of Bach, a message, and not, in contrast to that of Beethoven, personal confession. He does not reveal in his music any doctrine and certainly not himself."

new address, but it was not home. So in Mozart person and genius could live detached from the other and often did.¹⁵

Bach is an entirely different creature. He was aware of his genius and that it was given by God to whom he returned it in faith.¹⁶ On this account his music is never detached from who he is and the God he serves. The mathematical harmony of his music belongs to the harmony of the universe over which the Creator God rules. Angst and faith struggle with each other and form a unity of contrasts. For the Rationalists the universe was a machine, something that it never was for Bach for whom it is the revelation of God, but always in the context of his own sin for which Christ is the only solution. Librettos with abridged biographies of the great man distributed at the playing of his music say little, if anything, about the demands that his Lutheran faith made on his life. Thus hearers are left to search these mysteries by themselves. Sadly many never

¹⁵Barth's observations about Mozart might be an attempt at autobiography. In his admiration for Mozart Barth was telling us something about himself. He could immerse his genius in the study of theology without a commitment to the historical Jesus of Nazareth and also perhaps with a religious commitment, which is characteristic of so many scholars of religion. Ignoring the larger question of how theology and history came together--which is after all what *Incarnuatus est de Spirito Sancto ex Maria Virgine* of the Creed is all about—he gave himself a freedom which biblical scholars would or could not claim for themselves. Barth did not fashion his theological genius after Mozart's musical genius, but he saw in how Mozart did music a parallel for his own theological enterprise. Because Barth raised himself above the critical analyses of history that were in vogue since the Enlightenment and had raised so many problems for other theologians, he was able to pursue a pure theology unencumbered with issues which bogged down other theologians.

¹⁶Buszin's assessment of Bach sums up matters modestly but well. "I insist ... that Bach's music is filled to the brim with the Lutheran Geist'" Quoted in Robin Leaver, "Walter E. Buszin and Lutheran Church Music in America," *Lutheran Quarterly* 16 (Summer 2002): 179.

find them.

Barth's dictum that when the angels play for God, they play Bach, but when they play for their own enjoyment, they play Mozart, is flawed. Angels never play for themselves and they never will. Those angels who did that kind of thing went to their doom. God's angels only play for him, because apart from him they have no existence. Neither do we.¹⁷

¹⁷During the discussion following the presentation of this essay at the Good Shepherd Institute for Pastoral and Liturgical Studies on November 4, 2002, the Reverend Richard W. Berg asked whether Bach's cantatas, rather than his *Passions* and *B Minor Mass*, reflected Bach's Lutheran ethos. In preparing the manuscript I considered engaging his cantatas theologically, but soon came to the end of the page limitation. Pastor Berg is right. Berg noted that Bach's cantatas were written for the Lutheran church year and so they centered in the appointed Gospel, which provided the topic for the sermon. Bach's *Passions* and *Mass* have to do more specifically with how God confronts Christians and thus often portray the universal human dilemma which even non-Christians can experience.

Theological Observer

Toward a More Accessible CTQ

Information technology and the internet have made information more readily available than any time in history. Such technology can be a blessing and a curse (see James G. Neal, "Information Anarchy or Information Utopia?" *Chronicle of Higher Education* [December 9, 2005]). In order to serve the church, Concordia Theological Seminary, particularly the editorial staff of *Concordia Theological Quarterly* and the staff of Walther Library, have scanned the entire run of CTQ (1977-2004).

Articles, Theological Observers, and Book Reviews are available at <http://www.ctsfw.edu/library/probono.php>. In the future, materials from CTQ's predecessor, *Springfielder*, will also be available. It is our hope that such will truly be *pro bono ecclesiae*.

Lawrence R. Rast Jr.

Delay of Infant Baptism in the Roman Catholic Church

Among Roman Catholics the movement to delay or even deny baptism to infants has been organized around the commission assigned by the Vatican with providing baptismal ritual for adult converts, *Rites of Christian Initiation of Adults (RICA)*.¹ Impetus for this reconfiguration of baptism originated in with the Second Vatican Council.² In response the Sacred

¹For an overview of this controversy see Kurt Stasiak, *Return to Grace: A Theology for Infant Baptism* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1996). Numbers in the text are to this book.

²*The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (December 4, 1963) called for commissions to prepare new liturgical rites. Provisions were made for an adult catechumenate, revised adult baptismal rites (*Constitution*, III, 65-66) and rites for infant baptism with specified roles for parents and godparents (67). Local bishops were allowed to dictate the form and the age for administering confirmation (68, 69, 71).

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued *Pastoralis Actio* in 1983, which affirmed traditional teaching that John 3:5 required baptizing infants. Reasons for delaying baptism among Roman Catholic scholars were not all of one kind. One group, the Mature Adulthood School, preferred to move in the direction of traditional Baptist practice of administering the sacrament first at maturity. Another group, the Environmentalist School, took moderating view in favoring of baptizing infants whose parents show a sincere Christian commitment. This resembled Calvin's idea that children born to Christian parents were included by their birth in the covenant, but was more subjective requiring the priest to test their faith.³ In some cases baptism is best not administered to infants.⁴ Though this movement among Roman Catholics has not yet made serious inroads among Lutherans, to preserve the integrity of baptism some pastors have hesitated to baptize children where the assurance of their being given a Christians upbringing cannot be assured

In addition to *RICA* the Catholic Church established commissions for the Rite of Baptism for Children (*RBA*), Rite of Confirmation (*RC*), and Rite of Initiation for Children of Catechetical Age (*RCIC*) (11). Though the *RICA* proposals of 1972 were for the most part rejected by the *Pastoral Actis* of 1983, their arguments, especially the one that the early church did not know of infant baptism, continue to influence even those outside the Catholic Church. In making adult baptism the norm Aidan Kavanaugh, *RCIA*'s most prominent exponent, went so far as calling infant baptism "a benign abnormality." *RICA*'s proposals were hardly original. Rationalists in eighteenth century, Schleiermacher in the nineteenth, and Karl Barth in the twentieth also doubted the biblical support for infant baptism and like the *RICA* did not call for its outright abolition. New in the *RICA*'s proposal was its introduction of the argument that baptism, confirmation and eucharist were

³ See David P. Scaer, *Baptism*, Confessional Lutheran Dogmatics, vol. 10 (Saint Louis: Luther Academy, 1999), 159-60.

⁴Stasiak provides a detailed discussion of these positions (11-52).

initiatory sacraments were according to New Testament usage. Orthodox communions also administer these rites together, but administer them to children. The *RICA* proposal saw adults as the proper recipients of these rites.

The Mature Adulthood School adherents of *RICA* proposal have five principles at the core of their program. First, an indiscriminate baptism is unacceptable and best resolved by abandoning it (Stasiak, *Return to Grace*, 17-19; 51). Second, adult baptism is the norm and infant baptism is a benign abnormality. It has been administered because of "pastoral malfeasance, theological obsession, or the decline of faith among Christians into some degree of merely social conformity" (Stasiak, 21). Third, catechesis is "conversion therapy" and is necessarily prior to baptism. Fourth, baptism, confirmation, and the eucharist are initiatory rites and necessarily belong together (Stasiak, 23-26). Fifth, children are better enrolled in the catechumenate instead of being baptized (26-30).

Lutherans can find a common ground to Stasiak's objections to the *RICA* proposals to delay baptism. Enrolling children in the catechumenate hardly assures them salvation as baptism does—see Luther!⁵ *RICA* proponents argue that including children as catechumens does not violate their will as baptism does. This argument is somewhat specious, since enrollment in the catechumenate is also a violation of the child's will. Rare is that child who of his/her own free will becomes a catechumen or for that matter shows up for confirmation class. The real problem with the *RICA* proposals is the fate of children denied baptism, who then die. Having fallen from grace and gone into its own limbo, *limbus infantium* is for Roman Catholics no longer an operative doctrine. Lutherans have never had this unacceptable option. *RICA* does allow for the emergency baptism for infants in danger of death, a merciful practice not allowed by Calvin.⁶ But knowing which

⁵Among recent studies one of the best, if not the best, is Jonathan Trigg, *Baptism in the Theology of Martin Luther* (Boston and Leiden: Brill, 2000).

⁶See Scaer, *Baptism*, 164.

child will be alive tomorrow (how about AIDS?) requires omniscience, a divine attribute not shared with us mortals. Every pastor knows of a critically sick child given an emergency baptism who lives and a presumed healthy unbaptized child who dies. What kind of certainty does a certificate of enrollment in the catechumenate give to grieving parents?

The Rite of Baptism for Children, which provided a core for the Environmentalist School, also opposes indiscriminate baptism, but allows for infants to be baptized where an environment for developing child's faith is in place. Here the motives of the parents must be ascertained before baptizing their children (Stasiak, 34).⁷ Those involved with The Rite of Baptism for Children suggested twelve as an ideal age for baptism.

The Roman Church resolved the issue in favor of infant baptism by issuing the 1980 *Instruction on Infant Baptism* (Stasiak, 53-57). The child no less than the adult is to be deprived of the eternal life promised in this sacrament; however, proposals for denying and delaying infant baptism persist among Roman Catholic liturgical scholars. Stasiak is so opposed to the *RICA* proposals in making adult baptism normative that he parses every argument for denying or delaying baptism to infants. His arguments are worth reading.

Faced with a radical change in church practice, Stasiak is defensive, but he does offer a theology for infant baptism (113-212) from which Lutherans can benefit. He sees infant baptism as the normal means for families to initiate their children into the mysteries of the Christian faith. It expresses our divine adoption. Baptizing children is normative in a sense that the baptism of adults cannot be. "The small helpless child at the font with new life in it, not the successful preacher in the

⁷ Something similar may be afoot in the rite of "Holy Baptism" in *Lutheran Worship* [p. 220] where pledges are required of sponsors and parents. These were not found in Luther's rites, but originated in the Enlightenment.

pulpit, is the typical Christian" (Stasiak, 114). This about says it all—at least for a Lutheran. At baptism we are all infants. At least this is what Jesus wants. "Except you become as little children, you will not enter the kingdom of God."

