

LOGIA

A JOURNAL OF LUTHERAN THEOLOGY



REFORMATION/OCTOBER 1992

VOLUME I, NUMBER 1

LOGIA

A JOURNAL OF LUTHERAN THEOLOGY

REFORMATION/OCTOBER 1992

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 1

CONTENTS

ARTICLES

- Logia: A Journal of Lutheran Theology – An Introduction*
By the Editors3
- The Church's Confession*
By Hermann Sasse, Translated by Matthew Harrison5
- The Universal Priesthood in the Lutheran Confessions*
By Erling Teigen11
- The Church: Hospital or Gymnasium?*
By Ken Schurb19
- Church Fellowship and Altar Fellowship in the Light of Church History*
By Martin Wittenberg, Translated by John Bruss.....25
- Two Sermons on the Holy Supper*
By Martin Luther from the House Postil61

REVIEWS67

- Review Essay: *Memoirs in Exile: Confessional Hope and Institutional Crisis* by John Tietjen
Confessing the Faith: Reformers Define the Church, 1530–1580 by Robert Kolb
The Foolishness of God: The Place of Reason in the Theology of Martin Luther by Siegbert Becker

LOGIA FORUM77

- Löhe's Nightmare • Consumerism and the Church • Fictional Ethics • Greener Pastures • Just a Big Misunderstanding? • Brave New Church • Where Is The Mote?

LOGIA

A Journal of Lutheran Theology

An Introduction

WELCOME TO *LOGIA*. MANY OF YOU HAVE RECEIVED THIS journal because you are on the mailing list of *Logia*, *Lutheran Confessional Review*, or *Confessional Lutheran Research Society Newsletter*. The editors of these three publications have joined forces to produce the journal you now have in your hands. We have shared a mutual admiration for each others' journals and have found ourselves printing material very similar in content and purpose. Since we recognized that we shared goals and purposes, we decided to join forces editorially and financially.

Logia expresses what this journal wants to be. In Greek, *Logia* functions either as an adjective meaning "eloquent," "learned," or "cultured," or as a plural noun meaning "divine revelations," "words," or "messages." The word is found in Acts 7:38 and Romans 3:2. Its compound forms include ὁμολογία (confession), ἀπολογία (defense), and ἀναλογία (right relationship). Each of these concepts and all of them together express the purpose and method of this journal. *Logia* is committed to providing an independent theological forum normed by the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. At the heart of our journal we want our readers to find a love for the Sacred Scriptures as the very Word of God; not merely as rule and norm, but especially as Spirit, truth, and life which reveals Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life—Jesus Christ our Lord.

Each editor speaks for himself, not for his church body or any other group. Formal church fellowship is not implied by any individual's participation in this journal, nor do we imply any "level" of the same. We believe that God's Word alone—never the labors, intentions, or dreams of people—unites and creates fellowship. We do not intend to involve ourselves in the political issues of any particular church body. In *Logia* we hope to provide our readers with a forum for coming to grips with serious issues which challenge our historic Lutheran faith in a calm, reasoned atmosphere of responsible Christian scholarship. Our purpose is to encourage study and learning at the deepest level for busy parish pastors and laymen as well as theologians.

The editors are united in their belief that the church today needs to recapture the true spirit and nature of historic Lutheranism. While our roots are in the old Synodical Conference, we are not interested in repristinating a romanticized past. We need to look deeply into our past and to follow the example of American Lutherans like Walther, Krauth, Hönecke, Koren, and others. Especially, we need to return again to the spiritual father after whom we name ourselves and our confession, Martin Luther. And if we return to Luther, we

will find that we are returning to the true church catholic, reformed and reforming those who cling to her confessions as contained in the *Book of Concord*. We want our confession to be that we have changed nothing in the church, but only rediscovered the Gospel, which, through human rationalization and scholastic meandering, has become clouded in the church's theology. Like our confessional fathers, we claim to teach nothing novel, but we assert that the confession of the Evangelical Lutheran Church is the confession of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church. The Lutheran church is a "denomination" only insofar as it is distinct from other groups. We recognize that historic Lutheranism is evangelical, orthodox, confessional, and catholic; therefore we reject the charge that the Lutheran church is schismatic or sectarian.

We want to promote a healthy church life among Lutheran people. It saddens us that some who claim the name Lutheran are willing to surrender that which marks our church as being one with the church catholic in the historic doctrines, liturgy and practices of the church. Unity in the faith is not predicated on external forms but is predicated alone on the doctrine of the Gospel (AC VII). Only that doctrine marks a church as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic, and it is precisely that precious apostolic treasure which is under attack from all corners.

We are not ashamed of being Lutheran. There is today a great deal of discomfort with the unique doctrinal emphases and liturgical practices of Confessional Lutheranism. In our "modern" climate where only that which is new is true, some are embarrassed by the claims of the Confessional Lutheran Church. We, however, remain convinced that there is no other confession in which the Word of God, specifically the Gospel, has such free course and has been preserved in such purity. We cling to God's divinely instituted marks of this church: the Gospel, preached purely in all its articles, and the Sacraments, administered according to Christ's institution. Therefore, we confess the Church, without apology and without rancor, only with a sincere and fervent love for the precious bride of Christ, the Holy Christian Church, "the mother that begets and bears every Christian through the Word of God," as Luther says in the Large Catechism (LC II.42). We wish to defend her and support her in the challenging days in which we find ourselves. We are animated by the conviction that the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession represents the true expression of the Church which we confess to be "holy, catholic, and apostolic."

Word and Sacrament will always be at the forefront of *Logia*. The Word and Sacraments are the heart of the church; they are its identifying marks. Therefore, the Lutheran Church

insists that even in its forms and ceremonies it will give witness to and confess the Word and Sacraments in all truth and purity. We rejoice in our freedom in Christ and retain those ceremonies and forms which comprise the historic liturgy. We do not throw out those forms as worn-out or culturally bound forms unsuited for this culture. Rather, by our forms and ceremonies we want to be distinguished from the Reformed and Armenian sects which surround the church of the Augsburg Confession in America as well as in other countries. Thus, it will be a goal of this journal to encourage a healthy appreciation for the ancient liturgical forms of the true Evangelical Lutheran Church and encourage uniformity in their practice and use, and especially, conformity to the confessions of our church. We believe that liturgy is not at all irrelevant to the church's theology, but *is* a church's theology. A pastor's private reflections or convictions do not a church's confession make. Proper confession will find expression in appropriate liturgical forms and ceremonies through which God serves His people with the treasures of salvation and must always be in conformity with the means of salvation, Gospel and Sacraments.

We want to promote an evangelical zeal for our Lutheran faith. The Lutheran church today, throughout the world, is in a great struggle to be faithful to its confession. In this struggle, the sins of human hearts are repeatedly made manifest, and in all pride and arrogance, backbiting and jealousies, shame is brought to the Gospel. We call each other to repentance, especially for those sins which bring dishonor to the Gospel. But at the same time we rejoice in the growing movement among Lutherans the world over to recapture the zeal and devotion for the pure Word and Sacraments of our Reformation fathers. Our theological roots are in this movement, and we wish to propagate and reinforce its message for the church today. We lament the contemporary apathy toward the vigorous and uncompromising theology, faith, and church life set forth in the Lutheran Confessions.

We want to contend for our confession without being contentious. The well-intentioned desire for peace in the church has led to a distaste for open and frank discussion of issues and trends. We deplore this misguided concept of "peace in our time" at the expense of confessional and moral integrity. We also regret the fact that theological discussion in the church today has tended to be governed by issues of political power and fear of financial consequences instead of a search for truth.

This journal intends to provide for an open and frank discussion among Confessional Lutherans and commits itself to the theological research, reflection, and analysis which are necessary to restore a genuine and honest confessional commitment in our churches.

Logia will be "pan-Lutheran" in the sense that we will address the vital issues which confront all those who bear the name Lutheran, and we want to be a true forum for all who are struggling to remain faithful to the theology of the Lutheran Confessions. But we will not be "pan-Lutheran" in trying to be all things to all men. Our goal is a full renewal of the Lutheran churches to the faith confessed in our Lutheran Confessions. We believe that both myopic parochialism and turf wars on the one hand and reckless ecumenism and the practice of church fellowship without full confessional unity on the other hand are poisons ready to suffocate true renewal.

In sum, we wish to return to the one source—the Holy Scripture, and our Lutheran understanding of it expressed in the *Book of Concord*. That, and that alone, will inform and mold our thought in this journal. We do that in unity with the fathers of the church, of both ancient and reformation times as well as from more recent times. We appreciate their struggles and we look to them for guidance in our own struggles. We may not be able to return to the past. Who would want to? But if there is an ecumenical unity possible, surely we have it with our confessing fathers. We want to sit at their feet and hear their teaching and sing with them the praises of Him who is the same yesterday, today, and forever. 

The Editors

AN INVITATION

Logia will be published four times a year. We hope that you will find the \$18.00 per year subscription fee a fair price for the quality journal we want to produce. This first issue is being mailed out widely. We feel the best way for you to decide if you would like to subscribe to our journal is for you to have a sample copy in your hands. We hope that you will fill out the subscription card immediately so that you will not miss Vol. 1, No. 2. You may choose to be billed for your subscription.

The Church's Confession

Hermann Sasse

Translated by Matthew Harrison

*Hermann Sasse (1895-1976) was one of the leading voices for confessional Lutheranism in the twentieth century. Though an advocate of the Bekennende Kirche which arose in response to the oppressive Nazi regime, Sasse was opposed to the Barmen Declaration. Sasse moved away from the classic liberalism of his university training toward the confessional position which caused him increasing difficulty in Germany. Sasse became involved in a fierce struggle to prevent his native church, the Lutheran Church of Bavaria, from joining the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland, a federation of churches in Germany, including also the old Prussian Union churches of Reformed and Lutheran background. When he realized that there was no stopping the union, he resigned his post as professor at Erlangen University, a most prestigious position, and joined the small Lutheran Free Church in Germany. In 1949 he emigrated to Australia to accept a position as professor at Immanuel Theological Seminary in North Adelaide, South Australia, the seminary of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australia. Sasse, throughout his life, was a prolific writer. His areas of particular speciality were the Sacrament of the Altar and the Doctrine of the Church. His two most famous works are *Here We Stand* and *This is My Body*. He wrote many journal articles as well, which are not widely available for two reasons. First, they are, in many cases, available only in German and second, even when written in English, they often appeared in journals obscure to American and European Lutherans. It is our desire to make available more of Sasse's writings than have previously been known to American Lutherans. Sasse's witness to a reinvigorated confessionalism is timely, and it is possible that Sasse will find an audience more eager today to hear him than was his own generation. Sasse never failed to emphasize that the church and its confessions are inextricably linked. By confession Sasse did not mean to imply that merely a human assent was adequate; rather by confession he meant the historic confession of the church based on Holy Scripture. Elsewhere Sasse emphatically asserted, "The experience of Christendom shows that wherever the authority of the ancient confessions has been set aside, there also the Biblical doctrine of the incarnation of the eternal Son has been lost. It is not possible to maintain the authority of Holy Scripture and reject the authority of these confessions. This is so because the authority of the confessions is none other than the authority of their Scriptural content."*

*This article was written prior to Sasse's professorship at the University of Erlangen and appeared in *Christentum und Wissenschaft*, September 1930. Sasse laments the trend toward an undogmatic Christianity. He demonstrates from the New Testament that the church is always a confessing church or it becomes a denying church.*

THE INTELLECTUAL DISPOSITION OF THE MODERN WORLD HAS developed through a long, difficult struggle against ecclesiastical dogma—be it that of Roman Catholicism or that of old Protestant Orthodoxy. This explains modern man's deep aversion toward dogmatic Christianity, indeed toward everything which confession, doctrine, and dogma mean. This aversion exists even there where one is rooted, to the very depth of his being, in the great Christian tradition of the past. There is scarcely any conviction today so widely held as that which maintains that if Christianity is to have any future at all, it must be a religion of the love of God and men, an undogmatic Christianity of sentiment and deed [*Gesinnung und der Tat.* Goethe]. This conviction has deeply penetrated the church itself. It is not an overstatement to say that the great majority of Protestant churches are actually no longer confessional churches. They would sooner be united by anything *but* agreement in pure doctrine, which is what the writings of the Reformation speak about. Modern theology has provided theoretical justification for this development. It has raised the question whether the emphasis on "pure doctrine" is actually constitutive for the Christian church in the sense which the confessions of the sixteenth century thought it so. It has answered in the negative. Religion is not doctrine; consequently, doctrine cannot belong to the essence of Christianity; rather it must be a secondary expression of Christianity. Doctrine belongs to the church. As such it is a concretization of Christianity. As is the case with other religions, Christianity forms its social expression, called churches. It also forms its philosophical-intellectual expression in dogmas, doctrines, and confessions. And in the same way that churches are very imperfect attempts to bring "Christianity" to manifestation in the world, so also "Christianity" finds a very insufficient expression in confessions. Indeed, church and confession are always a defection from genuine, living religion. Modern Christendom strives for a non-dogmatic Christianity and finds its theoretic justification in these concepts.

Into this situation has come forth—apparently at the most untimely moment—a new dogmatic movement. Study of the Reformation has caused the question of the right and importance of "pure doctrine" to be raised again. Thus the entire modern theory of religion and its application to Christianity has been placed in question. How is Christianity to be explained if biblical revelation *is not* a particular case of a general religious-historical phenomenon called "revelation"? What is the church if it is not merely a sociological creation, nor merely a "Christian religious society"? Should there perhaps be a history of the church which is not just a Christian

history of religion, but is rather a history of the church of Christ, which is actually what the term says? We cannot enter into these questions here.¹ But it is clear that the question concerning confession will now be more important. The moment in which the church comes to occupy the central place in theological thought concerning the Christian religion, confession will necessarily experience a new critique. Thus the question of the theological concept of the confessions of the church has become an important problem. That this problem is not only theoretical but also has to do with the extremely important practical problem of the church, needs no further explication in this year of Jubilee for the Augustana [1930].

AN UNDERSTANDING OF CONFESSION

The religious language of the New Testament uses the words *ὁμολογεῖν* and *ἐξομολογεῖσθαι* in a three-fold sense: for the confession of sin, for the confession of the faith, and for the praise of God. These three meanings belong together in closest conjunction. In their totality they constitute the Christian concept of confession in the widest and most general sense. How closely tied together and dependent they are upon each other is shown not only by the New Testament, but also by study of the classical liturgies of Christianity and great individual “confessors” such as Augustine and Luther.² None of these forms of confession is present without the others. But the three must be theologically distinguished. They began to be delimited already in the New Testament and this development continued in the history of the church.

From the *ἐξομολογεῖσθαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας* developed the liturgical confession of sin and the sacramental confession, the *ἐξομολόγησις* of the Greek and the *confessio* (as part of the sacrament of penance) of the Latin church. From *ὁμολογεῖν*, the *ὁμολογία* of faith in the New Testament, come the corresponding expressions *confiteri*, *confessor*, *confessio*. These obtained particular concrete meaning as “martyr’s tomb,” “confessional writing” and, in modern languages, as a denomination represented by a particular confession. The third meaning—praise of God—withdrew in the course of time and remained limited to liturgical language. What the concept of “confession” in the widest sense has meant for Christianity shall not be entered into here. It is of note, however, that the effects of the Christian concepts of confession are to be noted far beyond the religious sphere, indeed in all of western culture.

From the Christian concept of *confessio* in the sense of confession of sins (*Beichte*) has come the capacity of the European man to give account for himself, and to give account to others for himself and to describe his innermost thoughts. “Confessions” have become a form of literature, a secularized form of confession (*Beichte*). Compare, for instance, the *Confessions* of Augustine and Rousseau. Even poetry has been understood as confession where Goethe describes his work as the fragment of a great confession. And confession as confession of faith lives on in secularized form in the manner in which philosophical systems and world views step forth as “Confessions.” So great is the power of the Christian *confessio*-concept that the western man still remains a confessor even if he has long since given up the world of the Christian faith.

The wider and general concept of Christian confession is when a man, seized by the revelation of the living God, speaks forth—a speaking in which the confession of sin, confession of

faith, and praise of God ring together. From this wider definition, we distinguish confession in the strict sense as the church’s confession of faith. It is a particular case of Christian confession. This confession is not an individual speaking out, it is the church of Christ speaking. If an individual should express it, then he does so as a member of the church or in the name of the church. As far as its content is concerned, this confession is qualified by the fact that it is only confession of faith. It does not comprise the confession of sin, nor the praise of God; rather it presupposes that these aspects of confession find their own expression. Distinct from the confession of sin and praise which is directed only toward God, confession of the church’s faith is directed also toward men. It is in this sense that the oldest formulas of the New Testament are confessions. The Early Church expressed its faith before God and the world. This expression of faith is characteristic of the so-called ecumenical creeds, and furthermore, the confessional writings of the churches of the Reformation and the particular documents in which an ecclesiastical communion sought to present its faith as the correct Christian faith. As great as the formal differences between these confessions may be, they essentially belong together. As churchly confessions, they are distinct from the the personal confessions of individual Christians.³ In what follows we are concerned only with these churchly confessions.

CONFESSION AND REVELATION

Where is the origin of the confession of the church to be sought? Fendt finds it in Jesus’ call to discipleship.⁴ “The disciples professed adherence to Jesus, while they physically became his followers...” The physical following of Jesus was the actual confession of adherence to Jesus, the actual *Confessio Apostolica*. Thus it is a praxis. After the earthly days of Jesus, in the place of the physical following came baptism, again as a praxis. “Baptism is a new *Confessio*, the new confession of adherence to the same Christ.” That now in baptism one confessed adherence to Jesus verbally was understandable. When Christ was yet visibly in the center of his followers, to be sure, verbal expression on the part of the confessor was unnecessary. But now the muteness of baptism was taken away by “words addressed to Jesus,” by praying words. “These words which now accompanied baptism were called ‘confession,’ thus we have *Confessio* . . . a confession of the second order. . . . Baptism itself is confession of the first order, the allowing-oneself-to-be-baptized, the becoming-baptized. On the other hand, the words, the *Confessio* of the second order, are only a sign of the confession of the first order, an illustration of the real confession, a witness to the confession. . . .” According to Fendt it is in this sense that all ecclesiastical confessions are to be understood, including the baptismal confession of the ancient church, the confessions of the councils, and also the Augustana.

Fendt is correct in maintaining that the verbal formulation of the confession must not be overestimated or indeed absolutized. The boundary for every ecclesiastical confession is already indicated in the Sermon on the Mount where the mere speaking of the *Kyrios*-confession is contrasted with real discipleship, the true following of Christ, which is confirmed by doing what God wills. Nevertheless, the judgment must be rendered that the confession of the church cannot be understood as Fendt attempts to explain it. A confession, also a baptismal confession, must not be viewed as “praying words to Jesus.”

Indeed, baptism stands in close connection to confession, but it is not confession, for then baptism would be understood in the same sense which Baptists understand it.

Following Christ is also something other than confession, even though both belong together. The first disciples followed Jesus before their belief in him had become clear. They did not know who He was when they followed His calling. Following Christ was not yet a confession in the strict sense. The origin of ecclesiastical confession is not in the call, "Follow me," but in the question, "Who do you say that I am?" It is very significant that according to the New Testament Jesus himself demanded confession, indeed, verbal confession from his disciples. This must be placed in emphatic contradistinction to all modern attempts to degrade confession to something subordinate to "the practical Christianity of the following of Jesus," or possibly even superfluous (attempts with which a theologian such as Fendt has nothing to do). It was not the metaphysical curiosity of men, or the appetite of theologians for speculation which called forth the formation of the confession of the church, but rather the question of Jesus to His disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" In response to this question followed the first confession of the church, uttered by Simon Peter, "You are the Christ." That we are dealing here with a *ὁμολογία*, a genuine confession, even if it is yet something formally entirely different from the later symbols, is shown by Jn 9:22, "The Jews were already in agreement that whoever confessed him as the Christ (αὐτὸν ὁμολογήσῃ Χριστόν) would be expelled from the synagogue." Jesus answered the confession of Peter, according to Mt 16:17, by praising him (the only time Jesus praises a particular individual), "Blessed are you Simon, son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven." These words are extraordinarily important for the understanding of confession. The confession of Peter presupposes a precise knowledge.

