

# CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY

Volume 83    Number 1–2

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CELEBRATING 150 YEARS  
OF CONCORDIA PUBLISHING HOUSE

A Brief History of Concordia Publishing House

**Charles P. Schaum**

Review Essay: Publications from Concordia  
Publishing House

**John T. Pless**

Review Essay: Chemnitz, Gerhard, Walther

**Roland F. Ziegler**

Review Essay: *Luther's Works*

**Lawrence R. Rast Jr.**

The Canonical Reading of Scripture

**James G. Bushur**

A Debatable Theology

**Richard J. Serina Jr.**

Luther and Latin Polyphonic Music

**Daniel Zager**

Useful Applications of Scripture

**Benjamin T. G. Mayes**

Pastoral Formation in the 21st Century

**Lawrence R. Rast Jr.**

# Concordia Theological Quarterly

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**Editor’s Note**

This year marks the 150th anniversary of Concordia Publishing House. Since her founding, she has supported the church in a number of ways, most especially through the publication of materials used to proclaim God’s word. The Editors now take this opportunity to thank Concordia Publishing House for her work, in general, and for supporting the publication of this issue in particular. May the Lord grant Concordia Publishing House increased blessing in service to him.

The Editors

# The Highest and Ultimate Gift of God: A Brief History of Concordia Publishing House in the German-Era LCMS

Charles P. Schaum

## I. Introduction

In 1869, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), then *Die deutsche evangelisch-lutherische Synode von Missouri, Ohio und anderen Staaten*, wanted to form a synodical press to stabilize its core mission of publishing modern Lutheran classics designed to aid the teaching and defense of doctrine. Concordia Seminary professor Georg Mezger put it best in the *Denkstein* published in 1922 for the seventy-fifth anniversary of the LCMS:

The fact that God permitted His revealed word **to be written down**, that He commanded research in **Scripture**, and that in many Bible passages He commissioned us to proclaim His word to all people surely vouches for the certainty that, according to God's will, the art of publication or the press also may serve Him and His Church. Thus Luther also called publication "the highest and ultimate gift of God, through which He promotes the matter [of the Gospel]" (St. Louis Edition XXII:1658).<sup>1</sup>

Here we seek to show the events that shaped the course of Christian publication in the early LCMS, both for good and ill.<sup>2</sup>

## II. Turbulent Early Years

C. Ferdinand W. Walther began publishing *Der Lutheraner* ("The Lutheran") in September 1844. His unifying, supportive goals for this newspaper, which extended throughout the LCMS German era, included the following:

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<sup>1</sup> Georg Mezger, *Denkstein zum fünfundsiebzigjährigen Jubiläum der Missourisynode* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1922), 292. Unless otherwise noted, all translations from German sources are by the present author and use boldface to indicate *Sperrdruck* in the original.

<sup>2</sup> One should consult the collections at Concordia Historical Institute. The present author organized handwritten sources of the German-era conventions. See Martin R. Noland and Mark Loest, eds., *The Doctrinal Resolutions of the National Conventions of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod 1847–2004* (St. Louis: Concordia Historical Institute, 2006).

1. Concerning doctrine: To make known the treasures and history of the Lutheran Church and 2. to offer proof that this Church does not stand among the category of Christian sects, rather, that it is not a new church but the old, true Church on earth. . . . 3. To show the true, Lutheran manner in which a person can have faith, live a Christian life, and die a blessed death. Finally, 4. [to show] how to discover and refute the false, misleading doctrine that is on the upswing, how to warn others about it, and especially how to unmask those who falsely call themselves Lutheran.<sup>3</sup>

*Der Lutheraner* was a key element in bringing the early LCMS together, putting doctrine at the center, and helping the young synod deal with trust issues regarding clergy in the wake of the alleged sexual sins of ousted Saxon “bishop” Martin Stephan Sr. and the related issue of private Absolution.<sup>4</sup> *Der Lutheraner* was published by the firm Weber und Olshausen from September 1844 onward. Wilhelm Weber, a prominent abolitionist, had published the St. Louis newspaper *Anzeiger des Westens* (*The Western Gazette*) since 1836.<sup>5</sup> His partner, Arthur Olshausen, became sole owner of the firm in May 1847.<sup>6</sup> Both Weber and Olshausen were among a wave of immigrants who some called young “radicals.” They embraced municipal socialism, abolitionism, and Union causes. They opposed positions that they perceived to be like the oppressive tendencies in German-speaking lands after the Napoleonic Era.<sup>7</sup> In St. Louis these “radicals” clashed

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<sup>3</sup> Mezger, *Denkstein*, 293, quoting C. F. W. Walther, “Vorbemerkungen über Ursache, Zweck und Inhalt des Blattes,” *Der Lutheraner* 1, no. 1 (1844): 1.

<sup>4</sup> For example, C. J. Hermann Fick, “Gespräch zweier Lutheraner über kirchliche Verfassung,” *Der Lutheraner* 3, no. 22–25 (1847): 119–21, 125–26, 129–30, 135–36; Charles P. Schaum and Albert B. Collver III, *Breath of God, Yet Work of Man: Scripture, Philosophy, Dialogue, and Conflict* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2019), 129–43. For more on Stephan, see Walter O. Forster, *Zion on the Mississippi* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1953). Regarding pagination of articles in volume 3 of *Der Lutheraner*, see note 6 below.

<sup>5</sup> Indicated in the colophon of May 4, 1847. The best information is in the article on *Anzeiger des Westens* in J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Saint Louis City and County*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts, 1883), 932–35. See also Henry Boernstein, *Memoirs of a Nobody: The Missouri Years of an Austrian Radical 1849–1866*, trans. and ed. Steven Rowan (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 1997). One sees inaccuracies on this point in Edmund Seuel, “Publication Activity of the Missouri Synod,” in *Ebenezer: Reviews of the Work of the Missouri Synod during Three Quarters of a Century*, ed. William H. T. Dau (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1922), 293–94.

<sup>6</sup> The original third volume of *Der Lutheraner* (September 1846–August 1847) was set solid (little or no white space) on four pages of stock trimmed to 9.5 by 14.25 inches. Before and after that volume, the standard was six pages trimmed to 9.5 by 13 inches. August Wiebusch und Sohn set the 1860 reprint of volume 3 using the series standard. They kept the same articles in each issue but changed the layout and pagination of the articles within each issue.

<sup>7</sup> After the Congress of Vienna in 1815 that promoted an outcome favorable to Great Britain, Prussia, Russia, and Austria-Hungary, Europe was rocked by a series of radical revolts. All major world powers were engaging in expansionism and colonialism, deciding winners and losers amid

with the Saxon immigrants. The latter's desire for religious freedom and fear of a powerful central government led them to support pro-Southern, states' rights positions.<sup>8</sup> The "Forty-Eighters" brought a new wave of progressive immigrants after the failed socialist revolutions of 1848, fearing authoritarian figures like Prussian crown prince Wilhelm, later Kaiser Wilhelm I of Germany.<sup>9</sup> Olshausen's socialist activism estranged him from the Saxons. He promoted the *Anzeiger in Der Lutheraner* from July 27, 1847, onward, leading in part to the 1850 termination of his firm's relationship with the LCMS.<sup>10</sup>

The LCMS established a publication society (*Verlagsgesellschaft*) in 1849 that engaged outside printers on behalf of the Synod.<sup>11</sup> In the first convention session of that year, Messrs. J.H. Tesch and F.H. Eilers of Milwaukee, along with pastors Ernst G.W. Keyl and Christian A.T. Selle, submitted a memorial to explore the establishment of a synodical press. Pastor Theodor Brohm of New York submitted a similar memorial directly to President Walther, which was later shared.

After careful examination of the matter and consideration of all sides of the issue in view of conditions in the near future and the relationships pertinent thereto, whereby among other things it became clear that the publication and printing of *Der Lutheraner* could not be joined with such an undertaking according to the plan as it stood in the first memorial [of Tesch, et al.], — the synod resolved to hand the entire matter over to a publication society established by the synod. The drafting of a separate constitution for [this society] was assigned to a committee, whose draft the synod later reviewed, improved, and adopted.<sup>12</sup>

The constitution of the publication society was printed in the convention minutes. It mandated that the society provide "the most inexpensive and most general distribution of orthodox evangelical Lutheran books for education and edification, with special consideration given to the works of the blessed Doctor Martin

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an industrial explosion. See also Norman Davies, *Europe: A History* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1996), 759–896.

<sup>8</sup> Schaum and Collver, *Breath of God, Yet Work of Man*, 234–35; 281. See also C. F. William Dallmann, *My Life* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1945), 40, 44–45.

<sup>9</sup> Wilhelm was known as the "Grape Shot Prince" [*der Kartätschenprinz*]; Otto von Bismarck gave the "Blood and Iron" speech in 1862. For more on the Forty-Eighters, see Jakob Mueller, *Aus den Erinnerungen eines Achtundvierzigers: Skizzen aus der deutsch-amerikanischen Sturm- und Drang-Periode der 50er Jahre* (Cleveland: Schmidt, 1896).

<sup>10</sup> See *Der Lutheraner* 3, no. 24 (1847): 134 and the colophons thereafter until the issue of May 14, 1850.

<sup>11</sup> Mezger, *Denkstein*, 293–94. One sees that immediately in the colophon of the 1849 convention proceedings.

<sup>12</sup> LCMS, *Dritter Synodalbericht der deutschen evangelisch-lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und anderen Staaten vom Jahre 1849* (Chicago: Höffgen, 1849), 16.

Luther.”<sup>13</sup> The criterion of orthodoxy was determined by complete agreement with Scripture and *The Book of Concord*. That confessional basis remains intrinsic to both Concordia Publishing House (CPH) and the LCMS.

Members of the society could include LCMS pastors, school teachers, and voting lay members of LCMS congregations. The society was to sell bond certificates [*Actien*] to its members, the value of which would be redeemed in the form of goods upon delivery. Few wanted to pay in advance for goods that might never arrive; thus, the plan failed by 1850.<sup>14</sup> The Synod’s publication society continued to work as well as it could with limited resources.<sup>15</sup> On April 24, 1853, Walther and his congregation started a separate Bible society, the *Evangelisch-lutherische Bibelgesellschaft* (“Evangelical Lutheran Bible Society”), which began by importing German Bibles, then printing its own editions later.<sup>16</sup>

The last issue of *Der Lutheraner* printed by Olshausen was published May 14, 1850. The printer Moritz Niedner served from 1850 to late 1857. Like Olshausen, Niedner used *Der Lutheraner* to advertise for his own business. Niedner and his firm never really stabilized; he would undertake something for a few years, then he would jump to something new.<sup>17</sup> One of the few books that his firm produced for the LCMS was a two-volume book of martyrs: *Die Märtyrer der evangelisch-lutherischen*

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<sup>13</sup> LCMS, *Dritter Synodalbericht*, 16; the society’s constitution spans pages 16–17.

<sup>14</sup> LCMS, *Vierter Synodalbericht der deutschen evangelisch-lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und anderen Staaten vom Jahre 1850* (St. Louis: Niedner, 1850), 37–38. The publication society sold only 37 certificates, about a quarter of the 140 that were needed. The total of \$378.75, about a year’s wages for little better than unskilled labor at the time, was set up as a publication fund [*Verlags-Casse*] that would provide resources on loan to the Synod for needed publications. The Synod promised to repay the bond holders [*Actieninhaber*] either in cash [*Baar*] or in books as the course of publication continued.

<sup>15</sup> Mezger has the best account of the 1850 convention. Seuel is vague. Bruce Cameron bases his analysis on a 1951 letter by Otto Dorn, whose unsupported speculation about Walther’s motives, along with sparse facts, undermines Cameron’s analysis of the situation before 1869. Compare Mezger, *Denkstein*, 293–94; Seuel, “Publication Activity,” 293–94; and Bruce Cameron, *The Word of the Lord Endures Forever* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1994), 3.

<sup>16</sup> Martin Günther, *Dr. Carl F. W. Walther: Lebensbild* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1890), 94; compare Seuel, “Publication Activity,” 293–94; Cameron, *The Word of the Lord Endures Forever*, 6.

<sup>17</sup> Moritz Niedner (1817–95) later became a publisher of judicial sales and other legal notices in St. Louis County. He then acquired *The St. Louis Bulletin* in February of 1861, renamed it to *The State Journal*, and continued its course as a pro-Southern paper. Later he edited the *St. Louiser Abendzeitung* (1867–68). He seems to have worked as a foreman at CPH under Louis Lange from about 1869 until 1878. See *Laws of the State of Missouri Specially Applicable to Saint Louis County*, comp. Horatio McLean Jones and Alexander Martin (St. Louis: The Missouri Democrat Office, 1861), 252–54; Joseph A. Mudd, *With Porter in Northern Missouri: A Chapter in the History of the War Between the States* (Washington, DC: National Publishing Company, 1909), 17–18; Seuel, “Publication Activity,” 299.



*Kirche* (“*The Martyrs of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*”).<sup>18</sup> In 1851, the LCMS rejected a proposal to create a Christian political newspaper amid fears of rising tensions. These tensions later exploded into a “maelstrom of resentment and hate” on all sides at the outset of the American Civil War and thereafter.<sup>19</sup>

In 1854, August Wiebusch, who in 1849 had emigrated from Osnabrück in the Kingdom of Hanover (part of present-day Germany), donated \$1,000 for a synodical press. Starting on December 19, 1854, the colophons of *Der Lutheraner* show the publisher as *Druckerei der ev.-luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio u. a. St.* The LCMS saw itself as the publisher and retailer; it did not want to co-brand its publications with wholesale partners. Relations with Niedner’s firm ended in late 1857.

Memorials at the 1853 convention showed that the LCMS needed a theological journal for clergy and a general paper for laity. As a result, the scholarly journal *Lehre und Wehre* (“*Doctrine and Polemics*”) was launched in 1855, distinguishing itself from *Der Lutheraner*. In the 1857 convention, Walther suggested the printing of the *Altenburger Bibel* (“*Altenburg Bible*”). That triggered the change from Niedner to August Wiebusch und Sohn as the Synod’s printer from late 1857 to late 1869.<sup>20</sup> Wiebusch was a capable, assertive businessman.<sup>21</sup> For the first time, the LCMS could implement an organized publication plan. The Synod required Wiebusch to do business as the synodical press [*Synodaldruckerei*]. The Synod appointed a

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<sup>18</sup> Likely based on John Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments of the Church*, one finds Anabaptists among the Lutheran martyrs. See C. J. Hermann Fick, *Die Märtyrer der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche*, 2 vols. (St. Louis: Niedner, 1854–56).

<sup>19</sup> Mudd, *With Porter in Northern Missouri*, 23; see also Mezger, *Denkstein*, 294. On Walther’s handling of the slavery issue, see Ludwig E. Fürbringer, *Eighty Eventful Years* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1944), 220, 222–29. See also Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Oxford History of the American People* (New York: Oxford UP, 1965), 612; James M. McPherson, “Civil War,” *The Reader’s Companion to American History*, ed. Eric Foner and John A. Garraty (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1991), 182–90.

<sup>20</sup> Mezger, *Denkstein*, 294–95. One must remember that the early LCMS publishers and related committee members also were members of Walther’s congregation; many of them served on the congregation’s boards and committees. When the Synod changed publishers, ripples spread in the congregation. The situation was complex and sometimes murky.

<sup>21</sup> Both Mezger, *Denkstein*, 295 and Seuel, “Publication Activity,” 294 report that the 1854 offer was actualized in 1857. Wiebusch built a house and established a business on South Fourth Street during 1859–1860. Some sources suggest that he worked out of the basement of Trinity Church, located at Third and Lombard Streets in St. Louis until 1864, when it relocated to Eighth and Lafayette. Sources within the LCMS do not present the story in that manner. Compare Don Heinrich Tolzmann and Ernst D. Kargau, *The German Element in St. Louis: A translation of Ernst D. Kargau’s St. Louis in Former Years: A Commemorative History of the German Element*, trans. William G. Bek (Baltimore: Clearfield, 2000), 44–45. For more on Trinity, see C. F. W. Walther, *Law and Gospel: How to Read and Apply the Bible*, ed. Charles P. Schaum, John P. Hellwege Jr., and Thomas E. Manteufel, trans. by Christian C. Tiews (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2010), xlvii–xlviii; as well as Dennis R. Rathert, *A History of Trinity Lutheran Church and School* (St. Louis: Trinity Lutheran Church, 1989).

publishing committee (E. W. Leonhardt, C. Römer, and T. Schuricht) to negotiate prices and supervise the selection and scope of goods to be sold.<sup>22</sup> Starting in 1858, one sees the Wiebusch colophon broadly in LCMS publications.

These stipulations proved to be unworkable. For example, the education journal *Evangelisch-lutherisches Schulblatt* (“*Evangelical Lutheran School Newspaper*”), organized by Johann C. W. Lindemann of the teacher seminary in Addison, Illinois, was not an official LCMS publication until 1869, yet Wiebusch printed it perhaps as early as late 1866.<sup>23</sup> Yet he was forbidden to print other outside jobs. The publishing committee wanted Wiebusch to abide strictly by the agreed stipulations, but Wiebusch did not want to lose money with idle presses. In 1867, the publishing committee, along with E. F. W. Meier and Louis Lange, formulated a new business plan. With startup funds of \$3,000, they installed a small press at Concordia Seminary on South Jefferson Avenue in late 1867 or sometime in 1868 before the Synod approved the plan in 1869.<sup>24</sup>

Not only did business relations sour between the Synod and the Wiebusch firm, but in 1870 the Wiebusch family also suffered anonymous personal attacks on its reputation that harmed its business. Both the LCMS and Trinity Church vouched for the integrity of the Wiebusch family, but to no avail as the situation deteriorated. Henry Wiebusch, son of August, pulled his children from Trinity’s parish school, and later that year the Wiebusch family joined the Evangelical Synod of the West<sup>25</sup> and successfully aided that synod’s publishing efforts with many works, including *Erklärung des kleinen evangelischen Katechismus der deutsch-evangelischen Synode des Westens* (1870). August died in 1881.<sup>26</sup>

The Wiebusch firm printed historically important publications, some of which still shape the LCMS. Illustration 1 shows the title page of the first hymnal used synod-wide by the LCMS. In 1847, the Ludwig company of New York printed the first edition for Trinity Church in St. Louis, on the condition that it be a stereotype edition. In 1861, August Wiebusch und Sohn reprinted the hymnal that Trinity

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<sup>22</sup> Seuel, “Publication Activity,” 294.

<sup>23</sup> Seuel, “Publication Activity,” 295. The Addison facility moved to River Forest, a Chicago suburb, and became Concordia Teachers College, later Concordia University.

<sup>24</sup> Seuel, “Publication Activity,” 294; Rathert, *History*, 14. Louis Lange (1829–93) ran the Lange Publishing Company and printed *Die Abendschule*. The ultimate fate of this first press is not related in published materials.

<sup>25</sup> The Evangelical Synod of the West was a synod with a mixed Lutheran-Reformed confession, now part of the United Church of Christ.

<sup>26</sup> Cameron, *The Word of the Lord Endures Forever*, 4; Tolzmann and Kargau, *The German Element in St. Louis*, 44–45. Seuel identifies Niedner (likely the former publisher) working under Lange (“Publication Activity,” 299). Yet all published reports of Lange give specific details about his efforts to avoid conflicts of interest. Without more data, one ought not engage in idle speculation.

offered to the LCMS on December 2, 1861, which the Synod officially accepted in 1863.<sup>27</sup> Wiebusch printed early editions of the *Großer Gebets-Schatz* (“Large Treasury of Prayer”) starting in 1864; it was reprinted through 1908.<sup>28</sup> This book guided LCMS laity to pray in the same manner as their Lutheran forebears had done since the Reformation. Other notable books produced by Wiebusch include the following: Wilhelm Sihler memorialized Synod in his *Denkschrift* (“Memorial,” 1860), which justified moving the practical seminary from Fort Wayne to St. Louis and mitigated conflict between the Saxons and Franconians.<sup>29</sup> Books that established the basis for LCMS polity even today include Walther, *Die Rechte Gestalt einer vom Staate unabhängigen evangelisch-lutherischen Ortsgemeinde* (1863; *The Form of a Christian Congregation*, 1963); with *Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt* (Erlangen: Deichert, 1852–75; CPH 1894; *The Church and the Office of the Ministry*, 2012). Köstering and Walther, *Auswanderung der sächsischen Lutheraner im Jahre 1838* (“Emigration of the Saxon Lutherans in the Year 1838,” 1866) serves as an LCMS history to that date. Walther, *Die evangelisch-lutherische Kirche die wahre sichtbare Kirche Gottes auf Erden* (1867; *The True Visible Church*, 1961) was pivotal to hermeneutics and dogmatics in the LCMS. Hermann M. Baumstark’s *Geschichte der Christlichen Kirche* (“History of the Christian Church,” 1867) was one of the first scholarly history books in the LCMS. Lindemann, *Deutsche Grammatik* (“German Grammar,” 1868) was used in LCMS schools until 1893. Wiebusch printed nine books of *Luthers Volksbibliothek* (“Popular Library of Luther,” 1859–76, fifteen books of two volumes each).

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<sup>27</sup> Mezger, *Denkstein*, 302–303. A hymnal commission met in the 1908–1911 triennium, after which a revised, expanded edition of the hymnal was printed by CPH after final synodical approval in 1917. Image by Charles P. Schaum, taken of the original volume donated to him by John M. Fields of Muscle Shoals, Alabama. See also Rathert, *History*, 14; and Seuel, “Publication Activity,” 294.

<sup>28</sup> *Evangelisch-Lutherischer Gebets-Schatz: Vollständige Sammlung von Gebeten Dr. Martin Luthers und anderer rechtgläubiger, gesalbter Beter der ev.-luth. Kirche in unverändertem Abdruck. Nebst einem Hausgesangbüchlein* (St. Louis: M. C. Barthel, 1864). See the translation by Matthew Carver, *Lutheran Prayer Companion* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2018).

<sup>29</sup> The Saxons and Franconians had clashed over private Absolution since 1847. See Schaum and Collver, *Breath of God, Yet Work of Man*, 142–143.



Illustration 1: First General LCMS Hymnal

To handle projects that the LCMS could not undertake, the Synod contracted with the St. Louis-based firm Volkening to reprint the *Trostreden* of Lassenius (“Discourses of Consolation,” 1861), Spener’s *Catechismus-Predigten* (“Catechism Sermons,” 1867), and the first edition of Martin Günther’s *Populäre Symbolik* (“Popular Symbolics,” 1872), later reprinted and expanded by CPH and Ludwig E. Fürbringer. The Leipzig-based firm Fr. Dette co-published *Das Weimarische Bibelwerk* (“The Weimar Study Bible”), Christian Löber’s *Dogmatik* (“Dogmatics”) for the laity, and other Lutheran classics with the LCMS throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Schaum and Collver, *Breath of God, Yet Work of Man*, 246.

### III. Early Retail Arrangements

Retail sales were handled through at least three book shops. In 1850, J. H. Bergmann of New York offered to address the failure of the bond plan. His bookstore offered to import and sell books from Germany, in addition to those printed in the US, for use in the LCMS without needing advance money. In exchange for sales on demand, whether wholesale or retail, his conditions were as follows:

1. Bergmann would carry only those books that agreed fully with Scripture and *The Book of Concord*, be they scholarly or popular.
2. He would obtain German works from publishers either locally or from Germany as long as this were possible and if the price did not exceed the cost of reprinting. He also would print English translations of German works.
3. The net profit of this business should be split thus: Fifty percent would be set aside to build a publication fund. The other fifty percent would be administered by a committee representing Lutheran synods holding strictly to the Formula of Concord to support either properly educated pastors serving poor congregations or missionaries.<sup>31</sup>

The plan would be underwritten by notes of credit issued by business owners within LCMS congregations, who would then be repaid or debited when annual balances were tallied. Pastor Theodor Brohm was the contact for general inquiries and correspondence, while Bergmann was the contact for placing orders. The Synod accepted this offer but left participation up to individuals and congregations.<sup>32</sup>

The other two retail stores were owned by members of Walther's congregation. Louis Volkening (1826–1920) and his family had a shop on Franklin Street in northern St. Louis. It was re-branded as an official U.S. store of the Leipzig-based Fr. Dette Company until at least the First World War.<sup>33</sup> Martin C. Barthel (1838–99) ran a book shop near Trinity Church, southeast of the corner of 10th and Carroll Streets, where Interstate 44 cuts through today. Martin was the son of Saxon immigrant Friedrich Wilhelm Barthel, the first LCMS treasurer. In 1860, Martin Barthel became the first general retail agent for the LCMS. After the founding of the LCMS press in 1869, he became general manager of the wholesale press at the seminary in addition to being the general retail agent. Combined wholesale and retail operations were authorized in 1872 and completed in 1874, just in time

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<sup>31</sup> LCMS, *Vierter Synodalbericht*, 37–38.

<sup>32</sup> LCMS, *Vierter Synodalbericht*, 38.

<sup>33</sup> *The Lutheran Church Guide* (St. Louis: Lutheran Church Guide Association, 1916), 143.

to move into the new, second building of CPH at the corner of Indiana Avenue and Miami Street.<sup>34</sup>

#### IV. Stabilization: *Lutherischer Concordia-Verlag*

The LCMS established a synodical press on September 11, 1869, in its general convention:

1. Resolved: to approve the action of the Publication Committee whereby they set up a synodical **typesetting facility**;
2. Resolved: to accept with heartfelt thanks the suggestion of Mr. L. Lange and four other members of the St. Louis congregation, whereby they should issue bond certificates [*Actien*] to be paid back within five years in order to set up an account for a synodical **publishing facility** . . . and in this manner to make this publishing facility to become and remain the free and clear property of the synod inside of at least five years, for the latter of which the undersigned members shall take responsibility for any loss.<sup>35</sup>

The bonds mentioned above were twenty-five dollars each for five years at 0 percent interest, slightly less than a month's salary for an unskilled laborer. The return on investment was spiritual, not financial. Response was swift and massively successful because, unlike the 1849 plan, people knew exactly where their money was going. The Church wanted its Bibles and catechisms! Gross profit was at 50 percent in 1872, compared to 12 percent in 1922. This growth accelerated the process of building the physical plant, located between Jefferson and Indiana Avenues along Miami Street, that stands yet today. The Synod decided against forgiving outstanding accounts from the Wiebusch era except in a few exceptional cases, lest that become the norm.<sup>36</sup> After two stormy decades, the Synod's publication program finally was on track. A tabular overview of early LCMS periodicals and convention proceedings shows this event as pivotal to the robustness of publication in the LCMS.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Walther, *Law and Gospel: How to Read and Apply the Bible*, xlvii; Cameron, *The Word of the Lord Endures Forever*, 8.

<sup>35</sup> Mezger, *Denkstein*, 295, quoting the convention proceedings. Text originally in *Sperrdruck* appears here in boldface. The undersigned were Louis Lange, Henry Kalbfleisch, H. Steinmeyer, E. F. W. Meier, and F. Lange as "colporteur." See Seuel, "Publication Activity," 294.

<sup>36</sup> Seuel, "Publication Activity," 297.

<sup>37</sup> Schaum and Collver, *Breath of God, Yet Work of Man*, 386–90. This English-language resource corrects and explains predecessor German publications whose roles as guides otherwise had been lost to the ages. CTSFW librarian Robert Smith provided helpful assistance. The tables are based mainly on Ernst Eckhardt, *Homiletisches Reallexikon nebst Index Rerum*, 8 vols. (St. Louis: Success, 1907–1917) 6:[d54].

Edmund Seuel relates that the founding date for Concordia Publishing House should precede its incorporation because the Board of Directors [*Direktorium*] authorized by the 1869 convention had been operating continuously as such since then.<sup>38</sup> Georg Mezger reports that the original plan was to make Walther the president of the Board of Directors. Walther declined, but he maintained an active, supervisory role in the young firm. The cornerstone was laid on October 21, 1869, and the “Printing Office” was complete on December 27, 1869. The \$3,800 “Adams Press” from Hoe of Boston was installed on February 6, 1870. The first publications included Lindemann’s *Schulblatt*, an edition of Johann Conrad Dietrich’s *Dr. Martin Luthers Kleiner Katechismus* (“*Dr. Martin Luther’s Small Catechism*”), and an intermediate reader, *Lesebuch für Mittelklassen* (“*Reading Book for Intermediate Classes*”).

Walther dedicated the new building on Monday, February 28, 1870. The dedication began with a 2:15 p.m. service at Holy Cross Church, a block west of the seminary, with the brass choirs of both Immanuel, St. Louis and St. Trinity, Carondelet. Pastor G. Schaller wrote a seven-stanza hymn about Christian publishing set to the tune “*Nun freut’ euch, liebe Christen, g’mein*” (“Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice”). Walther gave a dedication speech. The public was invited to see the press in action. Sumptuous food and drink (beer and wine) were served.<sup>39</sup> The festivities included community singing that lasted until 11 p.m. in the winter cold with “*Nun ruhet alle Wälder*.”<sup>40</sup> The early LCMS was serious but not uptight.

Concordia Seminary had been incorporated as “Concordia College” since February 23, 1853, three years after the “German Theological Seminary” in Fort Wayne. As such, it had the legal right to hold real estate and bequests in trust for the LCMS, which was not incorporated until 1894. The 1870s brought the so-called “Blaine Amendments” and attacks on church rights and parish schools that lasted until about 1930.<sup>41</sup> The young synodical press took shelter under the seminary’s corporate wing until 1891, even though it ran independently. Thus, Walther referred

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<sup>38</sup> Seuel, “Publication Activity,” 294–95. We capitalize Board of Directors throughout the article because it was the legal entity, backed by Concordia Seminary, that construed Concordia Publishing House before and at its incorporation.

<sup>39</sup> The potable water in the Dutchtown section of St. Louis had a high sulfur content. On the fact that beer as well as water were the common daily beverage for all, CPH holds a manuscript by George Buettner. Children could drink “small beer,” which included root beer, that was brewed to have a low alcohol content.

<sup>40</sup> Mezger, *Denkstein*, 298–302; Seuel, “Publication Activity,” 295–97. The “Printing Office,” now at the corner of Texas (formerly Clara) and Miami Streets (number 5) is shown in Walther, *Law and Gospel: How to Read and Apply the Bible*, xlvii. Published accounts appear to speak of the “Adams Press” as the second letterpress used on campus.

<sup>41</sup> Schaum and Collver, *Breath of God, Yet Work of Man*, 23.

to “our Concordia Press” [*unsere Concordia Druckerei*] at its dedication in 1870.<sup>42</sup> Concordia Seminary continued to produce course notes, outlines, and similar works *als Manuskript gedruckt* via CPH and, later, its own print shop. The student association printed and bound handwritten lecture notes using a mimeograph duplicator, styling itself “Concordia Seminary Mimeograph Printing Company” (MIMPERCO).<sup>43</sup>

In 1878, the synodical convention officially established the name “Lutheran Concordia Publishing House” (*Lutherischer Concordia-Verlag*).<sup>44</sup> Thereafter, the press began to grow as an independent, self-sustaining institution. Amid the turbulence of the Election Controversy, CPH thrived as a mainstay of the “Missouri fortress,” supporting one of the most productive times for publications in the LCMS.<sup>45</sup> The 1880s also were important as a time of organization. From 1881 through 1887, the general presidency, presidencies of educational institutions, and boards of directors all received new sets of instructions, powers, responsibilities, and regulations.<sup>46</sup>

Starting in 1881, professors were entitled to request editorial assistance and have their research costs reimbursed if approved by CPH. Otherwise, they could request that the synodical treasury purchase their needed materials, which would revert to being the property of the respective seminary libraries. Previously, if a professor wrote a book or article, he absorbed all the up-front costs as a selfless labor of love with no reimbursement. The faculty were not rich; the fruit of their long-suffering labor enriched seminary libraries, not their families. Professors still received no honoraria for the books and articles that they wrote. Martin C. Barthel began to be paid by CPH instead of the LCMS treasury. The Board of Directors became the holder of the bond certificates that had been circulating instead of the LCMS. Projects included a reorganized *Amerikanischer Kalender für deutsche Lutheraner* (“American Calendar for German Lutherans,” started 1870, the

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<sup>42</sup> Compare Cameron, *The Word of the Lord Endures Forever*, 4–7.

<sup>43</sup> Here German *Concordia Seminar* is used, even though the rest of the name is in English. See Schaum and Collver, *Breath of God, Yet Work of Man*, 144–45. See also Franz Pieper, *Vorträge über die evangelisch-lutherische Kirche die wahre sichtbare Kirche Gottes auf Erden, im Anschluss an das Referat, „Die ev.-luth. Kirche“, u.s.w.*, parts I and II (St. Louis: MIMPERCO, 1890–91); *Festrede gehalten bei der Feier des Geburtstags Dr. M. Luthers im ev.-luth. Concordia Seminar zu St. Louis, Mo. den 10. November 1891* (St. Louis: MIMPERCO, 1891).

<sup>44</sup> Seuel, “Publication Activity,” 295; Cameron, *The Word of the Lord Endures Forever*, 8.

<sup>45</sup> That is true for hermeneutics, yet also in general. See Schaum and Collver, *Breath of God, Yet Work of Man*, 246. On the Election Controversy or Predestinarian Controversy see also Carl S. Meyer, “The Missouri Synod and Other Lutherans Before 1918,” in *Moving Frontiers*, ed. Carl S. Meyer (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), 267–278; E. Clifford Nelson, *The Lutherans in North America* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 313–325.

<sup>46</sup> See the convention proceedings from 1881, 1884, 1887, and 1890.



forerunner of *The Lutheran Annual*), an atlas, and a series of three English readers. A host of committees were established to see what future projects could be done.<sup>47</sup>

In 1884, Barthel got a raise from \$1,500 to \$2,000 per annum in order to be on par with similar secular positions. CPH was directed to sell books also in Germany via cooperation with the Saxon Free Church, part of which is in today's LCMS sister church, the *Selbständige Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche* (SELK). The LCMS resolved that the faculty of Concordia Seminary, together with the CPH Board of Directors, set the prices of books to be as inexpensive as possible, in order to be competitive with similar resources in Germany. That faculty also performed doctrinal review for the LCMS until 1974. At least two directors had to serve as delegates for the LCMS General Delegate-Synod. The directors had to meet monthly, and the general agent (later, general manager) was required to attend. The chairman of the Board of Directors was designated president of CPH; the position had to be filled by an ordained minister of the church. (That stipulation changed in 1971 when Mr. Ralph Reinke became president of CPH.) The directors were governed by Chapter VI of the 1854 LCMS constitution in the same manner as all other synodical officers.

Also in 1884, the Board of Directors gained the sole authorization to decide what should be printed, except when the General Delegate-Synod voted to publish a work. The board was prohibited to do business with anyone save the general agent. Should the latter choose to let works go out of print or make other business changes, he was required to inform either the general LCMS president or the General Delegate-Synod. A host of regulations applied separately to the general agent regarding wholesale production, retail sales, and ordering from other publishers.

Perhaps most important for the Synod, the delegates resolved to develop a unified study text for Luther's Small Catechism. It later was known as the Schwan Catechism after LCMS President Heinrich C. Schwan (who served 1887–99).<sup>48</sup> Current English explanations of the Small Catechism used in the LCMS are descended from this catechism via the English translation and bilingual editions of 1912, used commonly among members of the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America.

The year 1887 saw the death of Walther. Still, the LCMS publishing project begun by Walther continued to live on, adding strength to strength. The Bible society that Walther had started in 1853 offered its assets of \$17,407.73 to be

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<sup>47</sup> LCMS, *Achtzehnter Synodal-Bericht der Allgemeinen deutschen evangelisch-lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und anderen Staaten versammelt als Dritte Delegaten-Synode zu Fort Wayne, Indiana im Jahre 1881* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1881), 64–67.

<sup>48</sup> LCMS, *Neunzehnter Synodal-Bericht der Allgemeinen deutschen evangelisch-lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und anderen Staaten versammelt als Vierte Delegaten-Synode zu St. Louis, Mo., im Jahre 1884* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1884), 57–62.

absorbed by CPH, which the Synod approved.<sup>49</sup> The report in 1887 showed the CPH board in compliance with its official regulations. Its status was equivalent to the boards of control (originally *Directorat*, later *Aufsichtsbehörden*) of the educational institutions. The board noted that CPH had been supplementing the general LCMS treasury since 1881, and that even though the total in the 1884–87 triennium had decreased to \$97,700.80, still, CPH was committed to supporting the efforts that created its success.<sup>50</sup>

Between 1870 and 1922, CPH experienced substantial growth. A second building was authorized in 1872 and completed in 1874, facing Indiana Avenue. That second building was annexed twice by 1888. Another building was added in 1893, facing Jefferson Avenue at the corner of Miami at the current 3558 South Jefferson location, with additions in 1911, 1925, and 1941.<sup>51</sup> Both power facilities and press capabilities were expanded several times.

Logotypes are reflections of an institution. Illustration 2 shows the most common CPH logos seen from around 1883 to the 1941–44 transition period, reflecting the management of M.C. Barthel, Martin S. Tirmenstein, and Edmund Seuel. No logos appear before 1880, apart from printer's ornaments like the Bible and sword associated with Walther's *Evangelien-Postille* ("Gospel Postil," first printed in 1870).<sup>52</sup>



Illustration 2: German-Era CPH Logos

<sup>49</sup> LCMS, *Zwanzigster Synodal-Bericht der Allgemeinen deutschen evangelisch-lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und anderen Staaten versammelt als Fünfte Delegaten-Synode zu Fort Wayne, Indiana im Jahre 1887* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1887), 57.

<sup>50</sup> LCMS, *Zwanzigster Synodal-Bericht*, 45–46.

<sup>51</sup> Mezger, *Denkstein*, 296–97, 302; Seuel, "Publication Activity," 289–93; Cameron, *The Word of the Lord Endures Forever*, 8–11; Christian Cyclopedia, s.v. "Lutheran Publication Houses," ed. Erwin Lueker, Luther Poellot, and Paul Jackson, <http://cyclopedia.lcms.org/display.asp?t1=p&word=PUBLICATIONHOUSES.LUTHERAN>. The 1874 "Lutheran Printing House" (no. 7), is shown in Walther, *Law and Gospel: How to Read and Apply the Bible*, xlvii.

<sup>52</sup> During the 1870s, colophons in LCMS publications referred to *Druckerei der ev.-luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio u. a. Staaten* or *M.C. Barthel, General-Agent der deutschen ev.-luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio u. a. Staaten*.

The leftmost logo appeared circa 1883 and was used on new works through at least 1895.<sup>53</sup> It appeared on reprinted works through at least 1898.<sup>54</sup> Its style stands at the very end of Romanticism. It slightly rewords 1 Peter 1:25, “*Verbum autem Domini manet in aeternum*,” also recalling Isaiah 40:8. In English, it reads, “Yet the word of the Lord endures forever.” The words that come off the press must agree with Scripture, a central tenet of CPH. The fleurs-de-lis signify Trinitarian motifs and perhaps also the symbolism of the city of St. Louis, while the “wings” at the top signify power.<sup>55</sup> Round logos of the era suggest global importance, opulence, quality, and a guarantee of trust. Luther’s 1532 Galatians commentary refers to doctrine as an unbroken ring.<sup>56</sup> The intertwined CSV stands for *Concordia Synodal-Verlag* (“*Synodical Concordia Publishing House*”).

One of the first works in which the middle logo appears is Walther’s 1893 *Gesetz und Evangelium* (“*Law and Gospel*”), the printing of the shorter 1878 lecture series that has not been translated into English.<sup>57</sup> The right-hand logo appeared around 1908 as a designation for practical works.<sup>58</sup> By 1913, it was used on shorter academic works.<sup>59</sup> The middle and right-hand logos were used interchangeably, with a preference for the middle. For example, Franz Pieper’s *Christliche Dogmatik* (“*Christian Dogmatics*”) used the middle logo, while its index volume by Ernst Eckhardt used the logo at right. Both the middle and right-hand logos have a noticeable Art Nouveau influence. Both have CPH for *Concordia Publishing House*. The middle logo adds “Trade Mark.”<sup>60</sup>

## V. Incorporation and Change: CPH Comes of Age

In the 1887 *Proceedings* a major part of LCMS business proceedings included the work of CPH (pages 45–57). In 1890, that work expanded. The Synod had

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<sup>53</sup> See the title pages in Wilhelm Sihler, *Zeit- und Gelegenheits-Predigten* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1883); Henry Sieck, *Adventspredigten über ausgewählte Texte* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1895).

<sup>54</sup> For example, Luther, *Kleiner Katechismus* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1898). During this period, many CPH colophons indicate the printing year, not the copyright year.

<sup>55</sup> Possibilities include the Holy Spirit, an imperial eagle on a crown, or a military decoration.

<sup>56</sup> Schaum and Collver, *Breath of God, Yet Work of Man*, 224, 462.

<sup>57</sup> See Walther, *Law and Gospel: How to Read and Apply the Bible*, ix–xii.

<sup>58</sup> *Concordia Chöre: Eine Sammlung von Liedern in vierstimmigen Satz für unsere Schulen und Sonntagsschulen* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1908).

<sup>59</sup> Franz Pieper, *Zur Einigung der amerikanisch-lutherischen Kirche in der Lehre von der Bekehrung und Gnadenwahl* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1913).

<sup>60</sup> Northwestern Publishing House also used a logotype influenced by Art Nouveau in 1915. See Carl Manthey Zorn, *Christenfragen aus Gottes Wort* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1915).

to make debt-collecting resolutions involving specific members, a burden they had not foreseen!

It was time that CPH incorporate, and the Board of Directors asked for that action. The synodical publication committee concurred, citing the Bennett legislation of the day that put the legal situation of CPH into question. After approval by the Synod in 1890, CPH was incorporated on May 27, 1891, as a stock company with 196 shares at \$1,000 each, held in good faith by the seven members of the Board of Directors, each of whom held 28 shares.<sup>61</sup> At this time, Pastor Carl Ludwig Janzow (known also as Charles) was the president of CPH, chairman of the board, and chairman of the committee tasked with publishing Ferdinand Walther's literary remains. He had worked closely with Walther as director of the Board for English Mission.<sup>62</sup>

Lightning struck out of the blue. On August 14, 1891, Assistant General Manager Martin S. Tirmenstein detected an unauthorized \$50 check to M. C. Barthel. An audit showed irregularities with the elder Barthel and M. R. Barthel Jr.; President Janzow interviewed the junior Barthel, who fled and went into hiding. M. C. Barthel initially was declared mentally unfit for trial on December 26, 1891. That declaration apparently was voided. Thereafter, a grand jury indicted M. C. Barthel on May 23, 1892, ordering his arrest. He was judged competent for trial. Thereafter, Barthel confessed to the Synod on July 23, 1892, and in criminal court on August 1, 1892, that he had embezzled \$50,000 in cash and other goods. C. L. Janzow stepped aside from his position the same year. The incident made national trade news in *The Publishers Weekly*. The report in the 1893 LCMS convention changed the Synod in fundamental ways. For legal stability, the Synod incorporated on June 2, 1894.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> LCMS, *Einundzwanzigster Synodal-Bericht der Allgemeinen deutschen evangelisch-lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und anderen Staaten versammelt als Sechste Delegaten-Synode zu Milwaukee, Wis. im Jahre 1890* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1890), 57. The Articles of Association for all LCMS organs used to be printed in the handbook that contained the constitution, bylaws, and regulations of the synod. See those of CPH in, for example, *Synodalhandbuch der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und Andern Staaten* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1924), 102–103. See also Seuel, "Publication Activity," 302. This later caused problems with the IRS. Looking for money during the Second World War, the Roosevelt administration pursued companies that were associated with churches, yet not incorporated in related fashion. CPH lost its case in U.S. district court. It paid the IRS and later reincorporated as a tax-exempt not-for-profit corporation. Details are in the CPH archives.

<sup>62</sup> Dallmann, *My Life*, 36–37.

<sup>63</sup> LCMS, *Zweiundzwanzigster Synodal-Bericht der Allgemeinen deutschen evangelisch-lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und anderen Staaten versammelt als Siebente Delegaten-Synode zu St. Louis, Mo. im Jahre 1893* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1893), 98–101. See also *Synodalhandbuch* (1924), 99–102. Details in Schaum and Colver, *Breath of God, Yet Work of Man*, 270–72, are given in cursory fashion following the reporting in *The Publishers Weekly*.

This loss was equal to 35.7 percent of the 1882–83 building cost of Concordia Seminary and 138 percent of the 1883 building cost of St. Paul's College in Concordia, Missouri. Even though this amount was dwarfed by LCMS financial irregularities in the 1960s, the effects were greater.<sup>64</sup> Those affected included CPH, Concordia Seminary, and everything that it held in trust for the LCMS. The general response, beginning in 1893, was to adopt current best business practices.<sup>65</sup>

Martin S. Tirmenstein righted the ship and got her moving on course. He was the grandson of Samuel Tirmenstein, one of the Saxon immigrants of 1838. Martin's wife was Clara Louise Lange, related to Louis Lange. He was appointed general manager on November 17, 1891, at the same salary as Barthel. CPH celebrated its silver jubilee on February 27, 1895. Rev. E. A. Brauer, the only surviving member of the seminary faculty from the 1870 dedication, delivered the sermon. Tirmenstein oversaw the award-winning CPH display at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis, after similar displays at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago and the Pan-American Exposition at Buffalo in 1901. In 1905, CPH got its first Linotype hot-metal press; it had seven by 1922. Tirmenstein resigned his position on March 10, 1907, to take on a management position at a printing firm in Konstanz, Germany. He died of respiratory complications in January 1908 after sailing to Europe.<sup>66</sup>

Johann Edmund Seuel, known as Edmund, became general manager on March 18, 1907, serving until 1944. He also served as pastor and missionary in Ogalalla, Nebraska (1886–88); teacher at Walther College (the first LCMS high school in St. Louis, 1888–1907); LCMS treasurer (1914–42); and co-founder of the Lutheran Layman's League. His position as treasurer was the catalyst for the LCMS to locate its corporate headquarters in St. Louis.<sup>67</sup> Previously, the LCMS presidents did

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<sup>64</sup> See Carl S. Meyer, *Log Cabin to Luther Tower: Concordia Seminary During One Hundred and Twenty-five Years Toward a More Excellent Ministry 1839–1964* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965), 83; "About Us," St. Paul's Concordia Lutheran Church and School, accessed March 26, 2019, <http://www.stpaulsconcordia.org/about>. Compare LCMS, *Proceedings of the Forty-Fifth Regular Convention of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1962), 154, 156; LCMS, *Convention Proceedings: 49th Regular Convention* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1971), 147–48; Fred C. Rutz, *A Businessman Looks at His Church* (Painesville, Ohio: [Fred C. Rutz Foundation], [1967]); *Supplement to A Businessman Looks at His Church* (Painesville, Ohio: [Fred C. Rutz Foundation], [1968]).

<sup>65</sup> Schaum and Collver, *Breath of God, Yet Work of Man*, 270–72.

<sup>66</sup> Perhaps the best published account of Tirmenstein's life is in Cameron, *The Word of the Lord Endures Forever*, 14–15. Compare Seuel, "Publication Activity," 300–301, wherein Seuel is unusually critical of Tirmenstein. Seuel disapproved of Tirmenstein's exposition displays as a waste of resources and panned *Concordia Magazine* as a marketing failure until it was redesigned as the successful *Young Lutheran's Magazine*.

<sup>67</sup> Seuel, "Publication Activity," 301; Cameron, *The Word of the Lord Endures Forever*, 17–19; *Lutheran Cyclopedia*, revised edition, ed. by Erwin L. Lueker and Luther D. Poellot (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1975), 713.

business from their respective parishes or locations of work in Cleveland, St. Louis, Chicago, and Oak Park, Illinois. The administrative business of the LCMS was conducted in crowded office space located at CPH. The “Lutheran Building” at 210 North Broadway opened as the LCMS headquarters in 1951.<sup>68</sup>

Major changes occurred after 1911. With the merger of the English Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri and Other States as the LCMS English District, CPH absorbed the American Lutheran Publication Board (the original ALPB). Their catalog, printed out of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, included the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book* (second edition 1909); *Sunday-School Hymnal* (1901); *The Abridged Treasury of Prayer* (1906, an English translation of selections from the larger *Evangelisch-lutherischer Gebets-Schatz* by CPH); and a number of sermon collections and devotional works.

The two English hymnals that were brought into the LCMS helped to lay the foundation for a common LCMS worship experience that has existed for about a century. The move from *Christenlehre* to Sunday School was helped by the attraction of area children and their families to church.<sup>69</sup> Yet some changes heralded later tensions. Although some LCMS churches started using offering envelopes in the 1890s, they usually did not collect the offering during the service after the offertory.<sup>70</sup> The LCMS *Gesangbuch* strove to preserve the theological unity of the spoken word and the visible Word, seeing a collection as being disruptive to that.

The English Synod, on the other hand, used the Common Service developed by the predecessor bodies of the United Lutheran Church in America. The ULCA claimed that the collection of offerings after the offertory, with subsequent mandatory placement on the altar, was the act of the congregation actualizing the Gospel.<sup>71</sup> Tensions between the *Gesangbuch* approach and that of the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book* created ambiguity regarding the scope and validity

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<sup>68</sup> John W. Behnken and William J. Schmelder, *This I Recall*, revised edition (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2014), 43–44. For photos and more information about the building see “Built St. Louis,” accessed May 1, 2019, <https://www.builtstlouis.net/opos/lutheran.html>.

<sup>69</sup> See also Schaum and Colver, *Breath of God, Yet Work of Man*, 479n15. *Christenlehre*, with both Lutheran and Roman Catholic roots, was a service of religious instruction, often held on Sunday afternoon, where the pastor expounded on Christian doctrine. When the LCMS shifted to Sunday School, it drew on both the tradition of Norwegian mission societies and approaches that had been imported from England into English-speaking American churches.

<sup>70</sup> Compare Cameron, *The Word of the Lord Endures Forever*, 13; Ludwig E. Furbringer, *Liturgik: Leitfaden für Vorlesungen* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1915), 18–19.

<sup>71</sup> Luther D. Reed, *The Lutheran Liturgy* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1947), 308–309; Paul Z. Strodach, ed., *An Explanation of the Common Service*, 6th ed. (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, 1941), 41.

of actualized faith in the worshipping community. That ambiguity ignited arguments at the time and fueled later conflicts.<sup>72</sup>

In 1899, C. L. Janzow published *Life of Rev. Prof. C. F. W. Walther* with the ALPB. It was a “Victorian,” sanitized version of Martin Günther’s *Dr. Carl F. W. Walther: Lebensbild* published by CPH in 1890. Janzow deleted Walther’s edgier, saltier expressions (recalled in detail by William Dallmann). The casting of Walther as a saintly *pater patriae*, a founding father of his church, helped to create common ground in the 1911 merger of the English Synod with the LCMS.<sup>73</sup>

Perhaps chief among the English Synod contributions, however, remains *The Lutheran Witness*, started in 1882. In 1916, its circulation was already on par with *Der Lutheraner*, and it overtook the latter after the First World War. In 1922, *Der Lutheraner* reached its greatest regular circulation of 40,000. In that same year, *The Lutheran Witness* had a circulation of 505,000. *Der Lutheraner* lingered on as a bimonthly after the Second World War until the November-December issue of 1974. Its final circulation numbers were 2,700 copies, supported by members of the SELK, the German sister-church of the LCMS, as well as German speakers in Canada, Brazil, and Finland.<sup>74</sup> Yet *The Lutheran Witness* also changed from a biweekly to a monthly periodical like *Der Lutheraner*.

The turn of the twentieth century heralded a golden age in periodicals at CPH. Until 1866, the only periodicals were *Der Lutheraner*, *Lehre und Wehre*, and convention proceedings. *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Schulblatt* started in 1866, *Lutherisches Kinder- und Jugendblatt* (“Lutheran Newspaper for Children and Youth”) rolled off the presses from 1871–1938, and *Magazin für evangelisch-lutherische Homiletik* (“Magazine for Evangelical Lutheran Homiletics”) arrived in 1877. One can add the *Missions-Taube* (“Mission Dove,” 1879–1933) and *Lutheran Pioneer* (both started in 1879 for the Synodical Conference). The *Theological Quarterly* began in 1897, changing to a monthly in 1921. It was combined with *Lehre und Wehre*, the *Homiletic Magazine* (begun 1903) and the *Magazin für evangelisch-lutherische Homiletik* to form *Concordia Theological Monthly* (1930–72). *Concordia Magazine* ran only from 1896 to 1901, yet from its ashes rose *Young Lutherans’ Magazine* (1902–1948).

We set aside the growth of Sunday School materials, English parochial school materials, and other changes to focus on specific theological contributions that

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<sup>72</sup> For more context see Schaum and Collver, *Breath of God, Yet Work of Man*, 115–16, 154–56, 179, 297–99, and 341n37.

<sup>73</sup> Schaum and Collver, *Breath of God, Yet Work of Man*, 403–404. See additionally Dallmann, *My Life*, 23f.

<sup>74</sup> Herman A. Mayer, “1844–1974: Der Triumphzug einer Zeitschrift,” *Der Lutheraner* 130, no. 6 (1974): 1–2.

suggest why the heritage of CPH in the German era still is good, right, and salutary for the teaching and defense of doctrine.<sup>75</sup>

## VI. Works We Miss in English

The LCMS, its districts, and its sister churches adopted well over 1500 doctrinal theses, which were considered *doctrina publica* from the early days until the 1970s. LCMS convention resolutions since then have made their authority ambiguous.<sup>76</sup> Many of these still-untranslated yet published theses and presentations explain theological matters in detail. They are the public record of a church body's thought processes regarding public doctrine and clear criteria for doctrinal standards and oversight. This testifies to a healthier condition of the church than we find today, when 58 percent of LCMS Lutherans fail to accept without reservation that the Bible is the literal, inspired, inerrant word of God as they live amid ambiguous doctrinal standards and church decline.<sup>77</sup>

The "Schwan Catechism" was based mainly on Conrad Dieterich's *Institutiones Catecheticae* (his explanation of Luther's Small Catechism) with additions from the Dresden *Kreuz-Katechismus*.<sup>78</sup> Before the latter 1880s, the Synod used the

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<sup>75</sup> An article cannot do justice to those topics. For more, see Seuel, "Publication Activity"; Cameron, *The Word of the Lord Endures Forever*; and Schaum and Collver, *Breath of God, Yet Work of Man*, 386–90, 394.

<sup>76</sup> Schaum and Collver, *Breath of God, Yet Work of Man*, 131–41. Compare Noland and Loest, *Doctrinal Resolutions*. One finds such theses in the various Proceedings [*Verhandlungen*] of the synods and their districts. The referencing systems in early LCMS and WELS publications that compile and list the theses assume that one has firsthand knowledge of the *Proceedings*. They have no common system for organizing topics. Compare L. August Heerboth, *Inhaltsangabe zu den Synodalberichten der Missourisynode und der Synodalkonferenz* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1915); LCMS, *Register über die Synodal-Berichte vom Jahre 1847 bis zum Jahre 1881* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1884); *Thesen für die Lehrverhandlungen der Missouri-Synode und der Synodalkonferenz bis zum Jahre 1893* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1894).

<sup>77</sup> Schaum and Collver, *Breath of God, Yet Work of Man*, 3–5, 472–90. See "U.S. Religious Landscape Survey: Religious Beliefs and Practices," Pew Research Center, accessed May 1, 2019, [www.pewforum.org/2008/06/01/u-s-religious-landscape-survey-religious-beliefs-and-practices](http://www.pewforum.org/2008/06/01/u-s-religious-landscape-survey-religious-beliefs-and-practices).

<sup>78</sup> Conrad Dieterich, *D. Conradi Dieterici institutiones catecheticae depromptae B. Lutheri catechesi et variis notis illustratae annexisquatuor symbolis oecumenicis et Augustana Confessione siue catechismi Lutheri expositio primum edidit D. Conr. Dietericus a. 1613 ex editione a. 1640 ab Dieterici filio curata* (Berolini: sumptibus Gust. Schlawitz, 1864); Martin Luther, *D. Martin Luthers sel. Kleiner Catechismus: Auf Churfl. Durchl. zu Sachsen gnädigsten Befehl, Im Jahr Christi 1683. durch Frag und Antwort deutlich erläutert, und mit angeführten Sprüchen Heil. Schriftt bekräftiget; von dem Ministerio zum H. Creutz zu Drefßden, Folgens Von dem Churfl. Sächs. Ober-Consistorio zu Drefßden, und beeden Theologischen Facultäten zu Leipzig und Wittenberg censiret und approbiret, und nunmehr Auf Churfl. Sächs. absonderlichen Gn. Befehl zum gemeinen Gebrauch in Druck gegeben* (Dresden: Mieth, 1688), <http://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb11291260-3>.



translation of Dieterich by Friedrich W.A. Notz, co-published with Fr. Dette.<sup>79</sup> Yet CPH also produced an edition of the Schwan Catechism for pastors and teachers.<sup>80</sup> It contains the same questions and answers as the student edition, but with many more citations from Scripture and *The Book of Concord*, along with explanations of the additional material that go into great detail about the hermeneutical application of the verses and how one thinks through it.