The chief RICA objection to infant baptism is its definition of baptism as the sacrament of faith (Stasiak, 161). On the surface Lutherans seem to agree, but differences arise over how faith is understood. Luther saw baptism as primary, but he also held to the *fides infantium*. For Lutherans baptism creates the faith it requires.⁸ In any event baptism is better understood not as the sacrament of faith, but of grace, since God is at work in it. Defining baptism as the sacrament of faith certainly fits a Zwinglian understanding of it. Stasiak along with traditional Roman Catholicism does not and perhaps cannot come around to Luther's view; however, he moves in this direction in seeing faith is the gift of grace for both infants and adults (162-169). "Baptism is the pledge and promise that infants are delivered from original sin—not by slow trickles of water, but by the flood of grace that rushes forth as one is transformed and brought into the family of God and the Church" (174). Luther's greatest Reformation enemies turned out to be the Anabaptists. At least in the matter of baptism the Roman Catholics were allies in not seeing infant baptism as inferior to adult baptism. Certainly Lutherans and Roman Catholics want to remain allies in understanding that infant baptism is the pristine form of this sacrament.

Sacramental integrity is an issue in our discussions about who may receive the holy communion in our churches, but barriers have less of a place at the font, especially when children are concerned. Regulations for administering baptism to infants have historically have been attached to the Lord's Supper. Ancient catholic practice knows *closed communion*, but not a *closed baptismal font*. We hold that children brought to Jesus become God's children in a way that they were not before. From out of the formless and misinformed crowds that surrounded Jesus came the parents who brought their children

⁸See Karl Brinkel, *Die Lehre Luthers von der fides infantium bei der Kindertaufe* (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1958).

to him to be blessed. Many of the parents who bring their children to our fonts are often hardly any different. Neither group would have met the criteria set forth by *RICA* in providing a proper Christian environment for their nurture.

Luther in the *Large Catechism* pointed to theologians who as infants became Christians in baptism. "Since God has confirmed baptism through the gift of His Holy Spirit, as we have perceived in some of the fathers, such as St. Bernard, Gerson, John Hus, and others, and since the holy Christian church will abide until the end of the world, our adversaries must acknowledge that infant baptism is pleasing to God. For he can never be in conflict with himself, support lies and wickedness, or give his grace and Spirit for such ends. This is the best and strongest proof for the simple and unlearned." Baptism in medieval Europe was indiscriminate by *RICA* standards, but this was at the heart of Luther's argument.

No one but no one has ever suggested going through hospital nurseries and baptizing all the infants. But more pleasing to God is the nurse who baptizes an infant in peril of death than a clergyman who denies baptism to a child whose parents do not meet *RICA* standards. Anecdotal evident is never by itself convincing, but Luther proceeded precisely in this way. In the old USSR many grandmothers secretly brought their grandchildren to priests for baptism, when such infant baptisms were proscribed. Several infants baptized by my father without the knowledge of one of the parents not only remained Christians but became pastors. Most pastors have similar accounts which they will treasure as long as they live. If a near-perfect environment and commitment were necessary for baptism, then we might never baptize anyone and we ourselves would have been excluded. This is what the Parable of the Sower is all about. Environment does not dictate where the seed is to be planted.

David P. Scaer

Book Reviews

Baptism in the Reformed Tradition: an Historical and Practical Theology. By John W. Riggs. Columbia Series in Reformed Theology. Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville and London, 2002. Cloth. 187 pages.

Our Lutheran Confessions defined theology over against medieval and then Tridentine Catholicism, but Lutheran Orthodoxy found its counter-part in Reformed Orthodoxy. Of these differences readers of Francis Pieper are well aware, but re-examination of Reformed teachings is required so that our critiques do not through overuse evolve into unsupported caricatures. The Columbia Series in Reformed Theology is invaluable in reviewing our critiques and prior recommendation of the series is happily given. *Reformed Confessions: Theology from Zurich to Barmen* by Jan Rohls appeared in the series in 1997. Now it is followed up by Riggs' study on baptism which reminds us that the Reformed Confessions and theologians demonstrate a diversity not typical of Lutheran ones (74, 87). So, for example, the Heidelberg Catechism (1562) offers a mild form of Calvinism in comparison to the Canons of Dort (1619). Faith in connection with baptism plays a bigger role in the Shorter Catechism than it does in the Westminster Confession (86). Riggs traces Reformed thinking on baptism from Zwingli and Calvin up through Reformed Orthodoxy and concludes with Schleiermacher and Barth. In spite of differences among the Reformed confessions and theologians, the one theme that runs through them all is the fear of "sacramental instrumentalism," to be borrow one of Riggs's own phrases (87). Some Reformed theologians connect their baptism with the covenant and others with Christ and the Spirit, but steer away from attributing divine working to the Sacraments. We all knew that, but reinforcement helps.

Zwingli took an anthropocentric view of baptism as a Christian's oath to God, but Calvin, who was influenced by Luther, Bucer, and Melanchthon, took a theocentric view and saw the sacraments as effectual signs of God towards the elect. Later Calvin melded Zwingli's views into his own. Fascinating is the evolution of Geneva reformer's thought on baptism as he attempted but never quite succeeded to coordinate it with double predestination. Unresolved is how God could make a sincere offer

of salvation in baptism to those whom he chose for reprobation (69-70). Calvin held that without faith baptism was valid, but not efficacious in itself (64). The wicked were offered the sacraments but did not receive them (63). (The parallel with the Reformed doctrine of the Lord's Supper is obvious. Christ's body is offered by not received by unbelievers.) Matters were equally dicey with infant baptism, which was God's act, but required the faith of a personal agent, a view that anticipated Barth's. Since Calvin believed that infants could not have faith, he held that they were given the seed of faith in baptism, a teaching which was out of sync with social understanding of baptism as a community event (63, 67, 77-78). More important in his defense of infant baptism was that by their birth of Christian parents children were already included in the covenant, but this did not provide the certainty of their election. Even without baptism they were included in the covenant. In effect Calvin held to two covenants, visible (family and community) and invisible (the elect) (65). The Scots Confession of Faith (1560) specifically calls baptism administered by midwives a misuse and so stands in Calvin's tradition (82).

A number of thoughts came to mind in reading this most readable book. Calvin and the Reformed really want baptism to have an important place in salvation, but when push comes to shove, they do not succeed. Baptism is an ordinance and a marker, but "sacramental instrumentalism" must be avoided. In the end baptism did not matter. It did not affect those who were predestined for salvation and had no effect on those predestined to reprobation. Second, ELCA theologians could have hardly been fully acquainted with Reformed thought on baptism in making alliances with Calvin's heirs in the United States, or they did not think that obvious differences were all that important. Another possibility was that in their view the Reformed were not really Calvinist or Zwinglians. (In Luther's theology the Triune God is actually in the water, an impossible idea for the Reformed.) Third, Riggs in his introductory chapter launches into a discussion of the *Lutheran Book of Worship* (LBW) and the Roman Catholic *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (RCIA) (1-17). In a book about Reformed theology this is at first mystifying until the concluding chapters clear up matters. In chapter 5 he asks whether the rite of baptism in the *Book of Common Worship* is in keeping with Reformed teaching and concludes that it is not. Then in chapter 6

he asks whether Lutheran and Catholic rites of baptism are in keeping with the teachings of their respective churches. Good question. The *LBW* reworks Luther's *Flood Prayer* by incorporating a reference to creation and not beginning with Noah, the flood's chief survivor. (After all it is called the *Flood Prayer* and not the *Creation Prayer*.) Riggs admits that he can only guess why Luther omitted reference to creation in his baptismal rite, but his guess appears better than what any Lutheran could offer: "Water cannot choose for or against God, and so the reference to the waters of creation was not relevant to the central datum of Christianity, baptism, and the baptism prayer—encounter with a gracious God in which we choose for either life or death" (14). Riggs takes exception of the *LBW* description of the "scriptural people from the flood story as "'chosen' or 'wicked' rather than as 'believing' and 'unbelieving'" (14). So a Reformed theologian can help us see things about ourselves that we often miss. In his last pages Riggs discusses the relationship of worship to theology and takes exception to a view offered by Fagerberg and Kavanaugh that worship is primary theology and hence normative for theological task. Neither does he endorse the opposing view that worship is "ritual informed by correct doctrine" (125). The honor of normative theology belongs to the apostolic witness from which the Scriptures and the earliest communities sprang (126). A serious challenge is offered here. Much of Christendom is undergoing liturgical changes. In the LCMS this is happening at both the synodical and congregational levels, so worship on a given Sunday morning differs from congregation to congregation and perhaps with little theological reason for these changes and innovations. Riggs saw that items in the *LWB* baptismal ritual that escaped the notice of the ELCA theologians. Perhaps not. Then there is the current report of a doctrinal reviewer rejecting Luther's *Flood Prayer* for a projected liturgy for the LCMS. In both ELCA and LCMS cases, one wonders if a Lutheran liturgy is any longer a possibility or are we destined to live a world of liturgical Rube Goldbergs.

One admires Riggs' critical mind, but at the same time he accepts some ideas uncritically: in Pauline congregations tongue speaking is understood as the dead speaking through the members and Johannine communities practiced foot washing. Really? Then there are matters insignificant. On p. 23, "batismal

font" should be "baptismal font." No matter how it is spelt, it was destroyed by some of Zwingli's friends in 1524 in Zollikon. It was fixed the next year. Something was left out of this sentence on p. 45: "First, to the 1536 matter that he here reworked Calvin added that sacraments 'are marks of declaration by which we publicly swear allegiance to God's name, binding our faith to him in turn.'" Still we can figure out that by 1536 Calvin warmed up to Zwingli's ideas. On p. 82 "emergence baptism" must be "emergency baptism," a practice not practiced by the Reformed. Also Lutherans will appreciate Riggs clarification of Anglicanism. "Anglican sacramentology surely is Reformed, but Anglican polity surely is not" (75). This distinction allows Riggs to handle the Thirty-nine (once Forty-two) Articles among the Reformed confessions. Since the Reformed make polity an article of faith, they cannot completely accept the Anglicans into their fellowship. In a world of theological obscurity, Riggs' perceptive analyses are most welcome.