What kind of knowledge is this? That Jesus is the Christ is not a rational knowledge, not some consequence which Peter had to draw from that which he had experienced with this Jesus. Justice is not done to this knowledge and the answer of Jesus is falsely understood if it is placed in the category of the irrational, and viewed as one sort with the "divination" by intuition of the metaphysician, or with the display of the mystic. It is a knowledge which according to its subjective side must be designated faith-knowledge, according to its transubjective side, revelation-knowledge. The Living God acts in His revelation, and faith answers Him, not in the sense of an intellectual allowing oneself to be convinced, not in the sense of a decision accordant with the will, not in the sense of a stimulation of pious feelings. It is rather a matter of faith in which the man, the entire man, abandons himself to God, or better, is accepted by God. For it is God Himself who works faith. And this faith expresses itself immediately in a confession. Confession belongs to the essence of the believer, he cannot be without it. He cannot be silent. According to the New Testament (Rom 10:9f.) the faith of the heart and the confession of the mouth belong inseparably together. And how does faith express itself? Not in a hymn, not in a gush of feeling, but rather in a confession, a sober judgment of reality, in which the facts of revelation are attested: "You are the Christ!" This sobriety, this objectivity, is characteristic of all genuine confession. Truths speak, not feelings. Its theology is throughout a theology of facts [*Theologie der Tatsachen* Vilmar]. There is nothing more sober, more matter-of-fact, than the great con-

fessions of the church. But in this sobriety lies their greatness. On their monumental factuality and simplicity are dashed to pieces all religious theories which are able to see doctrine as only rational, doctrinaire assertions which are the opposite of "true," living religion. If that theory of a romantic aestheticism is correct, if confession in its factuality is really a spoiling or falsification of the "true" religion, then it must be admitted that this falsification entered with the earliest beginnings of the Christian faith. To faith in Christ belongs the confession of Christ. This is a sober recognition of reality, and in this respect the first confession of the circle of disciples (now becoming the church), the confession of Peter at Caesarea Philippi, does not differ from the confessions of the later church.

Thus confession may be described as the answer to revelation—the revelation which occurred once in history. In her confessions the church gives her answer for all time, the answer of faith in the revelation in Christ. These answers may be different, corresponding to the understanding of the faith of their day. They may be formulated very differently, but they desire to be, according to their deepest intent, nothing other than an

Confession may be described as the answer to revelation—the revelation which occurred once in history. In her confessions the church gives her answer for all time, the answer of faith in the revelation of Christ.

answer to the revelation of Christ. Therefore, all confessions are confessions of Christ, that is, confessions at whose center stand declarations concerning Jesus Christ. This applies to the ancient confessions as much as to those of the Reformation and to the more recent attempts at formation of confession (Lausanne, Jerusalem, and the Social Creeds added at Stockholm). Because Christian revelation is historical revelation all confessions look to the past. They point back to the then and there of salvation history ("suffered under Pontius Pilate"). Thus it makes sense that their content is understood not to be new, but rather old truth. "The truth has already long since been found" stands invisibly as a preface to all confessions. Thus the [old Roman] baptismal symbol is antedated by the apostles, the *Constantinopolitanum* by Nicaea [325 A.D.] and the *Quicumque* [i.e. the Athanasian Creed ca. 600 A.D.] by Athanasius.

Thus the Augustana begins with the confirmation of the *decretum Nicaenae synodi*. This is one of the most difficult stumbling blocks for modern man. He can only conceive of a confession which looks entirely to the present and, if at all possible, ignores history and its "salvation facts," a confession which expresses the religious experiences of the present man, or perhaps "revelation of the present." In order to give biblical basis for this demand, the prophecy of Jn 16:11ff. is happily

called to service. Whether this passage is understood in the sense of Catholicism, which thereby justifies the production of dogma of the church as an expansion of the scriptural revelation, or in the sense of the enthusiastic *schwärmertum* of all times, from the Montanists on, which finds there a promise of a new revelation which places that of Scripture in the shadows, for the most part, the close correspondence of the fourth gospel between the witness of the Paraclete and the Apostle is overlooked. The prophecy of Jn 16 is not dealing with a continuance of the revelation of Christ, nor with an expansion or replacement of this revelation by another, but rather with its realization. The revelation in Christ maintains its unique place. The Spirit “will not speak of Himself . . . He will glorify Me, for He will receive that which is from Me.” The Spirit remains bound to the Word of Scripture, faith to the Gospel, confession to the revelation which occurred once in history. It is the task of the confession of the church to give answer to these facts and express them in a meaningful way. Whether that happened in the old confessions of the Early Church: (“Jesus is the Christ;” “Jesus is Lord”); in the developed Christological and Trinitarian confessions of later times; or in detailed confes-

New sayings, forms or symbols may be chosen, new categories of thought may be used, the meaning of revelation for every domain of life may come to be understood or expressed in new ways; yet confession always remains the answer to the great question of Jesus, “Who do you say that I am?”

sional writings in which Christianity or a portion of the same presented the fullness of the faith, the object of the confession is always the revelation of God in Christ. New sayings, forms, or symbols may be chosen, new categories of thought may be used, the meaning of revelation for every domain of life may come to be understood or expressed in entirely new ways. Still, confession always remains the answer to the great question of Jesus, “Who do you say that I am?”

CONFESSION AND CHURCH

Confession is the response to revelation. To this first characteristic we must add a second: It is always the response of a fellowship (*Gemeinschaft*) of men, the expression of a consensus. Thus ecclesiastical confession is distinguished from Christian confession in the widest and most general sense. And here is the point at which modern man most deeply misunderstands the confession of the church. He who knows the faith only as a private concern can present the confession only as the act of an individual who expresses his personal faith, his religious experience, with the entire force of “Here I stand. I can do no other.” His opinion gives rise to a congregation, when men who have had the same experience and possess the same faith unite

and formulate their common possession in a confession. This confession of the congregation is always something secondary. Over against the living, definite, concrete confession of the individual, it necessarily appears to be pallid, abstract and distanced from real life. Since religious experience is finally entirely individually defined, the confession of the congregation must reckon with individual differences. It must express the common or general and be subordinate to a broad interpretation. While the great confession-forming times in the history of the church created definite, concrete, unambiguous confessions, modern Christianity has sought to create confessions (the formulation of which was inevitable) which are as general and indefinite as possible. Thus Jesus Christ is spoken of not as the Son of God, Lord and Savior, but rather as the divine Lord and Savior.⁵ The confession “Jesus is Lord” is preferred but it is forgotten that the Early Church chose this expression because it unambiguously designated the divinity of Jesus Christ, while modern Christianity loves it because the word “lord” in modern languages is wan and ambiguous. This tendency toward generalization in the formulation of confessions is explained by the fact that the confession of the church is understood as beginning with the individual and then, no longer the individual from the church. Congregation, church, and confession are understood from the starting point of the individual Christian: the congregation as the sum of the individual Christians, as an association—the great form of social life in all ages—in which the genuine [churchly] fellowship is destroyed. The church is understood as a general union of the congregations (“the church is built from the congregation up”), the confession as the condensation of the declarations which are common to all individual confessions. This is the false doctrine of the Social Contract in the church!⁶ This is the reason that the confession of the church in its deepest sense is scarcely yet understood. And indeed this applies also to many of the so-called “confessional” school. For also here confession is understood from the basis of the individual. It is, as it were, the inviolable statute of union of the union “church.” Those who do not acknowledge this statute as binding may leave the church! In the confessional controversies of the last century the warring parties occupied, as far as the concept of confession is concerned, the same ground. The only controversy was whether the statute of union was to be interpreted strictly or liberally, whether it ought be left in its old form or formulated anew. And because there was basic agreement on the concept of the confession, the present, generally accepted compromise solution could be arrived at in the German churches, namely that the old forms retain their honor, but they are used very liberally. The controversy for us has been enclosed in the spirit of this compromise. But here there can be no doubt that the deepest and most difficult discussion of confession will break out the very moment in which the [present] conception of church union is acknowledged to be untenable. In theology this hour is already upon us.⁷

But how is the confession of the church to be understood if it is not the condensation of individual confession? Must not every confession first of all be formulated by an individual? Did not an individual disciple first confess the original confession of the church? That is, in fact, the case. But the import of the confession of Peter is that it was immediately taken up by the other disciples. Jesus had directed the question to all the disciples present: “Who do you say that I am?” And Peter answered in the name of all of them. The Gospel of John rightly understood this matter when it gave the answer in the first person

plural: "We have believed and are convinced that you are the Christ." This confession immediately became the confession of all the disciples, and it is no accident that after the profession of the first confession, for the first time the church is mentioned: "You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my *ecclesia*." Confession and church belong together. This applies also to the baptismal confession from the first primitive formulas of the New Testament to the final form of the *Apostolicum*. They appear understandably in the first person singular form of *Credo*, since they are indeed spoken by every individual Christian. But while the individual speaks this *Credo*, which is the confession of the church, he places himself within the consensus of the church.

As soon as the confession is employed not only in the case of baptism but also in the worship of the congregation, it has the tendency to take on the first person plural form. The *Nicaenum* of the eastern church has been kept with this form until today, and it is noteworthy that Luther's composition of the *Credo* in song likewise makes use of the first person plural: "We all believe in one true God . . ." The *Augustana* may be considered from this viewpoint. What sort of age must that have been in which a professor of theology could create a confessional writing which began with the words: "*Ecclesiae magno consensu apud nos docent*,"⁸ and which was so truly born of the consensus of the faith that it was immediately accepted by the churches of the Lutheran Reformation as their confession! What theologian would dare venture today to formulate what "our Churches" teach, and should he venture it, what response would he get? This consensus, this unity in the great common possession of the faith, is the mark of all great epochs in the history of the church, and these are the ages which could create the confessions. They are the times in which "church" is not only an old word or a sociological concept, but rather a reality which one experiences and in which one lives. They are in no way times in which "the concept of individuality was not yet developed." What a multiplicity of characters we meet in the early history of the church, in the epoch of the formation of dogma, and in Reformation history! What a multiplicity of antitheses and differences! The present possesses, in spite of all its individualism (or perhaps for that reason), much more spiritual unity than those times past. But to us is lost that which was the characteristic feature of the great ages of the history of the church—the inner harmony of person and fellowship in the reality of the church.⁹

If we could ask the men of the New Testament where the deep consensus rests from which the confession of the church is born, they would be able to respond to us nothing other than that which we read today in our New Testament: "So in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others" (Rom 12:5), or the passage from Eph (4:4ff.), which the *Augustana* quotes when it speaks of the unity of the church: "One body and one Spirit . . . one Lord, one Faith, one baptism, one God and Father. . ." They would say to us that the unity of the confession does not rest upon our faith, our experiences, nor upon a similarity of human individualities, but rather upon the one Holy Spirit who works faith and confession in us. Already in the discourse of the sending out of the disciples in the synoptic gospels, the confession of the martyr before the judge was designated as a work of the Holy Spirit (Mt 10:19f.), and Paul said (1 Cor 12:3) that no one could speak the (liturgical) *Kyrios*-Confession "except by the Holy Spirit." The church has never forgotten the correspondence between

confession and possession of the Spirit. We are reminded of this by the representation of the confessors as bearers of the Spirit, by the [ecumenical] synod as [believed to be] led by the Holy Spirit (a notion which, among other things, is tied to Acts 15:28), and by the charismatic teaching office of the bishop (culminating in the doctrine of Vatican I of the *charisma numquam deficientis veritatis* of the pope). It is urgently necessary that the evangelical church not only refute the false doctrines of eastern and western Catholicism concerning the manner in which the Holy Spirit works in the church, but also that it is itself clear concerning what the New Testament and the Reformation teach concerning the Holy Spirit and how it has viewed the workings of the Holy Spirit in the church. Perhaps this reflection would lead to the realization that we, who have the correct doctrine of the Holy Spirit, have also misconstrued and forgotten His reality; that would explain the terrible fact that the greater portion of Protestantism no longer knows what the confession of the church is.

CONFESSION AND PURE DOCTRINE

Confession is directed to God as the answer of the church to revelation. Therefore it has its place in the worship of the congregation, it belongs to the liturgy. All great, primitive confessions can be prayed, and they have been spoken with praying hearts, but they are as little prayers as the Our Father is a confession. If the confessions of a later time, such as the great confessional writings of the Reformation, in which were laid down the results of difficult dogmatic controversies, bear this liturgical character only in certain parts (passages from Luther's catechisms) or no longer at all, it must be remembered that these confessions presuppose the classical confessions of the ancient church and their utilization in worship. But this question will not be further discussed here because it belongs to liturgics and not to dogmatics.

The very confession which is directed to God and thus is closely related to the prayer of the church, is directed now toward the world. The moment the church gives its answer to revelation it delimits itself from everything which stands outside of the church. The great task of the confession is the separation of truth and error, of church and that which is not of the church. "Jesus is the Christ"—this confession separated the primitive Palestinian church from the orthodox synagog (Jn 9:22, 12:42). The question was whether or not it yet had any place within Judaism. That the crucified Jesus should be the coming Messiah could in no way be united with orthodox teaching about the Messiah, but perhaps it could somehow find some slight toleration. Thus the oldest church lived in the form of a Jewish sect in the shadow of the synagog. It would be different in the case of the second great confession which the Early Church put forward: "Jesus is Lord." It belongs, as the *maranatha* shows, already to the Aramaic epoch of the church, but not until it was preached in the Greek language would the cleft between church and synagog become entirely evident. *Kyrios* was the holy name of God of the Septuagint.

To give to a man "the name above all names," to bow the knee in worship before a man, was for the Jew blasphemy, an infringement on the first commandment. The *Kyrios*-confession set the boundaries for the church over against the pagan religions, the mystery religions with their "many Lords" (1 Cor 8:5), and the Caesar cult, in which Caesar was honored as lord and god. Indeed, these strange religions had no opposition to

the designation of Jesus as the *Kyrios*. They were very tolerant. All paganism is tolerant. But for the Christians there was only One who was the Lord! It was because of this Christian intolerance that the great persecutions of the church broke out. Thus the church delimited itself from all other religions by means of its confession. Had it not done this it would have been drawn into the rush of ancient syncretism and ceased to exist, just as all Christianity ceases to exist in the struggle of the great world religions, which is played out upon the earth, if it fails to delimit itself over against all [other] religions by means of its solid, unambiguous confession. Today the New Testament is avidly read (selectively, as in Europe), by non-Christian Indians and Chinese, and scarcely any pagan or Jew has any objection to praying the Our Father at inter-religious prayer-meetings. Many American Jews pray it fervently. But the confession of Jesus Christ, as expressed in the great churchly confessional formulas, is the boundary between what is church and non-church.

And just as the confession distinguishes the church from strange religions, so also it distinguishes—this its task—truth from error, pure doctrine from heresy, the church from sect, within Christianity. Thus rings the definition of confession in the introduction of the Formula of Concord, “*Et quia statim post apostolorum tempora, imo etiam cum adhuc superstites essent, falsi doctores et haeretici exorti sunt, contra quos in primitiva ecclesia symbola sunt composita, id est breves et categoricae confessiones, quae unanimum catholicam christianam fidei consensum et confessionem orthodoxorum et verae ecclesiae complectebantur...*” This setting of the limit of truth and error belongs to the essence of confession. If the *improbant* and the *damnant* (by which is designated the impossibility of church fellowship), which sound so harsh to modern ears, are silenced, the Augustana ceases to be confession.¹⁰

If this drawing of boundaries is called “loveless” and “unchristian,” then the same reproach is also directed toward the *Apostolicum*, every sentence of which was formulated against some heresy, and, above all, this reproach is directed toward the Bible itself. Just as the false prophets stand over against the prophets of God (Jer 23:21ff., 29:8f.; Ez 13), the false apostles stand over against the apostles of Christ (2 Cor 11:13), so the sect and heresy stand over against the church. And just as the struggle between truth and error rings through all of Holy Scripture, so also it runs through the history of the church, and the church would cease to be the church of Christ, messenger of the redeeming truth of the revelation of God to men, if it would cease to fight this battle. Here lies the greatest and most difficult task of the formation of confession. Here is shown whether or not Christianity still knows what the confession of the church means. The manner in which an age approaches this task shows what courage and strength of faith, what humility and love are alive in Christianity. Here is shown whether the church knows of the reality of the Holy Spirit.

If the men of the Christian West, deep into the rank and file of the church, have forgotten this last sense of the confession of the church, then the reason for the downfall must not be overlooked. It happened because this struggle for the truth of the Gospel—the most difficult struggle which the church in the world has had to carry out—was not always fought with pure hearts and unsullied hands. Nowhere has the church failed so seriously as there where it should have struggled for the pure teaching of the Gospel. In the fight against apostasy from the church, the church has itself only too often forsaken

Christ. Thus the confessing church has ever and again become the denying church. The history of Simon Peter, who was the first to express the confession of the church and the first to deny the Lord, has been repeated in the history of the church. But something else is also repeated therein: the tears of repentance and reinstatement to office, and this the office of confession, of bearing witness, of martyrdom. LOGIA

ENDNOTES

1. Concerning the question of the concept of the church and its dissolution in the modern theory of church history, see my article “*Kirche und kirchen*” in *Credo Ecclesiam, Festschrift für W. Zoellner*, 1930: 295 ff. [Reprinted in *In Statu Confessionis*, Band I, 155-167. Ed.]

2. The correspondence of the three “confessions” is plainly noticeable in Augustine’s *Confessions*. For Luther compare E. Vogelsang, *Der confessio=Begriff des jungen Luther, Luther=Jahrbuch XII*, 1930: 91ff.

3. When E. Peterson, *Heis Theos*, 1926: 171, denies to the early Christian formula *Kyrios Jesus* the character of a confession, because it is an acclamation, he overlooks the fact that according to Rom 10:9 the formula was used—apparently in the case of baptism—as a confession. There is no formal criterium for that which is “confession”, it is rather a matter of content. Formally, the *Augustana* is also something completely different than the *Apostolicum*.

4. *Der Wille der Reformation im Augsburger Bekenntnis*, 7ff. I engage this book intentionally because among the numerous books published for the Augustana Jubilee it is most well known and is certainly the book which has made the greatest attempt to awaken a new appreciation for the confession of the Reformation.

5. Preamble to the constitution of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

6. [Ed. The “Social Contract” is described as “A supposed agreement entered into by men dwelling together in one place or country to organize a state or political constitution, establish a government, submit to its authority, and obey its laws.” *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology*, edited by James Baldwin, Vol. II: 534. New York: Peter Smith, 1940. Schleiermacher’s definition of the church as a “voluntary association of men” comes directly to mind here.]

7. See Emil Brunner, *Gott und Mensch*, 1930: 50ff.

8. For the concept of the consensus see the preface of the Formula of Concord. The *ecclesiae* are not the “congregations” (Fendt, Thieme), but the territorial and state churches (Althaus in *Th. L. Z.* 1930: 357).

9. On this point see W. Elert, *Lehre des Luthertums*, 2 Aufl. 1926: 105ff, and W. Zoellner, *Die Kirche nach dem Epheserbrief* in F. Siegmund-Schultze, *Die Kirche im N.T.*, 1930. For an account of the decay of the fellowship in the Catholic Church see R. Guardini, *Vom Sinn der Kirche*, 1922: 4f.

10. On this point compare the article by Theodor Hoppe, “*Die Augustana als Bekenntnis unserer Zeit*” in the June [1930] issue of *Christentum und Wissenschaft* [Vol. 6, no. 6, 1930.]

The Universal Priesthood in the Lutheran Confessions

Erling Teigen



Erling Teigen, professor at Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato, Minnesota, delivered this article as a paper at the meeting of the Concordia Academy on August 6, 1991. Teigen identifies where the Lutheran Confessions discuss the doctrine of the Priesthood of All Believers and what this doctrine has to do with the doctrine of the Holy Ministry. He also sketches the development of these issues in Lutheran circles offering a critique and response to positions which have not adequately presented the Lutheran Confessions' understanding of the Holy Ministry and its relationship to the Priesthood of All Believers.

THE SUBJECT ASSIGNED THIS PAPER IS "THE UNIVERSAL PRIESTHOOD in the Lutheran Confessions." From one perspective, that has the makings of a very short paper, because there is very little explicit reference to the universal priesthood in the Book of Concord. A couple of references occur in connection with the simple idea of sacrifice where 1 Pt 2:5 is paired with Rom 12:1. The other reference to the universal priesthood comes in the *Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope*, 69: "Where the true church is, therefore, the right of electing and ordaining ministers must of necessity also be.... Finally, this is confirmed by the declaration of Peter 'You are a royal priesthood' (1 Pt 2:9). These words apply to the true church which, since it alone possesses the priesthood certainly has the right of electing and ordaining ministers."