In 1911, professor J. H. Herzer of Concordia Theological Seminary in Springfield, Illinois, wrote a book on catechetics, namely, everything necessary to teach the Small Catechism to older children and adults.<sup>81</sup> He tied LCMS catechesis to the broader Lutheran tradition. The book excels in its comprehensiveness for the time, and it shows quite well how serious, how sacred a duty it is for a pastor or catechist to pass on the faith. No equivalent book in English exists.

The English Synod printed only an abridged translation of the “*Großer Gebets-Schatz*” (see above). The 1908 printing of the larger treasury included 478 pages of prayers, Scripture verses, and devotional song stanzas for every occasion, with an index. The included “Small Hymnal for the Home” was another seventy-six pages of hymns and an index. The full book has only recently been translated.<sup>82</sup> Some of its contents are also in the current *Lutheran Book of Prayer*.<sup>83</sup>

Walther’s edition of Johann Wilhelm Baier’s *Compendium Theologiae Positivae* (“*Compendium of Positive Theology*”), along with Carl Gottlob Hofmann’s *Institutiones theologiae exegeticae in usum academicarum praelectionum adornatae* (“*Instructions in Exegetical Theology Furnished for the Use of Academic Lectures*”), were printed respectively in 1879 and 1876 by the synodical press designated in Latin as *Officina Synodi Missouriensis Lutheranae* (“*Workshop of the Lutheran Missouri Synod*”). Both books come from late Lutheran Orthodoxy and were a part of Walther’s educational plan of building a bridge from the common Pietism of the day to a better time, then equipping soldiers of the cross to do the same.<sup>84</sup> These works shaped LCMS doctrine from the 1870s until about 1920. Especially Walther’s

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<sup>79</sup> Conrad Dieterich, *Institutiones Catecheticae, das ist, gründliche Auslegung des Katechismus D. Martin Luthers in Frage und Antwort und mit Anmerkungen versehen*, trans. Friedrich Wilhelm August Notz (St. Louis, Mo., & Leipzig: F. Dette, 1876).

<sup>80</sup> Dr. Martin Luthers *Kleiner Katechismus in Frage und Antwort gründlich ausgelegt von Dr. Johann Conrad Dietrich, weiland Superintendent zu Ulm, mit Zusätzen aus dem Dresdner Kreuz-Katechismus und den Bekenntnißschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche, und mit Sprüchen der heiligen Schrift versehen, nebst dreifachem Anhang: Ausgabe für Pastoren und Lehrer mit Ausdruck sämtlicher citirten Schriftstellen* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1895).

<sup>81</sup> J.H. Herzer, *Evangelisch-lutherische Katechetik* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1911).

<sup>82</sup> See above, note 28.

<sup>83</sup> Translated by this author. See *Lutheran Book of Prayer*, ed. by Scott A. Kinnamann (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2005).

<sup>84</sup> Schaum and Collver, *Breath of God, Yet Work of Man*, 147–48, 197.

version of Baier, when compared to the edition of Eduard Preuss, shows how the LCMS interpreted the preceding Lutheran tradition for its time.<sup>85</sup>

Although the *Outlines of Popular Theology* by Augustus L. Graebner survived to the early 1980s, his *Geschichte der Lutherischen Kirche in Amerika* ("History of the Lutheran Church in America," 1892) did not. No other LCMS historian has yet filled that void; the work by G. F. Bente (*American Lutheranism*, two vols., 1919) came closest to that.

## VII. Works with Influence Today

The most monumental publication of CPH in its German period was the "St. Louis Edition" of Luther's works, *Dr. Martin Luthers Sämmtliche Schriften*: twenty-two volumes in twenty-four books, plus an index volume, published by CPH from 1880 to 1910. It is arguably the largest German-language work ever printed in the US.<sup>86</sup> The project was started by a motion from J. F. Bünger, emeritus president of the Western District, at a pastors' conference attached to the district convention opened by President F. J. Biltz on September 24, 1879, at Trinity Church in St. Louis. The conference voted to pledge the support of the entire LCMS ministerium to a revised edition of J. G. Walch's Halle Edition of Luther's works. The project would be edited by K. Georg Stöckhardt with assistance by E. W. Kähler. The LCMS rapidly secured the support of its pastors, likely through subscription orders, at which time the CPH Board of Directors moved forward. At the time, no one knew what the product cost would be; the pastors simply promised to pay whatever it would take to do the right thing. The first volume appeared around the Festival of the Reformation in 1880. Stöckhardt edited the Genesis lectures (vols. 1–2), the Church Postils (vols. 11–12), and the House Postils (vols. 13a–13b). Candidate H. Beyer edited the catechetical writings (vol. 10). The rest were edited by pastor Albrecht F. Hoppe, with Stöckhardt as project supervisor.<sup>87</sup> Many English-language LCMS works, including *What Luther Says* (1959), refer to this edition.

Franz A. O. Pieper's signature work, *Christliche Dogmatik*, influenced the LCMS in ways that were not intended by its author. Begun in 1917, its 1924 completion was supposed to herald an update of Walther's edition of Baier, designed to meet the contemporary theological climate. Yet in 1934, J. T. Mueller published an abridged English translation, whose quality was spotty. An even worse attempt at translating the full *Dogmatik* was produced privately by Walter Albrecht in 1938

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<sup>85</sup> Emmanuel Press (<http://emmanuelpress.us/>) has a reprint edition of Baier.

<sup>86</sup> Luther's Genesis lectures encompass the first two volumes of the St. Louis edition and the first eight volumes of the English-language American Edition. Given this rough factor of four, the current American Edition has yet to surpass an equivalent ninety-six volumes.

<sup>87</sup> Mezger, *Denkstein*, 303–305.

for use at the practical seminary in Springfield. An editorial committee revised and corrected Albrecht's text and published *Christian Dogmatics* (1950–53). Pieper wrote clearly and simply and was very irenic. He put all the complicated material in footnotes. The English version put the footnotes into the body text, impairing its readability. They changed the tone to be very bellicose. They introduced jargon that did not exist in the German text. In some places, they replaced Christology with language about divine sovereignty. Finally, they altered Pieper's text regarding closed Communion, even when Pieper used the English words "closed communion" in his German text.<sup>88</sup> Pieper is an oft-cited LCMS author, yet he is remarkably unknown and misunderstood in English.

Walther's works continue to be translated for the benefit of the LCMS, and his legacy lives on today. Recent volumes include *Law and Gospel: How to Read and Apply the Bible* (2010), edited by the present author with contributions by Thomas Manteufel and John Hellwege and translated by Christian C. Tiews; *The Church and the Office of the Ministry* (2012), edited by Matthew C. Harrison; *Gospel Sermons* volume 1 (2013) and *Gospel Sermons* volume 2 (2014), both translated by Donald E. Heck; *Church Fellowship* (2014); *All Glory to God* (2016); *Pastoral Theology*, edited by David W. Loy and translated by Christian C. Tiews (2017); and *Predestination* (2018).

### VIII. Conclusion

The early success of CPH depended on the pastors who taught and the congregations who received instruction according to the Bible and *The Book of Concord*. The enduring word of God, not the efforts of mere men, built the LCMS and her publisher. Do we hear that same word today? Before 1917, average worship attendance, reception of the Lord's Supper, attendance of children in parish schools and the like was high, at least 85 percent. By 1950, Sunday attendance was at 40 percent, regular Communion was at 33 percent, and children in parish schools were 25 percent.<sup>89</sup> Can we still teach our children well?

The LCMS founders worked themselves to death so that their children could have a better future and be free to learn, believe, and live out their faith according to Scripture and *The Book of Concord*. The German-era CPH was central to making the dream of our forefathers into our reality. As well-taught Christians, if we wish

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<sup>88</sup> Schaum and Collver, *Breath of God, Yet Work of Man*, 318–22. A sampling of respective page comparisons that illustrate these observations includes Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1950–1953), 1:23, 1:24, 1:28, 1:428, 2:387, 3:381; and *Christliche Dogmatik* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1917–1924), 1:24, 1:25, 1:29, 1:524, 2:464, 3:444.

<sup>89</sup> John E. Herrmann, *The Chief Steward* (St. Louis: LCMS, 1951), 4; George U. Wenner, "Lutheran Parochial Schools," *Religious Education* 11, no. 2 (1916): 129–30.

God to be with us today, we should extol and teach His promises and their fulfillment among our forefathers.<sup>90</sup> An excellent pastor is one who takes out the Gospel treasures old and new for his flock (Matt 13:52). CPH still takes out those treasures to enliven modern Lutheran theological classics. As Christian parents and teachers, before our health shall surely fade, we are commended to teach Christ well to our children, properly dividing Law and Gospel, so that they know He loves them. Spiritually healthy pastors, congregations, and church bodies need also laity who live in Christ and daily read and meditate on Scripture. In the LCMS, whether in 1869, 1969, or 2019, we give thanks that CPH is built on the word of the Lord that endures forever.

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<sup>90</sup> See Deuteronomy 11:21; Joshua 4:21–22; Nehemiah 9:23; Psalm 78:5; Ezekiel 37:25; and Ephesians 6:4.

## **Taking the Pulse of Theology in the Missouri Synod: A Look at Publications from Concordia Publishing House**

**John T. Pless**

Publishing houses owned and operated by church bodies reflect theological positions maintained by the body and, in turn, publishing houses are a factor in preserving, shaping, and modifying the doctrinal position of the denomination. Such is the case with Concordia Publishing House (hereafter CPH). Although The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) is often portrayed as having been doctrinally monolithic in the first hundred years of its existence, theological foment was present in the first part of the twentieth century<sup>1</sup>. It would intensify after World War II as theologians of the Synod stepped outside the ghetto to engage other Lutherans in the United States and especially theologians in Germany in the Bad Boll Conferences of 1948 and 1949. The change would accelerate in the next two decades and come to a head in the crisis that led to the formation of Concordia Seminary in Exile (Seminex) in 1974. In the years after Seminex, the Missouri Synod had to reconfigure itself. This reconfiguration might still be said to be in process. How are these changes reflected in the publications of CPH?

This essay makes no claims to comprehensiveness, nor is it a scientific investigation. Some significant authors and books are not included. The essay will not examine curricular material for Sunday schools, catechetical instruction, or vacation Bible school. Instead, the focus will be on theological publications whose primary but not exclusive audience would be clergy or seminary students preparing for the pastoral ministry.

We begin in 1950 with the publication of *From Luther to Kierkegaard* by a young professor, Jaroslav Pelikan (1923–2006) who earned his doctorate with Wilhelm Pauck at the University of Chicago in 1946.<sup>2</sup> Pelikan was critical of Lutheran Orthodoxy, which he judged as a return to Scholasticism with its Aristotelian categories. While he did not directly cite Franz Pieper, it is hard

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Eric W. Gritsch, “The Missouri Way” in *A History of Lutheranism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 194–199.

<sup>2</sup> Jaroslav Pelikan, *From Luther to Kierkegaard: A Study in the History of Theology* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1950). For an overview of Pelikan’s life and work, see Matthew Becker, “Jaroslav Pelikan” in *A Dictionary of Luther and the Lutheran Traditions*, ed. Timothy Wengert (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), 584–585.

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to imagine that Pelikan did not have him in mind. The reception of this early work of Pelikan would be mixed in the Missouri Synod, but it was clear that a rising generation of young scholars were seeking to orient the Synod in a new direction.<sup>3</sup> Pelikan's influence would continue through CPH, as he was one of the editors of the American Edition of Luther's Works, a project undertaken jointly with Fortress Press, the publishing arm of the Lutheran Church in America.

A contemporary of Pelikan, Martin E. Marty published *The Hidden Discipline: A Commentary on the Christian Life of Forgiveness in the Light of Luther's Large Catechism* (1962). At the time of its writing, Marty, pastor of the Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit in Elk Grove Village, Illinois, was only 34 years old but had already been marked by *Life* magazine as one of eight clergymen in what the magazine called the "Take over generation."<sup>4</sup> *The Hidden Discipline* enjoyed wide use as a textbook for theology classes at the Concordia Colleges and Valparaiso University in the 1960s and 1970s.

Lutherans would celebrate the 450th anniversary of the Reformation in 1967. Several significant publications were printed by CPH in conjunction with this jubilee. Three in particular are worthy of note: *The Church of the Lutheran Reformation: A Historical Survey of Lutheranism* by Conrad Bergendoff; *Accents in Luther's Theology Essays in Commemoration of the 450th Anniversary of the*

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<sup>3</sup> Both Pauck and Hermann Sasse studied under Karl Holl, a leading figure in the Luther Renaissance. Pelikan admits his reliance on Holl in *From Luther to Kierkegaard*. Here also see Pelikan's "Introduction" in Wilhelm Pauck, *From Luther to Tillich: The Reformers and Their Heirs* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1984), xv–xxiii, as well as 139–151 (the chapter on Karl Holl). In an essay from 1951, "Confession (Confessionalism) and Theology in the Missouri Synod," Sasse praises Pelikan for demonstrating the distinction between Luther's theology and that of Lutheran scholasticism: "Franz Pieper, the great systematician of the Missouri Synod, could have known this if he had taken cognizance of the results of historical research. But he was so completely imprisoned in the systems of Orthodoxy, that he disregarded history. The Missouri Synod of today is beginning to understand Orthodoxy historically. Of this the first publication of the young systematician, Prof. Jaroslav Pelikan in St. Louis, *From Luther to Kierkegaard* (St. Louis, Concordia, 1950) bears a testimony which is surprising as it is gratifying"—*Scripture and the Church: Selected Essays of Hermann Sasse*, ed. Jeffrey Kloha and Ronald Fuerhahn (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary Monograph Series, 1995), 217. However, just a few years later, Sasse is highly critical of Pelikan's neglect of Luther's understanding of Scripture's authority from the standpoint of inspiration. In his 1960 review of Pelikan's *Luther the Expositor: Introduction to the Reformer's Exegetical Writings* (a companion volume to the American Edition of Luther's Works), Sasse writes, "Pelikan tries to find the right balance between the Word of God as deed, as oral Word and as written Word, but he does not do justice to the written Word. Inspiration and infallibility of the Scriptures, the unquestioned basis of Luther's view of the Bible, which he shares with the Catholic church of all ages, are, as far as I can see, not even mentioned"—"Review of Luther's Works, Vols 2, 9" in *The Journal Articles of Hermann Sasse*, ed. Matthew Harrison, Bror Erickson, and Joel Brondos (Irvine: New Reformation Publications, 2016), 571. From that point on, nearly all of Sasse's references to Pelikan are critical of his position.

<sup>4</sup> Cited on the back cover of *The Hidden Discipline*.

*Reformation*, edited by Heino Kadai; and *Luther for an Ecumenical Age*, edited by Carl S. Meyer.

Conrad Bergendoff (1897–1997) was a Lutheran church historian out of the tradition of the Augustana Synod. His ecumenical passions were deeply shaped by the Swedish archbishop Nathan Söderblom (1866–1931).<sup>5</sup> Bergendoff earned a doctorate in church history from the University of Chicago and was a major player in the theological reorientation of Augustana Seminary in Rockland, Illinois, in the years before World War II.<sup>6</sup> By the time of the formation of the Lutheran Church in America in 1962, Bergendoff had emerged as a leading spokesman for an inclusive American Lutheranism with an “evangelical-catholic” orientation. His widely circulated book *The Church of the Lutheran Reformation* is representative of this perspective.<sup>7</sup>

The second publication, *Accents in Luther’s Theology*, edited by Concordia Theological Seminary (Springfield) church history professor Heino Kadai, was planned and executed by the Synod’s Reformation Anniversary Committee, chaired by Lewis Spitz Sr. The volume contains essays by John Tietjen, Hermann Sasse, Ernest Koenker, Jaroslav Pelikan, George Hoyer, and Martin Marty, as well as Kadai himself. Overall, the book expressed the thought that the riches of Reformation theology might serve as a resource for church renewal as “God’s gracious provision for man’s deepest needs, both temporal and eternal” without “merely dwelling” on past blessings nor venerating the man Luther.<sup>8</sup> In keeping with the pan-Lutheran theme of the 1967 celebration in North America, “Life-New Life,” the volume sought to correlate Reformation teachings with contemporary challenges.

The third book, *Luther for an Ecumenical Age*, was made possible by a grant from Lutheran Brotherhood in recognition of both the 125th anniversary of Concordia Seminary and the 450th anniversary of the Reformation. Its editor, Carl S. Meyer, was a senior church historian at the St. Louis seminary. The volume contains essays from both LCMS and non-Lutheran scholars: Lewis Spitz, Gordon Rupp, Carl S. Meyer, Harold Grimm, Ernest Schwiebert, Heinz Bluhm, Norman Nagel, Jaroslav Pelikan, Robert Bertram, Arthur Carl Piepkorn, James Atkinson, and

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<sup>5</sup> For more on Söderblom, see Jonas Jonson, *Nathan Söderblom: Called to Serve*, trans. Norman A Hjelm (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016).

<sup>6</sup> Here see Maria Erling and Mark Granquist, *The Augustana Story: Shaping Lutheran Identity in North America* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2008), 304–305, 332–333.

<sup>7</sup> Here see Bergendoff’s chapter on “Lutheran Unity” in Edward C. Fendt, ed., *What Lutherans Are Thinking* (Chicago: Wartburg Press, 1947), 368–390. Published under the auspices of the Conference of Lutheran Professors of Theology, this volume included essays by LCMS professors J. T. Mueller, W. H. T. Dau, William Arndt, and Theodore Graebner.

<sup>8</sup> Editor’s Introduction to *Accents in Luther’s Theology*, ed. Heino O. Kadai (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1967), 8.

Franklin Littel. As the title suggests, the book holds out the challenge and potential of Luther's work for an ecumenical audience.

In the two decades between 1950 and 1970, CPH published several significant Reformation studies, including: Heinrich Bornkamm's *Luther's World of Thought*, translated by Martin Bertram (1958); Kurt Aland's *Martin Luther's 95 Theses: With the Pertinent Documents from the History of the Reformation* (1967); Heinz Bluhm's *Martin Luther, Creative Translator* (1965); and Ernest Schwiebert's *Luther and His Times: The Reformation from a New Perspective* (1950).

After World War II, LCMS theologians had increased contact with Lutheran theologians in Germany. CPH played a significant role in giving many of these theologians a voice to English-speaking audiences. Most significant, perhaps, would be the work of Werner Elert. While Elert's early book *An Outline of Christian Doctrine* was translated by Charles M. Jacobs of the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia and published by the United Lutheran Publication House already in 1927, and his *Christian Ethos* published by Fortress Press in 1957, Elert's work did not gain much traction in the predecessor bodies of the ELCA. For them, Elert appears to have been overshadowed by his Erlangen colleague Paul Althaus, the Lundensian theologians from Sweden (particularly Gustaf Aulen and Gustaf Wingren), or Karl Barth, Elert's enduring nemesis. Such, however, was not the case in the LCMS. Robert Schultz, a graduate of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis would earn a doctorate with Elert for his dissertation on law and gospel in nineteenth-century German theology. Elert was enthusiastically promoted by Schultz and other younger scholars such as Jaroslav Pelikan, who wrote the foreword for CPH's 1962 translation of his *Morphologie des Luthertums* (vol. 1), which appeared under the title *The Structure of Lutheranism*. It appears that Elert was attractive to this rising generation of LCMS scholars as he sought to maintain a substantial commitment to the Lutheran Confessions without invoking the apparatus of verbal inspiration or inerrancy.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to *The Structure of Lutheranism*, CPH published three other works by Elert. Monographs on *Last Things* (1974) and *The Lord's Supper Today* (1974) were extracted from his dogmatics. Norman Nagel translated Elert's classic work

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<sup>9</sup> For contrasting evaluations of Elert in the Missouri Synod, especially regarding the third use of the Law, compare Scott Murray, *Law, Life, and the Living God: The Third Use of the Law in Modern American Lutheranism* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2002), 92–95; and Lowell C. Green, "The 'Third Use of the Law' and Werner Elert's Position," *Logia* (Eastertide 2013), 27–33. For more on Elert's position, see Roland Ziegler, "What Happens When the Third Use of the Law is Rejected?" in *The Necessary Distinction: A Continuing Conversation on Law & Gospel*, ed. Albert Collver, James A. Nestingen, and John T. Pless (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2017), 312–319.



on closed communion, *Eucharist and Church Fellowship in the First Four Centuries* (1966).

Many other titles would appear from across the Atlantic, including Edmund Schlink's *The Doctrine of Baptism*, translated by Herbert J. A. Bouman (1972). Schlink's earlier book of Lenten and Easter sermons, *The Victor Speaks*, translated by Paul F. Koehneke, had already been published by CPH in 1958.

The work of Schlink's Heidelberg colleague Peter Brunner, *Worship in the Name of Jesus*, was translated by Martin Bertram and published in 1968. Brunner, who served as doctoral advisor to American Lutheran theologians Robert Jenson and Eugene Brand, had far-reaching effects on liturgical developments embodied in the *Lutheran Book of Worship* (1978). Brunner drew on the work of Odo Casel, a Benedictine scholar known for his "mystery theology."<sup>10</sup>

Other significant German works would be translated and published by CPH in the 1960s and early 1970s. Georg F. Vicedom was a leading Lutheran missiologist from Neuendettelsau. His book *The Mission of God: An introduction to a Theology of Mission* (1965), translated by Gilbert Thiele and Dennis Hilgendorf under the general editorship of William J. Danker, in CPH's "The Witnessing Church Series," advanced the understanding the conceptuality of *missio Dei*. A study of the *damnamus* ("we condemn") by Hans-Werner Gensichen was translated by Herbert J. A. Bouman and published in 1967 under the title *We Condemn: How Luther and 16th Century Lutheranism Condemned False Doctrine*. Edward and Marie Schroeder translated *Evangelical; What Does it Really Mean?* (1968) by the Münster systematician Ernst Kinder. *Justification of the Ungodly* by Wilhelm Dantine was translated by Ruth and Eric Gritsch and published in 1968 with the assistance of the Lutheran World Federation. *The Mystery of God* by Wilhelm Stählin, a German Lutheran bishop associated with the high church *Berneuchener*, was published in 1964.<sup>11</sup> *The Theology of the Resurrection* by Erlangen theologian Walter Künneth and translated by James Leitch was published in 1965. During this period, CPH also published the work of a very conservative Norwegian theologian, Olav Valen-

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<sup>10</sup> Here see the critique of Oliver K. Olson, *Reclaiming the Lutheran Liturgical Heritage* (Minneapolis: Reclaim Resources, 2007), 70: "In plain language Brunner is saying that a unique event can be 'present.' He has accepted Casel's argument that the crucifixion never ends, and that Jesus is always dying . . . Brunner's illogical statement is embarrassing (and Concordia Publishing House should be embarrassed for printing it)."

<sup>11</sup> Stählin (1883–1975) was sympathetic to Andreas Osiander's understanding of justification as the indwelling of Christ and was, therefore, critical of the Formula of Concord's confession of the righteousness of Christ. Hermann Sasse expresses his concern regarding the influence of Stählin on numerous occasions. See, for example, his "Letter to Arthur Carl Piepkorn" (1956) in *The Lonely Way*, ed. Matthew C. Harrison, vol. 2, 1941–1976 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2002), 237–245. For more on Sasse's response to Stählin, see John T. Pless, "Hermann Sasse and the Liturgical Movement," *Logia* (Eastertide 1998), 47–51.

Sendstad, *The Word Can Never Die: A Scriptural Critique of Theological Trends*, translated by Norman A. Madson Sr. and Ahlert H. Strand (1966). Valen-Sendstad was critical of neo-Lutheran theology especially in the areas of Scriptural authority and Christology, as well as what he identified as “crypto-Romanism” in the understanding of the sacraments, church, and ministry. *History of Theology* by Bengt Häggglund of the University of Lund, translated by Gene J. Lund, was published in 1968, giving English-speaking readers a concise yet comprehensive overview of the historical path of Christian doctrine from the early church through the early twentieth century.

Meanwhile, closer to home, CPH did not neglect to publish works of its own theologians, particularly those who were on the faculty of the St. Louis Seminary. Two figures especially emerge: Richard Caemmerer and Martin Franzmann.

It would be difficult to overstate the influence of Caemmerer (1904–1984) in the post-war years through 1974. In many ways, Caemmerer would be a transitional link between the earlier theology of the Missouri Synod, as represented by his own seminary teacher, Franz Pieper, and the generation of pastors and professors whose theological orientation he would significantly shape. Only rarely does CPH publish a *festschrift* to honor the accomplishments of a significant teacher. In 1966, under the editorship of Robert Bertram, such a volume was published to honor Caemmerer’s completion of twenty-five years of service on the faculty.<sup>12</sup> The list of contributors is impressive, as it includes former students who would have significant influence in American Lutheranism: Robert Schultz, F. Dean Lueking, Paul W. F. Harms, Kenneth F. Korby, Edward Schroeder, John H. Elliott, Martin Marty, Robert Hoferkamp, David Schuller, and Richard Koenig. These essays, taken individually or collectively, provide a window into the theological foment churning in the Synod at the time.

Caemmerer’s literary influence through CPH reached back to his contribution to *The Abiding Word* volumes of the late 1940s but it reached its apex in his *Preaching for the Church* in 1959. For several decades, *Preaching for the Church* would be the standard textbook in homiletics courses at both seminaries of the LCMS as well as in other theological schools. Caemmerer’s “goal, malady, means” method continues to shape the preaching of many LCMS pastors. Caemmerer published numerous sermons in the *Concordia Pulpit*, and in 1952 he co-authored a book of Lenten sermons with Jaroslav Pelikan under the title *The Cross for Every Day*. In addition to chapters in several books, Caemmerer authored short books on church leadership and mission: *The Church in the World* (1949, revised 1961),

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<sup>12</sup> *The Lively Function of the Gospel*, ed. Robert Bertram (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1966).

*God's Great Plan for You* (1961), *Feeding and Leading* (1962), and *Christ Builds His Church* (1962). In 1969, he published a short "biblical theology" under the title *Earth with Heaven: An Essay in Sayings of Jesus*. Along with then-president of Concordia Seminary Alfred O. Fuerbringer, Caemmerer edited *Toward a More Excellent Ministry*, published in 1964 in commemoration of the 125th anniversary of the seminary. This collection of essays, mostly by faculty members, reflects the theological contours of the institution a decade prior to the formation of Seminex.

Martin Franzmann's contributions through CPH were in the areas of exegetical theology and devotional writings. As it is beyond the scope of this article to examine hymnals produced by CPH in this period, we will only mention his hymns in passing, although they are perhaps his most enduring legacy.<sup>13</sup> Franzmann, a product of the Wisconsin Synod, would in many ways represent something of a conservative figure who was moved to engage certain features of the historical-critical method but might be more properly thought as a "forerunner of the literary-critical movements of the 1980s–1990s."<sup>14</sup>

A leading voice in the Synod's discussion of both hermeneutical issues and ecumenical relations, Franzmann's CTCR document "Seven Theses on Reformation Hermeneutics" (1969) became the basis for a set of cassette tapes featuring lectures by Franzmann under the title *The Art of Exegesis*, released by CPH in 1972.<sup>15</sup> Earlier Franzmann had authored *The Word of the Lord Grows: A First Historical Introduction to the New Testament* and *Follow Me: Discipleship According to Saint Matthew*, both published in 1961. In 1968, his *Concordia Commentary: Romans* was published as part of the ill-fated "first" Concordia Commentary Series that collapsed

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<sup>13</sup> For a positive assessment of Franzmann's theological contributions, see Matthew E. Borrasso, *The Art of Exegesis: An Analysis of the Life and Work of Martin Franzmann* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2019). For a helpful biographical treatment of Franzmann and his hymns, see Richard Brinkley, *Thy Strong Word: The Enduring Legacy of Martin Franzmann* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1993).

<sup>14</sup> An observation from a personal conversation with Dr. James Voelz on January 10, 2019. Voelz studied under Franzmann, Scharlemann, and Danker. His reaction to this section of the article was very helpful. Franzmann's approach to controversies brewing in the Synod in the 1960s might also be seen from his contribution (an essay of Matthew's use of the Immanuel prophecy of Isaiah 7:14) in the Commission on Theology and Church Relations 1969 *A Project in Biblical Hermeneutics*, edited by Richard Jungkuntz.

<sup>15</sup> The two required textbooks for this course were J. C. K. von Hofmann's *Interpreting the Bible*, trans. Christian Preus (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1959); and A. Berkeley Mickelson's *Interpreting the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963). J. C. K. von Hofmann (1810–1877) was a theologian at Erlangen. For more on his theology, see Matthew Becker, *The Self-Giving God and Salvation History: The Trinitarian Theology of Johannes von Hofmann* (New York: T & T Clark, 2004); and "Johann Christian Konrad von Hofmann" in Lowell C. Green, *The Erlangen School of Theology: Its History, Teaching and Practice* (Fort Wayne: Lutheran Legacy Press, 2010), 105–132. Mickelson taught at Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois, and later at Bethel College in St. Paul, Minnesota. He might best be characterized as a "progressive evangelical."

a few years later under the pressures of tensions related to the controversy over biblical interpretation. Although not a full-length commentary, Franzmann's *The Revelation to John: A Commentary* appeared in 1976, the year of Franzmann's death. Franzmann prepared the annotations for the 1971 *Concordia Bible with Notes*.

Although he was not ordained while teaching at Concordia Seminary, Franzmann regularly preached, and his sermons were literary gems, as is evidenced in *Ha! Ha! Among the Trumpets: Sermons* (1966). His devotional writings, *Pray for Joy* (1970) and *Alive with the Spirit* (1973), also achieved popularity. He co-authored a book with a F. Dean Lueking in 1966 entitled *Grace Under Pressure: The Way of Meekness in Ecumenical Relations*.

Other St. Louis faculty members would make notable contributions through CPH. Edgar Krentz was the author of a short book in 1966: *Biblical Studies Today*. It was the aim of this book to keep readers abreast of the most recent developments in biblical scholarship. It was an introduction and mild apologetic for the historical-critical method.<sup>16</sup> Another New Testament scholar from the faculty, Frederick Danker, who was already well known for his work with William Arndt on *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (published by the University of Chicago with funding from the Synod's Centennial Thank-offering through its Committee on Developing Scholarly Research), wrote *Creeds in the Bible* (1966) demonstrating how modern methods of biblical exegesis might assist in identifying creedal material in the New Testament. In 1960, CPH published Danker's *Multipurpose Tools for Bible Study*, a handbook providing students and pastors with a wealth of information regarding concordances, lexicons, grammars, and other resources, including commentaries. Among the recommended commentaries are those by historical-critical scholars such as Claus Westermann, Hermann Gunkel, Gerhard von Rad, Hans W. Wolff, Eduard Schweizer, Rudolf Bultmann, and Hans Conzelmann.

Martin H. Scharlemann came to the St. Louis faculty in 1950 and was among the first to introduce historical criticism to his students. His collection of essays published in 1960, *Toward Tomorrow*, demonstrate that Scharlemann was an engaging and creative theologian in his work with topics as diverse as race relations, the biblical view of sex, and Christian love and public policy, as well as an exegetical study of "the descent into hell." Scharlemann created a storm of controversy when he raised criticisms of the Synod's traditional understanding of biblical inerrancy

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<sup>16</sup> Less than a decade later in 1975, Krentz wrote *The Historical-Critical Method* for the Guides to Biblical Scholarship series published by Fortress Press. This latter monograph gives a more robust defense of the historical-critical method. By the time of its publication, Krentz was a New Testament professor at Concordia Seminary in Exile.

in a pastoral conference paper presented in 1959. He apologized for this disturbance at a 1962 convention in Cleveland and went on to publish *Proclaiming the Parables* (1963) and *Healing and Redemption* in 1965. The content of this book would largely parallel a central theme of the “Mission Affirmations” adopted by the Detroit convention the same year.

Church historian Carl S. Meyer and New Testament professor Herbert T. Mayer would edit *The Caring God: Perspectives on Providence* (1973). Containing essays by Meyer himself as well as Martin Scharlemann, Warren Rubel, Curtis Huber, Ralph Underwager, Richard Baeppler, David Schuller, and John Gienapp, this volume demonstrated an effort at interdisciplinary theology as the doctrine of providence was examined from the perspectives of sociology, psychology, the arts, and evolutionary biology. A few years earlier in 1964, CPH published *Moving Frontiers: Readings in the History of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*, edited by Meyer. This volume examined the history of the Missouri Synod through 1960.

An enduring publication came from Robert Preus in the form of his two-volume *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism* (vol. 1: *A Study of Theological Prolegomena* in 1970; and vol. 2: *God and His Creation* in 1972). These volumes provided a picture of the theologians of Lutheran Orthodoxy that was both sympathetic and critical. Even those who did not see these theologians as champions to be emulated would recognize the importance of Preus’ work.<sup>17</sup> In many ways, this work would pave the way for a renewed and more appreciative reception of the seventeenth-century Lutheran theologians. It was also during this period that Ralph Bohlmann’s *Principles of Biblical Interpretation in the Lutheran Confessions* (1968) was published.

From the 1960s, two books stand out as indicative of what many had hoped would be Missouri’s move into an ecumenically bright future. Former missionary to Japan and pastor at Grace Lutheran Church in River Forest at the time, F. Dean Lueking wrote *Mission in the Making* (1964), offering an interpretation of the Synod’s missionary activity from 1846–1963. Lueking argued that this history may be understood as a conflict between what he called an “evangelical confessionalism” and a “scholastic confessionalism.” Clearly, Lueking favored “evangelical confessionalism” and hoped that under the leadership of Martin L. Kretzmann it would finally win the day. The adoption of the “Mission Affirmations,” of which Kretzmann was the architect at the 1965 convention in Detroit, seemed to vindicate (at least temporarily) Lueking’s hope.

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<sup>17</sup> Wolfhart Pannenberg was certainly no friend of seventeenth-century Lutheran Orthodoxy, but in his own *Systematic Theology*, he consistently uses Preus to check his reading of these theologians.

The second book from this period was *Which Way to Lutheran Unity? A History of Efforts to Unite the Lutherans of America* (1966) by John H. Tietjen.<sup>18</sup> This book was the result of Tietjen's doctoral work at Union Theological Seminary. At the time of the book's publication, he was the executive director of the Division of Public Relations of the Lutheran Council in the United States (LCUSA). He would be elected as president of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis in 1969. After surveying the tangled paths of Lutheran denominations in North America and the formation of LCUSA, Tietjen believed that the time was ripe for pulpit and altar fellowship between the LCMS, the ALC, and the LCA and advocated for it in the concluding chapter of his book.

Just a few months after Tietjen's election as the president of the Concordia Seminary, J. A. O. Preus defeated incumbent Oliver Harms in his bid for the presidency of the Synod at the 1969 Denver convention. Preus' election would be crucial to the investigation of the faculty of the seminary and ultimately to the events that led to the so-called "walkout" in February of 1974 and the formation of SemineX.

This shift would be reflected in the books published by CPH. In 1968, the first volumes of the old Concordia Commentary series appeared. The Romans commentary was by the well-respected Martin Franzmann and the commentary on Jeremiah and Lamentations by the Australian member of the St. Louis faculty, Norman Habel. Habel was already known for a controversial essay on Genesis.<sup>19</sup> Ralph D. Gehrke, who would eventually leave the faculty of Concordia Teachers' College in River Forest under charges that he denied the historicity of certain Old Testament events, was the author of the commentary on 1 and 2 Samuel. Two additional volumes appeared in 1970. The Acts volume was by Robert Smith, a New Testament professor at Concordia Seminary. The volume on 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon was co-authored by Victor J. Bartling, a St. Louis professor, and Armin Moellering, a parish pastor with a PhD in classics in New Jersey. The commentaries by Franzmann and Bartling/Moellering reflected traditional, conservative Lutheran readings of the text, while those of Habel and Smith showed signs of appreciation for the newer approaches in biblical exegesis. Additional volumes were projected but never published. One such volume was by Fred Danker.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Tietjen notes that Oliver Harms sought to block the publication of this book. See John H. Tietjen, *Memoirs in Exile: Confessional Hope and Institutional Conflict* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 7.

<sup>19</sup> Habel's *The Form and Meaning of the Fall Narrative: A Detailed Analysis of Genesis 3* was published by the Concordia Seminary Print Shop in 1965.

<sup>20</sup> He would found another CPH (Clayton Publishing House) to publish his commentary on Luke in 1972.

The publication of Milton Rudnick's *Fundamentalism and the Missouri Synod* (1966) was significant, as Rudnick demonstrated that the Synod's doctrine of biblical inerrancy was not shaped by American fundamentalism as some had supposed but by the Lutheran theologians of the seventeenth century. Rudnick noted that the Missouri Synod may have cheered for the fundamentalists in the debates of the early twentieth century but that the Synod's conviction regarding biblical authority did not derive from this source.<sup>21</sup>

It was under the presidency of J. A. O. Preus that CPH began to address the historical-critical approach to Scripture directly. This can be seen in three short booklets: *It is Written* (1971) by Preus, *The Apostolic Scriptures* (1971) by David Scaer, and *Form Criticism Reexamined* by Walter A. Maier II. Both Scaer and Maier were members of the faculty at Concordia Theological Seminary in Springfield, where Preus had served as president prior to his election as Synod president. With the publication of these short books, faculty members from Concordia Theological Seminary begin to emerge in the CPH catalog.

In 1977, CPH published an English translation of German scholar Gerhard Maier's *The End of the Historical Critical Method*, translated by Rudolph Norden and Edwin Leverenz with a preface by Eugene Klug from Concordia Theological Seminary, now in Fort Wayne.

Recognizing the need for an introduction to the Old Testament that reflected a conservative approach to questions of dating, authorship, and historical veracity, CPH published Horace Hummel's *The Word Becoming Flesh: An Introduction to the Origin, Purpose, and Meaning of the Old Testament*. Hummel was an Old Testament professor at the St. Louis seminary who had taught, among other places, at Wartburg Seminary and Valparaiso University. An early proponent of the historical-critical method, Hummel came to renounce it, although his typological approach to the Old Testament remained a matter of controversy for some.

In addition to the matter of biblical interpretation, questions of ecumenical relations and the issue of women's ordination loomed large in the controversies of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Two short pamphlets addressed these issues. Noted confessional Lutheran scholar from Australia Henry P. Hamann was the author of *Unity and Fellowship and Ecumenicity* (1973). An older work by Peter Brunner, *The Ministry and the Ministry of Women* from 1959, was translated and published in 1971, just a year after the American Lutheran Church made the decision to ordain

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<sup>21</sup> The review of this book by Richard Caemmerer in "Fundamentalism and the Missouri Synod," *Lutheran Forum* 1, no. 6 (June 1967), 26–28, is noteworthy. Caemmerer praises Rudnick for his careful research and scholarship, yet he wonders if there might be more to the story to be investigated, namely whether faith is understood fundamentally as trust in the living God or assent to correct propositions.

women. In the 1960s and early '70s, many within the Synod were urging membership in the Lutheran World Federation. David Scaer's 1971 monograph *The Lutheran World Federation* goes against this current.

In the wake of the synodical controversy, CPH would publish many volumes reflecting the Synod's commitment to the Holy Scriptures. These included both the *Concordia Self-Study Bible* and, more recently, the *Lutheran Study Bible* (2009) and the two-volume *Lutheran Bible Companion* (2014). Demonstrating that confessional Lutheran theology might avoid both liberalism and fundamentalism, *What Does This Mean? Principles of Biblical Interpretation in the Post-Modern World* (1995) by James W. Voelz provided the Synod with a sophisticated textbook for hermeneutics. The new Concordia Commentary series would commence in 1996 with the promise that this series "fully affirms the divine inspiration, inerrancy, and authority of Scripture as it emphasizes 'that which promotes Christ' in each pericope."<sup>22</sup>

With a renewed emphasis on scriptural authority came a more vigorous embrace of the Lutheran Confessions. Swedish scholar Holsten Fagerberg's *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions: 1529–1537* was translated by Gene Lund and was published in 1972. Although Fagerberg does not cover the Formula of Concord, he does affirm the third use of the Law, which was denied by some on the St. Louis faculty at the time. In addition to numerous popular treatments of the Lutheran Confessions, CPH undertook three major scholarly projects for the four-hundredth anniversary of the Formula of Concord (1977). *Formulators of the Formula of Concord: Four Architects of Lutheran Unity* by Valparaiso University professor Theodore Jungkuntz told the stories of Jakob Andreae, Martin Chemnitz, David Chytraeus, and Nikolaus Selnecker. With a back cover description "Six sermons to restore Lutheran unity," Robert Kolb's *Andreae and the Formula of Concord: Six Sermons on the Way to Lutheran Unity* provided historical background to the controversies leading up to the Formula, as well as Kolb's translation of the sermons. Robert Preus and Wilbert Rosin were co-editors of *A Contemporary Look at the Formula of Concord*. This volume contains a historical introduction by Robert Kolb and chapters on each article of the Formula by numerous scholars: Eugene Klug, Henry Hamann, Kurt Marquart, Richard Klann, George Fry, Lowell Green, David Scaer, Bjarne Teigen, as well as the editors. Although it was published posthumously, two volumes of Robert Preus' collected essays in *Doctrine is Life* (2006), edited by Klemet Preus, contain a wealth of material on scriptural authority, the nature of doctrine, justification by faith, and confessional subscription reflecting the battles of the theological turbulent 1960s and '70s.

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<sup>22</sup> From the inside panel of the dustcover.



In the 1970s through the early '90s, many in the Missouri Synod appeared to be enamored with the seeming success of American evangelicalism and the Church Growth Movement. This flirtation was reflected in several books. Chief among them was Oscar Feucht's *Everyone a Minister* (1974).<sup>23</sup> David Luecke's provocative, *Evangelical Style and Lutheran Substance: Facing America's Mission Challenge* (1988) created no small amount of controversy.<sup>24</sup> A book that suggested that good works and obedience and not faith and eternal life was the aim of the Gospel, *The Goal of the Gospel: God's Purpose in Saving You* (1992) by Philip Bickel and Robert Nordlie, brought sharp reaction and a challenge to its doctrinal review status, resulting in its withdrawal from publication.<sup>25</sup>

Notable titles indicating an articulate and solidly Lutheran approach to evangelism and mission include *Speaking the Gospel Today: A Theology for Evangelism* (1984) by Robert Kolb; *Mission from the Cross: The Lutheran Theology of Mission* (2009) by Klaus Detlev Schulz; *Lutheran and World Mission: A Historical and Systematic Study* by Ingemar Öberg, translated by Dean Apel; and *The Fire and the Staff: Lutheran Theology in Practice* by Klemet Preus.

Recognizing the need to have classical texts in print for use in the Synod, CPH initiated the Concordia Heritage Series to provide reprints of dozens of theological classics in the 1970s and '80s. An extension to the American Edition of Luther's Works was initiated, as was the ambitious project of publishing the works of C. F. W. Walther, Martin Chemnitz, and Johann Gerhard. J. A. O Preus' biography of Chemnitz, *The Second Martin: The Life and Theology of Martin Chemnitz* (1994) would give English-speaking readers insight into his contributions to emerging Lutheran theology. Likewise, *Lives and Writings of the Great Fathers of the Lutheran Church*, edited by Timothy Schmeling, would provide access to the stories of Philip Nicolai, Leonhard Hutter, Conrad Dietrich, Paul Gerhardt, and many others often overlooked from the seventeenth century.

CPH would take the lead in publishing books by or about Wilhelm Loehe, including Loehe's pastoral theology, *The Pastor* (2015), translated by Wolf Knappe and Charles Schaum; a biography of Loehe by Erika Geiger, *The Life, Work, and Influence of Wilhelm Loehe: 1808–1872* (2010), translated by Wolf Knappe; and a study of Loehe's ecclesiology, *Confession and Mission, Word and Sacrament: The Ecclesial Theology of Wilhelm Loehe* (2001) by David Ratke.

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<sup>23</sup> See the analysis of the roots of Feucht's book by Brent Kuhlman, "Oscar Feucht's *Everyone a Minister: Pietismus Redivivus*," *Logia* 8, no. 4 (Reformation 1999), 31–36.

<sup>24</sup> See, for example, John T. Pless, "The Evangelization of Missouri," *Lutheran Forum* 23, vol. 2 (May 1989), 30–31.

<sup>25</sup> See the review article by Harold Senkbeil, "A Famine in Lutheranism," *Logia* (Epiphany 1993), 41–42.

A very significant aspect of CPH's publication program in recent years has been making the works of Hermann Sasse available to a new generation. Sasse had deep connections with the Missouri Synod reaching back to the post-war years.<sup>26</sup> In a step to provide more of Sasse's work for the English-speaking world, Norman E. Nagel, dean of the chapel at Valparaiso University, translated numerous essays organized in three short volumes: *We Confess Jesus Christ* (1984), *We Confess the Sacraments* (1985), and *We Confess the Church* (1986). Two additional Sasse translation projects were spearheaded by Matthew C. Harrison: *The Lonely Way* (vol. 1 in 2001 and vol. 2 in 2002) and *Letters to Lutheran Pastors* (vol. 1 in 2013, vol. 2 in 2014, and vol. 3 in 2015). The papers from a 1996 theological symposium marking the hundredth anniversary of Sasse's birth, hosted by Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary in St. Catharines, Ontario, were published under the editorship of John Stephenson and Thomas Winger as *Hermann Sasse: A Man for our Times?* This volume contained essays by Ronald Feuerhahn, Lowell Green, John Wilch, John Kleinig, Thomas Hardt, Kurt Marquart, Gottfried Martens, Norman Nagel, and Edwin Lehman, as well as the editors.

Long considered the gold standard of works on Luther's catechisms, the five-volume commentary by Albrecht Peters (1924–1987) was translated by Holger Sonntag, Daniel Thies, and Thomas Trapp. Volume 1 on the Ten Commandments appeared in 2009, volume 2 on the Creed in 2011, volume 3 on the Lord's Prayer in 2011, volume 4 on Baptism and the Lord's Supper in 2012, and volume 5 on Confession and the Christian Life in 2013. This set is indispensable for serious scholarly work on Luther's catechisms.

The five-hundredth anniversary of the Reformation was duly observed by CPH. Two books stand out. First, there is the finely crafted volume by Cameron MacKenzie, *The Reformation* (2017), a telling of the Reformation story augmented with artwork from the period. Second, *Defending Luther's Reformation: Its Ongoing Significance in the Face of Contemporary Challenges* (2017), edited by John A. Maxfield, features essays by several scholars on aspects of Luther's teaching that are often deemed as problematic or have come to be challenged in the church and/or academy. For example, Cameron MacKenzie defends Luther's understanding of biblical authority while Jonathan Mumme takes on the challenge posed by the New Perspective on Paul.

In the last two decades, CPH has published dozens of books that seek to explicate, defend, and apply Lutheran doctrine to contemporary issues in both the church and the world. Here we will only mention one project, the two-volume

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<sup>26</sup> For more on Sasse and his relationship to world Lutheranism in general and the LCMS in particular, see John T. Pless, "Hermann Sasse (1895–1976)" in *Twentieth-Century Lutheran Theologians*, ed. Mark C. Mattes (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 155–177.

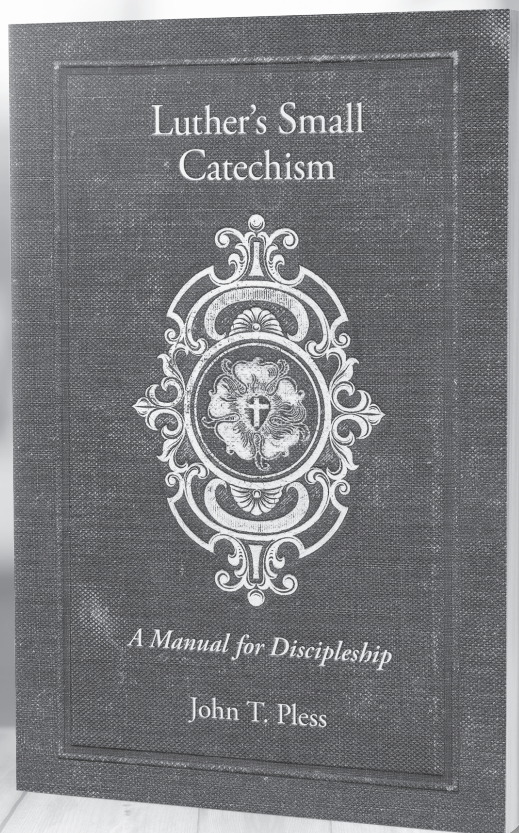
*Confessing the Gospel: A Lutheran Approach to Systematic Theology* (2017), edited by Samuel Nafzger. Over three decades in the making, these volumes represent the efforts of more than sixty scholars from churches that are part of the International Lutheran Council. *Confessing the Gospel* was not intended as a replacement for Franz Pieper's classic *Christian Dogmatics*. Instead, it was envisioned as building on it and engaging new issues that have emerged more recently.<sup>27</sup>

We have not engaged the myriad of popular theological books for the laity, pastoral and preaching resources, devotional aids, curricular and catechetical offerings, or liturgical materials from CPH. Each of these items would merit a separate article. However, in the publications that we have examined, we have observed both continuity and discontinuity, reflecting the contours of the theological life of the Synod itself. There are periods in this history especially in the 1960s and '70s that reflect a liminal zone where doctrinal cross-currents overlap. Within the last two decades, CPH has strengthened its profile as a publisher of confessional Lutheran theology not only for the Missouri Synod but for others both in world Lutheranism and beyond who seek reliable and responsible presentations of the truth that we believe, teach, and confess.

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<sup>27</sup> For on *Confessing the Gospel*, see the reviews by Mark C. Mattes, "A Review of *Confessing the Gospel in the Context of Contemporary Theology*," *Concordia Journal* 44, no. 2 (Spring 2018), 78–91; and John T. Pless, "Review of *Confessing the Gospel*," last modified March 11, 2018, <https://www.lutheranforum.com/blog/review-of-confessing-the-gospel>.

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## **Chemnitz, Gerhard, Walther, and Concordia Publishing House**

**Roland F. Ziegler**

Hermann Sasse wrote in 1954, “It is always a sign of deep spiritual sickness when a church forgets its fathers. It may criticize them. It must measure their teaching by the Word of God and reject whatever errors they have made as fallible men. But it must not forget them. But that is precisely what appears to be happening in our century in broad sections of the Lutheran Church.”<sup>1</sup> The reason for the forgetfulness Sasse identified is partly sociological: Western societies especially change fast, so that the felt distance from the past not only becomes greater and greater but such change also creates the impression that the past is useless for the tasks and challenges of the present. At best, the past is a museum piece, preferably set in our scene as a spectacle.

Sasse, though, calls forgetting the fathers of the church “a sign of deep spiritual sickness,” not simply a consequence of rapid societal and technological change. Sasse is primarily talking in this essay about the Lutheran fathers of the nineteenth century, the fathers of the independent confessional Lutheran churches in Germany and the confessional Lutheran churches in North America and Australia. Those fathers fought for the Lutheran confessions and a Lutheran Church that accepts the teachings of the Book of Concord as scriptural and thus rejects any communion in holy things (*communicatio in sacris*). When a church forgets them, even reviles them, it also undergoes a change in teaching and theological orientation.

It can be a nice touch to commemorate the fathers of the church in liturgical calendars, but far more important is to read them. For these fathers were teachers and preachers, and as such they are to be remembered and appreciated. Concordia Publishing House has done a service not only to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in publishing works of Martin Chemnitz, Johann Gerhard, and C. F. W. Walther, but to the Lutheran church worldwide. With English being de facto the lingua franca, these translated works—originally written in the old lingua franca, Latin (which is now accessible only to specialists) or in German (the language of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod for roughly the first ninety years of its

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<sup>1</sup> Hermann Sasse, *The Lonely Way: Selected Essays and Letters*, vol. 2, 1941–1976 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2002), 229.

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existence)—enable Missourians to reconnect with C. F. W. Walther, their most important father of the nineteenth century; Martin Chemnitz, one of the foremost theologians of the generation after Luther; and Johann Gerhard and his massive dogmatics.

### Chemnitz

Not all works in this series are new translations and editions. The works of Chemnitz, for the most part, are republications of earlier translations. Volumes 1–4 contain Fred Kramer’s translation of the *Examination of the Council of Trent*, first published by CPH in 1971–1986;<sup>2</sup> volume 5 contains Luther Poellot’s, J. A. O. Preus’, and Georg Williams’ translations (respectively) of *An Enchiridion* (1981), *The Lord’s Supper* (1979), and *The Lord’s Prayer* (1999);<sup>3</sup> volume 6 contains *The Two Natures in Christ*, translated by J. A. O. Preus and first published in 1971;<sup>4</sup> and volumes 7 and 8 contain the *Loci*, also translated by J.A.O. Preus and first published in 1989.<sup>5</sup> These volumes are thus simply a repackaging of previous publications, not revised editions. That is a pity, especially in the translation of the *Examination of the Council of Trent*, in which annotations are sparse and there was no attempt in modern editions to identify the numerous patristic and scholastic references quoted by Chemnitz. In this day and age, perhaps such an enterprise could be done collaboratively as a wiki project on the Internet by volunteers.

Chemnitz’s *Examination of the Council of Trent* is to this day the most extensive Lutheran engagement with the Council of Trent. And although the Roman Catholic Church of today is not quite the same church as in 1563, Chemnitz’s discussion is still helpful today in seeing the Lutheran difference over against Rome. When one starts reading the *Examination of the Council of Trent*, one has to get used to the style of the theological writing of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Shortness and conciseness are not necessarily virtues. Writers quote extensively from opponents and supporting authors, and an aim for exhaustive completeness may leave the modern reader somewhat exhausted. On the other hand, the modern reader is not challenged by enigmatic brevity or woolly generalities. A modern reader

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<sup>2</sup> Martin Chemnitz, *Examination of the Council of Trent*, trans. Fred Kramer, vols. 1–4 of *Chemnitz’s Works* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2007).

<sup>3</sup> Martin Chemnitz, *Ministry, Word, and Sacraments: An Enchiridion/The Lord’s Supper/The Lord’s Prayer*, trans. Luther Poellot, J. A. O. Preus, and Georg Williams, vol. 5 of *Chemnitz’s Works* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2007).

<sup>4</sup> Martin Chemnitz, *The Two Natures in Christ*, trans. J. A. O. Preus, vol. 6 of *Chemnitz’s Works* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2007).

<sup>5</sup> Martin Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, trans. J. A. O. Preus, vols. 7–8 of *Chemnitz’s Works* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2008).

who delves into the *Examination of the Council of Trent* would be well advised to read parallel the pertaining section of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which presents (relatively) concisely the contemporary position of the Roman Catholic Church, so that the reader is aware of changes and modifications in modern Roman Catholicism.

More accessible for the modern reader is *An Enchiridion*, a summary of doctrine for the examination of pastors in the form of questions and answers. One should not make the mistake of thinking that *The Lord's Supper* is an exhaustive study of the Lord's Supper since, among other things, it does not fully engage Reformed objections to the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the sacrament. This is, nevertheless, a timely book, especially for our age, in which a symbolic understanding of the Lord's Supper has overwhelmed many churches calling themselves Lutheran and where it would be a ridiculous euphemism to call some theologians *Crypto-Calvinists*. The exposition of the Lord's Prayer gives us another side of Chemnitz, not as the dogmatician and polemicist but as the preacher and catechist, and is a good place to start reading Chemnitz.

The *Loci*, which came from lectures that Superintendent Chemnitz gave to pastors in Braunschweig on Melancthon's *Loci*—a permanent continuing education program, so to speak—can serve this purpose still today. *The Two Natures in Christ* is a densely argued defense of the communication of attributes against the Reformed. For many today, this doctrine is only a historical item without present relevance. Maybe Chemnitz can be a help in rediscovering its relevance inside and outside the Lutheran church.

Newly translated is the 1569 *Church Order for Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel*, coauthored with Jacob Andreae,<sup>6</sup> and the *Apology of the Book of Concord*, coauthored with Timotheus Kirchner and Nicolaus Selnecker.<sup>7</sup> The *Church Order* gives a fascinating picture of how churches and schools were organized in the sixteenth century. As all church orders, they were promulgated by the civil authorities and were part of the civil law of the land. It gives insights in how the Lutheran church existed in a state church system and sheds light on the challenges for the fathers of the Lutheran churches in North America when they had to organize churches without the help of princes and magistrates.