David P. Scaer

The Theology of the Cross for the 21st Century: Signposts for a Multicultural Witness. Edited by Alberto L. Garcia and A.R. Victor Raj. Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2002. 254 Pages.

The appearance of Walther von Loewenich's pioneering study, *Luthers Theologia Crucis* (English translation: *Luther's Theology of the Cross* translated by Herbert J. A. Bouman, 1976) set in motion a renewed interest in Luther's theology of the cross, centered in his *Heidelberg Theses* of 1518 (see AE 31:37-70). Dozens of books and articles have followed in the wake of von Loewenich's work. *The Theology of the Cross for the 21st Century: Signposts for a Multicultural Witness* is yet another attempt to draw on the resources of the theology of the cross to address a contemporary issue. This time it is the church's missionary outreach in a pluralistic culture. The aim of the editors is laudable. Indeed the theology of the cross must be the filter for all of the church's evangelistic work lest "mission" become just another manifestation of the theology of glory. Writing over fifty years ago, Hermann Sasse observed "Consider for a moment the messages that have been coming out of the big world conferences and organizations since the beginning of this century. How God

has judged these great proclamations inspired by a boundless theology of glory, from 'evangelization of the world in this generation' to various forms of the 'century of the church'! No confessional grouping escapes this judgment. God Himself has sent us into the hard school of the cross.... To those whose illusions about the world and about man, and the happiness built on these, have been shattered, the message of the cross may come as profoundly good news. All that we think and do in the church has to be cleansed by the theology of the cross if we are to escape the perils of the theology of glory" (*We Confess Jesus Christ*, 52).

Among the thirteen contributions in this volume, the chapter by Robert Kolb, "Nothing But Christ Crucified: The Autobiography of a Cross-cultural Communicator," is particularly helpful. Using 1 Corinthians 2:2 as his point of departure, Kolb provides readers with a fine overview of the theology of the cross with missionary proclamation in view. Another useful essay is Gene Edward Veith's chapter "Postmodernism under the Cross." Veith argues that the Church Growth Movement is a postmodern form of the theology of glory. Richard Eyer adds a pastoral perspective to the book as he looks at bioethical issues through the lens of the *theologia crucis*.

Alberto Garcia and Robert Scudieri examine various missiological issues in light of the theology of the cross. Garcia sees Luther's theology of the cross as embracing counter-cultural, incarnational, eschatological, and sacramental dimensions. Scudieri speaks of Christian mission as flowing both from and to the cross.

Several of the essayists look at the theology of the cross in light of various ethnic and/or religious settings. The results are uneven. C. George Fry provides a timely and enlightening chapter on Islam but makes little use of the theology of the cross. Likewise, Roland Ehlke contributes a very informative essay on the New Age Movement but does not bring to bear Luther's critique of spirituality as an exercise in the theology of glory as a resource for confessing Christ to those whose minds have been darkened by the new paganism. On the other hand, Victor Raj uses the theology of the cross to critique Hindu spirituality and offer a word of promise to those living within the futility of its ongoing cycles of rebirth. A few of the essays are more sociological than theological as they tend to transform Luther's theology of the

cross into what Gerhard Forde describes as making "misery loves company" the "prime Christological motif" (Forde, *On Being a Theologian of the Cross*, 83). John Nunes, for example, asserts that "The theology of the cross has been central to the Christian black experience in the United States" (218). Victimization and the suffering of injustice do not necessarily make one a theologian of the cross. Rather the theology of the cross is about how God works to save in the suffering of Christ. The crucified Christ, and not our personal or communal pain, is the source of our redemption.

The theology of glory always leaves the human being in control. In such a theology, the gospel is not the work of a crucified Savior distributed in the lowly means of preaching and sacraments, but the gospel is whatever we do to advance the cause of righteousness, extend the boundaries of the church, or overcome physical and spiritual distress. Luther's theology of the cross reverses all of this it embraces a God who gives himself to us in the cross to be received by faith alone. *The Theology of the Cross for the 21st Century: Signposts for a Multicultural Witness* would best be read in conjunction with Forde's superb study, *On Being a Theologian of the Cross*.

John T. Pless

The Arts and the Cultural Heritage of Martin Luther. Edited by Nils Holger Petersen et al. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2003. 208 pages. \$20.00

This anthology of nine scholarly essays by Nordic authors is devoted to the study of Martin Luther's influence on the European cultural heritage. Six of the essays deal with aspects of the influence that Luther and the early Lutherans had and continue to have on music. Two contributions attend to architectural and visual dimensions of the Lutheran heritage. In one way or another, each of the authors examine how Lutheran theology and church practice re-shapes traditions from the Latin church of the medieval period to provide artistic vehicles for evangelical proclamation. A remaining essay, "Religious Meditations on the Heart: Three Seventeenth Century Variants" (Bernhard F. Scholz) examines literary imagery employed in three books of religious meditation.

Outstanding among the several fine essays is a contribution by Carl Axel Aurelius entitled "*Quo verbum dei vel cantu inter*

populos maneat: The Hymns of Martin Luther." Aurelius shows that Luther's exposition of the Psalter is the hermeneutic key to his hymns as Luther understands the Psalms to embody the patterns of Good Friday/Easter and death/life of holy baptism. Luther's hymns, like the Psalter, express both lament and praise within the trinitarian framework of the drama of creation, fall and redemption. Aurelius demonstrates how Luther's hymns reflect "the wonderful now of the Reformation" as Christ's work and human need are brought together in the present moment thus reflecting the pastoral reality of his theology.

Nils Holger Petersen explores Luther's use of the Latin Mass in his preparation of a German order in his essay, "Lutheran Tradition and the Medieval Latin Mass," noting that Luther was not attempting to salvage an outmoded ritual form but rather provide for a sound pedagogical structure for Reformation Christians. Eyolf Ostrem investigates Luther's fondness for the music of Josquin Des Prez (ca. 1450-1521) in "Luther, Josquin and *des fincken gesang*." Taking as his examples two monographs on music from the 1640s, Sven Rune Havsteen ("Aspects of Musical Thought in the Seventeenth-Century Lutheran Theological Tradition") demonstrates how music was understood to be reflective of God's presence and thus a divine reality in orthodox Lutheranism. Two essays attest to the ongoing musical significance of Luther. Magnar Breivik ("Contexts of Hindemith's *Fra Musica*") examines Paul Hindemith's (1895-1963) use of Luther's text. "The Fear of Death in a Life Between God and Satan: Kari Tikka's Recent Opera *Luther*" is the title of the chapter authored by Siglind Bruhn. Bruhn examines the use of the "Dance of Death" in Tikka's *Luther* (an opera that premiered in Helsinki in December 2000) as a device to demonstrate the realism of death under the Law in Luther's theology.

Hanna Prinen examines the influence of Lutheranism on church architecture in "Changes in the Furnishings of the Finnish Parish Church from the Reformation to the End of the Caroline Period" (1527-1718). He notes that this period witnessed a rich synthesis that brought together the medieval heritage with portrayals of catechism themes in altarpieces by Lutheran craftsmen. "The Writ on the Wall: Theological and Political Aspects of Biblical Text-Cycles in Evangelical Palace Chapels of the Renaissance" (Hugo Johannsen) documents the use of

scriptural and catechetical citations in royal chapels of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Photographs accompany this chapter thus giving visual expression to the author's narrative.

Luther's theology left its imprint on the cultural life of northern Europe. The essays in *The Arts and the Cultural Heritage of Martin Luther* provide the scholarly data to sustain this assertion. Theologians, church musicians and historians will benefit from their research.

John T. Pless

Fundamental Biblical Hebrew and Fundamental Biblical Aramaic. By Andrew H. Bartelt and Andrew E. Steinmann. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2000, 2004. 378 pages.

A rather surprising feature of catalogues from various publishers is the large number of recently released Hebrew grammars. At least half a dozen such volumes have been published within the last few years; and this is only a sampling. While naturally sharing some feature in common, each text approaches the pedagogical task somewhat differently. Almost all boast that, having completed this grammar, the student will have obtained sufficient knowledge to read the Old Testament in its original language.

Well, not quite. The fact remains that large sections of two Old Testament books—Ezra and Daniel—are not in Hebrew but Aramaic. And though these two Semitic languages certainly share many features in common, they are in fact two distinct languages requiring two distinct books of grammar to learn.

With the publication of *Fundamental Biblical Hebrew and Fundamental Biblical Aramaic*, however, these two distinct books have been brought together under one cover. The Hebrew section, by Bartelt, has been used at both LCMS seminaries and numerous universities for several years. That section remains unchanged in this new edition. With the addition of the Aramaic section, by Steinmann, instructors will now have the opportunity to build on what the students have already learned from Hebrew to enable them to read the Aramaic portions of Scripture as well. Bartelt and Steinmann, along with Concordia Publishing House, are to be

highly commended for this truly innovative, holistic approach to teaching the biblical text.

Both portions of the book are arranged in a similar sequence. Having explained various points of grammar, each chapter concludes with vocabulary lists and exercises. The Hebrew exercises gradually introduce the student to direct biblical verses. Already in chapter 4 the Aramaic student is translating short phrases from the biblical text. Helpful indices, verbal charts, and glossaries are included at the close of each section.

For students new to these languages, or for pastors who need to resurrect or refine their knowledge of Hebrew, Aramaic, or both, this is a book well-worth the purchase.

Chad L. Bird

Intermediate Hebrew Grammar. By Andrew E. Steinmann. College Station, TX: Virtualbookworm.com Publishing, 2004. 169 pages.

There is currently no lack of introductory Hebrew grammars on the market. Nor do students or professors have to search high and low to find classical or more recently published reference grammars. There does exist, however, a gap between these two treatments of the Hebrew language that is seldom spanned. Andrew Steinmann's *Intermediate Hebrew Grammar* seeks to accomplish just that.

