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More on the Death of Jesus and Its Meaning

For Paul, Christ did not merely die but died *for sins*. His death determines the value of his life and, in turn, determines our relationship to God. Christ's death comes under the topic of atonement; its benefits come under the topic of justification. Since the apostolic period both doctrines have been interpreted differently. One understanding of Christ's death as atonement has been more prominent than others at different times in history. By concentrating on one understanding and not giving sufficient attention to others, the church falls into error. The same is also true for justification. In this issue, we continue the discussion on the atonement that began in the July 2008 issue (*CTQ* 72:3) and expand it to include justification. William C. Weinrich shows that Adam's transgression was not just another sin among others: the fall corrupted our human nature and thus immortality was replaced with death. According to Athanasius this could only be resolved by the divine Word assuming human nature and dying to offer atonement. Naomichi Masaki shows that many contemporary views fit under "Christ died for sins." Some develop previously undeveloped aspects. Other understandings are so false that the totality of Christianity is corrupted. Prominent in Luther studies is Tuomo Mannermaa, who holds that for the Reformer justification takes place by the indwelling of the deity in the believer. Timo Laato correlates the doctrine of justification as held by Mannermaa and his Finnish Luther School with the views of the Reformation-era theologian Andreas Osiander and traditional Roman Catholicism. Jonathan Edwards brings to mind an early colonial American theologian who outdid John Calvin in his sermon on sinners in the hands of an angry God. Lawrence R. Rast Jr. traces how Edwards, in attempting to ameliorate a severe doctrine of predestination by allowing faith to be the individual's voluntary response, introduced Arminianism into the core of his theology. We hope these articles enrich your understanding of Jesus' death and its benefits.

For those who enjoy early Missouri Synod history, a contribution in the Theological Observer section discusses an event among our spiritual ancestors that has been often passed over, maybe with good reason.

David P. Scaer
Editor

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God Did Not Create Death: Athanasius on the Atonement[1]

William C. Weinrich

According to the Nicene Creed, the one Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of God the Father, was he through whom all things were made and "who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary and was made man." In this way the Creed places in closest connection the creation of all things through the Word and the redemption of man worked by him through his incarnation, that is, pre-eminently through his death and resurrection. Typical of the Scriptures and of early Christian thinking generally, the Nicene Creed is completely void of speculative interests and is rather specifically focused on the story of the salvation of the human race, which is nothing other than the story of Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word of the Father. At the center of the drama of redemption is man himself, for it was through man that sin came into the world and, with sin, the corruption of death. Until this situation is righted, the whole world groans, as Paul says, until the revelation of the sons of God (Rom 8:18–25).

Man was not, however, merely the instrument through whom sin came into the world. Man was from the dust of the earth and therefore so bound and connected with the earth that the creation itself suffered corruption when man chose corruption in his disobedience. In the reality of man lies the fate and destiny of all things. In the sin of man's disobedience *things change*. This does not simply mean that the external circumstances in which man lives change; it means that man himself is changed so that in him and through him the devil finds an ally, and man is and chooses to be a vessel of corruption and death. Man sinned and in sinning man became sinner. But also in sinning man allowed himself to become the agent of sin. Sin itself now has an image, sinful man, and, through the life and work of this sinful man, sin exerts its power and effects its own kingdom, namely, the kingdom of corruption and death. Sin

[1] The title, "God Did Not Create Death," is from Wisdom of Solomon 1:13, as discussed in Part I below. Wisdom of Solomon (hereafter "Wisdom") is a Jewish writing from Alexandria that probably originated in the first century BC and circulated with many Greek translations of the Old Testament (Septuagint).

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is a power, precisely because it is work of a will, with intent and purpose, and the form and shape that sin takes is corruption and death. Corruption and death take their own concrete form in the sinful life of man. Sin and death go together, not simply as cause and effect, but as matter and form. Sin is a power but not without the form it takes, and death and corruption are that form.

Death and corruption are not punishments meted out only by way of a judgment that is externally imposed upon a transgressor. They are, to be sure, punishments and judgments, but they lie within the reality of sin and, as we noted, are the form of sin. Sin, we might say, assumes bodily form. This bodily form is the life of disobedience that man has chosen for himself. Sin is not only transgression; it is also, so to speak, a creative power that brings forth that which is proper to it, namely, the life of the sinner that is encompassed by death, bound to death, and destined to death.

It is important to keep in mind this bodily character of the power of sin when considering the thought of Athanasius concerning the passion of the Lord. For when he considers the death of the Word through the cross, Athanasius does so by considering the necessity of the incarnation of the Word. Not a mere verbal declaration of forgiveness for transgression would suffice for the salvation of man. The consequences of the fall are more dire than that. Fallen man is not external to his acts of sin, as though man remains what he is even as he commits acts of sin. Man himself, created for life and blessedness, has become a vessel of death. Man himself must be reconstructed by him through whom man was made. This reconstruction is the work of the cross.

As subtle and sophisticated as Athanasius is, he is not the originator of such ideas. He had predecessors. In *De Incarnatione* (*On the Incarnation*) 5,[2] Athanasius quotes both Wisdom 2:23–24 and Romans 1:26–27 to provide a kind of conceptual template for the creation of man and the consequences of the fall. A brief consideration of these two texts may serve as an introduction to the thought of Athanasius on the atonement of man by the Word crucified.

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[2] The edition used for references and quotations of *De Incarnatione* is that of R. W. Thomson, ed. and trans., *Athanasius:* Contra Gentes *and* De Incarnatione, Oxford Early Christian Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971).

I. Creation and the Fall in Wisdom of Solomon, Ephesians, and Romans

Wisdom

Wisdom 2:23–24 states: "God created man for incorruptibility and he made [man] to be the image of his own eternality. But by the envy of the devil death entered into the world, and those who are of his party experience [death]." This is a remarkable passage, and the thought—if not the text itself—lies at the foundation of much of the New Testament. In itself it is an intertestamental commentary on Genesis 1:26, "Let us make man according to our image and likeness." Man is not a mere thing that is brought into existence as an independent and autonomous reality. Man is defined by the destiny for which God made man, and this destiny is vouchsafed to man by the fact that man is the image of God's own eternality. Man was created to live, and man is man only in his imaging the life of God. Man is the one created to live as God lives.

Through the envy of the devil, however, man determined upon another destiny, namely, death. This destiny finds its expression in a life of deception and corruption that is actualized in hate, envy, murder, and idolatry. Wisdom 2:23–24 is to be read in the light of Wisdom 1:12–15:

> Do not desire death in the deceit of your life, nor seek out destruction by the works of your hands. For God did not create death nor does he delight in the destruction of the living. For he created all things that they might exist, and that of the world that is brought forth is in itself secure, and there is in them no medicine of corruption nor is the rule of death upon the earth. For righteousness is immortal.

Here death is quite explicitly said to be located in "the deceit of your life" and in "the works of your hands." Death takes its form in the life according to the devil, namely, that life characterized by deceit, idolatry, and all forms of wickedness. God did not create man for such a life. Rather, God created man to live that life that is according to God, and the human life lived according to the life of God is the life of Christ. As the Gospel of John might have it, the Word became flesh, and the Word enfleshed is the Way, the Truth, the Life.

Ephesians

This conceptual paradigm of Wisdom occurs in various passages of the New Testament, but perhaps nowhere more definitely than in Paul's Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Romans. A brief summary of these texts must suffice here. First, let us look at Ephesians 1:3–2:10. Keep in mind the language and thought of Wisdom as we read the following passages: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . who chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy

and without blame before him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will" (Eph 1:3-5). According to this passage, before the world began man is elected to be holy and without blame in love, and this was in Christ. The life given to man to live was holiness and blamelessness; such a life was the life of sonship and so the life lived in Christ. Yet, man was "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph 2:1); this death was manifested in "the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind," for men had become "by nature children of wrath" (Eph 2:3). Although dead in sins, God made us alive with Christ and in this brought man again to that for which man was created and elected. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (Eph 2:10). Paul has given a christological interpretation to the thought of Wisdom. Man was created to be "the image of God's eternality." That is the language of Wisdom. In Ephesians the apostle speaks of the life of holiness and blamelessness in Christ Jesus, "through whom and unto whom all things were created," as Paul states in Colossians 1:15.

Romans

Paul also follows the conceptual path of Wisdom in Romans. In Romans, Paul describes the fall of the human race in the following terms: "Although they knew God, they did not glorify him as God . . . but changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things" (Rom 1:21-23). "The glory of the incorruptible God" is probably what Wisdom calls "the image of God's eternality," that is, man himself. The wrath of God, therefore, is revealed upon man when God "gives man up" to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, and the dishonoring of their bodies (Rom 1:24). The wrath of God takes, as it were, bodily form, namely, the life of corrupted man that he lives in and through his body. "God gave them up to vile passions," to a "debased mind," so that men received "in themselves the penalty of their error which was due" (Rom 1:26-27). This penalty lay not only in the future but was also already meted out in the perversion of life to which God gave them over. Paul lists the various forms of such lives: unrighteousness, sexual immorality, covetousness, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness, pride, haters of God, lack of mercy, unforgiving, to mention only some that Paul indicates (Rom 1:29-32). Paul is following the description of the descent of men into increasing wickedness such as it is given scriptural articulation in Genesis and commentary in the book of Wisdom.

In the concrete reality of man, not only in his soul but also in the body of man, God had made his own image. When man forsook his maker in sin, the consequence was death and corruption, namely, man became death-ridden and corrupted, and this consequence was revealed and visible in the perverse sinfulness of humankind. The narrative of Scripture is intensely concrete. Like it or not, biblical faith focuses on the individual and concrete reality of man as in fact he lives in the world. The body of man, not only his soul or spirit, is the form of God's image in the world and, under the consequences of human sin, man's body and the life lived through it is the form of divine punishment. Man, as Paul puts it, is "dead in trespasses and sins."

We must remember this concentration on the bodily nature of man, image of God but also sinner, when we read in Romans 8:1 that there is "now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus." That there is no condemnation is to say that there is a restored righteousness, a judgment actualized in the gift of life for which man was first made. What, however, is the specific reality in which that righteousness exists? Paul speaks of it like this: "For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin, and he condemned sin in the flesh, so that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit" (Rom 8:3–4). In Christ the "law of sin and death," that is, that pattern of sinful behavior to which man is bound and enslaved, has received a condemnation of its own and is replaced by the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," that is, the new life of Christ lived according to the works of the Spirit.

Crucial for the understanding of this passage is the phrase "condemned sin in the flesh," namely, the flesh of Christ. The atonement wrought by Christ demanded his incarnation precisely because man was not merely a sinner in the fact that he did sins. Man is transgressor but not merely transgressor. Man does not, so to speak, lie outside of his actions. Sinning does not leave man unaffected. When the primal man sinned, man became dead in sins and trespasses. The history of sin that Wisdom and Paul describe as the lack of knowledge of God, idolatry, and manifold wickedness is but the actualization of man as one who is death-ridden and corrupted. The fateful and tragic degradation of man exists, therefore, not only in works of sin but especially in the reality of man himself. Man is known by what he does, and the destiny of his death is the lot of all humankind. On account of sin, God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. Apart from the incarnation there is not, nor could there be, atonement and redemption.

II. Does the Incarnation Trump the Atonement in Athanasius?

I have introduced the topic of atonement in Athanasius' *On the Incarnation* in this way because Athanasius himself is guided by the narrative structure of the Scriptures, especially Genesis, the Wisdom of Solomon, and the Epistles of Paul. There remains in much scholarly literature, however, a wholly misguided and misleading reading of Athanasius that overlooks his biblical foundations and renders him as a Platonizing Greek who thinks of the body of Christ merely as an external instrument by which the divine Word made known his deity. Moreover, there is an interpretation of Athanasius that misinterprets the function of the incarnation in the soteriological thought of Athanasius. This misinterpretation is classically voiced by R. P. C. Hanson. According to Hanson, the incarnation in the thought of Athanasius mediates life from the divine Word to the flesh assumed from the Virgin Mary so that "one of the curious results of this theology of the Incarnation is that it almost does away with a doctrine of the Atonement."[3] What is implied in such an assessment is that the doctrine of the incarnation peripheralizes the importance, even the necessity, of the suffering of Christ. Incarnation trumps the cross.

In view of such criticism, it is important to note that *On the Incarnation* is explicitly an explanation of the necessity of the cross.[4] At the very beginning of the treatise Athanasius writes: "Let us next with pious faith tell of the incarnation of the Word, . . . so that from the apparent degradation of the Word you may have ever greater and stronger piety towards him. For the more he is mocked by unbelievers, the greater witness he provides of his divinity."[5] The deity of the Son is manifested and effected for the salvation of the human race by, through, and in the sufferings of the incarnate Word. This "degradation of the Word" is explicitly said by Athanasius to be the "degradation through the cross."[6] Elsewhere in the treatise the work of the cross is said to be "the primary cause of the incarnation"[7] and the cross is "the chief article of our faith."[8]

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[3] R. P. C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy, 318–381* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 450.

[4] Much modern scholarship neglects the significance of the cross for Athanasius. All the more welcome, therefore, is the important corrective given by Khaled Anatolios, *Athanasius: The Coherence of His Thought* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 28, 67–84, and John Behr, *The Formation of Christian Theology*, vol. 2, *The Nicene Faith*, Part 1, *True God of True God* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2004), 170–207.

[5] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 1; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 135.

[6] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 1; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 135.

[7] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 10; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 159.

What, however, must be noted is that the work of atonement in the cross of the Word directly corresponds to the reality of man in the specific and concrete circumstance of man's own degradation. The Word vicariously assumed the position of man who in the state of his own death and corruption is wholly incapable of paying the debt owed by sin and assuming again the destiny intended for man from the beginning, namely, participation in the eternality and incorruptibility of God. But the degradation of man itself is to be comprehended in view of what man is and is to be by way of the creative intent of the God. Man was created, to use the language of Wisdom, as the "image of God's eternality." Therefore Athanasius begins his exposition of the cross with an exposition concerning the creation of man.

III. Athanasius on Creation and the Fall

First of all, Athanasius rejects pagan and heretical notions of creation, specifically that of the Epicureans (who denied divine providence), that of Plato (who posited creation from pre-existent matter), and that of Marcion (for whom creation was the work of a lesser deity). The Scriptures rather teach, says Athanasius, a creation from nothing, and therefore the power of God to bring into existence that which had no existence is revealed to be an expression of God's goodness. The deity of God is revealed in that God gives life to that which in itself does not possess life: "For God is good . . . and the good has no envy for anything. Thus, because he envies nothing its existence, he made everything from nothing through his own Word, our Lord Jesus Christ."[9] However, Athanasius is aware of Wisdom's assertion that God created man for immortality and incorruptibility and therefore notes that God had a "special mercy" upon the human race. For "by way of nature of their own beginning" (that is, from nothing) man in his bodily nature had no capacity to remain forever. God, therefore, "graciously grants to man something more."[10] This "something more" is that man is created "according to God's own image" and this is further defined as a "share in the power of God's own Word" so that human persons as it were possess "shadows of the Word" and "becoming *logikoi* possess the power to remain in blessedness."[11] We must not interpret Athanasius after the manner of late medieval theology. This is not the structure of grace added to and upon nature, a *gratia superaddita*. Considered solely in terms of his bodily nature, man is similar to all other living things. But man is not

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[8] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 19; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 181.
[9] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 3; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 141.
[10] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 3; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 141.
[11] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 3; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 141.

merely similar to other living creatures. Constitutive of the reality of man is the gift of the Word, for only as man participates in the power of the Word is man destined for life with God, that is, unto incorruptibility and immortality. Man is "image of God's eternality" only in the fact that man participates in the power of the Word through whom all things were made and who is, therefore, the fully divine instrument by whom and in whom life is bestowed. Again, man is man in that he is oriented toward life with God. This teleological directedness of man is determinative of the very definition of man.

As Athanasius says elsewhere, this grace of the Word that constitutes the reality of man entails "the life that is according to God,"[12] or "the happy and truly blessed life."[13] As image of God, possessing the power of the Word, man is created to live according to the life of God, or as Athanasius puts it, to remain in blessedness and incorruptibility. Possessed of the Word, however, man lives freely as man was created to live. But this very freedom possessed also the possibility that man could determine against God. For this reason, to secure the grace that mankind had been given, God imposed "a law and a set place."[14] God brought man into paradise, namely, there where the life of the saints is lived, and he gave to man a law. He promised that if man continued in the grace given and remained "good" (καλός), that is, within the purpose of God for man, man would remain in the life of paradise without sorrow or pain and would arrive at that incorruptibility promised to him and intended for him. Were man to transgress the law of eating of the fruit of the tree of good and evil, however, he in fact would have chosen to turn away from the Word and thus not to live that life which is according to God. Thus man would become wicked and, void of the Word, destitute of his proper destiny and vocation, namely, that of life and immortality. Transgression would bring death. This death would not only be the event of death as punishment. Rather, the death which is brought on by transgression is "to remain in the corruption of death." Sin and death bring forth a life that is wicked, and this lived wickedness is the corruption of death whose own destiny is eternal death.

If we are to understand Athanasius' discussion of the incarnation and of the cross of the Word, we must keep this inner connection between sin and death in mind. The life of man as man is not distinguishable from the life of man as in the image of God; nor is the life now to be lived by man

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[12] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 5; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 145.

[13] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 11; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 161.

[14] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 3; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 141.

"in the power of the Logos" distinguishable from the life of immortality and incorruption to which man is destined. Were man "to remain" in blessedness, living the authentic life "in paradise," he would attain to that incorruptibility for which God created him. Were man, however, to transgress the commandment of God, man would fall into that corruption and death that is the natural tendency of the body apart from the presence of the Word. The presence of the Word is constitutive of the reality of man, of his life, and of the destiny for which he was created.

The work of the Savior must be commensurate to the reality of man in his debt and corruption. Therefore Athanasius first speaks "of the beginning of mankind," in order that we might know "that our own cause was the reason of his coming [κατάδου, condescension]. . . . We were the cause of his incarnation, and for our salvation he had compassion to the extent of being born and revealed in a body."[15] The incarnation of the Word, therefore, is not an event discreet from the necessity of the cross, nor is it, so to speak, the required basis and preliminary assumption for the work of the cross. The necessity of the incarnation lies within the necessity of the cross and is to be interpreted only in view of the necessity of the cross. The relation between the reality of man, transgression, death, and corruption is not mechanical, but organic. Life is that living of man that is marked by obedience; death is that living of man that is marked by disobedience. For the Word to take to himself the body was for him to take to himself death.

"God, then, had so created man and willed that he should remain in incorruptibility."[16] But men turned away from God and "invented for themselves wickedness" and so "received the condemnation of death" and "no longer remained as they had been created, but as they devised, were ruined."[17] Death brings on death, and corruption corrupts. Holiness becomes wickedness, and blessedness becomes accursedness. This is to say, death is a power, and Athanasius frequently speaks of death as a power that governs and rules, and as a power creates its own form. "Death overcame [men] and reigned over them";[18] through the envy of the devil "men died, and corruption took a strong hold on them, and was more powerful than the force of nature over the whole race."[19] And what does the power of death and corruption empower men to do? What are the

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[15] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 4; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 143.
[16] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 4; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 143.
[17] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 4; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 143.
[18] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 4; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 143.
[19] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 5; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 145.

forms that death takes? "[Men] turned to vice and exceeded all iniquity, and not stopping at one wickedness but inventing ever more new things, they became insatiable in sinning":[20] adulteries, thefts, murders, violence, seditions, and acts against nature. To summarize the reality of the fall Athanasius quotes Romans 1:26–27.

The fall of man, therefore, is not merely comprehended in an act of disobedience. Man not only disobeys; *man falls*. The fall entails a radical corruption of the reality of man, a total disruption of his being as possessed of the Word, and a total disorientation away from man's proper end. What then, Athanasius asks his readers, should God, who is good, have done? Should God simply have allowed man to remain in death? That, however, would have negated the very purpose for God's creating of man. Having created man, "it was not right that he should permit men to be destroyed by corruption, because this was neither proper nor fitting for the goodness of God."[21] Nor could God simply have ignored the transgression of men. The threat of God that death follows upon sin must also stand, for God is truthful and not a liar. As Athanasius notes, however, the salvation of man could not be accomplished simply by an act of repentance. Were the fall nothing other than an act of sin, then an act of repentance might well suffice. As it is, however, death and corruption is the form of sin; sin begets wickedness because death takes the form of sin. Moreover, man was under the "law of death," that determination and threat of God that should man transgress, death would come upon him. Man is, by his own devising, oriented toward wickedness and death. "Repentance gives no exemption from the consequences of nature, but merely looses sins," writes Athanasius.[22] Had there been sin and not also death and corruption as the consequence of sin, repentance would suffice. But men were "now prisoners to natural corruption" and were "deprived of the grace of being in the image."[23]

IV. Athanasius on the Atonement

For this dilemma the Word's incarnation so that he might in the body pay the debt and destroy the consequence of sin was necessary and alone the answer:

> For it was his task both to bring what was corruptible back again to incorruption, and to save what was above all fitting for the Father. For

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[20] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 5; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 147.
[21] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 6; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 149.
[22] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 7; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 151.
[23] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 7; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 151.

> since he is the Word of the Father and above everyone, consequently he alone was both able to recreate the universe and be worthy to suffer for all and to be an advocate on behalf of all before the Father.[24]

Or again:

> No one else could bring what was corrupted to incorruptibility, except the Saviour himself, who also created the universe in the beginning from nothing; nor could any other recreate men in the image, save the image of the Father; nor could another raise up what was mortal as immortal, save our Lord Jesus Christ, who is life itself; nor could another teach about the Father and overthrow the cult of idols, save the Word who orders the universe, and who alone is the true only-begotten Son of the Father.[25]

"No one else could bring what was corrupted to incorruptibility." Such a comment expresses the vicarious character of the work of Christ. Athanasius expresses the vicarious manner of Christ's work in various ways: "The death of all was fulfilled in the Lord's body";[26] Christ is "the common Saviour of all";[27] moreover, Athanasius frequently says that Christ suffered and died "for all" (ὑπὲρ πάντων)[28] or "in the stead of all" (ἀντὶ πάντων).[29] However, that Christ's work of atonement was a vicarious work is not due simply to a verdict that has universal application. Nor was his work one of perfect and absolute merit that could be understood in terms of payment. For Athanasius he who became man for the salvation of men is the Word through whom man was created and in whom man possesses his true being and destiny. In relation to man the Word is always the Creator who made man "for incorruptibility." This relation is not altered in the realization of man's redemption. Christ could die for all because he is the Word through whom all were made. But the Word was not merely the instrument of creation in the sense of an external instrument that stands outside of man and works externally upon man. The Word was that "special grace" in which man is made to be in the image of God and which allows man to live the life of blessedness and to attain to the life of immortality and the eternality of God. As we have noted before, the corruption of man is not a passive state with its own intrinsic reality. It is the effect of the deceit of the devil and of the devising of man. Death and corruption are effected by a will and by a work. Therefore, the effects of man's sinful willfulness through the deceit of the

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[24] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 7; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 151.
[25] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 20; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 183.
[26] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 20; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 185.
[27] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 21; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 185.
[28] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 7, 20, 21, 25; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 151, 183, 189, 197.
[29] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 8, 20, 21; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 153, 183, 187.

devil demand and require another and opposite will and work, namely, that of the Word through whom that which was created in the beginning is created anew, that which was consigned to remain in death is raised up to the newness of eternal life, and that which gives itself over to the worship of idols is brought again to the knowledge of God and piety toward the Father.

If we keep this point in mind, we will understand Athanasius' insistence that when the Word "submitted to our corruption," he did not merely exist in a body nor did he wish merely to appear. Rather, the Word "fashioned for himself in the virgin a body" similar to ours "as a temple, and appropriated it for his own as an instrument."[30] This language of appropriation, or of making the body his own body, is Athanasius' way of insisting that the body of the Word was not external to the Word but was the "instrument" of the Word as subject and agent of human redemption.[31] By the language of appropriation the language of instrument likewise loses every implication of an external means by which the Word was working. The body was "instrument" in the sense that the body was the manner of existence that the Word assumed. The body became "the Word's own body," so that the Word as creating and atoning subject does the work of redemption as man and therefore on behalf of man. The Christology of the Incarnate Word as single subject is internally related to the work of atonement and the life that it brings, for it allows Athanasius to predicate to the Word the requirements of man's own redemption, namely, to suffer the debt of sin which is death and to conquer death so that life might again be given to man. Note, for example, the following statements:

> When the theologians say that he ate and drank and was born, they understand that the body was born as a body and was nourished on suitable food. . . . But these things are said of him, because the body which ate and was born and suffered was no one else's but the Lord's; and since he became human, it was right for these things to be said of him as a man, that he might be shown to have a true, not an unreal body.[32]

The activities that pertain to the body likewise pertain to the body of the Word and not, Athanasius emphasizes, to the Word himself. However, by the incarnation human attributions do not detract from the integrity of the divine subject that is the Word. Athanasius does not understand the incarnation as redemptive in itself and therefore in some manner competing with the death of Christ. Athanasius discourses on the

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[30] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 8; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 153.

[31] See Anatolios, *Athanasius*, 80–82.

[32] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 18; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 177.

incarnation in order to affirm that he who died is none other than he who created man, so that the death of the Word in his body is an act of creation that both satisfies the commandment of God and destroys the consequence of sin, which is death and corruption. Consider this summary of the Word's atoning work:

> Thus taking a body like ours, since all were liable to the corruption of death, and surrendering it to death on behalf of all, he offered it to the Father. And this he did in his loving kindness in order that, as all die in him, the law concerning corruption in men might be abolished—since its power was concluded in the Lord's body and it would never again have influence over men who are like him—and in order that, as men had turned to corruption, he might turn them back again to incorruption and might give them life for death, in that he had made the body his own, and by the grace of the resurrection had rid them of death as straw is destroyed by fire.[33]

V. Conclusion

The one who died in the body was none other than the Word who was given to man as that "special grace" that directed man toward his proper destiny, namely, immortality and incorruptibility and eternal life with God. By the "sacrifice of his own body He put an end to the law which lay over us, and renewed for us the origin of life by giving hope of the resurrection."[34] As we noted above, by participation in the Word man was given a life to live. The life man lives is not external to the reality of man; it is rather the very form that the reality of man takes. Man lives as he is. Similarly, the fall of man entailed death and corruption and this was evinced in the wickedness that both marred and characterized the life of man who was remaining in death. The atoning work of Christ also entails within itself the renewed life of man that again is the "image of the divine eternality."