The general subject for this conference is the universal priesthood of all believers. But behind that is a not very hidden concern for the doctrine of the ministry, which has from the very beginning of Lutheranism always been at the forefront of theological discussion. To raise the question of Tr. 67-69 is to raise the question of the relationship between the universal priesthood and the *Predigtamt* [the preaching office, see Augsburg Confession, Article V]. And from that perspective, this subject has the makings of a very long paper; for therein lies quite a can of worms. The can of worms may have been opened by Luther, who in his 1520 treatise *To the Christian Nobility* opened the discussion of the universal priesthood in his critique of Rome. Later, in conflict with the Enthusiasts, Luther placed more emphasis on the call mediated through the church, as opposed to the inner call of those who swallowed the Holy Ghost, feathers and all. Since then, Luther's followers have debated which has primacy—the royal priesthood or the public ministry. Presumably, one can still write a doctoral dissertation on the subject—whether it be the tension or "bipolarity" (Prenter) in Luther between universal priesthood and *Predigtamt*, or the meaning of this doctrine for Lutheran church life.

Tr. 69 is the only explicit reference in the Book of Concord to the universal priesthood in regard to the ministry. However, just as in Luther, the universal priesthood is frequently presupposed, and the issue of the relationship between the called ministry and the universal priesthood is in the very near background in several places. To broaden our text then, we must include reference to Apology XIII.11, 12: "If ordination is interpreted in relation to the ministry, we have no objection to calling ordination a sacrament. The ministry of the Word has God's command and glorious promise.... The church has the command to appoint ministers," which parallels Tr. 69. The Lutheran rubric which stands over all discussion of the *Predigtamt* is Augustana XIV: "It is taught among us that nobody should publicly teach or preach, or administer the Sacraments in the church without a regular call." Finally, the debate expands to include also Augustana V, which at first seems to be an innocent bystander. It turns out, however, to be a rather hotly involved bystander: Does AC V speak of the universal priesthood of all believers or of the *Predigtamt* as the called ministry?

We probably do not have to say too much about the practical implications of this discussion. The very fabric of the church's ministry is involved. It appears that around us, in every quarter, there is a denigration of the public ministry of AC XIV, so that there is a ministry of just about everyone, from pope to janitor, and ministry has simply become a synonym for vocation. On the other hand, the issue is lively in the current discussions of the Church Growth Movement, which probably did not originate, but at least gave broader coinage to the notion "everyone a minister." We thought that the issue of "lay-ministry" (or "lay-pastor," which Marquart calls "that utterly oxymoronic locution" which "signals the loss of all categories," *The Church*, p. 105) had long ago been laid to rest in the churches outside of the pietist tradition. But recently those terms have been given new life in the churches which had once fought against that pietistic notion.

In this paper, we will now proceed to address two questions. 1) What is meant by Tr. 69? Does it establish that the public ministry is derived in some way from the universal priesthood? 2) Does AC V refer to the public ministry or to the universal priesthood?

TR. 67-69: PREDIGTAMT OR PRIESTHOOD?

The problem of Tr. 69 and the corresponding passages in the Book of Concord is made apparent in J. Schaller's "The Origin and Development of the New Testament Ministry." The article appeared in translation in *The Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*,

return to confessionalism were products of the “Great Awakening,”¹⁵ and so naturally found themselves in close company with early Pietism. Now, in his posthumous *Letzte theologische Bedenken*, published in 1711, Spener also demonstrated how in his mind communing in a particular congregation naturally implies a sanctioning of the doctrine taught in that congregation, “especially” of the doctrine of the Sacrament. He maintained this position even in the face of decision of a French-Reformed national synod (Charenton 1631; reconfirmed at Loudun in 1659/60, although not without reservations), which had issued a “Decree concerning our Brethren the Lutherans.” And that very same Spener, who is not unrightly accused of being too indulgent due to his overweening efforts not to harm anyone and his ever-mindfulness of bringing about Christian unity, advised the Lutherans against visiting Reformed services and taking part in the Lord’s Supper in Reformed congregations. What was the basis of his advice? He could not feel conscientiously responsible for Lutherans communing among the Reformed, thereby separating themselves from their own Church. Furthermore, speaking in 1680 about the union church service proposed in the territory of the Elector of the Palatinate (such a union service had parallels elsewhere), Spener indicated that such a “Concord Service” would only result in the conversion of the Lutherans to the Reformed Church. Even if such a Service of the Word could be possible between Lutherans and the Reformed (which Spener doubts), fellowship in the Lord’s Supper could hardly be possible. And finally, any spiritual growth that could take place at all depended upon instruction in controverted issues; but how could this instruction take place unless the doctrinal divisions were openly pronounced, causing grievances? Stated another way, if the doctrinal divisions are just swept under the carpet, then the spiritual growth of the congregation is stunted. To be sure, Spener did not maintain that the Reformed had no Lord’s Supper; but he believed that the Reformed celebration was not the true Supper. For the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ in His Supper causes His Body and His Blood to be present as His promise is not the only thing which properly belongs to the Lord’s Supper. Rather, of much more import in the Lord’s Supper is what is demanded both of the ministrant and the manducant—that the one wishes to distribute, the other wishes to receive precisely what the Lord had promised to be present. And there is where the Reformed go wrong.

Spener certainly sharpened the consciences of the Lutheran *ministerium* by recommending that they should rather lose their office than participate in the “Concord Service.” But he also rendered a great service to the Lutheran *laity* in another one of his *Gutachten* by instructing them what they ought to do. He even deals with the fringe issue of the case of death and answers the question as to whether or not a Lutheran should be permitted to request a member of the Reformed clergy to administer the Sacrament to him. His answer is: If a Lutheran happens to be among only heterodox Christians when he is on his deathbed, and can find no Lutheran pastor at all, he should receive the Sacrament from a Lutheran layman, as from a brother (no matter how dubious this advice might seem), rather than let a Reformed preacher administer it to him. In the last century, it was correctly judged that:

Nothing can more strikingly or strongly express the dismissal of this type of emergency case (which is now appealed to at the drop of a hat or at the slightest hint

of discomfort) than this way of dealing with matters touching true affliction of the soul, on which a man such as Spener would rather receive the opposition of the whole theological world than he would receive the Sacrament from the hands of a false believer.¹⁶

One should also mention on this point the fact that Spener’s emphatic appellation of the Lutheran laity as “brother” is connected in a way to his altercation with the faculty at Wittenberg in 1695 in which he maintained along similar lines that the name “brother” could not be used of the Reformed. It has often been held against Paul Gerhardt that he did the same. Gerhardt would not recognize the Reformed as brethren, *quatenus tales sint* (that is, insofar as they are Reformed by what makes them Reformed). They deviated from what is distinctively Christian inasmuch as they retained their distinctively Reformed ideas. And Spener was of the opinion that no adherent of Reformed doctrine, “as long as he remains such,” could be his brother, since he did not agree with the Reformed

Spener was of the opinion that no adherent of Reformed doctrine, “as long as he remains such,” could be his brother, since he did not agree with the Reformed in the fides quae creditur.

in the *fides quae creditur*, but rather found that the Reformed confessed allegiance to a religion in which Spener believed there were dangerous errors. And so one can hardly be surprised that Spener disapproved of the fact that in Württemberg they were trying to build bridges for the French Reformed by a mild form of a requested “explanation” of beliefs which provided the following formula: “*le vray corps et le vray sang*” of Jesus Christ are received “*avec le pain*” (the infamous *cum!*) and one was to believe that “*la manière de la manducation*” is “*sacramentaire, mystérieuse, spirituelle et incompréhensible à nos sens.*”¹⁷ Reflecting on all of this, Spener surmised that the Swabian church leadership had satisfied itself well enough with this formula, since they probably just expected that the Huguenot refugees would still grow in their own perceptions once they had entered the churches of Württemberg.

There is one more thing necessary to mention in order to come to a more complete evaluation of Spener’s position: It is during Spener’s lifetime that the Prussian *Collegium irenicum* falls. Since 1703 this institution, under the leadership of the Reformed Bishop Benjamin Ursinus (the episcopal title on account of the desire more closely to resemble the Church of England), had sought to effect unity between the Lutherans and the Reformed in Prussia. Now, for Spener the unity of God’s children was of heartfelt importance; the enduring separation of the churches was another “episode of divine judgment against our sins”; and only divine grace could bring

Schaller's chief concern is the outward form of the ministry. His argument is that no concrete, external form has been instituted by God.

Winter 1989, and according to an introductory note, the original German article had been published in the catalog of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary for 1911-1912 and again in 1917-1918.

Schaller's thesis is set out at the very beginning: "Among us no question can arise about the real essence of the New Testament ministry. Christ gave his disciples only one commission. He has therefore also established only one office, one ministry, in the church, the ministry of preaching the Gospel" (30). Schaller meticulously demonstrates that the proclamation of the saving Gospel began at Eden, where the Gospel was first proclaimed. For Schaller, "It lies in the very nature of the Gospel that it is a preaching" (31). The preaching of the Gospel does not even have to be commanded: "Strictly speaking, therefore, the ministry of the New Testament is posited by the Gospel itself and was instituted by God through the Gospel when He revealed it" (32). 1 Peter 2:9 teaches that "through the gospel He creates preachers of the Gospel. And that, to be sure, is an inevitable effect which God really intends and therefore in every case achieves" (32). The same is true of the age of the patriarchs: "No one had received a special commission from God to preach publicly, and yet the preaching ministry was carried on. The preaching ministry had been given with the Gospel" (32). Mt 28 and Mk 16 must be understood in that way too: "The New Testament ministry was not thereby established; for it is an institution of God which was given immediately in conjunction with the first revelation of the Gospel of Christ" (33). The same is likewise true of St. Paul's preaching: "Paul occupies no exceptional position. Every Christian can immediately apply Paul's words to himself personally" (35). Of course, there must be some sense in which the ministry is instituted: "God very obviously wills the preaching of the Gospel. He accomplished this will by calling people to the fellowship of the Gospel, and thereby, that is, through regeneration, awakens them to new spiritual life and makes them true active preachers of the Gospel. Jesus' commands are not the original institution of the Gospel ministry; they substantiate the fact that it had been instituted. He couldn't give a command to preach if He didn't already have preachers" (35).

Schaller makes it clear that all of the foregoing must be explicitly applied to the New Testament ministry. One can form a mental picture of the ministry, but that would be *in abstracto*, and God did not institute the ministry *in abstracto*, just as much as marriage has not existed *in abstracto*. Therefore, what God has instituted is the spiritual priesthood. "Since every Christian is a spiritual priest, the special priest class

which God ordained in the Old Testament here finds its anti-type and is thereby abolished. But whatever could be said about the nature of an Old Testament priest's responsibility now applies to every believer on earth by virtue of the fact that the Holy Ghost applies the term to him" (36).

Schaller's chief concern is the outward form of the ministry. His argument is that no concrete, external form has been instituted by God. But what of the prophetic and apostolic offices? Schaller agrees that the prophets and the apostles held a special, divinely created form of the God-ordained ministry, but those forms expired at the end of the prophetic and apostolic ages. But for Schaller, the transmission of the apostolic office is to be denied. The special office and power that the apostles received was "in addition to the ministry common to all believers, that namely which made them apostles, was a purely personal possession and ceased with them" (45). What was true of the Old Testament believers is also true of the New: "With the apostolic doctrine, which of course is nothing else than the Gospel, all who accept it receive, as was demonstrated earlier, the commission to preach, and it produces in them the corresponding activity, the ministry of the New Testament" (45). Schaller quickly dismisses the concept of an *amt* [office]: "The New Testament ministry [the editor supplies "*Predigtamt*, literally, office of preaching, better termed service *Predigtdienst*, literally service of preaching"] began with and through the first preaching of the Gospel in Paradise and appears wherever the Gospel is in any way communicated" (46).

Schaller's argument is ostensibly about whether or not certain forms of the ministry are divinely instituted. In the Reformation context, of course, that argument was about whether or not bishops were divinely placed above the presbyters, and the Bishop of Rome over the other bishops. But in this context, the argument is about something else, apparently the difference between pastor, college instructor, seminary professor, visitation pastor, associate or assistant pastor, catechist, etc. At the very best, however, Schaller does not make it clear that he is restricting himself to that issue. He has already dismissed the notion of any sort of *amt* other than that which is common to all Christians, and has even replaced *amt* with *dienst*. Schaller holds that "one can speak of an institution of the apostolate only in an improper sense. God did not command that there be apostles, but He made apostles, and thereby that special ministry was established. We can also consider it as settled that nowhere in the New Testament can a definite command be cited that Christians should establish a particular form of the public ministry in their midst. But if one wishes to speak about an institution, one must, of course, be able to cite the instituting command" (47). But at that point the editor apparently is nervous and calls attention to the fact that Schaller is speaking about forms and "it should also be noted that Scripture clearly teaches that it is God's will that there be a public ministry and that Christian congregations have shepherds and teachers who in the name and on behalf of the congregation carry out the duties of the ministry of the Word in their midst" (note, p. 47). But there is no indication in Schaller's essay that he would assent to that. And both in Schaller and in August Pieper, as we shall see later, there is an indiscriminate movement back and forth between a definite *amt* and an abstracted activity common to all.

But Schaller has denied that there is any particular institution of an *amt* distinct from the universal priesthood. The

Predigtamt Augustana XIV wants to recognize, i.e. the *amt* which requires *rite vocatus* [a rightly ordered call], can only fall into Schaller's category of forms, since the only *amt* with a divine command is the universal priesthood, and it is even doubtful whether one can apply the idea of a command to that priestly service common to all. Schaller attempts to escape the dilemma:

We come thus to the indisputable conclusion that God can indeed recognize something that has been established under his invisible dominion and yet also according to human decisions. One cannot immediately infer from this, however, that there is a formal divine command, a divine institution, for just that changeable form. When, moreover, we continue to hold firmly to the truth that whatever involves a preaching of the Gospel is a form of the New Testament ministry, we will see clearly how these forms come into existence without God's special command and then are recognized by Him (50).

Thus the way in which the pastoral office arises is as a pragmatic response to a moral command; but whether the reference is to *Predigtamt* or *Pfarramt* is unclear. When Christians come together for mutual edification, then a need simply arises from the nature of the group and that need must be met, which, presumably, leads to the election of an individual to act on behalf of all. Schaller can affirm, "That this takes place is essential" (51), but one finds not a breath that it takes place on the ground of any divine command. As a conclusion, Schaller essentially begs the question: "These things could also be arranged in an entirely different way, since the pastorate in the form which is customary among us was very likely totally unknown in apostolic times" (51). And that, of course, is true, but Schaller has not at all dealt with the question of any kind of divine command on which the strict rubric of Augustana XIV is based. If one follows Schaller's argumentation, the only reason for asserting Augustana XIV is pragmatic need, and whatever one comes up with, whether it be an arrangement arising from Church Growth methodology or Episcopalianism, God will approve of it so long as it is orderly.

While Schaller never cites any of the relevant articles of the confessional writings, it is certainly clear that he has begun from the presupposition that there is no unique, distinct *Predigtamt*, but that any *amt* of the Gospel is only derived from the universal priesthood, since only one office has been instituted.

What is behind the reluctance to refer to a specific New Testament command? Francis Pieper accuses Höfling of rejecting the idea of an instituting command because "if one assumes a divine command for the administration of the Means of Grace by public servants, one carries over into the New Testament Church an Old Testament feature, a legalistic element, a trace of the Old Testament bondage" (III, 445). That this may well be the case for Schaller as well can be seen in an article which was written by one of his colleagues, August Pieper. In fact, Francis Pieper in St. Louis may well have been pointing not so much at Höfling as his brother August at Wauwatosa. The well-known Missouri-Wisconsin discussion of Church and Ministry was in progress after 1910 and the Pieper brothers were among the primary antagonists.

August Pieper, in his article, "Are There Legal Regulations

in the New Testament?" (*Theologische Quartalschrift* 13 [July 1916]: 157–182; Tr. C. Lawrenz, *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* 86 [Winter 1989]: 34–63) argues that there can be no legal regulations in the New Testament, since such regulations were abolished. In contrast to the Ten Commandments which have behind them the moral law, which is the simple expression of love, legal regulations are "precepts, commands, commandments, laws and regulations of God as are not in themselves immediately, and under all circumstances, moral expressions of love, but which are such more or less mediately, under specific outward circumstances" (36). They are "precepts and instructions given to God's people for more or less general and permanent arrangements and institutions and for their maintenance" (37). Pieper admits that there are such ordinances in the New Covenant: "One cannot dispute the fact that the Gospel is in the fullest and most intensive sense such an ordinance" (38), as are the sacraments, citing "Go and Baptize" and "This Do." They are ordinances, but they are not legal regulations, since "these are in themselves neither moral nor ceremo-

One is called to this amt (Rm 10:15), mediately by the royal priesthood, but is set in the office by God (Acts 20:28) and has the specific appointment by Christ (Jn 20:21) along with the promise of Christ, "He who hears you hears me" (Lk 10:16).

nial symbolic demands through which obedience toward God is meant to be exercised." (39). Rather, such ordinances are evangelical arrangements. The Means of Grace are unique in this respect—there are no other such evangelical ordinances. But the question then is: What about the Ministry of the Word? August Pieper rightly observes, in contrast to others, that *Predigtamt* and *Pfarramt* are not to be equated; they are not "interchangeable concepts." Pieper then proceeds to assert that there is no New Testament legal or evangelical regulation for the *Pfarramt*, although like Schaller, he permits the *Pfarramt* to be a product of God's providence.

August Pieper is certainly correct in saying that there is no New Testament prescription of a particular form of the ministry—viz. *Pfarramt* as it is conceived today. But along with that, Pieper has swept out any divine institution of the *Predigtamt*, which is again reduced to a vague abstraction—either as what all believers have, or as the ministry of the Means of Grace (subjective genitive).

But the *Predigtamt* goes well beyond that. It is the office which exercises the keys on the public behalf, which administers word and sacrament in the place of Christ. One is called to this *amt* (Rom 10:15), mediately by the royal priesthood, but is set in the office by God (Acts 20:28) and has the specific appointment by Christ (Jn 20:21) along with the promise of Christ, "He who hears you hears Me" Lk 10:16). The incumbents of this office hold an apostolic ministry and are "stewards

of the mysteries of God” (1 Cor 4:1). There are specific qualifications for the office, e.g. 1 Tim 2:12, 3:1–7, 1 Cor 14:34; the office holders are to have their livelihood by that work (1 Tim 5:17) and they are to be seminary graduates, i.e. not in form, but in substance, properly trained (2 Tim 2:2, 2 Tim 3:8–17, Ti 1:9). All of this is distinct from the *Pfarramt*, the congregational ministry, the specific office which has developed and may continue to develop. A missionary, a seminary professor, a college or hospital chaplain, may not have the *Pfarramt*, but they certainly have the *Predigtamt* as much as does the pastor in a local congregation. Luther was not the pastor of a local congregation in today’s sense, but he was certain that as a Doctor of Theology he had God’s call to the Gospel ministry, and he would then point to his call to the university as his call to preach and teach the Gospel, not only as a royal priest, but as one called to the *amt*.

The most serious deficiency of August Pieper’s view is that it calls into question whether or not there can be divine commands or *mandata Dei*, in the New Testament; ultimately, to

Tr. 69 nowhere asserts that the power and authority of the ministry comes from the congregation qua universal priesthood. The only authority of the public ministry comes from God.

deny such *mandata* is to lapse into Antinomianism. Pieper’s assertion is troubling: “Let us get rid of this erroneous tradition. Let us recognize that there is no divinely instituted and prescribed form of the ministry even for the administration of Word and Sacrament, that the Holy Spirit here works freely through free Christians...” (49). At the same time, August Pieper expresses himself in a way which is ominous:

Why do not we Lutherans learn something in this matter of spiritual freedom from the Reformed churches round about us? They know how to draw the laity into the service of the church, also in the individual congregations and how to make them co-workers of the pastor. It’s remarkable! No church has set forth the doctrine of the spiritual priesthood of all Christians more clearly and emphasized it more strongly than the Lutheran church, and especially the Lutheran church in America. And no church put this doctrine less into practice (49).

To be fair, one should note that August Pieper was arguing against a tendency in American Lutheranism to equate *Pfarramt* and *Predigtamt*. The result obscured or obliterated the divine command as the basis for the called ministry, leaving it to be a free, evolutionary derivation of the royal priesthood.