As the name implies, this relatively short book occupies an intermediate place between grammars written to teach the basics of Hebrew and those which delve more into the minutiae of the language. It is designed for those students who, having completed a course in basic Hebrew, are now transitioning to reading the biblical text. The focus therefore is less on morphology and more on advanced syntax (though the former is far from neglected). Because teaching grammars frequently do not employ direct biblical examples throughout the exercises, and because the Scriptural text is understandably richer and more diverse than the impression sometimes given by introductory texts, a book such as *Intermediate Hebrew Grammar* is useful in coaching the students through to this next level of reading.

There are five major sections to the book, each one filled with numerous biblical examples of the subject under discussion. The first addresses orthographical matters and clarifies several easily confused forms. In the second and third, Steinmann covers syntactical features of nouns, pronouns, and prepositions. The verb is the subject of the fourth section, with discussions of the various functions of the stems or *binyanim*. Arguably the most helpful section concludes the book. Here the author delves into clause and sentence syntax, the area most frequently given short shrift in introductory grammars. Because the book is written to be used ideally in a course on biblical Hebrew readings, there are no exercises included. Several useable diagrams and tables appear throughout the book. For providing such a text, Steinmann is to be commended, and his book highly recommended.

Chad L. Bird

Counted Righteous in Christ. By John Piper. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2002. 141 pages.

The book's subtitle, "Should We Abandon the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness?" should grab the attention of the readers of this journal. What prompted John Piper to begin the study that resulted in this short book was the contemporary challenge to the doctrine of imputation by those within the wider evangelical world in light of his own study and preaching through the Epistle to the Romans. For insulated Lutherans accustomed to shibboleth slogans like, "the doctrine of justification is the central article upon which the church stands or falls," it is encouraging (humbling?) to see others in the conservative Reformed tradition grapple with the substance behind what can easily become an empty cliché or another dogmatic formula.

The challenges to the doctrine of justification that Piper addresses (chapter 2) are contemporary, but not new: that our righteousness consists of faith itself (rather than Christ as the object of faith, where faith is that which lays hold of Christ); that there is no imputation of divine righteousness (!); and that justification has to do with liberation from sin's mastery (thereby mixing sanctification into justification). As he introduces in chapter 1, Piper's concern in the face of these threats is a pastoral one. He holds up the doctrine of justification with such urgency

not simply because we are in a post-9/11 world that witnessed ecumenical mushiness and compromises in the public confession of Christ (23-24), but even more because of the mundane concerns of sinners who need God's righteousness and mercy in place of their sin (27ff). Piper ambitiously writes for an audience of laypeople, pastors, and scholars. He succeeds. While chapter 3 necessarily reads a bit more slowly as he lays out his exegetical arguments with more technical language, he writes in such a way that any disciplined reader can follow his progress. A helpful "Full Outline of the Argument" at the beginning of the book (17-19) makes it easy to review the discussion.

Piper enlists a wide selection of Reformed influences: from Calvin, to Jonathan Edwards, and William Wilberforce, to more recent scholarship (especially Robert Gundry, whose articles in *Books and Culture* were an additional incentive to write when Gundry suggested that the doctrine of imputation needed to be abandoned as unbiblical). You will hear a hint of limited atonement (e.g. a quote from George Whitefield in footnote 3, 43); that God's sovereign intention in Christ was to uphold his glory (rather than to show His love and mercy through the cross, e.g. footnote 11, 67); and wonder at the insistence that the "imputation of righteousness ... cannot simply be reduced to forgiveness" (116). Likewise, any treatment of justification apart from the Reformation's emphasis on the sacramental word runs the risk of reducing the ongoing work of Christ through his incarnate means into nothing but a cerebral abstraction. Still, this is a useful book and will serve as a prod into our own confession as we take full measure of his clear defense against the attacks on this most comforting doctrine. We can only profit by being aware of and involved in the wider discussion on the chief article going on around us.

Peter C. Cage
Grace Ev. Lutheran Church
Muncie, Indiana

The Contemporary Quest for Jesus. By N. T. Wright.
Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002. 104 pages. \$6.00.

This new Facets edition of material from N. T. Wright's *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Fortress Press, 1996) offers a succinct

overview of the development of historical approaches to Jesus of Nazareth as well as the author's own insightful criteria for evaluating the varying results. The book serves as an apologia for the "Third Quest," a healthier alternative to the historical skepticism of the Jesus Seminar.

The author begins, however, with a swift critique of Lutheranism. Wright maintains that the opportunity for Christians to embrace historical insights into the life of Jesus was lost with the Reformers' single-minded focus on the *pro me* character of the gospel, particularly manifest in Melancthon's dictum that "to know Christ is to know his benefits." Consequently, a major flank was left open to attack when Reimarus and others sought to discredit orthodox Christianity by demonstrating its lack of historical foundations. In this critique, Wright oversimplifies the basic character of the Lutheran Reformation. While it may be true that some Lutheran pastors scholars have not been fully attentive to the significance of the life of Jesus between "born of the Virgin Mary" and "suffered under Pontius Pilate," it is hardly so that "the emphasis on the *pro me* ("for me") of the gospel seemed to be threatened by the specificity, the historical unrepeatableness, of the Gospels" (4). In fact, a thoroughly consistent Lutheran position would note that the uniqueness of the life of Jesus perfectly characterizes that life as the *extra nos* righteousness which can only be apprehended through faith. Wright further misrepresents the Reformers in saying that they emphasized the sayings of Jesus over against his deeds so that "the purpose of Jesus' life was . . . to teach great truths in a timeless fashion" (19). One might more easily maintain the opposite. Luther proclaimed the Word made flesh who came to accomplish a vitally necessary rescue operation by mighty deeds which his words only serve to explain and clarify (cf., the Large Catechism's explanation of the Second Article). In the end, any such opposition between words and deeds is precarious. In any case, that Wright wrongly blames the Lutheran Reformation for the stagnation in Christian historical research into the life of Jesus ought not hinder Lutherans from considering his challenge to embrace a Christian faith disciplined by the science of history.

Much like Schweitzer's *Quest*, Wright categorizes and evaluates the work done before him and among his

contemporaries. As such, he presents the "lay of the land" for those not familiar with all the names, positions and movements of the many Jesus questers. He describes the Old Quest as ending with the alternative of Wrede's skepticism of the sources and Schweitzer's apocalyptic Jesus. The New Quest, in his estimation, dominated as it was by the methodologies of historical criticism and the existentialism of Bultmann, produced little of "lasting value" (17). Wright offers useful criticism of the continued efforts being made along those lines, particularly addressing the Jesus Seminar.

The bulk of the book is given over to Wright's description of the Third Quest and its strengths. After the "uncritical" reading of Scripture by the "unenlightened" church, after the hypercritical shredding of Scripture by the Enlightenment, and after the specialized "science" of historical criticism, many scholars are attempting to approach the life of Jesus with the standard tools and procedures of secular historical analysis. Framed within the worldview of first century Palestinian Judaism, the person of Jesus is reconstructed on the basis of key events in his life. Those engaged in the New Quest do not all agree on the resulting picture, but many commonalities emerge, such as the centrality of "the Temple event" (traditionally understood as a "cleansing"), the Jewishness of Jesus, and the need to find a cause for the crucifixion under the Romans. Wright summarizes his own criteria in five questions: How does Jesus fit into Judaism? What were Jesus' aims? Why did Jesus die? How and why did the early church begin? Why are the Gospels what they are? To these historical questions, he adds a sixth theological and practical concern: How does the Jesus we discover by doing "history" relate to the contemporary church and world? Wright leaves it to the reader to turn to the complete book to see his own answers to these questions, although one already suspects that his efforts will not prove overtly hostile to the historic claims of the Christian faith.

For conservative Lutherans, *The Contemporary Quest for Jesus* serves as a summary introduction to a lively field of contemporary scholarship and as a helpful warning that the claims of the Christian faith are now being tested by a new challenge from the field of history. For those who do not accept the inerrancy of Scripture, the historians' reconstructions of the life of Jesus yield

meanings and interpretations of that life made all the more attractive because of their historical plausibility. Side by side with the philosophical Jesus of Thomas Jefferson's scissored Gospels and the existential Jesus of biblical criticism now stands a Jesus reconstructed through standard historic methodology. The Jesus Seminar must make room for The History Channel.

Those who know Jesus to be the Lord truly proclaimed in the inspired Scripture will be grateful for the new and relevant questions about the life of Jesus as well as the freshly unearthed details of life in first century Palestine. Finally, however, one will have to reject the suggestion that the incarnate Lord will prove more present in the life of the church through our own historical inquiry than he has through the proclamation of his word. Wright may in the end be right that the Lutheran Reformation stands at odds with his effort. But the reason for the impasse lies elsewhere than he proposes: a Lutheran sacramental view of the Scriptures will allow for no other Jesus than the one already present there.

Charles R. Schulz
Concordia University
Ann Arbor, Michigan

The Free Church and the Early Church: Bridging the Historical and Theological Divide. Edited by D. H. Williams. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2002. 183 pages.

This book consists of eight essays written by scholars in the free church tradition discussing the legacy of the early church and its meaning for those within Protestant churches. The free church tradition is represented here by scholars who work in institutions that are Baptist (Southern Baptist and American Baptist), Church of Christ, the Christian Church, Mennonite and Disciples of Christ.

The stated goal of the volume is to stimulate the free churches to take a fresh look at the patristic tradition and what it has to offer. This attempt requires overcoming several significant hurdles such as ignorance of the patristic material and history itself, apathy toward historical study as meaningful and distrust of "Catholic" tendencies such as tradition. Regrettably, Lutheran parishes and pastors face many of the same attitudes toward the early church and the value of historical sources. Historical

amnesia, a lack of awareness of the deep roots our own Lutheran reformers had in the patristic sources and an apathy or even antipathy toward the tradition that gave birth to the Reformation and is summarized in the Confessions is all too apparent in our church life.

This collection succeeds in facing this challenge in several areas. It excels in appropriating the patristic habit of locating the Scriptures within the church. A persistent symptom of Protestantism has been to chase the Bible away from its home in the church's proclamation and liturgy. Several essays point to an understanding that the Scriptures were born in and are only properly understood within the context of the church itself. D. Jeffrey Bingham warns that in order to avoid excess individualism and deficient community traditions of exegesis, the hearer of the Scriptures must listen with "the prejudice of faith" (44), which is given and sustained only in the church.