> By the incarnation of God the Word were effected the overthrow of death and the resurrection of life. For the man who put on Christ says: "Since by man came death, also by man came the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive" (1 Cor 15:21–22). For now no longer as condemned do we die, but as those who will rise again we await the general resurrection of all.[35]

The condemnation of death is sacrificed, and the corruption of death is itself put to death. In *On the Incarnation* 28, Athanasius can speak of those

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[33] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 8; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 153.
[34] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 10; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 159.
[35] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 10; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 159.

who "put on the faith of the cross."[36] That, in fact, is an apt way of expressing the life of man won by Christ in his cross. In such a faith the Christian "scorns the things of nature, and is not afraid of death because of Christ."[37] Although Athanasius mentions the miracles reported in the Gospels as demonstrations of the deity of Christ Jesus, more typical in this discussion is his mention of the life now lived by the Christians as demonstrations that the death of Christ is none other than that of the divine Word. Paradigmatic for Athanasius is the Christian martyr. "By nature man is afraid of death and of the dissolution of the body."[38] But many who first disbelieved and mocked the cross later believed and "despised death so that they even became Christian martyrs."[39] No more visible is the incorruption of human destiny than in the death of the martyr, for here as perhaps nowhere else the defeat of death is noted and in the faith of the cross death itself is scorned as impotent. The death of death, that is, the resurrection to the newness of life, takes itself the form of the cross.

> But if it is by the sign of the cross and by faith in Christ that death is crushed, then it is clear, if truth is the judge, that it is none other than Christ himself who has shown triumphs and victories over death and who has rendered it powerless. And if death was formerly powerful and therefore to be feared, but is now despised after the coming of the Saviour and after the death and resurrection of his body, clearly it is by Christ himself who ascended the cross that death has been destroyed and overcome.[40]

That Christ is alive and divine is made evident in the lives of his saints, who, having put on the faith of the cross, are themselves living the life of Christ. As the life of Christ himself was the human form of the life of God the Word, so also in those who participate in the resurrection of the Christ is revealed the life made manifest in the cross. Christ did not live unto himself, nor was his death accomplished as an isolated event. It was for us and for our salvation, as the Nicene Creed affirms. The cross and the life that it brings is given to us who are of his body, the Church. That we are of his body, one with him and his cross, is now to be manifested in the shape of faith, which is nothing other than what Paul says in Galatians 2:20: "It is not I who live, but Christ who lives in me."

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[36] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 28; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 203.
[37] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 28; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 203.
[38] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 28; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 201.
[39] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 28; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 203.
[40] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 29; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 203–205.

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Contemporary Views on Atonement in Light of the Lutheran Confessions

Naomichi Masaki

"All heresy strikes at this *dear* article of Jesus Christ."[1] For Martin Luther, heresy was not just an academic or formal disagreement over the correctness of doctrine; it had to do with Jesus and his office. Jesus alone answered for our sin on Calvary, and he alone delivers forgiveness to us through the means of grace and the office that serves those means.[2] Luther saw the devil attempting to reduce Jesus to *nothing* in order that his way of delivering the gifts may be disturbed.[3] Nothing was more harmful and intolerable for Luther than heresy that deprived him of Jesus his *dear* Savior.

Luther witnessed moves to accommodate belief in Jesus to the religious and cultural environment.[4] This has continued in our own age. Jesus remains a popular figure to be sure, but people searching for personal communion with the divine tend to make up a Jesus whom they like, as Stephen Prothero demonstrated in his *American Jesus: How the Son*

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[1] Martin Luther, *Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe* [*Schriften*], 65 vols. (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1883–1993 [hereafter WA]), 50:267,17–18; Martin Luther, *Luther's Works*, American Edition, 55 vols., ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress Press; St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955–1986 [hereafter *LW*]), 34:208. *The Three Symbols or Creeds of the Christian Faith*, 1538 (emphasis added).

[2] In the Gospels, Jesus is confessed to be the Son of God precisely when he hangs dead on the cross (Matt 27:54 and Mark 15:39; cf. Luke 19:41 and John 20:28). The very first sermon after Jesus' ascension and sending of the Spirit in Jerusalem was that the hearers were responsible for the crucifixion of the Messiah (Acts 2:36). Paul was preaching "the word of the cross" (1 Cor 1:18), having decided "to know nothing except Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor 2:2). At the Lord's table, the eating and drinking of Jesus' body and blood is at the same time a proclamation of "the death of the Lord" until he comes (1 Cor 11:26).

[3] WA 50:269,1–4; *LW* 34:210. "What does it profit you that you confess him to be God and man, if you do not also believe that he has become everything and has done everything for you?" WA 50:269,8–10; *LW* 34:210.

[4] Cf., Norman E. Nagel, "*Martinus*: 'Heresy, Doctor Luther, Heresy!' The Person and Work of Christ," in *Seven-Headed Luther: Essays in Commemoration of a Quincentenary 1483–1983*, ed. Peter Newman Brooks (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), 26–49.

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of God Became a National Icon.[5] The massive success of "The Da Vinci Code" reflects the hunger of millions to see Jesus as a regular person—a man with a wife and a child, and a popular teacher whose true story was subverted. He was, they claim, a sage, mystic, rabbi, boyfriend, father, pacifist, ascetic, and prophet.[6] Along with attacks on the divine nature of Jesus, challenges to his work of salvation have also come. In Britain, Steve Chalke's claim that Jesus' death on the cross was "divine child abuse" stirred a considerable controversy among evangelicals.[7] In the United States, the violent imagery of the cross is avoided by many favorite TV preachers.[8] Building up a positive self-image of Christians seems to be more important than the preaching of Christ crucified.

Luther's statement that "all heresy strikes at this *dear* article of Jesus Christ" is still applicable. What are the current views of the atonement? Is the death of Jesus transformed into something that it really is not?[9] In this essay, we will survey contemporary views on the doctrine of the atonement and present a theological critique of these views in light of the Lutheran Confessions.

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[5] Stephen Prothero, *American Jesus: How the Son of God Became a National Icon* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003).

[6] Cf., Lisa Miller, "A Portrait of Faith: Pope Benedict Becomes the Teacher He Always Wanted to Be," *Newsweek*, May 21, 2007, http://www.newsweek.com/id/34753/page/1.

[7] Madison Trammel, "Cross Purposes: Biggest Christian Conference Splits amid Growing Atonement Debate," *Christianity Today* 51 (July 2007): 15-16. Trammel reports that three of Great Britain's most prominent Christian groups, i.e., Keswick Ministries, the Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship (UCCF), and Spring Harvest, have ended their 14-year conference partnership because of the disagreement over the view of Steve Chalke on the atonement expressed in *The Lost Message of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003). On July 6-8, 2005, the Evangelical Alliance (EA), an umbrella organization for U. K. evangelicals, co-hosted with the London School of Theology a public debate on the atonement. Critiques of penal substitution made by Steve Chalke, Joel Green, Graham McFarlane, Steve Motyer, Stuart Murray Williams, and Lynnette Mullings charged that the penal substitution model has problems because it lacked a persuasive socio-political theological outworking. The Evangelical Alliance revised its doctrinal statement, but it still upholds penal substitution; see "Atonement Symposium," *Evangelical Alliance Web site* (July 8, 2005), http://www.eauk.org/media/joint-evangelical-alliance-london-school.cfm.

[8] For example, Joel Osteen wrote in his latest book: "At the start of each new day, remind yourself: 'I am talented. I am creative. I am greatly favored by God. I am equipped. I am well able. I will see my dreams come to pass.' Declare those statements by faith and before long, you will begin to see them in reality." *Become a Better You* (New York: A Free Press, 2007), 22.

[9] Cf., Dan Kimball, *They Like Jesus but Not the Church: Insights from Emerging Generations* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007).

I. The Doctrine of the Atonement Today

The Atonement Theories

Ever since the publication of Gustaf Aulén's *Christus Victor* in 1931,[10] it has become a habit of the Western church to speak of the doctrine of the atonement in terms of three major types or theories: objective, subjective, and dramatic (which Aulén also calls the classic theory).[11] Despite the appearance of numerous critiques against his advocacy of the dramatic theory, few theologians seem to have avoided his classification scheme when presenting the doctrine of the atonement.[12]

Among those who held to the vicarious satisfaction understanding of the atonement,[13] disagreements arose as to the nature and effect of Jesus'

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[10] Gustaf Aulén, *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of Atonement*, trans. A. G. Herbert (New York: MacMillan, 1931). This work is a translation of the Swedish original, *Den Kristna Försoningstanken: Huvudtyper och Brytningar* (Stockholm: Svenska Kyrkans Kiakonistyrelse, 1930). The literal translation of the Swedish title is: *The Christian Reconciliation-Thinking: The Chief Types and Accents.*

[11] The objective atonement is where God is the object of Christ's atoning work, which delivers men from the guilt of sin. The subjective atonement, on the other hand, consists in a change taking place in men rather than a changed attitude on the part of God. The dramatic atonement designates a view in which Christ fights against and triumphs over the evil powers of the world. Aulén, *Christus Victor*, 1–7.

[12] On Aulén's influence over American Lutheranism, see Kent S. Knutson, *His Only Son Our Lord: Ideas about the Christ* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1966).

[13] A long line of evangelical thinkers have embraced some version of the penal substitution theory, including Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. (New York: Scribner, 1872), 2:464–543; W. G. T. Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, ed. Alan W. Gomes, 3rd ed. (1894; repr., Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 2003), 711–720; Louis Berkhof, *Vicarious Atonement Through Christ* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1936); John Murray, *Redemption: Accomplished and Applied* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955); Leon Morris, *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 144–213; Leon Morris, *The Cross in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965); Robert H. Culpepper, *Interpreting the Atonement* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966); J. I. Packer, "'What Did the Cross Achieve?': The Logic of Penal Substitution," *Tyndale Bulletin* 25 (1974): 3–45; John Stott, *The Cross of Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986); and Thomas R. Schreiner, *The Law and Its Fulfillment: A Pauline Theology of Law* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993). The penal substitution theory is essentially supported by *Where Wrath and Mercy Meet: Proclaiming the Atonement Today, Papers from the Fourth Oak Hill College Annual School of Theology*, ed. David Petersen (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2001); Peter G. Bolt, *The Cross from a Distance: Atonement in Mark's Gospel* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004); Hans Boersma, *Violence, Hospitality, and the Cross: Reappropriating the Atonement Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004); and Charles E. Hill and Frank A. James III, eds., *The Glory of the Atonement: Biblical, Historical and Practical Perspectives, Essays in Honor of Roger Nicole* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004). A study of Anselm and Luther on the

sacrifice with respect to God and his demands. This controversy was exemplified in the twentieth-century debate over whether the Greek word ἱλάσκεσθαι, and related terms used for the atonement, should be translated as "propitiation" (i.e., appeasement) or "expiation" (i.e., the removal of sin).[14] After Abelard in the twelfth century, the subjective view of the atonement did not gain much support until the rise of nineteenth-century theologians Horace Bushnell, Hastings Rashdall, Friedrich Schleiermacher, Albrecht Ritschl, and R. S. Franks.[15]

In recent years some theologians have been making use of Aulén's third and main theory of the atonement—the dramatic, classic, or *Christus Victor* motif[16]—in order to develop a nonviolent liberationist understanding of the atonement. Simon S. Mailela argues that the *Christus Victor* theory needs to be revised to include the concrete historical forces of

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atonement by Burnell F. Eckardt, Jr., remains a unique contribution in the field; see *Anselm and Luther on the Atonement: Was It "Necessary"?* (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1992). We may also make note of the so-called moral government theory of Hugo Grotius (which originated over against the satisfaction theory of Anselm), the moral influence theory of Abelard, and the Reformed penal substitution theory. In this latter theory, God's hatred of sin is demonstrated by the suffering of Christ. This view has often been adopted by those within the Wesleyan/Arminian tradition, such as John Miley, *The Atonement in Christ* (New York: Phillips & Hunt, 1879) and J. Kenneth Grider, *A Wesleyan-Holiness Theology* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 1994), 330–335.

[14] C. H. Dodd, arguing for the expiation view, opened up the debate with his article, "ἱλάσκεσθαι, its Congnates, Derivatives, and Synonyms in the Septuagint," *Journal of Theological Studies* 32 (1931): 352–360. Leon Morris eventually offered his well-known counterargument, first articulated in "The Use of ἱλάσκεσθαι, etc. in Biblical Greek," *Expository Times* 62 (1951): 227–233, and later expanded in his book *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross*, 144–213.

[15] Horace Bushnell, *The Vicarious Sacrifice, Grounded in Principles of Universal Obligation* (New York: Scribner, 1866); Hastings Rashdall, *The Idea of the Atonement in Christian Theology* (London: Macmillan, 1920); Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, ed. and trans. H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart, 2nd ed. (1830; repr., Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1928), 458; Albrecht Ritschl, *The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation*, ed. and trans. H. R. Mackintosh and A. B. Macaulay (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1900); and R. S. Franks, *The Atonement* (London: Oxford University Press, 1934).

[16] Aulén's *Christus Victor* motif has been picked up by a number of scholars who hold it as a way to understand the work of Christ; see Sydney Cave, *The Doctrine of the Work of Christ* (Nashville: Cokesbury, 1937); Thomas N. Finger, *Christian Theology: An Eschatological Approach*, 2 vols. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1985), 1:303–348; Rowan A. Greer, "Christ the Victor and the Victim," *CTQ* 59 (1995): 1–30; Karl Heim, *Jesus the World's Perfector*, trans. D. H. Van Daalen (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1959); R. Leivestad, *Christ the Conqueror* (New York: Macmillan, 1954); J. S. Whale, *Victor and Victim* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1960); and Robert Webber, *The Church in the World* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), 267.

economic and political oppression.[17] Darby Kathleen Ray criticizes Anselm's "vicarious satisfaction" and Abelard's "moral influence" theories, contending that these models foster values such as sacrifice, obedience, and dependency—values that reinforce victimization and economic-, race-, or gender-based subordination.[18] J. Denny Weaver writes from an Anabaptist (Mennonite) perspective of Christian pacifism, promoting a view which he calls "Narrative Christus Victor."[19] He attempts to create a holistic theology encompassing Jesus' complete nonviolent ministry that includes his death, while criticizing the penal substitution theory. Gregory A. Boyd combines an open theism view with the warfare between God and Satan as a cosmic battle, pointing the way for the church to be involved in this struggle.[20]

Aulén's three motifs are not the only categories. There is an ongoing quest in recent literature for the most suitable theory by which to understand the atonement. John Driver has noted no less than ten motifs of New Testament atonement images: conflict-victory-liberation, vicarious suffering, archetypal images (representative man, pioneer, forerunner, firstborn), martyr, sacrifice, expiation/the wrath of God, redemption-purchase, reconciliation, justification, and adoption-family.[21] Driver points out that any one of Aulén's traditional motifs falls short of comprehending the whole biblical imagery of atonement. Similarly, Peter Schmiechen affirms a multiplicity of atonement theories and has supplied four overarching categories for grouping them: "Christ Died for Us" (sacrifice, justification by grace, and penal substitution); "Liberation from Sin, Death, and Demonic Powers" (liberation); "The Purposes of God" (the renewal of the creation, the restoration of the creation, and Christ the goal of creation); and "Reconciliation" (Christ the way to the knowledge of God, Christ the Reconciler, and the wondrous love of God).[22] Ted Peters accepts Aulén's classification but enlarges it to include six models of the atonement: Jesus as the teacher of true knowledge, our moral example and influence, *Christus Victor*, our satisfaction, the happy exchange, and the final

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[17] Simon S. Maimela, "The Atonement in the Context of Liberation Theology," *International Review of Mission* 75 (1986): 261–269.

[18] Darby Kathleen Ray, *Deceiving the Devil* (Cleveland: Pilgrim, 1998).

[19] J. Denny Weaver, *The Nonviolent Atonement* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001).

[20] Gregory A. Boyd, *God at War: The Bible and Spiritual Conflict* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), and *Satan and the Problem of Evil: Constructing a Trinitarian Warfare Theodicy* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001).

[21] John Driver, *Understanding the Atonement for the Mission of the Church* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1986).

[22] Peter Schmiechen, *Saving Power: Theories of Atonement and Forms of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005).

scapegoat.[23] Contributors to *Cross-Examination* argue that the church is moving in the twenty-first century toward a fourth category of the atonement theory on top of Aulén's three models: various liberation models.[24] Gregory A. Boyd and Paul R. Eddy summarize the atonement views into five categories: *Christus Victor* view (early church), the satisfaction view (Anselm, eleventh century), the subjective view (Abelard, twelfth century), the penal substitution view (Luther, Calvin, sixteenth century), and the moral government view (Grotius, seventeenth century).[25] Contributors to *The Nature of the Atonement* present four views of the atonement: the *Christus Victor* view (Gregory Boyd), the penal substitution view (Thomas Schreiner), the healing view (Bruce Reichenbach), and the kaleidoscopic view (Joel Green).[26]

Critiques of the Traditional Views of the Atonement

Another way to look at contemporary views on the atonement is to examine critiques that have been offered against the traditional views. First, some critics maintain that the traditional doctrine of the atonement has lost relevancy and must be contextualized. Joel Green and Mark Baker provide examples of how culture has influenced theories of the atonement.[27] They claim that the *Christus Victor* model in Irenaeus and Gregory of Nyssa was effective because it addressed the cosmology and needs of the people of that period, the satisfaction model of Anselm was culturally relevant because it addressed the feudal system of the day, and the like. Green and Baker argue that since the church has always developed different models of the atonement in response to the cultural context of the times, today's church needs to develop images that speak to our own context. They presented a concept of shame to interpret the atonement in the Japanese context.[28] Douglas John Hall is another example

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[23] Ted Peters, "Atonement and the Final Scapegoat," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 19 (Summer 1992): 151–181, and "Six Ways of Salvation: How Does Jesus Save?" *dialog* 45 (Fall 2006): 223–235.

[24] Marit Trelstad, ed., *Cross-Examinations: Readings on the Meaning of the Cross Today* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006).

[25] Gregory A. Boyd and Paul R. Eddy, *Across the Spectrum: Understanding Issues in Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 113–131.

[26] James Beilby and Paul R. Eddy, eds., *The Nature of the Atonement: Four Views* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006).

[27] Joel B. Green and Mark D. Baker, *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross: Atonement in New Testament and Contemporary Contexts* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000).

[28] Green and Baker, *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross*, 153–170. Makito Masaki argues that the solution for the gospel proclamation in Japan is Lutheran theology and anthropology rather than the concept of contexualization; see "The Use of Luther's

of similar contextualization because he presents the theology of the cross self-consciously in a post-September 11 world.[29] Vitor Westhelle incorporates liberationist thinking into Luther's theology of the cross, arguing on the basis of the nonviolent understanding of the atonement that the church needs to be involved in the pain and death in the world rather than staying away from them.[30]

Second, there are a considerable number of feminist theologians calling for changes to our understanding of Jesus' death. Rita Nakashima Brock charges that the image of God as father reflects the family structure of patriarchal culture where fathers tend to be both in control and absent.[31] She also argues that Jesus is not the locus of the redemptive event; it is the task of the human community that saves the world from the sin of patriarchy.[32] Rather than Jesus saving us, Brock believes that we need to save Jesus. Joanne Carlson Brown and Rebecca Parker sound a similar note:

> Christianity is an abusive theology that glorifies suffering. Is it any wonder that there is so much abuse in modern society when the predominant image or theology of the culture is of "divine child abuse" – God the Father demanding and carrying out the suffering and death of his own son? If Christianity is to be liberating for the oppressed, it must itself be liberated from this theology. We must do away with the atonement, this idea of a blood sin upon the whole human race which can be washed away only by the blood of the lamb. . . . We do not need to be saved by Jesus' death from some original sin. We need to be liberated from the oppression of racism, classism, and sexism, that is, from patriarchy.[33]

Theological Anthropology in Addressing Current Japanese Thought" (STM thesis, Concordia Theological Seminary, 1992).

[29] Douglas John Hall, *The Cross in Our Own Context: Jesus and the Suffering World* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003).

[30] Vitor Westhelle, *The Scandalous God: The Use and Abuse of the Cross* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006). Cf., Roy A. Harrisville, *Fracture: The Cross as Irreconcilable in the Language and Thought of the Biblical Writers* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006).

[31] Rita Nakashima Brock, "And a Little Child Will Lead Us: Christology and Child Abuse," in *Christianity, Patriarchy, and Abuse: A Feminist Critique*, ed. Joanne Carlson Brown and Carole R. Bohn (New York: Pilgrim, 1989), 42–61.

[32] Rita Nakamura Brock, *Journeys by Heart: A Christology of Erotic Power* (New York: Crossroad, 1988).

[33] Joanne Carlson Brown and Rebecca Parker, "For God So Loved the World?" in *Christianity, Patriarchy, and Abuse: A Feminist Critique*, ed. Joanne Carlson Brown and Carole R. Bohn (New York: Pilgrim, 1989), 26–27.

Mary J. Streufert asserts that male-centeredness and sacrifice in Christology are problematic to feminist theologians.[34] Her solution is to recover the theology of Schleiermacher. Borrowing Dawn DeVries' study of Schleiermacher,[35] Streufert argues that the atonement theory may be released from its violent paradigm when the redemptive work of Christ is relocated from the sacrificial appeasement to the preached word. Preaching is not only the locus of atonement but also the genderless incarnation of Christ.[36]

Related to the feminist critique is the evaluation of traditional atonement theories given by Steve Chalke[37] and Alan Mann. Debate has arisen in evangelical circles about their writing, mostly because of their alleged denial of penal substitution, as evinced in this statement:

> The fact is that the cross isn't a form of cosmic child abuse—a vengeful Father, punishing his Son for an offence he has not even committed. Understandably, both people inside and outside of the Church have found this twisted version of events morally dubious and a huge barrier to faith. Deeper than that, however, is that such a concept stands in total contradiction to the statement "God is love." If the cross is a personal act of violence perpetrated by God towards humankind but borne by his Son, then it makes a mockery of Jesus' own teaching to love your enemies and to refuse to repay evil with evil. The truth is, the cross is a symbol of love. It is a demonstration of just how far God as Father and Jesus as his Son are prepared to go to prove that love. The cross is a vivid statement of the powerlessness of love.[38]

Recently a strongly negative response to Chalke appeared in a collection of essays entitled *Pierced For Our Transgressions*.[39] N. T. Wright, who

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[34] Mary J. Streufert, "Reclaiming Schleiermacher for Twenty-first Century Atonement Theory: The Human and the Divine in Feminist Christology," *Feminist Theology* 15 (2006): 98–120.

[35] Dawn DeVries, *Jesus Christ in the Preaching of Calvin and Schleiermacher* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1996).

[36] For a much more traditional understanding of the atonement from a feminist perspective, see Nancy J. Duff "Atonement and the Christian Life: Reformed Doctrine from a Feminist Perspective," *Interpretation* 53 (1999): 27. She explains the atonement according to the threefold office of Christ as prophet, priest, and king. Robert Sherman also uses the threefold office of Christ as a way to describe the work of reconciliation in *King, Priest and Prophet: A Trinitarian Theology of Atonement* (New York: T&T Clark International, 2004).

[37] See above, 306 n. 7.

[38] Steve Chalke and Alan Mann, *The Lost Message of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 182–183.

[39] Steve Jeffery, Mike Ovey, and Andrew Sach, *Pierced For Our Transgressions: Rediscovering the Glory of Penal Substitution* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007).

previously commended Chalke's book, countered the response by saying that it does not, in fact, deny the penal substitution theory; instead it expressed the opinion that there are several forms of the doctrine of penal substitution, with some more biblical than others.[40] Some Lutheran theologians are also challenging the understanding of the atonement as penal substitution.[41]

Third, the studies of literary critic René Girard have also resulted in a powerful criticism of penal substitution.[42] Girard claims that the root of ritual in all religion and all culture is human violence, which arises out of the "mimetic desire" that sets people onto a deadly rivalry. Religion transforms the human violence into "sacred violence." The death of Jesus should not be seen as a sacrifice but a scapegoat, a means of purification to maintain social order. Jesus was the final scapegoat who broke the pattern of "mimetic desire." Girard's theory influenced a number of theologians, including Raymond Schwager, James G. Williams, and Robert G. Hammerton-Kelly, who applied the thought of Girard to biblical interpretations.[43] This theory also influenced Ted Peters, William C. Placher, Anthony W. Bartlett, and Kevin J. Vanhoozer, who interact with Girard's theory in their presentations on atonement.[44]

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[40] N. T. Wright, "The Cross and the Caricatures—A Response to Robert Jenson, Jeffrey John, and a New Volume Entitled *Pierced for Our Transgressions*," *Fulcrum: Renewing the Evangelical Centre Web site* (Eastertide 2007), http://www.fulcrum-anglican.org.uk/news/2007/20070423wright.cfm?doc=205.

[41] For example, David A. Brondos, *Paul on the Cross* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), and *Fortress Introduction to Salvation and the Cross* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007).

[42] René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (French, 1972; Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977); *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World*, trans. Stephen Bann and Michael Metteer (French, 1978; Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987); and *The Scapegoat*, trans. Yvonne Freccero (French, 1982; Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

[43] Raymond Schwager, *Must There By Scapegoats? Violence and Redemption in the Bible*, trans. Maria L. Assad (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1986); James G. Williams, "The Innocent Victim: René Girard on Violence, Sacrifice, and the Sacred," *Religious Studies Review* 14 (1988): 320–326; James G. Williams, *The Bible, Violence, and the Sacred: Liberation from the Myth of Sanctioned Violence* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991); and Robert G. Hammerton-Kelly, *Sacred Violence: Paul's Hermeneutic of the Cross* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992).

[44] Ted Peters, "Atonement and the Final Scapegoat," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 19 (Summer 1992): 151–181; William C. Placher, "Christ Takes Our Place: Rethinking Atonement," *Interpretation* 53 (1999): 5–20; Anthony W. Bartlett, *Cross Purposes: The Violent Grammar of Christian Atonement* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2001); and Kevin J. Vanhoozer, "The Atonement in Postmodernity: Guilt, Goats and

Finally, there are several other new approaches to the atonement that critically evaluate the traditional views. Jon D. Levenson expounds on the theme of the father who offers his beloved son.[45] He claims that the literal sacrifice of the first born son to Yahweh was an authorized practice in the early church (Genesis 22; Exod 22:28–29; 34:19–20). Jesus did not eliminate this practice but transformed it (John 1:29; Rom 8:32). Like Isaac, Jesus as the paschal Lamb and the Suffering Servant provided his Father in heaven complete pleasure only when he had endured a brutal confrontation of death. David Seeley argues that Paul's interpretation of the death of Jesus was influenced by the martyrology of 2 and 4 Maccabees.[46] Seeley called it "the Noble Death," which consists of five elements: vicariousness, obedience, a military context, overcoming physical vulnerability, and the application of sacrificial metaphors. Stephen Finlan aims to undo what Aulén did.[47] If Aulén's *Christus Victor* shifted the center of theology from the incarnation to the atonement, Finlan wants to reverse the shift. Finlan does not attempt to offer another acceptable theory of the atonement; rather, he suggests that salvation should be understood in terms of incarnation and *theosis*, not in terms of sacrifice.