Schaller’s and Pieper’s argument, while not the same as Höfling’s, is certainly influenced by the so-called *Übertragungstheorie*. It has been argued in several places (Prenter, Schlink, Reumann, Marquart) that *übertragung* has a great deal of ambiguity. Luther can be shown to hold to an idea of conferral, as can Walther and others. But Höfling’s conferral idea differs considerably from the others. Reumann summarizes Höfling’s position: “. . . this ministerial office rests solely on the universal priesthood, ‘the only office which exists by divine right’ ” (*Eucharist and Ministry*, 246). The confusion of those who apparently follow Höfling seems to arise, at least so far as Tr. 69 is concerned, from the statement that the church alone possesses the priesthood—and therefore alone has the right of electing and ordaining ministers. If that is true, the reasoning seems to be, then whatever authority the public ministry has it derives or has transferred to it from the universal priesthood. Schlink penetrates Höfling’s notion:

. . . it might seem natural to infer that the public ministry grows out of the royal priesthood of all believers and that it comes into being through the enabling commission of the congregation; that its authority is the authority of the congregation transferred to one of its members. The public ministry would then be an ‘emanation,’ or an ‘organization’ of the universal priesthood of all believers, a ‘community office’ based on the ‘collective right’ of the whole congregation, and the pastor would preach the Gospel and administer the Sacraments in the name and at the direction of the congregation—‘for the community and on behalf of the community’ (244).

Schlink correctly counters, however, that this construct makes the public ministry a creation of the congregation, simply “demanded by the moral principle of order.” Rather, the ministry is “an immediate institution of God through the command and promise of Jesus Christ. The Confessions do not permit us to place the universal priesthood as a divine institution over against the public ministry as a human institution” (244f).

Marquart points out that a word is not in itself a theory (112). Löhe’s doctrine of the ministry can at this point be called an *übertragungslehre* as well (according to Hebart, Marquart, 112, n. 1). Marquart also notes that Lieberg characterizes Luther’s doctrine of the ministry using *übertragung* (see Marquart, 113, for a discussion of the ambiguity and various usages of *übertragung*).

The issue is whether or not one takes Tr. 69 to establish a theory that the public ministry is derived, probably on the basis of 1 Cor 14:40, from the universal priesthood. Schaller clearly does that in common with Höfling. Walther on the other hand does not. In Thesis I on the ministry, Walther says, “The holy ministry or pastoral office [*Predigtamt*] is an office distinct from the priesthood of all believers” (*Church and Ministry*, 161). Thesis VII would seem to fall right back into the Höfling construct, “The holy ministry [*Predigtamt*] is the power, conferred by God through the congregation as the possessor of the priesthood and all church power, to exercise the rights of the spiritual priesthood in the public office in the name of the congregation.” But the emphasis here is that of Tr. 69. Tr. 69 nowhere asserts that the power and authority of the ministry comes from the congregation *qua* universal priesthood. The

only authority of the public ministry comes from God (Acts 20:28, Lk 10:16, Eph 4:11, 12, Rom 10:17). Tr. 69 and Ap XIII take for granted the divine institution of the *Predigtamt*. The confessors simply assert that the church has the command to appoint ministers, which in itself is the divine institution. And in this connection the question has to be dealt with: What is the divine institution of the *Predigtamt*?

The public ministry exists by God's own institution and command, but He does not place the office holders immediately. By virtue of their possession of the keys (Mt 18), and the command to proclaim the Gospel (Mt 28 and Mk 16), and by virtue of the office which God has established, it is axiomatic that the believers have the right and the power to elect and ordain ministers, and they carry that out in accord with the command, e.g. of Rom 10:15, 2 Tim 2:2, Ti 1:5. Apology XIII.11, 12 simply refers to Rom 1:16 and Is 55:11 as the ground for saying that the ministry of the Word has God's command and glorious promise.

A great deal of the Lutheran literature on the doctrine of the ministry attempts to answer the question put by Schaller and others: Where is the divine institution of the *Predigtamt*? Not finding any specific and explicit enough, some have gone to the universal priesthood and simply derived any divine authority from it. But they have missed the divine institution that is most important for the confessional writings. In a set of theses on the ecclesiastical ministry, Tom G.A. Hardt notes in theses 10 and 11: "The special ministry is created not by the church's free choice, but goes back to Christ's institution of the Apostolate (11). The command to preach until the end of time is directed to the special ministry, which thus must also stand until Christ's return" (*Confessional Lutheran Research Society Newsletter* [Epiphany 1988]: 4). While the form of the apostolic office is not perpetuated either in Mormon fashion by election or in an apostolic succession, the ministry is nevertheless authorized and empowered apostolically. That the church is built on the foundation of the prophets and apostles means that not only the church but the ministry as well is in the fullest sense of the word apostolic. The three contexts in which the keys are given (Mt 16; Mt 18 and Jn 20) show a single root for both the special ministry and the spiritual priesthood which has the right to call and elect ministers. Schlink is thus right when he observes that "the Word by which Jesus authorizes the apostles is also the authorization for the entire church" (242). Hardt goes on in thesis 12 to note: "The Apostles represent here, at one and the same time, the ministry and the church, wherefore there is a double institution of the ministry and the universal priesthood."

What then is the relationship between the *Predigtamt* and the universal priesthood according to Tr. 67-69? The right to elect and call ministers is given exclusively to the church, the believers. That does not mean that the church or the universal priesthood establishes the ministry or even instantiates that which has before existed only in the abstract. The royal priesthood is the unmentioned referent of Romans 10:15, "How shall they preach except they be sent?" The universal priesthood is the means by which God calls and sends particular individuals into His ministry, the ministry instituted by Him in the Apostolate and which is continued today in the Apostolic Ministry. Chemnitz says: "For the mediate call God ordinarily does not use the ministry of angels but the ministry of His church, which is a royal priesthood (1 Pt 2:9). For to it as to His spouse has Christ entrusted the keys of the kingdom (Mt 18:18). Like-

The universal priesthood is the means by which God calls and sends particular individuals into his ministry, the ministry instituted by him in the apostolate and which is continued today in the apostolic ministry.

wise He entrusted the Word and the Sacraments (Rom 3:2; 9:4). And briefly, all things are of the church, both the ministry and the ministers (Eph 4:12; Col 3:21, 22)" (*Enchiridion*, 33). In that sense there is a conferral, but not at all in Höfling's sense. The conferral is by God in the first place, and in the second place as well, when He bestows the office on an individual through His royal priesthood.

AC V: PREDIGTAMT OR PRIESTHOOD?

The second question is whether AC V speaks of the universal priesthood or the public ministry. That issue has been discussed extensively in the last decades by Fagerberg and Schlink, for example, and in recent publications by Kurt Marquart and Eugene Klug. Marquart, in *Confessional Lutheran Dogmatics* IX, expresses dismay at Tappert's note dissenting from the title given to AC V (105), and then asserts that "It is this one Gospel ministry which is confessed to be divinely instituted in AC V" (120), and makes it clear that that is not the ministry generally held by the universal priesthood: "The truly decisive and constitutive realities for the church are, as we have seen at length, the pure preaching of the Gospel and the right administration of the Holy Sacraments (AC VII). That at once entails the public ministry (AC V). . . ." (196). On the other hand, Eugene Klug, writing in the *Concordia Journal* (January 1991) sees AC V as using the term *Predigtamt* in a much different way: "Article V on the ministry, the *Predigtamt*, embraces implicitly within itself all that God ordained for the sake of delivering His saving Word to sinners. Clergy and laity alike have a stake in that ministry. The slogan 'everyone a minister' ought not disturb the church. Does the doctrine of the royal priesthood of believers make anything more plain than that each believer, young and old, is a witness of the Word . . . ?" (41).

John Reumann claims that "Article V . . . really concerns the Means of Grace" (234). Klug seems to look for a middle position when he says, "Those who agitate for either extreme, the elevated view of the pastor's office or the so-called lower view which makes every lay person a minister, have no leg to stand on when they cite Article V in behalf of their positions. The focus simply lies on the Means of Grace which God has graciously given and empowered for effecting the salvation of mankind" (36). It is not really clear, however, where Klug wants to go, because near the end of his article, he says, "It can rightly be argued, as does C.F.W. Walther, that the distinctive office of the pastor is already implicit in these articles, especially Article V, an office which Article XIV . . . makes explicit"

The placement and the construction of AC V certainly makes it clear that the distribution of Word and Sacrament will not be thought of apart from Predigtamt, and likewise, when Predigtamt is discussed more concretely later on, it will not be thought of apart from Word and Sacrament.

(40), which implies that *Predigtamt* and *Pfarramt* are equal. Walther, however, in Thesis II “Concerning the Holy Ministry,” cites AC V and then observes: “This statement, of course, does not speak of the Ministry of the Word *in concreto* or of the pastoral office, but only of the Ministry of the Word *in abstracto*.” Walther then cites Ludwig Hartmann to demonstrate that one can speak of the ministry abstractly when the state or office is being discussed—which, Hartmann claims, AC V does—or concretely, when persons who minister are considered, as AC XIV does (278). In other words, Walther wants to draw a strong connection between AC V and AC XIV, and the connection is not that the latter is derived from the former.

Walther’s approach does not require any mental gymnastics to avoid identifying AC V with the public ministry. To speak abstractly about the ministry does not mean that one asserts that God has instituted an abstraction, as Schaller feared. We frequently speak alternately in the abstract and in the concrete about the same thing. Abstract and concrete are, for one thing, relative terms. “Teaching is an aptitude,” is an abstract statement. But “Only those who pass the exam will be permitted to teach” is more concrete, and “She is a good teacher” is even more concrete.

At the same time, Klug senses that one cannot get rid of the concrete *amt* in AC V and seeks to span the chasm: “Thus Article V must be seen as the foundational platform on which both the royal priesthood and the office of called pastor rest under Christ’s mandate for carrying His Word to the world” (40).

Klug also cites Fagerberg to show that *ministerium* designates either the office or the activity: “‘The Confessions clearly emphasize the latter,’ states Fagerberg, that is, the activity of ministering Word and Sacraments, rather than the power of the pastor, elder, or deacon so involved, or his office” (Klug, p. 31). It should be noted, however, that Fagerberg in his discussion clearly excludes the notion that the universal priesthood is the referent either exclusively or inclusively in AC V. In fact, Fagerberg says:

It is true that a number of scholars insist that AC V points to the universal priesthood. The article, however, does not refer to it, but rather to the function of administering Word and Sacraments, which is regularly taken care of by persons called thereto—persons who are discussed in detail in Ap XIII and XIV, and in the confessions in general. If AC V is interpreted in

the same way, one can avoid all the problems concerning the relationship between the universal priesthood and the special office of the ministry... (248).

It should also be added that Fagerberg cannot be used here to support the view that AC V refers only to the Means of Grace, since Fagerberg has previously observed that “‘The ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments’... (AC V.1) is the technical term for this functional view of the ministry” (233).

It is quite unnecessary to attempt to include the royal priesthood in AC V. And to reinterpret *Predigtamt* to include the royal priesthood is to empty AC V of its specificity. Marquart is correct in questioning Tappert’s note, which suggests that *Vom Predigtamt* or *De ministerio ecclesiastico* is “misleading” unless one remembers that the confessions “thought of ‘the office of the ministry’ in other than clerical terms,” Tappert, 31, n. 4 (Cp. *Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch Lutherischen Kirche*, Göttingen, 1979, 58: “*Luther verstand das Predigtamt nicht klerikal*”). One can simply ask what “in other than clerical terms” is supposed to mean? At best, the note is unnecessary editorializing on the text. At worst, it applies a disastrous revisionism to the text. Klug and others have made much of the fact that the titles were not present in the original texts. But that makes too much of that fact. The titles were added soon after by people intimately involved with the preparation of the confession who knew what they were talking about.

The meaning of *Predigtamt* is certainly clear in the Apology. In Ap. XIII.7, the *Predigtamt* is “the administration of the Sacraments to others” (Tappert, 212), and AC XXVIII describes “*das Amt der Predig*” (9): “Our teachers hold that according to the Gospel the power of keys or the power of bishops is a power or command to preach the Gospel, to remit and retain sins, and to administer the Sacraments. . . . This power is exercised only by teaching or preaching the Gospel and by administering the Sacraments either to many or to individuals, depending on one’s calling” (AC XXVIII.6,8). Finally, Walther certainly defines *Predigtamt* rigorously in *Church and Ministry*, Thesis VII, as “the power, conferred by God through the congregation as the possessor of the priesthood and all church power, to exercise the rights of the spiritual priesthood in public office in the name of the congregation” (268).

AC V simply shows that the *Predigtamt*, which certainly is an ontological reality, exists for no other purpose than to serve the Means of Grace. There is only one Office of the Ministry, and that is the Word and Sacrament ministry. That Word and Sacrament ministry is the way in which God himself intends to distribute the salvation won described in AC IV on Justification. The placement and the construction of AC V certainly make it clear that the distribution of Word and Sacrament will not be thought of apart from *Predigtamt*, and likewise, when *Predigtamt* is discussed more concretely later on, it will not be thought of apart from Word and Sacrament. None of this is to deny that the royal priesthood possesses, individually and collectively, the keys of the kingdom of heaven. To them belong all things of Christ, including Word and Sacrament. The universal priesthood is indeed a referent in AC V; they are made priests by God in Word and Sacrament.

One can observe as Klug does that while the doctrine of the universal priesthood does not have a separate article in the Confessions, it is a theme that runs throughout the Confes-

sional writings as it does in Luther and indeed is presupposed in all discussion of the ministry. But there is nevertheless no ground in the texts dealing with ministry for asserting that the universal priesthood is the root out of which the public ministry grows or is derived. The public ministry has its ground on the one hand in the institution of the apostolate and on the other hand in the myriad of commands to preach the Gospel and administer the Sacraments. Some of those who balk at citing a specific New Testament command establishing the *Predigtamt* nevertheless recognize that it is God's will that a ministry on the public behalf is to function in the church.

The doctrine of the universal priesthood needs to be asserted and proclaimed. Above all, it means that everything that belongs to Christ belongs to those made His brothers and sisters by the Gospel; and that includes preaching and the administration of the Sacraments. That it is the right, duty, and function of the priesthood to elect pastors and also to judge their shepherds is not to be hidden from them. But it needs to be said in the same breath, not as an appendage, not as a qualifier, not as a higher truth, that God has instituted the office, to which He wants to call incumbents, specific individuals, to distribute the salvation He has won. And the objects of that service are the royal guests, the kingdom of priests, who are the banquet guests of the King.

Therein lies the great paradox of the ministry. "How beautiful are the feet" points to the high honor of the office, as a divine institution of God, which has received expression in the term *Pfarrherr*, "The Reverend," and "Father." And yet, those who hold that lofty office are δούλοι, more slaves than servants, menials who wait on tables at the great banquet attended by the nation of priests. LOCAL

WORKS CITED

- The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959.
- Chemnitz, Martin. *Ministry, Word, and Sacraments: An Enchiridion*. Translated by Luther Poellot. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1981.
- Elert, Werner. *The Structure of Lutheranism*. Translated by Walter A. Hansen. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1962.
- Empie, Paul C. and T. Austin Murphy, editors. *Eucharist & Ministry*. "Ordained Minister and Layman in Lutheranism," by John Reumann. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1979.
- Fagerberg, Holsten. *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions (1529-1537)*. Translated by Gene Lund. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1972.
- Hardt, Tom G. A. "Twenty Theses on the Ecclesiastical Ministry." *The Confessional Lutheran Research Society Newsletter*, Epiphany 1988, Letter No. 9.
- Klug, Eugene. "Augsburg V: Intent and Meaning of the Confessors on Ministry." *Concordia Journal* (January 1991): 30-42.
- Marquart, Kurt. *The Church and Her Fellowship, Ministry, and Governance*. Volume IX in *Confessional Lutheran Dogmatics*. Edited by Robert Preus. Waverly, Iowa: The International Foundation for Lutheran Confessional Research, Inc., 1990.
- Pieper, August. "Are There Legal Regulations in the New Testament?" *Theologische Quartalschrift* (July 1916): 157-82. Translated by C. Lawrenz.
- Schaller, J. "The Origin and Development of the New Testament Ministry." *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* (Winter 1989): 30-51.
- Walther, C. F. W. *Church and Ministry*. Translated by J. T. Mueller. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1987.

The Church: Hospital or Gymnasium?

Ken Schurb

What is the church to do? Should it be a place of healing, like a hospital, or more a place for the Christian to exercise his or her spiritual muscles? In this article, Ken Schurb, assistant professor of theology at Concordia College, Ann Arbor, Michigan, suggests that a whole host of challenges confront the church precisely when it attempts to identify her exact nature and purpose.

A BEWILDERING VARIETY OF THEOLOGICAL CHALLENGES CONFRONT Lutheranism in our day: questions about ecumenical relationships, about the call into the ministry, about “lay ministry” about women in the church, about “Church Growth,” about the propriety of certain evangelism and stewardship approaches, about the role of liturgy in church life, about whether we should adopt certain practices of the so-called “Evangelicals” to enhance mission activity, and about administrative machinery and its place in day-to-day church work. Really, these are not disconnected items, especially when seen from the standpoint of what the Church is supposed to do in the world. It comes as no accident that we face these challenges simultaneously, for in their present forms they all manifest one perspective on what the Church does. This essay aims to summarize that perspective and show how it contrasts with the truly Gospel-centered view which our fathers found in the Scriptures and left to us. The subject can perhaps best be approached by raising this question: Is the Church like a hospital or like a gymnasium?

How we conceive of the Church’s work will go hand in hand with another question, namely, does the Church have effective Means of Grace? Do the Gospel and the Sacraments actually deliver the forgiveness of sins to people, or don’t they? Depending on the answer to this question, we will think of the visible Church either as a saving agency, or as a “sanctifying” institution.

THE CHURCH AS A HOSPITAL

Consider this illustration: if the Church has effective Means of Grace, means which actually impart forgiveness and life, then at least for present purposes it can be likened to a hospital. It works as a saving agency, dispensing to sin-sick patients the medicine which has the power to make them well. Thus, the medicine in our imaginary hospital corresponds to the Means of Grace around which our Lord gathers His Church. These Means of Grace are the Gospel and Sacraments which impart to sinners all the blessings procured by Christ in His life, death, and resurrection. And since sin is a chronic (not just occasional) illness we need continual contact with the life-giving Means

of Grace in the Church. In other words, the Church is like a hospital with which we stay in constant contact, not like an emergency room that we might visit two or three times in our entire lives.

Note: It is important that we recognize from the start the limits of this illustration. It is not intended to suggest that people are saved, gradually and piecemeal, by an infusion of grace. Nor does it mean to say that faith is not necessary to receive the salvation which God gives us in His Word. The point of comparing the Church to a hospital is this: Just as a hospital’s work is shaped by the fact that it has and uses medicines with true medicinal value, so the Church’s work is shaped by the fact that God’s Means of Grace actually give people the treasures of salvation which Christ their Savior won for them.

As a mission of mercy, a hospital may send doctors out into the world with medicine to bring healing to people where they are. Of course, the Church has been sending out missionaries for a long time, to bring the Gospel to people where they are—because in so doing we bring them Christ. For the Gospel does not merely describe Jesus and His blessings. It is not just *communication*; it is *transportation*. It brings us the Savior. Better to say, He comes to us in and through the Gospel and Sacraments to forgive and cleanse us.

This is the Lutheran position on what the Church does in the world. It amounts to a saving agency because it wields the God-given Gospel and Sacraments which impart forgiveness, life, and salvation. Referring to His words, Jesus said that they “are Spirit and they are life.” They give the Spirit and life (John 6:63). He told His disciples, “The Word which I have spoken to you has already made you clean” (Jn 15:3). *Note:* It was *the Word* that made them clean. St. Paul proclaimed “the Gospel... by which you are saved...” (1 Cor 15:1-2). The Gospel saves. So in Galatians Paul was able to ask rhetorically, “Did you receive the Spirit by doing what the Law says, or by believing what you heard?” (Gal 3:2). Of course they had received the Holy Spirit through what they heard—that is, through the Gospel—because the Spirit came through the Gospel. This message has power. It delivers the goods of salvation. The letter of the Law kills, but the Spirit given in the Gospel brings life (2 Cor 3:6). James urged that his readers “. . . with a gentle spirit welcome the Word that is planted in you, which can save your souls” (Jas 1:21). Of baptism, Ephesians says that it is the washing of water in the Word by which Christ cleanses His Church. And in the Lord’s Supper Jesus gives us the New Testament, which consists above all in the forgiveness of sins according to Jer 31:31-34). The Lord’s Supper forgives sins. In Scripture there never arises a question as to whether Christ saves or the Means

We cannot travel back in time to Christ as He hung on the cross. Rather, He comes to us, transcending time and miles to bring us the blessings of the cross in the Means of Grace.

of Grace save, because Christ saves through His Means of Grace.