The essays also give a helpful perspective on the topic of tradition and Scripture. Five of the eight essays have to do in some way with the concept of tradition and its validity and use in Protestant churches. Protestants have, of course, adopted a very critical attitude toward tradition, often assuming that any use of tradition meant placing something against or above Scripture. These essays make a good case for a patristic notion of tradition as opposed to a Tridentine or anti-Tridentine stance. In his essay, D.H. Williams points out that tradition in the early church was nothing other than the substance and essential teaching of the Bible and points out the value the early reformers placed on just such tradition.

The essays also succeed in more general ways. They demonstrate the value of careful historical reflection for the ongoing life of the church. They strike a blow for the notion that the study of church history, especially patristics, is not simply the study of the distant past but a conversation with members of one's own church whose opinions still matter. The references to primary material as well as secondary sources in the texts and notes are valuable as a jumping off point for more reading on these themes.

However, the book falls short in a couple of areas. It is striking that in a volume intending to be a conversation between the non-sacramental free church and the early church, the topic of the

sacraments never comes up. Surely if there is one area in which the early church speaks with a strong single voice, it is on baptism, the eucharist and also absolution. If the free church tradition wishes to have a dialogue with the church fathers they must also listen to them on a theme central to the patristic era. The same silence is noted in the area of liturgy. Worship practices express much about current theological views and the early church has much of value to say on this matter but the essays nowhere take up that challenge.

This volume is valuable for the Lutheran scholar or pastor if only as a reminder that the patristic church is our church and that we do well to listen when the that church speaks.

Paul Gregory Alms
Redeemer Lutheran Church
Catawba, North Carolina

Pastoral Theology in the Classical Tradition. By Andrew Purves. Louisville: John Knox Press, 2001. 137 Pages.

Today's pastor is confronted with two paths. First, the modern world seduces him into a ministry that seeks to help the American consumer. The pastor seeks to help the individual with his life. This path proceeds with one fundamental presupposition—each individual has his own life. The church becomes relevant to modern man by offering to improve and enrich his life. Such a ministry sees the gospel as a way to affect the form, the style, the appearance, and the function of one's life. The goal of the gospel is to make a man's life Christian in the adjectival sense. In this context, the pastor promotes a Christian marriage, a Christian lifestyle, a Christian use of money, and a Christian discipline.

In contrast to this consumerism, there is another path that is well traveled by pastors throughout history. This traditional perspective of pastoral theology is given voice in a short monograph, *Pastoral Theology in the Classical Tradition* by Andrew Purves. In this volume, Purves maintains that pastoral practice needs a divorce from modern psychology and a reunion with orthodox theology. His book surveys five practical theologians: Gregory Nazianzus, John Chrysostom, Gregory the Great, Martin Bucer, and Richard Baxter. If one is looking for a thorough investigation into these figures, one will be disappointed.

However, this book provides a worthwhile summary of each theologian including a brief biological sketch and a thematic survey of each one's theology.

While the theologies of these men certainly vary, Purves sees a common tradition of pastoral practice. For these men, the pastoral ministry is not merely about the form, the style, the appearance, or the function of life, but about the essence of life itself. These pastors did not merely seek to help individuals with their lives, but to put them to death to their lives and raise them into the real and eternal life of the Triune God. For these five pastors, theology was not merely a matter of right and wrong, but of life and death. In the ministry of the pastor, God's word comes in human voice to enter into a real conflict with sin, death, and the power of the devil.

Purves' volume is a valuable contribution toward the recovery of pastoral practice as a worthy subject of theological and historical study. His book not only presents a classical view of pastoral theology, but also inspires the reader to begin his own investigation into the pastoral theology of the ancients. Purves reminds the church that the ancient fathers offer a vast banquet of practical theology for any willing to look. The church certainly hungers for this feast of patristic wisdom to be made available. Of this feast, Purves' book is a tantalizing taste.

James Bushur
Immanuel Lutheran Church
Decatur, Indiana

Music for the Church: The Life and Work of Walter E. Buszin. By Kirby L. Koriath, with essays by Walter E. Buszin. Fort Wayne, IN: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 2003. 273 pages.

When the editors of *Music for the Church* write that this publication of "a twenty-six-year-old dissertation together with essays delivered some fifty years ago" is ventured because it is "timely" (viii), it is tempting to dismiss their assertion as the sort of self-congratulation that one expects to find in a Preface. Yet, in reading through the book, the claim is found to be strikingly correct. And precisely so, *Music for the Church* merits the attention and careful study of pastors, musicians, and anyone else concerned with the Divine Service.

The book is uniquely designed and arranged, in a way that makes the subtitle particularly descriptive. The first part is a biography of Walter Buszin, by Kirby Koriath, while the second part features a selection of ten essays from Buszin himself, written over the course of sixteen years (from April 1950 to April 1966). Thus, *Music for the Church* is not simply a book about the life and work of Walter Buszin; the inclusion of his own essays allows the man's life work to continue teaching and serving the church in this new generation.

For a Missouri Synod readership, it should really not be necessary to identify Walter Buszin. The sad fact that he is relatively unknown in the present day is one indication of the importance of this new book. For two decades, from 1947 until his retirement in 1966, Buszin was a professor of liturgics and hymnology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, his alma mater. During this same period (and even longer, from 1940 until 1967), he served as a member of the LCMS Commission on Worship, Liturgics and Hymnology, and as the chairman of that Commission from 1949 until he retired. In addition, Buszin was instrumental in bringing the music department of Concordia Publishing House to a high level of distinction during the 1950s and 60s. And along with his numerous articles and reviews, he was a prolific editor of church music from the golden ages of Lutheran composition. He was, indeed, "a man of many words" (53), as the thirty-eight pages of bibliography provided in the center of the book testify (91-128). Throughout his life, in everything that he did—in the classroom, on the commission, as an editor, in his many articles and addresses—Walter Buszin was first and foremost an educator, and above all a servant of the church.

Music for the Church is aptly titled, in that it identifies the lifelong aim and dedication of its subject, Buszin, to serve the church. That attitude and goal were exemplified in personal sacrifice and practical contributions, in which the very best of scholarly endeavors were never forsaken but always geared to the life of the church and her worship of the Holy Triune God. In his own words, for example, "the arts, particularly music," are employed "for the sake of worship and not merely for the sake of art!" (162). In the same vein, Buszin was a theologian who knew, understood, respected and appreciated the history of the church,

who learned from that history for the sake of addressing and serving the church in his own day. In doing so, he has himself enriched that ongoing history, and we in turn do well to learn and benefit from the legacy he has contributed. *Music for the Church* beautifully enables us to do so.

In his essays, Buszin is balanced and steady, rational and coherent, both with respect to his positions and in his manner of setting them forth. Here is no wild-eyed radical or extremist, but a sturdy servant of the church, speaking clearly and plainly to the practical needs and possibilities of the church's life.

So, what does Walter Buszin have to say to the church in this twenty-first century? For one thing, his diagnosis of a problem that he saw facing the church more than fifty years ago is more to the point now than it was then. Lutherans have, in many respects, retained their theological positions more or less intact, but have relinquished an actual practice of worship that lives in continuity with their doctrine. What Dr. Buszin prescribed—and what he did much to foster—was an unapologetic *Lutheran* identity, in both teaching and practice, *because* such Lutheranism is inherently and concretely *evangelical*. By the same token, he cautioned against the unguarded borrowing of principles and practices from either Roman Catholicism or Protestantism. He observed that a fundamentally different spirit or “genius” animates each of these other confessions, which is incompatible with the evangelical heart and spirit of Lutheranism and Lutheran worship. Along these same lines, his essay on “The Unity of the Church and Her Worship” (255–269) is extraordinarily pertinent.

Positively speaking, Buszin's theological analysis of music, of its place and purpose, is exemplary and instructive. He recognized that music for the church is necessarily music for the liturgy; it has a liturgical purpose, which is marked by order and decency. It is guided and governed (and characterized) by objective standards, not by subjective emotions. Above all, music serves the church and the liturgy by serving the Word of God. Thus, while the quality of the tune is surely important, everything depends upon and bows before the text, which is to proclaim and confess the divine Word. There is here a salutary balance to be sought and maintained, in which both text and tune assume their respective places, also in relation to each other, “as bearers and interpreters

of the *Verbum Dei*" (211). Buszin put his finger on a real danger involved in driving culture and the arts out of the church and focusing on the mechanical communication of facts and information. He perceived that culture and the arts should be employed, not in competition with the Word, far less in place of the Word, but as true and worthy servants of the Word, lending their warmth and beauty in support of—and in thankful response to—the proclamation of the Gospel. *Music for the Church* is also such a servant.

By way of constructive criticism, it would have been helpful for the book to provide at least a brief introductory paragraph for each of the essays, in order to contextualize their contribution. Such an introduction could have explained and interpreted Buszin's frequent references to the "priesthood of all believers," which occur throughout his works and reflect certain concerns and attitudes that were especially prevalent at the time he was writing. Likewise, some corrective comments might have been offered regarding the interpretation of the "liturgy" as a "work" and "worship" of the people (191). Also disappointing is the omission of Buszin's article on Luther's understanding of music, described in the biographical portion of the book as one of his "finest articles" (29). Thankfully, it is summarized briefly at that point in the book.

It is a blessing to the church that others are here and now given the opportunity to meet the man, as it were, and to learn from this sainted teacher. Indeed, *Music for the Church* is a timely and valuable contribution, which every Lutheran pastor and church musician ought to be encouraged to read and consider carefully.

D. Richard Stuckwisch
Emmaus Lutheran Church
South Bend, Indiana

Under the Influence: How Christianity Transformed Civilization.
By Alvin J. Schmidt. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing
House, 2001. 423 Pages.