The *Apology of the Book of Concord* is an answer to Reformed attacks on the Book of Concord. It gives mainly an extended defense of the doctrine of the *genus*

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<sup>6</sup> Martin Chemnitz and Jacob Andreae, *Church Order for Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel*, trans. Jacob Corzine, Matthew C. Harrison, and Andrew Smith, ed. Jacob Corzine and Matthew Carver, vol. 9 of *Chemnitz's Works* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2015).

<sup>7</sup> Martin Chemnitz, Timothy Kirchner, and Nicolaus Selnecker, *Apology or Vindication of the Christian Book of Concord*, trans. James L. Langebartels, ed. Kevin G. Walker, vol. 10 of *Chemnitz's Works* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2018).

*maiestaticum* and of the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper. The *Apology of the Book of Concord* can serve as an in-depth resource for the study of the Formula of Concord. Circuits that have a Confessions study could make use of the *Apology* in their study of FC VII and VIII.

## Gerhard

The translation of Johann Gerhard's *Dogmatics* is a monumental enterprise. The longest Lutheran dogmatics ever written, on scale in the Protestant realm only comparable to Karl Barth's *Church Dogmatics*, it will be the first full translation in any language ever. It is superbly edited and annotated. Its sheer size is intimidating, though. Who is going to read all that? Just as "every journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step," so also the reading of Gerhard begins with reading a chapter a time. Like any dogmatics, Gerhard is contextual. He uses the methodology of his time, and the reader soon learns to expect that subjects are analyzed by the scheme of the four causes: effective, formal, material, and final, with instrumental as sub-cause thrown into it.

Gerhard is in constant conversation with Reformed and Roman theologians; the Socinians, anti-Trinitarians of the time, are also engaged. Numerous quotations from church fathers are included. All this gives the reader a wealth of material; Gerhard's *Loci* are a library by themselves. But is there a practical value beyond the historical interest? There are two questions: what is the practical value of studying dogmatics, and how does Gerhard's *Dogmatics* fulfill this task? Dogmatics explicates the content of the Christian faith as it is given in the Holy Scriptures in the context and controversies of one's time. It is, in a way, "higher catechesis."

Since every pastor has to teach the Christian faith, in so doing, he does dogmatics. Admittedly, a dogmatics textbook does so on a level and in a detail that is beyond most teaching in the congregation. But as any teacher knows, the teacher has to know more and to think through things before he teaches. Dogmatics is practical because its task is to articulate the truth of what Christianity teaches, and this is a basic task of the church. Gerhard's *Loci*, with their detail and thorough engagement with Scripture, are still a helpful exposition of the Christian faith. Their polemical parts, even if not all of Gerhard's questions are still living questions, shed further light on the truth of the Christian faith. In that sense, Gerhard's work is a classic dogmatics. That is, it is worthwhile to engage beyond its immediate context, because it continues to be stimulating and helpful. Of course, there are issues that contemporary dogmatics have to tackle that are not on Gerhard's horizon. Modern science is just in its infancy, and the questions that science and scientism pose to Christianity are not dealt with in, for example, Gerhard's teaching on creation, nor is historical criticism and the issue it raises in connection with the doctrine



of Scripture. Many years ago, William Weinrich in “‘It is not Given to Women to Teach’: A *Lex* in Search of a *Ratio*” criticized Gerhard’s argumentation against women’s ordination as “very likely founded upon his own historical context, and—let us say it forthrightly—an androcentric viewpoint. Obviously, such arguments bears no persuasive power today.”<sup>8</sup> The list could be continued. The dogmatic enterprise continues. Hopefully, Gerhard in translation will now be an interlocutor in that dogmatic enterprise and a help for pastors in their teaching of the faith. Maybe a good way to start is with Gerhard’s volume on the law, which contains an extended exposition of the Ten Commandments, and the volume on the gospel.

In his volume *On the Law*, Gerhard argues for the distinction between moral law and political and ceremonial law. He then gives a detailed exposition of the Ten Commandments. Some of the applications are not our questions, as when he discusses in his chapter on the Fourth Commandment whether an illegitimate child must honor his/her father and mother. The question in what way the Third Commandment is part of the moral law shows a change in Lutheranism and foreshadows some of the issues that resurfaced in the nineteenth century in American Lutheranism. In the volume *On the Gospel and Repentance*, Gerhard first discusses what the gospel is in distinction from the law, concluding with this definition: “The Gospel is the second part of the heavenly teaching about man’s salvation and the more noble part. It is contradistinct from the Law and is unknown to mankind by nature. Rather, it comes to us from the secret bosom of the heavenly Father through His Son and has been proclaimed in the church at all times of the world. In it all the free forgiveness of sins, righteousness, and eternal life are offered and presented to those who truly believe in Christ the Mediator, to the salvation of mankind and to the glory of God.”<sup>9</sup> The second part of the volume is dedicated to repentance—the working of law and gospel in the individual. Maybe a thorough study of these two volumes could provide helpful clarification in the present debates on law and gospel.

## Walther

The recent edition of Walther’s works consists of volumes that have been newly translated and volumes that have been previously translated and are repackaged. Among the new translations are Walther’s evening lectures on law and gospel in a

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<sup>8</sup> William Weinrich, “‘It is not Given to Women to Teach’: A *Lex* in Search of a *Ratio*” (Fort Wayne, Ind.: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1993), 33. See also Johann Gerhard, *On the Ministry: Part 1*, trans. Richard J. Dinda, ed. Benjamin T. G. Mayes (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2011), 271.

<sup>9</sup> Johann Gerhard, *On the Gospel and On Repentance*, trans. Richard J. Dinda, ed. Benjamin T.G. Mayes and Heath R. Curtis (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2016), 140.

modernized translation<sup>10</sup> and *Church and Office*, formerly translated as *Church and Ministry*.<sup>11</sup> Both books have been extensively used in the Missouri Synod.

Walther's evening lectures on Law and Gospel have been retranslated, among other reasons, to do justice to the more conversational style which in W. H. T. Dau's translation becomes "a flowing, literary British style."<sup>12</sup> The new translation might thus enable the reader to freshly encounter this classic. It is not, however, without its shortcomings. On pages 184 and 204, there are annotations that state that Walther "specifically means a male member of the laity" and "specifically refers to a man" when the word "Laie" is translated. This annotation is somewhat misleading. In the nineteenth century, one could still use the masculine in the general sense, and when one looks up "Laie" in Grimm's *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, one finds the word used for male and female persons. Secondly, it is not Walther's intention to say that female Christians cannot absolve, as he states in Thesis IX:

Now that forgiveness of sin has been acquired as stated, not only does a pastor have a special commission to proclaim it, but also every Christian—male, female, adult or child—is commissioned to do this. Even a child's Absolution is just as certain as the Absolution of St. Peter—yes, even as the Absolution of Christ would be, were He again to stand visibly before people and say, "Your sins are forgiven."<sup>13</sup>

*Church and Office* has the distinction of being adopted as official position of the LCMS twice. The latter should be reason enough for every pastor to be familiar with it. Walther's *American-Lutheran Pastoral Theology* was available as a shortened translation and has been now fully translated and well edited.<sup>14</sup> Here we see how Walther appropriates the resources of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century German Lutheranism for the Lutheran church in nineteenth century North America. After an introduction, Walther deals with the call and entry into the ministry, then with the pastor and the means of grace: the sermon, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. Marriage and divorce and confirmation follow, then pastoral care, church discipline, the administration of a congregation, and the life of the preacher. Much of the material is still pertinent, but there are also issues where the cultural changes had an impact on pastoral care, as in regard to announcement for communion, a practice

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<sup>10</sup> C. F. W. Walther, *Law & Gospel: How to Read and Apply the Bible* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2010).

<sup>11</sup> C. F. W. Walther, *Church & Office*, ed. Matthew C. Harrison (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2012).

<sup>12</sup> Walther, *Law & Gospel*, xii.

<sup>13</sup> Walther, *Law & Gospel*, 187.

<sup>14</sup> C. F. W. Walther, *American-Lutheran Pastoral Theology*, trans. Christian C. Tiews, ed. David W. Loy (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2017).

that has all but disappeared, or the view of engagement, which for Walther is tantamount to marriage.

In *Church Fellowship* (2015),<sup>15</sup> Walther's essays on confessional subscription, the role of the Confessions for fellowship among Lutherans, and "Duties of an Evangelical Lutheran Synod, 1879," given at the first convention of the Iowa District in 1879 and running to a hundred pages, are collected. The essays are a side piece to *Church and Office*, spelling out the ecclesiology of Walther. They reward the reader with a careful exposition of the nature of confessional subscription and impress upon him the importance of doctrinal unity in a church body and for fellowship between church bodies.

*All Glory to God* (2016) is a collection of convention essays from 1873 till 1886 under the topic "The doctrine of the Lutheran church alone gives all glory to God, an irrefutable proof that its doctrine alone is true."<sup>16</sup> These essays are presented to pastors and laypeople and are therefore not overly technical, though theologically quite meaty. As the introduction to the volume states, Walther never wrote a textbook on dogmatics, but these essays are somewhat a substitute for it in what they cover. After treating the word of God, they essentially show the soteriological concentration of Walther's theology: they treat the origin of sin, death, hell and damnation, divine providence, the universal grace of God, reconciliation and redemption, justification, regeneration and sanctification, the means of grace, conversion, and predestination. The last two essays on prayer and earthly authorities are concerned with the Christian life.

Predestination take up almost two hundred pages in *All Glory to God*, but Concordia Publishing House gives us a separate volume containing Walther's writings connected with the predestinarian controversy in *Predestination* (2018).<sup>17</sup> Some of the theological controversies of the nineteenth century are still alive, like church and ministry, church fellowship, the nature of confessional subscription, and the doctrine of Scripture. But, for whatever reason, predestination or election is not one of them. Included in this volume of Walther's works are the minutes of the two general pastoral conferences of the Missouri Synod in 1880 in Chicago and in 1881 in Fort Wayne, the only occasion when all the pastors of the LCMS were invited since the issue was deemed so important and threatening to the unity of the LCMS. These minutes show the struggle for a correct understanding of FC SD XI. What was at stake was the pure gratuitousness of salvation, even if the Lutheran doctrine of election leads to a logically not quite satisfactory statement: the elect are saved by God alone, but the damned are damned because of what they did. Election is

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<sup>15</sup> C. F. W. Walther, *Church Fellowship* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2015).

<sup>16</sup> C. F. W. Walther, *All Glory to God* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2016), 1.

<sup>17</sup> C. F. W. Walther, *Predestination* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2018).

particular and the effective cause of salvation, but there is no corresponding reprobation that is the effective cause of damnation. Included in the volume are “The Controversy Concerning Predestination” and “The Doctrine Concerning Election,” directed to a wider audience to explain to laypeople what is at stake. A sermon on predestination on Eph 1:3–6 concludes the volume. Here Walther gives an example regarding how the doctrine is to be preached and to be used by Christians as comfort, admonishment, and warning.

Walther is renowned as a church leader, teacher, and polemicist. But he was also a pastor and preacher. The edition of his sermons on the gospel (*Gospel Sermons*, 2 vols., 2013) show this part of his work and give an example of the homiletical application of his orthodoxy—how he taught, comforted, and admonished his congregation. These sermons can still be read devotionally, and hopefully they still can be a help for a pastor who reads them in his sermon preparation.

Though there is more material in these republished and newly translated works than most people have time to read, the hope is that many will read *some* of it and that doing so will benefit them in their ministry. Learning from the Lutheran fathers does not mean simply repristinating them—which is not a possible option anyway—but to interact with them and learn from their insights (and from their mistakes!) as we address the theological tasks and challenges of the present. In so doing, we honor our fathers’ memories with a mind for the present work to which our Lord has called us.

## ***Luther's Works: A Monument for Centuries to Come***

**Lawrence R. Rast Jr.**

The Lutheran Church was not founded by Martin Luther, yet it bears his name due to the central role that he played in confessing Jesus Christ in the sixteenth century. The Lutheran Church rightly treasures his writings, yet countless other Christians have loved them ever since his time. At the turn of the millennium, *Life* magazine named Martin Luther the third most important person of the last thousand years. His writings continue to edify Christians to this day and are a monument of Christianity that will serve all Christians for centuries, should the Lord tarry.

The original fifty-four volumes of Luther's Works<sup>1</sup> covered only about one-third of the writings included in the German-Latin Weimar Edition (WA), of his writings, not even counting the fifteen volumes of the WA's *Deutsche Bibel* subsection.<sup>2</sup> In 1955, the LW general editors wrote that not everything Luther wrote was worth translating, and the LW series did not aim to translate everything. This was surely a good aim. The WA reproduces nearly every scrap of paper on which Luther scrawled, nearly every marginal note he scratched in a book. These may be valuable for researchers, but not for most readers. Yet in 2009, the time was right to release more Luther to America and the world, and Concordia Publishing House was well situated to undertake the work.

As Christopher Boyd Brown, general editor for the new volumes of LW, remarked in the prospectus for the expanded series of LW,

Concordia Publishing House has a distinguished history of publishing Luther's works. In addition to publishing the first thirty volumes of the original American Edition, Concordia also produced the "St. Louis Edition" of Luther's works, a conscientious revision of the eighteenth-century edition of Johann Georg Walch, presenting the whole corpus of Luther's works translated (as necessary) into German. This labor won the respect even of the German scholars engaged in preparing the Weimar edition, and its translations still

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<sup>1</sup> CPH abbreviates it "LW," but another convention is "AE" for "American Edition," since other editions of his works do in fact exist.

<sup>2</sup> Martin Luther, *D. Luthers Werke: Deutsche Bibel*, 12 vols. in 15 (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1906–1961), hereafter cited as WA DB.

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serve as a convenient reference for scholars of the Reformation. That tradition continues with Concordia's expansion of *Luther's Works* in English for the twenty-first century.<sup>3</sup>

The original fifty-four volumes of LW were published jointly by Concordia and Fortress Press (now Augsburg-Fortress, the denominational publisher of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America). "Jointly," however, meant that each publisher took responsibility for a different part of the series. CPH published LW 1–30, the Reformer's exegetical writings, from 1955–1976 under the general editorship of Jaroslav Pelikan. Fortress published LW 31–54, the non-exegetical theological writings, from 1957–1986 under the general editorship of Helmut T. Lehmann.

Sometime in 2004 or before, the leadership of CPH—at the time acting president Paul T. McCain, CFO Bruce Kientz, and editor Mark Sell—developed a plan to translate more Luther. Sell contacted Christopher Boyd Brown, asking him to draft a proposal concerning the writings that most needed to be translated. A year later, by constructing databases and after much research, Brown had the plan for twenty new volumes. CPH's board of directors approved the plan in 2006, promising to commit the significant financial resources that the project would require. CPH then sought a managing editor knowledgeable in Luther's German and Latin who could work alongside Brown to organize and train the large corps of translators and researchers for the project, helping to ensure the high quality requisite for the series. In 2006, Benjamin T. G. Mayes was called to CPH to undertake this work, initially as managing editor and then in the early 2010s as a general editor alongside Brown. The first new volume (LW 69) was published in 2009. Within a few years, CPH expanded the project from twenty volumes to twenty-eight to include Luther's *Church Postil* and *House Postil* (sermons for the Church Year).<sup>4</sup>

From the beginning of plans for the new series, CPH decided not to partner with Augsburg-Fortress. The ELCA and their publishing house have embraced a form of Christianity that in significant ways is contrary to the historic Christian faith as found in the Holy Scriptures and confessed by the Lutheran Confessions. An example is the ELCA's embrace of gender-neutral language for human beings and even for God. As a result, CPH did not see joint work with Augsburg-Fortress as a possibility. This has not, however, made the new series a project of the Missouri Synod alone. Translators and researchers have come from the ELCA, NALC, WELS,

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<sup>3</sup> "Prospectus: Luther's Works: American Edition, New Series" (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2007), 2.

<sup>4</sup> Currently the entire *Church Postil* has been released as LW 75–79. A popular, affordable edition is also available: *A Year in the Gospels with Martin Luther*, 2 vols. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2018).

ELS, and other non-Lutheran churches. Some of the contributors, indeed, make no Christian confession. But their scholarly abilities under the editorial principles of the new series enable a wide range of individuals to contribute.

Since the new volumes began to appear in 2009, they have been cited with ever-increasing frequency in every significant scholarly work on the Reformation and on the life and thought of Luther. The series editors frequently address national and international seminars and scholarly gatherings. The volumes have been of particular aid to Lutheran pastors and laity, who have especially appreciated expanded Luther's sermons and devotional writings.

### Features of the New Series

The volumes of the new series undergo a thorough process of translation and editing. First, potential translators are assessed to see what kinds of Luther texts they are most suitable to translate. It often happens that excellent scholars are not good translators, and vice versa. Next, translators prepare their translation using the biggest and best dictionaries and grammars available. The series editors then review the translation against the original German and Latin. Annotations and introductions are then researched and written, usually by the series editors.

Several features of the new volumes contribute to their excellent quality. A scholarly translation such as this informs readers not just of the historical context of the document but also of the history of the transmission of the document from Luther to us. Brackets, superscripts, and footnotes remind the reader that these are not the exact words that Luther wrote but the translators' and editors' best possible translation into modern idiom. The scholarly features thus help readers to use rightly the text they are reading. The introductions and footnotes are superior in every way to those in the older, original volumes. This is the finest "Luther in English" ever produced.

Researchers will find some design features helpful. At the top of each page, there are cross-references to the Weimar edition (Luther in the original German and Latin), making it easy to check translation decisions. At the end of each introduction, the editors give a full bibliography of the first printing of the document and its Aland reference number.<sup>5</sup> The little details are where the quality shines forth. Many a pastor has had a volume of LW open on his desk and, when needed, could not remember what volume it was. Here, every LW page gives the volume number at the top just after the header "LUTHER'S WORKS." Footnotes explain Luther's idiomatic sayings, possible errors in the WA (with consultation of earlier printings and original documents), obscure grammar, historical context, and biography

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<sup>5</sup> Kurt Aland, ed., *Hilfsbuch zum Lutherstudium*, 4th ed. (Biebefeld: Luther-Verlag, 1996).

of persons mentioned. In summary, an immense amount of scholarly activity has been poured into each volume.

The most important part is the translation of Luther's words—the content. Can heterodox doctrines or arguments among English-speaking Lutherans be traced to poor translations of Luther? Helmar Junghans notes that mistranslations of the 1518 Heidelberg Theses in LW 31 have led scholars who do not consult the Latin original to arrive at false conclusions: "False translations contribute to the misunderstandings of Luther's writings and can even lead to completely unnecessary quarrels."<sup>6</sup> So accuracy is paramount in the new volumes, but this does not lead to wooden, nonsensical interpretations.

The content focuses on texts published and reprinted in the sixteenth century. Dr. Brown looked especially for texts that have loomed large in German research but had not been translated. The goal has been not to retranslate the original volumes but to add new translations of untranslated words.<sup>7</sup>

The original series was light on Luther's sermons and disputations. Far more of these exist in German and Latin, so the time is ripe for making more of this material available. Most of the volumes released since 2009 consist of Luther's sermons, but beginning in 2020, two full volumes of his disputations will appear, including Luther's famous "Antinomian Disputations."

The first fifty-four volumes reflected the interests of scholars in isolating Luther's voice from the voices of his colleagues and also in positing sharp distinctions between Luther and all his colleagues. Now that interest is more balanced with the insight that Luther operated as the leader of a reform team centered in Wittenberg and that he valued the contributions that others made in editing and publishing his works. The new series therefore includes works approved by Luther, but not edited by him, as being his own, such as Casper Cruciger's 1543/44 edition of the summer half of the *Church Postil* (LW 77–79). At the same time, the editors have diligently noted the editorial history of each document and have indicated where a sixteenth century editor may have overstepped his authority.

In the first fifty-four volumes, historians' interest was in the young Luther and the beginning of the Reformation. Now that interest is balanced with interest in the mature Luther. The new volumes thus give more attention to Luther's mature theology and writings. As an example, the *Christmas Postil* in LW 52 gave the earliest

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<sup>6</sup> Helmar Junghans, "The History, Use and Significance of the Weimar Luther Edition," *Lutheran Quarterly* 17 (2003): 275. See also Eric G. Phillips, "Luther's Heidelberg Disputation Revisited in Light of the Philosophical Proofs," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 82 (2018): 235–245.

<sup>7</sup> A contrast to this method is seen in *The Annotated Luther* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2015), which updates the language of the old LW volumes and adds new notes and introductions.



form of the sermons that would later be included in the *Church Postil*. In the new series (LW 75–76), on the other hand, we have the last edition of Luther's life, in which the old Luther toned down his anti-establishment rhetoric against "the universities" and "the clergy" and "priests," since by 1540 the church had been reformed. The anti-establishment rhetoric was no longer appropriate unless specified against "the Pope's" universities and clergy.

In the mid-twentieth century, the development of Luther's thought was of major scholarly interest, but now that has been balanced by interest in how Luther's ideas were received by his contemporaries and successors. Therefore, the plan for new volumes favors documents that were widely read in the sixteenth century, "recognizing, for example, that a 1520 German layman had not necessarily come to know Luther primarily through the early works that loom largest in modern Reformation courses."<sup>8</sup> The new volumes have thus helped us to see Luther in the context of his Wittenberg friends and coworkers rather than as a lone hero.

In summary, many significant features give the new LW the greatest usefulness not only for scholars but also for Lutheran pastors and laypeople. His texts are not just translated but are provided with explanations that detail and fully comment but do not grow too long. They help us understand Luther and his situation. They aid Christian faith and life today, since Luther mainly exposit Scripture, which is always relevant for true Christians. His works are not a complete Bible commentary, but for what he covers, he provides insights more rich and succinct than modern commentaries. Luther's exposition of Scripture includes applications, such as consolation, admonition, and rebuke. Thus Luther provides pastoral care, not just information. Most of the volumes published up to 2019 consist of sermons. This provides an excellent tool to preachers, since they now have better access to Luther's sermons than ever before. Now they have the ability to learn not just Luther's exegesis but also his homiletics and thereby to add to their own homiletical abilities.<sup>9</sup>

### The Treasures in Each Volume

56. *Sermons III* (forthcoming, 2019). With a host of translators, this will give us Luther's best sermons from the early 1520s, when the marriage of priests presented new problems and led to deep thinking on the nature of marriage and divorce, all the way until 1531, when evangelical fears of military disaster after the Diet of Augsburg turned to joy at God's protection.

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<sup>8</sup> Brown, "Prospectus," 2.

<sup>9</sup> On Luther's homiletics, see Gerhard Ebeling, "How Luther Preached," trans. Benjamin T. G. Mayes, *Concordia Pulpit Resources* 28, no. 3 (May 27–August 26, 2018): 9–14.

57. *Sermons IV* (2016), multiple translators. Several sermons invite scholarly attention and give aid to churchly life. “How Law and Gospel are to be Thoroughly Distinguished” (January 1, 1532) on Galatians 3:23–29 was cited often by C. F. W. Walther in his *Law and Gospel*. The editor shows that the sermon was expanded significantly after Luther’s death, and this is the form Walther knew. Luther’s use of Aristotelian analytical terms was supposed to clarify what Law and Gospel are but may actually have confused his hearers. The ordination sermon for October 20, 1535, is significant, too, since it is Luther’s assessment of how men are put into the ministry. The editor’s preface explains the context and translates a Wittenberg ordination certificate and other historical documents. Many other treasures wait here to be found.

58. *Sermons V* (2010), multiple translators. These are selected sermons from Luther’s last years. Here he strives to secure the independence of the church and its discipline from interference by the princes; oversees the spread of the Reformation to new German territories; catechizes the younger, rising generation; and gives his last sermons right before his death. These sermons show his pastoral and polemical sides. Toward the Wittenberg congregation, Luther consoled consciences and rebuked false faith and manifest sins. Here, pastoral care involved polemics. Warning his hearers not to revert to Roman Catholicism, Luther consistently admonished people to hold onto the Gospel and pure teaching of God’s Word that had been set forth in the previous decades. Some of Luther’s last sermons against the Jews are here, which would be used for horrible purposes some four centuries later.<sup>10</sup> The editor’s introduction does not absolve Luther but, by providing his historical and theological context, helps readers to understand and distinguish between Luther’s views and those of the National Socialists.

To this reviewer, one of the most surprising features of this volume is Luther’s admonitions. Sometimes after the sermon was finished, Luther would address problems in the congregation and town. In these, he denounced university jurists who were retrieving and applying rules of Roman Catholic canon law to marriage, and he rebuked the people of Wittenberg for immorality and greed. These admonitions show us, first, Luther’s sense of his own authority as a preacher of God’s Word. There is absolutely no timidity here, and by inaccurate modern definitions, Luther could be seen as the opposite of “pastoral.” Second, Luther took marriage seriously and wanted it to be regulated according to God’s Word, not left to the lawyers and government to do with as they pleased. Third, Luther took good works very seriously and expected real fruits of repentance and faith.

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<sup>10</sup> LW 58:458–459.

Besides Luther's very strong assertions of his own pastoral authority, he also at times states that pastoral duties are held by pastors in the name of all Christians and that pastors act in the stead of all Christians.<sup>11</sup> Luther continues to challenge modern views on the ministry.

59–60. *Prefaces I–II* (2011–2012), multiple translators and editors. These volumes, more than perhaps any others, have garnered the praises of scholars. These are the prefaces that Luther wrote for the books of other people and sometimes for his own publications, such as pre-Reformation documents that he translated as witnesses of corruption or of the presentation of the truth. Many scholars among the top Reformation scholars in the English-speaking world either translated documents or provided introductions and notes. Andrew Pettegree, who used these prefaces as a major source for interpreting Luther's significance in the book *Brand Luther*, calls these volumes “magnificent and brilliantly conceived.”<sup>12</sup>

Luther is often thought of as a writer, teacher, and preacher, and one involved in church-political discussions. These volumes show us a completely different side of Luther: Luther the publicist and marketer, using his prefaces and personal reputation to advance the Reformation through the writings of other people. We see Luther not as a lone reformer but at the center of the reformation movement, aiding and aided by the writings of many other people. The prefaces are different from Luther's other writings. These are not doctrinal treatises, nor are they extended exegesis. Some of them are simply church-political commentary. But their benefits are obvious to anyone who reads them:

- Magazine-like articles on topics still of importance today, such as marriage, Islam, congregational leadership, family life, and leading young people to read Scripture (which are informative and edifying);
- Beautiful prose translated into beautiful, accurate English, as Luther strove to write at the highest levels of rhetorical brilliance; and
- Laugh-out-loud sarcasm and parody.

Several prefaces stand out. Prefaces addressing Islam and the invasion of Europe by the Turks continue to interest us due to our own challenges with worldwide Islam.<sup>13</sup> The preface to Augustine's *On the Spirit and the Letter* shows that Luther supported Augustine's doctrine of sin, grace, and justification without hesitation throughout his life, at least publicly.<sup>14</sup> His 1537 publication of the so-called “Donation of Constantine” with a preface, sarcastic glosses, and a lengthy

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<sup>11</sup> LW 58:74.

<sup>12</sup> Review of LW 59–60, in *Church History and Religious Culture* 94 (2014): 119–121, here at 119; Andrew Pettegree, *Brand Luther: 1517, Printing, and the Making of the Reformation* (New York: Penguin, 2015).

<sup>13</sup> LW 60:1–6, 251–266, 286–294.

<sup>14</sup> LW 60:35–44.

afterword constitutes some of the most raucous, entertaining Luther one will ever find, against the “papist abomination.”<sup>15</sup>

67. *Annotations on Matthew 1–18* (2015), translated by Jon Bruss. When Jerome Weller was appointed as a preacher at the castle church in Wittenberg, his first duty was to preach through Matthew at midweek services. He was terrified and did not know what to do, so Luther helped out his former student by providing comments, or “annotations,” on Matthew 1–18. Here he not only explained the meaning but also gave tips on how to preach it. These annotations are his most extensive engagement with a synoptic Gospel. Here Luther gives us his rhetoric of preaching and presents the Lord Jesus as a rhetor of Law and Gospel. Weller and his friends happily took Luther’s notes and published them in 1538 without his consent, to our own great benefit. The last part of this volume includes the beginning of Luther’s sermon series on Matthew 18–24.<sup>16</sup> This volume contains the sermons on Matthew 18; the next volume contains the rest.

68. *Sermons on Matthew 19–24* (2014), translated by Kevin Walker. Besides giving us his exegesis of these chapters of Matthew, these sermons are almost like Luther’s diary for the period ca. 1537–1540. Whatever he was thinking about at the time found its way into the sermons, whether it was the actions of the pope and king of France, public immorality in Wittenberg, German financial products (usury), the oft-delayed council of Mantua (which finally met in Trent), the Turks, plagues, or Charles V’s plans for a religious colloquy—Luther found a way to apply Scripture to the events that were on everyone’s minds. Extended topics here include marriage and divorce; binary, complementary creation and roles of men and women; government; and the end times.

Luther’s sermons as presented here spoke to people in their time and place, but there is also much for us to learn from them here and now. Besides the explication of Matthew’s Gospel, the sermons illustrate how Law and Gospel should be preached. Not only should the Law be preached as accusation, it should also give positive admonition to good works and should be concrete and specific. Also, the Gospel should not only speak of God’s love and Christ’s self-sacrifice on the cross but should also apply it “for you.”

69. *Sermons on John 17–20* (2009), translated by Erwin W. Koehlinger and others. The original LW series intended to include Luther’s sermons on John 17 but had to omit them for the sake of space. This fact by itself points out the incompleteness of the original series. Here, in the first volume that the new Luther

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<sup>15</sup> LW 60:158–184.

<sup>16</sup> Translated by Kevin Walker.

team released, Erwin Koehlinger's previously prepared translation of these sermons was obtained, edited, and published.

Luther loved the Lord's "high priestly prayer" in John 17. In these sermons (1528–29), he preached on prayer, the person of Christ, and the meaning of the Gospel. Of historical note, there are references to the "catechism," which was in preparation at the time, and the "Turks," whose military power threatened Europe. The sermons on John 18–20 are Luther's most extensive exposition of the Lord's passion.

Finally, eleven sermons or outlines from 1522 to 1540 are included here, giving us every extant Luther sermon on John 20:19–31, the Lord's appearance to the disciples on Easter evening and his authorization for them to forgive or bind sins. This gives a marvelous diachronic view of Luther's understanding of Absolution, the Office of the Keys, and Office of the Ministry. Some themes remain constant from 1522–1540, while others change back and forth. Throughout these sermons, Luther refers to the forgiveness of sins as a possession of the Church that it usually exercises publicly by called ministers (pastors) but which may in emergencies be exercised by any layman. One interesting 1529 sermon, preached for Easter Tuesday morning,<sup>17</sup> sets forth Luther's view that one can have the Holy Spirit in two ways: for his person and for his office. The sermon was recorded in shorthand notes and then posthumously expanded and published. The LW editors printed words in boldface when they were based on the original shorthand notes. This lets readers see what material was original to Luther and what material was being set forth under his name by a later editor.

LW 69:374–401 also gives us a clear example of how Luther's preaching went from his sermon outline to preaching to a smoothed-out, edited, published sermon. The outline notes are just over a page long. Luther had underlined some words in red, which gave him his main talking points. Following this, there are two versions on facing pages. The left side is a translation of shorthand notes, which is quite close to the very words that Luther uttered from the pulpit on April 16, 1531. The right side is the sermon as it was published in 1544. It is about twenty percent longer than what Luther preached.

72–73. *Disputations* (in preparation), multiple translators. The original LW included only a few of Luther's disputations. Here nearly all the rest will be provided with a translation of the theses and reconstruction of the disputations themselves based on all the extant protocols. In the late disputations, Luther deals with Law and Gospel (the Antinomian controversy), Christology, the Trinity, the Church, resistance to persecution of the Gospel, and many other topics. Here Luther is a

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<sup>17</sup> LW 69:349–372.

systematic theologian who uses and transforms medieval and patristic traditions to defend biblical truth. The volumes will surely be monumental.

75–76. *Church Postil I–II* (2013), translated by James L. Langebartels. Sermons are included from Advent 1 to the end of Lent. Until 2016, the only complete edition of Luther’s *Church Postil* (his first major collection of sermons for the church year) was by John Nicholas Lenker (1858–1929), published 1904–1909. That edition had problems. The translation was stilted, even by early twentieth century standards. It was often inaccurate. It presented the *Church Postil* in a form that Luther did not authorize, with early versions of the sermons being featured, even though these were superseded by updates and replacements from 1540–1543.<sup>18</sup> In the early versions of the sermons, Luther often sounded like an opponent of the established church, which at that time he certainly was. But the mature Luther lived in an established evangelical church. So in his 1540 revisions of Part I (LW 75–76), he changed several disestablishmentarian expressions usually by specifying that the “pope’s” priests, clergy, and universities were being criticized—not good, reformed ones.

LW 75–79 all contain charts showing where each sermon is located in German editions, the Lenker English version and other English translations, and also indicating where the manuscript notes or first printings are located in the WA or Erlangen edition. This is an excellent feature.

The first two volumes of the *Postil* (LW 75–76) were originally known as the *Winter Postil*, because these sermons covered the winter half of the church year. This is the earliest part of the *Church Postil*. Here Luther uses allegory frequently, despite his supposed rejection of it.<sup>19</sup> Here he also focuses on the basics, especially faith and love.

77. *Church Postil III* (2014), translated by James L. Langebartels. Sermons are included from Easter to Pentecost Tuesday. This volume also has Luther’s preface to the 1544 *Summer Postil*, edited by Caspar Cruciger Sr., which is an important text all on its own. Here Luther, toward the end of his life, looks back and assesses what had changed since the beginning of the Reformation and what God had given His German-speaking people: the knowledge of the chief parts of the catechism; postils; Georg Major’s *Lives of the Fathers* (an evangelical edition of the legends of the saints); prayer books and psalters; and most of all, the German Bible. He ends with an admonition to pastors, that they should fulfill their ministry, and that the people should heed their preaching. Thus, the Reformation was not just about recovering the Bible but was also about edifying the people and restoring the pastoral ministry and church life to their proper focus and function.

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<sup>18</sup> This comes from nineteenth- and twentieth-century Luther scholars’ fascination with the young Luther and the first few years of the Reformation.

<sup>19</sup> LW 76:315, 340 in particular gives Luther’s guidance on using allegory.

This volume begins the *Summer Postil*, edited by Caspar Cruciger and published after Christmas 1543.<sup>20</sup> Luther did not edit these sermons, but he authorized the editing. Robert Kolb explains, “Complaints that such works give you more Cruciger than Luther miss the points that Luther found his colleague’s rendering of his message just fine—an improvement on what he had probably said—and that Luther found the only value in publishing his sermons and lectures lay in the preparation of the Wittenberg message, not in his own words.”<sup>21</sup>

All previous editions of the *Church Postil* simply presented the sermons without indicating when they had first been preached by Luther and how they were changed in the editing process. Here, the first footnote of every sermon gives a full textual history for the sermon:

- When first preached.
- Where the stenographic notes are located.
- Where and when it was published previous to the *Church Postil* (and its location in the WA, if applicable).
- A general assessment of how extensively the sixteenth-century editor adapted it for the *Postil*.

This content should prove helpful to researchers for many years to come.

78. *Church Postil IV* (2015), translated by James L. Langebartels. This volume contains sermons from Trinity Sunday to the Tenth Sunday after Trinity. Translated for the first time is the appendix: “Several Beautiful Sermons on 1 John, on Love” (1532/1533). Because these sermons were in print when Cruciger prepared the *Summer Postil*, he simply referred to them instead of printing a sermon on 1 John 4:16–21 for Trinity 1.

79. *Church Postil V* (2016), translated by James L. Langebartels. This volume contains sermons from Trinity 11 to Trinity 27. Appendices include Luther’s prefaces to earlier editions of the *Summer Postil* and *Festival Postil*, as well as “Ephesians 6, on the Christian’s Armor and Weapons” (1531/1533). Here again, a popular sermon of Luther was in print, so Cruciger simply referred to that instead of producing a sermon on Ephesians 6:10–17 for Trinity 21. Then for centuries, printings of the *Church Postil* simply lacked this sermon. But now this sermon is included, so that the *Church Postil* is finally complete.

Companion Volume, *Sixteenth-Century Biographies of Martin Luther* (2018), multiple translators. This is editor Christopher Brown’s magnificent work, bringing

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<sup>20</sup> The date listed by the printer was 1544.

<sup>21</sup> Robert Kolb, review of Luther’s Works, vols. 68 and 77, *Concordia Journal* 42, no. 1 (Winter 2016): 90.

together biographies of Luther written by people who knew him. Johann Walter's sixty-four-stanza ballad about Luther is splendidly translated into English verse by Matthew Carver.<sup>22</sup> Most of the volume is Kevin Walker's translation of Mathesius's biographical sermons on Luther's life. Brown's footnotes are masterful summations of hours of historical research into the old Latin and German documents and the history of scholarship from the sixteenth century to the present.

What does the future hold? As mentioned above, two volumes of Luther's late disputations are being prepared. Another volume will include many writings of theology and polemics. Next, we will have two volumes of Luther's *Labors on the Psalms*, his second set of lectures on the Psalms from 1519 to 1521. Two volumes of various early works will be added, as well as *Selected Psalms IV* with Luther's commentary on the *Psalms of Degrees* (Pss 120–134) from 1532–1533. Two volumes covering the Pentateuch will give us Luther's sermons on Exodus (1524–1527), commentaries on Isaiah 9 and 53 (1544), and his famous "Muster-Sermon against the Turks" (1529). One volume of letters will focus on Luther's counsels given in church-political and spiritual care settings. Finally, three volumes will present the first full English translation of the original *House Postil*, edited by Veit Dietrich in 1544.

Luther's Works: American Edition thus continues to grow, with the new volumes matching and often surpassing the old volumes in terms of translation accuracy and scholarly annotation. These volumes have already helped us better to understand Luther, the Reformation, ourselves, and even God's Word. It is our own hope and prayer that God will continue to bless CPH and the whole Luther team as they continue to bless the Church through these books.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Johann Walter, "A New Spiritual Song About the Blessed, Precious, and Highly Gifted Man, Dr. Martin Luther, the Prophet and Apostle of Germany (1564)," trans. Matthew Carver, *Sixteenth-Century Biographies of Martin Luther*, ed. Christopher Boyd Brown (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2018), 81–100.

<sup>23</sup> I thank the editors of LW and CPH for their helpful conversations, which provided many of the details for this review article.



# **The Early Christian Appropriation of Old Testament Scripture: The Canonical Reading of Scripture in 1 Clement**

**James G. Bushur**

## **I. Habitats Form Habits**

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”<sup>1</sup> With these words, a twentieth-century scholar named Durant offers an apt summary of Aristotle’s moral philosophy. As a teacher, Aristotle knows that the task of the catechist is not merely the communication of knowledge. Rather, the teacher’s task is also to turn truth into habit—habits that order the mind, structure life, even form the body itself. Such habits are not simply a physical repetition of conduct; rather, habits are formed when wisdom begins to shape personal identity. Habits are formed when wisdom and truth are no longer simply what we know but become who we are. “We are what we repeatedly do.”

Yet, such habits are notoriously difficult to cultivate. Habits demand more than the understanding mind; they demand zealous hearts, virtuous souls, and disciplined bodies. Habits are abstract ideas taking form in the flesh; they consist in the movement of single-dimensional thoughts into three-dimensional space. Thus, for the ancients, perhaps the most important element for such moral training is the three-dimensional setting in which we are placed. Habits are determined by habitats; habitats direct our movements, influence our sensory experience, inspire our desires, and determine the ends toward which we stretch out. In short, habitats turn life into habits and habits into identity. The training of soldiers demands obstacle courses and diverse fields of engagement where they learn to move, fight, adapt, and overcome. Athletes are shaped by weight rooms, stadiums, and gymnasiums. For Johann Sebastian Bach, the organ was not merely an instrument but also a dwelling place, a three-dimensional setting that gave form and texture to his identity. It is no different for pastors, theologians, and all those engaged in the reading of Scripture.

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<sup>1</sup> Will Durant, *The Story of Philosophy: The Lives and Opinions of the World’s Greater Philosophers* (Garden City, NY: Garden City Publishing Co., 1927), 87.

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The early Christian reading of the Scriptures has generally suffered at the hands of the modern academy, because scholars tend to focus on the question “*How or in what manner* did ancient Christians read the Old Testament?” With this question, scholars seek to analyze exegesis scientifically according to sociological and psychological processes. The academy tends to picture the exegete as a very active reader who begins with certain philosophical biases and then employs literal and figurative methods to extract his own meaning from passive texts. From this perspective, the true genre of exegesis is thought to be the commentary generated by single authors who are shaped by certain psychosocial biases. Thus, the modern examination of patristic exegesis has almost wholly focused on the genre of the ancient commentary, which originated in Hippolytus, Origen, and other third- and fourth-century writers.<sup>2</sup>

However, ancient Christian commentaries do not share a common nature or purpose with modern commentaries. The most profound difference is the setting for exegesis. In our contemporary age, the exegetical task is almost completely severed from the Christian sanctuary. As a consequence, exegesis has gradually ceased to be a spiritual act rooted in Christian *eusebeia*, that is, the life of prayer, contemplation, and eucharistic communion. Rather than the question “*How* did early Christians read the Old Testament?” I will argue that more fundamental is the question “*Where* did early Christians read the Old Testament?” If the early Christian reading of Scripture is to be understood, then it must be recognized that the true setting for patristic exegesis is the eucharistic assembly, and its true genre is the sermon. Already in Paul’s First Letter to Timothy, the ecclesial sanctuary is the setting for his instructions. “I desire then that in every place men should pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or quarreling” (1 Tim 2:8).<sup>3</sup> This sacred setting gives form to Timothy’s pastoral identity, namely, “to attend to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching, to teaching” (1 Tim 4:13). Within the sanctuary, the Scriptures are not passive; rather, they live and move within an intensely personal fellowship, subsisting within the direct, reciprocal discourse between God and his people.

For early Christians, the reading of the Scriptures was, above all else, a public, liturgical, and ecclesial event. “And on the day called Sunday,” writes Justin Martyr,

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Manlio Simonetti, *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1994), 26–31, 39–50. Simonetti is representative of the strong bias toward commentaries as the genre of exegesis. He writes, “With Hippolytus, catholic exegesis, restricted so far to controversial, catechetical or doctrinal purposes, at last frees itself from these fetters and becomes an independent literary genre, with works devoted explicitly to the interpretation, if not yet of an entire book of the Bible, at least to fairly extensive passages, as the Gnostic Heracleon had already done with the Gospel of John” (27).

<sup>3</sup> Scripture translations are my own.

“all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits.”<sup>4</sup> In the same way that water is the constitutive setting for fish, so the eucharistic gathering of the baptized conditions the Christian reading of the Old Testament, turning faith into habits, and habits into personal identity. In this study, I will explore the habits of early Christian exegesis as they formed within the habitat of the eucharistic gathering.

## II. From Scroll to Codex: Old Testament Scripture in Christian Sanctuaries

The early Christian engagement with the Old Testament has been the subject of countless studies and scholarly examinations. The detailed consideration of this scholarship is beyond the scope of this paper. These studies have certainly thrown light on the extensive use, quotation, and allusion to Old Testament texts by early Christians; they have also focused attention on the diverse ways early Christian readers discovered meaning—both theological and moral—in these ancient texts. What is largely neglected in these studies, however, is the significance of the liturgical, eucharistic gathering of the church as the fundamental setting for patristic exegesis. This study will demonstrate that the most significant factor giving form to early Christian exegesis was the transition of the Old Testament out of the synagogue into the church’s eucharistic sanctuary.

The conventional theory concerning the development of the Christian canon assumed that Old Testament books simply were received as inspired and New Testament books were added later. In other words, Old Testament books were the foundation of canonical Scripture, while New Testament books gradually achieved the elevated status of the ancient Torah and prophetic writings. This theory, however, is becoming less convincing. One of the decisive factors against this theory is the curious early Christian practice of reproducing Old Testament scrolls in codex form. In the ancient world, the scroll was the traditional form of a proper book; it was the proper form for the Greek classics from which students would learn to read and to practice their rhetorical skills in oral performance. It was also the proper form of the Torah and the Prophets as read in Jewish synagogues. The codex, namely papyrus or parchment pages bound in the center like a modern book, was a novelty used for taking personal notes at a lecture or recording business transactions. The process by which the codex achieved the status of a book has been studied by C. H.

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<sup>4</sup> Justin Martyr, *Apologia* I.67, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: The Writings of the Fathers Down to AD 325*, 10 vols., ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), 1:186.

Roberts and T. C. Skeat.<sup>5</sup> Their thorough examination shows that the Greco-Roman world did not accept the codex as proper literature in any sense until the beginning of the third century. In addition, the codex did not gain comparable status to the scroll until the beginning of the fourth century.<sup>6</sup>

In spite of this cultural preference for the scroll, Christians, at least as early as the second century and perhaps as early as the first, preferred the codex as the form of their Scriptures, both old and new. The conclusion of Roberts and Skeat emphasizes this surprising disjunction between Christianity and its surrounding culture. They write,

The conclusion remains the same, namely that when the Christian Bible first emerges into history the books of which it was composed are always written on papyrus and are always in codex form. There could not be a greater contrast in format with the non-Christian book of the second century, a contrast all the more remarkable when we recall that Egypt, where all these early Christian texts were found, was the country where the papyrus roll originated and where the status of the roll as the only acceptable format for literature was guaranteed by Alexandria with its dominating position in the world of books.<sup>7</sup>

This surprising disjunction between early Christians and the Greco-Roman world compelled Roberts and Skeat to consider its causes.<sup>8</sup> They examined several social and practical issues that scholars typically argue, including financial, pragmatic, and utilitarian factors. After demonstrating the inadequacy of all these explanations, Roberts and Skeat concluded as follows:

In contrast to the slow and piecemeal process by which the codex ousted the roll in secular literature, the Christian adoption of the codex seems to have been instant and universal. This is all the more striking because we would have expected the earliest Christians, whether Jew or Gentile, to be strongly prejudiced in favour of the roll by upbringing, education and environment. The motivation for their adoption of the codex must therefore have been something overwhelmingly powerful, and certainly none of the reasons considered above appears capable of producing such an effect.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> C. H. Roberts and T. C. Skeat, *The Birth of the Codex* (London: The British Academy, 1987), 37.

<sup>6</sup> Roberts and Skeat, *Birth of the Codex*, 37.

<sup>7</sup> Roberts and Skeat, *Birth of the Codex*, 42.

<sup>8</sup> The reasons for the early Christian preference for the codex remains a significant debate among scholars. Cf. Larry Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 61–83. In this essay, I am not claiming to offer a satisfactory explanation for the Christian preference for the codex but simply want to suggest that the liturgical setting has been neglected in this discussion and needs due consideration.

<sup>9</sup> Roberts and Skeat, *Birth of the Codex*, 53.

Frances Young recognizes the significance of Roberts's research for patristic exegesis. Young argues that the early Christian reproduction of the Old Testament in codex form represents more than merely new pragmatic or utilitarian interests on the part of Christians. Rather, it is evidence of a profound cultural battle between Christianity and Judaism that consisted in a deeply personal and spiritual conflict of identity. Young argues that the reproduction of the Old Testament in codex form suggests "that Christian-authored books had a certain priority—the very opposite of the usual view of canon-formation."<sup>10</sup> Young goes on to discuss the implications of this for the Old Testament.

The use of the codex has dramatic implications for the reception and appropriation of the Jewish books. They were physically "taken over"—not just re-read but re-formed. In the act of appropriation, they were subordinated, demoted, long before they were accorded the title "Old Testament." They had been, as it were, wrested away from their original community, and another community was taking charge of this literary heritage. These books were informing a new culture for a new community which received them differently, and according them a different kind of status.<sup>11</sup>

Young argues that in the apostolic church, "It was not scrolls and reading which had primacy," but "the living and abiding voice of witness."<sup>12</sup> The written texts of the Torah and Prophets were no longer ends in themselves; the living, apostolic testimony took precedence. Like John the Baptist in John's Gospel, the Old Testament was relegated to the status of witness; and the codex is the natural form for written testimonies. Young concludes, "We are witnessing, it seems, not the gradual elevation of recent Christian books to the sacred status of the Jewish scriptures, but rather the relativising of those ancient scriptures. . . . They have become secondary to the Gospel of Christ."<sup>13</sup>

Young's argument is certainly thoughtful and provocative. Even if we accept her proposal that in early Christian assemblies, the Old Testament took the form of written testimony subordinate to apostolic preaching, there are questions that remain unanswered. Not only the Old Testament but also the apostolic writings of the New Testament were published in codex form. If the ultimate and most fundamental revelation were identified with the apostolic preaching, why were the original apostolic texts not published in a proper scroll and preserved in their pristine condition for the sake of posterity? If the codex is the form of written

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<sup>10</sup> Frances M. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997), 14–15.

<sup>11</sup> Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, 14–15.

<sup>12</sup> Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, 15.

<sup>13</sup> Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, 15.

testimony, then it appears that both the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures were accorded equal status as witnesses to something beyond themselves. But witnesses to what precisely?

Already in 1945, Peter Katz offered a suggestion that has not been given due consideration. In a brief article, Katz suggested that the Christian introduction of papyrus codices “may have been a fresh instance of the well-known tendency of the early Church to differentiate itself sharply from Judaism.”<sup>14</sup> Katz understood this differentiation to be more profound and pervasive than merely a preference for the living voice of apostolic tradition; rather, it was a disjunction intimately related to the new three-dimensional setting in which the Old Testament was read and heard by early Christians. He wrote this about the new setting for the reading of the Old Testament:

The grand result of this fresh attitude was the transformed appearance of the rooms of worship. Their front centre was no longer the rolls with their concomitant apparatus, but the sacramental table which indicated the presence of the Lord of the Eucharist and, at the same time, represented the whole spiritual and social life of the congregation, which fed upon the continual mysterious administration of His body and blood, the ever fresh feeding of the multitude. No wonder that the *cistae* and arks, the veils and rolls had to give way.<sup>15</sup>

In synagogues, the Torah and prophetic scrolls occupied a prominent place in liturgical practice. As Katz noted, these scrolls were placed behind veils reminiscent of the holy of holies and later in elaborate containers resembling the ark of the covenant. The scrolls were more than sources of divine wisdom; they were sacred objects to be venerated and preserved as the source of holiness in Jewish communities.

Thus, the Christianization of Jewish synagogues was not benign or gentle, a mere change in utilitarian purpose; rather, the Christian appropriation of Jewish synagogues consisted in a radical transformation of liturgical space. In Christian assemblies, the body and blood of Jesus occupied the altar as the true holy of holies and the genealogical root of Christian identity. Old Testament scrolls had to find a new place in the sanctuary. Like concentric waves spreading from the center when a rock breaks the surface of a pond, so the body and blood of Jesus reverberated throughout the sanctuary and reordered the whole life of early Christian communities. It altered social relations between husbands and wives, masters and

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<sup>14</sup> Peter Katz, “The Early Christians’ Use of Codices Instead of Rolls,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 46 (1945): 63.

<sup>15</sup> Katz, “Early Christians’ Use of Codices,” 64.

slaves, rich and poor. It stimulated the structure of episcopal, pastoral, and diaconal ministries. It inspired forms of spirituality—prayer, asceticism, liturgies, hymns, iconography, and martyrs. Finally, it most certainly affected the way the Old Testament was read, heard, and appropriated as Christian Scripture.

Katz's suggestion fits well with the New Testament and helps illuminate the deeply personal and genealogical conflict between early Christians and their Jewish context. Within the Jewish community, the Old Testament was a scroll, that is, a direct and linear narrative intended to be read from beginning to end. As Young points out, this linear movement is characteristic of both the scroll and oral performance.<sup>16</sup> In both cases, texts function in a one-dimensional format like a musical score in which the significance of each word or note depends on what precedes and anticipates what will follow. The apostles appropriated the Old Testament scrolls by grabbing hold and taking control of both sides of the scroll—its beginning and its end.

Paul's preaching clearly emphasized Christ as the new man, the new covenant, and the new creation that brings the Old Testament to its proper end. In Luke 4, Jesus' first act as the anointed one is to preach at the synagogue in his hometown. One cannot help but notice the important theological tone in Luke's description of the event. The scroll of Isaiah is not an end in itself. After it is read and rolled up, the eyes of all are "fixed" on Jesus. In place of Isaiah's future expectation, Jesus proclaims a present reality: "Today, this Scripture is fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:21). This initial step down the messianic path ends with a similar emphasis in Luke 24, where Jesus' oral performance of the Old Testament narrative ends with the opening of eyes in the breaking of the bread.

Likewise, in his Second Letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul directly compares the liturgical act of reading the Old Testament in the synagogue with its reading in the Christian assembly. For Paul, the change in setting could not be more significant; ink must give way to the Spirit of the living God and tablets of stone to the tablets of fleshly hearts (2 Cor 3:3). Paul proceeds to characterize the reading of the Old Testament in Jewish synagogues as a "veiled" reading. Indeed, a veil lies on each aspect in the economy of the liturgical act. Paul mentions three veils: one veil hides the face of Moses, the author of the Torah (2 Cor 3:13); a second veil lies over the public reading of the text in the synagogue (2 Cor 3:14); and a third veil clouds the hearts of hearers (2 Cor 3:15). This veiled glory is taken away only in Christ (2 Cor 3:14). For the apostle Paul, the end of this scroll is not a new scroll but an unveiled, face-to-face communion in the Spirit (2 Cor 3:18). "The light of the knowledge of the glory of God," says St. Paul, is no longer hidden under the veil that covers

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<sup>16</sup> Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, 12–13.

Moses' face and the reading of his text but is located "in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor 4:6). For Paul, Christ himself is the "goal [τέλος] of the Torah" (Rom 10:4) or, as he expresses it to the Galatians, "The Torah was our tutor [παιδαγωγός] to bring us to Christ" (Gal 3:24).

Paul's emphasis on Christianity as the completion or end of the Torah scroll could be heard as a break with the past or an end that makes the past irrelevant and insignificant. Certainly Marcion and some gnostic teachers understood the apostle's letters in precisely this way. For most early Christians, however, Paul's emphasis on Christ as the end or completion of the Old Testament scroll needs to be balanced by John's emphasis on the beginning of the Old Testament scroll. For John, while Jesus' flesh is certainly the true end and eschatological pinnacle of God's revelation, that flesh belongs to One whose origins are from of old. Indeed, the Word who became flesh predates the Prophets, the Torah, and even creation itself. John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word," does not merely resonate with the first verse of the Torah; it also predates it. Even before the making of heaven and earth, there was "the Word who was with God and was God" (John 1:1). For John, Christ is not merely the fulfillment of the Old Testament but also the origin of creation, the calling of Abraham, and the prophetic proclamation. While Paul emphasizes Christ as the singular "Seed of Abraham" (Gal 3:16), John testifies to Jesus' words, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). Again, for John, Christ is not only the fulfillment of the Old Testament scroll but also its source: "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to me; yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life" (John 5:39–40).

Thus, Paul and John testify to the early Christian appropriation of the Old Testament. In the eucharistic assembly, Christians embrace both the beginning and end, the alpha and omega, of the Old Testament scroll. Christ is both the personal author of the Old Testament and its eschatological fulfillment in the flesh. Thus, Irenaeus, the second-century bishop of Lyons, often summarizes the Christian reading of the Scriptures in this simple aphorism: Christ "joins the end to the beginning."<sup>17</sup> With these words, Irenaeus may be commenting on the transition from a linear scroll to a circular codex. The narrative of the Old Testament is no longer a one-dimensional, prophetic line seeking an end; it is a circular witness rotating around a central binder, that is, Christ himself, whose cross binds together Jew and Gentile, old and new into one body. Thus, the eucharistic gathering is a truly formative habitat that profoundly shaped the Christian reading of the Old Testament. What Katz merely suggested some seventy years ago warrants greater consideration. While it may not be possible to prove Katz's proposal historically, it

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* IV, 12, 4; IV, 20, 4; IV, 25, 1.



bears the ring of truth because it resonates with the early Christian reading of the Old Testament. The remainder of this essay will support Katz's proposal by revealing the intimate and inherent relationship between the Christian reading of the Old Testament and the eucharistic assembly in the early Christian letter known as 1 Clement.