Therefore Luther, in a thoroughly practical insistence on reconciliation with God in the Christian life, said something which might strike us at first as quite shocking. He said, “If now I seek the forgiveness of sins, I do not run to the cross, for I will not find it given there.” Notice that Luther’s point has to do with where I, a poor sinner, can receive forgiveness of my sins. It won’t come at a wooden cross in the Holy Land, a cross long since torn down. Instead, as Luther continues, “I will find in the Sacrament or Gospel the Word which distributes, offers, and gives to me that forgiveness which was won on the cross” (AE 40, 214). We cannot travel back in time to Christ as He hung on the cross. Rather, *He* comes to *us*, transcending time and miles to bring us the blessings of the cross in the Means of Grace.

THE CHURCH AS A GYMNASIUM

But suppose for a moment that the opposite is the case, that the Means of Grace do not actually deliver the goods of salvation. What impact would that eventuality have on the visible Church and its work? In this case the Church would be comparable to a hospital without medicine, or like a hospital whose medicine supply consists of mere sugar pills. Obviously, there would remain no overriding need for this institution to be concerned with medicine on a day-to-day basis. So what would it do? What *could* it do? What’s left if you take away effective medicine from a hospital?

The hospital would then have little choice but to put its emphasis on physical therapy. In effect, the hospital would become a gymnasium or health club, a place where those who are well enough to work out can exercise themselves. Needless to say, such a facility could only serve those who are in basically good health already, but who want to improve. What exercises should these folks do? In the main, any exercises are good: push-ups, sit-ups, running, or whatever. Some may suit one person’s situation well, while others might appeal to someone else. The decision to do a particular exercise might depend on where an individual’s talents or gifts lie. Or there could be some workout which one feels he especially needs at a given time in order to exercise a set of muscles which has grown flabby. Overall, however, the choice of an exercise ranks far lower in importance than the fact that people *are* exercising. You never know what God may do with a body that is exercising.

In broad strokes, this illustration sums up the position of

Protestantism (as distinct from Lutheranism) when it comes to the Church’s role in the world. For the Reformed, the Church is not as much like a hospital as it is like a gym. It is not a saving agency, putting people in touch with salvation in the Means of Grace; it is instead a “sanctifying” institution, a place where Christians can exercise themselves in good works with a good deal of freedom to choose from an array of exercises. It is important for us to see that this view is influenced by the denial, on the part of the Protestant world, that the Means of Grace are effective—the denial, in other words, that the Means of Grace actually deliver the goods of forgiveness, life, and salvation.

While all the Reformed deny that the Means of Grace are effective, there are two basic ways to arrive at this conclusion. They follow in schematic.

CALVINIST VIEW

The Calvinist approach hangs on double predestination. If in eternity God has elected some people to go to heaven and others to go to hell and has appointed no certain means to bring the blessings of Christ to people in time, then no Gospel or Sacraments can actually deliver the goods of salvation—not even to those who are eventually saved.

So the gymnasium makes sense as a Calvinist model of the Church. The Church can’t be a hospital, for in the Calvinist view the medicine (that is, the Gospel) is designed *not* to heal some patients because they have been predestined to go to hell. And even the patients who get well do so not because they have come into contact with any medicine but because God predestined them to go to heaven apart from any means. It’s as if, out of the blue, they got a lifetime membership at a gym or health club. While there is medicine such as liniment or antiseptic on the premises at the gym—just as you can find the Word in use in Calvinist churches—it plays, at best, a mere supporting role there.

At a Calvinist church gathering, those present are there because they believe their salvation is a matter settled by God’s election long ago. If God’s Word is read and heard in the assembly, it will not be as forgiveness-bearing Gospel, the medicine which makes the difference between life and death. Nor will people regard that Word or the Sacraments as actually giving them salvation. Rather, any concern about salvation will be fastened (among other places) on the exercise of good works, since by their good works these folks think they show, to themselves and those around them, that they are indeed the saved. As far as they are concerned they do not need a spiritual hospital; what they need is a spiritual gym.

SYNERGIST VIEW

But there remains among the Reformed a second way to reach the conclusion that the Means of Grace are not effective. This is the route taken by people who insist that the difference between the saved and the lost is that, of the two, the saved cooperated more with God: They made a decision for Christ, committed their lives to the Lord, or some such thing. This view can easily be recognized as the prominent Protestant position in America today. Synergists also deny that the Means of Grace actually bring people salvation.

How? Think again of the analogy comparing effective Means of Grace to medicine. The problem with effective Means of Grace, from the synergist point of view, is this: Like

medicine, effective Means of Grace do not ask a person whether he *wants* the cure or whether he will *decide* to get well; they simply deliver the cure. Now, certainly we should not forget that what the Means of Grace deliver can be rejected by people. But synergists are insulted when they are *not* asked to *accept* salvation. In fact, they hold that you can't be saved unless you have been asked to accept it and said "yes" by an act of your will. At best, synergists want medicine that will stimulate them to make the decisive contribution themselves. They too are looking for a gym more than a hospital.

And they want a gym for the Christian life after conversion, too. They think the decisive thing in their conversion, the start of their Christian life, was a task or feat within their power to perform. To them it was not an intervention from outside in which God gave them something they could not in the slightest degree achieve or attain for themselves. Not surprisingly, this same idea comes to serve as a model for their ongoing Christian lives. The crucial question continues to be: Are you responding with your will to what God has done for you? As

Therefore the hospital and its patients live in ongoing dependence on the Founder—not just for information and guidance, but for life itself.

with the Calvinist view, salvation is seen as a matter more or less settled in the past, and settled in the case of any individual without effective Means of Grace. The task at hand for the converted is the production of good works, exercising themselves in the Christian life. For exercise, you don't need a hospital; you need a gym.

COMMON IDEA

By different routes, the Calvinist and the synergist wings of Protestantism come to the same conclusion: They deny that the Means of Grace bring people the very forgiveness and life won by Christ our Lord. This fact should not surprise us, for in spite of all their differences both operate with a common assumption: that the finite is not capable of the infinite. In effect, they say God would be stooping beneath His dignity to exercise His saving power in and through limited human things such as words, water, bread or wine. Instead, if God is going to save people, Protestantism claims that He will do it apart from, or at best alongside of, the Means of Grace—but certainly not through them. Regardless of Protestantism, though, St. Peter affirms that Christians are born again both by Christ's resurrection from the dead and by the living and abiding Word of God which is preached to them (1 Pt 1:3, 23). Scripture holds that the power of the Word, which is the power of the Means of Grace, is the same power that raised Jesus from the dead.

DOES THE CHURCH BRING US CHRIST?

The Church's work cannot be separated from the effectiveness of the Gospel, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. If these points become separated, the teaching on the Church will be skewed. We misperceive the visible Church and its work if we view it as a gym rather than as a hospital with effective medicine for sin-sick souls.

Consider but one way of extending our example. Suppose the hospital mentioned above had been founded by a brilliant physician whose personal efforts developed the very miraculous medicine which the hospital uses. Let's say the medicine was based on a rare antibody found in the great doctor's own blood, and still today he constantly donates blood with which to make new batches of the medicine. Every drop of the medicine used in treatment gives the patient, as it were, a transfusion of the physician's blood. (This extension may sound far-fetched, but in southern Louisiana there are professional snake farmers who in their own blood have developed factors immune to poisonous venom, and who consequently are in demand to give blood transfusions to snake-bite victims.) Therefore the hospital and its patients live in ongoing dependence on the founder—not just for information and guidance, but for life itself.

The reason for adding this section to the illustration is to make explicit mention of our Savior's work. Just as the medicine in the story has healing power because it is made from the founding doctor's blood, so the Means of Grace apply to us, again and again, the blood of Christ which cleanses us from all sin. To be sure, Christ died once and for all. The sacrifice is complete. "It is finished," Jesus said before He died. At length He rose and He lives to apply His redemption to people in the Means of Grace. That is precisely what an American Lutheran leader of the last century named Charles Porterfield Krauth was talking about when he wrote:

The glory of the Lutheran system in all its parts, and especially in its doctrine of the Lord's Supper, is, that it accepts, in all its fullness the Apostle's argument, "If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we will be saved by His life"....He made the sacrifice once for all—He applies it constantly. We live by Him, we must hang on Him—the vine does not send up [only] one gush of its noble sap . . . the sap . . . must flow on—its one, unchanging and abiding life puts itself forth into the new offshoots, and by constant application of itself maintains the old branches. . . . Cut the branch off, and the memory of the life will not keep it from withering; it must have the life itself . . . from the vine. It could not exist without the original life of the vine, nor can it exist without the present life of the vine. . . . Faith cannot feed on itself, as many seem to imagine it can—it must have its object. . . . The Word and the Sacraments give to it that by which it lives. Faith in the nutritious power of bread does not nourish—the bread itself is necessary (*Conservative Reformation*, 653-54).

But the Reformed, who do not see the Means of Grace as effective medicine and thus do not regard the Church as a hospital, end up with little more than what Krauth called "faith in

If the Church is like a hospital which has medicine to cure the true disease which plagues everyone, nothing could be more important than getting the precious medicine to people.

the nutritious power of bread.” They think their salvation was accomplished long ago, and so it does not loom as their main Christian concern now. They do not need medicine to exercise in their gym.

Nor do they need the Church’s Founder to be with them to forgive and to save. A gym can continue even if its founder is off the scene. Krauth noticed this point too, when he said:

The current view of un-Lutheran Protestantism practically is, that all we need for our redemption is a *dead Christ*. We are to look back to Calvary to find peace in thinking of what was done there, and at the Lord’s Supper we are to look back to the sacrifice once made for our sins. The current view excludes the necessity of a living Savior in our redemption. According to it, we redeem ourselves, or the Spirit of God redeems us, by what Christ once did, and without any personal work on His part now. To the theology of a large part of the Church it would be no disturbing element if the divine nature of Christ had been separated from the human after the resurrection. Instead of a robust and mighty faith which hangs upon a living Savior, and lives by His life, we have a religion of sentiment verging away into sentimentality; a religion which lives by its own thoughts of a Savior of bygone times (*Conservative Reformation*, pp. 652-53).

It is one thing to realize that as long as we live in this world we will remain chronically sick unto death and to confide for rescue in a Lord Who died for us and rose, and now—specifically in His Word of Grace, in Baptism, and in the Lord’s Supper—this same Lord gives us, completely and continually, the forgiveness in His blood which is the answer to our most crying need. If this is what you believe, you recognize your need for a spiritual hospital to give you the medicine that brings you the blood of Christ. You need the Gospel, so you need the Church. But it is quite another thing to imagine that the great task of your Christian life now is to exercise yourself in good works, whether to prove that you really are elect or to continue your work of bringing your will into line with God’s will. If that is what you believe, you will want a spiritual gym to provide you with a good exercise program. You want the Law, and that is what you will seek from the Church.

The way we view the Church forms a reflection of how we view the Means of Grace. It also shows what we are looking for

in our Savior. The contrast between the two views of what the Church does is most sharp when we ask: Where does Christ fit in?

In the next section of this essay we will extend the illustration from part one still further, in a number of directions, to show how a non-Lutheran model of the Church can cause no end of trouble when it emerges within Lutheranism. Such a model ought to stick out like a proverbial sore thumb, standing out as incompatible with the rest of our doctrine; for example, it conflicts with the effectiveness of the Means of Grace. But do we recognize a Protestant model of the Church as an alien teaching among us or do we tend instead to embrace it and adjust matters of theology and practice so as to fit in with it?

MINISTRY

The picture of the Church as a hospital does not indicate everything that should be said about the Office of the Ministry these days. But it can suggest this much: If the Means of Grace are like effective medicine, they should be entrusted to those qualified to exercise responsible stewardship of them. No wonder St. Paul laid such emphasis on pastors being apt to teach, and able to refute and correct those who teach falsely! The Word which pastors administer is like powerful medicine. As a public service it should be doled out, in due proportion, by trained individuals whose qualifications the whole church has had the opportunity to attest. If not, grave harm might result for patients.

But if the Church is less like a hospital and more like a gym, it does not need physicians. It needs coaches. And conventional wisdom dictates that the best coach is one who has played the game well himself. Just as superior athletes are often rewarded by being made coaches, becoming a pastor is often regarded as the ultimate step in an exemplary Christian life. This view of the Ministry is not confined to Reformed circles. It emerges among us whenever the goals of classical theological education are questioned in favor of an approach in which those best qualified for the Ministry are supposed to be those whose demonstrated personal commitment or dedication runs highest. The alien model of the Church is also in evidence when the work of the pastor is explicitly likened to that of a coach training people to be Christians as mature as he himself is (note many common explanations of Eph 4:11-12). In one way or another, this view of the Ministry is espoused by groups among us ranging from feminists to Church Growth enthusiasts. It builds on the Reformed idea of the Church as a gym where Christians exercise themselves in good works, not on the Biblical and Lutheran foundation where the Church is more like a hospital with the real medicine of the Gospel to cure sin-sick people.

MISSION

If the Church is like a hospital which has medicine to cure the true disease which plagues everyone, nothing could be more important than getting the precious medicine to people. Even if a patient enters the hospital building convinced that his problem is stress or air pollution or anything else, the doctors at the Church-hospital know—often better than their patients—that all such troubles ultimately stem from the basic disease, sin. They know that even if they could treat all the symptoms which they can see, to do so while leaving the underlying sin untouched would amount to a hopelessly

superficial effort, like putting a band-aid on cancer. But there is no reason to remain superficial, for the doctors at the hospital—the pastors of the Church in our illustration—have precisely the medicine needed to cure what truly ails the patient: They can give forgiveness on account of Christ, concretely available and offered by God in the Gospel and Sacraments. And as Luther said, where there is forgiveness of sin, there is also life and salvation. The Gospel is the medicine which physicians of souls should use without getting sidetracked by shallow diagnoses.

But in the Reformed view the Church is like a gym where people exercise themselves in all manner of good works, and it should do more than any hospital does to tailor its services to the “felt needs” of its clientele. “Find the needs and meet them” becomes a slogan—not only among the Reformed but also in some of our own churches.

But to what end? That the “clients” be saved? Not in the Reformed understanding which says that God either will or will not save people apart from any effective means to which we have access. So what turns out to be the goals behind meeting “felt needs”? One is that church members will be able to do still more good works by extending themselves to people. The other is that the people whose needs are met might join the outward fellowship of the Reformed church, feel cared-for and well-assimilated there, and hopefully join in the spiritual exercise program at this “gym.” Therefore it becomes essential that a great many activities exist in a Reformed church so that each individual can plug in at a spiritual exercise level comfortable for him or her. Even if one of those activities is Bible study, the emphasis there will likely rest on the dynamics of the group or the amount of data learned, not on the forgiveness which Christ gives poor sinners through His Gospel in the Bible study. In other words, even when someone at the gym reaches for the real medicine, the gym does not encourage it as a matter of life and death. Just thank God that the medicine of His Gospel is used among the Reformed at all! That way, in spite of their protestations, He works through it.

But someone will say, “We do not have Reformed thoughts in mind when we take the advice to ‘find the needs and meet them.’” Perhaps not. I certainly do not wish to dismiss all pre-evangelism efforts; in fact, I think we must grow more sophisticated as we engage in pre-evangelism. But I hold that it is crucial for us to keep pre-evangelism efforts in proper perspective, appreciating them for what they *are* and realizing what they are *not*. If we don’t, the emphasis which our congregations quite properly and evangelically place on the Means of Grace can be compromised in practice, for they will run the activities of a spiritual gym in order to attract people to the church and hold them there. Who of us has not heard the suggestion, “We could get more people to come to our church if only . . .”? We must beware how we complete that sentence! If we complete it by saying there is something more we can do to bring the Means of Grace to sinners, that is like a hospital rightly concerned about getting medicine to sick people in the best way it can. If we complete the sentence with anything else, we must realize that we risk acting as a mere gym. But nothing endears the Church to people like good Gospel-packed preaching, according to our Lutheran fathers. If we regard the Gospel and Sacraments as the crucial medicine through which Christ heals sin-sick people and by which He gathers His Church, why should we look to other means to bring varieties of “salvation” (such as meeting “felt” needs) and to build the Church?

If the Church is like a hospital with effective medicine, and if this hospital is being run so as to hold to its purpose, it certainly will do everything possible to get the all-important medicine to people who need it. If administrative structures get in the way, the structures can and must be changed. But if the Church resembles a spiritual gym, rather strict observance of certain administrative policies might actually become part of the spiritual exercise program offered there—a test of the mutual love and respect between brothers who have voluntarily joined together to cooperate in running a gym. Locally or at the denominational level, it can bulk large in importance that people adhere to a desired organizational polity, or that certain administrative procedures are followed rigorously—or else someone can easily be deemed unloving, uncooperative. In the Church as gym, cooperation and harmony can be valued every bit as highly as the teaching of the Gospel, if not more highly. The greatest sin in the organization can get to be the bureaucratic sin of disturbing the group’s outward peace or progress for any reason, even on account of the Gospel.

If we regard the Church as a hospital, avoiding administration of the wrong medicine or of contaminated medicine—that is, the teaching of false doctrine—has to stand out as a matter of paramount importance. Dealing with it is worth risking some hurt feelings, or even the complete loss of outward peace, all for the sake of people for whom Christ died.

However, if we regard the Church as a hospital, administration of the wrong medicine or of contaminated medicine—that is, the teaching of false doctrine—has to stand out as a matter of paramount importance. Dealing with it is worth risking some hurt feelings, or even the complete loss of outward peace, all for the sake of people for whom Christ died. But if the Church is more like a gym, then concern over doctrine may easily be greeted with the impatient warning that we dare not risk losing our love for people by being consumed with trifles like the purity of our medicine.

Yet in a hospital it would be absurd to say, “We love our patients; it’s the boring science of medicine that we ignore.” And in a Church that is like a hospital—with effective Means of Grace—to use these means as God gave them *is* to love people. There it would be unthinkable to say, “We love people; it’s theology that we can’t stand.” On the other hand, those in the Church-as-gym might think they can afford to go their way relatively unconcerned about doctrine since medicine does not have the critical importance in a gym that it enjoys in a hospital. As we have noted, in the Reformed conception of the Means of Grace salvation does not depend on the proclamation of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments. We notice similar sentiments in the call for the church to accommodate herself to the “felt needs” of the persons who come.

CHURCH FELLOWSHIP

In these days of medical licensing and supervision, a sick person can be assured of getting at least adequate care at any hospital. But suppose no such regulation existed, leaving people more or less on their own to find a hospital which provides good medical care. If you knew of the hospital in our illustration, one which had medicine able to cure the worst disease of all people, and which used that medicine purely and properly, why would you subject yourself to treatment at any other hospital? If you were a doctor at that hospital, would you want to approve publicly of the way other hospitals and doctors might dilute or contaminate the all-important medicine? Would you suggest to patients even faintly that there is little difference between the treatment they receive from you and a workout at the local gym?

Briefly, this indicates the Lutheran position on church fellowship. Its import for the individual Christian is precisely the same as Jesus' warning to "beware of false prophets." It bears repeating that if we regard the Church as a hospital, administration of the wrong medicine or of contaminated medicine—that is, the teaching of false doctrine—has to stand out as a matter of paramount importance. And when false doctrine is taught consistently, it is at least as incumbent upon orthodox pastors and their churches to dissociate themselves from that faulty doctrine and its public representatives as it is incumbent upon medical doctors and their hospitals to denounce the bogus practices of a quack or charlatan. While a doctor may attend the meetings of the same civic organization which some unsound medical practitioner attends, it would be unconscionable for the legitimate doctor to participate with the quack in the practice of medicine: working together on a case, publishing a jointly written article, etc. Just so, it is unthinkable for pastors who proclaim the Gospel in all its sweetness and comfort to join with those who do not in an effort to proclaim the Gospel or administer the Sacraments. The purity of our medicine is a matter of life and death—if we look upon the Church as a hospital for sin-sick people.

But if churches are gyms where Christians exercise themselves in good works, there can be no big difference between them. Broadly speaking, one is no better than another; about the most you can say is that they are different. Someone might choose a gym because it offers the exercise routine which he thinks he needs. Similarly, among the Reformed, one's choice of congregation easily comes to depend less on theological positions which the churches hold and more on the programs and challenges available at each. "Church-hopping," even across denominational or theological lines, is rather common. For in the main all the Protestant "gyms" recognize each other as equally legitimate. Ecumenical activity—even the joint-proclamation of differing versions of the Gospel—stirs up rela-

tively little problem for them, since in their view the Gospel they proclaim is not God's means of salvation.