The Disappearing Doctrine of Penal Substitution

Most criticism of the atonement is targeted at the penal substitution theory. Several scholars argue that it is irrelevant, too violent, too individualistic, or insufficient. The centrality of the cross had already vanished from the "liberal" Protestant churches in the nineteenth century. During the last few decades, however, the doctrine of the atonement has weakened and is losing importance in other mainline and evangelical churches as well. What H. Richard Niebuhr wrote of the "old liberals" seems to apply even among some of today's "conservatives": "a God without wrath brought men and women without sin into a Kingdom

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Gifts," in *The Glory of the Atonement*, ed. Charles E. Hill and Frank A. James III (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004): 367–404.

[45] Jon D. Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son: The Transformation of Child Sacrifice, Judaism and Christianity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1993).

[46] David Seeley, *The Noble Death: Graeco-Roman Martyrology and Paul's Concept of Salvation*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 28 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990).

[47] Stephen Finlan, *The Background and Content of Paul's Cultic Atonement Metaphors* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), and *Problems with Atonement: The Origins of, and Controversy about, the Atonement Doctrine* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2005); cf., *Options on Atonement in Christian Thought* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007).

without judgment through the ministration of a Christ without the cross."[48]

During the sixteenth century, the Reformers and the Roman Catholics appeared to have agreed on the article on Christ but not on the article on justification. Now most debates are about the doctrine of the atonement rather than the subjective side of faith. Paul Tillich was prophetic when he observed the following: first, that in our era guilt *coram Deo* is not the dominant cultural and religious problem and such concepts as meaninglessness and anxiety express the problem better than does sin; second, that "absolute faith," that is, faith without an object is the way to describe the antidote for this contemporary form of what is wrong with us; third, that justification is then understood as awareness of being accepted; and, fourth, that the role of Jesus becomes a revealer rather than a savior.[49] George Lindbeck found an analogy between Tillich and Karl Rahner, for Rahner also wrote on those four points.[50]

Distaste for Christ's work of atonement is widespread. Is the death of our Lord on the cross to be left open for a variety of these interpretations? Has the church accommodated Jesus to our religious and cultural environment? What do our Confessions say about the atonement?

II. The Atonement in the Lutheran Confessions

If one hopes to find references to the atonement in the Lutheran Confessions by surveying the subject index, puzzlement may result because the word "atonement" does not appear. The reason is simple. The term "atonement" does not derive from Latin or German but from an English word. It probably originated in the use of Anglo-French by the Normans after their conquest of the Anglo-Saxons in AD 1066: *etre a un*, which means "to agree." English Bibles of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries began using "atonement" ("at-one-ment") for the Hebrew כָּפַר (cover over, propitiate) and the Greek ἱλασμός (expiation, propitiation) and καταλλαγή (reconciliation).[51]

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[48] H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Kingdom of God in America* (New York: Harper, 1959/1937), 193.

[49] Paul Tillich, *The Courage to Be* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1952), 155–190. On Tillich's view on the atonement, see *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), 2:165–180.

[50] See George Lindbeck, "Justification and Atonement: An Ecumenical Trajectory," in *By Faith Alone: Essays on Justification in Honor of Gerhard O. Forde*, ed. Joseph A. Burgess and Marc Kolden (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 193–195.

[51] Cf. Ted Peters, "Atonement and the Final Scapegoat," 153.

The Lutheran Confessions, on the other hand, describe the work of Christ with the German term *Versühnung* (reconciliation), having 2 Corinthians 5:19 as background: "God was in Christ *reconciling* the world to himself." The Confessions also employ other terms such as *Bezahlung* (payment), *Opfer* (sacrifice), *Mittler* (Mediator), and *Genugtuung* (satisfaction) to confess the atonement.[52] *Reconciliation* is what Jesus has done on the cross and is still doing today as he delivers the forgiveness of sins to the world.

The Augsburg Confession and Its Apology[53]

In the Augsburg Confession, the article on sin (*CA* II) precedes the article on Christ (*CA* III). Sin is confessed as inherited since Adam's fall. The Apology states that the sinner is totally powerless to do anything to rescue himself from his sinful status before God and from his captivity to Satan (Ap II, 46–50). Before the formal confession in Article IX, the first reference to Baptism in the Augsburg Confession is found in this Second Article (*CA* II, 2). To insist that one can save himself is to reject Baptism and the Holy Spirit, and to deny that he is born sinful is to "insult [*zu Schmach*]" and "diminish [*extenuent*]" what Christ has done for the sinner by his suffering and the shedding of his blood (*CA* II, 3; cf. Ap IV, 157, 204; *CA* XXVII, 38).

After confessing original sin, Article III unpacks what Christ has done for the sinner[54] by dividing the work of Jesus into two parts. Jesus was born, suffered, was crucified, died, and was buried "in order to be a sacrifice [*hostia, ein Opfer*] for sin" and "to reconcile [*reconciliaret, versohnet*] God's wrath" (*CA* III, 3; Ap III). Jesus descended into hell, rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God not only "to rule and reign," but also "to justify and sanctify the believer" (*CA* III, 4–5; Ap III). In this way, Augsburg Confession and Apology III connect not only the incarnation and the atonement but also the atonement and justification. We hear the same in the Apology: "Thus it is not enough to

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[52] Cf. Kenneth Hagen, "Luther on Atonement—Reconfigured," *CTQ* 61 (1997): 252–253.

[53] We will use the following abbreviations for the confessional documents in the Book of Concord: *CA* for the Augsburg Confession, Ap for the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, SA for the Smalcald Articles, Tr for the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope, SC for the Small Catechism, LC for the Large Catechism, FC for the Formula of Concord, Ep for the Epitome of the Formula of Concord, and SD for the Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord.

[54] As if it were the Advent season, *CA* III confesses the threefold coming of Jesus—his coming into flesh (*CA* III, 3), his coming in his present ministry (*CA* III, 4–5), and his final coming for judgment (*CA* III, 6).

believe that Christ was born, suffered, and was resurrected unless we also add this article, which is the *causa finalis* of the history [of Jesus]: 'the forgiveness of sins'" (Ap IV, 51).

On the one hand, the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross is confessed to be "sufficient [*satis fuisse, gnug getan hat*] for the sins of the entire world" (Ap XIII, 8). There is nothing to add to what he has done for us (cf., *CA* XXVI, 21). He bore our sin and penalties. He destroyed the reign of the devil, sin, and death (Ap II, 50). He did this all *for us, in our place.* Therefore, he *alone* is the Reconciler, Mediator, Propitiator, Savior, and High Priest, as well as the mercy seat, the propitiation, the sacrifice, payment, and satisfaction (*CA* XXI, 2; Ap IV, 53, 156, 179; Ap XII, 76, 140; Ap XXIV, 19–24). It is also confessed, on the other hand, that the same Jesus is *now* delivering the fruits of the cross to us by forgiving, enlivening, and protecting us (*CA* III, 5; Ap III).

How does Jesus deliver his gifts? The Augsburg Confession says, "through the Holy Spirit" (*CA* III, 5). Article IV then confesses such a delivery from the point of view of *the receivers*, and Article V confesses the same from the point of view of *the giver*. Forgiveness is received when we believe that Christ has suffered *for us* (*CA* IV, 2).[55] Such faith is only possible, however, when there is a mouth that *preaches* the word of the cross to us (*externum verbum*; *CA* II, 4). For the sake of Jesus' speaking, the Augsburg Confession confesses that our Lord has instituted the *Predigtamt*, the office that delivers a sermon (*CA* V, 1–3).

Augsburg Confession VI returns to the confession of *faith*, which lives in believers and produces good works. Articles VII and VIII confess the church to be the place where faith receives the gifts through the means of grace. The confession of each of the means of grace—Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and Holy Absolution—follows as instituted by Jesus for his delivery of the forgiveness he accomplished on the cross (*CA* IX–XII).

This is the way in which the Augsburg Confession and its Apology articulate the works of Christ as *reconciliation*. Jesus *alone* is confessed as *the reconciler*. The doctrine of the atonement is not confessed in isolation; it is not presented as an abstract theory, idea, or concept. It is located within the confession of Sin (*CA* II), Justification (*CA* IV), the Office of the Holy Ministry (*CA* V), Christian Life (*CA* VI), the Church (*CA* VII, VIII), Baptism (*CA* IX), the Lord's Supper (*CA* X), Holy Absolution (*CA* XI), and the Divine Service (*CA* XXIV).

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[55] The Apology defines faith as receiving the gift that has been bestowed (Ap IV, 48–49, 60, 80, 154).

This understanding of reconciliation in the Augsburg Confession and the Apology is grounded in the Scriptures. The terms καταλλάσσω and καταλλαγή appear only in two places in the New Testament, 2 Corinthians 5 and Romans 5, which gave the basis for the reformers' confession on the atonement. Again, Paul included two things as he spoke on Christ's work of *reconciliation*. One is Christ on the cross; the other is Jesus in his preaching today. "God was in Christ *reconciling* the world to himself, not taking into account their transgressions against them" (2 Cor 5:19); "He who did not know sin he made sin (sin offering) in our place, so that we may become righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor 5:21).[56] These words spoke of Christ on the cross, accomplishing our salvation. *In our place* (ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν) speaks of *vicarious atonement* on Calvary.[57] On the other hand, "In the place of Christ, therefore, we are carrying out the office of an ambassador, as if God is appealing through us. We are imploring in the place of Christ, '*Be reconciled* with God'" (2 Cor 5:20). These words speak of the reconciliation that Jesus proclaims today, because the apostles Paul and Timothy (2 Cor 1:1) spoke *in the place of Christ* (ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ) as the ones sent by Jesus (cf. 1 Thess 2:13). For Paul, *reconciliation* includes a *report* of the cross and an *address* to the hearers; reconciliation includes justification: "He who did not know sin, in the place of us he made (to be) sin (sin offering), so that we might become righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor 5:21; cf., Rom 5:9, 10).[58]

The Smalcald Articles

The doctrine of justification is usually called *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae* (an "article upon which the church stands or falls," or, more literally, the "article of the standing and falling church"). This phrase does not occur in the Lutheran Confessions.[59] The closest that we find is in the

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[56] Cf., John W. Kleinig, *Leviticus*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2003), 121–124. Kleinig sees in Paul's use of the word "made" in "He who did not know sin he *made* sin offering in our place" an influence of the use of עָשָׂה as a ritual term in Leviticus. God offered Jesus as the "sin offering" for man's sin. Kleinig demonstrates that the heart of all sacrifice is found in vicarious sacrifice.

[57] See Harald Riesenfeld, "ὑπέρ," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 8:507–516.

[58] The close relation between reconciliation and justification may be observed by the use of the word λογίζεσθαι (2 Cor 5:19), which is vital to Paul in his understanding of justification (Rom 4:3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 23, 24).

[59] On the difficulty of finding the origin and history of the phrase, see J. A. O. Preus III, "Justification by Faith: The *Articulus Stantis et Cadentis Ecclesiae*," in *And Every Tongue Confess: Essays in Honor of Norman Nagel on the Occasion of His Sixty-fifth Birthday*, ed.

Smalcald Articles where it reads: "On this article [*Häuptartikel*, "the chief article"], stands all that we teach and live against the pope, the devil, and the world" (SA II, I, 5). This statement corresponds with the Roman position as Luther discerned it: "When the Mass falls, the papacy falls" (SA II, II, 10).

The *chief* article in the Smalcald Articles, however, is not the doctrine of justification, but "the office and work of Jesus Christ [*das Ampt und Werk Jesu Christi*]" (SA II, I). Luther combined the office of Christ and the doctrine of justification in his *Lectures on Galatians 1531*: *iustificare peccatorem sit solius Christi proprium officium*, "it is the proper office of Christ alone to justify the sinner."[60] In confessing the *chief* article, Luther did not craft some well-thought-through words and formulations or state his scholarly analysis of the dogmatic tradition of the church (SA II, I, 1–5). Instead, he simply put forward *the words of our Lord*, just as he did in the Small Catechism when he confessed Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper. His way is that of homology—saying back to the Lord what he has said to us.

The first thing that Luther confesses is the death and resurrection of Jesus (Rom 4:25), especially that Jesus bore the sins of the world on the cross by shedding his blood as the Lamb of God (John 1:29; Isa 53:6) (SA II, I, 1–2). The uniqueness of the cross of Jesus is confessed by the term "alone." *Jesus alone* went to the cross, bearing the sin of the whole world (SA II, I, 2). It seems that Luther had a vivid sense of the actual sacrament before his eyes as he confessed the atonement.[61] Jesus, who was identified by the voice from heaven and by the confession of John the Baptist as *ebed Yahweh* and the Lamb of God, bore the sins of *many* (πολλοῖς: Isa 53:11 LXX; John 1:29). The same Jesus says: "This is my blood of the testament which is shed *for many* [περὶ πολλῶν, ὑπὲρ πολλῶν] for the forgiveness of sins" (Matt 26:28; Mark 14:24). Luther knew that the fruit of the atonement on the cross is given out in the Lord's Supper. Next, Luther confesses the justification of sinners with Romans 3 (SA II, I, 3–4). It seems that the words of Isaiah 53 were still echoing in Luther's ears, because Isaiah says: "My *righteous* one, my servant, shall *justify many*, as he shall *bear* their

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Gerald S. Krispin and Jon D. Vieker (Dearborn, MI: The Nagel Festschrift Committee, 1990), 279.

[60] WA 40.I:406,24–25; *LW* 26:259. As in the *Large Confession* of 1528, so in the Smalcald Articles, Luther's way of confessing justification is to speak of Christ in terms of what he has accomplished on the cross and what he continues to bestow on us today. Only then does talk of faith appear.

[61] The confession of Jesus *alone* to be *the Lamb of God* was sung in the liturgy in the *Gloria Excelsis* and the *Agnus Dei*.

iniquities" (Isa 53:11). Lastly, Luther adds Acts 4, on the name of Jesus, and concludes with another verse of Isaiah 53 (SA II, I, 5).

To summarize, the chief article (SA II, I) confesses that Jesus *alone* is *the Lamb of God*, who bore the sin of the world and who *alone justifies*. For Luther, the confession of Christ and his office is never complete unless delivery of Jesus in the means of grace is also confessed. Immediately after the chief article, Luther writes: "The Mass in the papacy must be the greatest and most horrible abomination, as it directly and violently opposes against this chief article" (SA II, II, 1).[62]

In Part III of the Smalcald Articles, Luther then articulates further this chief article of the work and office of Christ in relation with law and gospel, the means of grace, the church, and the life of the Christians in the world. As the confession of the church as "holy believers and 'the little sheep who hear the voice of their shepherd'" indicates (SA III, XII, 2), *the Lamb of God* who *suffered* on the cross now *speaks* in the church as *the Good Shepherd*.[63]

Small and Large Catechisms

Within the catechisms, the confession of the Second Article of the Creed and of Holy Baptism is vital for our understanding of the atonement. If *the Lamb of God* was the key title of Jesus in the Smalcald Articles, here it is *the Lord*. The Large Catechism explains: "Let this be the summary of this article, that the little word 'LORD' is the simplest way to say Redeemer, that is, he who has brought us back from the devil to God, from death to life, from sin to righteousness, and keeps us there" (LC II, 31). We were captive under the power of the devil. We were condemned to death and entangled in sin. But now Jesus redeemed and released us from sin, death, and the devil (LC II, 26–30). How did Jesus redeem the sinner? The Large Catechism answers that he became man, suffered, died, and was buried to make satisfaction (*genug täte*) for the sinner, and paid what the sinner owed not with silver and gold but with his own precious blood. He

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[62] The Mass in the Roman Church was judged against Romans 4, John 1, Isaiah 53, Romans 3, and Acts 4. Not only the Mass but also purgatory, the appearing of the spirits of the departed, pilgrimages, fraternities, relics, indulgences, the invocation of saints, monasteries, and the papacy in the Roman Church are considered to stand contrary to the chief article of the office and work of Christ, and against his mandate (SA II, II–IV).

[63] If what is said about the Roman abuses is seen as Luther's theological diagnosis, what follows in Part III of the Smalcald Articles may be considered as his cure. The twin pillar in this section is the confession of "sin and Christ our Savior" (SA III, I, 11). It also has to do with the proper distinction between law and gospel. "Christ has died in vain," says Luther, if we hold false doctrine (SA III, I, 11; cf., SA Preface, 15).

swallowed up death by his resurrection, ascended, and assumed the authority at the right hand of the Father, where he subjected the devil to him (LC II, 31). In this way, Luther confesses the atonement as Jesus bringing the sinner back from the power of the devil.

Luther's confession of the atonement does not stop here. The Large Catechism says that it is Baptism that brings "the overcoming of devil and death, forgiveness of sin, God's grace, the whole Christ, and the Holy Spirit with his gifts" (LC IV, 41; cf. SC IV, 5–6; Baptismal Booklet, 3, 8, 11–22). Moreover, Jesus keeps the baptized within the "boundless [*überschwänglich*]" blessings of Baptism (SC II, 4; LC IV, 42) to live in his kingdom through the Lord's Supper and Holy Absolution. Luther exhorts the baptized to teach the devil to death through the hearing of the word since we are daily still under the dominion of the devil (LC I, 100–102; Preface 19).

The Formula of Concord

The Formula of Concord articulates the atonement by providing further clarifications. Second Corinthians 5, the key passage on *reconciliation* (*Versühnung, reconciliatio*), now appears explicitly (Ep III, 1; SD III, 30; V, 22; XI, 27; cf., SD III, 4, 54; XI, 15; Ap XXIV, 80). For example, the Solid Declaration says:

> In order that the troubled heart may have a steadfast and sure comfort and that Christ's merit and God's grace may be given appropriate honor, Scripture teaches that the righteousness of faith before God consists only in the gracious reconciliation [*gnädiger Versühnung*] or forgiveness of sins, which is bestowed upon us out of genuine grace solely for the sake of the merits of Christ our Mediator [*des Mittlers Christi*], and is received only through faith in the promise of the Gospel. (SD III, 30)

In this text, justification and atonement are both confessed, as in the rest of the Book of Concord. The Formula adds a renewed emphasis that Jesus died on the cross and serves the church today in the Lord's Supper through both his divine and human natures (SD III, 4; VIII, 4, 78).

III. The Lutheran Confessions and the Doctrine of the Atonement Today

The confessors in the sixteenth century did not address contemporary questions on the doctrine of the atonement, but their understanding of Jesus' death does leave us with guidance in addressing these questions ourselves.

The Atonement as a Theory?

First, we recall that Aulén is largely responsible for presenting the doctrine of the atonement in terms of ideas, concepts, and motifs. While

many current theologians acknowledge that the death of Jesus cannot be understood by only one of the available categories, there is an ongoing quest for the most suitable theory.

What is the Confessions' theory of the atonement? Superficial reading may suggest that the Lutheran Confessions held all the great schemes in one way or the other. A closer look at the Confessions, however, indicates that the confessors articulated the doctrine of the atonement in a fundamentally different way. Theories of the atonement tend to conform to a certain *a priori* pattern of explanation. Some contemporary scholars attempt to understand the atonement by searching for what may have been going on behind the texts of the New Testament. In the Lutheran Confessions, in contrast, the words of the Lord remained not only primary but everything.

In the Smalcald Articles, for example, all Luther did was to confess some key biblical passages without presenting sophisticated theories. Christology is a matter of an *afterthought*, a joyous confession and acclamation of all that Jesus has done *for us*. It is not as though we first figure out how we would like Jesus to be, and then set him up to work that way according to our notion of how he should be God. Jesus does not suffer that way. He does not fit into man's specifications. The Lutheran Confessions do not hope to establish a rational explanation of Christ's accomplishment because it exceeds our comprehension.[64] The devil can preach the facts, but only the Holy Spirit preaches that Christ died *for you*. Second Corinthians 5, one of the key passages in the Confessions on the atonement, presents the gospel not only as a historical *report* of Christ's life, death, and resurrection, but also as Jesus' own *address* to us with the words *for you*. Yet theology is in constant danger of converting even this *for you* into a "theory" of atonement.

The Lutheran Confessions do not stand *above* the Scriptures but *under* them. Luther speaks of *oratio, meditatio, tentatio*,[65] that is, a theologian is not of *our* making but *God's* making. Theology for the Lutheran Confessions is not a matter of *vita activa* (doing) or *contemplatio* (theory), but of *vita passive* (passive life).[66] We are only passively *given to* by the Lord: *externum*

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[64] Ian D. Kingston Siggins, *Martin Luther's Doctrine of Christ* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1970), 108–113.

[65] *Preface to the Wittenberg Edition of Luther's German Writings, 1539*. WA 50:657–661; *LW* 34:283–288.

[66] Oswald Bayer, *Theology the Lutheran Way*, ed. and trans. Jeffrey G. Silcock and Mark C. Mattes (Grand Rapids: Eerdman, 2007), 21–27.

verbum, extra nos. This explains why Luther's confession of the chief article in the Smalcald Articles sounds liturgical and catechetical.

Relocation of the Atonement?

Second, some contemporary thinkers relocate the atonement from the death of Jesus on the cross to his incarnation or to the ongoing preaching in the church. The Lutheran Confessions do not reposition the atonement as preaching to avoid the distaste of the sacrificial death or his male-centeredness. Neither do they move reconciliation from atonement to incarnation to undo the theories of Aulén. Rather, in the Confessions reconciliation includes both Calvary and the means of grace. It is not either Good Friday or preaching; it is both, each having uniqueness in its office and work.

Neither is reconciliation detached from the incarnation. The Formula of Concord emphasizes that Jesus reconciled the world in both divine and human natures. Jesus' ongoing ministry of preaching and sacraments is also by both natures. Instead of isolating the doctrine of the atonement from the rest of the articles, the Lutheran Confessions confess it within the organic wholeness of one doctrine that includes all the articles of faith.

The Atonement as Too Individualistic?

Third, the doctrine of the atonement is troublesome for many because it was considered too individualistic. It is claimed that the church should focus her attention more on economic and political oppression as well as the issues of gender and race. One author even suggested that rather than Jesus saving us we need to save him from saving us from sin. Here the doctrine of the two governances, the proper distinction between law and gospel, and the two kinds of righteousness may be helpful. What liberationists claim about the work of Jesus on the cross depends on how they view the seriousness of our sin, the reality of death, and the work of the devil.

The Atonement as Too Violent?

Fourth, the doctrine of the atonement is considered distasteful because it is measured as too violent. Critics say that the imagery of the shedding of innocent blood does not promote Jesus as a moral example for us to follow. They also noted that the Father punishing his Son contradicts the real meaning of the cross, a symbol of God's love.

The Lutheran Confessions do not have a problem with violent imagery. Luther wrote in the Small Catechism that Jesus redeemed us "not with gold or silver, but with his holy, precious blood and with his innocent

suffering and death" (SC II, 4). Consider Luther's two sermons from 1537 and 1538:

> The body and the blood of Christ are a medicine against the poison which the devil in Paradise put into death and sin. This is the medicine: It is by His death and the shedding of His blood that He takes away your death. Therefore, so that you never forget it, I have instituted the Sacrament.[67]

> That we die, we who are children of death, is not something to wonder at. But that the Lord of death dies, that is something to ponder. When death and sin stare threatening at us, then let us look to the death of our Lord .... What does my death amount to? However, when the Lord of life dies, then one little drop of his blood does more than the death of all men. So then we leave behind us every distress. For he did not die for his own sake but for ours. ... [68]

The comfort that Luther preaches in the drinking of the blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper was never possible without the shedding of blood in violent death. Luther also wrote: "Our God, however, has his honor in this: that for our sakes he gives himself down to the utmost depth, into flesh and bread, into our mouth, heart, and bosom, and more, for our sakes he *suffers* [*leidet*] himself to be dishonorably treated both upon *the cross and altar.*"[69] Jesus does not ask us how to be our Savior. He does the job himself. People worry about losing credentials in becoming fragile. Only God could be so humble and weak. *Jesus alone* suffers. Only God acts at Calvary. The cross and the altar: these two points are inseparable.

The Atonement as Irrelevant?

Finally, we heard that the doctrine of the atonement is irrelevant. It is said that since culture has influenced theories of the atonement in the past, it is our task today to develop images and models for the atonement that speak to our own cultural context. The joyous task of the church is to proclaim the gospel in a way people may comprehend it; this does not mean, however, that we need to change the content of the gospel. According to the Lutheran Confessions, the doctrine of the atonement remains relevant, not only because it is a confession that is given through

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[67] WA 45:201,10–17; E. Ellwein, *D. Martin Luther Epistel-Auslegung* (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968), 2:135; translated and quoted in Norman Nagel, "Viaticum Death," in *Shepherd the Church: Essays in Honor of the Rev. Dr. Roger D. Pittelko*, ed. Frederic W. Baue, John W. Fenton, Eric C. Forss, Frank J. Pies, and John T. Pless (Fort Wayne, IN: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 2002), 192.

[68] WA 46:479,10–16; Ellwein, *D. Martin Luther*, 138; translated and quoted in Nagel, "Viaticum Death," 193.

[69] WA 23:157,30-33; *LW* 37:72 (emphasis added).

the Scriptures but also because it is a part of the dynamic ministry of Jesus as the shepherd. He speaks law and gospel to us who dwell in a feel-good therapeutic culture and a capitalist consumerist society. The Lutheran Confessions do not suggest that we start with our experience of an "absolute faith" to reinterpret biblical doctrine in order to suit the need of modern people. Justification *before men* and justification *before God* need to be distinguished.[70] Our Lord continues to address us through apostolic preaching: "Be reconciled with God."

IV. Conclusion

The church confessed by the Lutheran Confessions as the place where Christ's work of *reconciliation* occurs is not an abstract notion. Week after week, Jesus baptizes, speaks, and gives out his body and blood.[71] There are only two possible resting places for sin: It either rests on us or it lies on Christ, the Lamb of God. The unanimous voice of the Confessions is that Jesus became our substitute. *He alone, in our place,* and *for us,* shed his blood to answer for all our sins: the *vicarious atonement.* He has done it all the way through, once and for all. "It is finished." The atonement is surely and completely done, as surely as the body and blood of our Lord are given to us.