### III. Clement of Rome and the Canon of the Christian Tradition

The first and perhaps most significant example of the early Christian engagement with the Old Testament is the letter sent from the church at Rome to counsel the church at Corinth in the midst of internal strife, commonly known as 1 Clement. The date of this letter is up for debate. While most scholars date it at the end of the Domitian persecution (AD 96), there are sound reasons for arguing an earlier date. The author speaks of Peter, Paul, and other martyrs from the time of Nero as "champions of close proximity" and "noble examples from our own generation" (1 Clem 5:1).<sup>18</sup> If Clement writes after the Domitian persecution, why refer only to martyrs from the time of Nero? In addition, Clement mentions Fortunatus (1 Clem 65:1), who may be the same Fortunatus mentioned by Paul in 1 Corinthians 16:17. As Edmundson points out, it is unlikely that the same individual who assisted Paul in the fifties would still be actively delivering letters in the nineties.<sup>19</sup> The main argument for a later date seems to be the use of "ancient [*ἀρχαία*]" to describe the church at Corinth (1 Clem 47:6). However, this designation need not connote an ancient time but can refer to that which is merely the foundation or source of something. In Acts 21:16, Luke describes Mnason of Cyprus as "an early disciple [*ἀρχαίῳ μαθητῇ*]." Here, Luke does not mean that Mnason is an "ancient" disciple of a distant past but rather the foundational root of Christianity in Cyprus. Therefore, Clement is referring to the Corinthian church not as a temporally ancient community but as the foundation or source of Christianity in Corinth.<sup>20</sup> While the exact date of 1 Clement is not of great importance for this

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<sup>18</sup> Quotations of 1 Clement are from *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations of Their Writings*, 2nd ed., ed. and trans. J. B. Lightfoot and J. R. Harmer, ed. and rev. Michael W. Holmes (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992), 28–101. The translations of 1 Clement below are my own but were certainly influenced by the translation of Lightfoot and Harmer.

<sup>19</sup> George Edmundson, *The Church in Rome in the First Century* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1913), 199.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Edmundson, *Church in Rome*, 198. Edmundson argues that Clement's description of the Corinthian church as *ἀρχαίαν* stems from Clement's language in 1 Clem 47:2. Clement refers to Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians as written "in the beginning [*ἀρχῇ*] of the gospel." Here, *ἀρχῇ* refers not merely to a temporal beginning but to the foundation or ontological source of Christianity.

essay, I will argue that this letter represents a very early reading of the Old Testament with roots in the apostolic age.

The letter is universally ascribed to Clement of Rome, though his name never appears in the epistle. Thus, this epistle does not proceed from personal, episcopal authority but represents a fraternal correspondence between Christian communities with a deep familial bond. This fact favors an early date for the letter, that is, one that precedes both the establishment of the monepiscopal order in Rome and Clement's own promotion to the office of bishop. The identity of Clement has been the subject of much debate. As early as Irenaeus of Lyons (AD 180), Clement is recognized as the third bishop to succeed Peter and Paul following Linus and Anacletus. The identification of Clement with Titus Flavius Clemens, Domitian's cousin who was executed for Jewish practices and atheism, is almost surely to be rejected. Archeological evidence, however, suggests that a Christian church existed in the San Clemente complex, as mentioned by Jerome, and perhaps was patronized by Flavius Clemens and his wife Domitilla, the granddaughter of Emperor Vespasian.<sup>21</sup> Thus, it is possible that the author of this letter, who was likely a presbyter and later rose to episcopal prominence in the Roman church, took his name from the household where he had been a slave.<sup>22</sup>

While Clement's identity remains uncertain, it is clear that he writes with a thorough knowledge and familiarity with the Old Testament. Donald Hagner's thorough analysis of Clement's epistle points out that a fourth of the letter is simply direct quotation from the Old Testament.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, Hagner is surprised by how "uninteresting" and "literal" Clement's reading of the Old Testament is.<sup>24</sup> For Hagner, Clement's straightforward application of the Old Testament to the church "consists primarily in seeing Israel and the Church as a continuity—on which point Clement seems almost to go too far." Hagner continues, "The exact relation between Israel and the Church is nowhere expressed, but the implication of Clement's use of the Old Testament is that the Church is virtually equated with Israel and, what is perhaps even more important, the religion of the Old Testament is regarded as virtually identical with that of the Church."<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> James S. Jeffers, *Conflict at Rome: Social Order and Hierarchy in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 33. See also Raymond E. Brown and John P. Meier, *Antioch and Rome: New Testament Cradles of Catholic Christianity* (New York: Paulist Press, 1983), 159–183.

<sup>22</sup> Jeffers, *Conflict at Rome*, 32–33.

<sup>23</sup> Donald Alfred Hagner, *The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1973), 21.

<sup>24</sup> Hagner, *Use of the Old and New Testaments*, 125–127.

<sup>25</sup> Hagner, *Use of the Old and New Testaments*, 127–128.

Hagner is certainly right to recognize the profound continuity between Christianity and Judaism in Clement's perspective. Clement is content to simply quote the Old Testament as directly and immediately applicable to the Christian church. There are two different ways to understand this continuity. Hagner seems to assume that the Old Testament is Jewish Scripture and that Clement, somewhat illegitimately, appropriates or usurps Old Testament Judaism for Christian purposes. From this perspective, Christianity is nothing more than an innovative offspring from the Jewish vine.

In contrast, I would argue that Clement's reading of the Old Testament is actually the exact converse of this perspective. For Clement, the Old Testament is not Jewish, but Christian Scripture. Yet, the Old Testament is Christian Scripture not by illegitimate cultural appropriation but according to its true genealogical origin. Christianity is not a new form or recent offspring of Judaism; rather, Old Testament Judaism was a preliminary form of Christianity. The Christian origin of the Old Testament is evident in the way Clement introduces his Old Testament quotations. As Hagner points out, Clement is not simply mechanical or formulaic in the way he introduces scriptural quotations. Rather, he is extremely cognizant of the personal source of sacred texts, ascribing passages to God, the Master, the Holy Spirit, the Holy Word, Christ, as well as various Old Testament saints. Thus, Clement seems to follow a Johannine trajectory that emphasizes the Christian authorship of Old Testament texts. Christianity is not merely the eschatological end of the Old Testament narrative but also its genealogical source and foundation.

Clement's exegesis of the Old Testament is perhaps best defined as a genealogical reading. Most scholars recognize Clement's extensive use of *mimesis*, that is, treating biblical saints as patterns of holiness to be imitated, which was common in the ancient world, as seen in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb 11).<sup>26</sup> Yet, for Clement, as for the author of Hebrews, the outward, three-dimensional lives of biblical saints manifest a deeper, inward, spiritual, and passionate source.<sup>27</sup> Like branches from the same root or children from the same parent, the external forms of biblical narratives constitute patterns or impressions generated from a common genetic source. In other words, *mimesis* is not merely the ethical imitation

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<sup>26</sup> Hagner, *Use of the Old and New Testaments*, 126–127. In addition to Hebrews 11, Hagner references James 2 and 2 Peter 2 and reasons that Christian writers borrowed a device common in Jewish homiletical practice. See also the comments by Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, 226–230.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, 230. Young points out the unique character of Clement's *mimesis*, namely that it involves an appropriation of the language of the Scriptures on the part of the reader such that the distance between reader and text is eliminated, thus joining all readers to the community that stands before God.

of external actions but also inherent patterns that reveal a genealogical relationship, that is, a common participation in the same genetic root.<sup>28</sup>

Clement begins his epistle recognizing “the detestable and unholy schism” that threatens the church at Corinth (1 Clem 1:1). Yet, more important to Clement than the immediate causes and peculiar circumstances of the Corinthian conflict is the genealogical origin of the schism. Clement proceeds to trace the origin of schism to the passions of jealousy and envy “through which death entered the world” (1 Clem 3:4). Here, Clement quotes Wisdom of Solomon 2:24 in order to place the Corinthian conflict within an ancient, biblical, and theological setting. The Corinthians are fighting a truly ancient battle that has its beginning in Cain’s murder of Abel, Jacob’s conflict with Esau, Joseph’s persecution by his brothers, Moses’ harassment at the hands of his countrymen, and David’s persecution by King Saul (1 Clem 4). For Clement, the biblical narrative is not one merely of persecution but also of familial conflict within the close confines of the household of God. Such familial conflicts are the external fruit that grows from a common root: the passions of jealousy and envy. Clement, then, proceeds to trace the narrative patterns of jealousy and envy from the Old Testament directly to Peter, Paul, and two female martyrs who became “demonstrations” and “patterns” of “patient endurance” (1 Clem 5–6).<sup>29</sup>

For Clement, the biblical narrative is not a Jewish narrative recording the historical roots of the Jewish people. Rather, Clement reads the Old Testament as a martyrological narrative; the ancient saints are three-dimensional icons displaying a distinctively Christian pattern of life. In the next chapter (1 Clem 7), Clement seeks to exhort the Corinthians to recognize their place within this cosmic martyrological battle. “We write these things, beloved, not only to warn you, but also to put ourselves into remembrance. For we are in the same arena, and the same agony lies before us” (1 Clem 7:1). Clement refuses to see the Corinthian conflict as a mere parochial skirmish; he wants the Corinthians to recognize the eternal and theological dimensions of the schism as it now threatens the church of God.

As chapter 7 begins, Clement concludes his warning that the Corinthians reject a course of life formed by jealousy and envy. Following this negative counsel, Clement makes a positive exhortation that his hearers embrace a path formed by patient endurance and repentance. In the same way that Clement traced the

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<sup>28</sup> Consider Paul’s common exhortation to Christian churches to imitation (1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; Eph 5:1, 1 Thess 2:14; 2 Thess 3:7, 9). Paul roots his call to imitation in his own genealogical relation to the Corinthians. “For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. I urge you, then, be imitators of me” (1 Cor 4:15–16). Likewise, in Eph 5:1, Paul calls his hearers to be “imitators of God, as beloved children.”

<sup>29</sup> Clement uses both *ὑπογραμμός* and *ὑποδείγματα* to emphasize the concrete form of the saints’ lives as worthy of imitation. Cf. 1 Clem 5:1, 7; 6:1; 16:17; 33:8; 46:1; 55:1; 63:1.

genealogy of division to its root in jealousy and envy, so he seeks to establish the genetic root of patience and repentance. Clement writes,

Therefore let us forsake empty and vain thinking, and let us come [ἔλθωμεν] to the renowned and revered canon of our tradition [τὸν εὐκλεῆ καὶ σεμνὸν τῆς παραδόσεως ἡμῶν κανόνα]; indeed, let us see what is good and pleasing and acceptable before the One who made us. Let us fix our eyes upon the blood of Christ [ἀτενίσωμεν εἰς τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ] and let us know it as being worthy of honor to his Father, for being poured out [ἐκχυθὲν] on account of our salvation, it bears the grace of repentance [μετανοίας χάριν ὑπήνεγκεν] for the whole world. (1 Clem 7:2–4)

This text reveals the heart and core of Clement’s engagement with the Old Testament. Much scholarly discussion surrounds the meaning of the phrase “canon of our tradition.” Literally, “canon” refers to a straight rod and generally denotes an ideal, perfect, or fixed rule by which other things are measured and judged. Architecturally, a canonical rod would aid builders as they erect a wall, allowing them to judge the precision of its construction.<sup>30</sup> The canon is the fixed rule according to which a wall is to be conformed and fixed into place.

Early Christians employed the word *canon* freely in several different contexts to refer to a rule governing the Christian way of life (Phil 3:16) as well as ordering its offices and liturgical services (2 Cor 10:13–16). Most intriguing is Paul’s use of the term at the end of his Epistle to the Galatians (Gal 6:16). There Paul brings his argument about circumcision to a conclusion in “large letters” written with his own hand (Gal 6:11). The apostle argues that his opponents practice circumcision so that they can avoid “persecution for the cross of Christ” (Gal 6:12). Circumcision allowed early first-century Christians to be identified with the Jewish community and, therefore, share its protected status in the Roman empire. Yet, Paul does not argue against circumcision by promoting uncircumcision. Rather, he claims that neither counts for anything, “only a new creation” (Gal 6:15). For Paul, the practice of circumcision and, I presume, the practice of uncircumcision are merely attempts to “glory in the flesh” (Gal 6:13). For the apostle, however, there is no glory except “in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world” (Gal 6:14). Paul, then, concludes, “Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule [τῷ κανόνι τούτῳ στοιχήσουσιν]” (Gal 6:16). What does Paul mean by “canon”? I do not think that it refers to an abstract law or code of conduct. Rather, “canon” may entail a quite literal reference to the cross of Christ himself.

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. Ezek 40:3. “Canon” is originally a Hebrew word referring to a “measuring reed.” In Ezek 40, the “measuring reed” is used to judge the dimensions of the eschatological temple. Cf. also Rev 11:1.

His cross is the fixed rod to which the Christian life is bound; it is the perfect pattern according to which the Christian life is to be conformed. Immediately following his reference to the “canon,” Paul speaks of the “*stigmata* of Jesus” that the apostle himself bears in his own body (Gal 6:17). The *stigmata* of the crucified constitute the perfect circumcision, that is, the sacred marks that identify the Christian life.<sup>31</sup> Jesus’ wounds are the salutary injuries that cut away sin, restore humanity, and bring the Old Testament prophetic rite of circumcision to its intended fulfillment.

Clement’s use of “canon” seems to bear a similar meaning to that of Paul in Galatians 6, that is, bearing a connection to the passion of Jesus.<sup>32</sup> Many scholars assume that Clement is referring to an early baptismal creed or a summary of Christian faith. Yet, this seems unlikely. Clement refers to a singular canon or rule that is “renowned” and “revered” among many Christian communities and governs what Clement refers to as a common Christian “tradition.” Yet, there was no formal creed in common use among Christians or generally known and shared among churches until the end of the second century. So, if the canon does not refer to a formal creed, a specific code of conduct, or a summary of Christian teaching, then what is the “canon of our tradition” that Clement references? If we examine the context of Clement’s letter and the texture of the language he uses, it becomes clear that the “canon” is associated with the church’s eucharistic assembly and identified most fundamentally with the flesh and blood of Jesus himself.<sup>33</sup>

Clement uses the word *canon* in connection with what he refers to simply as “our tradition [*παραδόσεως*].” In the first century, the language of “tradition” does not yet refer to patristic writings, conciliar decisions, or doctrinal formulations but is intimately associated with the church’s eucharistic life. The origin of this language is found in Jesus’ passion statements. Following the transfiguration, Jesus teaches his disciples that “the Son of man is being handed over into the hands of men” (Mark 9:31). For Jesus, the present passive verb *παράδιδται* (“is being handed over”) is the first act that initiates his saving passion. For early Christians, the subject of this verb

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<sup>31</sup> Cf. J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians*, The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 566–569. Martyn points out the contrast between the marks of circumcision and the *stigmata* of Jesus. He writes, “For the sign under which God is making things right in his new creation is not the physical mark one receives in the religious rite of circumcision, but rather the physical scars Paul has received because he preaches the gospel” (569).

<sup>32</sup> Clement uses “canon” three times in his epistle. Besides 1 Clem 7, he uses it in 1:3 with reference to the order and structure of the Christian household; he also uses it in 41:1 with reference to the sphere of liturgical ministry in the church. Clement may be thinking of Paul’s own traditions and instructions as the canon or rule for the ordering of both the Christian household as well as the eucharistic community. In 1 Cor 11, Paul is clearly concerned about the Christian household, which may lie behind 1 Clem 1:3. In 2 Cor 10:13–16, Paul uses “canon” with reference to the sphere of his own apostolic mission, which may inform 1 Clem 41:1.

<sup>33</sup> For a similar use of “canon” as identified with Christ’s own body, see Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* I, 9, 4, where Irenaeus uses “canon of truth” synonymously with “body of the Truth.”

is not simply Judas; he is the one “through whom” Jesus is handed over (see Mark 14:21; Matt 26:24). Rather, early Christians read this verb as a divine passive referring to the Father “traditioning” his own Son for the salvation of the world.<sup>34</sup> In the Synoptic Gospels, the passion statements typically begin and end with divine passives.<sup>35</sup> The Father, who initiates the passion by handing over his Son, finishes the course of salvation by raising him from the dead on the third day (see Matt 17:22–23; 20:18–19; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22, 44; 18:32).

Already in the Gospels, however, this act of divine “traditioning” that initiates the saving liturgy of *pascha* is identified with the Eucharist. The salutary shedding of blood does not begin with the scourging, the crown of thorns, or the crucifixion. Rather, in Jesus’ own words, it begins with the cup of the Eucharist: “This is my blood . . . being poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (Matt 26:28). The participle ἐκχυννόμενον (“poured out”) is present tense, inaugurating the saving liturgy of *pascha*. Indeed, for Jesus, the voluntary handing over of his own blood is not merely the beginning of his own passion, but it is also the perfection of an ancient sacrificial liturgy. Jesus’ shed blood brings to perfection “all the righteous blood shed [ἐκχυννόμενον] on the earth since the blood of Abel” (Matt 23:35).

Thus, like all the feasts in the Gospels, the Eucharist begins with the Father who traditions his Son’s body and blood for the forgiveness of sins, the fellowship of the church, and the salvation of the world. Paul understands his own apostolic identity from within this divine act of “traditioning.”<sup>36</sup> “For I received from the Lord,” Paul says in his own letter to the Corinthians, “what I also tradition [παρέδωκα] to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was traditioned [παρεδίδετο] took bread” (1 Cor 11:23). In addition, Paul uses the language of tradition in 1 Corinthians 11:2 regarding the order and structure of the church as the household of God. He uses it again in 1 Corinthians 15:1–3 regarding the teaching of Christ’s passion in terms of his death, burial, resurrection, and manifestation to the saints. Thus, in Clement’s epistle to the same Corinthians, he references language well known to his hearers.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> An interesting example can be found in *the Martyrdom of Polycarp* 4. The author argues that, like Christ’s passion, martyrs should not hand themselves over but patiently wait for the will of the Father. Polycarp is presented as a true example of such patient endurance whose martyrdom is grounded in the will of God rather than his own choice.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Brian Peterson, “What Happened on ‘the Night’? Judas, God and the Importance of Liturgical Ambiguity,” *Pro Ecclesia*, 20, no. 4 (2011): 363–383. Peterson emphasizes the importance of reading “*paradidomi*” as a divine passive for the church’s eucharistic liturgy.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Peterson, “What Happened on ‘the Night’?,” 367–374. Peterson mentions 2 Cor 4:11 and argues that Paul’s use of the “traditioning” language shows “that the life of Jesus is revealed through the suffering of Paul’s apostolic ministry” (374).

<sup>37</sup> Cf. 1 Clem 42:1–2, where Clement refers to the order inherent in the gospel. “The apostles received the Gospel from the Lord, Jesus Christ; Jesus the Christ was sent from God. Therefore, Christ is from God and the apostles are from Christ. Both, therefore, came from the will of God in good order.” Such a passage may recall 1 Cor 11 and the traditioning of the gospel from the

The “canon of our tradition” refers to the divine ordering of the church’s life constituted in the narrative of Christ’s passion and perfected in the handing over of his flesh and blood.<sup>38</sup>

This eucharistic interpretation of Clement’s letter is supported by the liturgical texture of the language he uses. In chapter 7, Clement employs seven verbs to exhort his Corinthian hearers. With the first two verbs, he speaks of the canon as a geographical place to which we should “come,” “abandoning” a vain course of life (1 Clem 7:2).<sup>39</sup> The third verb assumes the canon as something to be seen and describes it in liturgical, aesthetic language; Clement identifies it with “what is good, pleasing, and acceptable before him who made us” (1 Clem 7:3). The fourth verb is the heart of his exhortation: “Let us fix [ἀτενίσωμεν] our eyes into the blood of Christ.” This language recalls Luke 4:20, where this verb emphasizes the movement from the Old Testament scroll of Isaiah to the presence of Jesus and his preaching. Clement uses this present tense verb again in 1 Clement 9:2, exhorting the Corinthians to fix their eyes on Old Testament saints, who he describes as “the perfect liturgists of his magnificent glory.” He then uses it again in 1 Clement 19:2, calling his hearers to “run with urgency to the goal of peace traditioned to us from the beginning” and to “fix our eyes on the Father.” Finally, he uses it in 1 Clement 36:2, calling the church to gaze through Christ into “the exalted place of the heavens.” Thus, this language always bears strong liturgical connotations and sums up for Clement the heart of the eucharistic liturgy.

Yet, Clement is not finished; he employs three more verbs of exhortation. Having fixed the eyes on the blood of Christ, Clement calls the Corinthians to “recognize or know [γινώμεν] it [Jesus’ blood] as worthy of honor before the Father.” For Clement, as for early Christians generally, the Eucharist begins and

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Father through Jesus Christ, the sending of the apostles, and the appointment of bishops and deacons. Yet, for Clement, the ordering of the church’s life is not merely a matter of governing authority but also of liturgical practice. The orders of ministry in the early church seem to be a natural structure needed for the concrete practice of the Eucharist.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. 1 Clem 19:2–3, where the language of “tradition” is used again in a liturgical context. Clement writes, “Having a share in so many, great, and glorious deeds, let us run to the goal of peace traditioned to us from the beginning [τὸν ἐξ ἀρχῆς παραδεδομένον ἡμῖν τῆς εἰρήνης σκοπόν]; and let us fix our eyes into the Father, even the Creator of the whole world; and let us cling to his magnificent and most excellent gifts and good working of peace.” Here again “the goal of peace traditioned from the beginning” may indeed refer to the blood of Christ that brings the ancient liturgy of peace to its proper conclusion.

<sup>39</sup> There is a strong geographical element to Clement’s letter. He speaks of Peter going “to the appointed place of glory” when he was martyred. Paul, likewise, “departed the world and went to the holy place.” The Eucharist is a place to which we “come.” This geographical emphasis informs Clement’s understanding of the church and the virtue of “hospitality” as seen in Noah’s ark, Abraham’s friendship, Lot’s hospitality, and Rahab’s house as ecclesial settings of salvation (1 Clem 9:4–12:8).



ends with the Father; the Father traditions his Son but also receives the voluntary offering of Jesus' blood as the atonement for the sins of the world. For Clement, this blood is worthy of honor because "it is poured out [ἐκχυθὲν] for our salvation" and "bears [ὑπήνεγκεν] the grace of repentance for the whole world." The verb ἐκχυθὲν ("poured out") is almost certainly to be associated with the words of institution and the Old Testament sacrificial liturgy; the use of this verb solidifies the argument that, for Clement, the canon is most fundamentally to be identified with the Eucharist.<sup>40</sup> Yet, the blood of Jesus is more than just the cause of atonement; it is also the geographical location of atonement. The blood dwells before the Father as the very place of atonement, honor, and glory. Thus, it "bears the grace of repentance for the whole world."

Finally, in the last two verbs of exhortation, Clement connects the Eucharist to the reading of the Old Testament. For Clement, the blood of Jesus is the fixed canon and the perfect pattern to which he conforms his reading of the entire Old Testament narrative. Clement continues,

Let us pass through [διέλθωμεν] all generations and let us truly learn [καταμάθωμεν] that in generation after generation, the master has provided a place of repentance [μετανοίας τόπον] for those desiring to turn to him. Noah preached [ἐκήρυξεν] repentance, and those hearing were saved. Jonah preached [ἐκήρυξεν] catastrophe to the Ninevites, but repenting of their sins, they propitiated God while praying and received salvation, even though they were strangers to God. (1 Clem 7:5–7)

For Clement, Noah, Jonah, and the rest of the Old Testament saints are no longer merely patriarchs of the Jewish race prophesying a future hope; they are also Christian preachers and eucharistic liturgists serving the glory and honor of Christ's blood. In the narrative of their lives, Clement sees the genetic code of Jesus' own passion—his patient endurance, his priestly ministry, his voluntary self-sacrifice, and his eternal glory. Thus, Clement concludes his journey through the Old Testament this way:

Let us fix our eyes [ἀτενίσωμεν] on those who were perfect liturgists [τοὺς τελείως λειτουργήσαντας] of his magnificent glory. Let us receive Enoch who, being found righteous in obedience, was translated and death did not find him. Noah, being found faithful, preached the regeneration [παλιγγενεσίαν] of the world through his liturgy [διὰ τῆς λειτουργίας αὐτοῦ] and the Master

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<sup>40</sup> Clement uses this language, "ἐκχυθὲν (poured out)," in 1 Clem 46:6 with reference to trinitarian "grace" and in 1 Clem 2:2 with reference to the Holy Spirit.

saved through him those living creatures entering the ark in harmony.  
(1 Clem 9:2–4)

For Clement, the Eucharist is not a new liturgy; it is the perfection of a truly ancient liturgy.<sup>41</sup> This liturgy extends back to the creation of the world, where Christ's passion receives testimony from the rhythm of the rising sun, the generation of seeds out of the earth, and the regeneration of the phoenix<sup>42</sup> (1 Clem 24–25). This liturgy continues through the Old Testament receiving the service of Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and even the harlot Rahab, whose hospitality under the sign of the scarlet cord hanging from her house testifies to "redemption through the blood of the Lord" (1 Clem 12:1–8).

The flesh and blood of Christ is not merely the eschatological perfection of this ancient liturgy but also its generative source. Christ is the true High Priest of the sacrificial liturgy.<sup>43</sup> His shed blood is the seed that generates the fruit of patient endurance manifested in Abel, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and David, as well as Peter, Paul, and those martyrs of Clement's own generation. Thus, for Clement, the Old Testament is an intimate, familial narrative, not of the Jewish race but of the Christian church. The Old Testament saints are Christian "fathers,"<sup>44</sup> and their Scriptures do not belong to the synagogue but to the eucharistic gathering where their veil is removed, their voice is set free, and their testimony is perfected in the glory of Jesus' passion.

#### IV. Conclusion: Habits Formed by a Habitat

Vince Lombardi once said, "In truth, I have never known a successful man who did not appreciate the discipline that it takes to win."<sup>45</sup> The early Christian reading

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<sup>41</sup> Cf. Brown and Meier, *Antioch and Rome*, 169–171. Brown and Meier recognize Clement's fondness for Old Testament cultic language. They maintain that 1 Clement moves beyond Paul's Letter to the Romans and Peter's first epistle, which spiritualize the Old Testament cult. They also assert that 1 Clement is directly opposed to the Epistle of the Hebrews, which sees Christian worship and the Old Testament cult as incompatible. However, I think if one recognizes the place of the Eucharist in Clement's perspective, these supposed disagreements and differences fade away. For all of these early Christian writings, the Eucharist does not so much spiritualize or abrogate the Old Testament cult as fulfill and perfect it.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Edmundson, *Church in Rome*, 196. Edmundson refers to the public display of a phoenix in Rome during the reign of Claudius around AD 47. Clement may have witnessed this display as a youth.

<sup>43</sup> Jesus is called "High Priest" in 1 Clem 61:3; 64:1.

<sup>44</sup> Clement refers to Old Testament saints as "our fathers" in 1 Clem 60:4, which may recall 1 Cor 10:1.

<sup>45</sup> Quoted by John J. O'Keefe and R. R. Reno, *Sanctified Vision: An Introduction to Early Christian Interpretation of the Bible* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 114. O'Keefe and Reno offer an excellent survey of early Christian interpretation and conclude with this quote from Lombardi to emphasize the disciplined character of patristic exegesis.

of the Bible was not a haphazard process characterized by intellectual confusion or the chaotic application of literary techniques. Rather, the exegesis of the ancients stems from a disciplined way of life. Exegesis is a deeply spiritual habit knit together into one fabric with prayer, contemplation, sacramental communion, works of service, and the self-offering of martyrdom. Yet, the sanctuary not only turned faith into three-dimensional habits, but it also allowed these habits to constitute a new genealogical identity. Early Christians heard the word of God as a new word with the most ancient of origins. Indeed, the very Word generated from the bosom of the Father has taken on three-dimensional form in human flesh and continues to dwell among us. His body is the new habitat in which human beings are generated anew, “not from blood, nor from the desires of the flesh, nor from the desires of man,” as John says, “but begotten out of God” (John 1:13). It is within the spiritual fabric of the church’s eucharistic fellowship that the habits of early Christian exegesis took shape.

Without in any way being exhaustive, there are at least three exegetical habits evident in Clement’s letter to the Corinthians. The first habit is Clement’s assumption that the Old Testament is Christian Scripture. This assumption testifies to the inherent interconnection between the reading of the Old Testament and the eucharistic assembly in Clement’s mind. Here is where early Christian exegesis, such as Clement’s, presents a profound challenge to the contemporary age where habits are shaped by an ever fragmenting habitat. The contemporary reading of Scripture simply assumes the separation and independence of the Scriptures from the eucharistic gathering. This schism between the Scriptures and the eucharistic altar makes the patristic reading of the Old Testament somewhat inaccessible; yet, its inaccessibility is not so much due to the confusion of the patristic tongue but to the limited scope of our modern senses. It is like a sound that cannot be heard because it communicates with a tone that lies outside the spectrum of normal hearing. Fundamental to the problem is the setting. For Clement, the church’s sanctuary is the very atmosphere within which the divine voice of the Old Testament is meant to be heard; and Old Testament Scripture is the genealogical narrative that constitutes the hereditary root of the church’s true identity. For Clement, the Old Testament Scriptures cannot be extracted from the eucharistic gathering anymore than a fish can be extracted from water or an internal organ like the heart or liver can be extracted from the human body without fatal consequences.

The second exegetical habit formed in the eucharistic assembly is Clement’s engagement with Old Testament Scripture as the direct, living, and personal correspondence between God and his people. The true genre of patristic exegesis is the sermon where the Scriptures sound forth in the present tense as the direct discourse of God to his people. Yet, this correspondence is by no means a

monologue but consists in a reciprocal and deeply spiritual communion. Here again is a fundamental challenge to modern scholarly exegesis. Separated from the church's sanctuary, contemporary exegesis is defined in terms of psychological and sociological processes that can be exposed by the application of scientific methods and literary techniques. Lost in this secular, academic model are the theological and, perhaps more important, spiritual dimensions. For Clement, reading Scripture is an act of prayer and is, therefore, inseparable from the church's spiritual mode of existence. To read Scripture is not merely to hear what God has said in the past; it is also to hear him speak in the present. Exegesis, therefore, is not merely the passive reception of divine revelation from a distant age, but it also entails active discipline, repentance, and spiritual effort. For early Christians, the exegetical act entails prayer, contemplation, and a spiritual *ascesis*, that is, a daily struggle with the devil's lies, the temptations of the world, and the passions of the flesh.

The third exegetical habit is Clement's conviction that the body and blood of Jesus form the fixed canon, the unchanging rule, and the perfect pattern according to which the Old Testament is read. For Clement, the shed blood of Jesus is the genetic code that underlies the entire biblical narrative; it is the theological DNA that is the source of Christian identity and manifests itself in the lives of the saints. This genealogical reading propels the exegete along a radically different path. The trajectory of contemporary exegesis is typically intellectual, that is, a movement from text to conceptual thought. In other words, the text is often reduced to the psycho-social processes by which authors and readers argue, counsel, and converse. Sacred texts originate in the minds of authors and end in the minds of readers.

The trajectory of Clement's exegesis, however, is truly incarnational, moving from text to the three-dimensional lives of saints. Rather than merely a thought or idea, sacred texts seek to communicate a life with concrete, fleshly form. For early Christians, the true medium of divine revelation is not abstract concepts, but human flesh and blood. Just as an artist may favor paint or a sculptor his clay, so God prefers to work with humanity. From the beginning, human flesh bears the form and texture of God's own hands and moves by the vitality of his breath. The perfection of this divine revelation is the flesh and blood of Jesus—crucified, risen, and exalted into glory. The saving pattern of Jesus' paschal blood likewise shapes the Old Testament saints, whom Clement describes as "examples" and "patterns" of the Christian life. In this way, Clement's eucharistic reading of the Old Testament leads directly to a contemplation of both Christian virtues and demonic vices. For early Christians, neither sin nor righteousness can remain abstract, general concepts; both sin and righteousness manifest themselves as deeply personal experiences that have concrete texture and form. Sin manifests itself in diverse passions, such as envy or jealousy, that lead to fleshly forms of corruption, like strife, division, and death.

In the same way, virtues, such as patience, repentance, and hospitality, are three-dimensional forms of the righteousness perfectly embodied in Jesus' passion.

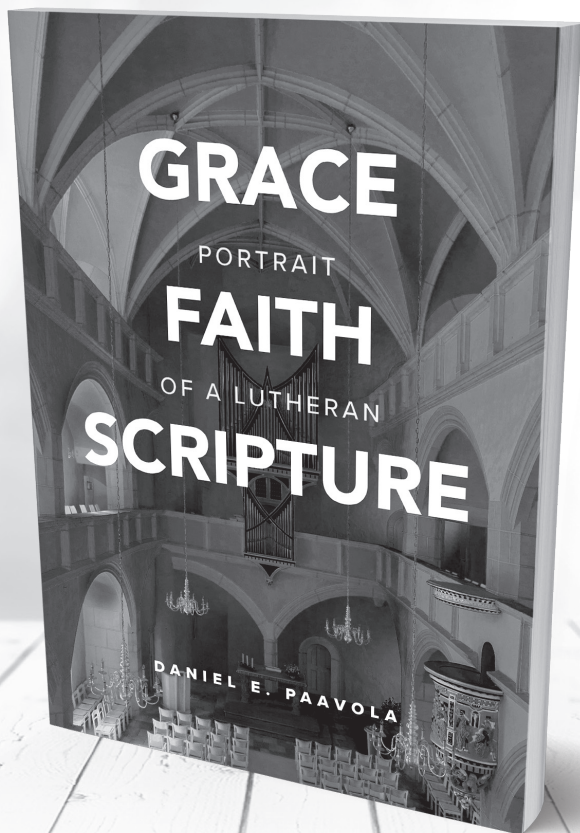
"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."<sup>46</sup> Clement's exegesis reveals deeply ingrained habits formed in the church's sanctuary. The eucharistic habitat has formed Clement's faith into three-dimensional habits and his habits into identity. Thus, the Eucharist is truly formative of the early Christian reading of the Old Testament. Yet, it is formative not in the sense that Clement simply chooses to read the Scriptures sacramentally as if he superficially imposes a foreign sacramental veneer on the text in an arbitrary and capricious way. Rather, the Eucharist forms his exegesis because the body and blood of Jesus constitute the ground of his own identity. Like a pebble entering the water, the body and blood of Jesus reverberate throughout Clement's life. In the same way that light affects our perception and the atmosphere our ability to hear, so the Eucharist is the habitat that conditions Clement's sensory experience and orientates the way he hears and sees everything, including the Scriptures. Thus, it is appropriate to conclude with a final exhortation from Clement as he calls the whole church to join in his own hermeneutical vision.

This is the way, beloved, in which we found our salvation, Jesus Christ, the High Priest of our offerings, the Guardian and Helper of our infirmities. Through him, let us fix our eyes [ἀτενίσωμεν] into the exalted places of the heavens; through him, we perceive [ἐνοπτρίζομεθα] his unblemished and lofty countenance; through him, the eyes of our hearts have been opened; through him, our senseless and darkened understanding grows up into the light; through him, the Master has desired that we taste immortal knowledge. (1 Clem 36:1–2)

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<sup>46</sup> Durant, *Story of Philosophy*, 87.

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# **A Debatable Theology: Medieval Disputation, the Wittenberg Reformation, and Luther's Heidelberg Theses**

**Richard J. Serina Jr.**

Lutherans typically do not consider the medieval academic disputation an indispensable part of Martin Luther's development or necessary for the growth of the Reformation. But it was. Indeed, the practice of disputation was part and parcel of the reforms that began in Wittenberg. It is not possible to mention the start of the Reformation, for instance, without reference to the *Ninety-Five Theses* disputing the indulgence trade or the Leipzig Disputation dealing with papal authority or the Heidelberg Theses, from which some contemporary Lutheran theology derives its theology of the cross. The early Reformation depended heavily upon the medium of the academic disputation to articulate its views as part of an interscholastic debate over contested points of theology. These disputations and related theses provided a basis for ongoing conversation between rival theological schools during the formative years, 1516–1521. An understanding of the prevailing disputation culture will reveal what such disputations sought to do—and what they did not seek to do. This essay will introduce the assumptions, practice, and goals of medieval disputation, describe how disputation influenced the university theology of the early Wittenberg Reformation, and finally suggest some important implications for how we should view the theology emerging out of these disputations, chiefly the oft-misunderstood Heidelberg Disputation.

## **I. The Medieval Culture of Academic Disputation**

Medieval intellectual life revolved around the disputation. Disputations were held in universities and monasteries, for bachelors in the arts through doctors in higher faculties, and across all academic fields—theology, law, even medicine.<sup>1</sup> Two important features led to the emergence of the theological disputation in the Middle Ages. The first was the use of Aristotelian logic, in particular the subset

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<sup>1</sup> Brian Lawn, *The Rise and Decline of the Scholastic 'Quaestio Disputata': With Special Emphasis on Its Use in the Teaching of Medicine and Sciences* (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 18–38, deals with how the disputation influenced the sciences.

of logic known as dialectic.<sup>2</sup> Logic had been a part of the medieval curriculum, including the works of Aristotle, but took precedence with the fresh translation into Latin of the so-called *Logica nova*, or New Logic. Logic had a place in the medieval trivium because of the sixth-century thinker Boethius, who, in addition to his own writings on logic, translated Aristotle's *On Categories* and *On Interpretation*, as well as Porphyry's *Isagoge*, into Latin. Together, these came to be called the *Logica vetus*, or Old Logic. The *Logica nova* included Aristotle's *Topics*, *Prior Analytics*, *Posterior Analytics*, and *Sophistical Reflection*, rounding out the canonical version of Aristotle's *Organon*. Aristotelian logic provided formal rules for making an argument, but it was the specific form of dialectic that had the greatest impact on medieval disputation. Dialectic is best defined as a dialogue or discussion where truth is sought through question and answer, thesis and antithesis, problem and solution, or—as the famous medieval text of Peter Abelard put it—*Sic et Non* (“Yes and No”). Using dialectic, medieval scholastics could resolve theological problems by contrasting their ideas with other proposed solutions.<sup>3</sup>

The second element contributing to the development of the disputation was the *quaestio*, or a disputed topic in theology. This primarily began in the study of Scripture by asking a question about a specific biblical text or gloss of the text.<sup>4</sup> It would eventually furnish the subject matter for disputations in all academic disciplines, enabling the organization of specific theological topics, or *loci*, for analysis, whether in Peter Abelard's *Sic et Non*, Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, or Gratian of Bologna's collection of canon law, the *Concordance of Discordant Canons*. Ultimately, Aristotelian dialectic and the disputed question in theology supplied the method and the subject matter for the practice of disputation in the universities of the twelfth century and would shape its practice for the next four centuries.<sup>5</sup>

What was that practice? What did a medieval debate look like? While the particulars changed depending on the occasion for the disputation, the most common type followed a framework not dissimilar from modern debate. A *magister*, or teacher, presided over the debate. He would usually put forward a disputed question, accompanied by his own proposed solution to the question, called

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<sup>2</sup> On these developments, see Alex J. Novikoff, *The Medieval Culture of Disputation: Pedagogy, Practice, and Performance* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 63–66, 108–14; and John Marenbon, *Later Medieval Philosophy (1150–1350)* (London: Routledge, 1987), 35–49.

<sup>3</sup> On medieval logic in general, see the treatments in E. J. Ashworth, *Language and Logic in the Post-Medieval Period* (Boston: Reidel, 1974); and Alexander Broadie, *Introduction to Medieval Logic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987).

<sup>4</sup> For the origins of the *quaestio* in medieval exegesis, see Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964), 66–82.

<sup>5</sup> Lawn, *Rise and Decline*, 6–17.



*propositiones*, or theses. One of his students would take the position of the *respondens*, or respondent, in the debate, while another would take the role of *opponens*, or opponent. It was the respondent's responsibility to defend the theses of the magister. He didn't have to agree with the theses or even prove them. He simply had to defend them. The opponent, on the other hand, had to establish why the theses were wrong and to substitute his own resolution to the disputed question. Afterwards—sometimes immediately, sometimes days later—the magister would render his *determinatio*, or judgment of the debate. He would judge one disputant the winner, then he would go on to further substantiate the position he set forward in his theses.<sup>6</sup> By the fourteenth century, a student might attend disputations his first two years in the school of arts, participate in the debates for another two years, and then finally be allowed by his magister to render a *determinatio* in his fifth year.<sup>7</sup> After that, he would become a master of arts, and if he proceeded to the theology faculty, he would have to supervise his own disputations for a year on the way to his doctorate.<sup>8</sup> This meant a medieval doctor of theology—indeed, a doctor of theology just like Luther—had been thoroughly saturated in the logic and practice of disputation.

While disputations tended to follow this formula, they were not formulaic. There were different types of disputations that served different functions within the medieval university. The primary kind most closely resembled what was just described: the private (*privata*) or circular (*circularis*) disputation. This was a required part of the curriculum in the school of arts and in the higher faculties, including theology. The magister had to supervise disputations at regular intervals, often on a weekly basis, that were restricted to his own pupils. A similar version was the solemn (*solemnis*) or ordinary (*ordinaria*) disputation. These disputations followed the same pattern but were open to students and masters from other faculties as well. There was also the *disputatio de quolibet*, a public event that broke from the traditional form. In this instance, the magister would open the debate not only to other faculties but to the community at large. Clerics, prelates, and civic leaders attended. The magister proposed the *quaestio*, offered his theses, and

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<sup>6</sup> There is a lack of documentary evidence describing actual disputations in the Middle Ages, and there were no manuals with prescribed rules. For the above, see Schubert's summary in Anselm Schubert, "Libertas Disputandi: Luther und die Leipziger Disputation als akademisches Streitgespräch," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 105 (2008), 414–419. See also the discussions in Novikoff, *Medieval Culture of Disputation*, 141–147; and Marenbon, *Later Medieval Philosophy*, 19–20.

<sup>7</sup> William J. Courtenay, *Schools and Scholars in Fourteenth-Century England* (Princeton, 1987), 33.

<sup>8</sup> Courtenay, *Schools and Scholars*, 41.

defended them in response to objections from the gathered audience.<sup>9</sup> Later in the Middle Ages, celebratory graduation or promotion (*pro gradu*) disputations were held, where masters or doctors taking the next degree would have to preside over a disputation in connection with their graduation ceremony. These last disputations would play an instrumental role in the articulation of Reformation theology at Wittenberg.

What should be noted, though, is the purpose disputations had in medieval university theology: a disputation was a legitimate search for truth on the part of the participants. Yes, to a certain extent, they were observed simply for the sake of academic exercise (*exercitii causa*) in order to receive a degree. But more than that, the participants genuinely believed that through this ongoing practice of debate—using logic and dialectic, addressing disputed questions and proposing solutions, and objecting and responding—they would gain a greater grasp of truth.<sup>10</sup> These were not monologues or lectures; they were dialogues about contested theological questions governed by the rules of Aristotelian logic and dialectic. Of course, this method would come under fire in the century prior to the Reformation. Nominalism and voluntarism began chipping away at certain features of it, beginning in the fourteenth century.<sup>11</sup> Humanists targeted it, too. Francesco Petrarch wrote of his “aversion to the logicians,” and Lorenzo Valla argued for the

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<sup>9</sup> On these, see Novikoff, *Medieval Culture of Disputation*, 133–147; Lawn, *Rise and Decline*, 12–15; and Marenbon, *Late Medieval Philosophy*, 27–34.

<sup>10</sup> Schwarz and Leppin maintain that Luther and his colleagues shifted the focus of the disputation from this notion of an academic exercise to a search for truth (*inquirendae veritatis causa*); see Reinhard Schwarz, “Disputationen,” in *Lutherhandbuch*, ed. Albrecht Beutel, 2nd ed. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 374; and Leppin, “Zuspitzung und Wahrheitsanspruch: Disputationen in den Anfängen der Wittenberger reformatischen Bewegung,” in *Reformation und Rationalität*, ed. Herman Selderhuis and Ernst-Joachim Waschke (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), 55. But for my opinion, I follow Novikoff, *Medieval Culture of Disputation*, 169–171; and Ernst Wolf, “Zur wissenschaftsgeschichtlichen Bedeutung der Disputationen und der Wittenberger Universität im 16. Jahrhundert,” in *Peregrinatio: Studien zur reformatorischen Theologie, zum Kirchenrecht und zur Sozialethik*, ed. Ernst Wolf, 2 vols. (Munich: Ch. Kaiser, 1965), 1:48, who is forced to admit it through gritted teeth.

<sup>11</sup> The primary target of the nominalists and voluntarists was Aristotelian realism among the Thomistic Scholastics, but their arguments allowed Luther and his colleagues much of the ammunition to criticize both the Thomistic conclusions and confidence in their logic-heavy methodology. For the nominalist and voluntarists, see Heiko Oberman, *The Harvest of Medieval Theology: Gabriel Biel and Late Medieval Nominalism* (Durham, NC: The Labyrinth Press, 1983); and Francis Oakley, *Omnipotence, Covenant and Order: An Excursion in the History of Ideas from Abelard to Leibniz* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984). For Luther and Aquinas, see Dennis Janz, *Luther on Thomas Aquinas: The Angelic Doctor in the Thought of the Reformer* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden, 1989); and O. H. Pesch, *Martin Luther, Thomas von Aquin und die reformatische Kritik an der Scholastik: Zur Geschichte und Wirkungsgeschichte eines Mißverständnisses mit weltgeschichtlichen Folgen* (Hamburg: Joachim Jungius-Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften, 1994).

superiority of Ciceronian rhetoric to scholastic logic.<sup>12</sup> By the time Luther began criticizing scholastic theology and theologians in 1515, widespread humanist and Augustinian curricular reforms had begun in Wittenberg and elsewhere.<sup>13</sup>

For all the conflict in the academic communities of the late Middle Ages, however, the medieval practice of disputation remained ensconced in educational life as the presumed method to obtain truth. Nominalists like Ockham recorded their *quodlibeta*, and Erasmus praised the practice alongside other methods: “Hilary thunders against heretics, Augustine disputes, Jerome contends in dialogues, Prudentius wars in various forms of verse, Thomas and Scotus fight with the help of dialectic and philosophy. All have the same purpose but each uses a different method. Variety is not condemned as long as the same goal is sought.”<sup>14</sup> The method may have been academic disputation, but the goal was always the discovery of truth. And, most importantly, medieval disputants believed they could arrive at that truth not by the single exegesis of a passage or a single resolution to a disputed question but by the process of proposition, objection, response, and judgment, and then running it back and doing it again.

## II. Academic Disputation and the Wittenberg Reformation

Little work done has been done on the role medieval disputation played in the articulation of early Reformation theology. What literature does exist regrettably seems to begin with Wittenberg and pays far less attention to its medieval context.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, for all the changes occurring on the eve of the Reformation, this

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<sup>12</sup> On these and other related arguments, see James A. Overfield, *Humanism and Scholasticism in Late Medieval Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985); and Erika Rummel, *The Humanistic-Scholastic Debate in the Renaissance and Reformation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 1–18, and 183–86 for the humanist criticism of dialectic in theology.

<sup>13</sup> On the conflict between the respective theological *viae*, or curricular approaches to theology, at the time of the Reformation, see Leif Grane, *Contra Gabrielem: Luthers Auseinandersetzung mit Gabriel Biel in der Disputatio Contra Scholasticam Theologiam 1517* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1962); and Heiko Oberman, *Masters of the Reformation: The Emergence of a New Intellectual Climate in Europe*, trans. Dennis Martin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 3–110; but see especially Heiko A. Oberman, “Headwaters of the Reformation: Initia Lutheri—Initia Reformationis,” in *Luther and the Dawn of the Modern Era*, ed. Heiko Oberman (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 40–88.

<sup>14</sup> Erasmus, *Colloquies*, 633; quoted in Mishtooni Bose, “The Issue of Theological Style in Late Medieval Disputations,” in *Medieval Forms of Argument: Disputation and Debate*, ed. Georgina Donavin, Carol Poster, and Richard Utz (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2002), 2.

<sup>15</sup> One exception is David Luy’s entry in the Oxford Encyclopedia of Martin Luther, which takes into account many of the same studies. See David Luy, “Disputations,” in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Martin Luther*, ed. Derek R. Nelson and Paul R. Hinlicky, 3 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 518–550. This paper shares the same view on medieval disputation as Luy but will go further than him in suggesting how formative the disputation culture was for early Reformation theology.

medieval culture of academic disputation neither waned nor ceased but directly impacted Luther, Wittenberg, and the early Reformation. Despite its relative newness as an institution and its connection with the Reformation to come, Wittenberg was essentially a medieval university, and that meant academic life there revolved around disputations.<sup>16</sup> The Theology Faculty Statutes of 1508 provided for three different types of disputations.<sup>17</sup> The first was the weekly circular disputation. It constituted a regular part of academic instruction, typically three hours on Friday morning. The magister presided during the term and the bachelors during vacation, and students were required to participate in a certain number of disputations to earn their degree. The second was the public, or solemn, disputation. Faculty were required to hold one per year. These were presumably no different than the public disputations of the medieval variety, with the magister presenting his theses and serving as respondent. The third was the graduation, or *pro gradu*, disputation. Like its earlier analogue, these were primarily ceremonial. The candidate for the degree would serve as respondent. It would last three hours for the bachelor, a day for the license to teach (*licentia docendi*), and two days for the doctorate, with a second disputation at the ceremony itself. The course for Luther's doctorate in 1512 deviated somewhat from these, but the principal pieces were there: private disputation, public address, and a public disputation.<sup>18</sup>

As doctor of theology and professor of Bible, Luther involved himself intimately in these disputations, and out of them emerged some of the more pivotal contributions to the start of the Reformation. Wittenberg had been in the throes of curricular reform, as scholars like Luther and his mentor and predecessor at Wittenberg, Johannes von Staupitz, advocated for humanist and Augustinian ideas over against Thomistic and nominalist positions. They wanted more Bible, church fathers, and ancient rhetoric, and less Aristotle, logic, and medieval scholastic commentary. For one example, note Luther's oft-cited comment from a

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<sup>16</sup> On the university's academic culture, see Jonathan Mumme, "The University of Wittenberg," in *Martin Luther in Context*, ed. David M. Whitford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 38–46.

<sup>17</sup> Wolf, "Zur wissenschaftsgeschichtlichen Bedeutung," 38–51, as well as the shorter summary in Christine Helmer, *The Trinity and Martin Luther: A Study on the Relationship between Genre, Language and the Trinity in Luther's Works (1523–1546)* (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1999), 47–50. For a recent treatment of this based upon the best documentary evidence, see Henning Bühhmann, "The Wittenberg Disputation Culture and the Leipzig Debate," in *Luther at Leipzig: Martin Luther, the Leipzig Debate, and the Sixteenth-Century Reformations*, ed. Mickey L. Mattox, Richard J. Serina Jr., and Jonathan Mumme (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming).

<sup>18</sup> Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther: His Road to the Reformation, 1483–1521*, trans. James L. Schaaf (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1985), 1:125–28; and Ernst Schwiebert, *Luther and His Times: The Reformation from a New Perspective* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1950), 193–96. See also Richard J. Serina Jr., "Luther's Doctorate and the Start of the Reformation," *Lutheran Forum* 56, no. 3 (2017): 53–57.

1516 letter: “Our theology and St. Augustine are progressing well, and with God’s help rule at our University. Aristotle is gradually falling from his throne, and his final doom is only a matter of time . . . Indeed no one can expect to have any students if he does not want to teach this theology, that is, lecture on the Bible or on St. Augustine or another teacher of ecclesiastical eminence.”<sup>19</sup> Luther and his growing circle of Augustinian—and humanist—influenced colleagues criticized late medieval scholastic theology for its views on grace, nature, reason, faith, and a host of other positions, and provided a fresh—if not altogether new—alternative.

Yet, alongside Luther’s biblical lectures, the means for engaging those positions was the same as it was for their scholastic opponents: the disputation. In 1516, for instance, a master’s candidate named Bartholomäus Bernhardi presented a set of three theses debating the natural powers of man apart from grace on the occasion of his promotion. The theses directly reflect Luther’s own lectures on Romans, which Bernhardi would have attended. They voiced Luther’s opposition to Thomistic and nominalist notions of free will and expressed a conscious reliance upon the arguments of Augustine.<sup>20</sup> A year later, Luther’s colleague Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt published a set of 151 theses protesting indulgences, in the process decrying the “bad mixture” (*mala mixture*) of Aristotle and theology in a way that evokes Luther’s own arguments.<sup>21</sup> Luther himself composed a set of theses for debate at the September 1517 promotion disputation for Franz Günther to bachelor of Bible. The resulting *Theses against Scholastic Theology* pitted Augustine against the nominalist Gabriel Biel on the ability to love God and keep the commandments.<sup>22</sup> And it was at his own September 1519 disputation for promotion to bachelor of Bible that Philip Melanchthon unveiled a set of theses on the sufficiency of Scripture that many now equate with the original formulation of *sola Scriptura*.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Martin Luther, “To John Lang, Wittenberg, May 18, 1517”: vol. 48, p. 42, in *Luther’s Works, American Edition*, vols. 31–55, ed. Helmut Lehmann (Philadelphia/Minneapolis: Muhlenberg/Fortress, 1957–86), hereafter AE.

<sup>20</sup> Jens-Martin Kruse, *Universitätstheologie und Kirchenreform: Die Anfänge der Reformation in Wittenberg 1516–1522* (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 2002), 78–82; and Brecht, *Martin Luther*, 1:166–67.

<sup>21</sup> Leppin, “Zuspitzung und Wahrheitsanspruch,” 51; and Brecht, *Martin Luther*, 1:170.

<sup>22</sup> Brecht, *Martin Luther*, 1:172; and Theodor Dieter, “Martin Luther and Scholasticism,” in *Remembering the Reformation: Martin Luther and Catholic Theology*, ed. Declan Marmion, Salvador Ryan, and Gesa E. Thiessen (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2017), 55–74. Dieter notes that even the theses did not even receive their current title until the Erlangen edition; prior to that, they were simply identified by the name of Gunter as respondent or described as a debate over nature and grace.

<sup>23</sup> Schwarz, “Disputationen,” 374. For Melanchthon, see also Volker Leppin, “Die Genese des reformatischen Schriftprinzips: Beobachtungen zu Luthers Auseinandersetzung mit Johannes Eck bis zur Leipziger Disputation,” in *Reformatorsche Theologie und Autoritäten: Studien zur Genese*

Though these are normally treated as part of the early Wittenberg Reformation, they were nonetheless concrete examples of interscholastic debate between medieval schools of theology on contested questions that entered the public realm through, of all things, university disputation.<sup>24</sup> Of course, that is to say nothing yet of the most notable disputations and theses: the *Ninety-Five Theses* of October 1517, the Heidelberg Disputation of 1518, and the Leipzig Disputation of 1519. We know the impact of the *Ninety-Five Theses*, even if we do not know when or how they were distributed or for what purpose.<sup>25</sup> We know the implications of the Leipzig Disputation of 1519, which was the first disputation for which we have protocols recording exactly what arguments were set forth and debated during the proceedings.<sup>26</sup> We also know that Luther's ultimate conclusion there—pope and council can err, but Scripture alone is infallible—led to the resumption of heresy charges against him and to his eventual excommunication.<sup>27</sup> But this culture of disputation provides a different insight into the theses Luther composed for debate at Heidelberg and raises important questions about the historical significance of the theology of the cross that twentieth-century Lutheran theologians found in those theses.<sup>28</sup>

### III. Heidelberg in the Context of Academic Disputation

No one looks to the indulgence theses or the protocols of the Leipzig Debate—or, for that matter, the other examples of disputations and theses cited above—as definitive expressions of Reformation or Lutheran theology, yet Heidelberg is

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*des Schriftprinzips beim jungen Luther*, ed. Volker Leppin (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 138–139.

<sup>24</sup> For a differentiation of disputations and theses during this period and their goals, see Volker Leppin, "Disputation als Medium der Theologie- und Kirchenreform in der Reformation: Zur Transformation eines akademischen Mediums," in *Lehren und Lernen im Zeitalter der Reformation: Methoden und Funktionen*, ed. Gerlinde Huber-Rebenich (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 2012), 115–125.

<sup>25</sup> For the debate on the posting of the theses, see Kurt Aland, *95 Theses: With Pertinent Documents from the History of the Reformation* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1967); Erwin Iserloh, *The Theses Were Not Posted: Luther between Reform and Reformation*, trans. Martin E. Marty (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968); and, more recently, Volker Leppin and Timothy J. Wengert, "Sources for and against the Posting of the *Ninety-Five Theses*," *Lutheran Quarterly* 29, no. 4 (2015): 373–98.

<sup>26</sup> Leipzig, interestingly enough, was the first disputation to have official protocols, or record of the proceedings, per agreement between the disputants. On this, see especially Schubert, "Libertas Disputandi."