But this thinking proves disastrous within Lutheranism, where the biblical teaching on the Means of Grace flies in the face of the ecumenical impulse. Yet there is no denying that this impulse has turned out to be the most enduring un-Lutheran temptation in the 20th century, older and more basic than flirtations with historical criticism of the Scriptures.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion is simple: Why should a hospital pare down its services so as to act like a mere gym or health club? When you have the healing medicine for the sin-sick soul, why act as if you are simply a social service institution, a private club, or even a charitable society?

Herein lies one of the great ironies of our present difficulties: At a glance it seems confessional Lutheran congregations are being encouraged to do more these days. Most of the influences mentioned at the beginning of this essay come across to many as invitations to expand the scope of service. Yet if we take such advice we may end up doing quantitatively more, but it will be qualitatively much less: While our congregations have the resources to be hospitals, they will spend much of their time acting as mere gyms.

It's an old bit of wisdom that we should meet people where they are. Indeed we should, even going out of our way to do so. But it is critical for us to realize the answers to these questions: *Why* do we meet them? *What resources* do we have to help them? We can meet them with the Gospel which gives them forgiveness, life, and salvation in Christ—not with devices simply designed to make them feel good, or like us personally, or get along well together, or get lots of work done.

This essay has contrasted a Protestant model of what the Church does (that is, the Church as a "sanctifying" institution) and the Biblical, Lutheran view (that is, the Church as a saving agency). In effect, what we are being tempted to do these days is to put a Protestant model of the Church atop our Lutheran teaching about what the Savior has done for us and still does for us in the Means of Grace. But the two are not compatible because the Protestant model of the Church is based on false ideas of what our Savior has done and still does for us. Sooner or later we Lutherans must wake up to this incompatibility.

If we do, it will be from a Gospel perspective. Let us walk by faith, not by sight. We must *believe* in our Lord, in His Church, and in the power of His Word; we do not see any of this. If we believe—as we say we do—that we have the miraculous medicine of the Gospel, then let our churches be hospitals and act as hospitals. After all, our Lord did not come to call the well, but the sick. LOGIA

Church Fellowship and Altar Fellowship in the Light of Church History

Martin Wittenberg

Translated by John Bruss



Martin Wittenberg is Professor Emeritus of the Augustana-Hochschule in Neuendettelsau, Germany, the little Bavarian town made famous by the 19th century pastor Wilhelm Löhe. This essay, though quite lengthy, is presented to our readers complete in this issue because of its very important subject. Tracing the history of church and altar fellowship from the days of the Early Church, Wittenberg reveals the catholic understanding that altar fellowship flows from unity in doctrine. He then presents the struggle to retain and to articulate this position in the confessional crisis in Germany, particularly Löhe's struggle. Wittenberg leaves the application of the lessons of history to the reader, but it is clear that this essay speaks to the pressing challenges which are faced in worldwide Lutheranism today. A careful reading of Wittenberg's presentation will be of great benefit.

The essay was translated by John S. Bruss, Mankato, Minnesota, with the author's permission. The essay was first printed in Lutherischer Rundblick, Vol. 9, No. 3 & 4, 1961, and was reprinted in 1986 by Flacius-Verlag. The translator would like to express his indebtedness both to the Confessional Lutheran Research Society for bringing to his attention the value of this article, as well as to Dr. Tom Hardt, without whose close scrutiny of the translation in a few critical passages, the value of the English version of the work would have been greatly diminished. For the convenience of our readers a glossary of the foreign words and phrases in the article is provided at the end of the article.

PERMIT ME TO ARRANGE THIS PAPER UNDER THREE PROPOSITIONS. I. John Damascenus, in Book Four of *De fide orthodoxa*, writes, "With all of our might we resolve to hold ourselves to this: that we not receive communion from heretics nor give it to them."¹ II. Dr. Martin Luther, in *Open Letter to the Congregation of the City of Frankfurt am Main* in the year 1532,² writes, "We do not want to make a pig-pen out of Christ's Church and let everyone come to the Sacrament, as sows to the trough, without having been previously examined—such churches we leave to the enthusiasts. And this we have received from the Early Church."³ III. The Schwabacher *Erklärung* of October 9, 1851, entitled *Erklärung mehrerer Geistlicher über ihr Verhältnis zur bayerisch-protestantischen Landeskirche* (Nürnberg, 1851). In this document, nine theologians under the leadership of Löhe state: "There is no emergency situation which demands mixed communion. And so we maintain that there cannot be any such situation. Emergency knows no commandment; but it knows the Commandment of God. God's Word is above emergency. God's Word prohibits Altar Fellowship with those who have different teachings and will not desist from them; it prohibits such a narrow fellowship

with them." In these three citations you have an overview of the three portions of my paper. And so, I turn first to the question of the relationship between Church Fellowship and Altar Fellowship in the Ancient Church.

THE ANCIENT CHURCH

APOSTOLIC CONSTITUTIONS

On this first issue, we already have a great help in Werner Elert's highly acclaimed *Eucharist and Church Fellowship in the First Four Centuries*. It is a *sine qua non* for every theological library. And in fact, if I am not mistaken, what Tom Hardt says is true, that there is but one error to censure in Elert's book: namely, Elert's interpretation of *The Canons of the Council of Nicaea* in relation to the administration of the Sacrament to non-members of the Church in the case of *periculum mortis*. And so straight away, I want to mention Tom Hardt's very militant essay on *communicatio in sacris*, entitled "*Keine Kirchengemeinschaft mit Häretikern*."⁴ This essay will serve as the second piece of literature in our list on the Ancient Church, and is applicable also to part two of this essay. The only other sources of which I shall make mention are the church orders of the Ancient Church, found in *Bibliothek der Kirchenväter*, vol. 5, *Griechische Liturgien*.⁵

Now generally speaking, it is quite clear that the Ancient Church knew no form whatsoever of open communion. Let us direct our attention to how this principle worked on the level of single congregations as seen from the perspective of the form of their worship services. In the Eighth Book of *The Apostolic Constitutions* (where we find the regular Syrian liturgy of approximately the fourth and fifth centuries which contains strong influences from the liturgy of the city of Rome from about 200 and from the Egyptian Orders for the Worship Service from the third and fourth centuries) we find an arrangement which is interesting for the point we are pursuing. In this liturgy, after the Scripture readings in the mass of the catechumens, to begin with the deacon ascends to the ambo⁶ where he declares in no uncertain terms that no unbeliever and none of the "hearers" may be present (the "hearers" are the class of the repentant *lapsi* as far as they are still permitted to attend church). Then after a prayer is said for the catechumens, the deacon says to the catechumens, "Depart in peace!" And so, with the dismissal of the heathen and the "hearers," the catechumens are also dismissed from the fellowship of the Altar. The next step in the liturgy is a prayer said for the energumens who are beset with unclean spirits. Then they are dismissed. Those who would be soon baptized remain a bit longer. But

In matters of Church Fellowship and Altar Fellowship the Ancient Church exercised her strict exclusivity in a world and in an ecclesiastical situation very much similar to ours today.

then the deacon says, “No unauthorized people! All of us, who are believers, shall now kneel!” From the stand point of the Church Catholic, it is clear that the “unauthorized” are those who do not confess the doctrine of Nicea, Constantinople, and Chalcedon.

Now, in this discussion, it is extremely important to recognize that the religious plurality in Christendom at this time plays into this question on the congregational level. Confessional integrity in this pluralistic situation demanded that whoever was not in a position to confess the doctrine which was authoritative in a particular congregation, naturally did not go to communion in that congregation. That means, naturally, that a Nicene Christian did not and could not go to the Arians for communion. Simply stated, no Athanasian is permitted among the Arians! The Arians are convinced that by his Christology such a man would blaspheme God. And this holds true, vice versa, in every imaginable case!

And so this is what it all means: Church Fellowship is understood essentially as being Confessional Fellowship. Wherever Confessional Fellowship does not exist, so also is Altar Fellowship prohibited, from the very outset. Following this principle, there is a series of orders which explicitly state that a false believer is not in a position to be present during communion even in a passive role, looking on or praying. Please permit me to pass over an enumeration of such examples. But suffice it to say that the introduction of the Niceo-Constantinopolitan Creed into the liturgy of the mass essentially had the intention of erecting doctrinal limits around the Altar. A good example of this is the Egyptian Marcus-liturgy, composed in Greek at the end of the sixth century.⁷ Seen purely from the perspective of content, dogma and salvational history are far more abundantly present, and developed, in the prayers of presentation than they are in the Niceo-Constantinopolitan Creed. However, the formal recitation of the creed in the liturgy is intended to raise up the unmistakable battle standard of orthodoxy. Of course, this does not mean that the individual statements get less significance. As an example of this, perhaps one ought to draw attention to the significance of the one statement in our Apostles’ Creed—in its original sense presumably strongly Judeo-Christian: “I believe in God . . . the Maker of heaven and earth.” It is the strongest repudiation of Marcion, for whom the Creator-God is not the Redeeming God; a repudiation of the Marcion who at that time had a larger congregation in Rome than did orthodoxy and who had developed such an enormous caritative activity that his welfare

organization was quite famous! The very same creedal statement is also a rejection of all gnostic communities and, as Hermann Sasse again and again correctly emphasizes, their tremendously imposing and ornately designed rites. The capricious initiations of the anthroposophs are a boring thing in comparison to some gnostic services. In the ancient world, if someone longed for aesthetics and sought the magic effect of a perfectly celebrated liturgy, he went to a gnostic congregation, where on top of that, he found the attraction of the priestesses. However, the presence of the creed in the mass is an implicit refusal of all such sectarians from the Lord’s Table—provided that they are honest and do not look at confessional statements merely as religious poetry. And of course, vice versa, none of the sects permits any adherent of the Nicene Creed to commune at the Lord’s Table—disregarding some obvious exceptions.

Now, after all of that, I have something else to take up: a fact, I believe that although well-known in our circles, we must make ourselves clear on again and again. The nice, often captivately presented thesis which states that in the Ancient Church, up to the point of the schism between the East and Rome, there was only the One Church, *uno corde credens, uno ore confitens*, with only a few heretical or national groups on the fringes, is simply not true!

Rather, it is often much more disturbing to see, even in the days of the Ancient Church, how Christian fellowships, some of which were often downright different and some of which differed perceptibly only for the initiated Christians, existed side-by-side in one and the same place. And these differing fellowships each claimed that they were the true Church, since they had the true doctrine. It is also disturbing to see that even already by the decline of antiquity, a heathen who comes to Christ must ask the question, “What really, then, is genuine Christianity?” But this also means that in matters of Church Fellowship and Altar Fellowship the Ancient Church exercised her strict exclusivity in a world and in an ecclesiastical situation very much similar to ours today. Envious competition, power struggles, politics, turncoats, confessionalism, territorialism, caesaro-papism, misuse of state power at the hands of ambitious priests—all of that is there. And it occurs only very rarely that the death of some worthy and spirit-filled man would draw the various confessions and groups together at his grave in the face of eternity. There at the grave, in the face of eternity, they would sing psalms together and pray, thereby hinting at the unity of all confessors of Christ which was otherwise hardly evident in their general praxis and certainly not realized in their Altar praxis at all.

PEACE LETTERS

What happens now in the face of the fact that even the Church of late antiquity lived in a realm in which there was very heavy exchange between East and West, North and South? In this situation, there is something like a “Church pass,” the so-called “peace letters.” These peace letters came to be a different thing from the “letters of recommendation”; however, note that the ἐπιστολαὶ συστατικαί from the days of the Apostle Paul are obviously nothing other than precisely such letters from congregation to congregation stating, “You can accept this person!” To maintain the purity of her altars, the Ancient Church developed a careful system whereby she gave to her relocating members a testimony as to what was believed in the home con-

gregation in order to make it possible for these members to commune in congregations of the same confession. And so no stranger was permitted to commune unless he could produce a *libellum pacis*—that is, the proof that he is in such a position as to exchange with the confessors of a certain faith the kiss of brotherhood, the kiss of peace during the communion service.

And so you see that it is really not as if the congregations each lived out their own secluded lives. Indeed, there was a great fluctuation in Christendom, from Egypt to Gaul, from Spain to Mesopotamia; so much so that it is cause for concern. Nevertheless, in the face of all this fluctuation, there remains an aide in maintaining Altar Fellowship with those who confess the same doctrine—the letters of peace. And so, for this reason, letters of peace illegibly undersigned were not accepted! And when it comes to the clergy, the letter alone did not suffice; rather, in many instances, they had to sit a colloquy before they were permitted to celebrate the Lord's Supper. Even bishops were accepted into the *κοινωνία* only after they had demonstrated themselves to be heralds of the truth and God-fearing

Church Fellowship is, indeed, Confessional Fellowship; however, Confessional Fellowship as Church Fellowship is the presupposition to Altar Fellowship.

preachers. On the other hand, the bishops ratified the existing fellowship by sending the Eucharist, that is, the consecrated host, to each congregation with whom they were without doubt in Altar Fellowship—at least when they were installed in their position and on otherwise celebratory occasions. This mission of the host to one another was used to demonstrate the concept of “eating-from-one-bread.” Therefore, not everyone who said, “I am a Christian,” was accepted to partake of the Sacrament. Rather, the Ancient Church attempted in the most diverse of ways to ensure that the altar would not be profaned; to prevent anyone who was not a comrade in faith and a brother in confession from insinuating himself at the altar.

In accord with that, we find that it is also the case that when someone is in a place where there is no congregation which confesses his faith, he does not commune. One therefore does not go as a “guest” to the Lord's Supper in a Chalcedonian church if, let's say, he is a monophysite. Rather, he just does without communion at all. If you know Werner Elert's book or even only Elert's short essay in the collection of articles from the Ecumenical Committee of the VELKD entitled *Koinonia* (Berlin, 1957) which contains quite a variety of material, then you know about that famous “student-congregation” in Berytos. The members of that congregation prayed with one another and listened to sermons alternately from the various confessions. However, when a student who had been won for Christ through this congregation—which was actually a stu-

dent mission—decided to be baptized, he was told, “Sorry, friend. I cannot be your sponsor, for I am in *κοινωνία* with the Holy Fathers of Egypt, but not with the Bishops of Phoenecia; the profession of my confessional Church debar me from communing here as your sponsor.⁸ I would lose my communion right in my own church if I were to commune here,”—or something of that nature. And this little anecdote has its own particular attraction in that the above-mentioned form of confessional distancing comes from one who is not a theologian.

I hope that I have brought forth the essential elements which needed to be mentioned about the Ancient Church. Church Fellowship is, indeed, Confessional Fellowship; however, Confessional Fellowship as Church Fellowship is the presupposition to Altar Fellowship; that is, in the Ancient Church, they did not say, “If someone communes with us, by virtue of that, he has implicitly come to our side. So let's let everyone commune with us!”

Admittedly, such thoughts did crop up. The custom which reigned at that time always sought to make good on the “*Cogite intrare*”—that blasphemous and flippant saying of the great Augustine—in the interest of admitting fringe groups into the main Church by compulsory Altar Fellowship that was supposed to effect a “union.” Elert produces a telling example of this: the report that in around 360 A.D., the Anti-Nicene group in Constantinople compelled the Nicene Novatians to a “union” by assembling the Novatians by police force and having officials open their mouths and force the host on them. By doing this, they had “communed;” and in so doing, had recognized the majority Church in Constantinople *de facto* to be the right Church. This is a good example of compulsory union by means of forced Altar Fellowship. Also not absent in ancient times was the argument; “What do you mean you do not want to commune with Caesar?”—an argument which, although changed in form, has played its role in the history of the Prussian Church and has recently taken on the form, “So then, you wouldn't go to the Lord's Supper with Dibelius, or Gollwitzer?”

ETHICS

Nevertheless, all of this establishes in its own unique way the principle that Altar Fellowship is Church Fellowship and is relevant as it pertains to confessional agreement. So now, in order to present the picture within the correct framework, I would still like strongly to underline the fact that this broad, dogmatically defined arrangement concerning admission to the Lord's Supper was imbedded within the framework of the baptismal order, and that this baptismal order in a very decisive way excluded a whole series of “conditions” for ethical reasons *a limine* of Christian Baptism. The slave was not excluded nor was the soldier. However, those possessed by demons were excluded, as the Apostolic Constitution VIII, 32, shows (although later, they tried to get rid of the demon with an official exorcism). Brothel keepers were excluded from Baptism as were artisans who produced idols, actors, coach drivers, career athletes and career musicians. *Not* excluded was the unliberated mistress of an unbeliever, insofar as she gives herself only to him. And even the afficianado of the maniacally theatrical circus could not be baptized. I only mention all of this (which can for the most part be proven from the conciliar resolutions and patristic writings) so that you can see that the Ancient Church did not bother itself only with a purely dog-

matically determined altar discipline; the Ancient Church also considered ethics in their determination of who would or would not receive Baptism. And concerning this strongly ethical aspect of the Church's considerations, note that already from the time of *The Didache*, appealing to Mt 5:23f., the Early Church sometimes even demanded under certain conditions that the worship service be interrupted for the purpose of reconciling estranged parties!

However, what we are particularly concerned with here today is the question as to what happens when the baptized from various groups, from various confessions, encounter one another. Here the rule of Damascenus applies: "that we not receive communion from heretics nor give it to them."

THE REFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

What was the situation in the Church of the Reformation and in the Church of the following centuries? One can include the Age of Orthodoxy along side the Reformation Period, albeit with certain qualifications. If you are looking for material in this particular area, it can be found in Gerhard von Zezschwitz's "*Die kirchlichen Normen berechtigter Abendmahls-gemeinschaft*" (Leipzig, 1870) which is very instructively put together. This pamphlet presents his position taken against Rietschel, who was still at that time a Saxon pastor. Zezschwitz was practically the last academic representative of a dogmatically determined altar discipline. Rietschel had attacked him with the accusation of "un-Lutheran and un-evangelical conduct" through his pamphlet, "*Die Gewährung der Abendmahls-gemeinschaft an Reformierte und Unierte in ihrem Recht und ihrer Pflicht*" (Leipzig, 1869). Zezschwitz, then, in his response presents, in an extremely convincing manner, from the principles of Luther, from the *Book of Concord*, and from the Church Orders and praxis well into the Eighteenth century, what sort of requirements had existed for admission to the Lord's Supper. Zezschwitz's own point of view was hardly moved. Of course, when Tom Hardt mentions him merely as an example of a deterrent, that may perhaps be due in part to the unique fate of Hardt. For Germany, at any rate—I have compared other presentations—we have no better compilation or assimilation of the pertinent material; on the issue in Sweden, Hardt himself offers some very instructive things. Naturally, one can also find material in Tholuck. But in Tholuck's broader account of the ecclesiastical life of the seventeenth century, a double sort of tendency predominates. First of all, he tried to demonstrate what abstrusely psychopathic, and at the same time sadistic, monsters the Lutheran orthodox teachers were—men who would worry other humans at their deathbed by telling them that they could not administer the *viaticum* to them in case they had not yet sincerely denied their false teachings. On the other side, in Tholuck's view, stand those full of love, those engaged in caritative works, the truly godly, who at that time practiced open communion. And so admittedly the examples of Tholuck are in accord with those tendencies; but they do not mean what he thinks they mean.

However, it is especially important for us right now to come to grips with the thesis that the Lutheran Confessions and even Luther himself knew actually only one requirement for reception of the Lord's Supper: faith in the words, "Given for you and poured out for the remission of sins." In the literature on this topic, one finds again and again the assertion that

this is the genuine Lutheran principle in the question of admission to the Eucharist—pronounced in *The Small Catechism* and undergirded by innumerable other writings of Luther—that there is only one unworthiness, namely, unbelief toward the words "for you"; and only one worthiness, namely, the worthiness of poor sinners who desire their Savior. Is that correct? As we continue on this thought, we cannot overlook the sense in which the Fifth Part of *The Small Catechism* brings its explanation to bear on matters of "worthiness" and "preparation." It is brought expressly against late-medieval popular piety according to which the worthiness of one's participation in communion was effected through "fasting and bodily self-preparation." If we fail to see that the reference to Christ's words "for you" and faith in them ought to be seen within this framework, divorcing the reference from the greater context, we do violence to the text of *The Small Catechism* and to at least a good share of the other passages produced in favor of this argument. We are therefore still going to have to deal with the question, whether or not and to what extent our Reforma-

Luther emphasizes the fact that no communion can be celebrated without personal registration and that there can be no communion without prior examination of the communicants as to whether or not they know what the Sacrament is and for what reason it was given.

tion Fathers demanded of the participant in the Holy Supper not only the believing "yes" to the words "for you" of Christ's death, but also a "yes" to the distribution of His Body and Blood under the bread and wine.