The way that the Lutheran Confessions deal with the doctrine of the atonement teaches us that when doctrine is right, doctrine delivers. What is at stake is not whether the doctrine is right or wrong. Rather, the proper approach to doctrine is to discern whether it confesses Christ *for you,* which eliminates all our efforts. The moment we think that we have done it, we have destroyed it. The Lutheran Confessions stand against every way that diminishes Christ and his atoning and gift-bestowing office and work.

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[70] Oswald Bayer, *Living By Faith: Justification and Sanctification,* trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003).

[71] There is no doubt that our hymnal, now *Lutheran Service Book,* has played an important role in keeping the church from temptations. Which page of the Divine Service does *not* confess the atonement? From the very beginning of the service the congregation hears a pastor speak: "Almighty God in His mercy *has given His Son to die for you* and *for His sake forgives you all your sins.*" The church sings to Jesus as *the Lamb of God* in the *Gloria in Excelsis* and the *Agnus Dei.* After the *Sanctus,* the pastor prays to the Father: ". . . You . . . sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh *to bear our sin* and *be our Savior.* With repentant joy we receive *the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross.*" Then, the Our Father, *Verba, Pax Domini,* and distribution formula continue, which are all related to the atonement.

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Justification: The Stumbling Block of the Finnish Luther School[1]

Timo Laato

At various times Tuomo Mannermaa has called attention to the significance of his studies on Luther in ecumenical doctrinal discussions between Lutherans and Roman Catholics.[2] In his opinion, the *unio* concept clarifies the relationship between being declared and made righteous, which remains unclear in the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* adopted by the Lutheran World Federation and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (to be precise, in the first version).[3] Mannermaa also made similar claims when he examined the *unio* concept as a solution to the deadlocked Evangelical-Catholic dialogue.[4]

Undoubtedly Mannermaa has made a significant contribution to the revival of Luther scholarship in Finland and world-wide. He has found elements in the Reformer's theology that are suited to forming the basis for dialogue with both the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholics. His groundbreaking work *In ipsa fide Christus adest* was already published in

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[1] This is an edited version of a Finnish study translated into English by Tapani Simojoki. The titles of articles originally in Finnish are translated below with brackets. The Finnish originals behind this article are Timo Laato, "Luther-tutkimuksemme epäselvyys vanhurskauttamisopin ytimessä. Luther Latomusta vastaan. Laato Mannermaata vastaan" ["The Confusion of Our Luther Research at the Heart of the Doctrine of the Justification. Luther Against Latomus. Laato Against Mannermaa"], *Teologinen Aikakauskirja* 101 (Helsinki, 1996): 166–172, and "Yksimielisyyden Ohjeen oppi vanhurskauttamisesta: Luther-tutkimuksemme kompastuskivi" ["The Doctrine of Justification in the Formula of Concord. The Stumbling Block of Our Luther Research"], in *Turhentuuko uskonpuhdistus? Rooman kirkon ja Luterilaisen Maailmanliiton uusi selitys vanhurskauttamisopista*, Suomen kirkollisten herätysliikkeiden puheenvuoroja, ed. Simo Kiviranta and Timo Laato (Vantaa: Perussanoma, 1997/1998), 170–183 (first edition) and 181–194 (second edition).

[2] See below. For example, in an interview aimed at the laity in *Sanansaattaja* 24 (Helsinki, 14 June 1995), 4. Contrary to good journalistic manners, however, *Sanansaattaja* failed to publish the text approved by Mannermaa himself, so one can only refer to it with reservations in a scholarly article. Later additions published by the paper (27 July 1995) did not correct the problem.

[3] *Sanansaattaja* 24 (14 June 1995), 4. Later, the declaration was corrected at this point precisely in the way Mannermaa wished.

[4] Tuomo Mannermaa, "Evankelis-katolinen dialogi umpikujassa" ["Evangelical-Catholic Dialogue in a Dead-End"], *Teologinen Aikakauskirja* 95 (Helsinki, 1990): 425–429.

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1980 (second edition 1981).[5] He later dealt with the same topic several times.[6] Mannermaa's insights have since been developed in a number of doctoral dissertations (e.g., Risto Saarinen,[7] Simo Peura,[8] Antti Raunio[9]) and in other academic studies (e.g., Eero Huovinen[10]). He is justifiably regarded as the founder of the Finnish Luther School in Helsinki.

My task in this article is to examine critically Mannermaa's interpretation of the relationship between righteousness and union, first in Luther's theology and then in Lutheran theology, especially in the Formula of Concord. I will summarize the main points of Mannermaa's interpretation and then deal in more detail with Luther's teaching on justification before comparing it with Article III of the Formula of Concord. In particular, my study is directed at Mannermaa's claim that there is an outright contradiction between Luther and later Lutheranism. Because the Formula of Concord as a whole, and especially Article III, was largely the work of Martin Chemnitz, I will also make use of his *Loci Theologici* and other writings. Particular attention will be given to Luther's *Lectures on Galatians* (1536) and *Against Latomus*. Finally, I will also give an example

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[5] The full title is *In ipsa fide Christus adest: Luterilaisen ja ortodoksisen kristinuskokäsityksen leikkauspiste* [*In ipsa fide Christus adest: The Point of Contact between the Lutheran and Orthodox Understanding of the Christian Faith*], 2nd ed. (Helsinki: Missiologian ja Ekumeniikan Seura, 1981). [In 1989 it was published in German as *Der im Glauben gegenwärtige Christus: Rechtfertigung und Vergottung zum Ökumenischen Dialog*, Arbeiten zur Geschichte und Theologie des Luthertums, n.F., Bd. 8 (Hannover: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1989), 11–93. The first main section was translated into English as "The Doctrine of Justification and Christology: Chapter A, Section One of *The Christ Present in Faith*," *CTQ* 64 (2000): 206–239. The page numbers below are from the Finnish second edition, with the corresponding page numbers in the German edition and *CTQ* given in square brackets, where possible. The translation follows the Finnish original.] It is an ecumenical contribution to the doctrinal discussions between the Finnish Lutheran and Russian Orthodox churches (cf. its preface). It was only later that the central ideas of the book came to be applied to the discussions between Lutherans and Roman Catholics. This was due to Mannermaa's initiative (see below).

[6] See, e.g., Tuomo Mannermaa, *Kaksi Rakkautta: Johdatus Lutherin uskonmaailmaan.* [*Two Loves: An Introduction to Luther's World of Faith*] (Juva: Söderström, 1983).

[7] Risto Saarinen, *Gottes Wirken auf uns. Die transzendentale Deutung des Gegenwart-Christi-Motivs in der Lutherforschung* (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden, 1989), and *God and the Gift: An Ecumenical Theology of Giving* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2005).

[8] Simo Peura, *Mehr als ein Mensch? Die Vergöttlichung als Thema der Theologie Martin Luthers von 1513 bis 1519* (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1994).

[9] Antti Raunio, *Summe des christlichen Lebens: Die "Golden Regel" als Gesetz der Liebe in der Theologie Martin Luthers von 1510 bis 1527* (Helsinki: [Universität Helsinki], 1993).

[10] Eero Huovinen, *Fides Infantium: Martin Luthers Lehre vom Kinderglauben* (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1997).

showing how the doctrine of justification affects the whole of Christian doctrine.[11]

I. Mannermaa's Interpretation of Luther's Doctrine of Justification and Its Relationship to the Formula of Concord

Mannermaa's main thesis is that in Luther's theology Christ is "simultaneously both God's favor (*favor*) and gift (*donum*)."[12] He defines these terms in this way:

> "Favor" means the taking away of God's wrath and his forgiveness. In other words, the question concerns the attitude in God's "subject" towards man. Christ as a "gift," on the other hand, means that God gives himself really to man. In faith, Christ is really present with all his characteristics—such as righteousness, blessing, life, power, peace, etc. Hence, the concept of Christ as a "gift" means that the believing subject becomes a partaker of the "divine nature."[13]

Mannermaa claims that Luther developed his concept "especially in his famous writing against Latomus."[14] Nonetheless, Mannermaa does not deal with that work in detail; he does not even quote it. His attention shifts quickly to Luther's *Lectures on Galatians*, although it "does not deal thematically with the difference between 'gift' and 'favor.'"[15]

In 1990 Mannermaa focused more thoroughly on *Against Latomus*, which he harmonized with his earlier research.[16] Christ is simultaneously both grace (*favor*) and a gift (*donum*), and in him justification and sanctification belong together in Luther's theology. They must not be separated.[17] In his view the Formula of Concord differs from Luther in separating them: "In the Formula of Concord, as is well known, justification is *only* 'favor' (*favor*) or 'grace', that is receiving the forgiveness of sins on account of Christ. The 'gift' (*donum*), that is God's essential

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[11] It is not possible, therefore, to delve more extensively into the arguments of the Finnish Luther School. Although my critical evaluation is focused on Tuomo Mannermaa's arguments, it is *mutatis mutandis* applicable to the whole school.

[12] Mannermaa, *In Ipsa*, 24 [*Der im Glauben*, 30; "Justification and Christology," 213]. He teaches the same in "Evankelis-katolinen dialogi umpikujassa," 425–429.

[13] Mannermaa, *In ipsa*, 24–25 [*Der im Glauben*, 30; "Justification and Christology," 213–214]; see also 53–54 [*Der im Glauben*, 64].

[14] Mannermaa, *In ipsa*, 25 [*Der im Glauben*, 30; "Justification and Christology," 214].

[15] Mannermaa, *In ipsa*, 25 [*Der im Glauben*, 30; "Justification and Christology," 214].

[16] Mannermaa, "Evankelis-katolinen dialogi umpikujassa," 425–429.

[17] Mannermaa, "Evankelis-katolinen dialogi umpikujassa," 427.

presence or sanctification, is defined as an independent quantity, which only follows logically from the forgiveness of sins."[18]

Already in 1980–1981 Mannermaa had claimed that the Formula of Concord differed from Luther.[19] In an interview aimed at the laity, however, he did not make his view clear.[20] He apparently wanted to ensure as positive a response from readers as possible.

II. *Favor* and *donum* in Luther's Doctrine of Justification

In interpretating Luther's *Against Latomus,* Mannermaa specifically rejects the priority of grace (*favor*) over the gift (*donum*).[21] Rather, he reverses their relationship, so that the gift is the "basis and prerequisite" of grace.[22] Faith and righteousness are a gift, and "this gift also then mediates or effects grace,"[23] though in Christ both grace and the gift are still one.

In *Against Latomus,* however, Luther takes the opposite view. Grace comes before the gift. This becomes apparent when he explains what the gospel contains.[24] Mannermaa quotes the same passage to support his interpretation, though he abridges the text.[25] What follows is the selection from Luther; in his work, Mannermaa quotes only the parts in italics and omits what does not serve his argument. Thus, he misconstrues Luther:

> *For the gospel, too, preaches and teaches two things, God's righteousness and grace. By righteousness he mends the corruption of nature—namely, by the righteousness that is God's gift, that is faith in Christ* [references: Rom 3:21; 5:1 and *3:28*]. And this righteousness, which is the opposite of sin, is usually understood in the Bible as the innermost root [of righteousness], whose

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[18] Mannermaa, "Evankelis-katolinen dialogi umpikujassa," 427.

[19] Mannermaa, *In ipsa,* 12–14, 22, 42–43 [*Der im Glauben,* 14–17, 26, 51–52; "Justification and Christology," 210, 235]. The same emphasis still appears in his article "Santiago de Compostela 1993 ja me" ["Santiago de Compostela 1993 and us"], *Reseptio* (1994): 9–10.

[20] "For the time being, I have not arrived at a final definition of the relationship between Luther and the Formula of Concord on this matter. Luther does express more clearly than the Formula, however, that the forensic aspect—the forgiveness of sins—and habitation are united in the person of Christ." *Sanansaattaja* 24 (14 June 1995), 4.

[21] Mannermaa, "Evankelis-katolinen dialogi umpikujassa," 427–428.

[22] Mannermaa, "Evankelis-katolinen dialogi umpikujassa," 428.

[23] Mannermaa, "Evankelis-katolinen dialogi umpikujassa," 427–428.

[24] Martin Luther, *Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe* [*Schriften*], 65 vols. (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1883–1993 [hereafter WA]), 8:105,39–106,28; Martin Luther, *Luther's Works,* American Edition, 55 vols., ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress Press; St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955–1986 [hereafter *LW*]), 32:227–228.

[25] Mannermaa, "Evankelis-katolinen dialogi umpikujassa," 428.

> fruits are good works. *The companion of this faith and righteousness is grace or mercy, God's favor against the wrath that is the companion of sin, so that everyone who believes in Christ has a favorable God. For we would not rejoice enough in the good brought about by righteousness, nor praise this his gift, if it remained alone and did not bring to us the grace of God.* I take grace here to mean properly [*proprie*: also 'solely'] God's favor, which is how it must be understood, rather than some kind of quality of the soul, as our more recent theologians have taught; and this grace really produces true peace of heart so that a man who is healed from his corruption also feels that he has a gracious God [*atque haec gratia tandem vere pacem cordis operatur, ut homo a corruptione sua sanatus, etiam propitium decum habere se sentia*]. It is precisely this that strengthens one and makes the conscience joyful, secure and fearless, so that it dares all, can do all, mocks even death when it thus trusts in God's grace. Therefore, just as wrath is a greater evil than the corruption of nature, likewise also grace is a greater good than the healing [*sanitas*] brought about by righteousness, which we have said comes from faith. For there is no one who—if it were possible—would not rather be without the healing [*sanitas*] brought about by righteousness than without God's grace. For the forgiveness of sins and peace are properly attributed to the grace of God, but to faith is attributed the healing from corruption [*nam remissio peccatorum et pax proprie tribuitus gratia dei, sed fidei tribuitur sanitas corruptionis*]. *For faith is a gift and the inner good in opposition to sin, which it cleanses, and it is the yeast of the gospel, which is hidden in three measures of flour. But God's grace is an external good, God's favor as the opposite of his wrath. [Ref. Rom 5:27].* He calls faith in Christ (which he also frequently calls a gift) "the gift of grace through one man," which is given to us by the grace of Christ, namely because he alone of all people was favored and beloved and had a gracious and merciful God, so that he earned for us this gift and also this grace.[26]

By looking at the entire section, we see that Luther says just the opposite of what Mannermaa claims. Union (*unio*) with Christ is not enough to calm the heart. Not the gift (*donum*) but grace (*favor*) "really produces true peace of heart." Grace is "a greater good than the healing brought about by righteousness, which we have said comes from faith." A Christian would "rather—if it were possible—want to be without the healing brought about by righteousness than without God's grace." The reason is that the gift is only an inner good whereas grace is an external good. The gift of faith "is given to us by the grace of Christ." On behalf of all people "he earned for us . . . also this grace."

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[26] The citations from *Against Latomus* here and below follow the translation either of Mannermaa (see previous comment) or M. E. Lehtonen, or both, but with some of my own preferences and clarifications. The English translation is made from the Finnish; references to *Luther's Works* are also given. For Lehtonen's translation, see M. Luther, *Valitut teokset III*, ed. L. Pinomaa, trans. M. E. Lehtonen (Juva: WSOY, 1983), 253-369.

The Luther passage Mannermaa quotes does not prove the priority of the gift over grace. The effectiveness of the gift against sin is due only to the reality of grace. The gift would not benefit the recipient at all if its giver were not fully serious about his grace; however, because the gift brings the grace, there is no room for doubting. Luther takes "the proper meaning of grace to be God's favor." For a gift is a sign of someone's favor. The favor comes first. Only in the sense that the gift is a sign of God's favor does the gift convey God's grace.

To state it in a phrase favored by Mannermaa and taken from the Reformer himself: Christ as he is present in faith justifies, for faith takes refuge in Christ, who gained perfect righteousness on behalf of the whole world. The Christ who dwells in the heart (*donum*) is none other than the Christ who died on the cross (*favor*). The former lives because the latter was raised up, not *vice versa*! Christ as *favor* gives birth to himself as *donum*. The "umbilical cord" is faith, which "brings" from the outside, from himself, life for himself. The one giving birth and the one being born are in fact one and the same person.

Thus we can understand Mannermaa's other citation from *Against Latomus*:[27] "For grace there is no sin because the whole person is pleasing to God—but for the gift there is sin, which it is driving and forcing out. But the whole person neither is pleasing to God nor has grace, except for the gift, which is thus driving out sin." Grace is indisputably "superior" to the gift. No sin is present in grace, since Christ (*favor*) made the one perfect atonement on the cross. The gift contains no sin, but sin exists alongside the gift, since Christ (*donum*) has not yet fully cleansed the heart. Yet no one has grace except for the gift, because without the gift of faith no one becomes personally a partaker of grace.

As a logical conclusion from above, Luther makes repeated warnings against putting one's trust in oneself or even in God's gifts. From his personal experience, he advises:

> For although he has justified us by the gift of faith and in his grace has become favorable to us, nonetheless his will is that *we would not waver by trusting ourselves or these gifts.* Instead, we should trust Christ, *in order that we would not be satisfied with this righteousness that has been begun,* but that our righteousness would cling to Christ's righteousness and would flow from him. This is so that no ignoramus, having once received the gift, would consider himself satisfied and safe. He wants us daily to cleave to him more and *not remain counting the gifts that have been received,* but be

[27] WA 8:107,32–35; *LW* 32:229.

> fully transformed[28] into Christ [*in Christum plane transformari*]. . . . That uncertain faith of the sophists is not enough, which having received the gift is supposed to work. But only that is faith which makes you a chick and Christ a hen, under whose wings you have hope. For Mal. 4:2 says, "healing in its wings," *so that you would not trust in the faith received, for that is fornication*, but you must know: it is faith that you cling to him and hope that he will be holy and just to you. See, this faith is a gift of God, which preserves for us God's grace and cleanses that sin, makes us saved and certain, not on the basis of our works but of those of Christ, so that we can stand and remain forever . . . .[29]

He continues a little later:

> . . . that they could have their security in his grace, *not because they believe and because they have faith or the gift*, but because they have these by the grace of Christ. For no one's faith will endure if he does not rely on Christ's own [*propria*: also "constant, continual, perpetual"] righteousness and if he is not protected in his care. For this (as has been said) is real faith, not that absolute—in fact obsolete [*non absoluta immo obsoleta*]—quality of the soul, as they imagine, but rather such faith as does not allow itself to be torn away from the grace of Christ, nor relies on anything other than knowing that he (i.e., Christ) is in the grace of God and cannot come under judgment. Nor will anyone else come under judgment who has taken refuge in him. For such a great matter is this remaining sin, so intolerable God's judgment, that you cannot endure it unless you place against it him whom you know to be without any sin; and that is what true faith does . . . in order to force and compel all people to Christ, to hide themselves in the shadow of his wings, trembling, desperate and sighing. But those deniers of this sin lead people *to depend drowsily and in false confidence on the gift already received and hence make void the grace of Christ and the mercy of God*; from which it will inevitably follow that love will grow cold, praise become lukewarm, and gratitude grow slack.[30]

Luther is clear. No further proof is required. Believers are not to depend on the gift within them.

After completing *Against Latomus*, Luther immediately began to write the Church Postil. Its exemplary sermons come from the same period. His sermon on Titus 3:4–7 for Christmas 1522 warns:

> Guard, then, against false preachers and also against false faith. Rely not upon yourself, nor upon your faith. Flee to Christ; keep under his wings; remain under his shelter. Let his righteousness and grace, not yours, be your refuge. *You are to be made an heir of eternal life, not by the grace you have*

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[28] In the Finnish original, the term here was "assimilated" [*Translator*].

[29] WA 8:111,29–112,15; *LW* 32:235–236 (emphasis mine).

[30] WA 8:114,19–115,1; *LW* 32:239–240 (emphasis mine).

> *yourself received, but, as Paul says here, by Christ's grace.* Again, it is said in Psalm 91, 4, "He will cover thee with his pinions, and under his wings shalt thou take refuge." And in the Song of Solomon 2, 14, "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the covert of the steep place." That is, in the wounds of Christ the soul is preserved. Observe, true Christian faith does not take refuge in itself, as the sophists dream, but flees to Christ and is preserved under him and in him.[31]

His accusations against Latomus are similar.[32] *Favor* is God's giving grace, the forgiveness earned in Christ. *Donum*, on the other hand, is the grace received by man, the forgiveness received in faith. A sure hope of salvation is not built on the gift received. Since his wrath has been appeased because of Christ's innocent suffering and shedding of blood, God saves by his pure grace. Wrath has been changed into favor towards humans.

Mannermaa himself quotes Luther's sermon for Pentecost 1544 on John 14:23–31:[33]

> This is one of those striking and beautiful as well as precious and greatest of promises (as St. Peter says in the first chapter of his second letter) given to us poor and miserable sinners. We become partakers of the divine nature and receive such a high rank of nobility that we not only become beloved of God through Christ *and not only receive his favor* [*Gunst und Gnad*] *as our highest and most precious sanctuary,* but that we receive him, the Lord himself, to dwell in us completely. It is as if he was saying, "God is not only limited to love, namely to taking his wrath away from us and bearing in his breast a gracious father's heart towards us, but we are also to enjoy this love (otherwise it would be for us empty, lost love, as the proverb says, to love and not to enjoy . . .) and we are to gain from this love a great benefit and treasure." [Untranslated: *und sol solcher nachdruck sein, das*] God's love proves itself in deed and by the great gift.[34]

This passage clearly shows that Luther considers God's favor the "highest and most precious sanctuary." Nevertheless, he also puts the emphasis on enjoying this love with Christ—to complement the Reformer's thinking with his own phrase—"in the secret wedding chamber of the heart."

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[31] Martin Luther, "Second Christmas Sermon," in *The Complete Sermons of Martin Luther*, trans. J. N. Lenker et al. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), 3.II:164–165; WA 10.I.1:126,13–127,6 (emphasis mine).

[32] See above, particularly Luther's advice against trusting in gifts once received.

[33] WA 21:458,11–22.

[34] From Mannermaa's Finnish translation, *In ipsa*, 25–26 [see "Justification and Christology," 215 and note] (emphasis mine).

It is true that in his *Lectures on Galatians* Luther does not discuss the distinction between "favor" and "gift," but he nonetheless assumes it.[35] Because Mannermaa constructs his research primarily on passages from this work, he has to develop his arguments from indirect references; hence, the probability of false interpretations increases. Mannermaa has been unable to avoid them. I shall choose as an example just one passage in Luther to which Mannermaa repeatedly refers.[36] To clarify the point, I shall illustrate the key ideas by numbering (*favor* = 1; *donum* = 2):

> In the place of that love we put faith. Whereas they [the Sophists] call faith a monogram and love its living colors and fullness, we, on the contrary, say that faith takes hold [*apprehendre*] of Christ, who is *forma*, which shapes and in-forms faith, like color does a wall. The Christian faith, therefore, is not an idle quality or an empty husk in the heart, which can exist in a state of mortal sin, until love is added and quickens it. If, instead, faith is true faith, *it is a firm trust and strong consent of the heart, by which Christ is taken hold of* [*apprehenditur*]. [1] For Christ is the object of faith, but not only its object but, as it were, [2] in faith itself Christ is present. For faith is such knowledge, i.e., darkness, that sees nothing. Yet in this darkness sits enthroned Christ, whom faith holds within itself [*apprehensus*; should be "possesses"].[37] In the same way, God dwelt on Sinai and in the Temple in the midst of darkness. Our formal righteousness, therefore, is not a love that gives form to faith, but instead it is faith itself and a cloud in the heart, that is, [1] trust in something we do not see, in Christ, who is completely beyond the reach of the sight [of reason], but [2] who nevertheless is present. So faith justifies because it [1] holds within itself [*apprehendit*][38] and possesses that treasure, namely [2] the present Christ. The way in which Christ is present, though, is beyond comprehension because on this point, as I have said, there is darkness. Wherever [1] true confidence of the heart exists, there [2] Christ himself is present in that darkness and faith. This is the formal righteousness, on account of which man is justified; he is not justified because of faith, as the Sophists claim. All in all: whereas the Sophists say that love gives faith its

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[35] Mannermaa, *In ipsa*, 25 [*Der im Glauben*, 30; "Justification and Christology," 214].

[36] Mannermaa, *In ipsa*, 3, 30–32, 54, 74 [*Der im Glauben*, 36-38, 91; "Justification and Christology," 220–223]. The reference is to WA 40.I:228,27–229,32; *LW* 26:129–130.

[37] Mannermaa translates the Latin word *apprehendere* in three different ways: (1) to possess or hold as one's own, (2) to take hold of, and (3) to contain or hold within oneself. See the clarifications I have added to the quotations. The latter translation (which in any case is inaccurate) dissolves the meaning of the original text, that faith takes ownership of Christ, who then is present in that faith. To be accurate, we could also number this sentence thus: "Yet in this darkness [2] sits enthroned Christ, whom [1] faith owns!" Logically, 2 follows 1. See also the previous sentence, which defines faith as knowledge (focused on Christ).

[38] It should be "possesses," or (to avoid tautology) "takes hold of."

> form and penetrates it, we say that Christ gives faith its form and penetrates it; that is, we say that Christ is the form of faith. It follows, then, that Christ [1] is taken possession of [*apprehensus*] in faith, and [2] dwelling in the heart, is that Christian righteousness for the sake of which God accounts us as righteous and gives to us eternal life. This certainly is no work of the law, no love, but entirely different righteousness and, as it were, another world above and outside the law. For Christ and faith are neither law nor the work of the law.[39]

This passage defines faith as a firm trust and a strong consent that takes hold of Christ. As the object of faith, he is, therefore, *favor*. Being present in faith, he is also *donum*. Throughout the passage, *favor* (1) and *donum* (2) alternate. Luther expresses the priority of *favor* over *donum* by consistently mentioning the former before the latter.

In making *favor* and *donum* of equal value or, worse, giving priority to *donum* over *favor*, Mannermaa partly misconstrues the *total* aspect of righteousness for the sake of Christ. Quite correctly he first explains it from the point of view of being accounted righteous: "God does not account the sins remaining in the Christian as guilt, but forgives them for the sake of Christ."[40] The emphasis of this quotation is exactly where it should be, on Christ as *favor*, but Mannermaa then expands his explanation and begins to speak of Christ as *donum*. He bases this on one Luther citation,[41] into which, however, he reads his own interpretation.[42] As shown above, the concept of Christ as a gift explains only a *partial* aspect of righteousness: he has not yet completed the cleansing of all sin from the human heart.[43] Only because Christ, given as a gift, has already earned a perfect righteousness on the cross, does a Christian receive that gift in whom he is fully righteous. The priority of *favor* over the *donum* must be maintained.[44]

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[39] From Mannermaa's translation, *In ipsa*, 31–32 [*Der im Glauben*, 47–48; "Justification and Christology," 221–223], some added clarifications from the original Latin are omitted.