Christianity is unique among world religions. While most religions claim an idea, a book, or a philosophy as their

foundation, Christianity sprouts from a more personal root. Islam has the Koran and the idea of divine oneness. Modern Judaism refers to the Torah and rabbinic traditions. Eastern religions flow from the fount of eastern philosophies. However, Christianity confesses a personal God, who interacts with his creatures in the most intimate way. Indeed, God comes in human flesh and blood, not merely to teach or communicate ideas, but to touch the diseased, raise the dead, and perfect his creative work. Thus, the Nicene Creed expresses the heart of Christianity by passing over Jesus' teaching and focusing on Jesus' incarnate actions. Christ comes, not merely to speak, but to live a life in the flesh. He is conceived and born, suffers death, rises from the grave, ascends to the right hand of the Father where he even now rules all things for the sake of His church.

While other religions rely upon creative followers to give life to ancient ideas and make their philosophies relevant to the modern world, Christianity follows a different path. The life of Christianity flows, not from an idea, but from the person of Christ who rules at the right hand of the Father and continues to interact with his creatures to bring them to fulfillment. The living Lord needs no one to make Him relevant to the modern world; he requires no new packaging to make him accessible to a new century. Thus, the history of Christianity is not the history of an idea, or even the history of Christ's disciples, but the history of Christ's personal presence as he continues to act in, with, and under his church for the life of the world.

This distinctively Christian perspective of history is demonstrated in Alvin Schmidt's *Under the Influence: How Christianity Transformed Civilization*. This book is a much needed survey of Christianity's impact on western culture. In a so-called post-Christian world where orthodox Christianity is condemned for its christological exclusivity, Professor Schmidt's work is a welcome read. His book publishes the truth of Christianity's profound impact on the world with a winsome, but not overstated, pen. *Under the Influence* investigates such themes as Christianity's impact on life issues, sexual morality, the dignity of women, hospitals, science, justice, slavery, music, art, and literature. The broad spectrum of themes included in this book makes it a valuable addition to anyone's library. Pastors will find it inspirational for sermons, confirmation, and Bible class; laymen

will find it both easy to read and highly illuminating. This book is not only worthwhile; it is a necessity in today's pluralistic culture.

James Bushur
Immanuel Lutheran Church
Decatur, Indiana

Participating in God: Creation and Trinity. By Samuel M. Powell. Theology and the Sciences series. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003.

Powell, who earned his doctorate from Claremont Graduate School and is Professor of Philosophy and Religion at Point Loma Nazarene University, prefaces his book with a problem: "how to think about the world in a way that is scientifically responsible and also faithfully Christian" (xi). His book-length answer is an exercise in systematic theology, with a twist. As he relates in his Postscript, "although understanding the doctrine of creation is an intellectual exercise, its purpose is not ultimately informative but anagogic...its purpose is to draw the human mind upward to the knowledge of God, which is love, and not to inform us about God" (215).

One in three—this one book is divided into three parts— theological, philosophical/ scientific, and ethical. In part one, the first chapter provides biblical and historical background to the doctrine of creation—more accurately, it questions whether the doctrine is even biblical, although he admits the concept permeates all scripture. "The Regulative Dimension of the Doctrine of Creation" (chapter 2) explores the biblical tradition more thoroughly in light of "the rule of faith" (a somewhat nebulous term for Powell, not directly correlated with the ecumenical creeds), since Powell sees it as having a wide range of interpretation and application. Chapter 3 pursues the "hermeneutical dimension" by reviewing biblical imagery of creation under the influence of Hellenistic philosophy (29) in light of modern science, suggesting that doctrine itself is always historically contingent and thereby malleable. This section concludes with the book's central theme, "Creatures' Participation in the Trinitarian Life of God" (chapter 4) in which he reviews biblical and traditional understandings of his theme.

In part two, Powell provides a masterful exploration of four paradoxical, or as he calls them "dialectical," themes that seek to understand "the universe in a Trinitarian way" under five headings: the physical universe, the biological world, human existence, under the condition of finitude, and "the kingdom of God [which] is God's response to the distortions of finitude existence" (82). The four chapter-themes are "Persistence and Change in Time," "Generic and Individual Features" "Part-Whole Relations" and "The Relatedness of All Things." In all, creation's participation in the Trinity is manifested in a paradoxical life of unity and diversity or "identity and difference" (61, 86, 100, 123), always under the condition of finitude and thus creaturely and never perfect.

Seeking contemporary application with part three, "A Trinitarian Ethics," Powell explores the ethical dimension of the doctrine of creation in Christian history as well as in contemporary society, contrasting divine transcendence with participation in God. Although differentiating the world from Christianity, Powell says there is still a desire to identify the world as God's good creation. Such world-transcending, he suggests, will overcome consumerism so that world-participation expresses itself as loving concern for nature (197).

Orthodox Christian understandings of the Trinity are subverted or subordinated to Powell's dynamic presentation of trinitarian qualities which grow out of human experience. Drawing on medieval and modern understandings of the image of God, for example, Powell first adopts Thomas Aquinas' anthropology, affirming that the "supernatural intellectual power [to know God] is a likeness of God, who is intellect itself...[and] in the creature is a participation in the likeness of the divine intellect" (49). Then, critiquing Paul Tillich's "theology of participation" as helpful but incomplete, Powell offers his own perspective, ultimately asserting that "theology today must show how universal participation (the participation of *all* creatures in God) is related to but also distinct from participation (as the New Testament represents it) as the result of redemption" (55). Participation, as Powell proposes, is merely manifestations of "identification and differentiation" in all creation, qualities which he claims are uniquely divine, yet evident in scientific investigation to various degrees throughout the universe.

Needless to say, a true biblical basis for participation in God is unavailable because Powell's distorted perspective is heavily influenced by the *passé* historical-critical approach of modernist biblical studies. After nearly neglecting the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, Powell makes the orthodox statement regarding John 17: "Here the life of the believer is represented as a participation in the common life shared by the Father and the Son" (45), but then immediately veers away from the truth by stating: "Although there is still no mention of the Spirit, John 17 marks an advance by setting participation in the context of the relation of the Father and the Son" (45). This reviewer wonders what biblical translation or text Powell is using, since John 16 provides some of the best New Testament pneumatology. Powell is curiously selective in other areas of his study, also. For example, in looking at the regulative aspects of the doctrine of creation he refers to Old Testament evidence, but skips the New Testament and immediately speaks of Irenaeus and the creeds, which he sees as an "amalgamation" of biblical ideas into Hellenistic philosophy and cosmology (14).

On the other hand, Powell's synoptic perspective on scientific research and breadth of examples are nearly overwhelming. He is certainly a modern "Renaissance-man" in the sense of having a gargantuan grasp of an incredible variety of illustrations from modern science with a desire to draw them together in service to God's kingdom. Part two (61-159) provides innumerable sermonistic illustrations of God's gracious care for and His subtle fingerprints in His creation. From subatomic particulate theories of quarks, leptons, and muons to galactic cosmologies, from sociological dissolution of Marxism and the psychological "fact of religious and cultural pluralism and proclaiming tolerance to be the chief value" (118) (a "modern cultural myth," whose endurance he questions) to quantum mechanics and the implications of the theory of relativity, Powell provides evidence for what he sees as "vestiges of the Trinity's dialectic of identity and difference" (94). Powell even makes reference to Luther's understanding of vocation (178), concluding, "In spite of the socially conservative tenor of this doctrine, it is a legitimate expression of the world-participating aspect of the doctrine of creation. It legitimates and sanctifies daily work" (179).

Unfortunately, "participation in God" finally is reduced to an anthropocentric works-oriented demand for toleration of differences and manifestation of generic love—claiming God's love for the world must be reflected in our love for the natural world as well as for each other. While not inappropriate for the Christian community, the work of Christ as the world's redeemer and the power of the Holy Spirit, who is "Lord and Giver of Life," are neatly subsumed under a generic concept of God in relation to modern science. The redemptive power of Christ's life, death, and resurrection, as well as the consequent sanctifying activity of the Holy Spirit's creation and preservation of faith, are adverted to, but are never presented as the greatest act of participation—originating in God's own gracious incarnation.

Sadly, this is the kind of book that will only be useful as a negative example for a seminary course on the Trinity. Illustrations of aberrations and distortions abound in Powell's study because he does theology apart from a committed biblical understanding based upon an authoritative text informed by the Christian church's creeds proclaiming Jesus Christ as Lord.

Timothy Maschke
Concordia University Wisconsin
Mequon, Wisconsin

Doing Right and Being Good: Catholic and Protestant Readings in Christian Ethics. Edited by David Oki Ahearn and Peter Gathje. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2005. Paper. 288 pages. \$29.95.

The editors bring together excerpts from classical and contemporary texts in moral theology and ethics in an anthology intended for use in undergraduate courses in Christian ethics. As the subtitle indicates this reader provides literature representative of both Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions. The readings are organized under seven headings: (1) The moral person (2) sources of Christian ethics (3) interpretations of love and justice (4) marriage, family, and sexuality (5) political life and the problem of violence (6) work, property and environment (7) Christian love at the margins of life. Each section begins with a brief exposition of selected biblical texts.

As with any anthology there is the question of selection. The editors opt to give weight to contemporary authors. There is one selection from Luther, one from Wesley, three from Aquinas, three from Augustine, one from Bernard, and one from Tertullian. All other readings are from twentieth century sources. Feminist writers are well represented (Beverly Harrison, Rosemary Ruether, Sally Purvis, Karen Lebacqz). Significantly less space is given to ethicists from a conservative or evangelical perspective. Noticeably absent are key figures such as Calvin from the Reformation period or Bonhoeffer, Barth, Thielicke, MacIntyre and Niebuhr from the twentieth century. With the exception of John Wesley's essay on "The Use of Money," there are no representatives from time between the Reformation and the middle part of the last century. Missing are any readings reflecting the Lutheran understanding of the ethical significance of the two governments and the three estates. There are no selections from the papal encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*. This narrow scope severely limits the usefulness of the volume as a classroom text or as a representative anthology for the general reader.

John T. Pless

The Human Condition: Christian Perspectives through African Eyes. By Joe M. Kapolyo. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2005. 176 pages. \$13.00

Joe M. Kapolyo, principal of All Nations Christian College in London and former principal of the Theological college of central Africa in Ndola, Zambia, breaks the ground by conversationally engaging his experience as an Africa scholar from Zambia, serving in a western context, London to unravel some conflicting concerns about the practicability of scripture in a contemporary African culture and more specifically that of Bemba in Zambia.