Let us first find out whether or not our Lutheran fathers thought that participation in communion is somehow tied to a profession of faith. Already in 1523 in the *Formula Missae*,⁹ Luther emphasizes the fact that no communion can be celebrated without personal registration and that there can be no communion without prior examination of the communicants as to whether or not they know what the Sacrament is and for what reason it was given. Registration was not merely a reaffirmation of repentance and reliance on Christ, of hunger and thirst! What Luther intended in the *Formula Missae* is evidenced again in the same writing which states, for example, that the communicants do not just have the Body and Blood of the Lord delivered to them in their own place in the Church (as Zwingli shortly thereafter arranged it), but that the communicants should go up to the chancel. Why? Because Luther views going to the Lord's Supper as an act of confession. And as certainly as the early Lutherans of the 1520s, 1530s and 1540s are convinced that the Holy Supper is not merely a *nota professionis*, with the same amount of certainty, they do indeed maintain that it is a *nota professionis*. For example, if this were not the case, the Brandenburger Joachim II's conversion to Lutheranism could hardly have been said to have taken place

merely by his reception of both kinds. Nevertheless, the Lutherans do regard his reception of both kinds as being signatory of his conversion! Certainly then, the issue was originally centered upon the *sub utraque specie*. But then it became an issue of whether or not one celebrated the Mass with men who desired both species; that is, later the issue was whether or not one shared a common understanding of the Evangel and a common confession concerning God's great gifts which the Church administers. This later development proved its worth from year to year in justifiable measure. However, the understanding of the Evangel and confession concerning the Means of Grace just mentioned did not deal with mere opinions, but rather with the truth. They dealt with membership in the Body of Christ, the Christian Church! Along these same lines, the frequently cited question, "What is the Sacrament?" and the instruction recorded in Augustana X concerning sacramental doctrine both make clear that the issue does not revolve merely around the *pro me*. And the force of *idoneus* in Augustana XXIV.5 clearly has to do with more than just hunger and thirst. In Sixteenth century Lutheranism, it was not only a denial of the Biblical conception of the gift-character of the Sacrament that made one unworthy, but also a denial of the "EST." Therefore, generally speaking, the Lutheran Reformation sees matters in the following way: A correct confession concerning the Lord's Supper is a prerequisite for admission to the Eucharist. And the Reformation Church practiced that, too—just look at the history preceding the *Wittenberg Konkord* and its (if I might be so bold as to say it) sacramental ratification of those who, as everyone knows, used the Sacrament only as a remembrance!

But not only the Lutherans were familiar with limits around the altar. Even Calvin believed that it was an outrageous profanation to let those who had not previously made a confession of the true faith commune. (If someone is a stranger somewhere, he must do it before the ministerium and the elders of the congregation.) "*Profanatur sancta coena promiscua exhibitione*" (*Institutio* IV.12,5)! When the Strasbourgers signed the *Wittenberg Concord*, the Zürichers forbade their students to commune in Strasbourg. Why? The Strasbourgers' Altar Fellowship with the Wittenbergers made it impossible for correct-believing Zürichers to receive the Lord's Supper in Strasbourg. This is also the report from around 1580 of Hermann Hamelmann, the Generalsuperintendent of Oldenburg, who tells us that the Reformed preachers would seek from their communicants a clear and open confession that Christ's Body and Blood were *not* present in the Holy Sacrament! From his point of view, Rietschel saw the Reformed perspective in much the same light. Nevertheless, to conduct oneself in such a manner could be perceived to be Reformed. But is it necessarily Lutheran? Where does Luther stand on the question?

LUTHER

With Luther it is evident from a great quantity of passages that he did not merely think it important that the *viva fides*, (I am making use of a somewhat later distinction) which grasps the merit of Christ, be there, but that he desired also the *vera fides*, that is, the *vera fides* which is known by *The Large Catechism*—that the bread in the Sacrament is not just bread which has been set aside, that the wine is not merely wine. Rather, we should speak of the bread and wine as "Christ's Body and

If someone cites the bare Words of Christ, but will not say that he is distributing Christ's Body and Blood, then he is playing a satanic trick with the Words of Christ and shamefully deceiving and robbing simple hearts.

Blood which has with it the Word. For the same, we say, is the treasure through which such forgiveness has been won." Luther would never have conceded that one could believe in the grace won through Christ's sacrifice and yet deny that we receive in the Sacrament the Body and Blood of the Lord by which that grace was won for us. And practically speaking, this concept is presented most strongly in the aforementioned letter of Luther to the congregation in Frankfurt. However, I can cite here only the most important sections of this letter which takes up fourteen pages in the *Weimar Ausgabe*. It is telling that Luther, in the face of the popular obscuring of the doctrinal divisions, goes so far as to impress it upon the Christians there, "Ask your preacher what it is that he has in his hand in the Sacrament!" Luther challenges every purely "Biblical" answer, every mere recitation of the Words of Christ, with the sentence, "We wish to receive what the Saviour has instituted." He counsels and urges the laity to ask the celebrant what he has in his hand when he distributes the Lord's Supper. (*N.B.* This sentence is important in the discussion with those theologians who permit the Body and Blood of the Lord to be present only upon reception of the consecrated gift. Luther's question, "What do you have in your hand?" would well express Luther's view to the contrary!) On this first point, the reformer says something like: If someone cites the bare Words of Christ, but will not say that he is distributing Christ's Body and Blood, then he is playing a satanic trick with the Words of Christ and shamefully deceiving and robbing simple hearts. On this basis, in his opinion, this classifies as a double hell: first of all, since such church servants lie against God's Word; and secondly, since they deny and hide from the laity their own teaching (which they extol as God's very Word). The second point which Luther deals with in this letter is the question on registration, confession, preparation, and absolution. On both points he sees clearly the practical consequences. The sentence which best elucidates the first point, as is well known, is:

In summary. . . it is frightening for me to hear that in the churches of one party, or at the altar of one party, both parties are taking and receiving the Sacrament of that one party, and that one group should believe that it is receiving mere bread and wine while the other group believes that it is receiving the true Body and Blood of Christ. And I often wonder if it is believable that a preacher or *Seelsorger* could be so callous and evil as to maintain silence on this issue and to permit

Is Luther in the last analysis a better Lutheran than some of his critics? And, after all, does not Luther stand more squarely than they do on the ecumenical heritage of the Ancient Church?

both groups to come, each with its own fancy that it can receive its own kind of Sacrament according to its own belief. . . . Therefore, whoever has such preachers or could expect such from them, let him be warned about them, as about the incarnate devil himself!

Rarely has the integral impossibility of an Altar Fellowship that is neglectful of the deep holes of doctrinal differences been more strongly exposed than through these words; rarely has the necessity that Altar Fellowship must be Fellowship in Faith and in Confession been more strongly emphasized.

However, on the question as to the arrangements in place for admission—that is, registration, confession, private confession and confessional examination—it becomes evident that Luther is in no way of the opinion that it all must be done away with so that the most people possible could be brought to the Sacrament. (Even well-intentioned circles of the present often plead this way of thinking: We must increase sacramental life; we must at any cost bring the people back to the Supper; we must make the Supper dear and priceless to them, attract them once again to the Supper!) Now, in connection with this stands Luther's saying concerning the pig-pen which we adduced at the beginning of this paper. I am certainly justified in commenting on it along the same lines as Luther who returns several times to that harsh image. It is a common experience that swine, for whatever reason, will not eat unless their caretaker has spoken to each one of them a kind word or petted each one. And so it follows: Do anything to get the dear swine to eat; woe if something happens that does not please them! Woe if they do not speak kindly but use force! However, that is not what Luther wants with the Lord's Supper. It does not matter to him whether or not the piglets eat (to continue with the imagery); rather he says:

Since it is our hope to raise Christians and leave them behind us, and to distribute Christ's Body and Blood in the Sacrament, we emphatically neither wish nor are able to give to anyone the Sacrament unless he has been previously examined as to what he has learned from the catechism and whether or not he wishes to desist from his sins. . . . For we do not want to make a pig-pen of Christ's Church.

The people are still going to need just as much pastoral care as ever—it is not important merely to get them to the Sacrament!

And certainly, it is more than interesting that Luther here binds himself to the order of the Ancient Church: "This we have received from the beginning of Christendom." Although in completing the thought he speaks only of "the catechism," he nevertheless then comes to Mt 7:7, used often in the Ancient Church. His opinion is:

Since a pastor ought to be a faithful servant of Christ, he must not, as far as is possible for him, throw the Sacrament before the sows and dogs, but rather find out who the people are. If they should deceive him and speak falsely, then he is excused. They have deceived themselves.

And it is thought-provoking that Luther attributes the preachers' dismissal of confession and determination of the communicants' catechetical knowledge and belief in the Lord's Supper to the preachers' own unbelief toward Christ's Words of Institution:

Where the preachers distribute mere Bread and Wine for [= instead of] the Sacrament, there is not much at stake when they distribute them and it does not much matter what those who receive them know and believe. There a sow eats with others, and they are saved from such trouble.

Such are those preachers who can have Altar Fellowship with just about anyone just because they shy away from any sort of clear expression of their belief and "chew the cud and say mum mum," and "play games under their hat and go mouse-hunting in the dark." And on top of all that, they appeal to Luther's own words when the proper occasion presents itself—something which really made Luther bitter!

Should we think that all of this is "un-Lutheran"? Or is Luther in the last analysis a better Lutheran than some of his critics? And, after all, does not Luther stand more squarely than they do on the ecumenical heritage of the Ancient Church?

LUTHERAN ORTHODOXY

Were our Orthodox theologians able to carry Luther's position and policy further? Answer: Yes, but with restrictions. In support of the "Yes" I here recall the Mömpelgard Colloquy of March 1586, the attempt by Duke Friedrich von Württemberg, born of his concern for the Huguenots, to get the Lutherans and Calvinists back together at one table to discuss doctrinal issues once again. The precipitating cause of this colloquy was the continual influx of Huguenots into the Württembergian county Mömpelgard during the 1580s. And a certain ambiguity on the issue of sacramental care for these "Gauls" becomes apparent as we delve into this whole matter. At first, they were turned down in their request for permission to receive the Lord's Supper so that in 1585 they were unable to commune during Christmas. Then, after the doctrinal discussion of March between Jakob Andreaë and Theodor Beza, they registered for Communion on Easter and Pentecost. The result was that the Lutherans, along with their Duke, thought that the Huguenots, having been instructed, now wished to express their "Yes" to the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper, especially since they had asked for permission to attend.

Whereas, before Christmas of 1585 the Duke had pointed to the Lutheran confession on the Eucharist and had exhorted the refugees to be conscientious (“*ne quid dubitante conscientia facerent*”), he now thought (according to his later assessment of the situation) that the doctrinal discussion would help them to rest their consciences on the Biblical foundation of the Lutheran confession of the Sacrament. Similarly, during the discussion, whenever the Duke was entreated by Beza for Altar Fellowship and asked to release his own opinion on the doctrine, he would point to Württemberg’s Confession and Church Order, which was well-known to Beza and his group, and insist that whoever wishes “by virtue of the Confession and Order” in “Mömpelgarten” to go to the Lord’s Supper should not be rejected.

Of course, in the answer to Beza, something of this nature was clearly expressed: that “the opinion and view” of communing by virtue of that Confession and Order must be presented and reported to the Lutheran pastor so that the answer would not operate with the fiction of a silent conversion. In

This position held the day until the time of Philipp Jakob Spener who, to be sure, viewed a union between the Reformed and Lutherans as being something considerably less serious in nature than a union between Lutherans and Roman Catholics.

any case, the fundamental stance of the Lutherans is very apparent in their softer position during Easter 1586: Altar Fellowship comes into question only in the context of Belief Fellowship. Along these same lines, one finds in the Foreword and Epilogue to the *Acta Colloqui Montis Belligartensis*, published by the command of the Duke in 1587, the following assessment/observation:

By the Grace of God, we have arrived at such a knowledge in spiritual things, as they touch the salvation of our souls [They considered even Altar Fellowship to be of import for their salvation!] that we are now certain that the Lord’s Supper was given and instituted by Christ for this reason among others: so that by means of it, as by means of an ensign or sign, we can recognize the allegiance of the faith of another. For whoever holds Communion with a church, whatever it might be called, thereby demonstrates that he is an adherent of its doctrine [not only the doctrine of the Lord’s Supper is intended here!]. “On this basis, he would not hold the Lord’s Supper with those who maintain a different doctrine, but would rather separate himself from them by it [*qui enim cum Ecclesia aliqua in hujus Sacramenti sumtione communicant, hoc ipso proprie confitentur, quod ejusdem ecclesiae doctrinam amplectantur, ea contrariam rejiciant seque ab aliis separent*].

Their further explanation strongly echoes the thought of Luther:

Wherefore it has always been, and still is, our firm conviction that one ought not make a joke out of receiving the Lord’s Supper in such a way that someone should confess one thing by his participation in the Lord’s supper, and yet hold to something else in his heart.

And so, the Mömpelgard struggle ends with the affirmation that the Huguenot refugees (here we must also mention from *The Book of Concord* the great love and respect with which our Fathers observed the struggles and sufferings of the Huguenots) must be denied Altar Fellowship—not because they are refugees, nor because they are French, but because they are Reformed and wish to remain Reformed.

The outcome of the debate on admission to the Lord’s Supper which surrounded the Mömpelgard Colloquium can be regarded as being a broadly valid assessment of this period. The position arrived at as an outcome of the whole issue gives a fair representation of the general demarcation of the Lutheran position on such questions.

According to Balthasar Mentzer’s *Bericht vom Heiligen Abendmahl*, “An honest Christian pastor shall never act in such a way that he either offers or administers the precious treasure of the Holy Supper to those who do not think and believe correctly about the same. And by the same token, I myself am so minded that I shall never have to be responsible before God in eternity for having given the Holy Supper of the Lord Jesus Christ to someone who mocks the Words of the Lord Jesus Christ and wishes to dispose of and fight against my own confession which is taken from those very Words.”¹⁰

This position is used by Mentzer to tackle some of the Reformed at the time who were offering the Lutherans Altar Fellowship with no regard for the confessional differences.

If a preacher who is openly committed to Calvinist doctrine would wish to offer me the Lord’s Supper according to my own confession and belief, I would have no choice but to conclude that such a preacher is either uncertain of his own opinion, having no basis at all, or that he is completely without conscience and does not seek after God and His mysteries.¹¹

To commune at the hand of such a preacher naturally never even entered the question!

This position held the day until the time of Philipp Jakob Spener who, to be sure, viewed a union between the Reformed and Lutherans as being something considerably less serious in nature than a union between Lutherans and Roman Catholics. For Spener, however, as long as the division between the Reformed and Lutherans continued, participation in the communion of the other confession was less serious than an implicit separation from one’s own Church. In Spener’s thought, the Holy Supper is admittedly not *only* a sign of confession, but certainly also a sign of confession; and, in any case, not merely an individual private religious matter, but an ecclesiastical matter!

But before we delve deeper into Spener’s position, we ought to consider August Kimme’s essay on how Friedrich Balduin handled the question of intercommunion. The essay is in

the previously mentioned volume, *Koinonia*, of 1957. Professor Balduin, who came from Dresden to Wittenberg, is famous for his “*Christlicher Unterricht vom Balgen*,” an address which he gave on the occasion of the burial of a student who was killed in a duel. However, more noteworthy is his *Tractatus de casibus conscientiae* which was published in Wittenberg in 1628, a reworking of the rich material from the *Gutachten* of orthodox theologians, faculties, and church councils which had been collected by Philippus Nicolai’s sometime deacon, Georg Dedeken. Balduin’s treatise filled a certain hiatus which had come into being as a result of the absence of a black-on-white theological ethics in the Lutheran Church. Now, in the sections of Balduin’s work presented in Kimme’s essay, Balduin deals with the intolerable situation of a Lutheran Christian communing with the Romans and the Reformed. He deals with the situation as an opponent of syncretism, much as the Faculty at Helmstedt, the school of the active Schleswig-Holsteinian pastor’s son Georg Calixt—who was always ready to form some new alliance, always ready to take part in new commissions and sessions—almost unswervingly defended it. In Balduin’s estimation, the “*Ecclesia Calviniana*” is no more “*vera ecclesia*” than the “*Ecclesia Romana*.” And neither have “*veram eucharistiam*” (“*quia substantiam hujus sacramenti corrumpunt*”). He maintains, “*Abstinendum est a sacris eorum quorum religionem.. .verbo Dei contrariam esse certi sumus*.” One cannot receive the Sacrament with an unscathed conscience (“*salva conscientia*”) in a church whose doctrine he does not recognize as being true. In passing, we note something which is important also for the present-day discussions: that Balduin, as I understand him, is not speaking merely of the Sacramental doctrine of the churches in question, although Kimme’s presentation would seem to indicate that that is the case. Rather, it is apparent that for Balduin, communing in a church which teaches false doctrine is a hypocrisy; and even more, an inner untruthfulness superceding the implicit lack of integrity concerning the Eucharist. Nevertheless, Kimme opines, and not without just cause, that a Lutheran’s eucharistic participation in a non-Lutheran fellowship has broad ramifications and fundamental significance. On this note, one may quietly ruminate over the fact that Balduin believed that the Sacrament of the Eucharist was not of “*tantae necessitatis*” as was Baptism. However, we should not wrest ourselves from the deep, scrupulous earnestness with which this Lutheran ethicist makes clear what Altar Fellowship with the heterodox actually implies and involves.

The opportunity here arises to draw our attention to a few points mentioned by Tom Hardt.¹² Luther himself could write a letter of recommendation for the Ethiopian Deacon Michael only after Michael had said that “all of our [sc. those of the Wittenbergers] articles” are representative of “the faith.” Another example of the early Lutheran conviction concerning the breadth of fellowship relations is the fact that the three parties involved in the “*Collegium caritativum*” in 1645 in Thorn (which Calixtus described to his Duke as being not so much “caritative” as “irritative”) each held separate worship services. But on top of that, the Lutherans already at this point refused to have joint prayer with the Roman and Reformed delegates (and so implicitly also with their more prominent representatives). Why? If the Lutherans were to practice prayer fellowship in this situation, they would have been in fellowship with the darkness! Hardt has also demonstrated from the Nordic Church Orders of the sixteenth and seventeenth-centuries that Scandinavian Lutheranism strictly upheld the fun-

Communing in a church which teaches false doctrine is a hypocrisy; and even more, an inner untruthfulness superceding the implicit lack of integrity concerning the Eucharist.

damental refusal to have *communicatio in sacris cum haereticis* even *in articulo mortis* so much so that it recognized the unconditional pastoral responsibility not to administer the *viaticum* to the heterodox on his deathbed. One even perceives in Tholuck’s *Kirchliches Leben des siebzehnten Jahrhunderts* (which gladly seizes every opportunity to react with horror to the intolerance of the Lutherans) that German Lutheranism likewise did not just simply administer the *viaticum* in the case of death.

(We must also point out here that the decision of the Nicene Canon XIII concerning the ἐφόδιον has been received among us with a terrible lack of criticism. This is largely due to the work of Hans Preuß in his *Geschichte der Abendmahlsfrömmigkeit*, where he somewhat clouds the issue.¹³ In fact, the decision of Canon XIII is not binding in every instance. Rather, it finds its proper place within the framework of the treatment of penitents. It is in dealing with penitents that “the old canon law” is in force, “that when one of them is on his deathbed, he ought not be robbed of the all-important ἐφόδιον.” But even in this case, it is the Bishop who should “administer the Eucharist along with its requisite examination.” Preuß does offer a very instructive example concerning the *viaticum* just before he mentions this decision of the council. But his example does not give prominence to what is actually prominent in the text; namely, that the *viaticum* in the case cited deals with releasing the *lapsus* from ecclesiastical ban. By communing, the dying person merely hastens this release to completion.)¹⁴

As for the rest, *Pastorale Lutheri* by Magister Conrad Porta from Eisleben (1582) was very influential in the last century, as was Christian König’s later *Casus conscientiae* (1654, that is, about 25 years after Balduin’s work). Both of these works leaned in the direction outlined above. To get a good handle on this, one need merely peruse the section (p. 299) in Rocholl’s excellent “*Geschichte der evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland*” on König’s position on the question of admission to the Eucharist. This outline of König’s position proves to be very instructive inasmuch as it takes up the objection that Closed Communion is contrary to the universal validity of Jesus’ call to grace.