<sup>27</sup> On the fallout, see Brecht, *Martin Luther*, 1:322–48.

<sup>28</sup> For a possible—but somewhat conjectural—explanation of the historical reasons behind the development of the theology of the cross in the early twentieth century, see James Stayer, *Martin Luther, German Saviour: German Evangelical Theological Factions and the Interpretation of Luther, 1917–1933* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), 48–78, especially 60–63.

treated differently. And maybe it is treated differently because it has been taught differently to interested readers today. The Heidelberg Disputation has become functional shorthand for the “Theology of the Cross.” In fact, one will strain to find entries in theological or historical reference works on the Heidelberg Disputation. References to the actual disputation itself are normally found as mere keywords in entries titled “Theology of the Cross.” The theses are cast as expressions of a new, distinctly Reformational, even Lutheran vision for theology, with a line directly connecting Heidelberg in 1518 to Luther’s 1525 *Bondage of the Will* and his biblical lectures of the 1530s, in order to substantiate this vision.<sup>29</sup> While this essay cannot address the content of the theology of the cross or the Heidelberg Theses, placing the theses in their context as an academic disputation will shed important light on how to understand their historical significance.

First, while it is customary to speak of the Heidelberg Disputation as occurring at a chapter meeting of the Saxon-Thuringian province of Luther’s religious order, the Augustine Hermits (technically “Order of the Eremites of Saint Augustine,” or OESA), it was actually an academic disputation conducted at the University of Heidelberg.<sup>30</sup> Though the Augustinians technically sponsored the disputation, it was hosted by the school of arts and incorporated faculty and students from Heidelberg and elsewhere.<sup>31</sup> The disputation was consequently an interscholastic debate between rival schools of theology in the late medieval university, and thus it was a place for those rivals to debate their material differences on contested subjects of theology.<sup>32</sup>

Second, we cannot even be sure of Luther’s role at Heidelberg because there is little record of what happened there. The most widely influential account for modern scholarship, that of Luther’s contemporary Martin Frecht, was not written until 1556—nearly forty years after the disputation itself—and was not

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<sup>29</sup> The most representative examples remain Walter von Loewenich, *Luther’s Theology of the Cross*, trans. Herbert J.A. Bouman (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1976); and Gerhard O. Forde, *On Being a Theologian of the Cross: Reflections on Luther’s Heidelberg Disputation, 1518* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997). For a statement that reflects the current consensus in Luther scholarship, see Robert Kolb, “Luther’s Theology of the Cross Fifteen Years after Heidelberg: Lectures on the Psalms of Ascent,” *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 61, no. 1 (2010): 69–85, especially 84.

<sup>30</sup> Bühmann, “Wittenberg Disputation Culture,” suggests that the theological and philosophical theses may have been debated at different meetings on consecutive days—the theological to the Augustinians, the philosophical in the broader university forum—but there is no evidence of this, even if there may be precedent for it.

<sup>31</sup> Hans Scheible, “Die Universität Heidelberg und Luthers Disputation,” in *Melanchthon und die Reformation: Forschungsbeiträge*, ed. Rudolf May and Rolf Decot (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1996), 371–91. Also see Brecht, *Martin Luther*, 1:213–15.

<sup>32</sup> Leppin in fact claims this was the primary goal of disputation for Luther: to distinguish between schools of theology. See Leppin, “Zuspitzung und Wahrheitsanspruch,” 50.

discovered until 1934.<sup>33</sup> Frecht seemingly overstates his point that the theses represented Luther's "entire theology" (*seine ganze Theologie*). Further reservations remain about the accuracy of Frecht's recollection and its relation to other accounts. What appears certain is that Luther presided over the disputation as director of his order's program of study and wrote the theses for Wittenberg Augustinian Leonhard Beier. When the disputation was held on April 26, Luther presumably presided as magister but not as respondent tasked with substantiating his own theses; that fell to Leonhard Beier himself.<sup>34</sup> The disputation was as much about Beier as Luther, and that means Heidelberg did not provide Luther the theological or ecclesiastical platform a public disputation like the medieval *quodlibet* would have.

Lastly, if the report of Martin Bucer (then a student at Heidelberg) is to be believed, Luther's proposal for a new "theology of the cross" did not factor centrally into the debate. Earlier scholars discredited Bucer's report because they did not believe the young Dominican with Erasmian tendencies understood the argument of the theses. But Thomas Kaufmann argues that, on the contrary, Bucer recounted the theses correctly and that past scholarship itself had understood the debate wrong by focusing on the *theologia crucis* rather than the more characteristic Wittenberg emphasis on Augustinian views of grace and works.<sup>35</sup> For instance, Bucer's account does not even mention theological Theses 17–24, in which Luther explains his theology of the cross. What stood out to Bucer was not a new method for theology but rather Luther's description of the law in Thesis 1: "The law of God, the most salutary doctrine of life, cannot advance man on his way to righteousness, but rather hinders him."<sup>36</sup> The new view of the law that astounded Bucer during the disputation reflected Wittenberg's characteristic Augustinian theology of grace and works over against scholastic notions of those same doctrines. In this connection, it is worth noting that Luther cites Augustine twice in his proof for Thesis 1 and continues to cite him through subsequent proofs (Theses 5, 13, 14, 15, 26), yet not a single citation of the church father most pivotal for the movement in Wittenberg is found in the proofs for the more celebrated Theses 17–24.

As a matter of fact, by placing the Heidelberg Theses in the context of medieval academic disputation, what emerges is less a distinctively Protestant or Lutheran

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<sup>33</sup> Scheible, "Die Universität Heidelberg," 375, 383–84. The letter is printed in Walter von Freidensburg, "Ein Brief an Matthäus Nägelein von Strassburg vom 22. Juni 1556," *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins* 86 (1934): 387–92.

<sup>34</sup> Schwartz, "Disputationen," 378.

<sup>35</sup> Thomas Kaufmann, "Bucers Bericht von der Heidelberger Disputation," *Archiv für Reformationgeschichte* 82 (1991): 147–170. Kaufmann includes numerous examples of the scholarly critique of Bucer at 149–150.

<sup>36</sup> AE 31:39.



view of theology than an ongoing interscholastic debate over specific, material doctrines, which Luther and his colleagues addressed chiefly on the basis of St. Paul and Augustine. Heidelberg may not have been the start of a new theological platform at all, but rather the fruition of a conversation taking place in Wittenberg stretching back to 1516 or even earlier.<sup>37</sup> The disputation had more to do with what came before it in Wittenberg than what came after it in Luther's corpus. In that case, instead of a single "theology of the cross" beginning at Heidelberg and running through the remainder of Luther's career, it could be more accurate to speak of something like multiple *theologies* of the cross. The first ends rather than begins with Heidelberg and in some sense punctuates the interscholastic debates revolving around Wittenberg and precipitating the indulgence controversy, then dissipates as debates over papal authority and justification come to the fore.<sup>38</sup> The second relates to Luther's diatribe against the perceived skepticism of Erasmus in *Bondage of the Will*, where he distinguishes between God preached and God not preached in a way strikingly similar to his Eucharistic arguments against Oecolampadius and Zwingli, as well as his emphasis upon the external Word over against "fanatics" like Karlstadt or Anabaptist practice.<sup>39</sup> A third would then appear in his understanding of the "Hidden God" in the 1530s, with its characteristic emphasis upon enduring suffering, possibly explained by Luther's own perception of his reform efforts as a failure.<sup>40</sup> But it appears anachronistic to speak of a single theology of the cross

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<sup>37</sup> And for whatever novelty his position on a theology of the cross may have entailed, it had its own precursor within the late medieval Augustinian tradition. See the discussion of Augustinian Jordan Quidenberg's theology of the cross in Eric Leland Saak, *Luther and the Reformation of the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 44–45.

<sup>38</sup> Interestingly enough, there are references aplenty to something like a "theology of the cross" in the year immediately preceding the Heidelberg Disputation, including Luther's response to Eck's *Obeliski* in Martin Luther, *Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe [Schriften]*, 73 vols. (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1883–2009), 1:290–291 (hereafter WA); the lectures on Hebrews in WA 57:79; and the *Resolutiones* to the indulgence theses in WA 1:614. His use of a theology of the cross to criticize the theology of indulgences can even be traced back to a February 1517 sermon (WA 1:509.35–510.8). On this, see David Bagchi, "Luther's Ninety-Five Theses and the Contemporary Criticism of Indulgences," in *Promissory Notes on the Treasury of Merits: Indulgences in Late Medieval Europe*, ed. R.N. Swanson (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 334.

<sup>39</sup> For one example of parallel language in Luther's sacramental writings, see Luther's "That These Words of Christ, 'This Is My Body,' etc., Still Stand Firm Against the Fanatics," AE 37:68–69.

<sup>40</sup> Take, for instance, Luther's sermon on cross and suffering at Coburg delivered before the presentation of the Augsburg Confession, AE 51:197–208. On Luther's later view of the reform movement, see the classic Gerald Strauss, "Success and Failure in the German Reformation," *Past & Present* 67, no. 1 (1975): 30–63. See also Gerald Strauss, *Luther's House of Learning: Indoctrination of the Young in the German Reformation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 268–308; and Mark U. Edwards, *Luther's Last Battles* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984).

beginning with Heidelberg and spanning the majority of Luther's theological career, even if one were to argue that it changes guises over time due to shifting circumstances and language (in which case it becomes a rather unhelpful unifying concept since it is not identifiable as the same concept at all).

Ultimately, Heidelberg provides but one example of how the culture of medieval disputation may help us better contextualize the early Reformation. Medieval disputations were self-contained, internal dialogues over contested questions in the study of theology. These were the same topics debated in different formats and different venues, from Wittenberg to Paris, from Oxford to Rome, from the twelfth century to the sixteenth century, from classrooms to monasteries and city halls. Disputations were not programs or platforms but perennial discussions. They assumed a recurring process of question and proposition, objection and response that would lead to the acquisition of theological truth, but not in a single disputation and not in a single set of disputation theses—even that of Heidelberg. Reading the Heidelberg Disputation in this sense, it is not a paradigm for Lutheran theology to come but is more like the summary statement of an interscholastic debate that had been going on in Wittenberg since Luther's arrival covering free will, nature, grace, reason, Aristotle, Augustine, St. Paul, and any number of academic matters that would give shape to the early Reformation.

## **“Exulting and adorning in exuberant strains:” Luther and Latin Polyphonic Music**

**Daniel Zager**

In his *Formula Missae* of 1523, Martin Luther outlined and commented on the reformed Latin Mass as he wished it to be observed in Wittenberg. Behind this bare historical fact is a significant and quite wonderful reality that we should not take for granted—namely, that Luther had no interest in jettisoning either the liturgy or the language of the medieval church as he had come to know them. He valued continuity with the church’s past, insofar as it was consonant with the Gospel. He could not have been more emphatic about this, writing in the *Formula Missae*, “We therefore first assert: It is not now nor ever has been our intention to abolish the liturgical service of God completely, but rather to purify the one that is now in use from the wretched accretions which corrupt it and to point out an evangelical use.”<sup>1</sup> After outlining and discussing the various parts of the Mass, Luther included, near the end of the *Formula Missae*, a call for *vernacular* hymns “which the people could sing during mass, immediately after the gradual and also after the Sanctus and Agnus Dei.”<sup>2</sup> Luther wanted both to retain the Latin Mass *and* to employ vernacular hymns within the Mass. Three years later, in 1526, he was even more adamant about continuing to use the Latin language. In the preface to his *Deutsche Messe*<sup>3</sup> (Luther’s outline of the Mass in the German language—the *Gottesdienst*, or Divine Service), he refers back to the *Formula Missae* and his retention of the Latin Mass:

For in no wise would I want to discontinue the service in the Latin language, because the young are my chief concern. And if I could bring it to pass, and Greek and Hebrew were as familiar to us as the Latin and had as many fine melodies and songs, we would hold mass, sing, and read on successive Sundays in all four languages, German, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. I do not at all agree with those who cling to one language and despise all others . . . It is also reasonable that the young should be trained in many languages; for who knows

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<sup>1</sup> Martin Luther, “An Order of Mass and Communion for the Church at Wittenberg, 1523”: vol. 53, p. 20, in *Luther’s Works, American Edition*, vols. 31–55, ed. Helmut Lehmann (Philadelphia/Minneapolis: Muhlenberg/Fortress, 1957–86), hereafter AE.

<sup>2</sup> AE 53:36.

<sup>3</sup> AE 53:61–90.

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how God may use them in time to come? For this purpose our schools were founded.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, for Luther, retaining the Latin Mass was important in part for education of the young and enriching their lives through continued use of the Latin language.

Luther's posture regarding languages for the Mass finds parallels in his views on music: Latin chant is to be retained, *and* German hymns and psalm paraphrases are to be newly written; Latin polyphony (music composed of two or more independent parts) is to be retained, *and* polyphonic settings of German hymns are to be newly composed. Luther's view of music in the Mass is inclusive (1) in retaining the historic repertory of Latin chant as it had developed from the seventh century on and (2) in continuing to cultivate Latin polyphony as it had developed during the fifteenth century in the hands of Franco-Flemish composers such as Guillaume Du Fay (1397–1474), Johannes Ockeghem (ca. 1410–1497), and Josquin des Prez (ca. 1450–55–1521). Such Latin polyphonic music would subsequently serve as models for composers like Luther's colleague Johann Walter (1496–1570); drawing on the musical language of Josquin and others, Walter would provide polyphonic settings of the newly developing repertory of German-language hymns (chorales). Luther was committed to both Latin- and German-texted liturgy and music.

The Latin polyphonic music of the church, specifically, experienced remarkable contrapuntal and stylistic development during the fifteenth century. Indeed, the prominent fifteenth-century music theorist, writer, and composer Johannes Tinctoris (ca. 1430–35–1511) observed, in his 1477 *Liber de arte contrapuncti* (Book on the Art of Counterpoint), that “there is no composition written over forty years ago which is thought by the learned as worthy of performance.”<sup>5</sup> On its surface that may seem like an audacious, perhaps even arrogant, statement, but in studying the music of the fifteenth century one notes that there is, in fact, a marked change in musical language by about mid-century, with the older layering of independent lines in late medieval polyphony giving way to a musical language in which the various voice parts of the polyphonic texture are more homogeneous in character, more smoothly integrated one with the other. That is the kind of Latin polyphony that Luther knew and loved and wished to retain, pointing on numerous occasions to Josquin, the preeminent composer of the later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Recorded sometime before December 14, 1531, in one of his “Table Talks,” Luther stated that “God has preached the gospel through music, too, as may

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<sup>4</sup> AE 53:63.

<sup>5</sup> Johannes Tinctoris, *The Art of Counterpoint (Liber de arte contrapuncti)*, trans. and ed. Albert Seay, *Musicological Studies and Documents*, 5 (Rome: American Institute of Musicology, 1961), 14.

be seen in Josquin, all of whose compositions flow freely, gently, and cheerfully, and are not forced or cramped by rules like the song of the finch.”<sup>6</sup> Also recorded in a “Table Talk” around 1540 is Luther’s observation that “Josquin is a master of the notes, which must express what he desires; on the other hand, other choral composers must do what the notes dictate.”<sup>7</sup> Three years earlier, Luther had lamented, “Alas, what fine musicians have died within the last ten years: Josquin (d. 1521), Pierre de la Rue (d. 1518), Finck (d. 1527), and many other excellent men.”<sup>8</sup> A keen observer of the music of his time, and a man who loved music, Luther not only discerned the quality of Josquin’s music but linked it to proclamation of the Gospel. Luther also corresponded with a well-known composer of the generation after Josquin, namely Ludwig Senfl (b. ca. 1489–91, d. 1543), from whom Luther requested, in a letter dated October 4, 1530, a polyphonic setting of the chant antiphon *In pace, in idipsum* (Psalm 4:8, “In peace I will both lie down and sleep”).<sup>9</sup>

How did Luther know the music of Josquin? Did Luther at some point meet Senfl, thus explaining his very direct and cordial request of the composer? Only by answering these questions and considering Senfl’s Latin polyphony can we provide a basis for understanding Luther’s love of Latin polyphony. Luther expressed this love with great fervor and eloquence in his preface to Georg Rhau’s *Symphoniae iucundae* of 1538, itself an anthology of Latin polyphony: “It is possible to taste with wonder (yet not to comprehend) God’s absolute and perfect wisdom in his wondrous works of music. Here it is most remarkable that one single voice continues to sing the tenor, while at the same time many other voices play around it, exulting and adorning it in exuberant strains . . . .”<sup>10</sup> It is important to clarify here what Luther means when he writes that “one single voice continues to sing the tenor.” A preexistent chant melody serving as the basis for a polyphonic setting was often placed in the tenor part—the part that quite literally “held” (Latin, *tenere*) the chant melody. Thus, “to sing the tenor,” as the translator Ulrich Leupold has it, means to sing the preexistent chant melody, which may be referred to as the *cantus firmus* (“firm song”) or the *cantus prius factus* (“song made previously”).

Luther was familiar with the magnificent and extensive Franco-Flemish repertory of fifteenth-century Latin sacred polyphony due to Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony from 1486 to his death in 1525. Frederick established his chapel

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<sup>6</sup> AE 54:129–30. For a necessary corrective to Tappert’s translation, see Robin A. Leaver, *Luther’s Liturgical Music: Principles and Implications* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 368 n199.

<sup>7</sup> Walter E. Buszin, *Luther on Music*, Lutheran Society for Worship, Music and the Arts, Pamphlet Series, no. 3 (St. Paul: North Central Publishing, 1958), 13 [reprinted from *Musical Quarterly*, 1946].

<sup>8</sup> Buszin, *Luther on Music*, 13.

<sup>9</sup> AE 49:427–29.

<sup>10</sup> AE 53:324.

of clergy and musicians—the Hofkapelle—in 1491, their responsibility being to furnish music for the daily Mass and Office liturgies wherever Frederick was “in residence,” whether traveling or in Wittenberg or Torgau, the latter being his primary place of residence.

In Wittenberg, Frederick’s new Castle Church was dedicated on January 17, 1503, one year after he had established his new university in Wittenberg. Also known as the *Allerheiligenstiftskirche* (“Church of the All Saints’ Foundation”), after the small *Allerheiligenkapelle*, or “All Saints Chapel,” which previously occupied that site, the Castle Church had its own group of clergy and musicians responsible for an extensive daily round of Mass and Office liturgies, by one scholar’s estimate “over 1,000 [sung] Masses each year.”<sup>11</sup> That pattern remained until late 1524 when, at Luther’s urging, “all the masses except for the evangelical Sunday mass were discontinued.”<sup>12</sup>

Latin polyphony for those liturgical observances was provided by two groups of music manuscripts, those groups being distinguished one from the other by where they were copied. A total of nineteen manuscript sources of Latin polyphony used at the Castle Church have come down to us, all of which, save one, are now held by the university library in Jena (the one exception residing in Weimar). The first group, of eight manuscripts,<sup>13</sup> was copied between approximately 1500 and 1520 at the Castle Church in Wittenberg for use at that establishment.<sup>14</sup> Those Wittenberg manuscripts preserve polyphony for both the Proper and Ordinary of the Mass as well as music for Vespers. The second group, consisting of eleven manuscripts,<sup>15</sup> was copied between 1500 and 1525 in the famed scriptoria of Petrus Alamire (ca. 1470–1536) and his associates (in present-day Belgium), and either presented to Frederick as gifts by Margaret of Austria or by her father Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I (r. 1493–1519) or purchased by Frederick.<sup>16</sup> The Alamire manuscripts furnish, predominantly, music for the

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<sup>11</sup> Kathryn Ann Pohlmann Duffy, “The Jena Choirbooks: Music and Liturgy at the Castle Church in Wittenberg under Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony” (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1995), 174.

<sup>12</sup> Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther: Shaping and Defining the Reformation, 1521–1532*, trans. James L. Schaaf (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 129.

<sup>13</sup> Jena, Thüringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, MSS 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36; and Weimar, Bibliothek der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirchengemeinde, MS A (see Duffy, 2).

<sup>14</sup> Duffy, “The Jena Choirbooks,” 2.

<sup>15</sup> Jena, Thüringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, MSS 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 20, 21, and 22.

<sup>16</sup> For a recent, detailed study of this group of eleven manuscripts see Hannah Hutchens Mowrey, “The Alamire Manuscripts of Frederick the Wise: Intersections of Music, Art, and Theology” (PhD diss., Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester, 2010). For descriptions of each manuscript see *The Treasury of Petrus Alamire: Music and Art in Flemish Court Manuscripts, 1500–1535*, ed. Herbert Kellman (Ghent, Amsterdam: Ludion, 1999); the range

Ordinary of the Mass as well as settings of the Magnificat. Ten of the eleven Alamire manuscripts were copied on parchment rather than paper, and exquisite miniature decorative artwork characterizes these sources, as is typical of manuscripts from that workshop. In contrast to these Alamire manuscripts, the eight manuscripts produced in Wittenberg were copied on paper rather than parchment and show very little in the way of artistic miniature illuminations. Both groups of manuscript choirbooks testify to the fact that the first two decades of the century were a time of intensive effort to acquire Latin polyphony for use at Wittenberg's Castle Church.

Of these nineteen manuscripts used at the Castle Church, five include works attributed to Josquin, primarily settings of the Mass Ordinary. Of the Alamire manuscripts, Jena 3 includes five Mass Ordinaries securely attributed to Josquin, with one more in Jena 7 and two in Jena 21. Of the manuscripts copied in Wittenberg, Jena 31 and 32 each preserve three Mass Ordinaries by Josquin. From these manuscript sources alone, it is clear that Luther had ample opportunity to hear the music of Josquin; indeed, in the Mass Ordinaries preserved in these sources, one finds some of Josquin's finest polyphony for the church.

While Luther certainly heard the music of Josquin sung at the Castle Church, it is likely that he knew the composer Ludwig Senfl personally. Who was Senfl? When and under what circumstances might Luther have met the composer? And what did Luther think of his Latin polyphony?

Senfl, whose birth year is uncertain but may be approximated between 1489 and 1491, joined the court chapel of Emperor Maximilian I as a choirboy in 1498.<sup>17</sup> The previous year Heinrich Isaac (ca. 1450-55-1517) had been appointed court composer for Maximilian's chapel, which resided in Vienna when not accompanying Maximilian on his travels. When his voice changed, between approximately 1504 and 1507, Senfl received a three-year period of study at the University of Vienna, after which he returned to Maximilian's chapel as a singer and copyist and became a composition student of Isaac. When Isaac left the imperial chapel in 1515, it is possible that Senfl found additional opportunities as a composer within that establishment. At the death of Maximilian in 1519, the chapel was disbanded, and Senfl held no regular position until 1523 when he joined the Munich court chapel of Duke Wilhelm IV of Bavaria as a composer, remaining there for the rest of his life.

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of dates for these sources, 1500-1525, reflects the descriptions in this volume. Mowrey argues persuasively that the Alamire manuscripts were used at Frederick's Castle Church in Wittenberg rather than at his court chapel; see pp. 362-77 of her dissertation.

<sup>17</sup> Biographical details are drawn from "Ludwig Senfl," accessed June 12, 2016, <http://senflonline.com>; and from *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Senfl, Ludwig," by Stefan Gasch and Sonja Tröster, accessed June 12, 2016, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/>.

The Senfl scholars Stefan Gasch and Sonya Tröster, currently working at the University of Vienna on a new edition of Senfl's works, suggest that Luther and Senfl may have met at the Diet of Augsburg in 1518, though Martin Brecht in his magisterial study of Luther casts some doubt on that possibility, stating that the Diet had ended before the October 7 arrival of Luther in Augsburg for his meeting with Cardinal Cajetan, with Elector Frederick the Wise having left Augsburg already on September 22.<sup>18</sup> Thus, it is possible that Maximilian and his chapel, including Senfl, may have departed Augsburg prior to Luther's arrival. Gasch and Tröster maintain that Senfl traveled to the imperial Diet in Worms in 1521, though they offer no documentary evidence for that conclusion. If true, it would constitute another possible point of contact between the two men.

By the time of the 1530 Diet of Augsburg, Senfl was employed as a composer at the ducal court in Munich and would have attended the Augsburg meeting as a member of the chapel of Duke Wilhelm IV of Bavaria. Senfl's setting of Psalm 133, *Ecce quam bonum* ("Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!") was sung at the beginning of the Diet.<sup>19</sup> Luther, unwelcome at the Diet, resided in Coburg, arriving on April 24 and staying until October 4.<sup>20</sup> One of the first things Luther did on his arrival in Coburg was to have some of his favorite psalm verses painted on the walls of his rooms, verses that encouraged him during this particularly trying time: Psalm 118:17, "I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the Lord"; and Psalm 1:6, "For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish."<sup>21</sup> He kept in touch with people, both at the Augsburg meeting and in Wittenberg, through written communications, as well as receiving guests in his rooms at the Coburg castle. Brecht notes, "Although the place of Luther's stay was supposed to remain a secret, he was constantly receiving visitors."<sup>22</sup>

One of Luther's last letters from Coburg, dated October 4, 1530, was written to Senfl. Before making a specific request of Senfl, Luther reflects on the nature and purpose of music:

... except for theology there is no art that could be put on the same level with music, since except for theology [music] alone produces what otherwise only theology can do, namely, a calm and joyful disposition ... This is the reason why the prophets did not make use of any art except music ... they

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<sup>18</sup> Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther: His Road to Reformation, 1483–1521*, trans. James L. Schaaf (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1985), 250–51.

<sup>19</sup> Leaver, *Luther's Liturgical Music*, 52.

<sup>20</sup> Brecht, *Martin Luther: Shaping and Defining the Reformation, 1521–1532*, 372, 407.

<sup>21</sup> Brecht, *Martin Luther: Shaping and Defining the Reformation, 1521–1532*, 372.

<sup>22</sup> Brecht, *Martin Luther: Shaping and Defining the Reformation, 1521–1532*, 376.



held theology and music most tightly connected, and proclaimed truth through Psalms and songs.<sup>23</sup>

To “[hold] theology and music most tightly connected” is a recurring motif in Luther’s thought, as is the premise that music is a means to “proclaim truth.” Luther then makes a specific request of Senfl. Luther writes that he has always found delight in the chant antiphon *In pace in idipsum dormiam et requiescam*, Psalm 4:8 (“In peace I will both lie down and sleep”).<sup>24</sup> Luther asks Senfl for a polyphonic setting of this text: “I ask if you would have copied and sent to me, if you have it, a copy of that song: ‘In peace [I will both lie down and sleep].’ For this tenor melody has delighted me from youth on, and does so even more now that I understand the words.” Again, to clarify, “tenor melody” in this context means that the preexistent Latin chant forming the basis of a newly composed polyphonic setting was most often placed in the tenor part of the polyphonic complex. Luther continues,

I have never seen this antiphon arranged for more voices [i.e., a polyphonic setting]. I do not wish, however, to impose on you the work of arranging; rather I assume that you have available an arrangement from some other source. Indeed, I hope that the end of my life is at hand; the world hates me and cannot bear me, and I, in turn, loathe and detest the world; therefore may the best and [most] faithful shepherd take my soul to him. And so I have already started to sing this antiphon and am eager to hear it arranged. In case you should not have or know it, I am enclosing it here with the notes; if you wish you can arrange it—perhaps after my death.<sup>25</sup>

This is an interesting excerpt from the letter, on several levels. First, for a world-weary Luther, this psalm-verse provides comfort, as it points him not merely to evening rest and sleep after the labors of a day but, more significantly, to eternal rest for his soul. Second, it shows us just how deeply Luther loved the Latin chant of the church, how the melody of a single brief psalm antiphon could bring him much delight as a singer. Third, it shows us his musical background and training, which permitted him to notate the chant melody for Senfl’s use. And finally, it shows

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<sup>23</sup> AE 49:428.

<sup>24</sup> For a version of this chant melody in a contemporaneous source, see the 1519 Passau Antiphonarium (Vienna: Johannes Winterburger, 1519), fol. 36v, which is available digitally at VD16 as item number A 2946: [http://www.gateway-bayern.de/index\\_vd16.html](http://www.gateway-bayern.de/index_vd16.html), and in a printed facsimile: *Antiphonale Pataviense (Wien 1519): Faksimile*, ed. Karlheinz Schlager, Das Erbe Deutscher Musik, Bd. 88 (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1985). Liturgically, this antiphon is designated in the Passau source for Dominica quarta Quadragesima, ad Completorium (Fourth Sunday in Lent, for the Office of Compline). A modern chantbook, such as the *Liber Usualis*, designates this text for Matins of Holy Saturday and preserves a completely different chant melody; cf. LU 713.

<sup>25</sup> AE 49:428–29.

us how much Luther loved polyphony, with his desire that this single piece of chant form the basis of a larger polyphonic complex.

Luther's first biographer, Johannes Mathesius (1504–1565), provides additional insight on this episode, reporting in his posthumously published 1566 biography of Luther that Senfl did, in fact, provide a polyphonic setting of *In pace in idipsum*, and, in addition, a polyphonic setting of Psalm 118:17, *Non moriar, sed vivam*.<sup>26</sup> That Senfl also provided this second motet is an interesting detail. As far as we know, Luther did not ask for a second polyphonic setting, so why did Senfl send him a setting of *Non moriar*? One reasonable hypothesis is that Senfl visited Luther at Coburg castle (secretly, since Luther remained persona non grata) and saw that psalm verse painted on the wall of Luther's room. Knowing how much that verse meant to Luther, Senfl also provided the second polyphonic setting. Such a hypothetical visit to Luther at Coburg would account for the cordial tone of Luther's October 4 letter to Senfl—the two had already met and become acquainted.

A four-part setting of *In pace in idipsum* is preserved in a set of manuscript partbooks from the mid-sixteenth century. That source, now held by the Zwickau Ratsschulbibliothek as Mus. Ms. 73, is known as the manuscript of Jodocus Schalreuter (born in Gera ca. 1487), who identifies himself as the copyist and owner of the manuscript partbooks.<sup>27</sup> The polyphonic setting of *In pace in idipsum*, however, is entered without composer attribution, without any reference to Senfl. By contrast, this source does include thirteen polyphonic settings that are attributed by the copyist to Senfl. So the question is whether the setting of *In pace in idipsum*, which the copyist declined to attribute to Senfl, is one that he wrote at Luther's request—bearing in mind, however, that Luther did not wish to impose on Senfl the work of composing a new polyphonic piece, Luther assuming that Senfl might have available “an arrangement from some other source.”<sup>28</sup> The editors of the 2004 edition of the Schalreuter manuscript are unwilling to ascribe it to Senfl without adding a question mark.<sup>29</sup> While such questions of attribution are often difficult, my observation, after examining the compositions attributed to Senfl in this source, is that the setting of *In pace in idipsum* is similar in terms of musical style and procedure to other Senfl compositions in this source. But basing an attribution

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<sup>26</sup> *Sixteenth-Century Biographies of Martin Luther*, ed. Christopher Boyd Brown, Luther's Works, Companion Volume (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2018), 352–53; Leaver, *Luther's Liturgical Music*, 52 and 369 n 204.

<sup>27</sup> *Die Handschrift des Jodocus Schalreuter (Ratsschulbibliothek Zwickau Mus. Ms. 73)*, ed. Martin Just and Bettina Schwemer, Das Erbe Deutscher Musik, Bd. 115–116 (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 2004). Bd. 115a, vii.

<sup>28</sup> AE 49:428–29.

<sup>29</sup> Similarly, the Danish scholar Ole Kongsted adds a question mark after Senfl's name in his edition: *Motetter af Ludvig Senfl*, ed. Ole Kongsted, Capella Hafniensis Editions A. 1 (Copenhagen: The Royal Library, 2001), 12–17.

on such “internal” evidence as the music itself is always tricky, for the musical style and language of Senfl is hardly unique as compared to his contemporaries represented in this manuscript source. Without concordant sources attributing the composition to Senfl—a type of “external” evidence—the question mark, I believe, will have to remain in place.<sup>30</sup>

In the *prima pars* (“first part,” mm. 1–49 of Kongsted’s edition) of this polyphonic setting of *In pace in idipsum*, nearly every note in the tenor part is taken from the chant, excepting only the flourish on the second pitch (mm. 9–11). Recall Luther’s words from 1538 in praise of Latin polyphony: “Here it is most remarkable that one single voice continues to sing the tenor, while at the same time many other voices play around it, exulting and adorning it in exuberant strains . . . .” What Luther described in 1538 may be illustrated by this setting of *In pace in idipsum*—regardless of whether Senfl or someone else is the composer. The composer has taken a specific chant as the basis for his composition, preserving the pitches of the chant in the tenor and, moreover, allowing the opening melodic profile of the chant to infuse the other three voice parts around the tenor (mm. 1–10). The chant melody that Luther so loved forms the basis of the polyphony, yet it is integrated with the other voice parts so that the whole composition sounds balanced, the preexistent chant melody not dominating the musical texture. While we might take that for granted just in terms of the characteristic overall sound of sixteenth-century Latin polyphony, we should not underestimate the compositional control that is at work here. Luther did not underestimate it, as this comment recorded in the Table Talk reveals: “After some fine and beautiful motets by Senfl had been sung, [Luther] was amazed, accorded them much praise, and said: ‘I would not be able to compose such a motet, even if I would tear myself to pieces in the attempt, just as he [Senfl] would not be able to preach a Psalm as I can.’”<sup>31</sup>

Unlike the setting of *In pace in idipsum* transmitted anonymously in the Schalreuter manuscript, which may or may not have been composed by Senfl, there is no doubt about the four-part motet *Non moriar sed vivam* (Psalm 118:17), which is attributed to Senfl in manuscript sources in Berlin, Regensburg, and Zwickau.<sup>32</sup> The text of Psalm 118:17 is as follows:

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<sup>30</sup> In her study *Mehrstimmige Responsorienvertonungen in deutschen Quellen des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts*, *Collectanea Musicologica* 8 (Augsburg: Wißner, 1998), 2:72, Bettina Schwemer indicates the authorship of this composition as “anonym.”

<sup>31</sup> Leaver, *Luther’s Liturgical Music*, 58–59, 371n227; Buszin, *Luther on Music*, 7–8.

<sup>32</sup> “Ludwig Senfl,” accessed May 1, 2019, [www.senflonline.com](http://www.senflonline.com).

*Non moriar sed vivam, et narrabo opera domini.*

I shall not die but live, and tell the works of the Lord.<sup>33</sup>

Motets had no fixed functions within either Mass or Office liturgies; rather, they were employed with great flexibility within a given liturgical occasion, their use not being limited to where the specific texts might be appointed within those liturgies.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, as one can tell from Luther's Table Talk, motets were sung outside of liturgical occasions, such as for recreational or devotional purposes by a group of associates or friends.

Senfl's motet *Non moriar sed vivam* is constructed economically by drawing on a small number of recurring musical ideas. The chant melody associated with this text is stated in its entirety twice: first in the soprano (or discant) voice (mm. 9–24), and later in the tenor voice (mm. 46–62).<sup>35</sup> Senfl uses the first phrase of this chant melody in the opening measures, where alto, tenor, and bass successively preview the preexistent chant melody about to be sung in its entirety by the soprano voice. As this chant melody sounds forth in slower note values, Senfl employs quicker figures on the word “vivam,” thereby adding forward momentum to the polyphonic complex. A new and distinctive musical idea appears with the second textual phrase “et narrabo opera.” This musical idea at times uses only two pitches, the pitch repetition providing an essentially rhythmic idea that contrasts with the opening melodic gesture derived from the preexisting chant.<sup>36</sup>

In summary, Luther desired to retain the Latin Mass, even as he took the lead in creating a repertory of vernacular hymns and a vernacular form of the Mass. Retaining the Latin Mass meant that the young especially would still have the benefit of using the Latin language. Moreover, in terms of music, Latin chant and Latin polyphony—each a remarkable heritage of the Western church—would also be retained, insofar as individual chant texts and motet texts were consonant with the gospel. Significantly, Luther knew the music of Josquin and came to know Ludwig Senfl sufficiently well to request a specific Latin polyphonic setting from him. And

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<sup>33</sup> Luther tried his hand at setting this text. See Leaver, *Luther's Liturgical Music*, 58–60; and *Lutheran Choral Anthology: The 16th Century*, ed. Carl F. Schalk and William H. Braun (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2010), 165–69.

<sup>34</sup> Anthony M. Cummings, “Toward an Interpretation of the Sixteenth-Century Motet,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 34, no. 1 (Spring 1981): 43–59; Anthony M. Cummings, “The Motet,” in *European Music, 1520–1640*, ed. James Haar (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2006), 130–56; David Crook, “The Exegetical Motet,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 68, no. 2 (Summer 2015): 255–316.

<sup>35</sup> For the chant melody, see Leaver, *Luther's Liturgical Music*, 53, 59. Measure numbers refer to Kongsted's edition (see note 29 above).

<sup>36</sup> For a recording of *Non moriar sed vivam*, see Ludwig Senfl: *Komponist der Reformation*, with Wilfried Rombach and Ensemble Officium, Christophorus CHR 77226, 2000, compact disc.

central to the topic of Latin polyphony is Luther's own love for this music and his sense of wonder at such music—a sense of wonder that reminds us not to take for granted the inherent beauty and the consistent compositional craftsmanship of those repertories from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

A final question to pose here is simply this: To what extent did Latin polyphony continue to be used in Lutheranism *after* Luther's death in 1546? Luther's bilingual model for liturgy found a parallel in terms of musical composition and performance throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and well into the eighteenth century, which is to say that the German chorale in all its musical manifestations coexisted with the continuing use of Latin chant and polyphony in the Lutheran church.

Johann Walter, Luther's most immediate musical colleague, is best known for his 1524 published polyphonic settings of German chorales—a landmark collection in the sense that it was the first in what would become a flood of vocal and instrumental elaborations of chorale melodies.<sup>37</sup> But Walter also composed much Latin polyphony, including a five-part setting of *Non moriar sed vivam*.<sup>38</sup>

Georg Rhau (1488–1548), a composer and music theorist who served briefly (1518–1520) in Leipzig as cantor at the St. Thomas School (a position that some two centuries later would be held by Johann Sebastian Bach), returned to his home town of Wittenberg in 1523. He there became a leading printer and publisher for the emerging church, editing and printing eleven volumes of Latin polyphony as well as music theoretical and pedagogical works written in Latin. Illustrative of his published anthologies is his 1538 *Symphoniae iucundae* (with a preface by Luther), which contains fifty-two Latin motets.<sup>39</sup>

The great Lutheran cantor, composer, and music theorist Michael Praetorius (1571–1621) had a direct link to the Luther circle in Wittenberg since his father was a colleague of Johann Walter. Praetorius was one of the most prolific of all Lutheran composers, both with respect to the German chorale—where he most often provided multiple settings of a given chorale—but also with respect to Latin polyphony. In 1611, for example, he published separate collections of his own Latin

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<sup>37</sup> A facsimile of the 1525 Worms printing was published as Johann Walter, *Das geistliche Gesangbüchlein* “Chorgesangbuch,” Documenta Musicologica, Erste Reihe: Druckschriften-Faksimiles 33 (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1979). For a recent, modern edition, see Johann Walter, *Geistliches Gesangbüchlein, Worms 1525*, ed. Christian Schmitt-Engelstadt (Bergheim: Verlag Dohr, 2017).

<sup>38</sup> For Walter's setting of *Non moriar sed vivam*, see Johann Walter, *Geistliches Gesangbüchlein, Wittenberg 1551, Zweiter Teil: Cationes Latinae*, Sämtliche Werke (Kassel: Bärenreiter; St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1953), 2:168–70.

<sup>39</sup> Georg Rhau, *Symphoniae iucundae*, 1538, ed. Hans Albrecht, Musikdrucke aus den Jahren 1538 bis 1545 in praktischen Neuausgabe 3 (Kassel: Bärenreiter; St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959).

polyphony: Mass movements (predominantly but not exclusively for the Ordinary), Latin hymns for the church year, and Magnificat settings.<sup>40</sup>

A final example illustrating the continuing use of Latin polyphony in the Lutheran sphere is the extensive anthology of Latin motets compiled by Erhard Bodenschatz (1576–1636)—Lutheran cantor, pastor, composer, and music editor. His *Florilegium portense* is a Latin motet anthology in two parts. The first part, published in 1603 and subsequently enlarged in 1618, included 115 Latin motets by forty-eight German composers, including Bodenschatz himself. In the second volume of 1621, Italian composers predominate. These two volumes enjoyed continuous use in schools and churches in the German-speaking lands, specifically in cities and towns having Latin schools.

Bach, for example, used these volumes during his years in Leipzig (1723–1750). His appointment was as cantor of the St. Thomas school (a Latin school) and Director of Music in Leipzig, responsible to the town council. As Director of Music, he was responsible for all of the music at four Leipzig churches—not only the two so-called principal churches, St. Thomas and St. Nicholas but also St. Peter’s and the so-called New Church, which was opened in 1699 to alleviate overcrowding at the two principal churches. Thus, Bach, with the help of student assistants, prepared and supervised four choirs for these four churches on a weekly basis. In a document from August 1730, written by Bach and directed to the Leipzig town council, he describes the graded choir program at the St. Thomas school and how he allocated his approximately fifty-five students among the four churches for Sunday morning music: “St. Peter’s receives the residue, namely, those who do not understand music and can only just barely sing a chorale.”<sup>41</sup> He added, “In the three churches, namely, St. Thomas’s, St. Nicholas’s, and the New Church, the pupils must all be musical.”<sup>42</sup> A Latin motet was a standard part of the Sunday morning music at all three of those churches. This motet repertory consisted not of the elaborate motets composed by Bach himself but rather of older and simpler Latin motets of the type found in the Bodenschatz anthologies. In 1729, the St. Thomas school records show a payment of 12 thaler to Bach for a *Florilegium portense* “which the pupils need in the churches.”<sup>43</sup> Just as Luther would not jettison the Latin language, the Latin Mass with its chant, or Latin polyphony, opting instead for liturgical and musical

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<sup>40</sup> See Michael Praetorius, *Gesamtausgabe der Musikalischen Werke*, ed. Friedrich Blume (Wolfenbüttel: Georg Kallmeyer, 1928–1940); for his Latin polyphony, see particularly volumes 11–14.

<sup>41</sup> *The New Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents*, rev. and enl. by Christoph Wolff (New York: W. W. Norton, 1998), 146.

<sup>42</sup> *The New Bach Reader*, 146.

<sup>43</sup> Andrew Parrott, *The Essential Bach Choir* (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2000), 21–22.

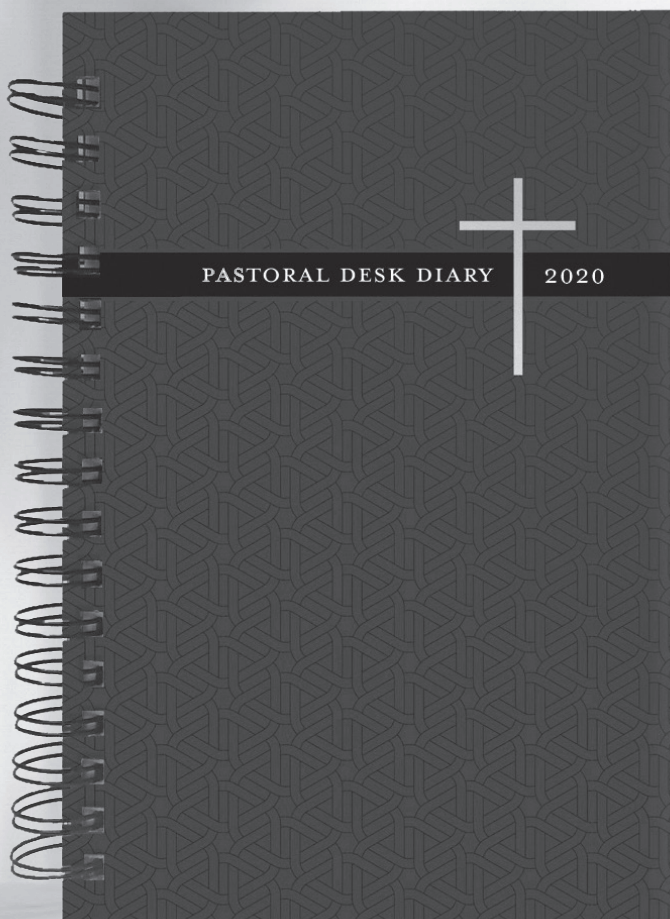
continuity with the rich traditions of the Western church, so also Lutheran worship in eighteenth-century Leipzig, among other cities, continued to draw on Latin polyphony in the form of a motet placed at the very beginning of the Divine Service.<sup>44</sup>

While the Calvinist reform movement in Switzerland and France took a cautious approach to music in the church, limiting music to unaccompanied unison singing of metrical psalms, Luther recognized and loved the musical heritage of the Western church and advocated for the continuing use of Latin chant and Latin polyphony. This openness to the best sacred music traditions of his time effectively set a precedent for music in Lutheran worship. While it is not the case that Latin polyphony found a permanent place in Lutheran liturgies, such polyphony from the late fifteenth through the early seventeenth centuries was invariably well-crafted music from well-trained composers working in the traditions of Western art music, and it is those factors that constitute this precedent. Those polyphonic musical repertoires established high standards of quality—not necessarily complexity, but *quality*—that ultimately manifested itself in musical genres as diverse as motets, baroque vocal concertos, cantatas, and anthems, among others. Just as Luther recognized the rich musical traditions of the Western church, so also he discerned the very best composers of his time. That commitment to continuity with the church's traditions and to quality in newly composed music set a course for Lutheran church music, a course that has provided—and continues to provide—extensive and rich repertoires of sacred music for use in the church today and in the future.

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<sup>44</sup> See *The New Bach Reader*, 113, for Bach's own outline for the "Order of the Divine Service in Leipzig."

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## **The Useful Applications of Scripture in Lutheran Orthodoxy: An Aid to Contemporary Preaching and Exegesis**

**Benjamin T. G. Mayes**

Anyone who says “I’m a good preacher” is probably deceiving himself. We all need to improve. Where should we turn for help? If we look at the preaching of Lutheran Orthodoxy, we will find rich resources, some of them quite surprising to those of us who have grown up with Walther’s *Law and Gospel*. What Lutheran Orthodoxy can give us is the “useful applications of Scripture.” The useful applications of Scripture, based on 2 Timothy 3:16 and Romans 15:4, are a major staple of post-Reformation Lutheran exegesis and preaching that has been lost and needs to be restored.

The Lutheran approach to exegesis in the seventeenth century can be summarized as, first, finding the sense of the biblical text, and second, applying it to one’s hearers or readers. “Now the church’s preacher has two duties,” Johann Gerhard said, “the interpretation of Scripture and applying it to salutary use.”<sup>1</sup> The “salutary use” of Holy Scripture is what concerns us here. This salutary use—especially in teaching, rebuking, warning, and consoling—was a standard feature of Lutheran exegesis and preaching in the seventeenth century. The distinction of law and gospel, on the other hand, was understated in the post-Reformation era. Apparently the fourfold use of Scripture was more significant for exegesis.<sup>2</sup> To be sure, law and gospel are actually being proclaimed whenever Scripture’s admonishing, warning, teaching, and comforting are being proclaimed, and the Lutheran dogmaticians continued to teach the distinction of law and gospel. But when reading and expositing Scripture, the Lutheran Orthodox seem to have thought in terms of multiple *uses* more than in terms of distinguishing law and gospel. These “uses” could be thought of as points of application through which the

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<sup>1</sup> Johann Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” in *On Interpreting Sacred Scripture and Method of Theological Study*, ed. Benjamin T. G. Mayes, trans. Joshua J. Hayes, Theological Commonplaces, I–II (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2017), 201.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Robert D. Preus, “The Influence of the Formula of Concord on the Later Lutheran Orthodoxy,” in *Discord, Dialogue, and Concord: Studies in the Lutheran Reformation’s Formula of Concord*, ed. Lewis William Spitz and Wenzel Lohff (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), 93–94.

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concrete, unchanging, historical reality of what Scripture discusses is applied in various ways to people now.

A few passages of St. Paul stand as the classic passages establishing the useful applications of Scripture. The two passages that Gerhard cites time and again are “For all Scripture, inspired by God, is useful for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness, that a man of God may be complete, ready for all good work” (2 Tim 3:16–17)<sup>3</sup> and, “Whatever was written previously was written for our teaching, so that we through patience and consolation of Scripture might have hope” (Rom 15:4). In his commentary on 1 and 2 Timothy, Gerhard’s exposition of the former passage is short and pithy. The uses of Scripture are: teaching, refutation of errors, correction of life and morals, and training in righteousness (or admonition or exhortation). From Romans 15:4, he adds also “consolation.”<sup>4</sup> Another passage often cited by the Lutheran Orthodox is 1 Corinthians 10:11: “All of that happened to them as an example, but it was written for our warning, upon whom the end of the world has come.”<sup>5</sup> From these passages the useful applications of Scripture are drawn and numbered either at five or four. These useful applications come up repeatedly in the writings of Lutheran Orthodoxy. They are the primary categories that preachers must keep in mind as they preach and teach so as to preach and teach with the intentionality that is already present there in the divine Word.

### I. State of the Question

The useful applications of Scripture in Lutheran Orthodox exegesis and preaching<sup>6</sup> have often been overlooked by scholars. One line of research focuses on the history of Lutheran preaching. Here Martin Luther was an important source with regard to the content of later Lutheran preaching, but he was insignificant with regard to method and form. He did not leave behind any manual for homiletics,

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<sup>3</sup> My translation from Luther’s 1546 German Bible, WA DB 7:281. All Scripture quotations not specifically noted are from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

<sup>4</sup> Johann Gerhard, *Commentary on 1 Timothy and Commentary on 2 Timothy*, trans. Joshua J. Hayes (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2017), 173, 179–180.

<sup>5</sup> My translation from Luther’s 1546 German Bible, WA DB 7:113.

<sup>6</sup> With the term “Orthodox,” the churches of the Reformation claimed the concept of the church found in the ancient Christian confessions for themselves. By claiming to be “Orthodox,” they claimed continuity with the Christendom of the Bible, of the ancient church, and of the first centuries. Thomas Kaufmann, “Luther and Lutheranism,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Protestant Reformations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 146–166, here at 160; Markus Matthias, “Orthodoxie: I. Lutherische Orthodoxie,” in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, vol. 25 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1995), 464–465.

and his manner of preaching was inimitable, not useable by average preachers.<sup>7</sup> Some historians of the homiletics of the sixteenth century have noticed that what influenced Lutheran preaching in that century were rather Philipp Melanchthon's and Erasmus's rhetorical handbooks.<sup>8</sup> It is also common to point out that a new approach to preaching was set forth by Andreas Hyperius (1511–64), a theologian of Marburg in the mode of Melanchthon and Martin Bucer.<sup>9</sup> Hyperius was important for developing a fivefold use or application of Scripture from 2 Timothy 3:16 and Romans 15:4, consisting of teaching, refuting heresy, guiding, correcting, and consoling. This approach to applying the biblical text in preaching, set forth by Hyperius in 1553, was influential on Lutheran homiletics not right away but beginning at the end of the sixteenth century.<sup>10</sup>

Yet there is still a lack of clarity on how, when, and why Lutherans picked up this method. According to Janis Krēsliņš, Hyperius' homiletics text was rarely referenced by the Lutheran Orthodox homiletics texts, even though they were "directly or indirectly" aware of Hyperius' work.<sup>11</sup> Krēsliņš, more thoroughly than all others, has explored the adoption of Hyperius' method of applying Scripture, but one significant exegete he neglected was Matthias Flacius (1520–75). The useful applications of Scripture, based on 2 Timothy 3:16–17 and Romans 15:4, were central to Flacius' hermeneutic in his *Clavis Scripturae Sacrae* (1567), according to Aaron Moldenhauer.<sup>12</sup> Flacius, of course, had drawn heavily on Hyperius in his

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<sup>7</sup> Jānis Krēsliņš, *Dominus Narrabit in Scriptura Populorum: A Study of Early Seventeenth-Century Lutheran Teaching on Preaching and the Lettische Lang-Gewünschte Postill of Georgius Mancelius*, Wolfenbütteler Forschungen 54 (Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1992), 16–17, 42–43; Yngve Brilioth, *A Brief History of Preaching*, trans. Karl E. Mattson (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), 118–119.

<sup>8</sup> Krēsliņš, *Dominus Narrabit in Scriptura Populorum*, 41, 46–47, 53–56; Amy Nelson Burnett, "How to Preach a Protestant Sermon: A Comparison of Lutheran and Reformed Homiletics," *Theologische Zeitschrift* 63, no. 2 (2007): 109–119.

<sup>9</sup> On Hyperius, see Bernd Schröder, "Hyperius, Andreas," in *Religion Past & Present*, ed. Hans Dieter Betz et al., vol. 6 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009), 365–366; Gerhard Rau, "Hyperius, Andreas," in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1986).

<sup>10</sup> Brilioth, *A Brief History of Preaching*, 126; Krēsliņš, *Dominus Narrabit in Scriptura Populorum*, 16–17; Hughes Oliphant Old, *The Age of the Reformation*, vol. 4 in *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures in the Worship of the Christian Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 371; Mary Jane Haemig and Robert Kolb, "Preaching in Lutheran Pulpits in the Age of Confessionalization," in *Lutheran Ecclesiastical Culture, 1550–1675*, ed. Robert Kolb (Boston: Brill, 2008), 136–141; Alfred Niebergall, "Die Geschichte der christlichen Predigt," in *Leiturgia: Handbuch des evangelischen Gottesdienstes*, vol. 2, Gestalt und Formen des evangelischen Gottesdienstes: I. Der Hauptgottesdienst (Kassel: Johannes Stauda-Verlag, 1955), 291.

<sup>11</sup> Krēsliņš, *Dominus Narrabit in Scriptura Populorum*, 41.

<sup>12</sup> Aaron Moldenhauer, "All Scripture Is Useful: Biblical Interpretation in the *Clavis Scripturae* of Matthias Flacius Illyricus" (STM, Concordia Theological Seminary, 2005), vi, 3–4, 21–22. This theme was also noticed by Rudolf Keller, *Der Schlüssel zur Schrift: die Lehre vom Wort Gottes bei Matthias Flacius Illyricus* (Hannover: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1984), 140.

*Clavis*<sup>13</sup> and could easily have discovered the fivefold application of Scripture from him. Flacius's use of the applications of Scripture shows that they were significant not just for homiletics but also for exegesis per se. This is shown also by a study of Bible prefaces in the era of Lutheran Orthodoxy. The applications, whether five or four in number, were central to several study Bibles of the era.<sup>14</sup> This indicates that the applications from 2 Timothy 3 and Romans 15 were more significant for the Lutheran Orthodox than simply as a homiletical technique.

Despite the growing number of scholars who have noticed the useful applications in the Lutheran theology of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the topic is mostly passed over in silence<sup>15</sup> or underappreciated.<sup>16</sup> This indicates that the useful applications of Scripture have been insufficiently appreciated for their role in the exegesis and preaching of early Lutherans. So far, no one has explained how the useful applications of Scripture really functioned. Scholars have noticed them but not explored how they enriched Lutheran preaching and exegesis.

Perhaps this it to be expected, given that the useful applications dropped out of Lutheran preaching in the twentieth century. Whereas Walther and Wilhelm Loehe expected that preachers would use the fivefold applications,<sup>17</sup> standard twentieth century Lutheran homiletics texts completely neglected this topic.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Moldenhauer, "All Scripture Is Useful," 126; Keller, *Der Schlüssel zur Schrift*, 148.

<sup>14</sup> Jürgen Quack, *Evangelische Bibelvorreden von der Reformation bis zur Aufklärung* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus G. Mohn, 1975), 169, 194–197; cf. Johann Anselm Steiger, "The Development of the Reformation Legacy: Hermeneutics and Interpretation of the Sacred Scripture in the Age of Orthodoxy," in *Hebrew Bible / Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation*, ed. Magne Sæbø, vol. 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008), 741.

<sup>15</sup> Bernd Jörg Diebner, "Matthias Flacius Illyricus. Zur Hermeneutik der Melanchthon-Schule," in *Melanchthon in seinen Schülern*, ed. Heinz Scheible (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997), 157–182; Bengt Hägglund, *Die Heilige Schrift und ihre Deutung in der Theologie Johann Gerhards: Eine Untersuchung über das altlutherische Schriftverständnis* (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1951).

<sup>16</sup> Henning Reventlow, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, trans. Leo G. Perdue, vol. 3 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 231; Henning Reventlow, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, trans. Leo G. Perdue, vol. 4 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009), 8; Johann Anselm Steiger, *Philologia Sacra: Zur Exegese der Heiligen Schrift im Protestantismus des 16. bis 18. Jahrhunderts*, Biblisch-Theologische Studien 117 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlagsgesellschaft, 2011); Old, *The Age of the Reformation*, 369–408.