[40] Mannermaa, *In ipsa*, 57 [*Der im Glauben*, 68].

[41] Mannermaa, *In ipsa*, 58 [*Der im Glauben*, 69–70].

[42] In the quoted passage, Luther does not speak of the total aspect of righteousness. Quite the opposite, he teaches that the Christian's lack of complete righteousness will only be remedied in heaven.

[43] In fact, Mannermaa states in this context: "Christ's work of 'leavening' begun in faith is the work of the Christ really present in faith and will remain such. Christ, however, cleanses the Christian more and more by means of the forgiveness of sins and the knowledge of Christ based on it"; see *In ipsa*, 57 [*Der im Glauben*, 69].

[44] This, by the way, is precisely what Luther teaches on his 1521 sermon "On Two Kinds of Righteousness"; see *LW* 31:297–306. In it he distinguishes between Christ's alien righteousness (*iustitia aliena*) and the Christian's own righteousness (*iustitia*

Worthy of special note, Mannermaa mistakenly considers faith the basis of justification, because "faith signifies the real presence of the person of Christ—that is God's favor and the gift."[45] The Luther quotations he cites, however, do not make faith the basis of justification. For the Reformer, Christ alone is the basis for justification; but of course Christ is indeed present in faith.[46] On the whole, it seems worthless to cite isolated linguistic expressions for views that are otherwise totally alien to Luther. For him, justification is completely based on the merit of Christ, who suffered and was crucified (*favor*). At the most fundamental level, the hope of eternal life is not based even on Christ as he is present in faith (*donum*), let alone on faith.

The Luther passages cited by Mannermaa reveal a grave error in his interpretation. Mannermaa is right in emphasizing the significance and centrality of the *unio* concept in Luther's theology. After all the philosophical speculations and modern interpretations,[47] there are new winds blowing. Mannermaa, however, is badly mistaken on this one significant point: he does not confess that salvation depends on Christ as *favor*, not as *donum*. The salvation-historical dimension of justification is inevitably pushed aside. The center of gravity moves from the historical event of the cross to the here and now, where the believer is united with the divine person through faith.[48] Finnish Luther research should now

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propria); see WA 2:145–147. Faith focuses (outside itself) on Christ and hence takes hold of him and his alien righteousness. Life, on the other hand, is directed to mortifying the desires of the flesh, to loving the neighbor and the virtues of humility and the fear of God, all of which are part of one's (right kind of) own righteousness. Immediately before, this sermon refers to the indwelling Christ as the explanation, on the one hand, of the connection between faith and life and, on the other hand, to the incompleteness of the Christian struggle against sin. Mannermaa, too, quotes Luther's sermon "On Two Kinds of Righteousness," although his translation is rather poor; see "Evankelis-katolinen dialogi umpikujassa," 428.

[45] Mannermaa, *In ipsa*, 54 [*Der im Glauben*, 64].

[46] See Mannermaa's quotations, *In ipsa*, 53–55 [*Der im Glauben*, 63–66]. The final quotation concludes with a remark that is extremely clear: "And so God accepts you, that is, reckons you righteous, solely because of Christ, in whom you believe"; see *In ipsa*, 55 [*Der im Glauben*, 66].

[47] See, e.g., Mannermaa, *In ipsa*, 9–11 [cf. *Der im Glauben*, 12].

[48] That salvation history has little, or no, significance for Mannermaa becomes apparent again in a tangible way in his special christological emphasis. He says that when Christ was born a man, he "did not, according to Luther, take on just a 'neutral' human nature as such but [we are to believe] a specifically *sinful* human nature"; see *In ipsa*, 19 [*Der im Glauben*, 22; following the German, the translation in "Justification and Christology," 206, is misleading]. It then follows logically that "the victory over the might of sin and corruption takes place . . . *in* Christ's own *person*. He won 'in himself'

direct its efforts to what Christ has done on the cross for all of humanity (*favor*) before studying his presence in and through faith (*donum*). Salvation history comes before faith. Then it will be clear that salvation does not depend on Christ as present in faith but on Christ who atoned for the sins of the world by his blood.

III. The Formula of Concord on Justification

In defining the doctrine of justification, the Formula of Concord rejected many errors, including the decrees of the Council of Trent and the serious one put forward by Luther's colleague, Andreas Osiander. According to Bengt Hägglund, Osiander held that a righteousness that is acceptable before God: (1) is not based on Christ's vicarious satisfaction (*satisfactio*), that is, on the sacrifice he made on the basis of his own, perfect obedience for the sins of the whole world on the cross of Golgotha; (2) thereby it requires that Christ's divine nature comes to dwell in the sinner through faith; (3) therefore righteousness is inner renewal, the ability to do good.[49] By contrast, the Formula of Concord makes it clear that the righteousness which avails before God: (1) is based on Christ's vicarious satisfaction; (2) requires possessing of the whole person of Christ, both his divine and his human nature, in faith; (3) means the imputing of Christ's perfect obedience to the sinner by pure grace through faith, not inner renewal (which is part of sanctification).

The differences between the two positions become apparent in Article III. Although it is not made explicit to whom it refers, there is no doubt that the false teacher is Osiander, among others.

> The one party contended that the righteousness of faith, which St. Paul calls the righteousness of God, is the essential righteousness of God (namely, that Christ himself as the true, natural, essential Son of God, who

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(*triumphans in se ipso*) the battle between righteousness and sin. Sin, damnation and death are vanquished . . . first in Christ's person and 'thereafter' the whole world must change through his person"; see *In ipsa*, 21 [*Der im Glauben*, 25–26; "Justification and Christology," 209]. Christ's salvation-historical work on the cross is lost completely in the personal change in himself. Moreover, this view assumes the idea (which was completely alien to the Reformer) that his human nature was essentially sinful.

[49] Bengt Hägglund, s.v. "Gerechtigkeit: VI. Reformations- und Neuzeit," in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, ed. Gerhard Krause and Gerhard Müller (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1984), 12:434–435. See also S. Peura, "Gott und Mensch in der Unio: Die Unterschiede im Rechtfertigungsverständnis bei Osiander und Luther," in *Unio: Gott und Mensch in der nachreformatorischen Theologie: Referate des Symposiums der Finnischen Theologischen Literaturgesellschaft in Helsinki 15.-16. November 1994*, ed. Matti Repo and Rainer Vinke (Helsinki: Suomalainen teologinen kirjallisuusseura; Luther-Agricola-Gesellschaft, 1996), 46–59.

> through faith dwells in the elect, impels them to do what is right) . . . . Against both parties [those who claim that Christ is our righteousness either only according to his divine nature or only according to his human nature] the other teachers of the Augsburg Confession held unanimously that Christ is our righteousness, not according to the divine nature alone or according to the human nature alone but according to both natures; as God and man he has by his perfect obedience redeemed us from our sins, justified and saved us. Therefore, they maintained that the righteousness of faith is forgiveness of sins, reconciliation with God, and the fact that we are adopted as God's children solely on account of the obedience of Christ, which, through faith alone, is reckoned by pure grace to all true believers as righteousness, and that they are absolved from all their unrighteousness because of this obedience. (FC SD III, 2, 4)[50]

In light of the points made by Hägglund, the Formula of Concord correctly characterizes Osiander's main heresy.

The Formula protects the doctrinal heritage of the Reformation in its battle against new errors. *Favor* is prior to *donum*. One citation proves this:

> On the one hand, it is true indeed that God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who is the eternal and essential righteousness, dwells by faith in the elect who have been justified through Christ and reconciled with God, since all Christians are temples of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who impels them to do rightly. But, on the other hand, this indwelling of God is not the righteousness of faith [*iustitia Dei*] of which St. Paul speaks and which he calls the righteousness of God, on account of which we are declared just before God. This indwelling follows the preceding righteousness of faith, which is precisely the forgiveness of sins and the gracious acceptance of poor sinners on account of the obedience and merit of Christ. (FC SD III, 54)[51]

To be precise, this passage rejects the equating of *inhabitatio Dei* (which belongs to *sanctification*) and *iustitia Dei* (which belongs to *justification*). This is what the battle against Osiander and Trent was all about. What, if anything, is the gift given to a poor sinner in justification? According to this passage, the answer is the forgiveness of sins for the sake of Christ's obedience and merit! But can the same thing be expressed differently?

I have referred to the Formula's definition of faith, "whereby we obtain [Latin: *apprehendimus*; German: *ergreifen*] Christ and hence in Christ

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[50] Theodore G. Tappert et al., trans. and ed., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), 539–540.

[51] Tappert, *The Book of Concord*, 548–549. See also above, 335–337.

the 'righteousness which avails before God'" (FC Ep III, 5).[52] Likewise, Luther speaks of faith in connection with justification. He goes on to add that in faith, Christ is present (*in ipsa fide Christus adest*). This is exactly how faith is defined by Luther in his *Lectures on Galatians* when he attacks the Roman Catholic view of faith formed by love (*fides charitate formata*).[53]

As one of his main points, Mannermaa contends that although the Formula of Concord does not define faith as Christ's real presence, it nevertheless supports the nature of faith as "real-ontic" by referring to Luther's "marvellous and incomparable" *Lectures on Galatians* (FC SD III, 28–29, 67). Hence, when the Formula defines faith solely as reliance on righteousness imputed on the basis of Christ's perfect obedience to the law, it actually understands—unawares or in self-contradiction—faith as Christ's real presence and as the giver of righteousness.[54]

Mannermaa's claim that Luther and the Formula do not agree should be supported by Chemnitz's writings on justification, which lie behind Article III of the Formula. The chapter on justification in his *Loci Theologici* (*De Justificatione*) deserves close attention.[55] Here Chemnitz quotes repeatedly from the church fathers and Luther. They all agree that in justification Christ's obedience is imputed to the sinner.[56] Moreover, Chemnitz follows, and perhaps even copies, Luther's *Lectures on Galatians* on the central points and in some unusual connections.[57] Clearly, Luther's

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[52] See also *Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche*, 5th ed. (Berlin: 1960), 782–783. The translation here is from the Finnish. Unlike the Finnish, the translation in Tappert, *The Book of Concord*, 473, deviates from the German original.

[53] See above, 334–336 and n. 39.

[54] Mannermaa, *In ipsa*, 12–14, 22, 42–43 [*Der im Glauben*, 14–17, 26, 51–52; "Justification and Christology," 210, 235]; see also "Evankelis-katolinen dialogi umpikujassa," 427.

[55] Martin Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici* (1653; repr., Sterling Heights, MI: Lutheran Heritage Foundation, 2000), 2:200–299. The English translation is Martin Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, trans. J. A. O. Preus, 2 vols. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989), 2:443–557. The Latin original will be cited first, followed by the English translation.

[56] On Luther's part, see, e.g., *Lectures on Galatians*, WA 40.I:40,15–51, 34; 217,26–308,30; 359,15–373,17; *LW* 26:4–12; 122–185; 226–236.

[57] For example, Luther interprets "rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim 2:15 KJV) as making the right distinction between the law and the gospel; see WA 40.I:44,14–17; *LW* 26:6–7. Likewise, he takes the account of the appearance of the Lord to the Israelites on Sinai (Exodus 19–20) as a description of the function of the law; see WA 40.I:259,12–25; *LW* 26,149–150. The commandments that belong to the gospel are appendices to it; see WA 40.I:259,33–260,14; *LW* 26:150. It is probably not a coincidence that we find the same explanations in Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici* (2000), 2:208, 214, 219, 260; *Loci Theologici* (1989), 2:452, 458, 464, 512. On the similarities, also see below.

Lectures on Galatians have influenced his thinking to a large degree, just as the Formula of Concord implies.

Chemnitz states repeatedly that in justification Christ's perfect obedience to the law is imputed to the sinner through faith. Suddenly he breaks his line of thought and like Luther criticizes the Roman Catholic idea of faith formed by love (*fides charitate formata*):

> If the question is in what respect or by what power and strength faith justifies, then the scholastics reply that faith obtains this power and efficacy to justify from love, and this they call "the faith formed by love" (*fides formata*). But Scripture affirms that faith justifies because it lays hold on [or obtains; *apprehendit*] Christ and applies to itself Him "whom God made our . . . righteousness," 1 Cor. 1:30 [RSV].[58]

The similarity between Chemnitz and Luther is striking, as is also the Formula of Concord's definition of faith as that which takes hold of Christ. It looks like Chemnitz's divergent emphasis comes from Luther's arguments in his *Lectures on Galatians*. By all accounts, Chemnitz had read Luther very carefully! He was not merely polite when he praised it as a marvelous work. Nevertheless, neither this passage, nor any other, stands in the way of Mannermaa. He insists that the Formula has corrupted the Reformation heritage. We agree that there seems to be a difference in emphasis between Chemnitz and Luther. Uncovering the weakness of Mannermaa's argument requires more evidence.

After concluding his main presentation on justification, Chemnitz outlines the doctrine in light of the testimonies of Scripture.[59] He discusses the *causa formalis* (formal cause) of righteousness and then contrasts the Roman Catholic view (love, or its equivalent) and his own understanding (the obedience of Christ). After defending his view, he continues:

> I approve of this simple statement of the case, because many disputes can be settled on the basis of it. Some suggest that the formal cause is faith, some Christ, others the mercy of God, others forgiveness of sins or acceptance. These ideas are often held by inexperienced people as if these points were in conflict with one another and different. This, of course, is exaggerated by our adversaries.[60]

In order to straighten things out among Lutherans and at the same time to refute the mockery by Roman Catholics, Chemnitz emphasizes Christ's

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[58] Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici* (2000), 2:253; *Loci Theologici* (1989), 2:504.
[59] Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici* (2000), 2:288–299; *Loci Theologici* (1989), 2:545–557.
[60] Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici* (2000), 2:296; *Loci Theologici* (1989), 2:554.

obedience as the *forma* of righteousness.[61] Nevertheless, he acknowledges that the right doctrine of justification can be, and has been, expressed in other ways. Among the different options, one stands out. Some considered the *forma* of righteousness to be Christ. Chemnitz mentions no names, but there can be no doubt that it was Luther.[62] He remarks sharply that there is no contradiction between the different alternatives:

> But the matter is clear. Faith in itself, as a quality, without Christ, is not our formal righteousness. And Christ, unless He is apprehended by faith, is not your [*tua*] righteousness. But if faith lays hold on Christ, but does not in Him also lay hold on the grace and mercy of God, it does not thereby establish that it will receive forgiveness of sins or acceptance, and it is certainly lacking the form of righteousness before God. For justification is absolution or acceptance.[63]

Christ's presence in justification means nothing else than the imputation of his obedience, suffering, and death to the sinner. He is, as the crucified Savior, in his own person "the Lord, our righteousness" (Jer 23:6; 33:16).[64] A faith that does not put its trust in Christ, and through him in God's grace and mercy, justifies no one. On this account, Osiander was in error. He bypassed the gift of righteousness (vicarious atonement) earned by Christ and, instead, stressed the dwelling of Christ's divine nature in the sinner (inner renewal leading to good works) through faith. Osiander's view is reminiscent of the Roman Catholic model, that only a faith formed by love justifies.[65]

When correctly understood, justification can be viewed from different perspectives: the sinner is accounted as righteous through faith, Christ present in faith is the righteousness of the sinner, the sinner has his sins forgiven by the grace of God, and the like. Even Chemnitz lists the different alternatives.[66] Still, in Lutheranism there is and will remain unchanged one doctrine of justification. If someone imagines otherwise, he is a theological novice. The serious accusation, first aimed at the Roman

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[61] This same emphasis is found at the same point in Chemnitz's argument as in the Formula of Concord; see, for example, 339 n. 50 above.

[62] At the same time, Luther emphasised faith as the *forma* of righteousness, because it possesses Christ. For example, see WA 40.I:232,23–26 [*LW* 26:132].

[63] Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici* (2000), 2:296; *Loci Theologici* (1989), 2:554.

[64] Chemnitz himself refers to these prophecies of the prophet Jeremiah concerning the (suffering) Messiah; see *Loci Theoligici* (2000), 2:215, 298, cf. 275; *Loci Theologici* (1989), 2:459, 557, cf. 530. So also does FC Ep III, 1; Tappert, *The Book of Concord*, 472.

[65] See Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici* (2000), 2:295; *Loci Theologici* (1989), 2:553.

[66] See 341 n. 60 above.

Catholic adversaries and Osiander, now applies *mutatis mutandis* to the adherents of the Finnish Luther School.

For the sake of clarity, let it be repeated that the *Loci Theologici* follows very closely the train of thought of the Formula of Concord, rejecting as false doctrine "that faith does not look alone to Christ's obedience, but also to his divine nature (in so far as it dwells and works within us), and that by such indwelling our sins are covered up" (FC Ep III, 16).[67] Osiander's error is here rejected for three weighty reasons. He pushed aside Christ's obedience as the only basis of justification, taught that Christ dwells in the sinner through faith in his divine nature alone, and stressed the effectiveness of that indwelling for good works. Thus, justification and sanctification were confused and then also mixed with a false Christology.[68] Despite condemning this particular error, Chemnitz affirms that the indwelling Christ can be regarded as the *forma* of righteousness precisely on account of his perfect obedience and innocent suffering. Therefore, faith finds in him alone the "righteousness that avails before God" (FC SD III, 5). Because of the Formula of Concord, Lutherans can be comfortable with the many lovely metaphors and images with which Luther adorns the doctrine of justification (e.g., Christ's gracious presence, the wedding chamber of the heart, the blessed exchange, and the like).[69]

To repeat once again: salvation is not based on Christ dwelling in the sinner through faith (*donum*) but only on Christ who died for the sins of all

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[67] Tappert, *The Book of Concord*, 475. See also FC SD III, 63; Tappert, *The Book of Concord*, 550.

[68] Like Osiander, Mannermaa first confuses justification and sanctification and, therefore, offers a distorted Christology. See H. Lehtonen, "Mannermaa—luterilaisuuden pelastaja?" ["Mannermaa—the Savior of Lutheranism?"], *Concordia* (Helsinki, 4/1995), 8–12. The same was argued by T. G. A. Hardt in his paper at a theological conference in Karkku, Finland, 16 July 1995.

[69] Hägglund argues that because of Lutheran orthodoxy's opposition to Osiander, the meaning of *iustitia Christi* was narrowed to refer only to Christ's obedience until death. He argues that Luther, by contrast, understood it to include, e.g., Christ's resurrection and ascension to heaven; see "Gerechtigkeit: VI. Reformations- und Neuzeit," 435. Although the Formula, of course, emphasizes Christ's obedience as the basis of justification against Osiander, the alleged antithesis does not exist. For example: "A poor sinner is justified before God [. . .] solely through the merit of the total obedience, the bitter passion, the death, and the resurrection of Christ, our Lord, whose obedience is reckoned to us as righteousness" (FC SD III, 9); "Therefore, the righteousness which by grace is reckoned to faith or to the believers is the obedience, the passion, and the resurrection of Christ [. . .]" (FC SD III, 14); "Faith thus looks at the person of Christ, how this person was placed under the law for us, bore our sin, and in his path to the Father rendered to the Father entire, perfect obedience from his holy birth to his death [. . .]" (FC SD III, 58).

on the cross (*favor*). In other words, what saves is, fundamentally, God's grace that gives rather than God's giving of that grace. Otherwise, no terrified and doubting soul will ever find lasting comfort. For by constantly scrutinizing oneself, the torments of the conscience are awakened and one will never have the absolute certainty that Christ lives in one's heart through faith or that faith exists in one's heart which is accounted as righteousness and receives the forgiveness of sins. Our gaze must always be directed towards the cross of Golgotha where blood was shed for the atonement of the whole world. Golgotha occurred even before there is forgiveness of sins through faith, before faith is accounted as righteousness, and before Christ's presence in faith. The only true certainty is in this.[70]

Ultimately, Mannermaa commits two main mistakes in his interpretation of the doctrine of justification. First, he does not emphasize the priority of *favor* in relation to *donum*; that is, he pushes to the side, almost entirely, Christ's *salvation-historical* significance in justification. Second, he shuns the forensic aspect of the Formula of Concord, showing that he does not fully realize the *juridical* character of justification.

IV. Justification and the Totality of Dogma: One Cautionary Example

In this context, I recollect an accusation Mannermaa made long ago, that "those who reject the ordination of women, rarely and feebly—if at all—express their concern about the real issue, which is that the doctrine of justification has been obscured in the [Evangelical Lutheran] church [of Finland]."[71] In retrospect, his evaluation of the situation seems rather ironic. I would dare to claim that Mannermaa's defection on the issue of the ministry in the mid-1980s was fundamentally due to his faulty doctrine of justification.[72] This affirms the Reformer's experience that in the doctrine of justification "are included all the other doctrines of our faith; and if it is

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[70] Especially in *Against Latomus*, Luther does not tire of repeating and emphasizing the priority of *favor* to *donum*. See above, 328–333. *Favor*, God's favor is directed towards sinful humanity through the (universal) atonement brought about by Christ. To be accurate, the two sides of justification (being accounted as righteous and Christ's presence in faith) are different aspects of *donum*.

[71] Tuomo Mannermaa, "Keskustelu naisesta ja kirkon virasta jatkuu" ["The Dialogue on Women and the Ministry of the Church Continues"], *Teologinen Aikakauskirja* 90 (1985): 133.

[72] Mannermaa was one of the front-line theologians of St. Paul's Synod in opposing the ordination of women. St. Paul's Synod is an organization of Finnish confessional Lutheran pastors and lay people that was formed in 1975 to campaign against the ordination of women and other deviations from biblical doctrine and practice in the Church of Finland.

sound, all the others are sound as well."[73] The next few lines aim at proving the case.

Mannermaa attempted to justify the opening of the office of the ministry to women by confining himself to the distinction of the law and the gospel.[74] Concisely put, he argued that the law belongs in the domain of love and, thus, is mutable. The gospel, on the other hand, belongs in the domain of faith and is immutable. Paul's commands and prohibitions concerning the pastoral office (especially 1 Cor 14:33–38 and 1 Tim 2:11–15) do not convey the gospel, hence they belong to the law. As such, laws prohibiting women from the pastoral office can still be changed, if and when they no longer serve the principle of love. Considering current circumstances, opening the office of the ministry to women becomes necessary, if we are to obey the principle of love.

At that time, Anssi Simojoki replied to Mannermaa. While their long discussion cannot be discussed in detail, I will draw some relevant conclusions. In searching for reasons why Mannermaa changed his position, Simojoki contends that they both agree on the divine institution of the office of the ministry passed in the so-called Ilkko I seminar.[75] The opening of the pastoral ministry to women indicates, however, that the ministry lacks the salvation-historical form it has in the word.[76] In addition, the juridical aspect of the ministry is disregarded.[77]

The same shortcomings emerge in Mannermaa's doctrine on justification. He pushes to the side Christ's salvation-historical significance and shuns the juridical character of justification.[78] From hindsight, it appears that Mannermaa's gradual move towards the ordination of women began with his doctrine of justification. Docent Eeva Martikainen

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[73] WA 40.I:441,30–31; *LW* 26:283.

[74] The summary that follows is based upon Tuomo Mannermaa, "Nykyinen vaihe keskustelussa pappisviran avaamisesta naisille" ["The Current State of the Discussion concerning Opening the Pastoral Office to Women"], *Teologinen Aikakauskirja* 90 (1985): 46–49.

[75] This was one in a series of theological discussions held in the early 1980s to discuss the office of the ministry and the ordination of women. They were organized by the Church of Finland and included representatives from both sides of the debate.

[76] Anssi Simojoki, "Distinktiot, teksti ja empiirinen Luther: Vastaus prof. Tuomo Mannermaalle" ["Distinctions, the Text and the Empirical Luther: A Reply to Prof. Tuomo Mannermaa"], *Teologinen Aikakauskirja* 90 (1985): 298.

[77] Anssi Simojoki, "Evankeliumi ja oikeus? Vastaus prof. Tuomo Mannermaalle" ["The Gospel and Jurisdiction? A Reply to Prof. Tuomo Mannermaa"], *Teologinen Aikakauskirja* 90 (1985): 478.

[78] See above, 344.

apparently convinced Mannermaa to join her in supporting women's ordination by concurring with his interpretation of the doctrine of justification.[79] By then, nothing could be done. Waterloo had already been fought and lost. Mannermaa's attempts to defend his position indicate the enormity of the defeat.[80] This discussion about the opening of the pastoral office to women concluded ironically with Simojoki praising Mannermaa for *In ipsa fide Christus adest*.[81] Yet this book sealed the fate of the Lutheran Church of Finland's unapostolic decision to ordain women into the ministry.[82]

V. Conclusion

Thus we see that in the doctrine of justification "are included all the other doctrines of our faith." In ecumenical dialogues, Lutherans never have been able to afford to compromise on the doctrine of justification even a little, for it is *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae* and will remain so. Therefore, the *unio* concept, as interpreted by Mannermaa, cannot and must not be considered the solution to the dead-end to which the Lutheran-Catholic dialogue came, despite its many undeniable merits. In the name of genuine Lutheranism, we must ask whether man's salvation depends wholly and solely on the full righteousness gained by Christ, which is given as a gift to the sinner only through faith. Mannermaa's Luther school should be reformed in accordance with the Formula of Concord. Otherwise, it will be the heir of neither Luther nor Lutheranism.

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[79] See Eeva Martikainen, "Lain ja evankeliumin erottaminen luterilaisen opin ja Raamatun tulkinnan peruskriteerinä" ["The Distinction of the Law and the Gospel as the Basic Criterion of Lutheran Doctrine and Biblical Interpretation"], *Teologinen Aikakauskirja* 88 (1983): 5–16. Her article anticipated Mannermaa's later fall.

[80] I will limit myself to one example. Simojoki had criticized Mannermaa in applying the distinction of the law and the gospel and, on the other hand, faith and love *specifically* to the issue of ordination; see Anssi Simojoki, "Virkakeskustelun nykyinen vaihe: Puheenvuoro prof. Tuomo Mannermaalle" ['The Current State of the Discussion Concerning the Ministry: An Address to Prof. Tuomo Mannermaa"], *Teologinen Aikakauskirja* 90 (1985): 128–129. Mannermaa, on his part, replied to Simojoki by proving triumphantly that the law and the gospel, faith and love, can be distinguished in general; see Mannermaa, "Keskustelu naisesta ja kirkon virasta jatkuu," 130–133. It seems to me that the whole discussion was deliberately spoiled from the beginning.