Analyzing his argument from both philosophical and anthropological approach, the author deals with five conceptions about humanity and attempts to construct a new reconception of humanity as understood and interpreted by Africans themselves. This book concerns itself with calling for African Christian scholarship to come up with a properly articulated theology, which is culturally friendly and appealing. In his preface Kapolyo argues, "Christianity must make a home in the cultures of the

southern hemisphere and thereby lose its foreignness, which is the task of making Christ Lord in these parts" (12). The author strongly believes that third world Christian scholarship especially from Africa, Asia, and Latin America will affirm the global character of Christianity even as much as it is profoundly rooted in the heart of each host culture (13).

The book comprises of five chapters. Starting with concepts of humankind, Kopolyo shows how science and technology have impacted the West in the way humanity is conceptualized. He criticizes reductional, biological, and psychological approaches to understand humanity. The author proposes a wholly new way of conceptualizing humanity, which he recognizes is complex. He fails to show, however, how this conceptualization would be possible. Every society and culture have ways of conceptualizing humanity, for instance in the west, humanity is understood from an individualistic point of view where biological, psychological and sociological means of analysis are used. However, in the African society, humanity is conceptualized from a societal point of view, which is well characterized by John Mbiti's theory: "I am because we are and since we are therefore I am." Western theories, developed by Jean Paul Sartre, Charles Darwin and Karl Marx, for understanding humanity, are articulated in this work. However, Kapolyo also brings in the African theory of *Ubuntu* or *Umntu* (to be human), which shows the ontological nature, and relationship of God and humanity as perceived by both Europeans and Africans. There seems to be a weakness of connecting the nature of God as understood by Africans in this area. The author uses few African scholars especially theologians to argue his case. He argues, "There are three distinct categories in creation apart from God himself" (36), which, is like saying, creation was accomplished by God using *Umntu*, spirits, *Ubuntu*, humans, and *umuntu*, vitality or human life which I find it difficult to accept because it is not biblically based.

The author implies that human beings are not defined by the roles they play. However, in the West, rational reductionism is used to understand humanity, while in Africa, communality is used as a means to understand humanity. Kapolyo misses the point by simply arguing that both of these ways of conceptualizing humanity do not have a place for higher powers. Looking from an African theological and scholarly lens, this

argument seems illogical in a sense because it is generally believed that "Africans are notoriously religious." In other words, Africans—even non-Christians—could not do anything or even seek for communal relationships if the ancestral spirits or other spiritual powers did not work peacefully with such communities. The sense of a god is by all means part and parcel of an African who is naturally religious, however, this does not always mean that being religious means being a Christian, for anyone can be religious and yet does not necessarily imply being a Christian.

What does the Bible say about humanity? This book explores the clarity of the Bible's teachings on how the Triune God created humanity out of nothing, *ex nihilo*, and how he shared his image, *Imago Dei* with the created humanity. This book gives an historical sketch from early church fathers, Reformers such as Martin Luther and John Calvin, and contemporary scholars of theology and their understanding of the subject, *image of God*. Since God created humanity in his own image, we find that it is by this means that all humans alike, no matter their contextual orientations, have a place in God's kingdom. Kapolyo does attempt to deal with subjects of time, sin, family, community, and virtue as understood by an African especially Bemba cultural lens through a biblical point of view.

Chapter four deals with a traditional African anthropology whereby the author clearly articulates the unity that exists between Africans as humans and their cultural surroundings. While Kapolyo's work here needs to be given careful attention, it is worth noting that to better understand an African one must understand the culture of that African. Here one finds a well-documented research on how Africa culture functions in day-to-day activities. More specifically, giving critical comments concerning the kind of Christianity found in Africa, Kapolyo's argument seems to convince readers that the imported Christianity often found in Africa is not theologically or even biblically grounded but rather expressively western grounded. The question that Kapolyo fails to address here is, who is the problem? Is it an African who has failed to theologize and contextualize the gospel message or the missionaries who brought Christianity to Africa? However, in this book's last chapter, the author very tactfully continues to give biblical evidence on how to

deal with culture and still maintain the sound doctrines of the Christian faith.

This book, as good as it sounds, is overly dependent on dated western scholarship at the expense of African authors. He uses a few African scholars and few books published from 2000-2005. This, however, does not make it insignificant; this is a great book especially if studied without cultural biases, liberalism, and biblical conservatism. Kapolyo's work helps any reader but more especially people from the West better to understand the practicability of the Bible in African context. Understanding culture is essential when dealing with any human being, and this is especially the case when dealing with socialistic cultures like those in Africa. This is an excellent and easy to read book. It should be in every theological library, as well as in the libraries of professors and seminarians.

Saneta Maiko

Concordia Theological Seminary

Christ's Churches Purely Reformed: A Social History of Calvinism. By Philip Benedict. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002.

This is a great book. Very well written and with a wealth of information, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed* is a comprehensive history of Reformed Protestantism from its first emergence in Zurich in the 1520s until around 1700 when it was being challenged and transformed by the Enlightenment. Benedict writes on a very broad canvas—geographically as well as temporally—so that he includes the story of the Reformed in Poland and Transylvania, as well as Scotland, France, and the Netherlands. He has even decided—correctly, in my view—to include the Church of England in his survey. Although the Anglicans eventually went their own way, for the first several generations they clearly identified with the continental Reformed on account of personal connections and theological affinities.

But what were those theological affinities? Clearly, the Reformed shared many beliefs in this period that set them apart from other Christian traditions, but Benedict singles out especially the doctrine of the eucharist as a defining characteristic (xxiii-xxiv), since it was this article that first and principally

distinguished Reformed theology from Lutheranism, the founding form of Protestantism. Although complete unanimity regarding the eucharist did not exist among Reformed theologians, all agreed in rejecting any *essential* presence of our Lord's body and blood in the bread and wine. Therefore, as the *Consensus Tigurinus* of 1549 demonstrated, differences on the eucharist, like those separating Calvin and Bullinger, Zwingli's successor in Zurich, were not insurmountable or church-dividing (57). Thus, theologically speaking, the Reformed churches constituted but one church.

According to Benedict, however, concern for the eucharist was illustrative of an even more basic characteristic of the Reformed — an insistence on liturgical purity: "The call to purge all nonscriptural elements from worship and the hostility to idolatry would henceforward permanently characterize the Reformed tradition" (2). Whereas Luther and his followers downplayed the importance of ceremonies and sacred images, the Reformed considered the elimination of the latter and the purging of the former as essential to real reformation, and in many places, iconoclastic riots signaled the introduction of Reformed Protestantism (e.g., Zurich, 27; France, 142-43; Scotland, 155; and the Netherlands, 181-85). Even in England, where some complained almost from the beginning that official worship was not pure enough, nevertheless, the authorities eliminated altars and sacred images from the churches (238, 244).

But the English example illustrates another of Benedict's themes — the considerable variety of theology and practice in the Reformed tradition, often manifesting itself in controversy and division. Thus, Benedict offers lucid descriptions of the controversies surrounding Erastianism (214-15), Arminianism (305-16), and Cocceianism (338-41), among others, as well as demonstrating significant differences regarding ecclesiastical offices, church discipline, worship, and the practice of piety. So, for example, in Zurich discipline was exercised by the state (30-31), in Geneva by churchmen (96). Again, English Puritans practiced what Benedict calls "experimental predestinarianism," a piety centered on a quest for assurance of salvation in personal experience (321-24); but that was not the case among the Huguenots whose ministers "inclined toward a more

intellectualist and less experiential understanding of the nature of saving faith, one in which recognizing the truth of justification by faith alone was more critical than sensing the presence of grace in the heart" (524).

Obviously—in spite of the subtitle—Benedict's book includes theology as well social history, and he does *not* seek to reduce religious phenomena to economic or other social factors. For Benedict, religion itself is one of the driving forces behind human action and social development, but it is not the only such force. "Beliefs make history," he asserts, "but not under circumstances of their own choosing" (xxii). Thus, while Benedict often demonstrates the connection between beliefs and actions, he also highlights the significance of context. In spite of commonly held beliefs, the Reformed churches did not all follow the same path of development. Historical context mattered.

Benedict illustrates this in an interesting section on the fate of the Reformed churches when politics shifted against them in the seventeenth century in Poland, Hungary, and France. In all three places, the monarchy embraced Counter-Reformation Catholicism and sought the reconversion of the Reformed populace. As a result, in all three places, the high aristocracy returned to Catholicism in large numbers. But while the apostasy of the nobility in Poland led to the collapse of the Reformed church there because it had been founded by aristocratic fiat, that did not happen in Hungary or France because those churches were much more the result of spontaneous conversions by the people (382-83). Different histories produced different results.

The book consists of four major sections: (1) the formation of a tradition; (2) the expansion of a tradition; (3) the transformations of a tradition; and (4) new Calvinist men and women? Each part concludes with a chapter that nicely summarizes the entire section, so that important themes stand out from the mass of detail that Benedict provides. The author has also included several illustrations, maps, and graphs to help the reader follow his argument. Benedict's work is well-documented (over 100 pages of notes); and for each chapter, he also includes a bibliographical note to direct the reader to important primary and secondary sources.

I did detect a few errors of fact in this work: it is Gabriel Zwilling, not Conrad (15); Calvin resided in Strasbourg until 1541, not 1542 (56); the battle of Mohács was in 1526, not 1528 (69); and Frederick of the Palatinate was James I's son-in-law, not brother-in-law (314). But these are minor points in an otherwise excellent volume, and I highly recommend this work to anyone seriously interested in Reformation studies.

Cameron A. MacKenzie

The New Faithful: Why Young Christians Are Embracing Christian Orthodoxy. By Colleen Carroll. Chicago: Loyola Press, 2002. 320 Pages. \$19.95.

What? Our culture's slide into the pit of moral relativism, secularism, nihilism, and the irrelevance of religion has suffered some interruption? The book's subtitle says it well—there is a definite trend among young Christian adults to embrace more orthodox positions than their parents on abortion, marriage, sexuality, homosexuality, politics, and even worship.