<sup>17</sup> Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther, *American-Lutheran Pastoral Theology*, ed. David W. Loy, trans. Christian C. Tiews (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2017), 98–109; Wilhelm Loehe, *The Pastor*, ed. Charles P. Schaum, trans. Wolf Dietrich Knappe (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2015), 349–351.

<sup>18</sup> Johann Michael Reu, *Homiletics: A Manual of the Theory and Practice of Preaching*, Concordia Heritage Series (Chicago: Wartburg, 1922); Richard R. Caemmerer, *Preaching for the Church* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959).

## II. The Useful Applications Instead of Law and Gospel?

The Formula of Concord confesses the distinction of law and gospel to be “an especially glorious light that is to be maintained with great diligence in the church” (FC Ep V 2).<sup>19</sup> It serves as a hermeneutical key to Scripture, that “the writings of the holy prophets and apostles may be explained and understood correctly” (FC SD V 1).<sup>20</sup> Yet Robert Preus found that Lutherans after the Formula of Concord did not think that the topics considered in FC V and VI (Law and Gospel and Third Use of the Law) needed extensive discussion in their dogmatics.<sup>21</sup> Preus’ observation is confirmed, in part, by an examination of the annotated bibliography of Lutheran theological writings edited by Johann Georg Walch (1693–1775) in the eighteenth century. Walch does not list many treatises dealing with “law and gospel.”<sup>22</sup> This raises the question: does “law and gospel” cease to be a central category for exegesis after the Formula of Concord?

If the four or five “uses of Scripture” are so primary in the exegesis and preaching of Lutheran Orthodoxy, does this shove the distinction of Law and Gospel to the side? Not necessarily. What it indicates, instead, is that the Lutheran Orthodox took the characteristics of individual biblical texts seriously and sought to apply them to people in more ways than simply “law” or “gospel.” For the Lutheran Orthodox, “law and gospel” was not a Procrustean bed onto which everything else must fit.

When expositing 2 Timothy 2:15 (“rightly dividing the word of truth”), Gerhard does not even mention the proper distinction of law and gospel. For him, 2 Tim 2:15 is more general than that. Gerhard takes ὀρθοτομοῦντα τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας as “cutting the Word of truth straight.”<sup>23</sup> It deals with every categorization and distinction that is rightly made within God’s Word. So for Gerhard, 2 Timothy 2:15 is not specifically about the proper distinction of law and gospel. There are other passages that speak to that distinction more clearly, such as Jeremiah 31:31–34; 2 Corinthians 3:6–11; and Galatians 4:24–25.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Theodore G. Tappert, ed., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), 478.

<sup>20</sup> Tappert, *The Book of Concord*, 558.

<sup>21</sup> Preus, “The Influence of the Formula of Concord on the Later Lutheran Orthodoxy,” 93–94.

<sup>22</sup> Johann Georg Walch, *Bibliotheca Theologica Selecta Litterariis Adnotationibus Instructa*, vol. 1 (Jenae: sumtu viduae Croeckeriane, 1757), 119.

<sup>23</sup> Gerhard, *1 and 2 Timothy*, 145–146.

<sup>24</sup> See Johann Gerhard, *On the Gospel and Repentance*, ed. Benjamin T. G. Mayes and Heath R. Curtis, trans. Richard J. Dinda, *Theological Commonplaces*, XVII–XVIII (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2016), 129–137, “On the Gospel,” §§ 119–126.

The useful applications could be described as subcategorizations of law and gospel. In his *Method of Theological Study*, Gerhard looks at 2 Timothy 3:17: “so that the man of God may be prepared, equipped for every good work.”<sup>25</sup> From here he describes the useful applications as leading towards faith, hope, and love, or to “complete Christian piety (as far as happens in this life).”<sup>26</sup> Gerhard does not superimpose law on rebuking, correcting, and admonishing, nor does he superimpose gospel on consoling. Instead, he puts both law and gospel within “teaching.” One must avoid confusing law and gospel, he says. 2 Timothy 2:15 applies here, which tells ministers of the church to “divide rightly the Word of truth.”<sup>27</sup> If the gospel is preached to impenitent and secure people without first preaching the law, they will be hardened in their impiety. On the other hand, if the gospel is omitted and only the law is preached to the contrite, they will become anxious and may even despair.<sup>28</sup> So for Gerhard, the distinction of law and gospel remains important for preaching and pastoral care.

While speaking of law and gospel in the context of “teaching” in homiletics, Gerhard says something that seems to contradict Walther’s precept that the gospel must predominate in every sermon<sup>29</sup> but fits well with the rest of Walther’s homiletic instruction and his actual sermons. Gerhard says that sermons should give teaching based on the law and gospel, yet, as he says, “because the majority of those in the mixed gathering of the church are impenitent, worldly people, Law sermons should be urged and inculcated more frequently. Plus the salutary use of the gospel holds no place in their hearts unless they have first been crushed by the hammer of the law.”<sup>30</sup> However, I do not find that this leads Gerhard to be a legalist. Instead of the Law predominating, I find that “teaching” predominates in his sermons,<sup>31</sup> and to this are added appropriate consolations, warnings, and admonitions.

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<sup>25</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 204.

<sup>26</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 205.

<sup>27</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 205. Note that although the general precept of rightly dividing God’s Word includes much more than the distinction of Law and Gospel, it does also include that distinction.

<sup>28</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 205.

<sup>29</sup> Walther, *Pastoral Theology*, 112–113.

<sup>30</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 205.

<sup>31</sup> This is, by the way, the use that Walther says is “most important among them.” Walther, *Pastoral Theology*, 99.

### III. The Prevalence of the Useful Applications in Seventeenth-Century Lutheran Theology

The post-Reformation Lutheran theologians especially were concerned about finding the useful applications of Scripture.<sup>32</sup> This focus on the applications based on 2 Timothy 3:16 and Romans 15:4 is found here and there in sixteenth century Lutheran texts, but it becomes extremely prevalent in the seventeenth century, especially from 1620 and on.

Luther occasionally spoke of the applications of Scripture as a summary of pastoral duty. Based on a sermon from 1532, Andreas Poach's version of the House Postil (1559) records these words:

In every way, therefore, it is serving God when one does what God has commanded, and does not do what God has forbidden. When a preacher preaches God's Word, baptizes, administers the Sacrament, *exhorts, rebukes, warns* the secure, *comforts* the timid and distressed, he in this way is serving not only men but God, who has ordained and commanded these things; and there is joy in doing them, knowing of a certainty that it is God's will and command.<sup>33</sup>

Luther's preaching consisted of teaching and exhortation especially, and it often ended with admonition and critique. Luther used dialectic in his preaching to make his teaching clear, and he used rhetoric to apply the teaching to his hearers in the forms of praise and blame.<sup>34</sup> In his sermons, Luther would first explain the text of Scripture, then summarize it and explain its doctrines. Then he would teach the faith and admonish people to do good works. He would go back and forth, consoling and admonishing.<sup>35</sup>

In 1526, Luther explained three "methods for strengthening faith" while he explained the prophet Habakkuk.

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<sup>32</sup> Steiger, "The Development of the Reformation Legacy," 741.

<sup>33</sup> Martin Luther, *Sermons of Martin Luther: The House Postils*, ed. Eugene Klug, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 106, emphasis added; E2 6:35; StL 13b:2358. Poach made his version of the Church Postil from notes taken by Luther's scribe Georg Rörer, as a correction to perceived problems with Veit Dietrich's 1544 edition. Since Poach's edition was published after Luther's death, it was not included in the Weimar edition of Luther's writings, though it was included in previous editions, such as the Erlangen and St. Louis editions.

<sup>34</sup> Robert Kolb, *Martin Luther and the Enduring Word of God: The Wittenberg School and Its Scripture-Centered Proclamation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016), 185–189.

<sup>35</sup> Kolb, *Martin Luther and the Enduring Word of God*, 195. On Luther's preaching, see Kolb, *Martin Luther and the Enduring Word of God*, 174–208; Robert Kolb, *Luther and the Stories of God: Biblical Narratives as a Foundation for Christian Living* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 29–64.

In addition to such promises and exhortation Habakkuk also resorts to threats, as he seeks out every method by which they might be sustained and preserved in the faith. For more methods of strengthening faith cannot be found than these three inscribed on this tablet, namely, promise, exhortation, and threat. If these do not help, nothing will. But in keeping with good order, threat is the last and promise the first. For if we promise good things and then implore and exhort, we must let anyone go his way who will not abide by that. Only as a final measure do we resort to threats . . . Christ and the apostles, as well as Moses and all the prophets, observe these three items.<sup>36</sup>

Besides challenging some modern Lutheran notions of preaching—such as the idea that law must never follow gospel—what this shows is that Luther, like all good preachers, was aware of various forms of how God’s Word should be applied to people. At the same time, it is clear that the structure of four or five useful applications from 2 Timothy 3:16 and Romans 15:4 was not in the forefront of his mind.

As mentioned previously, in 1553, a new approach to preaching was set forth by Hyperius of Marburg.<sup>37</sup> Hyperius developed five genres of preaching based on 2 Timothy 3:16 and Romans 15:4: teaching, refuting heresy, guiding, correcting, and consoling.<sup>38</sup> Shortly thereafter, these useful applications were adopted by Flacius in his biblical hermeneutics text, *The Key to Holy Scripture* (1567).<sup>39</sup> According to Flacius, an exegete must know four different things: the individual words, the sense of the discourse, the spirit of the scriptural (human) author, and the *use* of each passage. According to 2 Timothy 3:16–17, all of Scripture has such a use.<sup>40</sup>

The useful applications of Scripture find a significant place also in the Book of Concord. In FC SD XI 12, on God’s eternal election, these passages appear in their usual connection with each other and function to exclude false teaching on predestination, which leads people either to carnal security or despair. Instead, the two passages on the useful applications show that the *uses* are the purpose for which God gave us all of Scripture. Any use of Scripture is by definition wrong

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<sup>36</sup> Luther, *Habakkuk* (1526), LW 19:196; cf. WA 19:393.17–27. Cf. Kolb, *Martin Luther and the Enduring Word of God*, 123.

<sup>37</sup> On Hyperius, see Schröder, “Hyperius, Andreas”; Rau, “Hyperius, Andreas.”

<sup>38</sup> Brilioth, *A Brief History of Preaching*, 126; Krēslinš, *Dominus Narrabit in Scriptura Populorum*, 16–17, 41; Old, *The Age of the Reformation*, 371; Haemig and Kolb, “Preaching in Lutheran Pulpits,” 136–141; Niebergall, “Die Geschichte der christlichen Predigt,” 291.

<sup>39</sup> Moldenhauer, “All Scripture Is Useful,” vi, 3–4, 21–22. This theme was also noticed by Keller, *Der Schlüssel zur Schrift*, 140.

<sup>40</sup> Keller, *Der Schlüssel zur Schrift*, 140; Moldenhauer, “All Scripture Is Useful,” 29–31. See Matthias Flacius, *Clavis Scripturae S. seu de Sermone Sacrarum literarum*, vol. 2 (Basel: Episcopius, 1580), 38–64.



if it leads toward ends that conflict with reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness, patience, comfort, and hope.<sup>41</sup>

The useful applications soon became important for exegesis and preaching. The 1587 postil of Johannes Baumgart (or Pomarius, 1514–78) set forth not just the reason for and summary of each Gospel pericope of the church year but also doctrines, consolations, “reminders” (which are admonitions), and warnings. This is already indicated in the title, which reads: “Postil, in which there is shown most briefly what one should notice from each Sunday and festival Gospel: besides its occasion and summary, especially what kind of teachings, consolation, reminders, and warnings should be noticed, composed in certain questions and answers.”<sup>42</sup>

In 1610, when he wrote his *On Interpreting Sacred Scripture*, Gerhard did not deal with the uses of Scripture.<sup>43</sup> Gerhard’s hermeneutical rules dealt with the *interpretation* of Scripture—but that is only one of a preacher’s two duties. As Gerhard explained ten years later in his *Method of Theological Study*, a preacher’s other duty is to make salutary application of Scripture to his hearers. He writes: “Explanation of the true meaning is nothing but a periphrastic explication of the text. Application of the found and explained meaning to its use is nothing but gathering teachings from the text and making an application for the salvation and well-being of the hearers. One must join these together in sermons since each without the other is incomplete and fruitless.”<sup>44</sup> So for Gerhard, preachers must paraphrase the biblical text and then apply it to their listeners in various ways. In individual pastoral care, such as the “salutary use of private confession and absolution,” the pastor is able to take full account of the specific spiritual condition of individuals and give them “the appropriate remedy applied to them from the physician’s office of the heavenly Word.”<sup>45</sup> Sermons, on the other hand, need to include applications that would serve all the people, and as a result the “mode of application” has to be “manifold, various, and diverse.”<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> W. H. T. Dau and F. Bente, eds., *Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church, German-Latin-English* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), 1067; *Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche: Herausgegeben im Gedenkjahr der Augsburgischen Konfession 1930*, 11th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), 1067; Irene Dingel, ed., *Die Bekenntnisschriften der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche: Vollständige Neuedition* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 1564–1566.

<sup>42</sup> Johann Pomarius, *Postilla, In welcher, was aus einem jeden Sontags vnd Fests Euangelio, benebenst desselbigen Occasion vnd Summa, fürnemlich für Lehren, Trost, Erinnerungen vnd Warnungen zu merken, auffß kürztze angezeigt, vnd in gewisse Fragen vnd Antwort gefasset ist* (Magdeburg: Andreas Gene, 1587), <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn/resolver.pl?urn=urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00022231-6>; cf. Niebergall, “Die Geschichte der christlichen Predigt,” 276.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. footnote 1, Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 55–131.

<sup>44</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 201.

<sup>45</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 204.

<sup>46</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 204.

In 1701, the Tübingen theology professor Andreas Adam Hochstetter set forth his “Short Treatise on How to Preach Aright and How to Expound and Apply the Sacred Text,” a short homiletic that Loehe included as an appendix to his pastoral theology. Here, too, the uses of Scripture play an important role in exegesis and preaching.<sup>47</sup>

The useful applications of Scripture also were important for Lutheran study Bibles in the seventeenth century. Fairly early in the century, a Lutheran study Bible was prepared by Daniel Cramer (1568–1637), general superintendent of Stettin in northern Germany.<sup>48</sup> The Bible was first published in parts in 1619–1620, with a full edition in 1625. The lengthy title, translated, reads:

Bible: That is, the entire Holy Scripture according to the translation, prefaces, and marginal notes of Dr. M. Luther, with several concordances, along with a new summary explanation, in which not only is every book and chapter correctly summarized and outlined, but also the *use* is given afterwards for: doctrine, correction, consolation, warning—in brief and yet richly, so that it can take the place of a sizeable commentary, and it is confirmed with testimonies and examples of Holy Scripture, and thus Scripture is explained with Scripture.<sup>49</sup>

Cramer applies all exegesis to one of four uses: doctrine, consolation, warning, and correction. These uses are the summary of the Bible passage, which show what a willing reader should find in the Bible (according to Rom 15:4; 1 Cor 2, 3, 10, 11).<sup>50</sup>

The useful applications also play a role in another major Lutheran study Bible—arguably the best Lutheran study Bible of all time. This remarkable work was commissioned in 1635 by Duke Ernst “the Pious” of Sachsen-Gotha and published in 1641. This Bible—variously named *Kurfürstenbibel*, *Nürnbergiger Bibelwerk*, *Weimarisches Bibelwerk*, and Ernestinian Bible—had Gerhard as its general editor until his death in 1637, and thereafter, Salomon Glassius (1593–1656). Despite its enormous size, the “Ernestinian Bible” was reprinted repeatedly until the early 20th

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<sup>47</sup> Andreas Adam Hochstetter, “A Short Treatise on How to Preach Aright and How to Expound and Apply the Sacred Text,” in *The Pastor*, by Wilhelm Loehe, trans. Joshua J. Hayes (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2015), 337–358.

<sup>48</sup> Bülow, “Cramer, Daniel” in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 4 (1876): 546–547 [Online-Version]; URL: <https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/gnd119180049.html#adbcontent>

<sup>49</sup> Daniel Cramer, ed., *Biblia Das ist Die gantze H. Schrift, Nach der Dolmetschung Vorreden vnd Marginalien D. M. Lutheri mit mehr[ren] Concordantien Gesambt newer summarischer Außlegung darin nicht allein ein jedes Buch und Capitel richtig verfasst und getheilt sondern auch darauff der nutz an L. Lehr: B. Besserung: T. Trost: W. Warnung Kürztlich vnd dannoch reichlich das es an stat eines Zimlichen Commentarij sein kan, gezeuget, vnd mit Zeugnüßen vnd Exempeln H. Schrift bewähret, vnd also Schrift mit Schrift erklärt wird*, trans. Martin Luther (Straßburg: Zetzner, 1625).

<sup>50</sup> Quack, *Evangelische Bibelvorreden*, 169.

century in both Germany and the United States. Glassius' preface, starting from 2 Timothy 3:14–17, gives a full, Orthodox-Lutheran doctrine of Holy Scripture. The rebirth and renewal of the human creature is set forth as the goal of the Bible. In contrast to Luther's Bible prefaces, law and gospel is not a theme; it is mentioned only once in passing. Instead, Glassius focuses on the uses or benefits (*Nutzbarkeiten*) of Scripture, which include teaching, comforting consciences, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness. This Ernestinian Bible strives to explain the literal sense of Scripture; not all of the "uses" mentioned by St. Paul in 2 Timothy 3:14–17 could be indicated.<sup>51</sup> Until his death, Glassius edited and revised new editions of the Ernestinian Bible and composed new practical applications (uses) for each chapter, which were then included in this Bible beginning with the 1686 edition.<sup>52</sup> This Bible sets forth the literal sense as the basis for the many uses. The literal sense must be found, but it must not stay there. Rather, it must proceed to application. For Glassius, this distinction between the literal sense and its application is different than the distinction between the literal sense and the spiritual or mystical sense of Scripture (such as typology or allegory), which he also approves. The exegesis that takes the literal sense and applies it in teaching, rebuke, correction, training in righteousness, and consolation goes beyond the facts and makes clear that it applies to *me*, to the individual.<sup>53</sup>

Abraham Calov, too, had a study Bible. His German study Bible, published in 1681–1682, is a heavily glossed Bible with many citations from Luther. On the title page of volume 1, it claims to present not just the literal sense, but "in good part also the salutary use of Holy Scripture."<sup>54</sup> Again, on the title page of volume 2, it says that it intends to set forth not just the literal sense of Scripture "but also the salutary use, especially set forth from the writings of the German prophet Luther,

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<sup>51</sup> Salomon Glassius, "Salomon Glassius' Vorrede zum Nürnberger Bibelwerk (1640). Kommentierte Edition," in *Philologia Sacra: Zur Exegese der Heiligen Schrift im Protestantismus des 16. bis 18. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Johann Anselm Steiger (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlagsgesellschaft, 2011), 155–226; Salomon Glassius and Johann Gerhard, eds., *Biblia, Das ist: Die ganze H. Schrift, Altes und Neues Testaments Teutsch/ D. Martin Luthers: / Auff gnädige Verordnung deß ... Herrn Ernsts/ Hertzogen zu Sachsen ... Von etlichen reinen Theologen ... erklärt* (Nürnberg: Endter, 1641); Salomon Glassius and Johann Gerhard, eds., *Das Weimarische Bibelwerk. Biblia das ist die ganze Heilige Schrift Alten und Neuen Testaments verdeutscht von Doctor Martin Luther, and auf Herzog Ernst's Verordnung von etlichen reinen Theologen dem eigentlichen Wortverstand nach erklärt*, Neue Ausgabe, dritte Auflage (St. Louis: Fr. Dette, 1902); Jürgen Quack, *Evangelische Bibelvorreden*, 182–197.

<sup>52</sup> Salomon Glassius, *Enchiridion S. Scripturae Practicum* (Gotha: Typis Reyherianis, 1651); C. F. W. Walther, "Neue Vorrede," in *Das Weimarische Bibelwerk*, Neue Ausgabe, dritte Auflage (St. Louis: Fr. Dette, 1902), iii–vii.

<sup>53</sup> Quack, *Evangelische Bibelvorreden*, 194–197.

<sup>54</sup> "gutes Theils auch der heilsame Gebrauch der Heil. Schrift." Abraham Calov, *Die Heilige Bibel* (Wittenberg: C. Schrödter, 1681), title page of vol. 1.

through his Spirit-rich power and lively, edifying explanation.”<sup>55</sup> Calov’s useful applications in this Bible are based on 2 Timothy 3:16 and Romans 15:4.<sup>56</sup>

Not only in preaching and study Bibles, the useful applications of Scripture even played a role in dogmatics. In 1625, when Gerhard returned to the topic of Holy Scripture and wrote a more lengthy locus on it in his *Exegesis, or A More Copious Explanation of Certain Articles of the Christian Religion*, he wrote again of the uses of Scripture. Speaking of the end purpose of Scripture, he wrote, “With respect to God, the goal of Scripture is the salutary knowledge and glorification of God.”<sup>57</sup> The intermediate goal with respect to us is “teaching, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness,” and “encouraging” (Rom 15:4; 2 Tim 3:16), while the ultimate goal with respect to us is eternal salvation.<sup>58</sup> For nearly every commonplace in his *Theological Commonplaces*, Gerhard includes “practical uses” that correspond to the categories now familiar to us from 2 Timothy 3:16 and Romans 15:4: the didactic use, paraenetic use, elenctic use, paracletic use, and so on. The dogmatics of Balthasar Meisner (1587–1626), Calov, and David Hollaz (1648–1713) featured these useful applications, too.<sup>59</sup>

The useful applications of Scripture also found a place in hymnody and sacred music. Johann Rist in 1655 wrote *New Musical Feast-day Devotions, Consisting in Hymns Rich in Teaching, Comforting, Admonishing, and Warning, on All the Gospels*.<sup>60</sup>

These are but a few examples. The useful applications of Scripture became a rich part of Lutheran approaches to Scripture in the seventeenth century. Now that

<sup>55</sup> “Sondern auch der heilsame Gebrauch, Sonderlich aus den Schrifften des deutschen Propheten Lutheri, durch seine geistreiche Krafft, und Lebensvolle erbauliche Auslegung fürgetragen werden . . .” Calov, *Das Andere Volumen Der Göttlichen Schrifften Alten Testaments . . . Durch mühsamen großen Fleiß D. Abraham Calovii* (Wittenberg: Christian Schrödter, 1682), title page, <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:gbv:3:1-506268>.

<sup>56</sup> Volker Jung, *Das Ganze der Heiligen Schrift: Hermeneutik und Schriftauslegung bei Abraham Calov* (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1999), 18.

<sup>57</sup> Johann Gerhard, *On the Nature of Theology and On Scripture*, ed. Benjamin T. G. Mayes, trans. Richard J. Dinda, rev. ed., Theological Commonplaces, Exegesis I (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2009), 318, Commonplace 1 (Exegesis), § 362.

<sup>58</sup> Gerhard, *On the Nature of Theology and On Scripture*, 318–319, § 363.

<sup>59</sup> Hans Leube, “Die Theologen und das Kirchenvolk im Zeitalter der lutherischen Orthodoxie (1924),” in *Orthodoxie und Pietismus: gesammelte Studien* (Bielefeld: Luther-Verlag, 1975), 44–45; Kenneth G. Appold, “Abraham Calov on the ‘Usefulness’ of Doctrine,” in *Hermeneutica Sacra: Studies of the Interpretation of Holy Scripture in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Torbjörn Johansson, Robert Kolb, and Johann Anselm Steiger (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 304.

<sup>60</sup> Johann Rist, *Neüe Musikalische Fest-Andachten, Bestehende In Lehr- Trost- Vermahnungs- und Warnungsreichen Liedern, über Alle Evangelien und sonderbahre Texte, welche Jährlich, an hohen und gemeinen Fest- Apostel- und anderen Feiertagen, in den Evangelischen Kirchen werden erkläret und ausgelegt, Die den Grössern Theils auf gewöhnliche und bekante; Alle aber auf ganz Neüe von Herren Thoma Sellio . . . wolgesetzte Melodyen können gespielet und gesungen werden* (Lüneburg: Johann und Heinrich Stern, 1655).

their importance for Lutheran theology, exegesis, devotion, and preaching has been demonstrated, the question naturally arises: how were these uses actually used?

#### IV. The Useful Applications in Detail

Following Romans 15:4 and 2 Timothy 3:16–17, Gerhard identifies five uses or applications of Scripture: instruction (διδασκαλία), reproof (ἐλεγχος), correction (ἐπανόρθωσις), training (παιδεία), and consolation (παράκλησις).<sup>61</sup> Walther, drawing on the wisdom of Lutheran Orthodoxy, uses the same categorization of applications of Scripture in his *American Lutheran Pastoral Theology*. Again, the five uses are teaching, rebuking, correcting, instructing, and consoling (or encouraging). Walther uses the technical terms: applying God's Word didactically, elenctically, epanorthotically, paedeutically, and paracletically.<sup>62</sup> Walther can here be seen as a commentary on Gerhard.

#### Rules for Teaching

For each of the five uses of Scripture, Gerhard gives rules. For “teaching”: first, the doctrines (i.e., teachings) must be native to the text, not far-fetched. Second, more law sermons are needed than gospel ones, due to widespread impenitence. Third, law and gospel must be distinguished. Fourth, doctrines cannot simply be taken from a deed in a historical text of Scripture but must be taken from clear texts.<sup>63</sup> (That is, there must be clear judgments on the will of God related to the historical deed. So, to give an obvious example, after explaining Saul's suicide in 1 Samuel 31:4, it would be wrong to teach that it is permissible to imitate his act.) Fifth, when teaching, one should draw out doctrines from legitimate, logical consequences, such as “from effect to cause, from positing one thing to removing the contrary, from similar things to similar things.”<sup>64</sup> Sixth, only basic doctrines should be preached to the laypeople. Lofty doctrines should be relegated to academies. Seventh, after confirming the doctrine from the text that is being preached, it is a good idea to cite other testimonies of Scripture that speak of the same doctrine. This shows the harmony of Scripture and strengthens the hearers' knowledge of and faith in the truth.<sup>65</sup>

Compare this with Walther's *Pastoral Theology*. For Walther, the didactic (teaching) use is the most important. Without sufficient teaching, people are not being given the bread of life; they will be disgusted by God's Word. Teaching the

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<sup>61</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 204.

<sup>62</sup> Walther, *Pastoral Theology*, 98–99.

<sup>63</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 205.

<sup>64</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 205.

<sup>65</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 205–206.

facts has to be the foundation, without which admonition, reproof, and consolation make no sense.<sup>66</sup> Walther explains:

Precisely the eternal thoughts of the heart of God revealed to us humans in Scripture for our salvation, precisely these divine truths, counsels, and mysteries of the faith which were once kept silent by the world but have been made known to us by the writings of the prophets and apostles are the heavenly seed which must be planted in the hearts of the hearers if the fruit of true repentance, pure faith, and sincere, active love is to grow up in them.<sup>67</sup>

So preachers must preach doctrine. When this does not happen, it shows that preachers do not have any thorough knowledge of doctrine. Walther says that a good example of didactic preaching is St. Paul's epistle to the Romans, in which the first eleven chapters are doctrine; only then does he turn to admonitions.<sup>68</sup>

Comparing the two, Gerhard gives more insight on how to actually draw out doctrine from the text of Scripture, while Walther provides more motivation to do so. A contemporary of Gerhard was especially good at drawing out doctrine from the text of Scripture. Friedrich Balduin (1575–1627) of Wittenberg wrote a lengthy commentary on the Pauline epistles that is a paragon of dogmatic (or doctrinal) exegesis.<sup>69</sup>

### Rules for Reproof

Reproof deals with refuting false doctrine. Thus it is the polemical side of teaching.<sup>70</sup> This, by the way, is something Luther does habitually after nearly every main point of his sermons. Gerhard does it less often than Luther, but it still comes up frequently. Indeed, much of his *Theological Commonplaces* consists of reproof. Gerhard's rules for using reproof are as follows. First, do not refute all possible errors before the laypeople, but only the fundamental, central errors. Second, explain contemporary errors and reprove them but "remain cautiously silent" about errors that are not widespread, which people do not know. Here the idea is to avoid giving them new errors to consider. Third and fourth (these points in Gerhard's *Method* are essentially the same), reproof works best when it is taken

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<sup>66</sup> Walther, *Pastoral Theology*, 99–100.

<sup>67</sup> Walther, *Pastoral Theology*, 100–101.

<sup>68</sup> Walther, *Pastoral Theology*, 100–101.

<sup>69</sup> Friedrich Balduin, *Commentarius In Omnes Epistolas Beati Apostoli Pauli* (Frankfurt: Mevius, 1654); Benjamin T. G. Mayes, "Friedrich Balduin (1575–1627)," in *Lives & Writings of the Great Fathers of the Lutheran Church*, ed. Timothy Schmeling (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2016), 97–112; Benjamin T. G. Mayes, "Not Just Proof-Texting: Friedrich Balduin's Orthodox Lutheran Use of Exegesis for Doctrine," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 79, no. 1–2 (2015): 103–120.

<sup>70</sup> Gerhard, "Method of Theological Study," 206.

directly from the text and does not seem far-fetched.<sup>71</sup> For example, on the basis of Matthew 18, the parable of the unmerciful servant, a refutation of universalists seems to flow directly from the text. Fifth, you should reprove with moderation of tone and with gentleness. Avoid rage, coarseness, and ridicule, not to mention obscenity. Sixth, do not use the terms of logic when reproving false doctrine before the people. Seventh, reproof should be only a minority of the sermon's content.<sup>72</sup>

Walther deals with reproof, too, calling it the "elenctic use." It has to do with both coarse and subtle false doctrines, and in both friendly and forceful manners. Not only must false teachings be addressed, but false teachers must be addressed, "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1). And sometimes they must even be reproved by name! Scripture has many examples of reproving false teachers by name.

- Galatians 5:10 I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will have no other mind; but he who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is.
- Matthew 16:6 Then Jesus said to them, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees."
- Revelation 2:15 Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.
- 2 Timothy 2:17–18 And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some.

This elenctic use of Scripture is necessary to defend the people against false belief. Walther quotes Luther: "A teacher who is silent about errors and nevertheless wants to be a proper teacher is worse than an overt enthusiast, and he does more damage with his hypocrisy than a heretic. He cannot be trusted."<sup>73</sup>

Comparing the two, Gerhard offers more caution on how to use reproof effectively, especially if one does not already have the full heart and confidence of the hearers. Walther again gives more motivation to do it, and he insists (as Gerhard does not) upon naming errorists while preaching to the people.

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<sup>71</sup> Gerhard, "Method of Theological Study," 206.

<sup>72</sup> Gerhard, "Method of Theological Study," 206.

<sup>73</sup> Report on Georg Major's last conversation with Luther (Jan. 1546), WA Br 12:362, no. 4298, quoted in Walther, *Pastoral Theology*, 101–102.

## Rules for Training

“Training” is Gerhard’s term for admonition. His rules are as follows. First, “exhortation toward the pursuit of piety and towards the duties of the Christian in this old world wherein charity is nearly dead should be especially frequent.”<sup>74</sup> Second, biblical stories of the saints are excellent material for admonitions. Third, admonitions should deal not just with outward works but also with “the inner man’s progress, which consists of putting the old Adam to death, contempt for the world, the denial of self, sincere humility of heart, etc.”<sup>75</sup> Fourth, take account of the hearers’ situation in life. Admonishing rich people to endure poverty patiently would be out of place. Fifth, general biblical principles and admonitions should be applied specifically to the hearers. Sixth, after expounding the meaning of biblical prayers, canticles, and psalms (which is teaching), add an admonition to imitate, pray, and so on. Seventh, admonition to remain in the truth should also be given after teaching and reproof.<sup>76</sup>

According to Walther, a preacher should not just command, threaten, and rebuke; he should also admonish Christians to do good works. True Christians really *do* want to live for God and serve Him and be completely renewed in the image of God, but that does not mean that they know what to do or, if they do know, that they are always motivated to live lives of Christian love. Despite Luther’s insistence to the contrary in the 1520s, good works do not necessarily follow of themselves.<sup>77</sup>

The model for admonitions is Romans 12:1: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.” When the preacher admonishes, he should not be commanding. He is talking to Christians, and he wants them to be happy and eager servants of God.<sup>78</sup> That is Walther’s approach to admonition.

Comparing Gerhard and Walther, Gerhard again gives more practical advice on how to give admonition within the context of biblical preaching, while Walther gives more motivation and theological rationale for doing so. It is worth mentioning here that both Gerhard and Walther think that people should be admonished with the expectation that what is being admonished is actually *possible*. It is not too much to expect a forgiven, regenerate Christian to begin to love God, show love

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<sup>74</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 206.

<sup>75</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 206.

<sup>76</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 206.

<sup>77</sup> Walther, *Pastoral Theology*, 104–106. Walther notes that Luther, too, knew the importance of admonition. See the long quotation in Walther, *Pastoral Theology*, 105–106, referring to Luther, *Church Postil* (1540), AE 79:181–182.

<sup>78</sup> Walther, *Pastoral Theology*, 106–107.



to his neighbor, and control his outward actions. If a preacher states that everything he admonishes is impossible, people will not strive to do it—and then he is not really admonishing but is teaching people that they are sinful or is admonishing them just to have a sorry feeling (but not to show their contrition by changing their lives). Gerhard and Walther see a new, better life—inside and out—as possible in this life through the power of the Holy Spirit.

### Rules for Correction

By “correction,” Gerhard means moral correction. Because both this one and the elenchtic (or reproving) application deal with rebuking error, either of faith or of life, many of the Lutheran Orthodox combined them together and called them “warning,” based on Luther’s translation of 1 Corinthians 10:11: “All of that happened to them as an example, but it was written for our *warning*, upon whom the end of the world has come.”<sup>79</sup> Essentially, the preacher is doing the exact same thing in both cases, except that the objects of his warning differ: either false teaching and faith, or false living and behavior.

According to Gerhard, this correction is especially necessary now “in these most corrupt dregs of this final age.”<sup>80</sup> This is the first rule. It is necessary; do it. Gerhard’s second, third, and fourth rules deal with the biblical texts that give occasion for correction. These include prophetic sermons, rules for godly living, God’s moral attributes (such as truthfulness, righteousness, or justice), praise of the godly, and condemnation of the ungodly.<sup>81</sup> Following these, Gerhard gives rules for how to give correction. And so his fifth rule is to make sure that the correction is suitable for the situation of the hearers. There is no sense in reproving luxurious clothing to sick people in a hospital. Sixth, use prudence. Do not rebuke sins on the basis of rumors. Do not name names. Private grudges are out of place. Do not treat “great atrocities” lightly nor light matters as though highly important. Seventh, make sure it flows from fatherly love. Eighth, move from lesser to greater; that is, start with something small that people agree is wrong, then move to something related that is even worse. For example, on the basis of Romans 11:22, Gerhard states, “If those who did not feed the hungry and clothe the naked will one day be placed on His left hand, then what shall they fear who have stolen their neighbor’s goods through injustice and deceit?”<sup>82</sup>

When Walther deals with this use of Scripture, he quotes Luther: “Whichever pastor or preacher does not rebuke sin must go to the devil with the sins of others,

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<sup>79</sup> My translation from Luther’s 1546 German Bible, WA DB 7:113. Emphasis added.

<sup>80</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 206.

<sup>81</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 206.

<sup>82</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 207.

even if with regard to his own sins (which are forgiven him [ . . . ]) he is a child of blessedness.”<sup>83</sup> Walther gives some tips here. Students (such as vicars) who preach are not able to rebuke sins too specifically. Preachers must avoid bitterness. Admonition of specific sins in private must precede public rebuke. If it is a mixed assembly of Christians and non-Christians, sins should be rebuked in general, but not specific persons’ sins.<sup>84</sup> On this application, Gerhard and Walther are essentially the same.

### Rules for Consolation

The “paracletic use” is sometimes called “encouraging,” but I prefer “consoling.” It is based on Romans 15:4: “Whatever was written previously was written for our teaching, so that we through patience and consolation of Scripture might have hope.”<sup>85</sup> It is using the Word of God for comfort and hope.

Gerhard seems to take the “paracletic use” as both consolation and encouragement. His first four rules deal with the biblical material for consolations: first, God’s promises; second, the examples of the saints who were rescued by God from adversity; third, statements of “God’s mercy, the benefits of Christ, the joy of eternal life,” and so on; and fourth, the reasons why the cross is imposed upon the godly in this life.<sup>86</sup>

The former rules deal with material for consolations, which is the paracletic use applied to “inner testings.” The next two rules (the fifth and sixth rules) deal with material for encouragements to patience. The fifth rule is to compare the inner gifts of God with external evils.<sup>87</sup> What does this mean? Here is an example from Gerhard’s German *Postille*, his model sermons for the church year. He is preaching on Matthew 19:27–30 for the day of the conversion of St. Paul (January 25), on the passage “whoever forsakes house or brother or sister or father or mother or wife or children or land for the sake of My Name, he shall receive a hundred fold and shall inherit eternal life.”<sup>88</sup> Gerhard preaches:

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<sup>83</sup> Luther, preface to 1544 summer half of the Church Postil (LW 77:10), cited in Walther, *Pastoral Theology*, 102.

<sup>84</sup> Walther, *Pastoral Theology*, 102–104.

<sup>85</sup> My translation from Luther’s 1546 German Bible, WA DB 7:75.

<sup>86</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 207–108.

<sup>87</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 208.

<sup>88</sup> Johann Gerhard, *Postille: Exegesis and Explanation of Sunday and Main Festival Gospels; Part Three: Apostle and Other Festival Days; Part Four: Appendage of Passages for Midweek Sermons*, ed. Heidi D. Sias, trans. Elmer M. Hohle (Fort Wayne, Indiana: Lutheran Legacy, 2012), 25.

From this we see how richly God the Lord rewards everything that is forsaken upon this earth for the sake of Christ and His Word. Also, this reward actually begins in this life, that they receive a hundred-fold.

If one, however, wanted to object—as frequently happens, since it does not always result that those who are driven away from and deprived of their good possessions have such hundred-fold possession—the answer to that is this: such people possess a good, joyful conscience, which is better than any kingdom. They possess God’s grace, which surpasses all the riches of this world. They keep the treasure of God’s Word, which is far nobler than all temporal goods. And, they shall discover what Christ says in Mark 10:30, “at that time homes and brothers and sisters and mothers and children.” They shall find them again at the place where they shall come to. On the other hand, others who have fallen away from God’s truth, will have lost faith, a clear conscience, God’s grace, and salvation; and that is the greatest of poverty. If such stubborn betrayers even had an empire, they would still be poor before God. On the other hand, those who for the sake of Christ and His Word, forsake what is theirs, are rich before God—even if it were to be cumbersome for them. For in their hearts they have restful peace and a good conscience. However, this temporal reward shall not remain. Instead Christ shall richly replace it with eternal glory and heavenly blessings.<sup>89</sup>

So what Gerhard means by comparing inner gifts of God with external evils is that consolation can be given by pointing hearers to God’s invisible gifts—now in the Gospel and in eternal life. Sixth, Gerhard cites the example of Christ’s suffering as something that can be used to preach encouragement to people to bear suffering patiently.<sup>90</sup>

Gerhard distinguishes, as said previously, between consolation toward inner testing and encouragement to patience amid external evils. His seventh and final rule is that more frequent and stronger consolations should be given for the inner testing, since these trouble people more than the external evils in their lives.<sup>91</sup>

For Walther, consolation is the goal for every sermon. Consolation is to be given not just with regard to sin but also to the miseries of this life.<sup>92</sup> In preaching consolation, the preacher must consider the causes of all kinds of worries and afflictions, with regard to how people experience them.<sup>93</sup> According to Walther, the

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<sup>89</sup> Gerhard, *Postille, Parts Three and Four*, 31.

<sup>90</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 208.

<sup>91</sup> Gerhard, “Method of Theological Study,” 208.

<sup>92</sup> Walther, *Pastoral Theology*, 107.

<sup>93</sup> Walther, *Pastoral Theology*, 107.

masterpieces of consolation are found especially in the writings of Luther and of Luther's student Hieronymus Weller (d. 1572).<sup>94</sup>

Gerhard and Walther are similar here, though perhaps Walther is more focused on the Gospel aspect of "consolation," whereas Gerhard tends to treat it as something distinct from the doctrine of the Gospel.

If we consider how the "paracletic use" is used in Gerhard's sermons and other seventeenth century Lutheran literature, it seems that "consolation" is really the application of the Gospel. But consolation here is also broader than the "forgiveness of sins." It comes down to having God for you, on your side. It addresses all the legitimate worries and concerns that people have in life.

## V. Examples of the Uses in Exegesis and Preaching

### Gerhard's Postil

How does Gerhard put these uses into practice? In his postil, he seems mostly to teach or give a paraphrase of the text, and this teaching is interspersed with the other applications. As an example, we will consider Gerhard's sermon for the conversion of St. Paul (January 25) in his German postil.<sup>95</sup> The text was Matthew 19:27–30, about Peter's question regarding the reward that he and the other apostles would receive.

In this postil, Gerhard always begins his sermons with a type or a parallel from the Old Testament that depicts something in the Gospel reading, specifically or generally. Here he selects the story of Job's suffering and restoration. He says, "What pious Job experienced back then in deed and truth, Christ promises the same in our text. He does so to Peter, and to all who for the sake of Christ and His Word forsake goods or family members—so that they may have the certain hope that to them likewise shall be richly and convincingly rewarded and restored."<sup>96</sup> This is more of a general parallel than a specific type.

Following the type or parallel, which is Gerhard's sermon introduction, he gives a two-point outline for his sermon: "First about Peter's question[;] Then about Christ's answer."<sup>97</sup>

### Teaching

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<sup>94</sup> Walther, *Pastoral Theology*, 108. For Weller's writings, see AE 67:xxx–xxxiv.

<sup>95</sup> Gerhard, *Postille, Parts Three and Four*, 25–34.

<sup>96</sup> Gerhard, *Postille, Parts Three and Four*, 26.

<sup>97</sup> Gerhard, *Postille, Parts Three and Four*, 26.

Most of this sermon is either paraphrase of the text or teaching. As an example, he says:

The Evangelist records in the previous words that a ruler came to Christ and asked Him what good he should do in order that he might have eternal life. When Christ directed him to the Law as the perfect rule for all good works, the ruler thereupon gave him a haughtily proud answer, he had kept all the commandments of God from his youth on. But since such was a false boast—especially since “there is no one who does not sin,” 1 Kgs 8:46, but sinning means transgressing God’s Commandments—this Christ wanted eagerly to bring him to acknowledge. And He said to him, “If you want to be perfect, then go out, sell what you have, and give it to the poor. Thus you shall have a treasure in heaven. And come follow Me.” This was a very specific calling and order to this ruler—that he was to forsake everything, and like the other Apostles, commit himself to the school of Christ. However the text records that this young man turned back around and sadly walked away from Christ, because he had many goods. Thereupon Christ preached a harsh sermon to His disciples—that it is difficult for a rich person to come into the kingdom of heaven.<sup>98</sup>

This is a summary of the text, but it also teaches in giving other biblical texts and explaining the meaning of the events recorded in the Gospel. It is not possible to make a clean distinction between teaching and paraphrase of the text in Gerhard’s sermon.

### *Warning*

Following 2 Timothy 3:16, Gerhard distinguishes “reproof” from “correction,” but really they are the same thing applied to different objects: faith or morals. As Gerhard preaches these, there is sometimes no noticeable difference, especially when he addresses attitudes, which are both moral and based on teaching or doctrine. That is, they are matters of faith and morality at the same time. As an example, he writes,

From this we can see how we humans generally think—that we so gladly see the reward in everything, and constantly carry the concern that God might not richly enough reward us for what we do for the sake of His Name, or for the evil we stand up against. What was it then that Peter had forsaken? A tumbledown, decaying tent, a pair of fisherman’s nets, and whatever else it may have been. And he at the same time so precisely asked what he would be reimbursed for all that? We generally have a similar mindset—that we are more

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<sup>98</sup> Gerhard, *Postille, Parts Three and Four*, 26.

concerned about the wages than about the labor. But that should not be, and the more faith and love in Christ increases, that much more so this seeking of rewards recedes. For faith is a sure confidence of the things for which a person hopes for, Heb 11:1, but then believers are saved in this hope, Rom 8:24. God has given them a sure promise of eternal life. If then this faith, and this assurance, is correct and proper, why should they be concerned—as if the good things they have done, and their cross that they have suffered, will not be sufficiently rewarded[?]”<sup>99</sup>

This addresses wrongful actions based on wrongful attitudes, and it deals also with faith and hope. It is reproof and correction at the same time, and so it can fittingly be called “warning.”

Sometimes, however, reproof against the false doctrine of a rival confession is clearly discernible in his preaching. After teaching what it means to “leave houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands” for the sake of Christ’s name (Matt 19:29), Gerhard launches into a refutation of the Roman Catholic position that, by abandoning one’s vocation to family and embracing monasticism, one can achieve perfection and atone for his own sins and those of others (supererogation). He says,

There are those who maintain that the willing poverty of when a person forsakes everything that is his—as well as out of necessity and during times of persecution—is a great service to God. They maintain that by this a person can fulfill the counsel Christ has given to those who gladly want to do more [than] God has commanded in the Law. And, they then maintain that they thereby achieve perfection, by which they are able to atone for their own sins and also the sins of other people. They then use the previously recorded words where Christ said to the young man, “If you want to be perfect, sell what you have and give it to the poor” to this end. To this end they even also use the example of the Apostles. They make the claim that it was not only a good counsel that Christ gave to this young man and to the Apostles, but a serious, special Commandment. Because the young man did not want to follow this command, Christ thereupon proclaimed that it is difficult for the rich to enter into the kingdom of heaven. He herewith shows that this very same young man hereby forfeited heaven in that he did not forsake everything and did not want to follow Him. Now then, when those—who without any need to do so and without having any periods of persecution—forsake everything, it still remains a fact that this is a personal-choice service to God that may not please Him.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Gerhard, *Postille, Parts Three and Four*, 26–27.

<sup>100</sup> Gerhard, *Postille, Parts Three and Four*, 27–28.

*Admonition*

An example of an admonition from Gerhard's sermon is as follows:

So then, weigh one against the other, Here one sometimes forsakes a house—which is a collapsing building; there on the other hand one obtains a building, built by God, a house not made by hands, that is eternal in heaven, 2 Cor 5:1.

Here you forsake beautiful fields, wheat, delightful gardens; but, in place of them you there receive the heavenly Paradise, where there is fullness of joy, and the lovely essence at Your right hand forevermore, Ps 16:11.

Here you forsake father and mother, who of course will soon be separated from you by death; there you come before the heavenly Father, Who is the true Father over all that is called “family” in heaven and upon earth, Eph 3:14–15.

Here you forsake brother or sister; there you come before the holy fellowship of the angels and all the elect.

Here you forsake wife and children; there you shall find them again in eternal glory.

Here you forsake temporal, perishable fame; but there you receive the crown of the unfading glory.

Here you forsake your own life; there you shall find it again—for “whosoever” thus “loses his life, shall find it,” keep it, Matt 10:39.<sup>101</sup>

An example of encouragement was quoted above.

**Ernestinian Bible**

The Ernestinian Bible, which Gerhard and Salomon Glassius edited, provides examples of all the uses of Scripture. Here, as at the end of each chapter, there is a listing of the “useful applications” [*Nutzenwendungen*]. These should be seen not as exhaustive of all possible applications but as illustrative of good ways to apply the text to self or others. The useful applications for Matthew 19 are as follows:

I. Admonition: That divorce (except for adultery) as well as taking plural wives has been completely abrogated and forbidden by God in the New Testament, even though God permitted it in the Old Testament for certain reasons (vv. 3–9).

II. Doctrine: That Christ loves the children dearly and earnestly desires to accept them and take them into His heavenly kingdom (v. 14).

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<sup>101</sup> Gerhard, *Postille, Parts Three and Four*, 31–32.

III. Doctrine: That love toward God is shown to be genuine in this: when one gladly surrenders everything temporal on account of the confession of His name. That is what this young man lacked, who thought he had kept everything in the Law (vv. 20–22).

IV. Warning: Against misuse of temporal goods, because of which, according to the word of Christ, so few rich people enter into the kingdom of heaven (vv. 23–24).

V. Consolation: That those Christians who in persecution lose what is theirs and must do without it will have hundredfold repayment in heaven and will inherit eternal life (v. 29).<sup>102</sup>

This *Ernestinian Bible* is a rich guide to using the useful applications of Scripture.

## VI. Using the Uses

Now it is clear that seventeenth century Lutherans in their exegesis, followed by classic Lutheran homiletics even to the time of Walther in the nineteenth century, sought and found several uses of Scripture based on 2 Timothy 3:16, Romans 15:4, and 1 Corinthians 10:11. They saw the uses as extremely useful.

But why are the useful applications of Scripture important for us? There are several reasons. St. Paul in several places said *this* is how Scripture—all of it—should be used. Consider the fact that despite the clear teaching of the distinction of law and gospel in various places, when it comes to using and applying Scripture, St. Paul directs people to the useful applications of Scripture rather than only Law and Gospel. Since the Apostle commands us to use Scripture for doctrine, admonition, warning, and consolation, we should do so.

Besides this, the various applications give direction and clarity to sermons and individual care of souls. Too often, pastors are not distinct and clear in their

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<sup>102</sup> “I. V. Daß die Ehescheidung (ausser dem Ehebruch) ingleichen auch die Nehmung mehrer Weiber, im Alten Testament zwar, um gewisser Ursach willen, von GOTT nachgelassen, aber im Neuen gantz aufgehoben und verboten sey, v. 3–9. II. L. Daß Christus die Kinder hertzlich liebe, und sie gern und willig in sein Himmelreich auf und einnehme, vers. 14. III. L. Daß die Liebe gegen Gott darinn, als rechtschaffen, erwiesen werde, wenn man alles Zeitliche, um Bekänntnis seines Namens willen, gerne und willig fahren lasset, woran es diesem Jünglinge, der da vermeinte, er hätte alles im Gesetz gehalten, gemangelt, v. 20.21.22. IV. W. Für Mißbrauch der zeitlichen Güter, um welches willen, dem Wort Christi nach, so wenig reiche Leute ins Himmelreich kommen, vers. 23.24. V. T. Daß die jenige Christen, welche in der Verfolgung das Ihre verlieren und entrathen müssen, hundertfältige Vergeltung im Himmel haben, und das ewige Leben ererben sollen, v. 29.” Salomon Glassius and Johann Gerhard, eds., *Biblia, Das ist: Die gantze H. Schrift, Altes und Newes Testaments Teutsch/ D. Martin Luthers: / Auff gnädige Verordnung deß ... Herrn Ernsts/ Hertzogen zu Sachsen ... Von etlichen reinen Theologen ... erkläret* (Nürnberg: Endter, 1720), 524.



sermons, and usually this is because they are not clear in their own minds about what they are trying to do. Preaching requires intentionality. Are you teaching, admonishing, or consoling? Many pastors try to do all at once, and the result is that they are hard to follow and not edifying. If the uses are mixed, it's likely that people will just tune out.

Also, there is a real danger in just using “law” in the first half of every sermon and “gospel” in the last half of every sermon. While this sermon structure can be useful in some situations, if you use it or even some other pattern in every sermon, no matter what text of Scripture you are preaching, then people will know exactly what is coming next, and they will tune out. Also, more dangerously, they may begin to think that the different parts of Scripture are all exactly the same and that Scripture has nothing more to say—nothing more to teach, admonish, warn, or console—this week over and above what they heard last week. That is dangerous.

Also, how often have you heard about people who request more practical application in sermons and Bible studies? Some pastors teach Bible studies every week filled with huge quantities of data about biblical history and archaeology, and sometimes doctrine, but do not apply it in teaching (i.e., showing how the text taught or supported an article of faith); they do not apply it in admonition, warning, or consolation, either. If this is you, do not be surprised if people react by saying silently “so what?” to such preaching and teaching. People want practical application, and that is not wrong.

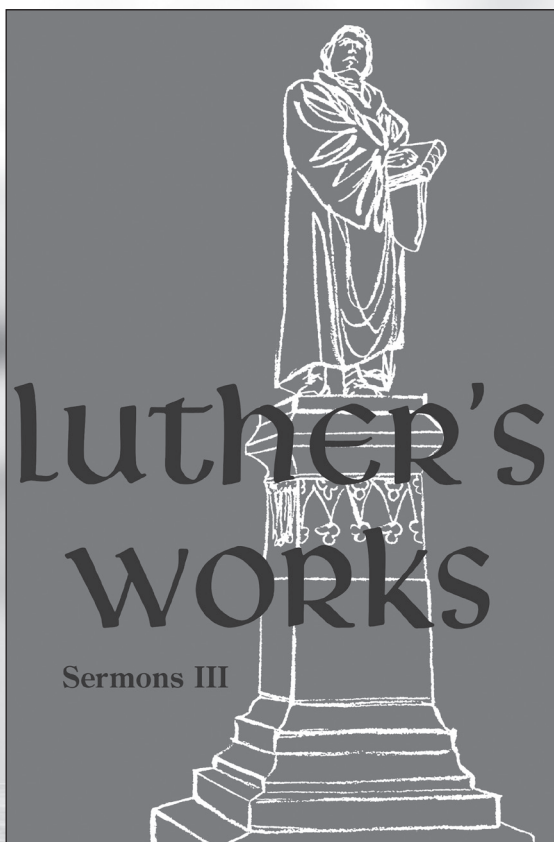
So how do preachers become skilled in preaching the useful applications of Scripture? First, they should be aware that they exist and know what they are. Second, they should find portions of Scripture that are sermonically and identify which of the applications are being used. The sayings of Jesus and the letters of the apostles would fit here. Third, they should analyze the sermons of great preachers to see how they do it, such as Augustine, Martin Luther, Johann Gerhard, and C. F. W. Walther.

All preachers have room for improvement. One excellent way to do so is to restore the useful applications of Scripture, based on 2 Timothy 3:16 and Romans 15:4.

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# Pastoral Formation in the 21st Century: The Pedagogical Implications of Globalization

Lawrence R. Rast Jr.

## I. Introduction—Pedagogy and Globalization?

Pedagogy and globalization: these are two terms that have something to offer when considering the future of Lutheranism in the twenty-first century. I am convinced that there is a place for the confessional witness Lutherans have to offer in the new situations in which we find ourselves. The evidence of the continuing collapse of the Constantinian church, Christendom if you will, is all around us.

As a professionally trained historian, I would like to note a problem that we all, as human beings, share. We tend toward the parochial; we as finite beings tend to think of the beginning of history with our birth and of the ending of history with our death. And so we necessarily live, in a sense, simultaneously in the first days and in the last days. Our lives are framed by the shortness of our existence, which is chronologically determined by a locatable moment of birth and a locatable moment of death.

As such, it takes work for us to think beyond these temporal limitations. We have to extend our minds and abstract ourselves from our experience to begin to embrace the Church, which while it exists in time and place has its existence in the eternal and blessed Trinity. This challenges us to think beyond the limitations of our particular time and place.

As we consider globalization and pedagogy, I would like to stretch us *back* over the history of Lutheranism, even as we project ourselves *forward* into the twenty-first century. We will do this, as the title implies, primarily in the context of pastoral formation.

When we think of globalization, we tend to think of current trends where the dominance of Europe and the West are moving from the center of human culture and life, of a growing importance of China (at least economically), and of the emergence of the “global south” (particularly in terms of the growth of Christianity). Philip Jenkins’s enormously influential study, *The Next Christendom*, argues that it is in the global south that Christianity is growing most rapidly and that in the next fifty to one hundred years a number of the most “Christian” countries in the world

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will be found in the global south. At the same time, Jenkins warns Western Christians that the kind of Christianity emerging in the global south will challenge certain assumptions and deeply held doctrines of the Western Church. For him, church doctrine is a dynamically developing reality not in some Hegelian, dialectical sense, but simply in a human, sociological sense—namely, that every expression of Christian doctrine is located in and subject to cultural and social influences found in the particular context in which the doctrine is applied. This means, very simply, that doctrinal change is not only likely, but it is inevitable.