[81] Anssi Simojoki, "Kumpi olikaan vastauksen velkaa? Vastaus prof. Tuomo Mannermaalle" ["So Who Owes Whom a Reply? A Reply to Prof. Tuomo Mannermaa"], *Teologinen Aikakauskirja* 91 (1986): 286. Nevertheless, one need not dispute the claim that "in the book [with the above reservations] the alleged antithesis between Lutheranism and Lutheran Pietism, which has been maintained in theology since Ritschl's studies, is genuinely resolved."

[82] The Synod of the Church of Finland approved the ordination of women in 1986, and the first ordinations of women took place in 1988.

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Jonathan Edwards on Justification by Faith

Lawrence R. Rast Jr.

Mention the name Jonathan Edwards to Lutherans and images of hellfire and brimstone preaching spring immediately to mind. Those familiar with Edwards, who is held up as the greatest preacher of the First Great Awakening, have likely first come to know him through his sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," which one commentator has called "the most famous sermon ever delivered in the history of America."[1] In what is perhaps the best-known part of his best-known sermon, Edwards writes:

> The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked: his wrath towards you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else, but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight; you are ten thousand times more abominable in his eyes, than the most hateful venomous serpent is in ours.[2]

What is not so well known is that, shocking as such sentiments are to Lutherans, they emerge from a consistent Calvinism on Edwards' part. The so-called Great Awakening that Edwards helped to engender initially stemmed not from preaching "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" but from a series of discourses on the doctrine of justification by grace through faith. Edwards facilely and consistently used the language of "justification by faith" and preached and taught on it throughout his ministry. What Edwards meant by justification by faith and what Lutherans mean by it, however, are different things.

Thomas Shafer has written: "there are important elements in Edwards' religious thought which cause the doctrine of justification to occupy an ambiguous and somewhat precarious place in his theology."[3] If Schafer's claim is true, the picture of Edwards as a theologian firmly entrenched in

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[1] John D. Currid, foreword to *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, by Jonathan Edwards (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1992), 3.

[2] Jonathan Edwards, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1992), 23–24.

[3] Thomas A. Shafer, "Jonathan Edwards and Justification by Faith," *Church History* 20 (December 1951): 57.

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the Calvinist tradition will have to be redrawn. If it is spurious, then we still face a difficulty: What would cause one of the leading interpreters of Edwards' thought to such a conclusion? Whether Shafer's statement is fact or fiction can only be determined by posing such questions as: Where does the doctrine of justification by faith alone fit in Jonathan Edwards' theology? Could Edwards integrate his doctrine of justification, with his stress on the internal character of the infusion of grace that turns the inclination to its proper goal, into the traditional Calvinist (Reformation) emphasis on the external and declaratory understanding of justification? In short, the real question is, could Edwards find a place for the doctrine of justification in his system?

Edwards could, and he did so by subtly modifying his classical Calvinistic understanding of justification. Edwards' soteriology will be drawn from his *Treatise on Religious Affections*, *Freedom of the Will*, *Original Sin*, and "Justification by Faith Alone." Also included is Edwards' critique of Arminianism to show how Edwards integrates justification by faith into his larger system of thought. Far from holding a "precarious" place in his thought, Edwards' stress on the human act of faith in justification fits well with his conception of the manner in which the human will wills.

To do this, Edwards shifted Calvinism's traditional stance by stressing the human act of faith. While he saw justification as the forensic imputation of Christ's righteousness to the sinner, he stressed that it was logically consequent to the real union of the Christian with Christ by faith. In other words, justification as a forensic declaration on the basis of the imputed merits of Christ is based on the volitional union of the Christian with Christ, which occurs by faith. Edwards wanted to maintain both the primacy of God's act and the integrity of the human will. He based justification on God's grace infused into the believer but then required the real consent of the human act of faith. What is *real*—the act of faith—is the basis of what is *legal*—the imputation of Christ's righteousness and forensic decree of "not guilty."[4]

From a Lutheran perspective, Jonathan Edwards reinterpreted justification by grace through faith. In the final analysis, one cannot avoid concluding that Edwards, though he tried to maintain a place for the

[4] This phrase figures prominently in the fine dissertation by Anri Morimoto, "The Reality of Salvation in the Soteriology of Jonathan Edwards" (PhD diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1991).

traditional Reformation understanding of justification by faith, actually opened the door for the triumph of Arminianism.[5]

I. Soteriology and the Human Will in Edwards

When Jonathan Edwards died shortly after becoming president of the College of New Jersey in 1758, he left uncompleted his "Rational Account." This was to be a systematic theology in which he intended to treat the theory and practice of Christianity *in toto*, and to provide an integrated theological system. Up to this point in his life he had produced several significant treatises that dealt at length with certain aspects of the Christian message but not a comprehensive treatment.

Edwards published his major soteriological treatises, *Religious Affections*, *Freedom of the Will*, and *Original Sin*, between 1746 and 1758.[6] These were lengthy and careful theological treatments, but not one covered the range of Edwards' soteriology. By taking the three as a whole, one can piece together an Edwardsean soteriology.

Edwards begins with original sin. Human experience and history show that all people sin. This universal experience of sin finds its root in the sin of Adam and its imputation to his seed. God's act of imputation, however, is not arbitrary. Edwards wrote:

> As Adam's nature became corrupt, without God's implanting or infusing any evil thing into his nature; so does the nature of his *posterity*. God dealing with Adam as the head of his posterity . . . and treating them as one, he deals with his posterity as having *all sinned in him*. And therefore, as God withdrew spiritual communion and his vital gracious influence from the common head, so he withholds the same from all the members, as they come into the world mere flesh, and entirely under the government of natural and inferior principles; and so become wholly corrupt, as Adam did.[7]

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[5] Klemet Preus explores the fundamental conflict between Edwards' "style" of preaching and the Calvinistic doctrine he sought so desperately to uphold; see "Jonathan Edwards: A Case of Medium Message Conflict," *CTQ* 48 (1984): 279–297. My article builds on Preus's in treating the technical character of the theological shift that Edwards' Calvinism comprised and the manner in which it opened the door to Arminianism.

[6] Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 2, *Religious Affections*, ed. John E. Smith (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1959); *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 1, *Freedom of the Will*, ed. Paul Ramsey (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1957); *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 3, *Original Sin*, ed. Clyde A. Holbrook (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1970). [Hereafter *Works* volume: page number.]

[7] Edwards, *Original Sin*, in *Works* 3:383.

People, by their actual sins, consent to the sin of Adam and, based on their choice, God imputes to them what they wish. Adam's sin becomes their sin by their desiring it. All people sin because their inclination is toward the evil. Thus, they cannot engage themselves in actions that are pleasing to God. Only through the turning of man's inclinations to God can man come to choose the good.

The key question then becomes, how can human beings with inclinations to evil turn themselves to the good? Edwards answers that they cannot:

> Tell me [how] a man that has no true grace within him shall begin to exercise it: before he begins to exercise it, he must have some of it. How shall [he] act virtuously the first time? how [*sic*] came he by that virtue which he then acted? Certainly not [by] exercise of virtue, for it supposes that he never acted virtuously before, and therefore could not get it by acting of it before.[8]

God shifts the orientation of sinners to himself, by infusing into the person a new principle. This alone God can do. This infused divine principle is described this way: "The Spirit of God in his spiritual influences on the heart of his saints, operates by infusing or exercising new, divine, and supernatural principles; principles which are indeed a new and spiritual nature, and principles vastly more noble and excellent than all that is in natural man."[9]

Edwards speaks of the nature of conversion in terms of a divine *creatio ex nihilo* where "God by his mighty power produces something that is new."[10] It is a new vital principle that turns the sinner from self glorification and obsessive self love to love of God. Infusion does not, however, violate the integrity of the human personality. It does not change the way the human will wills. Instead, God lays a new foundation that corrects the structure of the existing building.

> The new dispositions that attend it, are no new *faculties*, but new *principles* of nature. . . . By a *principle of nature* in this place, I mean that foundation which is laid in nature, either old or new, for any particular manner or kind of exercise of the faculties of the soul. . . . This new spiritual sense is

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[8] Jonathan Edwards, "Miscellanies No. 73," in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 13, *The "Miscellanies" (Entry Nos. a–z, aa–zz, 1–500)*, ed. Thomas A. Schafer (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 1994), 242.

[9] Edwards, *Religious Affections*, in *Works* 2:207.

[10] Edwards, *Religious Affections*, in *Works* 2:205.

not a new faculty of understanding, but it is a new foundation laid in the nature of the soul.[11]

Edwards was concerned about protecting the integrity of the human will. His *Freedom of the Will* sought to refute the Arminian notion that Calvinism was fatalistic—that it forced the human being into choosing things against its will. The will is not forced to do things it does not want to do. Edwards' Arminian opponents argued that if a person's actions are determined in any sense, then the freedom to choose is compromised. The will must be indifferent (morally neutral) or else it cannot will. Edwards countered that such an indifferent will is an impossibility. To will is to choose, Edwards argued, but the will that is under the power of sin chooses what is evil in God's sight. Because human beings have assented to the sin of Adam, their wills are determined to choose the evil. That is not to say that the way in which the will wills has been affected, that it is forced to choose what it does not want. The will always chooses what it desires most. To will is to choose, and all humankind retains this capability. What changes, Edwards argues in both *Freedom of the Will* and *Original Sin,* are the decisions that human beings make. Sin and its resultant misdirected inclinations determine the direction of man's choice, but the will chooses exactly what it desires. What people choose fits with their inclination; they choose what they want and get what they choose.

God infuses in the sinner a new "vital principle" in the soul that redirects the disposition of sinful humans and inclines them to choose the good. Thus, the divine principle or nature must be communicated prior to the exercise of the will.[12] The person receives the Holy Spirit "in his own proper nature," which acts as a "vital principle" in the soul. The infusion of grace reorients the sinner toward God. The person then wills the good and unites himself with Christ. The turning, however, does not change the manner in which human faculties function, nor does it add faculties to the person. The will continues to will as it did before. What changes is the object of its desire. Where before it chose evil, now it desires the good.

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[11] Edwards, *Religious Affections,* in *Works* 2:206.

[12] Consider "Miscellanies No. 77": "There must be the principle before there can be the action, in all cases; there must be alteration made in the heart of the sinner before there can be action consequent upon this alteration; yea, there must be a principle of holiness before holiness is in exercise. Yea, this alteration must not only be before this act of faith in nature (as the cause before the effect) but also in time . . . "; one may also see "Miscellanies No. 289": "It's evident that the habit of grace is always begun by an act of grace. . . ." See *The Works of Jonathan Edwards,* vol. 13, *The "Miscellanies" (Entry Nos. a–z, aa–zz, 1–500),* ed. Thomas A. Schafer (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 1994), 245, 381.

II. Edwards' Opposition to the Arminian "Scheme"

Jonathan Edwards sought, through the previously discussed works, to overcome Arminianism by upholding the Reformed tradition, of which he considered himself an heir. The lack of references to justification by faith alone, one of the cardinal doctrines of the Reformation, is striking.[13] That is not to say that the doctrine fails to appear. Edwards consistently, though infrequently, refers specifically to the idea of justification by faith. There is little in the way of detailed treatment of the subject, however, and no genuine attempt to integrate it into his overall theological system. The one place where Edwards treated the doctrine at length was in a series of sermons on justification by faith. By surveying Edwards' sermon "Justification by Faith Alone," this study will show, contrary to Shafer's contention, that justification by faith and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to human beings did hold a well-founded place in Edwards' theology.

Edwards' sermons on justification by faith were driven by the same threat that would inspire much of his life's work: Arminianism.[14] As he would later recount in *A Faithful Narrative*:

> About this time [1734], began the great noise that was in this part of the country about Arminianism. . . . The friends of vital piety trembled for fear of the issue; but it seemed, contrary to their fear, strongly to be overruled for the promoting of religion. Many who looked on themselves as in a Christless condition, seemed to be awakened by it, with fear that God was about to withdraw from the land, and that we should be given

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[13] The paucity of Edwards' treatment of justification by faith is paralleled in the Edwards literature. Works treating the subject are almost as scarce as Edwards' direct references. Thomas Shafer treated the topic in an article long ago; see "Jonathan Edwards and Justification by Faith," 55–67. The subject appears in Perry Miller's biography of Edwards, but Miller does not believe it drives the life of the Edwards' mind by any means; see *Jonathan Edwards* (Amherst, MA: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1981), 74–77. Dorus P. Rudisill's *Doctrine of the Atonement in Jonathan Edwards and His Successors* (New York: Poseidon Book, 1971) treats Edwards' doctrine of redemption. Conrad Cherry's treatment of faith in Edwards' theology comprises seventeen pages; see *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards: A Reappraisal* (1966; repr., Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990), 91–106. More recently Samuel T. Logan, Jr., has written "The Doctrine of Justification in the Theology of Jonathan Edwards," *Westminster Theological Journal* 46 (1984): 26–52, and Robert W. Jenson produced *America's Theologian: A Recommendation of Jonathan Edwards* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 53–64.

[14] For his sermon, "Justification by Faith Alone," see *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 19, *Sermons and Discourses, 1734–1738*, ed. M. X. Lesser (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 2001), 147–242.

> up to heterodoxy and corrupt principles; and that their opportunity for obtaining salvation would be past; and many who were brought a little to doubt about the truth of the doctrines they had hitherto been taught, seemed to have a kind of trembling fear with their doubts, lest they should be led into bypaths, to their eternal undoing: and they seemed with much concern and engagedness of mind, to inquire what was indeed the way in which they must come to be accepted with God. There were then some things said publicly on that occasion concerning justification by faith alone.[15]

Edwards attributed the initiation of the great work of God in the awakening to the sermons on justification.[16] He believed that as he faithfully proclaimed the message of Scripture, God worked grace in the hearts of sinful people.[17]

The words of Paul in Romans 4:5 formed the center of his message: "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."[18] With the doctrine of the Reformation clearly in mind, Edwards concludes that "we are justified only by faith in Christ, and not by any manner of virtue or goodness of our own."[19] The person who by faith unites himself to Christ receives the

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[15] Jonathan Edwards, *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God*, in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 4, *The Great Awakening*, ed. C. C. Goen (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 1972), 148.

[16] See the preface to "Justification by Faith Alone," in *The Works of President Edwards*, vol. 6, *Five Discourses on Important Subjects, nearly concerning the Great Affair of the Soul's Eternal Salvation: viz. Justification by Faith Alone. II. Pressing into the Kingdom of God. III. Ruth's Resolution. IV. The Justice of God in the Damnation of Sinners. V. The Excellency of Jesus Christ. Delivered at Northhampton, Chiefly at the Time of the Late Wonderful Pouring Out of the Spirit of God There* (London: n.p., 1817; repr., New York: Burt Franklin, 1968), 209–212. This work was originally published in Boston by S. Kneeland and T. Green, 1738. See also C. C. Goen, introduction to *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 4, *The Great Awakening*, by Jonathan Edwards (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 1972), 4–18.

[17] The contrast between Edwards' word-centered theology and the later psychological manipulation characteristic of Charles Finney and his theological heirs must be noted. In particular, many Lutherans seem to equate the preaching of the First Great Awakening with revivalistic developments of the Second Great Awakening. In fact, Edwards attributed salvation completely to the work of God, whereas Charles Finney believed that "religion is the work of man. It is something for man to do. In consists in obeying God. It is man's duty." Further, Finney believed that "a revival is not a miracle, nor dependent on a miracle, in any sense. It is a purely philosophical result of the right use of the constituted means"; see *Revival Lectures* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, n.d.), 1, 5.

[18] Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:147.

[19] Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:149.

double blessing of remission of sins and a righteous status in God's sight. Works done by the person cannot bring the favor of God; only by faith can the benefits of Christ's suffering and obedience become the sinner's own. Faith is the instrument by which a person receives or brings about "unition" with Christ. The union of the Christian with Christ makes possible the imputation of the righteousness of Christ. Justification is not simply an initial pardon of sin but a real uniting of the Christian with Christ that results in the forensic declaration of "not guilty" to the sinner. In other words, "What is *real* in the union between Christ and his people, is the foundation of what is *legal*."[20]

Edwards insisted that God does not look upon any of the works of a person in effecting justification. He rejected the Arminian conviction that human beings contributed to their salvation. The notion that human works had any place in the justification of the sinner before God was abhorrent to Calvinism in two ways. First, it compromised the glory of God and God's absolute sovereignty, as exhibited most concretely in the election of some to salvation and the reprobation of others to damnation. Second, it compromised the work of Christ. Edwards wrote:

> The adverse scheme lays another foundation of man's salvation than God hath laid. . . . [T]hat scheme supposes it to be men's own virtue . . . . It takes away Christ out of the place of the bottom stone, and puts in men's own virtue in the room of him: so that Christ himself in the affair of distinguishing actual salvation, is laid upon this foundation.[21]

The "bottom stone" in this controversy for Edwards, then, was his conclusion that Arminianism based salvation in part on human efforts, thereby denigrating the work of God in Christ. If human salvation depends in any sense on the efforts and achievements of man, then Christ's death was not really necessary. With these twin denials in mind, Edwards stakes out his ground clearly at the opening of the discourse.

> God in the act of justification, has no regard to anything in the person justified, as godliness, or any goodness in him; but that nextly, or

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[20] Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:158 (emphasis added).

[21] Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:238. The second of the two critiques is the more important one for Edwards here. Sovereignty, however, lies in the near background. Consider also the following: "In their scheme, a regard to man's own excellency or virtue is supposed to be first, and to have the place of the first foundation in actual salvation, though not in that ineffectual redemption, which they suppose common to all: *they lay the foundation of all discriminating salvation in man's own virtue and moral excellency:* this is the very bottom stone in this affair; for they suppose that it is from regard to our virtue, that even a special interest in Christ itself is given"; see Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:218 (emphasis added).

> immediately before this act, God beholds him only as an ungodly or wicked creature; so that godliness in the person to be justified is not so antecedent to his justification as to be the ground of it.[22]

The preceding critique is generally true of any system that seeks to make salvation a cooperative enterprise between human beings and God.[23] Edwards seems to have had something more specific in mind. What was the peculiar essence of the Arminianism he faced, the "Adverse Scheme" as he called it? Moreover, how would his understanding of this threat help him to outline the doctrine of justification within his theological system?

In answer to the first of these questions, Edwards' Arminian opponents insisted that they needed the work of Christ to attain salvation; however, their understanding of the nature and application of that work differed markedly from Edwards' understanding. The point at issue was human obedience to God's law. The Arminians argued that God gave to Adam the "old law." This old law required perfect obedience of human beings to attain the beatific vision. With the fall into sin, however, human beings proved themselves incapable of strict adherence to the demands of the law. So God, in mercy, "abolished that rigorous constitution or law . . . and has put us under a new law."[24] The new law does not demand perfect obedience of human beings. It asks only for "imperfect, sincere obedience."[25] God in mercy requires only that of which humans are capable of accomplishing. Commanding anything greater would be unjust on the part of God. "They strenuously maintain that it would be unjust in God to require any thing of us that is beyond our present power and ability to perform."[26]

Edwards countered that if God's new law demands of and exacts from humans only as much as they are capable of accomplishing, what need is there then for a savior? If human beings can fulfill the demands of God's law, then why would Christ have to enter the world to suffer and die? The Arminians answered: to satisfy God for human imperfection. God still demands perfect obedience, and because humans cannot attain that

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[22] Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:147.

[23] Robert Jenson states: "'Arminianism' is our inevitable self-serving interpretation of human responsibility over against God's mercy, according to which if we are blessed it is at least partly because we have chosen and labored to be, while when we suffer God is suddenly invoked for our unilateral rescue"; see *America's Theologian*, 53–54.

[24] Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:165.

[25] Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:166.

[26] Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:166.

perfection, "Christ died to satisfy for the imperfections of our obedience, that so our imperfect obedience might be accepted instead of perfect."[27]

Such a system is nonsense for Edwards; it depreciates the work of Christ. If followed to its reasonable end, there is no real need for Christ as savior from sin because there is no need for perfect obedience. Edwards wrote:

> They say it would not be just in God to exact of us perfect obedience, because it would not be just in God to require more of us than we can perform in our present state, and to punish us for failing of it; and therefore by their own scheme the imperfections of our obedience don't deserve to be punished: what need therefore of Christ's dying to satisfy for them? What need of Christ's suffering to satisfy for that which is no fault, and in its own nature deserves no suffering? What need of Christ's dying to purchase that our imperfect obedience should be accepted, when according to their scheme it would be unjust in itself that any other obedience than imperfect should be required? What need of Christ's dying to make way for God's accepting such an obedience, as it would in itself be unjust in him not to accept? Is there any need of Christ's dying to persuade God not to do unjustly?[28]

In other words, in the adverse scheme, imperfect obedience *is* perfect obedience.

It follows that if human beings have no real need for a savior, then there is no imputation of the righteousness of Christ. Logically, there is no lack of righteousness in the Arminian system. An imputation of righteousness to an individual presupposes an absence or at least an inadequacy on that person's part; but if imperfect obedience is all that God requires, then human beings lack nothing.

Rejection of the imputation of Christ's obedience to sinful human beings, Edwards believed, showed the true nature of the Arminian system. For him, if the imputation of Christ's righteousness is rejected, then there is only one possible alternative. The Arminian system, said Edwards, rests throughout all its parts on one thing: the works of human beings.

III. The Relationship between Faith and Justification in Edwards

As a Calvinist theologian in the Reformed tradition, Edwards sought to guard the notion of God's glory in all its applications. Anything that compromised God's majesty, particularly in the work of redemption, had to be rejected. In "Justification by Faith Alone," Edwards wanted to reject

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[27] Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:166.

[28] Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:166.

the Arminian scheme of justification because it "manifestly takes from, or diminishes the grace of God."[29] This section examines how Edwards faced the Arminian challenge and what his positive construction of the doctrine of justification is.

The greatest danger of Arminianism is that "it puts man in Christ's stead, and makes him his own savior, in a respect, in which Christ only is his Savior."[30] Most striking in this statement of the doctrine is the language of denial of the vicarious atonement. Arminians err by setting themselves in Christ's place—the righteous one in the stead of the sinner. Inclined to sin from birth, human beings cannot choose to love the good, that is, to be obedient to the demands of God's law. Christ fulfills this obedience in the place of the sinner. The very honor and glory of Christ is his satisfactory obedience to the law of God as he stands in the stead of the rebellious sinner. Thus any system that downgrades the necessity of Christ's vicarious work denigrates the very work of God. Christ is obedient specifically so his righteousness can be credited to the accounts of sinful humans.[31]

Crucial is Edwards' understanding of imputation, which appears in several of his works. Edwards speaks of it in at least three ways. First is the problem of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity. Edwards addresses this topic most clearly in *Original Sin*. When God dealt with Adam, God dealt with him as the head of the human race, "as the head of the whole body, and the root of the whole tree."[32] Although Edwards uses the traditional Reformed language of federal headship, he does so with a twist. When Adam sinned, a loss occurred in him. The divine love and the image of God left the heart of Adam when he sinned. Sin interrupted communion with God, and God the Holy Spirit forsook Adam.[33] God *then* imputed to Adam Adam's own sin, and he imputes sin to Adam's posterity as well. The consequence is an inclination to evil, which causes everyone to participate in Adam's sin, resulting in God imputing to each of

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[29] Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:183.

[30] Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:185.

[31] Consider also this statement from Edwards' sermon "The Excellency of Christ": "And he suffered from the Father, as one whose demerits were infinite, by reason of our demerits that were laid upon him. And yet it was especially by that act of his subjecting himself to those sufferings, that he merited, and on the account of which chiefly he was accounted worthy of, the glory of his exaltation"; see *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 19, *Sermons and Discourses, 1734–1738*, ed. M. X. Lesser (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 2001), 579.

[32] Edwards, *Original Sin*, in *Works* 3:389.

[33] Edwards, *Original Sin*, in *Works* 3:381–382.

them individually their own sin of participating in Adam's transgression. Each human being has "an evil disposition in the heart. . . whereby he is disposed to *approve* of the sin of his first father, as full as he himself approved of it when he committed it."[34] This participation in Adam's sin is not a "consequence of the imputation of that first sin . . . but rather *prior* to it."[35] What is imputed to Adam's posterity is the sin of participation that they have committed for themselves. By sinning, the child of Adam gets what he wants and deserves and therefore the imputation by God of sin is entirely just.

> From what has been observed it may appear, there is no sure ground to conclude, that it must be an absurd and impossible thing, for the race of mankind truly to partake of the sin of the first apostacy, so as that this, in reality and propriety, shall become *their* sin; by virtue of a real union between the root and branches of the world of mankind (truly and properly availing to such a consequence) established by the Author of the whole system of the universe; to whose establishment is owing all propriety and reality of union, in any part of that system; and by virtue of the full consent of the hearts of Adam's posterity to the first apostacy. And therefore the sin of the apostacy is not theirs, merely because God *imputes* it to them; but it is *truly* and *properly* theirs, and on that ground, God imputes it to them.[36]

The legal imputation of sin to Adam's heirs is based on their actual participation in his sin. In imputing this sin to them, God is not unjust, since they chose what they wanted. God merely allows them to have their desires.

The other two kinds of imputation deal with Christ. First the sins of humanity are imputed to Christ. God's justice demands that both the law's requirements and the penalty for the breaking of the law be fulfilled. Christ bore both the sins and the penalty for sin in his own body. "And he suffered as though guilty from God himself, by reason of our guilt imputed to him; for he who knew no sin, was made sin for us, he was made subject to wrath, as if he had been sinful himself. He is made a curse for us."[37] As in the case of Adam's sin, the imputation to Christ is contingent upon a prior act. Christ chooses to bear the sin of rebellious humanity, to bear their penalty so that they may have atonement for those sins. By suffering that penalty he wins righteousness.

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[34] Edwards, *Original Sin*, in *Works* 3:391.
[35] Edwards, *Original Sin*, in *Works* 3:391.
[36] Edwards, *Original Sin*, in *Works* 3:407–408.
[37] Edwards, *Original Sin*, in *Works* 3:414.