Carroll mainly studies Roman Catholics and Evangelicals. She uses individual personal stories which are the basis of her conclusions, but does not indicate how broad her research was. She indicates that she interviewed "dozens of sociologists, religious leaders, college professors, theologians and youth ministers," and that she "talked with hundreds of young believers who fit the profile of a young orthodox Christian" (10). Her research seems to dovetail with other studies done in religious circles. Though none of her research was done with congregations or members of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, there is much that can be gleaned from reading Carroll's informative book. When confronted with the claim that religion must be watered down to attract more followers, Carroll concludes: "This is not true for the contemporary American Gen-X'er." Carroll documents the Gen-X'er's serious search for theological substance. And that substance can be found only in Holy Scripture and the traditional teachings of Christianity through the ages.

Carroll examines the resurgence of more traditional Roman Catholic liturgical practices like the adoration of the sacrament, liturgical prayer, traditional liturgical worship, etc. Sacramental

life among the young seems resurgent in Roman Catholic circles. And there is also a rather dramatic rise in young Catholic individuals seeking to enter religious life—leaving prominent and prosperous careers to take vows of poverty and celibacy as priests and nuns. Carroll's research indicates that fluffy catechism instruction is not what is desired by most Gen-X'ers. Here is something for the church, including the LCMS to note. Today's youth want vigorous catechesis.

Not all individuals Carroll interviewed indicated their desire for more traditional liturgical worship. Many in the evangelical realm simply craved genuine worship that directed them to God rather than the fluff of human centered worship. Christianity needs to have justification-centered worship—God giving gifts to humans, not man-centered worship, which centers on our acts of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving.

Carroll emphasized the Gen-X craving for a genuine caring Christian community. She found many of the young faithful rejecting the excessive self-centered individualism of our current age. Her book examines a number of religious communities organized for various reasons. Here again mainstream churches and congregations can learn from her research. Are we creating caring Christian communities in our congregations which attract individuals with the love of Christ made visible? Are our loving actions a natural result that flows from a serious biblical theology and a deep faith and trust in Christ?

The trend to more traditional lifestyles and theology can be found even on liberal college campuses. Though our culture is permeated with a relativistic moral code and an anything goes attitude, many young adults are saying, "This isn't for me." Among those Carroll interviewed, there is a rise in the appreciation of a biblical sexual morality, traditional attitudes towards abortion, and absolute standards of right and wrong. The increased numbers of students Carroll found participating in campus ministries like Campus Crusade and more traditional Roman Catholic student centers has implications for our Synod and its outreach on college campuses.

Carroll's research also encourages believers to leave a Christian ghetto type of lifestyle in favor of what we as Lutherans term a "calling" or "vocation." This type of Christian lifestyle

means living one's faith in the boardroom, in the newsroom, in graduate school, in politics, in Hollywood, at home, at school, and in church. Christians are to be in the world as light, salt and leaven—changing the world for the better. Christians can gain much from Carroll's book in these areas. Carroll's research indicated however that the rejection of the world and its values can lead to a Christian ghetto type of lifestyle.

This is a profitable book. Serious study of Carroll's work should inform ministry and outreach planning for the future in more conservative church denominations. Truly the gates of hell will not prevail against God's church. And by the hand of God, even in trying and difficult circumstances the saving gospel message will continue to spread and even at times flourish throughout the world.

Rev. Armand J. Boehme
Kazakhstan

Indices to Volume 68 (2004)

ARTICLES

Barth, Karl L., <i>Get Out There With Some Godly Passion!</i>	2:99-104
Beckwith, Carl, <i>Martin Chemnitz's Use of Church Fathers in his Locus on Justification</i>	3/4:271-290
Evanson, Charles, <i>Center and Periphery in Lutheran Ecclesiology</i>	3/4:231-270
Gieschen, Charles A., <i>The Real Presence of the Son before Christ: Revisiting an Old Approach to the Old Testament Christology</i>	2:105-126
Jastram, Nathan R., <i>Man as Male and Female: Created in the Image of God</i>	1:5-96
Jenson, Robert, <i>The Trinity in the Bible</i>	3/4:195-206
Maier III, Walter A., <i>Does God 'Repent' or Change His Mind?</i>	2:127-143
Mayes, Benjamin, <i>Syncretism in the Theology of Calixt, Calov and Musäus</i>	3/4:291-317
Montgomery, John W., <i>A Historical Study of the "Dignus Est Agnus" Canticle</i>	2:145-153
Pittelko, Roger D., <i>Clerical Collar – To Wear or Not To Wear (TO)</i>	2:154-155
Rast, Lawrence R., Jr., <i>Toward a More Accessible CTQ</i>	3/4:341
Scaer, David P., <i>Carl F. H. Henry: An Evangelical Tribute to a Theologian (TO)</i>	2:155-156
Scaer, David P. <i>Delay of Infant Baptism in the Roman Catholic Church (TO)</i>	3/4:341-346
Scaer, David P. <i>Johann Sebastian Bach as Lutheran Theologian</i>	3/4:319-339
Weinrich, William C., <i>Should a Layman Discharge the Duties of the Holy Ministry?</i>	3/4:207-229

BOOK REVIEWS

- Ahearn, David Oki and Peter Gathje. *Doing Right and Being Good: Catholic and Protestant Readings in Christian Ethics*. John T. Pless3/4:371-372
- Barnes, Michel R., *The Power of God: Δύναμις in Gregory of Nyssa's Trinitarian Theology*. Carl Beckwith2:178-180
- Bartelt, Andrew H. and Andrew E. Steinmann. *Fundamental Biblical Hebrew and Fundamental Biblical Aramaic*. Chad L. Bird3/4:354-355
- Benedict, Philip. *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed: A Social History of Calvinism*. Cameron A. MacKenzie3/4:375-378
- Carroll, Colleen. *The New Faithful: Why Young Christians Are Embracing Christian Orthodoxy*. Armand Boehme 3/4:378-380
- Dembski, William A., *Intelligent Design: The Bridge Between Science and Theology*. Jody Rinas2:170-172
- Dunn, James D.G., and John W. Rogerson, editors. *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible*. Charles Gieschen2:180
- Fritz, Volkmar, *1 & 2 Kings*. Walter Maier III2:180-182
- Garcia, Alberto L. and A. R. Victor Raj, eds. *The Theology of the Cross for the 21st Century: Signposts for a Multicultural Witness*. John T. Pless3/4:350-352
- Hampson, Daphne, *Christian Contradictions: The Structure of Lutheran and Catholic Thought*. William Weinrich ...2:157-160
- Kapolyo, Joe M. *The Human Condition: Christian Perspectives through African Eyes*.....Saneta Maiko 3/4:372-375
- Kim, Seyoon, *Paul and the New Perspective: Second Thoughts on the Origin of Paul's Gospel*. Peter Scaer2:177-178
- Kleinig, John W., *Leviticus. Concordia Commentary*. Chad Bird2:182-183
- Koriath, Kirby L. *Music for the Church: The Life and Work of Walter E. Buszin*. D. Richard Stuckwisch.....3/4:363-366

- Lazareth, William H., *Christians in Society: Luther, the Bible, and Social Ethics*. Cameron MacKenzie2:183-185
- Metzger, Bruce M., *The Bible in Translation: Ancient and English Versions*. Cameron MacKenzie2:163-164
- McEvoy, James, Robert Grosseteste. Timothy Maschke ..2:175-177
- Mitchell, Christopher W., *Our Suffering Savior: Exegetical Studies and Sermons for Ash Wednesday through Easter*. James Bushur2:185-186
- Myers, David G., *The American Paradox: Spiritual Hunger in an Age of Plenty*. Grant Knepper2:164-165
- Nelson, Richard D., *Deuteronomy: A Commentary*. Andrew Steinmann.....2:190-191
- Oden, Thomas C., *First and Second Timothy and Titus*. L. Dean Hempelmann2:160-161
- Parker, D. C. *The Living Text of the Gospels*. David Scaer 2:169-170
- Peabody, David B., Lamar Cope, and Allen J. McNicol, editors. *One Gospel from Two: Mark's Use of Matthew and Luke*. Craig Meisner2:186-190
- Petersen, Nils Holger, et al., eds. *The Arts and the Cultural Heritage of Martin Luther*. John T. Pless 3/4:352-354
- Piper, John. *Counted Righteous in Christ*. Peter C. Cage 3/4:356-357
- Powell, Samuel M. *Participating in God: Creation and Trinity*. Timothy Maschke 3/4:3368-371
- Purves, Andrew. *Pastoral Theology in the Classical Tradition*. James Bushur 3/4:3362-363
- Riggs, John W. *Baptism in the Reformed Tradition: an Historical and Practical Theology*. David P. Scaer 3/4:347-350
- Schlink, Edmund, *The Vision of the Pope: A Narrative – A Parable about Christian Identity in an Ecumenical Age*. Timothy Maschke2:167-168
- Schmeling, Gaylin R., *God's Gift to You: A Devotional Book on Lord's Supper*. Mark Buchhop2:172-173

- Schmidt, Alvin J. *Under the Influence: How Christianity Transformed Civilization*. James Bushur.....3/4:366-368
- Schwarz, Hans, *Eschatology*. Matthew Rueger2:166-167
- Steinmann, Andrew E. *Intermediate Hebrew Grammar*. Chad L. Bird.....3/4:355-356
- Sueflow, August. *Servant of the Word: The Life and Ministry of C.F.W. Walther*. Grant Knepper2:174-175
- Willer, Roger A. editor, *Genetic Screening: Critical Engagement at the Intersection of Faith and Science*. John Pless2:162-163
- Williams, D. H., ed. *The Free Church and the Early Church: Bridging the Historical and Theological Divide*. Paul Gregory Alms.....3/4:360-362
- Wright, N. T. *The Contemporary Quest for Jesus*. Charles R. Schulz.....3/4:357-360
- Zaret, David, *Origins of the Democratic Culture: Printing, Petitions, and the Public Sphere in Early-Modern England*. Cameron MacKenzie2:173-174