This creates a tension in the church. We believe that there is *the faith*—the *fides quae*, the faith once delivered to the saints. This faith is captured in the phrases *sola gratia*, *sola fide*, *sola scriptura*. The Scriptures teach this one, true, catholic, and apostolic faith—and as such, this faith is as true and unchanging as the God who revealed it in the Scriptures. The faith does not change. At the same time, we all know that church today exists in rapidly changing circumstances. The theological/religious questions of the post-Constantinian age in which we find ourselves are framed differently than those uttered by Luther in the sixteenth century, just as the questions Luther framed differed from those of Augustine. Yet at the same time we strive—as did Augustine, Luther, and all the faithful over the ages—to apply the unchanging message of the Gospel to these differently framed questions.

I want to draw attention particularly to the issue of pastoral formation. I want to stress how Lutheran identity is linked to the way the Lutheran tradition has formed its pastors. Lutheran commitment to biblical doctrine confessionally *demande*d—*absolutely required*—that its clergy be intellectually capable, academically trained, and articulately able. Historically, Lutherans have placed a high priority on the intellectual attainment of understanding the faith—yet it should be noted that this deep understanding of the faith was always seen ultimately in the service of teaching the faithful and reaching the lost through the clearest possible proclamation of the Gospel.

And so Lutheran pastors have been theologically formed from the beginning in universities and seminaries. At the same time, however, the settings and circumstances in which Lutherans have found themselves have indeed challenged assumptions about the duration and character of pastoral formation—a conversation that is going on even today. Thus, there are many historical instances of men lacking a full theological education who were admitted to the pastoral office. However, while employing a variety of forms and modalities (short-term study in the sixteenth century and private tutors in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries), the ideal Lutheran form of pastoral formation has been an extended residential experience that sought to integrate doctrine and practice. My thesis is this:

Lutheranism has allowed and employed a variety of modalities in order to bring men to the point that they are “apt to teach.” The key is what it means to be “apt to teach.” Until this is done, and done clearly, pedagogies will lack focus and will not achieve outcomes.

## II. The Problem of Lutheran identity

Keep watch! Study! *Attende lectioni!* [“Attend to reading!” 1 Tim. 4:13]. Truly, you cannot read in Scripture too much, and what you do read you cannot read too well, and what you read well you cannot understand too well, and what you understand well you cannot teach too well, and what you teach well you cannot live too well. . . . It is the devil, the world, and the flesh that are ranting and raging against us. Therefore, beloved lords and brothers, pastors and preachers, pray, read, study, and keep busy. Truly, at this evil, shameful time, it is no time for loafing, snoring, or sleeping. Use your gift, which has been entrusted to you [cf. 1 Tim. 4:14], and reveal the mystery of Christ [cf. Col. 1:26].<sup>1</sup>

These are Luther’s words, and they are not surprising words for us as Lutherans to hear. Luther, after all, was a professor *and* a pastor. The Lutheran Reformation was born in the context of the academy/university, and its identity is inseparably bound up with that fact.

One thing I always point out to my students and to the faculty at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana, is the challenge that defining Lutheran identity presents. Not that it should be—but it is. What I mean is simply this: Lutheranism’s identity is bound up with its confession of the biblical witness—the *fides quae*, the faith once delivered to the saints. That confession is found in the Augsburg Confession (1530) as the foundational confession of the Lutheran tradition, and in the Lutheran symbols that make up the Book of Concord 1580, *because* the Lutheran Confessions are a faithful exposition of the doctrine of the Scriptures.

## III. Lutheran Identity and the University

Wittenberg was the obvious center of the Lutheran educational enterprise in the first century of German Lutheranism. Without Frederick the Wise (d. 1525),

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<sup>1</sup> Martin Luther, “Preface to Johann Spangenberg, *German Postil, from Advent to Easter, Arranged in Questions for Young Christians, both Boys and Girls* [1543],” vol. 60, p. 285, in *Luther’s Works, American Edition*, vols. 1–30, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan [St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955–1976]; vols. 31–55, ed. Helmut Lehmann [Philadelphia/Minneapolis: Muhlenberg/Fortress, 1957–1986]; vols. 56–82, ed. Christopher Boyd Brown and Benjamin T. G. Mayes [St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2009–], hereafter AE.

John the Steadfast (d.1532), and perhaps especially John Frederick (d. 1554)—all electors of Saxony—it is unlikely that the Lutheran Reformation would have succeeded as it did. Indeed, as John the Steadfast lay dying, he charged his son John Frederick to maintain the educational work begun at Wittenberg.

It is important that we have clergymen and ministers who are mighty in the defense of the Word of God and in the maintenance of its purity, especially in these recent times when confusion and misfortune appear to increase daily. . . . Hence, we sound this solemn warning to our dear son and his loved ones. Their father kindly but most emphatically directs that they uphold the institution of higher learning at Wittenberg, *regardless of its cost or the energy required*. This is to be done, especially in praise to Almighty God, because in recent times there has arisen again in that place the rich, saving Grace of the Word of God.<sup>2</sup>

This is a remarkable statement in that it underscores the centrality of education for the success of the Lutheran endeavor—delivered as the Elector lay dying, it shows how near this was to his mind and heart.

But what would be taught? The foundational text was, of course, the Bible. Here Melanchthon's biblical humanism had global pedagogical impact. Indeed, as incoming students to Concordia Theological Seminary wonder out loud why it is they have to take Greek, my answer is, "Blame Melanchthon!" Thomas Coates puts it like this:

The Missouri Synod has, to be sure, received its religious character from the genius and spirit of Luther himself. The Missouri Synod's educational system, however, bears the stamp of Philip Melanchthon. While Luther was deeply concerned about the Christian education of the youth, and while he wrote with his customary vigor and clarity upon the importance of this subject, it is evident that his concern was not with educational methodology, but with the goals to be achieved. And these goals were always religious—deeper knowledge of God and greater service to mankind. He was content to leave the content to leave the question of method to the schoolmen, provided that the aims of the Gospel were realized.<sup>3</sup>

The drafting of an educational method and a set of pedagogical assumptions fell, in the end, to Philip Melanchthon. In 1533, he drafted the *Statutes*, which outlined how the university would operate and what formation of students involved.

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<sup>2</sup> Ernest G. Schwiebert, "The Reformation and Theological Education at Wittenberg," *Springfielder* 38 (Autumn 1964): 27 [emphasis added].

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Coates, *The Making of a Minister: A Historical Study and Critical Evaluation* (Portland: Concordia College, n.d.), 16.

First and foremost, Melanchthon pointed to the Augsburg Confession because it confessed “the true and perpetual teaching of the Catholic Church”; Wittenberg’s theology was not new, but Apostolic.”<sup>4</sup>

What was important was the Church’s confession of the gospel, which Lutherans were convinced Luther had recovered through his reading of the Scripture and had been rightly confessed in the Augustana. Pastoral formation was a process of shaping a man in the Church’s confession so that he might preach the Scripture in its truth and purity. Not surprisingly, then, Melanchthon was deeply committed to students learning the biblical languages.<sup>5</sup> As Schwiebert summarized, “This training produced theologians who knew Biblical teaching on the basis of their own private investigations.”<sup>6</sup>

The Lutheran Reformation, then, was inseparably bound up with educational method and pedagogy, and as Lutherans moved into the world over the next centuries, these had global impact—even to this day.

#### IV. The Cost of Pastoral Formation and Supply

This kind of intense pastoral formation took time and money, as John the Steadfast proved. Assumptions regarding the time that this took were embedded within the process of higher education itself. Yet circumstances indicated that there was a gap between the ideally formed pastor and the immediate need of the churches. This was clear to Luther and Melanchthon by the end of the 1520s. It likely informed the revisions of the curriculum that were introduced in 1533 at Wittenberg.

Driving the revisions were the deplorable conditions in the church in Saxony—especially among the clergy, and especially in respect to the clergy’s lack of education.

In the remainder of the Saxon lands, especially those of the Elector’s cousin, Duke George, the bitter Luther enemy, conditions were even worse until his

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<sup>4</sup> Schwiebert, “Theological Education at Wittenberg,” 29.

<sup>5</sup> Ernest G. Schwiebert, *Reformation Lectures Delivered at Valparaiso University* (Valparaiso, Indiana: The Letter Shop, 1937), 274: “But it was not until the new Theological Statutes of 1533 (Foersteann, *Liber Decanorum*, p. 153) that this new philological method could be fully realized in the University of Wittenberg. There were now three regular professors in Theology, and in addition the town pastor, Bugenhagen, teaching part time. Henceforth, all theological candidates were to be carefully examined on the basis of the new norm, the *Augsburg Confession*, and after 1537 the ordination of ministers was begun, the prelude to the later Lutheran custom. Naturally, due to the shortage of available candidates, some of those so ordained were rather poorly prepared men including many tradesmen and guild members.”

<sup>6</sup> Schwiebert, “Theological Education at Wittenberg,” 32.

death in 1539. A large percentage of the clergy had families though they professed celibacy; others lived in “wild wedlock.” The clergy were very incompetent, few of them even knowing the Lord’s Prayer or the Ten Commandments. Bibles were rare and seldom used. A committee under Professor Justas Jonas reported that in one region 190 out of 200 lived in open fornication and classified the district as belonging to the very “dregs of society.” Congregations reported that the clergy neglected their flocks, spent their time making buttermilk and malt, and on Sundays told their congregations about it, if they attended. Such regions were hardly Lutheran even 22 years after the nailing of the *Ninety-five Theses*.<sup>7</sup>

Not surprisingly, then, as the revised Wittenberg curriculum began to produce capable pastors, they were in great demand.

Admission to Wittenberg assumed familiarity with the Latin language and the classics. The *gymnasium* process of education was assumed. The responsibility of the university was to help the students become fruitful users of these tools for the sake of the proclamation of the gospel. As the university itself stated,

The brilliant student, who has been properly trained in the mastery of languages, is indeed well prepared to interpret the Holy Scriptures and is qualified to administer public justice. For how can anyone, who wants to be versed in sacred literature, evaluate the conclusions based on information drawn from the Holy Scriptures if he does not know the languages in which they were written and does not grasp the figures of speech found therein? How can he expect to be able to interpret sacred dogma without the mastery of the correct use of Biblical exegesis, or in case he fails to grasp the context of passages from which conclusions are drawn?<sup>8</sup>

Implicit in the latter part of the previous quotation is the question of sufficient preparation. To put it differently, when is a man adequately formed to fulfill the biblical injunction that he must be “able to teach” in order to be a faithful preacher and teacher of God’s Word?

The desired outcome was clear preaching of the Gospel. Overt piety was necessary in a candidate for the preaching office, but it was not enough; it could not make up for the lack of intellectual capacity, for this would put the preacher’s hearers’ salvation at stake.

Poorly trained clergymen would fail to organize their sermons properly, would spread “darkness rather than light,” and leave their congregations neither uplifted nor better informed. Just as a medical doctor would not attempt the

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<sup>7</sup> Schwiebert, *Reformation Lectures*, 277.

<sup>8</sup> Schwiebert, “Theological Education at Wittenberg,” 26.



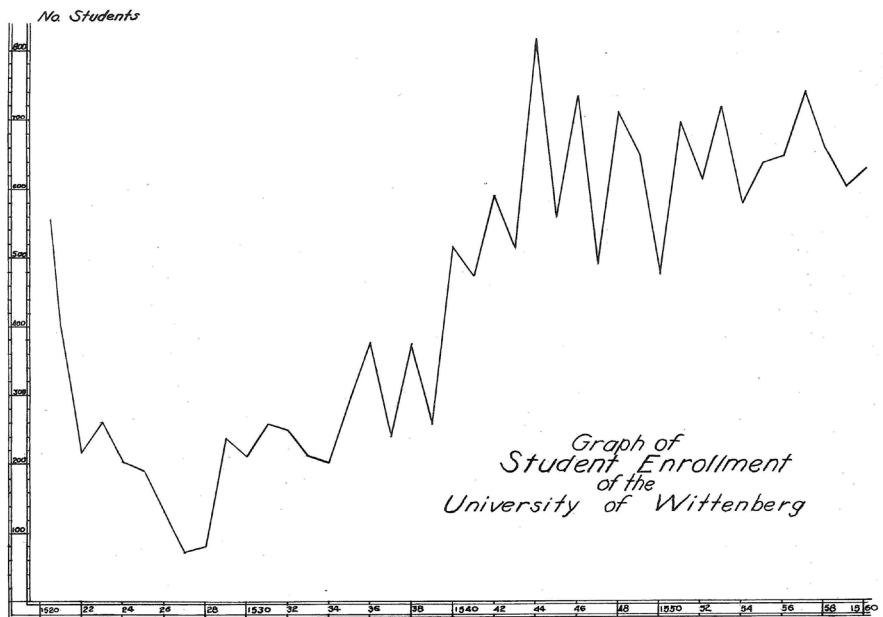
study of medicine without a mastery of physiology and mathematics, Melancthon maintained, so the theologian could not study theology without a mastery of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.<sup>9</sup>

Undoubtedly, the Wittenberg *ideal* was a man fully educated and formed for the sake of the clear preaching of the gospel. Such an ideal, however, is not attained without its difficulties. We will now consider some of the challenges and pressures of putting that ideal into practice—some of which are historical and some of which are contemporary.

#### *Problem 1—When Is a Man “Apt to Teach”?*

The biblical requirements for the candidate for the Office of the Ministry are well known to us all (1 Tim 3:1–7; 2 Tim 2:1–3; 2:22–26).

One of the early challenges facing the Lutheran tradition—and one that Wittenberg struggled to meet—was one of numbers. In 1521, when Luther was excommunicated, the student population of Wittenberg plunged precipitously. It took years to rebuild the student body. And recall that it was in the midst of the rebuilding of the student population that Luther and Melancthon revised the curriculum.



<sup>9</sup> Schwiebert, "Theological Education at Wittenberg," 26.

Taken together, these two points—the need to attract and to train a sufficient number of students—meant that there simply were not enough pastors to push the work of Reformation forward. Quite simply, this put the future of the Reformation at risk. And this, then, drove the question (which we touched on earlier): when is a man sufficiently formed to be “able to teach”?

As a result, there were a number of *Notprediger*—emergency preachers—in early Lutheranism. A study of the *Wittenberger Ordiniertenbuch* reveals that when ordinations began in earnest in Wittenberg in 1537, initially a large percentage of the ordinands were *Notprediger*. From a modest eight ordinations in 1537 and twenty-two in 1538, by 1539 the number had climbed to 110. Of those 110 ordinations in 1539, fully a third were men who lacked full classical training.

#### Ordination of Pastors in Town Church, Wittenberg, 1539

Merchants	1
Town Secretaries	2
Burghers	10
Stone Masons	1
Sextons	6
Council Men	1
Clothiers	1
Village Schoolmen	3
Printers	11 <sup>10</sup>
36 of 110 total (33%)	

Luther and his advisors wisely chose to send men rich in the Spirit if not in training to serve until enough candidates could be properly trained. In the ensuing years, the number of *Notprediger* decreased quickly: in 1542 it was twenty-seven out of 103; in 1546 it was fifteen out of 102. Increased enrollment at Wittenberg, coupled with the organization of new Lutheran universities at Marburg, Leipzig, and Griefswald, helped to alleviate the immediate pressure.

But it is noteworthy nonetheless that the ideal and its realization was something that took intentionality and time. How was this done? Schwiebert argues, “it was

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<sup>10</sup> Schwiebert, *Reformation Lectures*, 285. For narrower studies of the question of ordination in early Lutheranism, see Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *Luther's Pastors: The Reformation in the Ernestine Countryside* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1979), 56–60; Martin Krarup, *Ordination in Wittenberg* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007).

only by means of the extensive educational system of Luther and his co-workers, beginning with the grade schools and continuing through the preparatory schools and colleges, a marvel of organization for the period of the 16th Century, that the Reformation took root and flourished.”<sup>11</sup>

This was a Lutheran given—almost a matter of identity. Lutherans were deeply committed to the education of their clergy. Only once a man had a strong theological education could he even be considered for the Office of the Ministry. It was straightforward and simple. But questions continually presented themselves as this commitment was put into practice.

*Problem 2—What to do when there is not an adjudicatory  
for inducting men into the office?*

When Lutherans came to North America they faced new problems. The case of Justus Falckner (1672–1623) demonstrates the challenges of applying ecclesiology in the American setting. It was assumed that Justus, born into a clergy family, would follow his father, Daniel Sr., and brothers into ministerial service. Having studied at Halle, Justus was unconvinced that he was a viable candidate for pastoral ministry. In 1700, he came to Philadelphia as a land agent for William Penn. But the presence of a young, theologically trained Lutheran proved too compelling for the Swedish missionary pastors of the American setting.

Andreas Rudman was serving the widely scattered and ethnically diverse Lutheran congregations of America—ranging from the Swedish Lutherans on the Delaware River to the Dutch and German Lutherans in the Hudson River Valley of the former New Netherland. There was even a smattering of English being used in the church at this point. Later, there were American Indians and African-Americans in the Hudson River congregation. By 1703, Rudman was convinced that Justus Falckner was the perfect candidate for the congregation in New York, which stretched from New York City up the Hudson River Valley to Albany, New York.

The problem for Rudman, however, was how to properly induct the candidate of theology into the ministerial office.<sup>12</sup> Lutherans had insisted that the preparation of pastors required four steps: education, examination by peers, call, and ordination (with the last two being conflated in some cases). Falckner had the first point, education, but lacked the final three. The Lutheran church in America lacked a bishop, a consistory, or even an organized synod. What churchly adjudicatory

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<sup>11</sup> Schwiebert, *Reformation Lectures*, 286.

<sup>12</sup> There is some evidence that Rudman had attempted to ordain a candidate for the ministry earlier in North America. This ordination was simply not recognized due to its “irregular” character.

would authorize Falckner for ordination? The answer, in the end, was rather complex. Rudman was appointed suffragan bishop—limited to this one episcopal act. Forming a consistory with his Swedish ministerial colleagues, Erik Tobias Bjorck and Andreas Sandel, they examined Falckner and found him properly prepared for service. At the ordination proper, which occurred on November 24, 1703, Rudman served as bishop and ordinator, Bjorck as representative of the consistory, and Sandel as sponsor of the ordinand.<sup>13</sup>

*Problem 3—What do we do if we don't have schools to form Lutheran pastors?*

Lutherans in North America struggled in the colonial period for a series of reasons. One was that the earliest Lutherans, the Swedes and the Dutch in the seventeenth century, were never fully successful in adapting themselves to the new setting with its lack of formal structures and institutions. As such, they had to depend on candidates for the ministry from Europe—especially once the Germans began arriving in the early eighteenth century. Pastors received their training, examination, call, and ordination outside of the North American context, for the most part. Attracting candidates to the American frontier was terribly difficult. The result was that there were never enough pastors.

The question thus became whether an adjudicatory could authorize or license a man for service in the church when there was no official faculty or institution to provide “certification” for candidates for the office. The American answer was rather simple: to have pastors train candidates on their own. At times, this worked very well. One example is that of the Henkels, such as when Pastor Paul Henkel trained his son David and ended up producing one of the most articulate and

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<sup>13</sup> One of the questions surrounding Falckner is his pietism. He was trained at Halle; however, over time he clearly moved toward a more robust confessional position. For competing pictures, see Kim-Eric Williams, *The Journey of Justus Falckner. 1672–1723* (Delhi, New York: American Lutheran Publicity Bureau, 2003); and Julius Sachse, *Justus Falckner: Mystic and Scholar, Devout Pietist in Germany, Hermit on the Wissahickon, Missionary on the Hudson: A Bi-Centennial Memorial of the First Regular Ordination of an Orthodox Pastor in America, Done November 24, 1703, at Gloria Dei, the Swedish Lutheran Church at Wicaco, Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1903). One piece of evidence for this shift toward a more confessional orientation was Falckner's catechetical work, about which Susan Denise Gantt, “Catechetical Instruction as an Educational Process for the Teaching of Doctrine to Children in Southern Baptist Churches” (Ph.D. diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2004), 147, says, “The first book of Christian instruction by a Lutheran clergyman in America was written by Justus Falckner and printed in 1708 (Repp 1982, 19). The title of his book was *Fundamental Instruction upon Certain Points of the True, Pure, Saving Christian Teaching; Founded upon the Apostles and Prophets, of Which Jesus Christ is the Chief Corner Stone; Set Forth in Plain but Edifying Questions and Answers* (Clark 1946, 77). Although it was not based on Luther's Small Catechism, as were many of the catechisms produced during this time, this new catechism was intended to prepare candidates for Holy Communion (Repp 1982, 18).”

creative Lutheran theologians in history. On the other hand, when this became the norm rather than the exception for pastoral formation, the results were extremely uneven, and the impact of a less-educated clergy made itself particularly evident in the succeeding generation. That is to say, the pragmatic move away from the Wittenberg ideal of education affected the life of the church in longstanding ways.

Darius Petkunas's *The Repression of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lithuania during the Stalinist Era* touches on this subject excellently. While the purpose of Petkunas's work is self-evident from the title, he speaks to this issue in one section of the book:

Because of the urgent need for pastors, Baltris had taken to ordaining cantors and other warm bodies totally lacking in even most basic theological education. They did not know the difference between a Lutheran and a Baptist and could not care less. What was being heard from the pulpits was drivel and downright heresy.

The outcome of the situation, in Petkunas's estimation, is, "The situation with the uneducated pastors was indeed serious. The Lutheran Church was being threatened from within. It could easily lose its identity as a Lutheran Church."<sup>14</sup>

*Problem 4—What do we do in a fully democratized setting that has (1) a different ecclesiology and (2) a different understanding of the Office of the Ministry?*

Another problem was the democratization of American Christianity. Americans take their freedom seriously—oftentimes expressed as freedom *from* the past. This process of democratization, along with its attendant system of checks and balances, is the subject of Nathan Hatch's enormously influential study, *The Democratization of American Christianity*.<sup>15</sup> It was in the churches, argues Hatch, that the people forged their fundamental ideas about the nature of individual responsibility. The preachers of the day stimulated this defining process by seizing the opportunity to lead. They expressed their leadership primarily by organizing religious movements "from the ground up." They did so by using vernacular sermons based on the life experiences of their hearers, popular literature and music, protracted meetings, and, most importantly, new ideologies that both denied the hierarchical structure of elitist religions and promised to exalt those of lower status to at least an equal level with their supposed superiors.

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<sup>14</sup> Darius Petkūnas, *The Repression of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lithuania during the Stalinist Era* (Klaipėda, Lithuania: Klaipėda University, 2011), 226.

<sup>15</sup> Nathan Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

The leaders were accepted because they challenged the people to take their personal destiny into their own hands and to oppose centralized authority and hierarchical conceptions of society. They empowered the people by giving them a sense of self-trust. As the people learned to trust their religious impulses, they in turn spoke out boldly in defense of their experiences. Common people exhibited a new confidence in the validity of their personal religious experiences, and when they began to demand that religion offer an avenue to express this newfound individualism, the American church was revolutionized.

According to Hatch, freedom from the domination of the hierarchical clergy required three steps. First, the new preachers refused to defer to the seminary-trained theologians. Second, they empowered the laity by taking seriously their religious practices, affirming and validating the people's experiences. Finally, they exuded enthusiasm about the potential for their movements, and the people caught the vision. "They dreamed that a new age of religious and social harmony would naturally spring up out of their efforts to overthrow coercive and authoritarian structures."<sup>16</sup>

In this context, the fourfold nature of pastoral formation was seriously compressed. Education came to be seen as unnecessary; examination an expression of tyranny and power; the "call" as artificial because a personal experience, ratified in a quantifiable number of demonstrable "conversions," was the true mark of calling; and ordination as a superfluous act, which, if retained at all, was carried out by the congregation.

Indeed, an overt antagonism emerged toward men who had prepared themselves for ministerial service via seminary or university study.

Why are we in such slavery, to men of that degree;

Bound to support their knavery; when we might all be free?

They're nothing but a canker; we can with boldness say;

So let us hoist the anchor, let Priest-craft float away.<sup>17</sup>

In this context, Lutherans faced a series of choices that crystalized around, among other issues, the doctrines of church and ministry. What shape would the church take in democratic America? What authority do general, national bodies have over against particular, local congregations?

What did this mean for pastoral formation? An assumption began to develop in America that had two intensities: 1) theological education is not necessary for one to be a pastor; and 2) theological education is a hindrance for one becoming a pastor. As William Warren Sweet put it, "Alfred Brunson opposed theological schools

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<sup>16</sup> Hatch, *Democratization*, 10–11.

<sup>17</sup> Hatch, *Democratization*, 231.

on the ground that they so often turned out ‘learned dunces and third rate preachers,’ while Peter Cartwright compared the theologically educated preachers he knew to the pale lettuce ‘growing under the shade of a peach tree’ or to a ‘gosling that has got the waddles wading in the dew.’”<sup>18</sup>

The test of ministerial validity was the success, or failure, of the preacher in producing converts (recall that this was contemporary with the emergence of the market as the dominant economic engine in the United States). If you could win people to Christ (whatever that meant), you had the gift of the Spirit and were a legitimate minister. If you could not gain converts, it did not matter what education you did or did not have, whatever examination you had or had not passed, or whether you had received the laying on of hands in an ordination service.<sup>19</sup>

### V. Conclusion—Lutheran Identity in the Twenty-First Century

This study began to explore the relationship of theological formation (and only tangentially pedagogy as such) to the mission and life of the church. It hopefully has raised some questions and initial conclusions as we work to frame a concrete vision for the future of confessional Lutheran theological education and pastoral formation. Two acts of the 2016 LCMS convention are of enormous importance for theological education. I include them here for ongoing reflection. First, Resolution 6–03 sought to affirm what most of us think of as the “classic” route to acquiring ministerial credentials.

Whereas, Our Lord said, “The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers

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<sup>18</sup> William Warren Sweet, “The Rise of Theological Schools in America,” *Church History* 6 (September 1937): 271. Later, when some of these denominations began to form clergy in dedicated theological schools, the reasoning was based in the increasing educational level of the laity. “. . . educated and wealthy laymen . . . began to demand ministers of whom they need not feel ashamed. Trained ministers, they said, were needed to attract the cultured people of the cities, and scholars were needed to refute the attacks on their theology.” Sweet, “Theological Schools,” 272.

<sup>19</sup> The literature on the transformation of pastoral formation is enormous. Hatch, *Democratization*, is, of course, of paramount importance. See also E. Brooks Holifield, *God’s Ambassadors: A History of the Christian Clergy in America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007); Glenn T. Miller, *Piety and Intellect: The Aims and Purposes of Ante-Bellum Theological Education* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990); Donald M. Scott, *From Office to Profession: The New England Ministry, 1750–1850* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978); and Glenn T. Miller, *Piety and Profession: American Protestant Theological Education, 1870–1970* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007). For a quick view of the popular version of this transformation, see “Billy Sunday Burns Up the Backsliding World: Whirlwind Evangelist Swings into Action in Boston,” <http://youtu.be/Ykn8YcIbmfo>, accessed October 6, 2011.

into His harvest” (Luke 10:2), and the apostle Paul wrote, “If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task” (1 Tim. 3:1); and

Whereas, The 2013 Res. 5–14A Task Force Report states, “The New Testament passages listing qualifications for the pastoral office focus mainly on the character of the man proposed for the office (‘above reproach, husband of one wife, sober minded, self-controlled, respectable,’ etc. [1 Tim. 3:2ff]). The one theological requirement in that section is that the man be ‘able to teach.’ He must ‘keep a close watch on himself and on the teaching’ (1 Tim. 4:16). He must be ‘able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it’ (Titus 1:9). Character and the ability to teach and to hand the doctrine on to others are the qualifications Scripture looks for. These high standards apply to each of the various means by which the church recruits and trains pastors from her midst. Here is scriptural rationale supporting the work of our seminaries to train future pastors, as well as the careful work of our Colloquy Committee. We want men who love Jesus, whose hearts have been transformed by the Holy Spirit so that they also love people. We want men who are fiercely loyal to their Savior and to His Body, the Church. But we want these men to be thoroughly trained in biblical truth as well as other necessary disciplines for the task” (R64, p. 268); and

Whereas, The Synod has been blessed by the graduates of the master of divinity programs at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne; and

Whereas, The 2013 Res. 5–14A Task Force report states, “The most complete means of preparing a man for the general responsibilities of the pastoral office and a lifetime of service is the master of divinity route at our two seminaries. This full residential experience has always been our ‘gold standard’ for pastoral formation” (R64, p. 271); therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the Synod in convention affirm that the most complete means of preparing a man for the general responsibilities of the pastoral office and a lifetime of service is the residential master of divinity route at the Synod’s seminaries; and be it further

*Resolved*, That men aspiring to the noble task of pastor be encouraged by the Synod in convention to apply for admission to the master of divinity programs at the Synod’s seminaries; and be it finally



*Resolved*, That the Synod in convention urge all members of Synod and members of Synod congregations to encourage men to study in the master of divinity programs of the Synod's seminaries.<sup>20</sup>

The second resolution was even more important.

Whereas, The Office of the Holy Ministry is located within God's plan and work of salvation in Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:18–20; Mark 16:15–16; Luke 24:44–49; John 20:21–23). For this reason we confess AC V, because (*quia*) it is “a true exposition of Holy Scriptures” (*LSB Agenda*, p. 166). “To obtain such faith [i.e., justifying faith, AC IV] God instituted the office of preaching [*Predigtamt*], giving the gospel and sacraments” (AC V 1, German, Kolb-Wengert [KW] edition). See the paper “The Office of the Holy Ministry,” which “represents a consensus” of the “systematics departments of both LCMS seminaries” (*CTQ* 70 (2006): 97–111); and

Whereas, The Office of the Holy Ministry was instituted and mandated by Jesus Christ to save sinners by “giving the gospel and the sacraments. Through these, as through means, he gives the Holy Spirit who produces faith, where and when he wills, in those who hear the gospel” (AC V 1–2, German, KW). God instituted the Office of the Holy Ministry, or preaching office, for this very purpose, that sinners obtain saving faith in Jesus Christ (Rom. 10:14–17). We confess that this office has “the command of God and magnificent promises” (Rom 1:16; Ap XIII 11); and

Whereas, Jesus Christ has given the keys of the kingdom of heaven to His Church immediately. Thus the teaching of our church, “It is to the true church of believers and saints that Christ gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven” (C. F. W. Walther, *The Church and the Office of the Holy Ministry*, Thesis 4 concerning the Church, Thesis 6 concerning the Office, p. 36 of 2012 edition, adopted in 1852 and reaffirmed with 2001 Res. 7–17A). Jesus says in Matt. 18:18–20, “Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in My name, there am I among them”; so also, “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Pet. 2:9); and

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<sup>20</sup> “To Affirm the Master of Divinity Route at the Synod's Seminaries,” RESOLUTION 6–03 Report R64 (CW, pp. 268–296); Overture 6–10 (CW, pp. 359–360), *LCMS Proceedings*, 168.

Whereas, God has also instituted and mandated the Office of the Holy Ministry as His gift to the Church through which the saving Word of God and the Holy Sacraments are to be publicly distributed and the Keys are to be used publicly on behalf of the church (Eph. 4:8, 11; AC XIV; Walther on the Office, Theses 3 and 5). Thus Christ says to His apostles, “As the Father has sent Me, even so I am sending you. . . . Receive the Holy Spirit; if you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld” (John 20:21–23; Matt. 16:18–19); and

Whereas, In keeping with God’s own mandate for filling the Office of the Holy Ministry, we confess in AC XIV, “Concerning church government it is taught that no one should publicly teach, preach, or administer the sacraments without a proper [public] call” (KW, German), as the Scripture says, “And how are they to preach unless they are sent?” (Rom. 10:15); and

Whereas, In AC XIV, the “proper call” (*ordentliche Beruf, rite vocatus*) entails three biblical and confessional mandates (R62, pp. 238–240; R64, pp. 268–270),

1. Examination: The Scriptures mandate that the candidate for the holy ministry be personally and theologically qualified for the office (1 Tim. 3:1–7; 2 Tim. 2:24–26; Titus 1:5–9; 1 Pet. 5:1–4). The personal qualifications include that the candidate be a biological male (Gen. 1:26; Matt. 19:4), above reproach, and the husband of only one wife. The theological qualifications especially include the requirement that he be “able to teach” (2 Tim. 2:24), that is, that “he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it” (Titus 1:9), along with competence to perform all the tasks mandated to the office. See the Small Catechism, Table of Duties, 2. To this end the faculties of our seminaries have been called to teach the Scriptures and the Confessions to the pastoral candidates and to form their minds and hearts and skills to the pastoral task. The faculties of the seminaries are also called to examine the confession and life of each of the candidates for the office, along with the Colloquy Committee in the cases reserved for it (Bylaw 3.10.2). By this examination the Synod assures itself of the confessional commitment and the personal and theological fitness of its candidates for call and ordination.

2. Call: God Himself calls a man into the Office of the Holy Ministry through the church, whose right to call and ordain ministers stems from her possession of the Keys, on account of Christ’s institution. By the ministerial call (or sending, John 20:21, Rom. 10:15), Christ, through the church, bestows His own authority and power upon the one who is called, as we confess in the Apology, “They represent the person of Christ on account of the call of the church and do not represent their own persons, as Christ himself testifies (Luke 10:16), ‘Whoever listens to you listens to Me.’ When they offer the Word

of Christ or the sacraments, they offer them in the stead and place of Christ” (Ap VII/VIII 28, KW). The call of the church is not only the call of Christ into the Office, but also indicates the consent of the church in receiving the ministry of the one called (Acts 6:1–6; Walther, Thesis 6 concerning the Office). The divine call is always to a designated location and field of service. We especially defend the right of the local congregation to call her own pastor.

3. Ordination: The rite of ordination, the laying on of hands, is an ancient and laudable practice in the church, but not commanded by God. But when ordination is understood as the whole church’s confirmation of the call, it is an inherent component of transcongregational (transparochial) church fellowship and a part of the “proper call” confessed in AC XIV. So we confess, “Finally [the church’s right to call and ordain ministers] is also confirmed by Peter’s declaration (1 Peter 2:9): ‘You are a . . . royal priesthood.’ These words apply to the true church, which, since it alone possesses the priesthood, certainly has the right of choosing and ordaining ministers. . . . Ordination was nothing other than such confirmation of the candidate by the laying on of hands” (Tr 69–70, KW). The church has the right to put her ministers in place, and ordination guarantees that right. We also confess in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, “But if ordination is understood with reference to the ministry of the Word, we have no objection to calling ordination a sacrament. For the ministry of the Word has the command of God and has magnificent promises like Rom. 1[:16]: the gospel ‘is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith.’ . . . For the church has the mandate to appoint ministers, which ought to please us greatly because we know that God approves this ministry and is present in it” (Ap XIII 11, 12, KW). Again, from the Treatise, “For wherever the church exists, there also is the right to administer the gospel. Therefore, it is necessary for the church to retain the right to call, choose, and ordain ministers” (Tr 67, KW). C. F. W. Walther writes in his *Pastoral Theology* (p. 44), “Neither the examination which one who has been called to the preaching office passes before an appointed commission outside of the calling congregation, nor the ordination which he receives from the appointed persons outside of the congregation, are what make the call valid. But both procedures are among the most beneficial ordinances of the church and have—especially the latter—among other things the important purpose of publicly confirming that the call is recognized by the whole church as legitimate and divine. Anyone who unnecessarily omits one or the other is acting schismatically and making it known that he is one of those whom congregations with itching ears heap up for themselves (2 Tim. 4:3)”; and

Whereas, Society is challenging the church to conform to the shifting definitions of marriage (no-fault divorce, same-sex marriage, etc.) and sex (transgenderism, surgical modifications, etc.), putting pressure on applications of the qualifications for the holy ministry; and

Whereas, Within the Synod many are debating issues surrounding the Office of the Holy Ministry, including preparation, fitness, examination and certification, and the necessity of call and ordination to “publicly teach, preach or administer the sacraments” (AC XIV; see, e.g., 2013 Res. 4–06A on licensed lay deacons); and

Whereas, The office assigned to the seminary faculties is complementary to that assigned to the visitors of the church (i.e., district presidents). The seminary faculties present the candidates to the church for call and ordination, while the district presidents ordain and install them into office on behalf of the church. The district presidents (as ecclesial visitors) provide for the care and maintenance of the work done by the seminaries by encouraging and strengthening the pastors under their charge with the Word of God (Acts 15:1–35), continuing to examine their doctrine, practice, and life and testifying to the church of the faithfulness of each pastor’s confession and life; and

Whereas, God calls pastors to love and care for His people, to minister to them with compassion and understanding, and as the church asks her pastors to promise in the Rite of Ordination, “Will you faithfully instruct both young and old in the articles of Christian doctrine, will you forgive the sins of all those who repent, and will you promise never to divulge the sins confessed to you? Will you minister faithfully to the sick and dying, and will you demonstrate to the Church a constant and ready ministry centered in the Gospel? Will you admonish and encourage the people to a lively confidence in Christ and in holy living?” (*LSB Agenda*, p. 166); therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the seminaries in consultation with the Council of Presidents review their admissions and certification standards to ensure that all those admitted to or certified through any of the routes to the Office of the Holy Ministry conform to the personal qualifications outlined in Holy Scriptures (1 Tim. 3:1–7; 2 Tim. 2:24–26; Titus 1:5–9), including that they be a biological male (Gen. 1:26; Matt. 19:4; Acts 1:21; 1 Tim. 3:2), the husband of only one wife if married (1 Tim. 3:2, Titus 1:6; see also Ap XXIII); and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Synod in convention uphold these scriptural and confessional qualifications of the holy ministry by directing the seminaries and district presidents to ensure that (1) the candidate for office be examined by a seminary faculty or the colloquy committee to certify his fitness in life, doctrine, and confessional commitment; (2) he be called by the church to a

particular field of service in the public teaching of God's Word and administration of the Holy Sacraments; and (3) he be ordained into this office by the appropriate district president or his representative according to the order of the church; and be it further

*Resolved*, That where a man does the work of the holy ministry (AC V), he have a "proper public call" by examination and certification, call, and ordination; and be it finally

*Resolved*, That the Synod receive this resolution in the spirit of Friedrich Wyneken (second LCMS President): "This office is not about concealing from the so-called laity its sovereignty, patronizing it, and defining ever more narrowly the boundaries within which it may move. It does not clip its rights, limit its heart, close its lips, [or] reduce it to timidity that it remain nice-looking and subject and not dare in any way to impinge upon the sovereignty of the educated and well-reasoned pastor. In short, the office does not consist in suppression of the laity in order to elevate the clergy at the laity's expense. . . . The dignity, the desire, and the joy of the true co-worker of God is to draw ever more his community of believers into their freedom and its worthy use, to encourage them and lead them ever more in the exercise of their rights, to show them how to exercise their duties that they be more and more convinced of their high calling and that they demonstrate that they are ever more worthy of that calling" (Friedrich Wyneken, *At Home in the House of My Fathers*, p. 366).<sup>21</sup>

Res. 6–02 was adopted as presented by a vote of Yes: 875; No: 177. That is an 83 percent favorable vote. That is a truly encouraging result.

Questions about pastoral formation and certification, delivery systems for theological education, the relationship of pedagogy and methodology, increasing democratization, basic issues of funding, and many others will need the attention of the best minds gathered together in prayerful consideration of the future of our confession.

I hope this study will contribute modestly to that endeavor. In conclusion, consider the following statements. First: "The educational factor in the growth and spread of the Reformation has not been fully realized and appreciated. In a sense the

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<sup>21</sup> "To Uphold the Scriptural and Confessional Qualifications for the Office of the Holy Ministry," RESOLUTION 6–02, Reports R62, R64 (CW, pp. 235–261, 268–289), LCMS 2017 *Proceedings*, 166–68.

Reformation rose and fell with the educational system instituted by Luther and his fellow Reformers.”<sup>22</sup> And finally, Luther again:

Keep watch! Study! *Attende lectioni!* [“Attend to reading!” 1 Tim. 4:13]. Truly, you cannot read in Scripture too much, and what you do read you cannot read too well, and what you read well you cannot understand too well, and what you understand well you cannot teach too well, and what you teach well you cannot live too well. . . . It is the devil, the world, and the flesh that are ranting and raging against us. Therefore, beloved lords and brothers, pastors and preachers, pray, read, study, and keep busy. Truly, at this evil, shameful time, it is no time for loafing, snoring, or sleeping. Use your gift, which has been entrusted to you [cf. 1 Tim. 4:14], and reveal the mystery of Christ [cf. Col. 1:26].<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Schwiebert, *Reformation Lectures*, 290.

<sup>23</sup> Luther, “Preface to Johann Spangenberg, *German Postil, from Advent to Easter, Arranged in Questions for Young Christians, both Boys and Girls*” (1543), AE 60:285.

## Theological Observer

### Books, Always Books: Reflections on the 150th Anniversary of Concordia Publishing House

*“When you come, bring . . . the books (τὰ βιβλία) and above all the parchments (τὰς μεμβράνας).”* (2 Tim 4:13).

The Church treasures her books, and she always has. Above all, *the* Book of books, the Holy Bible, has been given rightful reverence and pride of place, resulting in lavishly illuminated and carefully copied editions, handmade for centuries before moveable type in scriptoria, where generations of nameless monks labored with vellum, quill, and ink to preserve copies of the sacred text, along with writings of the fathers, lectionaries, orders of worship, liturgy of the hours, and other prayers. But then along came Gutenberg, and by 1450 he was able to demonstrate the successful use of printing with moveable type, literally one sheet of paper after another. He nearly figured out how to make this profitable as well. But it was left to another German, who followed him in the early decades of the sixteenth century, to show the nascent publishing industry what was possible. Martin Luther, with his pamphlets, Bible translations, treatises, disputations, catechisms, and hymnals, kept a half-dozen printers in his own hometown alone working around the clock to produce copies of his materials throughout his lifetime. Luther was truly the first “mass media” celebrity, and he took a keen interest in every aspect of the printing and publishing arts.<sup>1</sup>

#### The Saxons and Their Books: The Early Years

In the fall of 1839, five ships carrying more than seven hundred members of an *immigration society* set sail from Germany to the United States with hundreds of copies of books tucked away in their luggage: Bibles, Luther’s sermons, various hymnals, prayer books, a wide variety of classic works of theology in German, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and a myriad of other works. The Saxon immigrants were mostly clergy, students, and professionals of every description from the German middle class, which was perhaps the most highly educated society on earth at the time. They were all voracious readers. Always, there were books.

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<sup>1</sup> Andrew Pettegree’s wonderful book *Brand Luther: 1517, Printing, and the Making of the Reformation* (New York: Penguin Press, 2015) gives the following description on the cover: “How an Unheralded Monk Turned His Small Town into a Center of Publishing, Made Himself the Most Famous Man in Europe—and Started the Protestant Reformation.” It is a delight to read and lays out in great detail Luther’s personal involvement in the design, layout, illustration, and even choice of typeface for his early works, which launched the Reformation across Europe.

After settling in Perry County and surviving their first year mostly on rice and bacon, dealing with disease, starvation, and privation of every description, they established as of highest priority a seminary and began immediately seeking sources for more books for their congregations and homes.

A look at the early newspaper started by Dr. C. F. W. Walther and his colleagues (*Der Lutheraner*) is shocking for modern readers: it presents mostly unbroken columns of nothing but small print, and it proved enormously popular, read by Lutherans of a kindred spirit across the Midwest, leading ultimately to their joining together to form what today we know as “The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod” (LCMS). At the constituting convention in Chicago in April 1847, the new Synod called for the provision of faithful Lutheran books and printed resources as one of the fundamental reasons for forming a Synod, to facilitate “the promotion of special church projects,” which no one congregation could accomplish on its own, but which, banded together, they could and most definitely did.<sup>2</sup> And what is more, books featured largely in the conditions required to be a member of this new “Evangelical Lutheran Synod.” One of the “conditions under which a congregation may join Synod and remain a member” was as follows:

The exclusive use of doctrinally pure church books and schoolbooks. (Agenda, hymnals, readers, etc.) If it is impossible in some congregations to replace immediately the unorthodox hymnals and the like with orthodox ones, then the pastor of such a congregation can become a member of Synod only if he promises to use the unorthodox hymnal only under open protest and to strive in all seriousness for the introduction of an orthodox hymnal.<sup>3</sup>

Here in America, particularly on the frontier where the Missouri Synod Lutherans took up residence, the process for obtaining books—and specifically confessional Lutheran books—was extremely difficult, and so they realized they would have to provide for themselves. They worked with local printers in St. Louis to produce “the basics” for congregational life: Bibles, catechisms, hymnals, and resources for Lutheran schools. One of Walther’s first projects was to provide the young Synod with its own hymnal so that LCMS congregations would stop using a hodgepodge of hymn collections, many heavily influenced by Pietism. Walther’s congregation resolved to sponsor the publication of a genuinely Lutheran hymnal for the young Synod.

Local printers were used for the Synod’s printing needs through the 1840s and into the 1860s, but the Synod finally decided it was time to buy its own printing

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<sup>2</sup> “Our First Synodical Constitution,” *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly* 16, no. 1 (April 1943): 1–18, <http://www.ctsfw.net/media/pdfs/lcmsconstitution.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> “Our First Synodical Constitution,” 3.



equipment and establish its own very own *Verlag* (“publishing house”) dedicated to the publication of orthodox Lutheran materials, soon to be called the *Concordia-Verlag*, indicating in its name the confessional commitment of the enterprise.

Walther preached at the overflowing dedication service on February 28, 1870, and dedicated the new publishing company “to God as long as it stands; dedicated to Him, the all-holy triune God, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. From this institution may nothing go forth except that which serves the glory of this great God and the temporal welfare and eternal salvation of men.” The Synod had already taken on some massive printing projects even before its publishing house was constructed. It moved quickly to prepare an edition (in German) of the works of Martin Luther and other important documents for historical context. Twenty-two large volumes were included in this set and were offered in three levels of binding: a plain cloth binding, a cloth/leather combination, and a genuine leather edition with gilding on the page edges and cover. Numerous other core Lutheran resources were being pumped out of the young publishing house at an astounding rate, testifying to the commitment and diligence of the hardworking Germans who worked ten-hour days Monday through Saturday. The original first printings of these books are all in the on-site archive to this day at Concordia Publishing House (CPH) and are as imposing and impressive today as when they were first released. The Bibles and other resources used binding and printing technologies so refined and so costly that they are now not used by mainstream printing companies.

### **German in America: The Language Challenge**

It is an oft-repeated myth in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod that our founders put the German language ahead of “mission.” At a pastor’s conference in Missouri some years ago, a speaker, with a scornful laugh, referred to how the German missionaries in Michigan required the Native American tribes first to learn German before they were taught the Gospel. Thankfully, he was immediately corrected by one of the pastors attending the conference. In fact, the missionaries working among the tribes of Michigan took great pains to learn and prepare a written alphabet for the native language, translated Scripture and the catechism into the native tongues, and conducted worship and instruction—and upon the missionaries’ parting, they were sent off with great weeping and embraces from the Indians, who stood on the riverbanks singing loudly the Paul Gerhardt chorales that had been taught them in their native language. I tell this story simply to caution against spreading myths about the commitment to German among our founders. Of course, German was the language used in our early congregations consisting

of German immigrants, with hundreds of thousands more Germans pouring into America throughout the nineteenth century.

The problems presented with offering resources in English are very clearly seen in Concordia Publishing House's earliest catalogs. Amidst all the German resources which were distinctly Lutheran, the Synod's publishing company was in the 1870s already selling English resources, including—ironically and ominously—the collected sermons of Charles Spurgeon! In other words, some English resources were produced by non-Lutherans, and while of course one can but speculate, it is probably not too far from the truth to think that the old phrase “in the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king” applies to how English resources were chosen. Because so few qualified Lutheran pastors, theologians, and professors were masters of the English language, what was available had to suffice. For example, as long as people were able to read Luther's Bible translation, they never knew of an edition of the Scriptures without the Apocrypha, but as the King James Bible became the translation of choice in the Synod and editions were sold and used by LCMS congregations, the Apocrypha simply fell out of the Synod's awareness. Then in 2012, when Concordia Publishing House produced a new study edition of the Apocrypha, from some corners of the Synod there was heard a warning that “Romanism” was creeping back into the Lutheran Church!

And so it presented quite a challenge to remain faithful to the Lutheran Confessions when those Confessions could no longer be read and studied by those for whom German was no longer a native language. The Synod and its publishing company struggled in the first few decades of the twentieth century to accommodate the rapidly growing need for English language resources, along with supporting and sustaining the Synod's many congregations, church workers, and laity still working in the German language. The typical pressures of an immigrant community to conform to its surrounding culture and society certainly came into play during the latter part of the nineteenth and first several decades of the twentieth century. The anti-German sentiment that was whipped to a fever pitch as a result of World War I was quite devastating to many German-speaking congregations, who were suddenly faced with intense community hostility when German words and phrases were seen inscribed on their church building and in their stained glass. This caused a rapid movement away from German throughout the Synod and at the Synod's publishing house—a hasty embrace of English resources despite the un-Lutheran doctrine and worldview that many of these writings set forth.

### **Becoming an American Lutheran Church**

A survey of CPH catalogs from the early decades of the 1900s still contain many German resources, but as each year went along, the number of English titles

increased and German titles decreased. By 1919, the Missouri Synod and her publishing house were fully engaged in providing English language resources. The rise of Sunday school in the Synod's congregations was a huge impetus for providing resources in English for congregations and schools and their families. Finally, the Synod realized that unless it adopted English wholesale it would simply lose generations of members who had been born in the United States and were living and working in the English language but had to step into another language and culture on Sunday mornings. The immigrant church was becoming an American church, for better or worse. Obviously, the expected resistance to this move to English came and was hashed out in heated debates at conventions and conferences, but eventually English took hold, and German speakers and German-only congregations waned in the Synod.

The CPH catalog of 1919–1920 is an interesting case study. It has two sections. The first 204 pages are devoted to resources in German, while the rest of the 512 pages consist of resources in English. This is quite a change from twenty years earlier, when the catalog nearly exclusively offered resources in German and English Bibles and other materials were scattered throughout the pages. The opening pages, title page, and postal rate and zone explanations are all in English.

Ironically, in the “English Publications” section, as alphabetical listing would have it, among the very first titles listed is *Ahn's Method of Learning the German Language* in two volumes, followed by *American Civil Church Law* with the explanation, “This book is confined to the civil law applicable to churches as distinguished from any merely ecclesiastical rules of conduct.” This had become a pressing issue for congregations that used German during the run up to and throughout the First World War, which had concluded the year before in 1918.

The catalog lists various editions of the Bible in English, many acquired from the American Bible Society, all in the King James Version. Editions entitled *Concordia Teachers Bible* and *Concordia School Bible* are of interest, since they would appear to be the Synod's first type of “study Bible” in English. The notes are described as being “reedited and revised thoroughly,” with “full use” being made of the late “Prebendary Scrivener's invaluable work on the References, which was first published in the Cambridge Paragraph Bible.” Here we should note that in this method of making “full use” of non-Lutheran notes, “revised” was a trend that would continue with many different English language study Bibles but finally ended with the publication of *The Lutheran Study Bible* in 2009. It was not until 2009 that Concordia Publishing House provided a genuine stem-to-stern confessional Lutheran Study Bible in English.

The Americanization of the Synod was in full swing one year after World War I, and it did not bode well for the Synod's theological future. Simply put, there were insufficient numbers of Lutheran scholars capable of working fluently in English to make up for the rapidly growing movement in the Synod away from German. Thus, in the first half of the catalog there are vast quantities of solidly Lutheran works from a variety of classic Lutheran scholars and teachers, but in the English half of the catalog the only full commentary on the Bible available is an English translation of the German Calvinist *Lange's Comprehensive Commentary on the Whole Bible* with a disclaimer from CPH stating, "The theology is not orthodox throughout this work, but graduates of our theological schools should have no difficulty in discovering when the commentary assumes a trend of thought that departs from the analogy of faith." And so it was that the only Bible commentary in English being sold by the Synod's *Concordia* Publishing House was a work by German Calvinists! As one pages through the English portion of CPH's catalogs from after WWI, it is painfully obvious that various works in English by a wide array of conservative Calvinists and other Protestants were included in the offered resources, outnumbering works by Lutheran writers in English.

By 1933, only two hundred pages of the 1,100 pages in the CPH catalog were devoted to German titles; the rest is entirely in English. By 1933, however, CPH was able to offer its customers a complete popular Bible commentary in English, brief and to the point, written by Dr. Paul E. Kretzmann. The *Popular Commentary of the Bible*, soon simply referred to as "Kretzmann's Commentary," would remain popular for decades to become. The entire set cost nineteen dollars, representing an enormous investment in the Depression.<sup>4</sup> But in the next several pages, theological works by Calvinist Christians appear in surprising numbers—Lange, Meyer, Hodge—authoring Bible commentaries, Bible dictionaries, various Bible editions, and so forth. Over twenty-five pages are filled with English Bibles, all King James, all published by Reformed/Calvinist companies or by CPH itself under license from other publishers, with no Lutheran-specific study editions. The study Bibles offered in the catalog were based on notes prepared by Calvinist theologians.

But on a brighter note, the Synod's project to commemorate the four-hundredth anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation was to print a publication of the Lutheran Confessions in a three-language (triglot) text. It contained the original German and Latin of the 1580 and 1584 editions of *The Book of Concord*, with an English translation. Production was delayed and slowed by the onset of the Depression, which saw paper supplies dwindle, but by 1933 the catalog offered an offprint of the English text from the *Concordia Triglotta*. Whereas one could

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<sup>4</sup> With the advent of print-on-demand technology, Kretzmann is back in print again today.

imagine that in more prosperous times more deluxe bindings would have been offered, in 1933 only a clothbound hardback was available, and its price was ten dollars, postpaid, the equivalent of well over \$150 today.<sup>5</sup>

Even during the Depression, CPH's business was flourishing, and it had become as much a church supply and Christian gift store as it was a publisher. Nearly 300 pages are filled with "Christian novelties" and prints, cards, pieces of artwork, supplies of every description for a church office, a school classroom, and, of course, the Sunday School program—thousands of items from pencil sharpeners to school accounting books, from folding tables and chairs to certificates of every description, with hundreds of postcards with Christian art.

One notices a good number of books, again mostly from non-Lutheran Protestant/Calvinist authors, which addressed the new trends in Biblical scholarship. These were popular in Europe for one hundred years or more but were now raising red flags among conservative Protestant Christians in America. For instance, *Is Higher Criticism Scholarly?* by Robert Dick was a small, sixty-two-page booklet. Dick was a Presbyterian American scholar who was reported to have learned forty-five languages and made it his life's work to prove the reliability of the Old Testament Hebrew manuscripts. LCMS theologians, on the other hand, provided responses to Free Masonry and Roman Catholicism and defended the Synod's doctrinal positions. Pages of titles concerning how to respond to materialism, Scientism, and so forth are offered, but nearly all by non-Lutheran Calvinist authors. Of particular exception, though, one observes titles by LCMS pastor and seminary professor Theodore Graebner such as *Essays on Evolution and Evolution: An Investigation and a Criticism* and *God and the Cosmos*. Graebner's literary output during his long career is nothing short of astonishing, and his works and titles are found throughout CPH catalogs. Clearly, by the late 1920s, Synod's professors were very much intent on grappling with modern trends and challenges to a confessional Lutheran church body in the United States.

Turning to the *General Catalog* from 1948, only in the very back of the catalog, in a relatively thin section, does one find "Publications in the German Language," including German Bibles, hymnals, catechisms, and other works—only one hundred pages, while the English section comprises nearly seven hundred pages. The era of the "German" Evangelical Synod was virtually over, and Americanization was an accomplished fact. The post-war era was a boom time for the nation and for the Missouri Synod—and consequently also for its publishing company. The 1948 catalog notes with pride that the publishing house was running the most

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<sup>5</sup> The *Concordia Triglotta* is back in print today via print-on-demand and digital technologies.

modern typesetting and printing presses of every description nearly constantly, the workforce had more than eight hundred persons, and the publishing house on the corner of Jefferson and Miami in St. Louis was expanding office space to accommodate the ever-increasing business. Concordia Publishing House was well known across the United States and was one of the largest and most prosperous church-owned Protestant publishing houses in the world. Advances in interstate highways and rail helped speed CPH resources to distribution points on both coasts and throughout the nation.

The 1948 catalog's first item featured is *The Concordia Bible with Notes*, explaining that in its fifteen hundred pages the Scriptures are expounded in a "modern, popular style. This Bible embodies the results of thorough Biblical scholarship. All notes have been carefully edited and revised by competent theologians of our day." Again, this was not a new work but relied on non-Lutheran, conservative Protestant scholarship of the Bible. As in the catalogs from previous decades, there is a preponderance of apologetic works aimed at the Roman Catholic Church and the papacy, but aside from some comparative symbolics, or smaller books along the line of "our church and others," there are no significant works of polemic over against Calvinism or the general American Protestant culture. Under doctrinal works, the featured product is J. T. Mueller's abridgement of Francis Pieper's *Christian Dogmatics*, which was not yet available in English. The *Concordia Triglotta* is not offered in this catalog, only the English translation from the *Triglotta*. It is the only edition of *The Book of Concord* offered, tucked away on the last page of the "symbolics, confessions, history of dogma" section, with few to no resources devoted to the Lutheran Confessions.