The righteousness Christ earns is not required for him, but he gains it to credit it to the deficient accounts of others. This imputation is Edwards' chief concern in "Justification by Faith Alone." Imputation in this sense consists in the moral obedience of Christ, which "is accepted for us, and admitted instead of that perfect inherent righteousness which ought to be in ourselves."[38]

Christ's righteousness consists in his willing obedience in the place of sinful humanity. Edwards insists throughout this section that the work of Christ is completely what is traditionally called the active obedience. Protestant scholasticism had differentiated between the active obedience of Christ (his fulfilling of the law) and his passive obedience (his suffering and death). Edwards consistently puts these two aspects of Christ's work under the active obedience.

> We are as much saved by the death of Christ, as his yielding himself to die was an act of obedience, as we are, as it was a propitiation for our sins: for as it was not the only act of obedience that merited, he having performed meritorious acts of obedience through the whole course of his life; so neither was it the only suffering that was propitiatory; all his sufferings through the whole course of his life being propitiatory, as well as every act of obedience meritorious: indeed this was his principal suffering; and it was as much his principal act of obedience.[39]

The correlative to Christ's active obedience is that God imputes Christ's righteousness to those who actively believe. As believers unite themselves to Christ by faith, God imputes to them the righteousness of Christ and declares them justified. "A person is said to be *justified* when he is approved of God as free from the guilt of sin, and its deserved punishment, and as having that righteousness belonging to him that entitles to the reward of life."[40] At this point it begins to become clear that faith precedes justification.

The critical question is how this righteousness comes to be imputed to the sinner. Is it an arbitrary act by God? Does the sinner grasp and take hold of it apart from the workings of God's grace? Edwards would answer

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[38] Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:185–186.

[39] Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:198. See also page 195: "The sufferings of Christ are respected in Scripture under a two-fold consideration, either merely as his being substituted for us, or put into our stead, in suffering the penalty of the law; and so his sufferings are considered as a satisfaction and propitiation for sin: or as he in obedience to a law, or command of the Father, voluntarily submitted himself to those sufferings, and actively yielded himself up to bear them; and so they are considered as his righteousness, and a part of his active obedience."

[40] Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:150.

"no" to both. He strives to maintain the free act of grace on God's part, while simultaneously maintaining the necessity of the individual to choose God's good.

The key is faith, because faith is the instrument through which human beings receive Christ and thus unite themselves to God. Faith is not, as the Arminians imply, a course of obedience undertaken by the Christian that God rewards with justification. Faith is "believing on him that justifies the ungodly."[41] Belief in the gracious, justifying God is more than simple assent for Edwards. There is a corresponding action on the part of the human subject.

> 'Tis most certain, both from Scripture and reason, that there must be a reception of Christ with the faculties of the soul in order to salvation [*sic*] by him; and that in this reception there is a believing of what we are taught in the gospel concerning him and salvation by him; and that it must be a consent of the will or an agreeableness between the disposition of the soul and those doctrines.[42]

There is a *reception* and this reception is *of Christ* by means of the faculties of the soul. Man exercises faith as an instrument and actively receives Christ first by understanding the message of the gospel and second by willing to make Christ his own.[43] As the disposition is turned from evil to good the soul consents to the grace of God, unites itself with Christ, and receives the benefits of Christ's obedience.[44] Thus justification is dependent upon faith and is logically consequent to it. "It seems manifest that justification is by the first act of faith, in some respects, in a peculiar manner, because a sinner is actually and finally justified as soon as he has performed one act of faith; and faith in its first acts does, virtually at least, depend on God for perseverance, and entitles to this among other benefits."[45] In short, what is real—the union between Christ and his people effected by faith—is the foundation of what is legal—imputation of Christ's righteousness.[46] It is Christ and his righteousness "in us," received

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[41] Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:148.

[42] Jonathan Edwards, "Miscellanies No. 27b," in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 13, *The "Miscellanies" (Entry Nos. a–z, aa–zz, 1–500)*, ed. Thomas A. Schafer (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 1994), 213.

[43] See Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:227: "For it is doubtless of the essence of justifying faith, to embrace Christ as a Savior from sin and its punishment, and all that is contained in that act is contained in the nature of faith itself."

[44] See Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:207: "Faith unites to Christ, and so gives a congruity to justification."

[45] Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:201–202.

[46] Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:158.

by faith, that is the "bottom stone" of the justification of the sinner before God.

> Neither are we to understand by God's righteousness, in the New Testament, only a state of justification of God's mere grace, and in which man himself has nothing to do; but also that inherent holiness that is in the heart of the Christian, as being owing not at all unto man, to his own mere motion and natural power, but as being entirely communicated from God through Jesus Christ. The law requires that [we] obey the precepts of it, and supposes that we are to do it of our own natural power; but this way can never obtain righteousness. But the holiness of Christians is merely and entirely a reflection of God's light, or communication of God's righteousness, and not one joy of it is owing to ourselves. 'Tis wholly a creature of God's, a new creature; 'tis Christ within us. 'Tis not our holiness or our righteousness any otherwise than as a gift; not as our offspring or progeny, nor as our natural right, nor because we make any additions to it, or because it is of our preservation. Every motion and action of grace is Christ living in us, and nothing else.[47]

IV. Conclusion

As a Calvinist, Edwards wanted to maintain both the primacy of God's act in salvation and to incorporate the integrity of the human will, which was essential to Enlightenment thought. Classical Calvinism stressed the activity of God and the absolute passivity of man in salvation. God predestines individuals to salvation or reprobation. God imputes the righteousness of Christ to individuals and declares them not guilty. Edwards did all he could to maintain this sovereign activity of God. His battles with the Arminians, however, forced him to maintain a careful balance between the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of the human subject. He wanted to protect the integrity of the human personality and the freedom of the will. He shifted the notion of imputation away from an arbitrary act of God, so that imputation was dependent on an act of the human will, not the decision of God. Imputation depended on faith. In fact, justification depended upon the act of faith. The unintended but real effect was that Edwards stressed the human side in the salvation equation more than the divine. The ironic result was that while Edwards sought to maintain a consistent Calvinism, he opened the door to a full capitulation to the Arminian scheme. The classical Calvinists were satisfied to state: "Those whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth: not by infusing righteousness into them,

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[47] Jonathan Edwards, "Miscellanies No. 66" in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 13, *The "Miscellanies" (Entry Nos. a–z, aa–zz, 1–500)*, ed. Thomas A. Schafer (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 1994), 236.

but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous; not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone."[48] For Edwards, on the other hand, faith became the means by which the human subject "closed with Christ."

> [Faith] is that by which the soul, that before was separate, and alienated from Christ, *unites itself to him*, or ceases to be any longer in that state of alienation, and comes into that forementioned union or relation to him, or to use the Scripture phrase, that 'tis that by which the soul COMES TO Christ, and RECEIVES him.[49]

Arminians believed that forensic justification on the basis of the imputation of Christ's righteousness as set forth by Edwards compromised the human personality. By an arbitrary act of God, it gave to men something that was not rightfully theirs, namely the righteousness of Christ. In "Justification by Faith Alone," Edwards tried to show a logical consistency between forensic imputation and human volition. He employed a similar strategy in his other soteriological treatises. Edwards' argument for the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the sinner in "Justification by Faith Alone" is logically consistent with his argument for the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity in *Original Sin*. Imputation is not the only basis of sin or grace in a person's experience. It is solely the legal basis. It, in turn, rests on the real basis of participation in Adam's sin or in Christ's righteousness. Edwards wanted to maintain both the primacy of God's act and the integrity of the human will. Justification is based on God's grace infused into the human soul but also requires the real consent of the human act of faith. By stressing the active, volitional character of faith and fitting the doctrine of justification by faith into his thought logically and consistently, Edwards provided a secure place for justification by faith in his theology. Simultaneously, though, he departed from a strict Reformed understanding of the justification of the sinner before God and allowed the camel's nose of Arminianism into Calvinism's tent. Little more than a generation after his death, strict Calvinism had largely disappeared from the American theological scene, and with it the doctrine of imputation disappeared generally from most theological treatises. Nineteenth-century Arminians saw Edwards as their hero of the faith.

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[48] Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), "The Westminster Confession of Faith," in *The Book of Confessions* (Louisville, KY: The Office of the General Assembly, 1991), 6.068.

[49] Edwards, "Justification by Faith Alone," in *Works* 19:157 (emphasis added).

Theological Observer

Martin Stephan: The Other Side of the Story or At Least Part of It

For over a half a century, Walter O. Foerster's *Zion on the Mississippi* (CPH, 1953) introduced seminary students to the circumstances of the 1839 Lutheran Saxon immigration which led in 1847 to the founding of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), whose chief architect was C. F. W. Walther. The formidable leader in the emigration was the now less-known Martin Stephan, pastor of St. John's in Dresden, who gathered confessional-minded Lutherans for the voyage to America. Chosen as bishop on January 14, 1839, as the four ships waited to dislodge their Lutheran passengers in New Orleans on January 29, his episcopacy was short lived. His relations with Louise Guenther, which came to light in her confession on May 5 to Pastor G. H. Loeber, led to his expulsion from the Perry County colony on May 30 and his being escorted across the Mississippi to Illinois, where he died on January 26, 1846. Like the English Pilgrims two hundred years before, these Lutherans had found it increasingly more difficult to practice their faith in a land whose king was Roman Catholic and whose Lutheran pastors were enamored with the Lutheran-Reformed détente in neighboring Prussia. Though two centuries separate the two migrations, their stories are strikingly similar: flight from oppressive government intrusion, chartering a ship, making a compact (charter) with regulations before landing, the prominence of clerical leadership, and the eventual disbanding of the colony.

During my seminary days (1955–1960), I came to know Phil Stephan, who spoke of his forefather, the ill-fated Bishop Martin Stephan. When I saw that the author of *In Pursuit of Religious Freedom: Bishop Martin Stephan's Journey* ([Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008], 327 pages, hardcover) was a certain Philip G. Stephan, I had to assume this was my classmate. Here he tells the other side of the story, which he and other family members have long desired to tell. Fascinatingly told, the book is well documented. Its thirty-three chapters are clustered under eight parts, followed by six appendices containing community regulations, Stephan's investiture as bishop, and O. H. Walther's hymns written for the sea voyage from Bremen across the Atlantic. Parts one through four tell of the origins of the Saxon Emigration Society and those of Martin Stephan's family in Bohemia, his ministry at St. John's in Dresden, his legal problems over his religious and personal activities, his wife and family, and his departure for America. Part five tells of the group's internal problems, which were exacerbated by a hostile press in St. Louis. Stephan's deposition as bishop is told in part six. Part seven relates his last years in Illinois (1839–1846), his vindication in the courts, and his four-month pastorate in Red Bud, Illinois. In part eight, the author reflects on his forefather's place in history.

A certain bias can be expected in a book written by a descendant of its subject, but in this case it is a useful antidote in coming to terms with a man who, in spite of his infractions, tilled the ground from which the LCMS sprang. Even those who became his critics admired his preaching and his counseling skills, which drew admirers from all over Germany. He and his wife Julia, a woman of high social rank, had twelve children, four of whom died. Three daughters were born deaf and were later institutionalized. Family problems were exacerbated by legal charges, among which was organizing a sect. These proved to be unfounded. Before Stephan left Germany he was placed under house arrest for one year and could not minister to his congregation. He suffered from eczema, especially on his feet, a disease often caused by anxiety, and sought relief at the baths in Radeberg, a village twenty miles away from Dresden. There he gathered a group of followers, Louise Guenther among them. In her twenties and about thirty years younger than Stephan, she emigrated with him, was in charge of acquisitions for the society, and served as his housekeeper in his last years. This relationship has arguably prevented putting his detractors under the same scrutiny they applied to him and allowed others to attribute to him views he did not hold. For example, Stephan was not a chiliast, as Paul Burgdorf claimed (54).

The most intriguing, and perhaps tragic, part of Stephan's life is told in part six, "Deposing a Bishop." Shortly after arriving in this country, Stephan encountered bad press in St. Louis about his handling of the Emigration Society's property. When Pastor Georg Loeber shared Louise Guenther's confession with Pastors Keyl, Buerger, and C. F. W. Walther, they were embarrassed by their published defense of their bishop (May 4, 1839), which they retracted on May 27. Assisting them in their intent to remove Stephan were the attorneys Vehse and Marbach (182). Louise Guenther was unaware that her private confession had become the reason for deposing Stephan as bishop. Though all this had become public knowledge, only on May 28 was Stephan confronted by a deposition signed by the pastors demanding his resignation. These pastors served as his accusers and his judges in requiring him to leave the community. At first Stephan refused what he considered an illegally constituted tribunal, but, in seeing a mob armed with whips outside his cabin, he acquiesced and was deprived of his possessions. He was bodily searched and was given only a shovel and pick to make a living and clothing which did not ward off the cold of winter (190, 237–238). His being forcibly taken to Illinois could legitimately be seen as kidnapping (247). Stephan's last years (1839–1846) were lived in pathetic misery. Once he returned to the colony for medicine, food, and clothing, but was refused. Loeber went to Kaskaskia to give him communion under the condition that he sign a confession. He refused (229). Four months before his death he became the pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Red Bud, Illinois, where he lies buried.

In the minds of his accusers and in common synod folklore, Stephan deserved all the misfortune he experienced, but this hardly exonerates those

who administered it. First, a confession made privately to a pastor is privileged information. It is one thing to ask the advice of other clergy and another thing to make it public, as Loeber and others did. On July 7, the same pastor told the congregation that two or three other women had come forward with the same claims. One of them wrote a letter withdrawing her allegations. Though current LCMS guidelines disallow making confessions public, the disposal of Stephan might be a warning for some to withhold potentially disastrous sins from their pastor (200–201). What was then considered a sacrament is looked on with suspicion now. Another unresolved issue is the society's forcing Stephan to surrender his personal belongings and property. Stephan's son, also Martin (V), returned to Germany where he studied architecture. After his mother's death, he returned to St. Louis and graduated from the seminary (1853). Walther's attitude to him as a student, and then as a pastor, was hardly positive. On one occasion the younger Martin was publicly called a "Judas." The book recounts how the seminary president persuaded him to relinquish all claims to the family property (269). This harassment continued into his ministry. He used his architectural skills acquired in Germany to design buildings for the seminary and several churches. The amazing legacy of the Stephan family is that, in spite of both proven and unproven allegations against their forefather, four generations served as pastors in the synod.

While the synod's crucial events 170 years ago may seem remote, those who choose to ignore them, as they are presented from another perspective, are depriving of themselves of coming face to face with an account of how we came to be as a synod. Things may not be as golden as we thought. The Lutheran Saxon experiment in Missouri was, in a way, an attempt to set up the kingdom of God on earth (hence the title *Zion on the Mississippi*). Quakers were doing the same thing in New Harmony, Indiana, as were the Mormons, first in Nauvoo, Illinois, and eventually in Salt Lake City. This is the dilemma of any church which sees itself as the true, visible church on earth. It may be that there is a little bit of chiliasm in our history, but then reality sets in. These Lutheran immigrants exchanged one set of problems in Germany for another set in America. Some of the problems faced in Germany in the first half of the nineteenth century reared their heads in the latter half of the twentieth century in America and, ironically, in St. Louis where the forefathers had come to find refuge from them. If there is a parable here, it is that we can never run away from problems without exchanging them for others, or maybe the same ones.

Should *In Pursuit of Religious Freedom* have a rightly deserved second printing, a few changes might be in order. In reference to a church government supervised by a bishop, "episcopal" should be substituted for "Episcopal" (e.g., 267), which refers to a denomination. German verbs appearing in an English language manuscript should be lower case (*erweckt*), not upper case (29). Nouns are reversed: not *beichtvater* but *Beichtvater* (65), preferably in italics. Followers of Pietism at the University of Leipzig are called "Disciples of Christ" (67) but should be "disciples of Christ." The third ship carrying the

Saxon immigrants arrived on January 12, 1839, not 1838 (129). Since its passengers left on November 12, 1838, they would have arrived in New Orleans before they left Bremen. Loeber's Rogate Sermon, which stirred the conscience of Louise Guenther, was preached on May 5, 1839, not March 5 (179). "Sacrament of holy absolution" should be either all lower or upper case, not both (266). "Emigration Society," yes, but the author does not address why they used the title "Society" (e.g., 8–9).

Its author has not yet responded to my letter sent in care of his publisher to confirm that we were once seminary classmates. If the heroic element of Bishop Stephan's story is that his family continued to give pastors to the LCMS for over a century after he was deposed, the tragic element is that the one descendant who wrote a book to show the other side of the story is no longer a pastor of the synod of which his great-great-grandfather was really the patriarch. Other classmates took the same path. That is a tragedy, too. Some have left the church. This is still even a worse tragedy, all of which is the subject for some other historian to recount.

David P. Scaer

Religious Belief in the USA: The Need for Creedal Christianity

The latest report of the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life on the religious landscape of the United States mostly gives a picture of a deeply religious nation, though with changing beliefs (http://religions.pewforum.org/reports#). Sixty-five percent say that religion is important in their life, and 92 percent believe in God. This is impressive data, especially if compared to similar polls in Western Europe. I cannot help but be impressed by the vitality of religion and the sheer number of people active in churches here compared to my homeland, Germany.

For decades the United States has defied the secularization thesis, that the growth of an industrial society, with science replacing religion as the way to explain the world, leads inevitably to a decline of religious beliefs, which are relegated to the backwaters or to the economically deprived—a variation on the theme that religion is the opium of the masses, numbing their pain, just that the proposed solution is not socialism but scientism. For decades Peter Berger, professor of sociology at Boston University, has deconstructed this hypothesis, and books like *The New Faithful* by Colleen Carrol show the resurgence of traditional religion among the younger generation. The growth of Christianity in the developing world and the less-welcome resurgence of Islam seem to refute the smug thesis of secular Western Europeans and their American counterparts that they are the *avant garde* of history. Thus, all is well on this side of the Atlantic.

Well, not quite. Religion is strong, but not necessarily what the readers of this journal would define as orthodox Christianity. Although 92 percent

believe in God, only 60 percent believe that he is personal; the rest waver between "impersonal force" or "both" (personal God and impersonal force). Sixty-three percent believe that the Bible is the word of God, but only 33 percent believe that it is literally the word of God. Evangelical Protestants, among whom the researchers grouped The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, score high on this question (59%), but mainline Protestants (among them the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) scored rather low (22%). Although a majority believe in absolute right and wrong on moral issues, only a slight majority (52%) of evangelical Protestants say that their ethical views are mostly shaped by their religion, while the majority of other beliefs rely on "practical experience and common sense." Not surprisingly, among all believers, belief in the existence of hell is less popular than belief in heaven.

What is most surprising and alarming, though, is the fact that a majority of believers in all groups hold that there is more than one way to heaven. The blight of relativism has infected Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. Only cultic groups like Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses resist. This is disconcerting because it contradicts not some outdated philosophical notion about "absolute truth," but the core Christian confession that, though there are many who are called gods and lords, there is but one God and one Lord, Jesus Christ (1 Cor 8:4-6). The "I believe in my way but yours might be just as good" attitude is not only a threat to a narrowly defined confessional Lutheranism, it is also a threat to a creedal Christianity that believes the true faith can be articulated, confessed, and distinguished from misbelief.

In turning to a religion that is eclectic and "non-dogmatic" (i.e., subscribing to the dogma of inclusivity and condemning the dogma of exclusivity), modernity and its tail, post-modernity, shape beliefs, not by destroying them completely, as the secularization thesis assumed, but by assimilating them and transforming them into a benign therapeutic model that is served cafeteria-style. In this surrounding, the church is more than ever challenged to confess clearly Christ as the one and only Lord and to be a creedal church. That includes a strong emphasis on life-long catechesis. Her loving care to those inside and outside the church will witness that such strong commitment to the one Lord is not hateful but an expression of love to those who are in need of this one Lord.

Roland F. Ziegler

Erratum

In *CTQ* 72:1 (January 2008), the word "death" in the Dio Chrysostom quotation on page 8 (fifth line from the bottom) should read "dearth."

Book Reviews

***Awakening to Equality: A Young White Pastor at the Dawn of Civil Rights.* By Karl E. Lutze. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2006. 176 pages. Hardcover. $29.95.**

Karl E. Lutze, a 1945 graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, faced a not uncommon reality for seminary graduates in the 1940s. His first assignment was, in part, as a missionary-at-large. No surprises there. Nor was his assignment to a young (less than a decade old), struggling mission community in Muskogee, Oklahoma, a surprise. What was different for him—completely different—was that he, a young white man, was assigned to serve an African-American congregation in the American South. *Awakening to Equality* is his story of serving as a pastor in chiefly African-American settings as the United States was just beginning to come to terms with institutionalized racism and its expression in legally-enforced segregation.

Lutze describes his awakening as a pilgrimage from a childhood and young adulthood lived almost entirely apart from African Americans (Sheboygan, Wisconsin), to the pastorate of an almost all-black mission congregation (Muskogee, Oklahoma), finally to the pastorate of an integrated congregation (Tulsa, Oklahoma). The narrative that unfolds follows Lutze from his early ministry as he becomes aware of the pervasive character of segregation, which defined the lives of African Americans in this period, and of how the church had been unresponsive to such patterns. Lutze largely leaves the narrative off with his move in 1959 from Tulsa to the Lutheran Human Relations Association of America at Valparaiso University in Indiana, where he worked with Andrew Schultze, the pioneering advocate of racial equality. However, Lutze does note that, over the course of his more than decade-long ministry in Oklahoma, the patterns of segregation began to change and have continued to change, though Lutze believes much remains to be done. "Everything's different, but nothing has changed," said one of his colleagues in assessment (163). Lutze's own assessment is blunt: "The full promises of an ideal community that cares for all of its people have not yet been met—in Oklahoma and in countless other places" (164).

Lutze's commitments are clear. As such, it is surprising that some inconsistencies appear in the work. For example, Lutze is critical of the Synodical Conference's mission approach, in which it seemed to create a "separate but equal" mission to African Americans (a point others rightly have made). This segregationist perspective, he observes, is also illustrated by the fact that white pastors serving black congregations were paid more than black pastors who served similar or even the same congregations. Further, officials in the Synodical Conference (all white) exercised a heavy hand in organizing the mission efforts of pastors (white and black) and congregations—a classic top-down approach that did not empower either the pastors or the

congregations. Lutze's critique is well stated. However, he does not level the same critique at the Oklahoma District of the LCMS, which, as described by Lutze, itself effected and affected the organization of the integrated congregation, the Lutheran Church of the Prince of Peace, which took Lutze from Muskogee to North Tulsa, seemingly apart from any input from the wishes of the Muskogee congregation (92). True, Lutze does on occasion critique LCMS officials and the general perspective of the LCMS (as an example, see his comments on LCMS president John W. Behnken on page 110), but perhaps the pervasive character of such perspectives is lost even on its critics.

The book has a few minor typographical errors in it. One that repeats itself regularly is the failure to capitalize The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. There also is a tendency toward repetition, which is not uncharacteristic of this genre of literature. Nonetheless, this is a significant and illuminating book. Readers interested in the life of congregations during a dynamic time of change in American society and in the LCMS will appreciate this volume.

Lawrence R. Rast Jr.

***The Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Edwards.* Edited by Stephen J. Stein. Cambridge Companions to Religion. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. 398 pages. Paperback. $27.99.**

Jonathan Edwards is best known for his sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," in which God is depicted as holding sinners over the fires of hell as one would hold a spider on a thin thread. Hellfire and brimstone preaching aside, there is a lot more to Edwards than this one sermon, and *The Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Edwards* promises to provide a more-balanced view of Edwards himself and the wider world of Edwards study. The book is a collection of essays that "seeks to open for . . . the reader the life and times of Edwards, his religious and professional achievements, and the full range of his reputation in diverse fields" (8). Editor Stephen Stein accomplishes this goal by organizing the essays into three main parts. The book begins with a group of essays on Edward's life and context, followed by a group examining his roles and achievements. The concluding essays all deal with his legacy and reputation.

Stein makes clear that these essays do not offer the final word on Edwards or his place in history. As a result of his complexity, no single interpretation of Edwards dominates the book. Not only did Edwards leave behind a vast collection of writings, the writings themselves are so varied that they thwart easy generalizations. This has caused some to claim Edwards as a theologian, while others prefer to downplay his theology and see him as a philosopher or even just a producer of early American literature. Edwards was, of course, all of these at the same time, and more, which is one of the reasons that he is

worthy of this kind of attention some three hundred years after his birth. Even if one were limited to Edwards as theologian, the questions do not end. He has been viewed as the last Puritan and the first Evangelical. He has been claimed by Calvinists, Revivalists, and Unitarians as one of their own, and even today he remains one of the seminal figures in American church history.

The contributors are a veritable "Who's Who" of Edwards scholars. Standout essays include George Marsden's "Biography," Harry Stout's "Edwards as Revivalist," Wilson Kimnach's "Edwards as Preacher," Stephen Stein's "Edwards as Biblical Exegete," and Stephen Crocco's "Edwards's Intellectual Legacy." *The Cambridge Companion* serves as an excellent introduction to contemporary interpretations of Jonathan Edwards. In addition to the essays, it also provides a full listing of the Yale edition of *The Work of Jonathan Edwards* (including forthcoming volumes), as well as an extensive bibliography of further reading.

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***Introduction to Modern Theology: Trajectories in the German Tradition.* By John E. Wilson. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007. 286 pages. Paperback. $29.95.**

John E. Wilson, professor of church history at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, undertakes a daunting task, namely, tracing trajectories of German trends as a way of charting out the course of contemporary theology. The value of the book is also its weakness. After a brief historical overview that begins with the Revolution of 1848 and continues through the period immediately after World War I, Wilson provides clear introductions to Kant, Hegel, Schelling, Kierkegaard, and Schleiermacher and their formative influence in nineteenth- and twentieth-century theology. In keeping with the subtitle of the book, he extends the trajectory from Germany to America in the thinking of Emerson. There are extended treatments of so-called "Mediation Theology" (for example, Tholuck, Dorner, and Baur) and Ritschlianism (for example, Ritschl, Hermann, Adolph Harnack, Troeltsch, and Otto). The antecedents of dialectic theology are found in Martin Kähler and Franz Overbeck. As one would expect, a significant portion of the book is devoted to Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Rudolph Bultmann, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Paul Tillich, and the Niebuhr brothers. The trajectory from Germany to America runs from Walter Rauschenbusch to Martin Luther King, Jr., and various forms of liberation theology.