Only in the German title section do we find the sturdier Lutheran orthodox materials that feature prominent, classic Lutheran works by Luther and other church fathers, including of course Pieper's dogmatics (only in German). The gap in the literature that we noticed already in the post-World War I era was accelerating rapidly and quite noticeable by 1948.

Into the 1950s, Concordia Publishing House, along with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, experienced tremendous growth and financial prosperity. One of the consequences of this time of "feast" in the LCMS's history was the establishment of a working group under the auspices of the Missouri Synod to encourage the funding and production of scholarly works via the Synod's publishing arm. Projects initiated during this era included the American Edition of Luther's Works, done in conjunction with the other large Lutheran publishing concerns in the United States, along with the translation of Johann Gerhard's *Loci Theologici* and the translation of Martin Chemnitz' *Examination of the Council of Trent*.

### The Seminex Crisis and the Publishing House

The greatest challenge to the Missouri Synod's self-understanding and identity as a Lutheran church in the twentieth century was the "Seminex crisis."<sup>6</sup> The Synod faced the question: Would it compromise its historic, orthodox, confessionally Lutheran doctrine and practice in order to participate in the much-longed for unification of the Lutheran Church in America, or would it remain true to its heritage? Rumors of theological war were circulating throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s, but open conflict would break out in public view—and the point of contention was the nature and authority of the Holy Scriptures.

Those committed to the Seminex agenda would regard the result as the Synod's decision to spurn the findings of modern scholarship and to turn its back on the promise of a large, united Lutheran Church. Only time would tell where such dreams for a large, united Lutheran Church would eventually lead. Within the LCMS, the controversy gave rise to a desire to revitalize a very clearly confessional Lutheran identity and to recognize where the Synod's many decades of absorbing an American Protestant ethos and culture had come to harm the Synod every bit as much, one might argue, as embracing the liberal theology represented in modern European Lutheranism and then in American Lutheranism. This was reflected in CPH's publishing projects and commitments through the end of the century and into the twenty-first.

The theological earthquake that finally struck the LCMS in 1974, after many years of rumblings throughout the late 1950s and 1960s, is reflected in the 1971 issue of CPH's catalog. Whereas in previous catalogs non-Lutheran materials (of which there were many) were mostly from conservative Presbyterians and other conservative Protestants, in the 1971 catalog one notices a veritable torrent of works by liberal Protestant scholars. In a section at the very front of the catalog, "Mission Books for General Reading," there are titles such as *Where Tomorrow Struggles to be Born: The Americas in Transition*, described as an account of how the people of Latin America are grasping for the future against "static social, political, and religious institutions." Books by authors deeply involved in the social gospel and ecumenical movements are included. *Our Claim on the Future* is offered by the liberal Presbyterian professor, J. Lara-Braud, in which he discusses issues in Latin American churches from a Marxist-Christian point of view. Turning to the theology section of the catalog, we see translations of contemporary German Luther scholars

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<sup>6</sup> On the conflict, specifically as it concerned Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and led to the "Seminary in Exile" (Seminex), see Paul A. Zimmerman, *A Seminary in Crisis: The Inside Story of the Preus Fact Finding Committee* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2007).

such as Edmund Schlink, Werner Elert, Helmut Thieleke and Heinrich Bornkamm, with analyses of Vatican II. Reinterpretations of the Reformation were offered by various liberal Lutheran scholars, such as one by J. P. Dolan with the titled listed as *History of the Reformation*, offering a “conciliatory assessment of opposite views.”

A double-page spread of the catalog is devoted to psychology, psychiatry, and philosophy, offering a host of resources based on the latest psychiatric theories of treating a range of human conditions and problems such as drug addiction and marriage problems. One has the title *Why Christians Crack Up*, a discussion of “nervous and mental disorders, particularly as these affect the Christian.” In the same portion is *The Bible’s Authority Today*, offering an “up-to-date, thorough discussion of the Bible’s meaning and relevance for today’s Christian church . . . it includes current discussions of leading contemporary theologians,” by R. H. Bryant, a liberal Episcopalian scholar.

Simply put, the vast majority of titles in the 1971 catalog addressed current events, trends, and modern theology from a liberal mainline Protestant point of view and were written by theologians from liberal theological institutions. This represented the direction the Synod was headed at the time, full-steam ahead! But there were bright spots. For example, with a large word “New!” next to them, we notice J. A. O. Preus’ translation of Martin Chemnitz’ *The Two Natures in Christ*, and immediately below it Robert D. Preus’ *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*. Such books signaled already a small beginning of new interest in classic, confessional Lutheranism, an interest that would bear much fruit throughout the next forty years and to the present day, as students inspired and informed by these works would start their service to the Synod and at CPH.

The 1971 catalog announces in a double-page spread “Coming in 1971 Mission:Life—A New Coordinated Curriculum of Religious Education,” which is designed to offer in four programs materials for day school, weekday school, Sunday school, and VBS; a companion “Design for Mission Life” is described as being available for use starting in September 1971. The course description rather clumsily explains that “Courses are designed to help the child learn to know God as Creator of all things, Love and Savior of all people through Jesus Christ, and as the Holy Spirit by whom the church invites them to live in love and joy with all other human beings. Students will be led to explore God’s revelation of Himself in nature, in the Holy Scriptures, and through His people, and to be directed to seek the resources of Word and Sacrament God provides for forgiveness and strength in the fellowship of His people.”<sup>7</sup> Noticeably absent in the description of the curriculum is any mention of Luther’s Small Catechism. Even a cursory overview of *Mission:Life*

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<sup>7</sup> 1971 *Catalog* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1971): 333.



reveals that it is very much a product of the spirit of that age in the LCMS, with a spirit, tone, and even vocabulary reflecting the ecumenical agenda and lack of doctrinal fidelity that was present at that time. In one of the teachers' guides, the teacher is told not to regard him- or herself as an "expert" or "having answers" but as someone who learning the material as an equal with the children in the classroom, with the focus on encouraging children to share their feelings about, encounters with, and experiences of God's love. *Mission:Life* was quickly replaced in the wake of the Synod's rejection of the liberal majority at Concordia Seminary and the departure of many of those siding with them. It was not until 1992 that publishing responsibilities for Missouri Synod curricula was transferred entirely to Concordia Publishing House. Prior to that, the Synod's Board of Parish Education wrote and edited the materials, with CPH serving as printer and distributor.

The post-Seminex era saw the publication of a new hymnal, *Lutheran Worship*, which was prepared with some haste after the collapse of the collaboration on the *Lutheran Book of Worship* project, which was nearly ready to go into production when the LCMS withdrew from it on theological grounds. *Lutheran Worship* was not as well-received in the Missouri Synod as had been *The Lutheran Hymnal* of 1941. It was replaced eventually by the current hymnal and attendant resources, *Lutheran Service Book*, which has been widely received and has been adopted by upwards of 85 percent of the Synod's congregations.<sup>8</sup>

The most significant project launched and still continuing at Concordia Publishing House in the post-Seminex era is the *Concordia Commentary* project. Launched in 1992, it is the largest confessional Lutheran Bible commentary project ever undertaken by any Lutheran publisher for the sake first of the man in the pulpit, proclaiming God's Word to his congregation, then in service to the entire Lutheran Church and wider Christian Church. The volumes have been well received and are known to the greater world of biblical scholarship as providing excellence in exegetical studies and interpretation without compromising a distinctly Lutheran confession, marked by a keen focus on the Gospel as the scope of the Scriptures, offering a clear distinction of Law and Gospel, and formed by the theological position of that church which subscribes unconditionally to the Lutheran Confessions contained in *The Book of Concord*. By the end of 2019, God willing, the project will have reached the halfway mark with thirty-seven volumes in print and thirty-seven more to come.

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<sup>8</sup> At the time, a high-ranking synodical administrator declared that the era of a printed hymnal was over and predicted failure for the *Lutheran Service Book* project. The prediction has proven to be entirely wrong.

### **Into the Twenty-First Century**

Never before has the Gospel been able to be so quickly and widely communicated at the speed of light (literally), but also never before has error been able to be disseminated so rapidly. This is the greatest challenge facing confessional Lutheran publishing today—and the greatest opportunity. Facing several challenges, Concordia Publishing House has been working through them.

One of the more interesting periods of time in Concordia Publishing House's history has been the first twenty years of the twenty-first century. Several significant projects mark this period of time, a number a "firsts" for Concordia Publishing House. Additionally, significant changes in how CPH functions as a self-sustaining business have been key to the ongoing success of the publishing house.

The business operations and financial condition of Concordia Publishing House were in need of significant attention by the end of the 1990s. The situation improved enormously when CPH embraced a quality improvement process, culminating in a "first" in all of publishing, sacred or secular: Concordia Publishing House was awarded the Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award in 2011 by the President of the United States of America, a capstone to many years of examining all aspects of operations and improving them to realize the greatest efficiency possible. The company was returned to a strong financial position, allowing it to sustain itself in spite of the economic ups and down of the early twenty-first century and the unique challenges presented to a denominational publishing house in an age of church membership decline across all denominations.

The new century also saw a resurgence of a keen focus of providing resources first and foremost for the pastors, teachers, church workers, and laity of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. With this keen focus came a hearty embrace of a renewed and robust Lutheran identity, resulting in an ongoing proliferation of uniquely Lutheran resources for laity and church professionals alike. At the beginning of this process of deliberate self-improvement, CPH carefully studied Christian publishing as a whole, asking, "Where is Christ in Christian publishing?" The simple reality, most easily and perhaps most tragically demonstrated by a survey of hundreds of books for children, was that Christ and the Gospel simply went missing in action and instead was replaced with much generic "God-talk" in the greater portion of all children's resources. This trend has only continued and accelerated. Against this trend, CPH took on large projects to strengthen a genuine Lutheran identity and confession both in doctrine and in practice. Concordia Publishing House stands today as the largest continuously operating and confessionally orthodox Lutheran publishing company in the world. The challenges and opportunities are quite wonderful and a blessing from our good and gracious God.

While German prevailed in the old century, CPH was able to offer customers genuinely Lutheran study Bibles, but it was not until 2001 that CPH began laying the foundation for the production of a new English study Bible using exclusively Lutheran scholars and writers—another first. A period of intense customer research went into this Bible. Laypeople were recruited to participate in a process in which they were assigned to read a portion of Scripture and write down any thought or question that came to mind as they read. Hundreds and hundreds of pages of this material was generated, and, based on that, the content of the study notes took shape, with extensive use of Luther, the Lutheran Confessions, Early Church Fathers, orthodox Lutheran fathers, and a wide variety of Lutheran sources. Reflecting the past, clear Law/Gospel notes were included throughout, with prayers added frequently at the end of note sections. Supplemental essays and resources throughout provided extensive discussions of a wide range of topics. Titled *The Lutheran Study Bible* (TLSB), the Bible has gone on to enjoy enormous success within the Missouri Synod and even outside of LCMS circles. TLSB was the first of a number of new Bible editions all prepared with the same methodology and commitment to providing genuinely Lutheran content throughout, not relying on notes first written by non-Lutheran authors.

Reflecting The LCMS' historic priority on providing the church with core resources, including *The Book of Concord*, CPH decided to provide a copy of the Lutheran Confessions aimed specifically at lay readers or anyone with minimal knowledge of the contents of *The Book of Concord*. Thus, in 2007, *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions* was published, and there are now nearly two hundred thousand copies in circulation in a variety of print and digital formats. When it was published, CPH heard from numbers of older Lutheran laymen who remembered a time when their grandfathers talked about attending study groups on the Lutheran Confessions, in the days when German was the language of the Synod.

Other significant projects undertaken in the last ten years or so include a continuation of the American Edition of Luther's Works, with fourteen of a projected total of twenty-eight volumes in print as of early 2019. The series offers a wider selection of Luther's writings, allowing the English speaking reader more of later Luther than the first series offered. Whereas the first series of the American Edition was a cooperative effort amongst various Lutheran publishing houses, it was deemed inadvisable to work with the ELCA's publishing company in producing more volumes of Luther's Works, due to Augsburg-Fortress's editorial practice of gender neutrality and its theological commitments.

The massive *Loci Theologici* of Johann Gerhard, a translation project commissioned by the LCMS Commission on Literature in the 1960s and largely

translated by Richard Dinda in the 1970s, languished for years, available only in the rough form of the initial translation and only available in microfiche format at the two Missouri Synod seminaries. The fact that it was never printed has as much to do with the Synod's lack of interest in Lutheran Orthodoxy during the Synod's troubled times as with the fact that the translation was in rough condition, needing careful revision, improvement, and editing. Dr. Benjamin Mayes and his team have produced twelve volumes, with more to come.

The translated works of Martin Chemnitz were produced in the 1980s and 1990s at different times and in different formats, some only having been bound in paperback. These have been gathered into a matching set, and additional volumes have been added, including a defense (*Apology*) of *The Book of Concord* and Chemnitz' Braunschweig Church Order. Also, the works of C. F. W. Walther, which had appeared previously in various inconsistent quality and binding formats, have been gathered into a matching set with new translations of his most significant works: *Law and Gospel* and *Church and the Office of the Ministry*. While he was shunned by the liberal majority at Concordia Seminary in the 1960s and 1970s, the German theologian Hermann Sasse, who had cultivated friendships with a number of Missouri Synod professors and with President John Behnken, President J. A. O. Preus, and his brother Robert, has been published extensively in recent years by Concordia Publishing House, which has offered his works in English and gathered English works previously produced into several new editions.

The new century saw the rise of new technologies in publishing, including the rapid ability to print on-demand, going hand-in-hand with Google digitally scanning entire libraries (copyrights notwithstanding at first). It is now possible for a printed book never to go "out of print." But what does "in print" mean? Does it mean literally "in print"? Digital files can indeed be rapidly printed using what amounts to high-tech photocopier machines, which can print, collate, and bind a book from start to finish. But even more significantly, "in print" now refers to any way the content of a given resource is provided. E-books have levelled off in popularity, and now it is the audiobook that is on the rise, soon, no doubt, to be replaced by yet another way to distribute content.

And this is what publishing has always been about. Not until the right content was available did the Gutenberg Press see its most prolific use, with Luther himself leading the way, yet it was soon followed by many hundreds of other authors with presses everywhere churning out ink on paper as quickly as technology would permit. And it has never stopped. Now "ink" is "digital ink," and dedicated e-book readers are regarded nearly as passé. The ever-present smartphone is used universally. In developing countries where basic necessities are hard to come by, a person may well have greater access to content on his smartphone than he does

to clean drinking water. The Internet has become the universal equalizer for publishing content of every description.

With the rise of the computer and desktop publishing, already decades ago everyone could become not only an author but a publisher. Now, with the ability to host and store unlimited amounts of data in the digital cloud, anything anyone publishes can last forever (or until the power goes off or equipment fails). What, then, is to become of publishing? The delivery of quality content has reached a point where it is “device/format agnostic.” Consumers of published content want it when, where, and how they want it—and they want it everywhere. A person can carry libraries of books in his pocket on his smartphone and access them anywhere at any time.

The role of a church publisher, then, is all the more needed for identifying quality content and curating it for the Church and her servants and people. Curating means careful selection, quality editing, careful doctrinal review, and doctrinal editing, then the complicated process of managing intellectual property rights for the church, storing the content, printing it in traditional ways (still very much needed and wanted), and making it available in various digital formats.

Opportunities abound to spread the Gospel via published resources, a task that Concordia Publishing House was founded to pursue and which it has pursued for 150 years. Why? Because “‘the word of the Lord remains forever.’ And this word is the good news that was preached to you”<sup>9</sup> (1 Pet 1:25). And where there is the Gospel, there will always be books. Always books.

Paul T. McCain,  
Publisher at Concordia Publishing House  
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### **New Developments in the Trend toward Lutheran Classical Education in the LCMS**

There was a time when virtually every LCMS pastor could point to the schools of the Synod and, with chest-thumping pride, speak of them as the crown jewels of the church. The parochial school was understood as a near indispensable part of a congregation’s work in fulfilling Matthew 28:19–20. In 1955, Synod’s Secretary of Schools, August Stelhorn, wrote that the Lutheran parochial school was “the workshop of the Holy Spirit by means of the Word, the powerful means for the

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<sup>9</sup> From The Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

enlightenment, establishment, and sanctification of His children.”<sup>10</sup> It was a sentiment with which almost every pastor in Synod could wholeheartedly agree.

Such pride is difficult to find these days. It is not unusual to hear pastors complain of the school as a burden on the congregational budget, teachers who do not want pastors in the classroom, and methods and materials that are less than satisfactory when placed under the lens of theology. Far from seeing the parochial school as an indispensable part of the congregation’s educational work, pastors today will often speak with measured relief that their parish does not have a school.

Certainly there are many reasons for this. A declining birthrate means fewer parish children enrolled in schools, societal changes have resulted in parents who are less committed to a Christian education for their children, and the rising cost of education has made parochial schools much more expensive. However, while these are certainly contributing factors, they fail to adequately explain the pastor’s detachment. A major factor that need to be addressed is the nature of the educational philosophy, which came to dominate Lutheran education in the twentieth century.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, government-run education was just beginning to take hold in America. In order to justify itself—and the public funds it required—it developed the argument that education was a science that could be studied and researched just like any other science. This was a radical idea. Prior to this, education had always been the domain of the church. It was a firmly established principle that education and theology were inseparably bound together. Education formed a student’s mind and thinking in order to allow him or her to grasp the theology of the church. The new American educators argued the opposite. Education was an objective science of learning, completely detached from theology. The myth was thus propagated that what a student learned had nothing to do with what was confessed. Teachers could do their thing while the pastor did his.

This meant that Lutherans thought they could freely adopt the methods and philosophies of secular educationalists. Teachers could be trained the same way that they were trained for government-run schools, and state licensure became a more important stamp of approval than that given by the church via its system of synodical training. All that mattered was that the content was theologically correct. But therein lies the rub. If the methods, philosophies, and pedagogies were essentially the same as those used in the government-run schools—which were much better funded and had the most up-to-date resources—and if teachers were trained according to the same standards as those teaching in government-run

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<sup>10</sup> August Stellhorn, “School System in Motion,” *The Lutheran Witness* (September 1956): 75.

schools, then why should a congregation continue to support a parochial school? Why should parents send their children to such a school? And why should pastors take an active interest in the type of educational philosophies employed in the school? They were, after all, “scientifically based,” and he was a theologian. If it was just a matter of content, then surely that could be taught to the children through Sunday school, confirmation class, and the like, without the expense of running a Lutheran day school.

It was a myth, nevertheless. In reality, the educationalists of the twentieth century were not driven by the pursuit of objective scientific truth but by their own confessions, which were militantly against the Christian faith. For example, John Dewey, often considered the father of modern American education, despised the church, which he viewed as an “intolerant superiority on the part of the few and an intolerable burden on the part of the many.”<sup>11</sup> Similar biases can be found in all the influencers of twentieth-century education, including Jean Piaget, Maria Montessori, Erik Erikson, and the like. They all desired to extirpate the historic position that orthodox Christian theology should govern and regulate educational philosophy and methodology.

Over the past twenty years, there has been a growing number of pastors, teachers, and laity who have reassessed the paradigms of twentieth-century Lutheran education and have found them wanting. The result is that they have searched for a new approach—one that intentionally lets theology exert her historic voice in the field of education. That search has taken them to the pedagogical model that has served the church well for almost two millennia: the classical liberal arts. “Liberal” here does not mean liberal in the American political sense but “befitting a free man [or woman], honorable, generous.”<sup>12</sup> The liberal arts are an educational model originating in classical antiquity that is designed to produce thoughtful, well-rounded members of society, no matter what their station in life may be. Its hallmark is its very deliberate order of learning. The lower arts of grammar, logic, and rhetoric prepare students with the basic skills needed to pursue the higher arts of math, astronomy, geometry, and music.

In the sixteenth century, Lutherans took this classical approach to education and incorporated it with the theological truths of the Reformation. The result was that the church produced thoughtful, intelligent, and well-rounded Christians who lived out their faith in Christ with love for their neighbor. The Lutheran liberal arts

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<sup>11</sup> John Dewey, *The Human Nature and Conduct: An Introduction to Social Psychology* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1922), 331.

<sup>12</sup> Charlton Thomas Lewis and Charles Short, eds., *A Latin Dictionary, Founded on Andrews' Ed. of Freund's Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), s.v. “liberalis” II.

equipped students not only with knowledge but also with the tools to think critically and logically, question and debate new ideas, and defend and confess their faith in Christ boldly. Over the past two decades, this model of classical Lutheran education has been revived and adapted to the realities of the twenty-first-century classroom.

The growth of this interest in classical Lutheran liberal arts education has been nothing short of remarkable. Grassroots organizations such as the Consortium of Classical Lutheran Education (CCLE) have developed in order to support and promote those who wish to build education upon this model. CCLE-accredited schools are now recognized by the National Lutheran Schools Association. Classical Lutheran education has come to be seen as an educationally responsible and theologically cohesive approach to teaching the children of the church.

As the number of schools seeking to be “classical” has grown, so has the need for teachers who are trained to teach in those schools. In response to that need, the LCMS, meeting in convention in 2016, adopted Resolution 7-05A: *To Endorse Roster Status for Graduates of Classical Liberal Studies and Other Teacher Education Programs*. This resolution endorsed classical training programs at several Concordia University System (CUS) institutions and called for the development of teacher education standards for graduates of these programs. The resolution also seeks the development of a track for roster status for these graduates. In response to this resolution, the CUS Board of Directors appointed a committee to develop a set of standards for these classical teacher training programs. The result was a list of six core competencies that every student graduating from a CUS Classical Education program is required to meet in order to be certified as a rostered classical education teacher. To date, classical education programs have been established at Concordia University Chicago, Concordia University Wisconsin, and Concordia University Irvine.

Recognizing the need to provide scholarship around this movement, Concordia University Chicago has established the Center for the Advancement of Lutheran Liberal Arts (CALLA). An essential component of CALLA’s mission is to foster the academic development of classical education in the context of the Lutheran confession. To further that mission, CALLA draws together scholars and educators from colleges and universities who appreciate the value of a classical education in the twenty-first century.

CALLA also reaches out to classical Christian educators who share a commitment to the historic confessions of the Christian church. While valuing the work accomplished within other confessional circles, CALLA seeks to act as a unique institution that strengthens the classical Christian educational community by exerting a distinctive Lutheran voice.



There are different ways to measure a school's success: enrollment numbers, financial stability, and grade scores, to name a few. These are certainly desirable qualities. After all, who doesn't want a school that is well funded? But these qualities cannot be the hallmark of a successful Lutheran school. We Lutherans must look where the Evangelical church has always looked: to its theology. This is what classical Lutheran education seeks to do. I believe that we are only at the beginning of this recovery. As the colleges and schools of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod unpack our own rich educational heritage, we will find inspiration for developing a renewed educational voice that will benefit the entire church.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> For more information, go to [cuchicago.edu/CALLA](http://cuchicago.edu/CALLA).



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***Early Christian Readings of Genesis One: Patristic Exegesis and Literal Interpretation.* By Craig D. Allert. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2018. 340 pages. Softcover. \$35.99.**

For the last century or so, Christians have engaged in a debate concerning the proper response to various scientific theories about the origins of the universe and the nature of life itself. One point of ongoing contention is the length of the days mentioned in the first chapter of Genesis. One side seeks to mitigate the conflict between sacred scripture and modern scientific theories. The days of creation are understood to allow for extensive lengths of time compatible with current scientific theories. The other side finds these accommodations of Genesis one to modern scientific ideas to be an outright denial of the scriptural faith or at least a dangerous compromise worthy of censure.

For myself, I can say that I have heard arguments from both sides throughout my life. Few arguments are actually new and even fewer promise a way forward. While I reject exegetical attempts to bring scripture into agreement with current scientific theories, nevertheless the debate generally has seemed rather stagnant and unworthy of prolonged attention. Enter Craig Allert's new book, *Early Christian Readings of Genesis One*. Allert suggests a way forward by turning backwards. His new book considers the testimony of ancient Christian fathers as expressed in their readings of Genesis one.

Allert divides his book into two parts. The first part (chapters 1–3) deals with the use or misuse of patristic sources within the modern debate concerning the days of creation. The second part (chapters 4–8) explores the way patristic readers such as Basil of Caesarea, Ephrem the Syrian, and Augustine of Hippo interpreted Genesis one.

The first part, while well written and thoughtfully organized, primarily surrounds a negative purpose. Allert seeks to critique the irresponsible use of the church fathers in the debate concerning the literal interpretation of Genesis one. While the author claims that both sides have misused patristic sources, the weight of his critique clearly falls on fundamentalist evangelicals who use the fathers to support a literal interpretation of the creation account. Allert's critique of these fundamentalists bears a certain emotion that seems to come from personal experience. For instance, he begins his book recounting his own experience of being

“misunderstood” and having his “words used in unintended ways” (1). This emotion gives Allert’s critique a certain passion and vitality, but it also raises suspicion that his criticism may be overly harsh. Allert’s critique of Louis Lavellee, James Mook, Ken Ham, *Answers in Genesis*, and *Creation Ministries International* appears warranted and worthy of due consideration; however, because there is no corresponding critique of the opposing point of view, Allert’s criticism comes off as one-sided and unbalanced.

While the reader may be tempted to stop reading after the first chapters, I encourage him to keep going. The second part offers a thought-provoking and truly illuminating venture into various patristic readings of Genesis one. Part 2 is a positive look at how ancient Christians confessed the doctrine of creation and handled important scriptural texts. For Allert, the fathers do not hold the literal meaning of scripture to be incompatible with figurative meanings. Indeed, the use of “figurative” may be misleading; for the fathers, the letter of the text includes within itself a deeply theological meaning. Inspiration means that scriptural words bear the Spirit. The surface of the text—its letters, words, and grammar—is a window that is meant to open up to the eternal depths of the Spirit.

Thus, as the fathers read Genesis one, they saw certain textual indications that called them to deeper theological meaning. Allert does a masterful job allowing the spirituality of the fathers to manifest itself. I will limit myself to two examples. First is the meaning of “beginning” in Gen 1:1. Is this strictly a temporal beginning or is it a genealogical priority of being? Allert shows how important this question was for the fathers’ polemical purposes. The very fact that the stars do not appear until the fourth day challenges their priority in pagan thought and philosophical perspectives. Yet, even more fundamentally, the “beginning” is read with reference to Christ through the influence of John’s Gospel. The divine Word is the beginning (John 1:1); this verse is a hermeneutical claim calling the fathers to read Genesis one in a thoroughly Christological way.

Second is Moses’ use of the cardinal number “one” in Genesis 1:5. While ordinal numbers—second, third, fourth, etc.—are used for the other days, the beginning of days is referred to as “day one.” This same cardinal number is used in reference to the day of resurrection (Matt 28:1; Mark 16:2; Luke 24:1; John 20:1). For patristic readers, this connection indicated that the mystery of salvation underlies Moses’ account. The first week of creation already points toward the holy week of our Lord’s passion. This relationship is the basis for the significance of the eighth day in patristic theology, that is, the Lord’s day that has no end.

Allert’s exposition demonstrates that the fathers refused to allow any barrier separating God from creation or time from eternity. Indeed, the fathers’ theology of time was the most thought-provoking aspect of Allert’s book. While they assume

the days of creation to be historical days, the fathers refuse to reduce their significance to such materialistic notions. Rather, within the historical days of creation, eternity is truly present manifesting itself to those with the eyes to see. The fathers are just as thoroughly incarnational with regard to time as they are with regard to space. The whole fullness of God is present in a single human being; so, too, the whole of eternity is present in day one, in the day of the Lord, in “the day the Lord has made” (Ps 118:24). Allert’s book calls us to join the fathers and “rejoice and be glad in it” (Ps 118:24).

James G. Bushur

***Luther’s Works: Companion Volume (Sixteenth-Century Biographies of Martin Luther).* Edited by Christopher Boyd Brown. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2018. 728 pages. Hardcover. \$54.99.**

This thick volume presents in English six biographies of Martin Luther from the sixteenth century, of varying length and disparate genres, and a brief preface authored by Luther himself for a catalog of his writings up to that time, published in 1533. Four of the biographical studies originated in the context of Luther’s death in 1546. The first is the meticulous report on the Reformer’s final weeks and of his deathbed experiences and confession of faith, recorded by Luther’s friend and colleague Justus Jonas and others. There follow the funeral sermon of Luther’s pastor, Johann Bugenhagen, and his colleague Philip Melanchthon’s funeral oration. Next appears Melanchthon’s careful biography of the Reformer, published a few months after Luther’s death as the preface for the second volume of his collected Latin writings; the preface covers Luther’s childhood through his development into a reformer, focusing especially on how God had raised up Luther to counter the “mania for idols” (77) of that age. These shorter works are followed by the unique hymnic biography consisting of sixty-four stanzas by Johann Walter, illuminatingly entitled *A New Spiritual Song about the Blessed, Precious, and Highly Gifted Man, Dr. Martin Luther, the Prophet and Apostle of Germany*, published in 1564. Finally, making up the vast majority of this large volume (101–612) are the seventeen biographical sermons of a former student of Luther’s, the Joachimsthal preacher Johann Mathesius, that deeply influenced subsequent Luther biography for at least the next two centuries. Mathesius preached these sermons between 1562 and 1564 and they were published shortly after his death, in 1566. Mathesius utilized countless published and manuscript sources as well as his own personal recollections to detail Luther’s upbringing and his career as a reformer and pastor, the leading figure of the Wittenberg Reformation. He celebrates Luther as a German

prophet, the “extraordinary man” that the Son of God used “to free us from the abominable kingdom and doctrine of the Antichrist and to rekindle the Gospel . . . and fan it into flame” (4).

Editor Christopher Brown’s extensive introduction (nearly eighty pages) to the volume analyzes each of these primary sources, and highly detailed annotations to the biographies make this book a treasure trove for the scholar. The annotations also provide the more casual reader with the historical background and bibliographical aids for understanding the many personalities, both allies and foes, who interacted with Luther during his influential life. Sometimes these annotations take up more than half the page and they can be a distraction from the narrative of these various biographies, but their inclusion makes the volume tremendously useful. For an account of Luther’s life and influence readers can always take up one or several of the many modern biographies available today, with quite a few of these published recently in the years leading up to the five-hundredth anniversary of the *Ninety-Five Theses* in 2017. But exploring these historic biographies, with the aid of the annotations, presents Luther as his contemporaries knew and valued him: not just an extraordinary and fascinating man but an instrument of God and even a prophet and apostle, sent to deliver the Church from the idolatry of the papacy and to renew the Gospel for the last days of human history.

Mathesius’s biographical sermons in particular reward the reader with insight into the character of the Reformation as a whole, from the perspective of a pastor living out its legacy under the difficult circumstances of Habsburg rule in Bohemia in the two decades following Luther’s death (1545–1565). While nearly all Luther biographies are at the same time analyses of (and judgments upon) Luther’s Reformation, modern biographers tend to read Luther and the Reformation through the lens of their own contemporary mores and theological frameworks. From Luther’s anti-papal and anti-Sacramentarian polemics to his harsh and sometimes disturbing attacks against the Jews and the Turks (i.e., Islamic society), Luther can be judged along psychoanalytical lines as displaying personality disorders (see Roland Bainton, who laments Luther had not died prior to his harshest polemics against the Jews in the 1540s; Erik Erikson; and more recently Mark Edwards and Lyndal Roper) or faulted even by highly sympathetic biographers (Heinz Schilling, Scott Hendrix) for not more gregariously engaging and winning over his political opponents and especially some of his own wayward disciples. Such analyses of Luther’s personal character stem largely from the modern biographer’s tendency, one could say goal, to explore Luther as a complex and flawed *man*, and the Reformation as an experience of humanity, a human phenomenon, even a human experiment. Reading these biographies of Luther’s contemporaries, but especially Mathesius’s on account of its length and the author’s

personal and pastoral interests in unveiling Luther's life and work so extensively, results in internalizing the very different but prevailing view of Luther's time that here was not just a man but an instrument of God, and Luther's Reformation the battleground between God and His archenemy, Satan. From his preface through each of his sermons on Luther's life—and even in those sermons devoted more specifically to Luther's views on fables (Seventh Sermon), the Augsburg Confession (Ninth Sermon), the University of Wittenberg (Sixteenth Sermon), and Luther's sayings and stories about mining (Seventeenth Sermon)—Mathesius continuously describes Luther as the instrument and apostle of God while his enemies and opponents, from the papal Antichrist to the Sacramentarians to wayward disciples like the fanatic Thomas Münzer and the antinomian Johann Agricola, all alike are but the tools of Satan to destroy and undermine God's own work through Luther and Luther's Reformation.

Each of these sixteenth-century biographies of Luther offers the Lutheran pastor and theologian today an opportunity to reflect on the story of the Reformer's life and work in the ways these were celebrated by Luther's contemporaries and the generation that followed. It is a very different experience than reading a modern biography, one that deserves to have an impact on preaching, as that event too is most profitably viewed as God at work through His instrument. As Karl Barth observed of Paul in the opening paragraphs of his commentary *The Epistle of the Romans*, "Fashioned of the same stuff as all other men, a stone differing in no way from other stones, yet in his relation to God—and in this only—he is unique. As an apostle—and only as an apostle—he stands in no organic relationship with human society as it exists in history: seen from the point of view of history, he can be regarded only as an exception, nay, rather, an impossibility." Luther's sixteenth-century biographers viewed his exceptionality as the divine intervention of God in human history. Preachers today will preach the Law and the Gospel with the authority of God's own word as they see their calling in the same light.

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***Luther and the Reformation of the Later Middle Ages.* By Leland Saak. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017. 410 pages. Hardcover. \$120.00.**

Did you know that there was a reformation before the Reformation? Well, there was and it was characterized by sharp criticism of corrupt clergy, efforts at returning the monastic orders to the ideal of their founders, new forms of lay piety, challenges

to papal leadership, and innovations in theology. Martin Luther became an Augustinian hermit and joined the fray. But the medieval reformation failed. Ironically, however, its failure became the catalyst for the Protestant Reformation—a fundamental restructuring of the western Church; and Luther was a part of that, too. This is the argument of Leland Saak's book.

As simple as that may sound, however, this is not a simple book. It demands a lot of the reader, for Saak not only describes the work of obscure medieval theologians, he also describes the Reformer's early theology on the basis of obscure sources from the Reformer's own pen. So, for example, in Chapter 5, Saak offers a brief survey of medieval Augustinians who taught unconditional predestination. They include Alfonsus Vargas, Johannes Zachariae, and (Luther's contemporary) Konrad Treger—all of them brand new to me and, very likely, unknown to Luther. Among the more challenging sources for Luther's thinking that Saak depends on are Luther's marginal notes on several works of Augustine (from the beginning of Luther's theological studies at Erfurt), similar notes on Lombard's *Sentences* (1509/10), and a Christmas Sermon to the Wittenberg Augustinians (1514).

Even more challenging than the sources is the author's method. For example, in order to understand Luther's statement, "all Aristotle is to theology as darkness is to light" from his *Disputation Against Scholastic Theology* (1517), Saak spends about seventy pages reflecting on Luther's awareness and use of scholastic thinkers in order to show that:

Fundamental structures of Luther's ways of thought of his mature theology were already present in his earliest theological development. Such structures were derived from an Aristotelian philosophy of the *via moderna* conditioned by the Augustinian theological tradition as Brother Martin knew it. (196)

As I said, this is not an easy book.

Readers of this journal, however, might find some parts of the work more accessible than the treatment of the "fundamental structures" of Luther's thought. Saak, for example, has a very interesting chapter on what it meant to call Luther "an Augustinian," (Ch. 2). Elsewhere (Ch. 3), Saak discusses Luther's Reformation breakthrough and argues against Martin Brecht and Heiko Oberman on behalf of an early date for Luther's realization that "the righteousness of God" in Romans 1:17 is the righteousness by which God declares us righteous for the sake of Christ and not the righteousness of good works that He demands from us. This involves a close rereading of Luther's own description of his experience as well as examining several other texts, but Saak is careful and persuasive. If nothing else, he shows how hard it is to be dogmatic about dating Luther's tower experience.



An early date for Luther's theological breakthrough is essential to the first thesis of the book—that Luther discovered passive righteousness, developed his exegetical principles, and began his opposition to the papacy while still being a faithful, obedient Augustinian hermit. Three additional themes follow: (1) to study the early Luther, we need to know late medieval Augustinianism, for Luther really was an Augustinian until at least 1520 (he quit wearing his habit only in 1524); (2) early Luther was a full participant in late medieval reformation; and (3) just as late medieval reform failed so did the 16th century Reformation. Instead, it produced the modern world.

Obviously, this is an ambitious work. It will be of most interest to those who want to make Luther's connection to scholastic theology and to medieval Augustinianism as precise as possible. For the general reader of Luther and his theology its focus on late medieval scholasticism and the Augustinian Order is probably too narrow. It certainly belongs in theology libraries. For pastors' libraries, probably not.

Cameron MacKenzie

***Surviving the Storms: Memoirs of David P. Scaer.* By David Scaer, edited by Robert E. Smith. N.p.: Luther Academy, 2018. 448 pages. Hardcover. \$40. Also available in softcover, PDF, and Kindle.**

Memoirs differ from autobiographies in that the former tends to focus less on the self and more on other persons. Readers looking for something like Augustine's *Confessions* (i.e., an introspective account) will have to look elsewhere. Scaer's memoirs are, to a great degree, about the people whom he knew, whom he studied with, whom he taught, and whom he worked with as colleagues at Springfield, Fort Wayne, and in the Missouri Synod. It also informs the reader about Scaer's theological development and insights, which are original to him, and worthy of study in their own right.

The basic structure of this book is chronological, which is normal. Unusual for this genre, the author has supplied one or more "excurses" after eight out of the twelve chapters. For those who want to read the book as an autobiography, the editor supplies an alternate table of contents (page x), but no reader should skip the excurses entirely.

Very helpful to the reader is the glossary of Lutheran acronyms and terms (371–374) and a complete index of persons (375–385). The back pages (387–427) are a wonderfully complete bibliography of works by David P. Scaer, compiled by the editor Robert E. Smith.

These memoirs serve as a study of two things: the author and the seminary which he served for nearly his entire career. The corporate history of the Missouri Synod's Concordia Theological Seminary, titled *Prairie School of the Prophets* (CPH, 1989), was written by Erich H. Heintzen and completed by Lorman M. Petersen. Scaer's memoirs extends details of that history from 1966 to the present day. Only time will tell for sure whether these memoirs of Scaer are more important for their insights into the seminary or their author. I think the latter.

One of the challenges in writing histories of significant theologians is that we often do not know the thinking or events that led them to forging a new path. Scaer does us a favor in outlining his thinking when it began to head in new directions. He writes "Soon after beginning to teach dogmatics [in 1966], I saw that even such a fundamental doctrine as biblical inspiration could not be taught in isolation, but had to be seen as a derivative of the authority of the apostles derived from Jesus. This injected an historical component into how the Scriptures took form. All this was expressed in my *Apostolic Scriptures*"(43).

When Scaer began his work as seminary professor in Springfield in 1966, Rudolf Bultmann was still a "super-star" in American religious academies. In *Excurses III*, "Working with the Gospels," Scaer rightly credits Bultmann's theological method with being the "ultimate theological cause for the St. Louis faculty walkout and formation of Seminex in 1974" (77). In his struggles to overcome the Bultmannian threat to Lutheran theology, Scaer realized that "History precedes God's speaking to us in our history, and so the incarnation is the necessary prelude to inspiration" (81), and "Typically dogmatics goes from the divine, with the assumption that the Scriptures are inspired, then to the historical, i.e., if God says it, it must be so. This is true, but this leaves unaddressed the historical context in which that authoritative word of God was spoken" (81).

Scaer continues to explain that the historical context in which that word of God was spoken is provided in the Gospels: "[T]he Gospels are recognized as the source of what is known about [Jesus] and what should be believed, and they take precedence in church life and theology over all other books, including the Old Testament and the Epistles, all of which, like the Gospels, claim divine origin and authority. So while the term *Christology* is reserved for a particular section in the dogmatic sequence, the term should primarily be used of the Gospels. They are Christologies in the primary sense" (79).

Here is my assessment of Scaer's accomplishment in theology: his was a new way of doing orthodox, biblical Lutheran theology. It grounded the authority of the New Testament in the fact that its books were authored by apostles of Jesus—an insight certainly found in Luther, but often forgotten. It preferred the acts of Jesus over the Acts of the Apostles. It preferred the "red letter" discourses of Jesus over

the discourses of the apostles. It preferred the thought-patterns and language of Jesus to traditional dogmatic categories. It was a thoroughly Gospel-historical way of doing dogmatic theology. It also resolved the problems in dogmatic theology noted by Albrecht Ritschl, Adolf von Harnack, and Ernst Troeltsch, and put Lutheran dogma on a firmer foundation than it had been for several centuries.

This just scratches the surface of the theological insights that the reader will encounter in these memoirs. It is mandatory reading for anyone who wonders what happened at Fort Wayne in the 1980s and 1990s and for anyone who cares about preserving orthodox, biblical Lutheran theology into the 21st century.

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***Johann Gerhard (1582–1637) and the Conceptualization of Theologia at the Threshold of the “Age of Orthodoxy.” The Making of a Theologian.* By Glenn K. Fluegge. Göttingen: Edition Ruprecht, 2018. 258 pages. Hardcover. \$40.00.**

The Lutheran concept of theology as a “practical habit” has been extremely important from the age of Lutheran Orthodoxy up to the present. In *Johann Gerhard (1582–1637) and the Conceptualization of Theologia at the Threshold of the “Age of Orthodoxy,”* Glenn Fluegge of Concordia University, Irvine, explores the origins of this understanding of theology within Lutheranism. The book represents a modified version of his doctoral dissertation.

As with much of the methodology of scholastic orthodoxy, the notion of theology as a “practical habit” draws on Aristotelian philosophy. In Aristotle’s thought, a *habitus* (habit) is an aptitude for action possessed by a human being. This aptitude can have moral and epistemological dimensions. One must have a certain aptitude to develop virtue through right practice (i.e., the basis of Aristotle’s virtue ethics). One also needs an intellectual aptitude to engage in a course of study on an academic subject.

The medieval church used Aristotle’s concept of habits as a way of conceptualizing how human beings exercised faith, hope, and love. God’s grace was understood as creating faith, hope, and love in the soul as capacities that developed by correct behavior. Luther rejected this notion not only because it lacked biblical support, but because “*habitus*” quite literally means “to have” or “to possess.” In Luther’s conception of the life of faith, grace can never be seen as a possession. As the Reformer famously wrote at the end of his life, we are “beggars

all.” Nevertheless, Luther’s, and later Lutheran, rejection of the notion of faith as a kind of habit created difficulties for discussion of theology as a discipline.

Gerhard’s impetus to further develop the concept of theology as a “practical habit” was occasioned by the fallout from the “Hofmann Controversy.” The Helmstedt professor Daniel Hofmann insisted that everything taught by philosophy was the wisdom of the flesh and therefore opposed to theology. Jakob Martini of Wittenberg affirmed that theology and philosophy were harmonious and should be seen as simply different modes of the same divine truth. This debate spilled over into an argument about the nature of theology as a discipline. Hofmann insisted that theology grew out of the piety of the individual theologian. If this were not the case, and theology was primarily academic discipline, it could be engaged in by anyone with basic intellectual capacities. By implication, unbelievers could be just as good theologians as people with genuine faith. Hofmann found this conclusion to be unacceptable. Countering this, Martini and others insisted that theology was a real form of propositional knowledge about God. Thus, it was a genuine academic discipline that utilized the same intellectual tools as other disciplines. Many Lutherans drew the conclusion during this debate that the practice of doing theology presupposed the existence of a certain intellectual aptitude (habit).

Gerhard wanted to affirm that theology was a genuine academic discipline, while not cutting theology off from faith and piety. Moreover, he wanted to affirm that the goal of theology is essentially practical (i.e., engaging in word and sacrament ministry). Hence, he developed the concept of theology as a “practical habit.” Following Aristotelian concepts of cognition, Gerhard asserted that there was a passive and active intellect. When a human being perceives an object of cognition, the passive intellect filters out all the accidental qualities and the active intellect identifies its formal reality. Nevertheless, when one reads Scripture the primary objects of perception (i.e., the doctrines of the faith) are not part of the natural order and therefore cannot be comprehended by the active intellect when left to its own powers. Rather, God must illuminate the human mind and give a “habit” to identify the supernatural object of cognition, namely, the truths of the faith.

At certain points, Fluegge seems to suggest that Gerhard was nervous about making grace a kind of possession for reasons similar to Luther’s. Hence Gerhard describes the *habitus* of theology as not being an intellectual capacity in the normal sense. The practice of theology is a kind of intellectual event that occurred when the Word of God was read, heard, or contemplated. Gerhard envisioned this encounter with the Word of God as occurring through Luther’s threefold practice of prayer, meditation, and suffering/temptation. As Fluegge shows, the value of this theory is that it was able to incorporate both the faith and academic dimensions of the practice of theology.

Overall, Fluegge does an excellent job describing and analyzing Gerhard's work. Some of the terminology might be a little challenging for those without a background in the period. Nonetheless, for those more advanced students of scholastic orthodoxy, Fluegge's work is essential and is therefore highly recommended.

Jack D. Kilcrease  
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***Seeing God: The Beatific Vision in Christian Tradition.* By Hans Boersma. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2018. 512 pages. Hardcover. \$55.00.**

Hans Boersma, best known for his advocacy of Christian Platonism as the necessary fundament for a Christian ontology, has in *Seeing God* given us a *tour de force* on the topic of the beatific vision as the *telos* of human existence as that has been articulated by major figures in the history of the church. As such, this book is a paradigm of historical theology which introduces significant theological issues through the study of various voices who have struggled to do justice to the mysteries of the Christian faith.

The beatific vision as the *telos* of man has been a constant in Christian theology from the beginning, although in contemporary thought it has suffered some neglect. Boersma's discussions of his chosen representatives for the beatific vision are consistently excellent and enlightening and evince a thorough reading and engagement with the primary source materials and relevant secondary literature. There is much here to learn and much to think about. The breadth of his chosen representatives is remarkable, and for most readers his discussions will be a primer on figures unknown, yet worthy of knowing.

True to Boersma's advocacy of the Platonic tradition as a necessary philosophical background for an ontology of participation (Boersma's "sacramentalism"), the first chapter outlines both strengths and weaknesses in Plato and Plotinus as conceptual aids in thinking about the beatific vision. Both regarded vision of the divine as possible, however fleeting and imperfect, already in this life, an aspect which Boersma finds (rightly enough) as a positive. Yet, he is aware that both depreciate the body, an aspect which Boersma finds (rightly enough) problematic: "One of the challenges facing Christian theologians would be how to give expression to their faith in the beatific vision without gainsaying either the incarnation or the bodily resurrection" (75). Among the theological issues always in play is the significance of the body for thinking of the eschatological fullness of seeing God, and concomitant with that problem the necessity of maintaining the distinction between

God and the creature. Interesting, too, is the question of whether the beatific vision is a purely mental/intellectual state or whether the vision of God is through our physical, albeit transfigured, eyes. Finally, the question of what exactly is seen in the beatific vision remains central in all representatives. Is it the essence of God; is it the incarnate Christ; is it the Trinity? With such questions in play Boersma provides wholly engaging discussions of the following: Gregory of Nyssa; Augustine; Thomas Aquinas and Gregory Palamas; Symeon the New Theologian and John of the Cross; Bonaventure and Nicholas of Cusa; Dante; John Calvin; John Donne; Puritan and Dutch Reformed thinkers (Isaac Ambrose, John Owen, Richard Baxter, Thomas Watson, Abraham Kuyper); Jonathan Edwards. Finally, in a concluding chapter Boersma offers his own reflections on how best to think of the beatific vision.

Strangely absent from the discussion is any mention or engagement with Luther and the Lutheran tradition. Luther is mentioned only once, in a footnote, to the effect that instead of a beatific vision Luther proposed a beatific hearing (27, n 24). Later, in another footnote, Boersma refers to a comment by Herman Bavinck that various Lutheran scholastics taught that the final vision of God would be with our physical eyes (mentioned are Quenstedt, Hollaz, Hülsemann, Lucas Maius, Johann Wolfgang Jäger)(423, n 100).<sup>1</sup> In fact, the beatific vision was given considerable discussion in the Lutheran tradition, as the extended treatment by Johann Gerhard attests. Nonetheless, as one from Dutch Reformed background, Boersma may be excused for this lapse. For Lutheran readers his discussion of Puritan and Dutch Reformed thinkers no doubt fills a void in our own knowledge.

This book is worth reading, and I highly recommend it. As I noted, it is superbly researched, and one can only deeply respect Boersma's compendious mastery of the sources. At the same time, some comments seem appropriate. Boersma notes that Aquinas thinks the object of the beatific vision is the essence of God (*οὐσία*). He never speaks of the beatific vision as a vision of Christ (414–417). Here “essence” refers to the deity of God as such.<sup>2</sup> As Boersma rightly notes, the Eastern tradition and most Protestants avoid such a conclusion as a threat to divine transcendence. According to his essence, God is incomprehensible, unknowable, and invisible. Boersma shares this reserve, insisting that the object of the beatific vision must be Christ himself. One can only concur with Boersma in this. But elsewhere, and throughout the book, Boersma uses the term “essence” in a wholly different, and inexact, sense. He frequently pairs “essence” with the “character” of God: “If we see

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<sup>1</sup> That Boersma refers to Bavinck for this information indicates his choice to neglect the Lutheran heritage. One might mention that Maius and Jäger are hardly major figures in the Lutheran pantheon. In fact, Maius (1522-1598) converted to Calvinism!

<sup>2</sup> A classic text is 1 Jn 3:2: “When he shall appear we shall be like to him, because we shall see him *as he is* (*καθὼς ἐστιν*).” Thomas takes the “is” as strictly ontological, the being of God.

the character or οὐσία of God in Christ . . . ” (417). But we do not see the οὐσία of God in Christ, not if by οὐσία the οὐσία of Thomas Aquinas is meant. A better term for “character” would be “nature” or φύσις. It is, perhaps, a mere linguistic point; but the inexactitude of Boersma’s employment of “essence” tends at times to befuddle his comments.

In my judgment, Boersma’s own reflections largely come out on the right side of things. He insists that the beatific vision must be that of the incarnate Christ. Although not vigorously, he demurs from the common opinion (Augustine) that we will see God only mentally or intellectually. We will see God with our physical eyes. This is an important point, for apart from this claim it is impossible to assert that Christ is the object of the beatific vision. Interestingly, it is the Puritan thinkers (John Owen, Thomas Watson) and the Orthodox Gregory Palamas who most decidedly insist on the beatific vision through transfigured physical eyes. Despite the wealth of discussion, it remains for me quite strange that the role of the earthly Jesus, the Christian liturgy, the Eucharist, and the church seem with extreme rarity to play a role in thinking about the beatific vision. Equally strange is the absence of any role the forgiveness of sins plays, although the purity of virtue is common. Had Boersma paid attention to the Lutheran tradition, these aspects might have risen to the level of mention.<sup>3</sup>

William C. Weinrich

***The Saving Truth: Doctrine for Lay People.* By Kurt E. Marquart, edited by Ken Schurb and Robert Paul. Truth, Salvatory and Churchly. N.p.: Luther Academy, 2016. 196 pages. Hardcover. \$34.99.**

Few men have had as much influence on the theology of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as Kurt Marquart. It is difficult for those who knew him to comprehend that so many years have passed since his passing in September, 2006. More vested clergy may have been in attendance for his funeral than for any other similar occasion. A room in the seminary library has been dedicated to his memory with an appropriate painting on the wall projecting the dignity in which he carried himself.

He served on the synod’s Commission on Theology and Church Relations longer than anyone else. To assure that his theology will continue to have an impact,

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<sup>3</sup> See, for example, the short, but dense, discussion of “Eternal Life” (*Creation and Redemption*, 575-579): “[The beatific vision], however, is not a mystical ascent to God’s eternal majesty, but a vision of God’s glory in the man Jesus Christ our brother.”

Luther Academy, which has already published two volumes of his writings in its Confessional Lutheran Dogmatics series, has inaugurated another series, Truth, Salvatory and Churchly, to make his unpublished writings available to future generations. The subtitle of the first volume, *Doctrine for Lay People*, may be misleading, simply because in the lecture hall or in front of a group of laity, Marquart was encyclopedic in knowledge and easy to understand. If there was anyone who might be described as a Leonardo DaVinci in what he knew about theology and science, it was Marquart. Whatever the circumstances, he was engaging as no one else was. Topics covered in the first volume of the series are the scriptures, incarnation, justification and sanctification, law, gospel and the means of grace, baptism, the Lord Supper and an apologetic defense of Christianity.

Marquart wrote the way he spoke and so this is as easy a read as it is profound. For those who knew him, these essays will make him alive. Others will be in for treat in getting to know him. Of the nine chapters, chapter 2, “The Living God” was written by Robert D. Preus, though it might be discovered, in boxes of papers Marquart left behind, that Marquart also addressed this topic. As we await the second volume and third volumes with essays specifically addressed to pastors and scholars, we can enjoy visiting with him in the first volume.

David P. Scaer

## **Reviews Published Online at: [www.ctsfw.edu/ctq/reviews](http://www.ctsfw.edu/ctq/reviews)**

*A Redemptive Theology of Art: Restoring Godly Aesthetics to Doctrine and Culture.*

By David A. Covington. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018. 233 pages. Softcover. \$24.99. (Eamonn M. Ferguson).

*Bach and the Counterpoint of Religion.* Edited by Robin A. Leaver. Bach Perspectives

12. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2018. 144 pages. Hardcover. \$50.00. (Kevin R. Hildebrand).

*Being Human: Bodies, Minds, Persons.* By Rowan Williams. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2018. 112 pages. Softcover. \$12.00. (Scott Stiegemeier).

*God's Two Words: Law and Gospel in the Lutheran and Reformed Traditions.* Edited by Jonathan A. Linebaugh. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2018. 265 pages. Softcover. \$35.00. (Martin R. Noland).



## Books Received

- Barrett, Matthew, editor. *The Doctrine on Which the Church Stands or Falls: Justification in Biblical, Theological, Historical, and Pastoral Perspective*. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2019. 912 pages. Hardcover. \$60.00.
- Bennema, Cornelis. *Mimesis in the Johannine Literature*. Library of New Testament Studies. New York: T&T Clark, 2017. 246 pages. Hardcover. \$114.00.
- Carney, J. J. and Laurie Johnston, editors. *The Surprise of Reconciliation in the Catholic Tradition*. Mahwah, New Jersey, 2018. 360 pages. Softcover. \$35.95.
- Challies, Tim, Josh Byers, and Joey Schwartz. *A Visual Theology Guide to the Bible: Seeing and Knowing God's Word*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019. 208 pages. Softcover. \$19.99.
- Grudem, Wayne. *Christian Ethics: An Introduction to Biblical Reasoning*. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2018. 1,296 pages. Hardcover. \$59.99.
- Johnson, Dru. *Human Rites: The Power of Rituals, Habits, and Sacraments*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2019. 176 pages. Softcover. \$13.00.
- Kolb, Robert. *Nikolaus von Amsdorf: Champion of Martin Luther's Reformation*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2019. 216 pages. Softcover. \$17.99.
- McKnight, Scot and Joseph B. Modica, editors. *Preaching Romans: Four Perspectives*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2019. 160 pages. Softcover. \$20.00.
- Perrin, Nicholas. *The Kingdom of God: A Biblical Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019. 272 pages. Softcover. \$29.99.
- Sanchez M., Leopold A. *Sculptor Spirit: Models of Sanctification from Spirit Christology*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2019. 290 pages. Softcover. \$25.99.
- Wrogemann, Henning. *A Theology of Interreligious Relations*. Intercultural Theology 3. Translated by Karl E. Böhmer. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2019. 528 pages. Hardcover. \$40.00.



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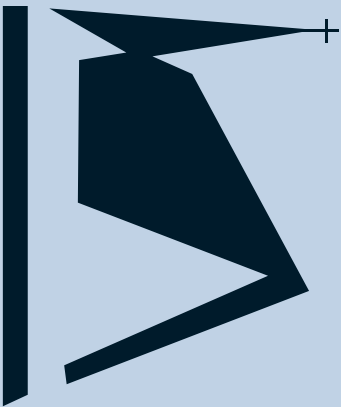
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