Wilson's concise and generally helpful summations of theologians and their theologies finally fail to give a comprehensive picture of contemporary trends. For example, there is only scant treatment of the confessional reawakening of

the nineteenth century and nothing on confessional theologians of the twentieth century (Elert, Schlink, Peter Brunner, and Iwand). Paul Althaus is mentioned only in relationship to his alleged complicity with National Socialism. J. C. K. von Hoffman is completely ignored, as is the leading figure in the Luther Renaissance, Karl Holl. The volume ends with German theology in the 1960s (Sölle, Moltmann, Pannenberg, and Jüngel), so genuinely contemporary figures such as Oswald Bayer and Gerhard Sauter are also absent. Apart from the section on Bultmann and Ebeling, there is little about the theological impact of biblical scholars such as von Rad (in Old Testament) or Käsemann (in New Testament) on systematic theology.

If one is looking for a comprehensive guide to contemporary theology, *Introduction to Modern Theology: Trajectories in the German Tradition* would not be the place to look. Hans Schwarz's *Theology in Global Context: the Last Two Hundred Years* (Eerdmans, 2005) would be a more adequate choice. However, those interested in probing the philosophical background of major movements in German theology in the last century will be assisted by this volume. In that sense it might be best used as a supplement to two older works: Karl Barth's *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century: Its Background and History* (reprint; Eerdmans, 2001) and Helmut Thielicke's *Modern Faith and Thought* (Eerdmans, 1990).

John T. Pless

***Educating People of Faith: Exploring the History of Jewish and Christian Communities.* Edited by John Van Engen. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004. 366 pages. Paperback. $34.00.**

"The church is always more than a school but the church cannot be less than a school," writes Jaroslav Pelikan (ix). This anthology of essays examines the ways that teaching and learning are woven into the fabric of the church's communal life in several historical and cultural contexts. Robert Goldenburg ("Religious Formation in Ancient Judaism"), Elliot Wolfson ("Orality, Textuality, and Revelation as Modes of Education and Formation in Jewish Mystical Circles of the High Middle Ages") treat religious education in Jewish history. John Van Engen, the editor, contributes a programmatic essay, "Formative Religious Practices in Premodern European Life," that seeks to apply rigorous historical methodology to discern the "lived religion" of the past and suggest ways in which this research might yield a "usable past" to believers in our time (1). All of the essays investigate expressions of religious formation prior to the end of the sixteenth century.

The first section of the book is devoted to early synagogue and church. In this section, Robert Louis Wilken's chapter on "Christian Formation in the Early Church" stands out as he explores the multi-level context of early church practices in Greco-Roman and Judaic worlds. Wilken notes that "Judaism's

greatest contribution to Christianity's understanding of moral and spiritual formation was not institutional but theological" (51). Tracing the place of texts, liturgy, and social relations (family, master-disciple, friendship), Wilken concludes: "What gave Christian formation its power and tenacity was that it was carried out within the context of a coherent theological framework. It was also thoroughly biblical and philosophically astute. People knew why they did what they did" (62). John Cavadini's study of Augustine argues that for the Bishop of Hippo "faith is the healing of the eye of the mind and, as such, a capacity for understanding or 'penetrating' mystery" (79). "Monastic Formation and Christian Practice: Food in the Desert" by Blake Leyerle examines eating and fasting habits that were part of the transformation envisioned in early monasticism.

Six essays are devoted to Jewish and Christian practices of religious education in the Middle Ages. Stanley Samuel Harakas surveys practices of liturgy, catechesis, and iconography in the Christian east, concluding that the key to the Byzantine approach is formation of the Christian consciousness and lifestyle in adherence with the Holy Tradition. Other essays in this section deal with the place of the cult of the Virgin Mary in Christian formation, practices in thirteenth-century England, and Jewish mysticism.

The final section of the book is devoted to the Reformation era. David C. Steinmetz provides the chapter on Luther, titled "Luther and the Formation in Faith." Steinmetz observes that Luther and his colleagues faced a task that in large measure was unprecedented. They had not only to pass on the faith to a new generation; they had "to re-form an older generation that had in their estimation been formed in the Christian faith incorrectly" (253). The Reformation was not only a theological movement but also a reforming of piety and practices. Steinmetz rightly notes the influence of Luther's catechisms in this regard. Lee Palmer Wandel writes on "Zwingli and Reformed Practice," tracing reforms in worship as a means of establishing Christian identity. Robert M. Kingdom looks at institutional developments as an embodiment of Calvin's version of Christianity in his essay "Catechesis in Calvin's Geneva." The final two essays deal with late-Reformation Roman Catholic practices: ritual (Philip Soergel) and spiritual direction as pedagogy (Lawrence Cunningham).

With a renewed interest in classical forms of catechesis, this volume is a helpful guard against a romantic attempt to return to a golden age. The essays in *Educating People of Faith* provide Christian educators with a wealth of historical and cultural research on how Christians have transmitted the faith in a variety of times and places.

John T. Pless

***The Pentateuch: A Story of Beginnings.* By Paula Gooder. London and New York: T&T Clark International, 2005. 128 pages. Paperback. $34.95.**

Paula Gooder, Canon Theologian of Birmingham Cathedral and an Honorary Lecturer at the University of Birmingham, introduces her book with the obvious statement that "Beginnings are important." She continues:

> Beginnings are important not simply because they describe how things used to be but because they can also point to how things might be. This is especially true of the accounts of beginnings found in the Bible. They not only describe how the world came to be but also point to the on-going relationship between God and humanity. The accounts were intended to be not so much informative as inspirational. They aimed to open a window on to how the world might be in relationship with the God who began the world and who continually intervenes in its history. (1)

All of this is true and intriguing. The whole of the Pentateuch is a description not simply of the creation but also of the beginnings of the people of God. Therefore, the theme of beginnings, or creation, is found not only in the formation of the world but also in the formation of Israel as the people of God. The first five books of Scripture end with a beginning as the covenantal people of God stand on the banks of the Jordan River preparing to begin a new life as God's people in the land that he promised.

The author's purpose, as stated in her introduction, is to explore the Pentateuch as a narrative of beginnings in more than one sense. Unfortunately, she never accomplishes this purpose. While giving her stated intent cursory attention, she fractures her theme. The author's beginning statement of purpose never comes to fruition; however, she does accomplish her statement of purpose as set down in her concluding remarks. Unfortunately, they are not identical.

While Gooder says that the ending is but a beginning, her beginning is most certainly the ending of her opening theme. Still, she does accomplish a different goal. She provides a concise and well-written account of various ways of reading the texts. Her book introduces the reader to some of the many approaches to the Pentateuch and does provide a useful guide with which to begin a study of the texts.

The book offers a concise overview of the various approaches to the text of the Pentateuch that provides useful information without bogging down in minutia. Source and form criticism, as well as oral tradition, are explained in a succinct manner along with the more current trend to abandon the attempt to understand the origins of the Pentateuch in favor of understanding it in its present form. She also gives a brief yet excellent explanation of "myth" in the context of the biblical text (25–26).

In regard to the Documentary Hypothesis, one of her statements is especially provocative and insightful:

> This theory is so influential that a whole host of different theories have grown out of it. Indeed, it is somewhat ironic that the current crisis which surrounds the hypothesis is as much due to the theories that set out to support it as to those that set out to criticize it. The wealth of proposals and counter-proposals that developed out of the original theory are now so complex that the hypothesis struggles to survive. (14)

This is well stated and demonstrates a careful observation of the current academic environment in which modern Pentateuch studies are carried out.

While Gooder does not accomplish the stated purpose in her opening, she has provided us with a useful resource for quick review and overview of Pentateuch studies. She did not end where she began, or begin where she ended, but in the end the journey was interesting.

Jeffrey H. Pulse

***The Preexistent Son: Recovering the Christologies of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.* By Simon J. Gathercole. Grand Rapids and Cambridge, U.K.: Eerdmans, 2006. 344 pages. Paperback. $34.00.**

When considering what the New Testament proclaims about the preexistence of the Son, it is the testimony of the Gospel of John and the Pauline Epistles that usually comes to mind, and certainly not much from the Synoptic Gospels. Simon Gathercole, formerly teaching at Aberdeen and now at the University of Cambridge, tackles the daunting task of challenging this common misperception that is also the scholarly consensus. He does this by presenting wide-ranging and fresh evidence for the preexistence of the Son from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. The result is one of the most intriguing books on early preexistence Christology that I have ever read.

Gathercole begins by presenting a very short survey—even too brief—of research on New Testament evidence of the Son's preexistence under three headings: Representatives of the Consensus; The Optimists; and the New History of Religions School. Although his overview demonstrates the strong consensus against seeing evidence of preexistence in the Synoptic Gospels, he also argues that scholars from the so-called New History of Religions School, like Larry Hurtado and Richard Bauckham, are "acknowledging that the portrayal of Christ in the Gospels in fact shows strong signs of including heavenly and divine contours to Christ's identity" (17). Gathercole follows a similar approach as these two scholars: careful historical research on New Testament texts in the wider context of Second Temple Judaism.

The primary thesis of this book is that the "I have come" (ἦλθον) sayings in the Synoptic Gospels are significant evidence for the preexistence of Jesus as

the Son. If Jesus is speaking of having come to the present place at this particular moment, the natural questions arise: *Where* did he come from, and *when* was he there? Gathercole proposes that these statements imply Jesus existed *prior* to his conception in the *heavenly* realm. Before Gathercole begins arguing his thesis, he presents two chapters of prolegomena. The first demonstrates that preexistence Christology was already widespread before AD 70 as evinced in the Pauline Epistles, Hebrews, and Jude. This chapter helps one to read the evidence from the Gospels in a pre-70 context where the Son's preexistence is already the subject of Christian thought and writing. The other chapter introduces the theme of Jesus' transcendence in the Synoptic Gospels. He concludes that "a heavenly christology is not a distinctively Johannine phenomena: There are plenty of thunderbolts throughout Matthew, Mark, and Luke as well" (79).

The main body of the book is a careful examination of the ten sayings in the Synoptic Gospels that contain or are related to Jesus' assertion "I have come" (Mark 1:24=Luke 4:34; Matt 8:29; Mark 1:38, cf. Luke 4:43; Mark 2:17=Matt 9:13=Luke 5:32; Matt 5:17; Luke 12:49; Matt 10:34=Luke 12:51; and Matt 10:35). Gathercole first reviews how other interpreters have understood these phrases: an idiom of a Hellenistic prophet; an Aramaic idiom for "I am here"; a signal of Jesus' origins from Nazareth; a statement of Jesus' status as a prophet of Israel; a statement of Jesus' coming as Messiah; and an epiphany statement. Seeing these understandings as deficient, Gathercole proposes that these statements are evidence of Jesus' preexistence in the heavenly realm. The primary support for his proposal is similar pronouncements by angels in biblical and Second Temple Jewish literature. The statements indicate that the angel has come from the heavenly realm and existed prior to becoming manifest. He reviews twenty-four examples that become his interpretative context for understanding that the statements in the Synoptic Gospels are implying the preexistence of the Son in the heavenly realm. He also argues that the sending sayings can be understood as having similar implications.

Gathercole offers a few related studies in the final chapters that only add to the value of this volume. First, he discusses the influence of Wisdom traditions on the Christology of the Synoptic Gospels and cautiously concludes that they are not nearly as influential as some have argued. Second, he offers a fascinating study of Matthew 23:37—"Jerusalem . . . how often have I desired to gather your children as a bird gathers her nestlings under her wings"—that moves from the observation that this is the first time Jesus is depicted in Jerusalem in Matthew to the implication that this saying reflects the preexistence of the Son who was active in the life of Israel in previous generations. Third, Gathercole spends a significant portion of the book (231–283) discussing four major titles of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels: Christ, Lord, Son of Man, and Son of God. A chapter is devoted to each title, with attention given to how these particular titles may reflect the preexistence of the Son in some contexts. Although Gathercole shows scholarly caution at many points in

drawing his conclusions, his bold contribution signals that this subject should be receiving more attention in the future.

Charles A. Gieschen

***An Introduction to the Study of Paul.* By David G. Horrell. Second edition. London and New York: T&T Clark, 2006. 164 pages. Paperback. $24.95.**

David Horrell does not provide pat answers to questions about Paul but offers methodologies and tools by which students "can begin to evaluate the interpretations others propose and develop a perspective of their own" (xii). Horrell's target audience appears to be well-prepared undergraduate and graduate students who are already familiar with Paul's writings but now desire access to the mountain of material that has been written by modern scholars about Paul.

Horrell divides the book into nine chapters. Chapter 1 ("Introduction: Paul the man-mountain") provides a general introduction to Paul and his influence, together with what will be covered in the rest of the book. Chapter 2 ("From Jesus to Paul: pre-Pauline Christianity") probes Palestinian Christianity and the extent to which Paul and others may have used teachings descended from Jesus. Chapter 3 ("Paul's life: before and after his encounter with Christ") surveys Paul's life and missionary career. Chapter 4 ("Paul the letter-writer") surveys the non-disputed letters (1 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1–2 Corinthians, Philemon, Philippians, and Romans), compares these with ancient letters and papyri, and discusses whether or not rhetorical criticism should pertain to Paul's letters. Chapter 5 ("Paul the theologian: the central elements of Paul's gospel") grapples with central themes in Paul's theology and ethics, and pays attention to scholarly debates in each area. Chapter 6 ("Paul, Israel and the Jewish law") probes Paul's views on Israel, Judaism, and the Torah. In chapter 7 ("New approaches to the study of Paul: social-scientific, political and feminist interpretation"), Horrell discusses the many new approaches and methodologies that have been applied to Paul since the late-sixties. In chapter 8 ("Paul's legacy in the New Testament and beyond"), Horrell surveys the so-called Deutero-Paulines (Colossians, Ephesians, 2 Thessalonians, 1–2 Timothy, and Titus), then discusses Paul's influence upon both orthodox and heretical Christianity and upon such personages as Marcion, Augustine, Luther, Wesley, and Barth. Horrell concludes the book quite abruptly in chapter 9 ("Coming full circle: why study Paul today?"). There is a seven-page bibliography that contains a fair representation of important works in English, and two indices: one for biblical texts cited in the book and the other a combined subject/author index.

The book does an admirable job of introducing seminarians and pastors to the latest in Pauline research. Questions have moved on considerably since this reviewer was in seminary, though many of the old issues remain. Take

authorship, for example: it is a foregone conclusion among most scholars that Paul did not write the so-called "Deutero-Paulines" but that continuators expanded on Paul's authentic ideas by adapting them to later generations. Horrell more or less buys into this scheme (126–135), yet acknowledges that all thirteen letters could well have been written by Paul to address the practical needs of Christians who lived during Paul's lifetime (135).

More problematic to Lutherans is the question of what is central to Paul's theology: justification by grace through faith, or what E. P. Sanders has called "participation in Christ" (74). Horrell seems to side with Sanders in the debate, though he allows scholars of the "old perspective" to have their say (76–77). Discerning readers will note that Horrell is fair-minded throughout, although he shows a certain predilection toward what is new and non-traditional. Thus, he voices appreciation for feminist approaches (114–121) and doubts, for example, that Paul really wrote 1 Corinthians 14:34–35 (118). Paul could not have written the Pastoral Epistles either, claims Horrell, because those letters reveal a penchant for sound doctrine and church hierarchy more reflective of an increasingly rigid age (135–136). Paul was more an advocate of women's liberation than a chauvinist (114), though the issue must be more finely nuanced than this:

> For some he is a voice for equality and liberation, for others a voice of male domination and women's oppression. Perhaps [Elizabeth Schüssler] Fiorenza is right to stress that any assessment of Paul in this regard must accept the ambivalent legacy which his letters represent; otherwise he may be somewhat one-sidedly claimed either as 'chauvinist', or as 'feminist' and 'liberationist'. (119)

In sum, this is a helpful book in that it offers an adequate introduction to the challenging field of Pauline studies for pastors and seminarians who already know a thing or two about Paul. Those who disagree with Horrell's positions will nonetheless appreciate his efforts toward providing varying sides to controversial issues and an evenhanded treatment throughout.

John G. Nordling

***Women Pastors? The Ordination of Women in Biblical Lutheran Perspective, A Collection of Essays.* Edited by Matthew C. Harrison and John T. Pless. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2008. 400 pages. Paperback. $26.99.**

Brought together into a single volume are twenty-one previously published essays by eighteen Lutheran theologians opposed to the ordination of women. Essays have been organized into four subsections (exegetical, historical, systematic, pastoral), corresponding to the four sub-disciplines of a seminary curricula. It would be tedious to list the eighteen essayists here, but all have wrestled directly with the issue of women's ordination as this has infiltrated American Lutheran synods and European Lutheran state-related

churches. The book articulates why authentic Lutheranism cannot ordain women to the pastoral office and encourages struggling brothers and sisters in Christ who have suffered as a result of women's ordination (6-7). Courageous bishops—such as Walter Obare of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya—have opposed women's ordination and have suffered ostracism by the Lutheran World Federation, drastic reductions in funding, charges of intransigence by the liberal establishment, and worse (*CTQ* 69 [2005]: 309-326). These essays show that since the apostolic age down through the past two millennia, including the Reformation era, the pastoral office was held by suitably trained male candidates of theology. Until recently this has been the consistent practice of the Lutheran church. *Women Pastors?* lets reader ponder what the Office of the Holy Ministry is and the reasons why Paul—and even our Lord Jesus Christ (Weinrich, 355-56)—allowed only for male pastors from the outset.

Two Pauline texts prohibit women from being placed into the office of the pastoral ministry: 1 Corinthians 14:33b-38 and 1 Timothy 2:11-14. Large segments of modern, western Christianity have variously sought to demonstrate that the prohibitions were not part of the original text (Schaibley's Argument A, 339), culturally conditioned (Argument B, 339-340), legalistic and so, not evangelical (Argument C, 340), or not supported by "at least one clear, distinct and unambiguous Bible passage" (Argument D, 341-342). With respect to Argument D, Scaer observes (242, 262; also Sasse, 269) that 1 Timothy 2:11-14 actually is a commentary on 1 Corinthians 14:33b-38, and both came from Paul. All the exegetical essays (Section 1, 11-105) affirm the traditional interpretation of these passages over against critical scholars and feminists who deconstruct them. No one has been able to demonstrate that the prohibitions were not written by Paul himself. A case can be made that the Pauline pronouncements were intended to protect the church against heretical and destructive tendencies already at work in apostolic times (e.g., 28, 32, 39, 47, 51, 92, 270-271, 288, 350-351, 354, etc.). To be sure, some textual variants place 1 Corinthians 14:34 and 35 after 14:40, but this tradition rests on shaky grounds. The evidence that 1 Corinthians 14:34 and 35 should be placed in its traditional location, and not after 14:40, is substantial. Marcion probably was the one responsible for removing it from its original location (Bryce, 64), a move that since then has provided fodder for interpolation theories that still make the rounds.

An overview of the three remaining subsections (historical, 109-166; systematic, 167-319; and pastoral, 321-395), would deprive readers of the benefit of coming to each essay on its own terms. Instead, what I shall offer is a summation of themes several essayists touch on in *Women Pastors?* For example, several admit that—biblically speaking (cf. Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:17-18; 21:9)—women can prophesy (Kriewaldt, 46-47; Brunner, 197; Scaer, 241 n. 40; Sasse, 270; Weinrich, 359); nevertheless, prophecy differs from preaching in that prophecy was directly received through the Spirit (Kriewaldt, 46). One

either had the gift of prophecy or did not, somewhat like healing (Brunner, 196). It was always the case in the Christian assemblies, however, that prophecy was weighed, evaluated, and thus subjected to various norms (Kriewaldt, 47; also Giertz, 179; Brunner, 200; Weinrich, 129, 355). Women with charismatic gifts—like Miriam, Huldah, Deborah, the Virgin Mary, and Philip's daughters—did not yield to any internal impulses to preach (*vocatio interna*). "Keeping silence" must mean that they deliberately refrained from activity that could be construed as preaching: "they loved their Lord and knew that they had to obey his command" (Sasse, 272).

The prohibitions need not mean that women cannot speak at all during the worship service (Scaer, 234; Lockwood, 286), or that Priscilla (15, 127, 234, 238, 246, 264, 289) and other godly women (190, 194) did not instruct their own households in the faith. Nevertheless, Priscilla's teaching was done privately, i.e., outside the context of the service of Eucharist (Sasse, 271; Lockwood, 289), or even exceptionally (Weinrich, 354). In any event, there is no evidence that prophesying of the sort that Paul seems to countenance in 1 Corinthians 11:5 was the same thing as preaching or leading worship (Scaer, 242). Rather, Paul describes there the sort of witnessing in which all Christians engage.

Many of the essays comment favorably upon the so-called "order of creation" (38, 51, 152, 176, 198, 243, 272, 278, 294, 340, 348–349, 356, 363, 376), which might be defined in basic terms as "the right relationship between man and woman" (Gärtner, 38). This relationship had been violated at Corinth (Gärtner, 31–32; Brunner, 191, 201–202; Scaer, 228 n. 4; Sasse, 269). Today feminism diminishes some differences between men and women. Another view sees gender differences as a result of the fall into sin. But God created the two genders ("male and female he created them," Gen 1:27 RSV), and so distinctions between men and women are part of God's good creation (22, 53, 84, 161, 176, 191, 202, 211, 243, 246 n.46, 348, 366). So-called "headship" is based in part on 1 Corinthians 11:3 ("But I want you to understand that the head of every man [παντὸς ἀνδρός] is Christ, the head of a woman is her husband [γυναικὸς ὁ ἀνήρ], and the head of Christ is God," RSV). The imagery here cannot be dismissed (Scaer, 240); thus, the increasingly insistent demand for a pervasive unisexuality—which holds, for example, that distinctive differences between man and woman are interchangeable—is contrary to creation and should not be tolerated in the church. Gender matters for Christians, who, in their inter-human relationships (husband-wife), reflect the unseen relationships that are operative between the diverse persons of the Trinity (Gieschen, 85; Brunner, 203; Kleinig, 217–225; Scaer, 240). Weinrich's thinking is most remarkable in this respect: humanity is "essentially binary" (363), "exists in twos" (368 n. 22), and is therefore apprehensible "in two consubstantial forms" (370). Feminism disrupts this by insisting that all human persons must be interchangeable; but God intended that there should be a wholesome complementariness as each diverse Christian submits to the demands of vocation, which, in turn, cannot be divorced from gender (376).

The point is that man and woman are *different* from one another, and so should have *different roles* at home and in the church (Giertz, 176, 180; Kleinig, 222; Scaer, 240; Lockwood, 291 n. 27). Only at the resurrection on the Last Day will the differences between man and woman be done away with (Gärtner, 33; Kriewaldt, 53; Scaer, 238 n. 33, 245 n. 43). Therefore, the rush to ordain theologically articulate women results, sadly, in a diminution of the service that women do within the church (Giertz, 180; Brunner, 213; Slenczka, 317–318; Smith, 395) and has had a profoundly negative impact also upon hearth and home: "the ordination of women contradicts the spiritual vocation of men as husbands and fathers and empties marriage and family life of much of their spiritual significance" (Kleinig, 222). Moreover, the ordination of women has in some churches in some Lutheran and Anglican communions prepared the way for the ordination of homosexuals. Of course, as many proponents of women's ordination insist, the ordination of women and the ordination of homosexuals are separate issues. The pattern of argumentation, however, for both ordinations follows identical trajectories: first, the appeal to Galatians 3:28 (a text that was engaged throughout this volume); and, second, the idea that the biblical writers were conditioned by their time and culture, so that "what a text meant" then is not necessarily the same as "what it means" for us today (Lockwood, 291 n. 28).

I need to point out two observations: first, the essayists in *Women Pastors?* are all male, which could lead some to suppose that *only men* think women should not be ordained—a completely wrong idea, of course. Some theologically articulate women should have been invited to contribute. Second, several of the essayists—Giertz (176, 177); Kleinig (223); Lockwood (292 n. 31); and Slenczka (313)—argue that Ephesians 5:21 ("Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ [ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις ἐν φόβῳ Χηριστοῦ]," NIV) advocates the submission of husbands and wives *to one another*. This type of interpretation is often used to placate feminists and others who cannot abide by the idea that one group of Christians (wives, in this instance) should have to submit to another group of Christians (husbands), but this is what Ephesians 5:21 means in its context (cf. Eph 5:22-6:9). Only one essay gets this right (Kriewaldt, 48), but does not go far enough, in my opinion. Again, Weinrich's second essay comes closest to expressing correctly the relationship that God intends should exist between man and woman (377–378).

Women Pastors? offers a lot about men, women, the way men and women were created by God to relate to each other, inter-Trinitarian relationships, and the Office of the Holy Ministry. Smith's essay at the end (389–395) gives hope that those who ordain women now may be persuaded not to do so in the future. This book is must reading for all—clergy and lay alike—in an egalitarian society.

John G. Nordling

***The Division of Christendom: Christianity in the Sixteenth Century*. By Hans J. Hillerbrand. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007. 504 pages. Paperback. $49.95.**

The Reformation—like all era-making episodes in history—was a complex amalgam of theological controversies, attendant political circumstances, and socio-cultural change. Historians of sixteenth-century Europe have long debated the priority each of these phenomena should be given in recounting the story and assessing the significance of the Reformation. Over the last three or four decades the trend has been towards social history, but, despite its many valuable contributions to scholarship, social historiography has in many respects lost sight of the significant theological refinements and developments that occurred during the period.

Histories of Europe in the sixteenth century that keep a keen eye on the theology of the era are, however, still being written. *The Division of Christendom* by Hans J. Hillerbrand serves as, perhaps, the most recent and finest example. Beginning with a survey of developments in late medieval European society, the book focuses in on where it all started: the indulgence controversy of 1517. From here Hillerbrand weaves a captivating narrative covering every region in Europe—from the British Isles to Hungary to Scandinavia—touched and shaped by reform movements.

Hillerbrand is primarily concerned with explaining the cause of the division of *corpus Christianum* during the sixteenth century. Thus, considerable attention is given to Luther and the Lutherans up to 1580 with the compilation of the Book of Concord. Detailed chapter-length attention is also given to the rise and diversification of Anabaptism (and more radical forms of dissent), the emergence and proliferation of Calvinism, the peculiar history of reformation in England, and, of course, the Church of Rome's response to all this. While the narrative focuses especially on the "interplay of religious and political forces," ample consideration is also given to the social history of the Reformation.

Certainly numerous histories of the Reformation cover the same material. One would, nevertheless, be hard pressed to find a narrative as wide in scope yet as economical and precise in detail as *The Division of Christendom*. Reformation enthusiasts in particular, but also anyone generally interested in the intellectual and cultural history of Western civilization—regardless of how erudite—will find this an extremely useful and learned book.

Adam S. Francisco

Articles, Editorials, and Theological Observers

Book Reviews