SPENER

We turn finally to Philipp Jakob Spener, whose own position and relationship to this whole question is often cited by the nineteenth-century confessionalists. Why Spener? Because historically, most of those in the nineteenth century who sought a

return to confessionalism were products of the “Great Awakening,”¹⁵ and so naturally found themselves in close company with early Pietism. Now, in his posthumous *Letzte theologische Bedenken*, published in 1711, Spener also demonstrated how in his mind communing in a particular congregation naturally implies a sanctioning of the doctrine taught in that congregation, “especially” of the doctrine of the Sacrament. He maintained this position even in the face of decision of a French-Reformed national synod (Charenton 1631; reconfirmed at Loudun in 1659/60, although not without reservations), which had issued a “Decree concerning our Brethren the Lutherans.” And that very same Spener, who is not unrightly accused of being too indulgent due to his overweening efforts not to harm anyone and his ever-mindfulness of bringing about Christian unity, advised the Lutherans against visiting Reformed services and taking part in the Lord’s Supper in Reformed congregations. What was the basis of his advice? He could not feel conscientiously responsible for Lutherans communing among the Reformed, thereby separating themselves from their own Church. Furthermore, speaking in 1680 about the union church service proposed in the territory of the Elector of the Palatinate (such a union service had parallels elsewhere), Spener indicated that such a “Concord Service” would only result in the conversion of the Lutherans to the Reformed Church. Even if such a Service of the Word could be possible between Lutherans and the Reformed (which Spener doubts), fellowship in the Lord’s Supper could hardly be possible. And finally, any spiritual growth that could take place at all depended upon instruction in controverted issues; but how could this instruction take place unless the doctrinal divisions were openly pronounced, causing grievances? Stated another way, if the doctrinal divisions are just swept under the carpet, then the spiritual growth of the congregation is stunted. To be sure, Spener did not maintain that the Reformed had no Lord’s Supper; but he believed that the Reformed celebration was not the true Supper. For the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ in His Supper causes His Body and His Blood to be present as His promise is not the only thing which properly belongs to the Lord’s Supper. Rather, of much more import in the Lord’s Supper is what is demanded both of the ministrant and the manducant—that the one wishes to distribute, the other wishes to receive precisely what the Lord had promised to be present. And there is where the Reformed go wrong.

Spener certainly sharpened the consciences of the Lutheran *ministerium* by recommending that they should rather lose their office than participate in the “Concord Service.” But he also rendered a great service to the Lutheran *laity* in another one of his *Gutachten* by instructing them what they ought to do. He even deals with the fringe issue of the case of death and answers the question as to whether or not a Lutheran should be permitted to request a member of the Reformed clergy to administer the Sacrament to him. His answer is: If a Lutheran happens to be among only heterodox Christians when he is on his deathbed, and can find no Lutheran pastor at all, he should receive the Sacrament from a Lutheran layman, as from a brother (no matter how dubious this advice might seem), rather than let a Reformed preacher administer it to him. In the last century, it was correctly judged that:

Nothing can more strikingly or strongly express the dismissal of this type of emergency case (which is now appealed to at the drop of a hat or at the slightest hint

of discomfort) than this way of dealing with matters touching true affliction of the soul, on which a man such as Spener would rather receive the opposition of the whole theological world than he would receive the Sacrament from the hands of a false believer.¹⁶

One should also mention on this point the fact that Spener’s emphatic appellation of the Lutheran laity as “brother” is connected in a way to his altercation with the faculty at Wittenberg in 1695 in which he maintained along similar lines that the name “brother” could not be used of the Reformed. It has often been held against Paul Gerhardt that he did the same. Gerhardt would not recognize the Reformed as brethren, *quatenus tales sint* (that is, insofar as they are Reformed by what makes them Reformed). They deviated from what is distinctively Christian inasmuch as they retained their distinctively Reformed ideas. And Spener was of the opinion that no adherent of Reformed doctrine, “as long as he remains such,” could be his brother, since he did not agree with the Reformed

Spener was of the opinion that no adherent of Reformed doctrine, “as long as he remains such,” could be his brother, since he did not agree with the Reformed in the fides quae creditur.

in the *fides quae creditur*, but rather found that the Reformed confessed allegiance to a religion in which Spener believed there were dangerous errors. And so one can hardly be surprised that Spener disapproved of the fact that in Württemberg they were trying to build bridges for the French Reformed by a mild form of a requested “explanation” of beliefs which provided the following formula: “*le vray corps et le vray sang*” of Jesus Christ are received “*avec le pain*” (the infamous *cum!*) and one was to believe that “*la manière de la manducation*” is “*sacramentaire, mystérieuse, spirituelle et incompréhensible à nos sens.*”¹⁷ Reflecting on all of this, Spener surmised that the Swabian church leadership had satisfied itself well enough with this formula, since they probably just expected that the Huguenot refugees would still grow in their own perceptions once they had entered the churches of Württemberg.

There is one more thing necessary to mention in order to come to a more complete evaluation of Spener’s position: It is during Spener’s lifetime that the Prussian *Collegium irenicum* falls. Since 1703 this institution, under the leadership of the Reformed Bishop Benjamin Ursinus (the episcopal title on account of the desire more closely to resemble the Church of England), had sought to effect unity between the Lutherans and the Reformed in Prussia. Now, for Spener the unity of God’s children was of heartfelt importance; the enduring separation of the churches was another “episode of divine judgment against our sins”; and only divine grace could bring

The principle stood fast that Altar Fellowship is Church Fellowship, and that Church Fellowship is Fellowship in Faith in the sense of fides quae creditur.

about the possibility of a reunion. But this same Spener withdrew from participating in the Collegium's effort at effecting peace. His reasons for so doing were: Since they were trying to effect a union without repentant renewal and purification of the churches, they were only worsening the "inherited and dangerous damages" and in all likelihood would end up making four churches of the two.

The Collegium was formed in the spring of 1702 after the preacher at St. Ulrici in Magdeburg, Johann Joseph Winkler, had handed over the "*Arcanum regium*" to the self-crowned Prussian king. Winkler at that time referred to the *Arcanum regium* as:

that regal mystery through which it has been especially revealed to a ruling Sovereign how he ought to conduct himself according to God's will among his religiously divided subjects in order to effect a God-pleasing unity surreptitiously and in short order.

(Pertaining to this fairly rash writing of Winkler, based largely on foreign material, it is telling that he depicts the doctrinal battles concerning the Holy Supper as mere logomachy.) This *Arcanum regium* and this *Collegium irenicum* stand in close relation to their contemporary efforts not only to effect a union between Lutherans and Reformed, but also, if possible, to draw all of Christendom together. This huge ecumenical movement's spiritual father and indefatigable counselor was none less than the likes of Leibniz. Its motivating power was none other than the court preacher Jablonsky (the nephew of Amos Comenius of the old Brethren Unity) who proved later to be so important for the Moravian episcopal office. Its leading Lutheran churchman was Molanus, who at the time was the Abbott of Loccum. The movement was being pushed through on the Roman side by the Bishops Spinola and Bossuet, on the Reformed side by the Scot John Dury, famous for his voyages *in oecumenis*. And it owed dearly to the Swabian theologian Christoph Matthäus Pfaff who between 1711 and 1713 had created *per fraudem* some fragments of Ireneus which, on the issue of the Supper, took the Eastern Church's position on consecration through ἐπίκλησις, the Roman Church's emphasis on sacrifice, and the Lutheran way of speaking on forgiveness of sins and eternal life. (Friedrich Heiler still considered this document to be a very early witness. And Gerhard Kunze more than twenty years ago amused himself by taking note of the document's remarkable similarity to modern

attempts.) In the face of such wide-ranging efforts, Spener's position is extremely notable, particularly as these endeavors were very especially supported by Spener's queen!

And so, up until the time of Spener, in whose thought we now perceive more of a continuity with the earlier traditions than did our recent predecessors, the principle stood fast that Altar Fellowship is Church Fellowship, and that Church Fellowship is Fellowship in Faith in the sense of *fides quae creditur*. Nevertheless, we are wrong on one point of our assertion insofar as even after Spener's death there are still explicit witnesses to this principle being advanced even from the mouths of mild and compromising men. To be sure, there is no way that I could possibly concede that *the exceptions* to the rule which held sway until the time of Spener, especially as Tholuck has collected them, can be treated as serious evidence. Sure, these exceptions do exist. Sure, there are provisions and *Gutachten* which treat the sacramental service of the Reformed or the simultaneous functioning of Lutherans and Reformed on one and the same altar as being distinct possibilities. If I am looking at this whole issue correctly, even when we do not take into consideration the generally applicable *in articulo mortis*, then all of these examples—which I have found either in Tholuck's work or have been exposed to me orally by my colleague Kantzenbach—in the best cases, deal more with the consequences of false premises concerning the right of the ecclesiastical patrons and the secular government in matters spiritual, in other cases with pleasing men vis-à-vis, e.g., princely visitors and the learned. And so, it is not my intention here to deal with those exceptions—which can truly be called exceptions—one by one. I believe, rather, that they will have been correctly characterized if only I qualify them as being the product of false theories concerning the right of the government in spiritual matters, inasmuch as any serious problem is, indeed, present in them. On this basis, one need not even seriously consider the "Sacrament-Union" held, I believe, in July of 1707, in Königsberg in the Waisenkirche which was "approved and lauded" by the Prussian king as a "very amiable" example "of Christian union of both the Evangelical parties."

ZINZENDORF

The historical turning point does not hinge on the old Pietism of Spener, but on Spener's Godchild, Count Zinzendorf, and his particular thoughts on the idea of the affiliation of all God's children and the Church which were developed through and in his own programmatic renewal of the Brethren Unity.

However, this is not the place to present either Zinzendorf's spiritual style or even his (strong and very realistic) eucharistic piety. And still less do we have the opportunity to trace the single steps and changes in the history of the "Brethren congregation."

Pertinent to our discussion, on the other hand, are the count's years in Dresden and his bemusings over a union of Lutherans and Reformed in his *Heftiger Drang der Liebe* as well as in detailed written dissertations. Upon advice from Halle, he abandoned any further pursuit of such projects—this brings to mind, of course, the fact that in America his later pursuit of "philadelphic" goals to create a congregation of all true children of God was opposed in the name of the Church bound to the Lutheran Confession by Henry Melchior Mühlenberg who was sent from Halle. But when the well-known founding of a Christian settlement of Moravians near Berthelsdorf made him

responsible as the Lutheran church patron for the spiritual fate of the Moravian Brethren (resuscitated out of a semi-Catholicism), of some Reformed (such as his own steward Heitz or the Berner patrician's son Baron von Waterville), and of some downright free spirits, he was forced once again, this time in an existential manner, to ask himself the question. One certainly recalls how on that 13th of August 1727 an Altar Fellowship, deeply divided for many years over doctrinal and ceremonial issues, was created in the Lutheran Church at Berthelsdorf. The fellowship there was, as the Moravian Christian David remarked, composed "of so many different types and sects—Catholics, Lutherans, Reformed, Separatists, Quakers, and such," who "melted together into one." And one also recalls how this congregation proclaimed itself to be "drawn together by God Himself" as "the apostolic," "visible congregation of Christ." One can never let this occurrence and its effect fall from sight if we wish to seek an answer on Zinzendorf's position on Altar Fellowship. The count had multifarious conceptions on the nature of the church. But the most important of them remains the thought to ensure for the various "tropes" and historical ways of God's guidance their place within the One Unity of the Church; to ensure for Lutherans, Reformed, Moravians, Judeo-Christians and so on the maintenance of their own confessional heritage on the level of the local congregation while maintaining among all of these "tropes" an undiscussed Altar Fellowship. Zinzendorf maintained that in all the various confessions, there was a common central truth. This commonality translates into, "the ideas of their hearts do not differ from one another," and means that one need not first bring into being a union. "The children of God, however, are not all required to be members of One Household"; "I wish carefully to keep the religions separate." But, as far as mission work went, the confessional differences were not applicable here: "It bothers me to no end that . . . the poor heathen are turned once again into sectarians." And, as far as reinforcement of a confessional stand was concerned, all negations and damnations were to be left out. On this basis, the Brethren Synod in Großkrausche near Bunzlau in 1748 was able to decree an explicit *quia* confessional allegiance to the *Confessio Augustana*. Yet the same synod could document a resolution, through the presence of a Reformed supreme court preacher from Berlin, to maintain a steady tie between the Reformed members of that congregation and the Church whence they were derived. And not least of all, Altar Fellowship between all parties thereafter was supposed to be the great step forward in their common "relation to Jesus." For Zinzendorf, this was part of the "un-partisan love" and his serious treatment of his pet saying from Jn 17:21, *omnes unum*.

When one thinks about what sort of mythical meaning "Herrnhut" had for the Awakening of the nineteenth century (whoever would cast doubts upon "Herrnhut" would do injury to the apple of their eye; and what we today call the "Kirchentag"¹⁸ was at that time the heritage of Zinzendorf), then even from our far-removed vantage point, we can understand how it must have been so self-understood for the Awakened to have Open Communion, just as Herrnhut had had it. It was not only Rationalism which, in the last analysis, had deposed the old observance; rather, it was the devout who were certain that they themselves had at last defeated it—and that not least of all for this reason, that one would compromise out of love for the person of the Saviour.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

THE CONFESSIONAL REVIVAL

The devout of the nineteenth century (bewitched by Herrnhut originally, although later more by the myth than the reality) regarded the idea of an Altar Fellowship among the various evangelical confessions as something which they were unwilling to give up (I say "evangelical" because Herrnhut did not carry its program so far as to effect a fellowship with the "Latin" *tropus*, especially since from the beginning of the movement on, it was the experience of many that among the Awakened there reigned a certain excessive anti-Catholic spirit, engendered often for political reasons.) But let us attempt to apprehend the attitude of the fathers of the Lutheran renewal! As we do this, we dare not overlook a startling fact: The Lutherans, just as Zinzendorf, Spener—and even more so, Francke—had just as much to do with the children of Awakening as they did with the men of the increasingly crass Rationalist Movement and its concomitant, purely political evaluation of religious phenomena.

Altar fellowship between all parties thereafter was supposed to be the great step forward in their common "relation to Jesus." For Zinzendorf, this was part of the "un-partisan love" and his serious treatment of his pet saying from Jn 17:21, omnes unum.

We all know the role played by politics in the building of the Union Church in Prussia and in Baden (it was perhaps the Union in Nassau which was the least fraught with political symptoms). And whoever is familiar with the style and requirements of Prussia's attitude toward the concept of state could already, without the aide of historical material, understand what the Lutherans, and even the Reformed, around Kohlbrügge had to struggle with, all those whose Confession in ecclesiastical matters was more important to them than the arrangements and goals of the state. But a great weariness of the will had crept in by the end of the Thirty Years' War, a weariness which risked everything, even the Fatherland, the Crown, and life itself, for the interest of the true faith. Furthermore, at that time it was thought to be a duty of statecraft to maintain state presence in the Church to keep an eye on things in order properly to maintain law and order among the populace (an idea which crops up already with Moritz von Sachsen, that is, already in the century of the Reformation). Due primarily to these two factors, it is no wonder that keeping the Church on a leash quickly became one of the fundamental bases in cabinet politics in Prussia-Brandenburg—and not only there. "Indifferentism"—first toward doctrinal divisions, then toward Christianity altogether—along with the valuation of the State and its greatness as being of the highest actual worth, went hand-in-hand. In Brandenburg, the first real Ger-

man country, the result of this was that under the influence of the grandfather (who, by the by, had converted to the Reformed faith) of the Great Elector, the cabinet's constitution pushed forward toward the ideal of an absolutist centralized state using the French monarchy as its model.

It is extremely interesting to see the effect that Pierre Jurieu had on the situation with his *Consultatio de pace inter Protestantes inuenda*, published in 1688 in Utrecht. Jurieu, despite his Huguenot convictions, lived and worked in Holland. There he found himself embroiled in literary battles, passionately defending his own Calvinism against Roman Catholics and even against the likes of the blasphemous Pierre Bayle. Jurieu had figured that the Antichrist would come in 1689 and gave to the Huguenots a special leadership role in the coming Kingdom of God. In his writings in favor of Church union (this idea is closely connected to his chiliasm), he dreams not only of a union of the Churches of the Reformation against Rome, but imagines an affiliation of all of Christendom. He even goes so far as to propose an affiliation of Christendom with Islam.

A quick glance at the history of eucharistic piety will demonstrate what a relatively small role the Sacrament played for Pietism.

However, in Jurieu's way of thinking, the *pax inter Protestantes* cannot function in such a way that some of the Protestants think that his own intention is errant, thereby opposing him in the interest of defending the truth. But Orthodoxy could hardly manage to achieve that on its own. And it was equally as unappealing. Rather, it was necessary to show Orthodoxy that these doctrinal differences did not deal with realities, but with words, so that the whole issue was merely one of logomachy. Similar strains were raised at the Kasseler Colloquium in 1661, where the only "champions" of Lutheranism were disciples of Calixtus from Rinteln. (A passing note: As an illustration of the Reformed idea of "Church-Tolerance," note that these disciples of Calixtus were deposed from their offices only four years later, in favor of the Reformed.) The Kasseler Colloquium is also of interest because of the fact that in it a decision was taken stating that the pastors could and should instruct the people from the chancel and the lectern in doctrines of the faith, but with the proviso that they omit from their instruction any mention of contrary doctrines which was now forbidden. They figured that they were one both in love and in the foundation of their faith, echoing Calixtus who had said that he could sufficiently confess his faith using only the Early Church Symbols without any help from the Confessions of the sixteenth century. And so we can see that Zinzendorf's formula, "*dissentium nulla fit mentio*," was not a new idea with him, but that it had been vocalized already two or three generations before his time.

At any rate, Jurieu, too, thought that it was possible to transcend the logomachy. According to him, all parties should be left to their own opinions. But there should be a state-imposed ecclesiastical tolerance permitting Altar Fellowship to exist between the two different confessions. The actual work of effecting a union should therefore fall into the hands of the statesmen and be brought to realization by the politicians, since it was completely apparent that the theologians had been unable to do anything with it. The theologians were to be responsible only for the small technical details which remained. And by coming together in a peaceful assembly, posing no questions on the truth, they were to come clear on the [un]importance of the points which had been contended up to that time and how those contended articles actually affected the faith experience of the adherents of the differing confessional groups and how to pay consideration to each of them in the best way. Jurieu's suggestions, in ever-new variations, reared their heads in the debate of the following decade—even in Pietist circles which, unlike Spener, did not see the inherent danger of *cæsaro-papism* for Protestantism under every rock. (On this last point, one need only think of the Pietist Winkler who viewed himself as a mediator of the *Arcanum regium*.) Precisely Spener even, according to a Pietist suggestion of 1695, should be used to find out what "the most necessary" of doctrines are which ought to be taught, outside of which everything else must be forbidden. But what is supposed to belong under the classification "the most necessary," if it is the Pietist spokesmen who are defending the thesis that only what is comprehensible to the believing heart ought to be taught in the Christian Church?

A quick glance at the history of eucharistic piety will demonstrate what a relatively small role the Sacrament played for Pietism. The leading Pietists' sacramental instructions prove to be nothing more than warnings and accusations against thoughtless, routine reception of the Sacrament. Yes, even that energetic Gottfried Arnold promulgated the opinion that a Christian's spiritual growth to eventual perfection was enough to do away with his need for receiving the Sacrament. Only Zinzendorf and his Herrnhuters provide an exception of any note. In the period after the migration from Herrnhut, the movement paid less attention to the single statements from Zinzendorf's Lord's Supper theology and poetry than they did to the reality of the Moravian Altar Fellowship. At any rate, no opposition could be expected from the Pietists against an Altar Fellowship decreed by the state. And it is telling that the greatest appeal to Spener's position in the nineteenth century comes from the "awakened" Lutherans who were carefully considering the limits of Altar Fellowship with those of different faiths! Even Kant's development of the Scot-Reformed and Pietist heritage in his "religion of the conscience" could recognize that "the formality of having the congregation eat at one table" was a good way to "get the congregation to live out their ethical mindfulness of the brotherly love associated with that act." And he could say that to make a "Means of Grace," replete with articles of faith, out of this mere "ecclesiastical custom is a delusion of religion that can only work against its own spirit." If such were the case, then it naturally appeared that it was the duty of a state such as Prussia (minded as it was toward popular enlightenment and the moral amelioration of humanity) to impose its powerful media in the interest of effecting Altar Fellowship and retiring eucharistic doctrine. After all, Heinrich Stephani, a Frankish church counselor, later Dean of Gunzen-

hausen to whom the Bavarian Church had entrusted the leadership of their whole school system, made clear to the world in 1811 in his book on the Supper that the perception of the Lord's Supper as a meal of bloody sacrifice and reconciliation, which had reigned to that day, would only bring about "a brutalization of the heart rather than its development into a higher humanity." In Stephani's mind, if this Jewish sacrificial meal had not been insinuated into Christianity, there would have been nothing like the Inquisition or the Wars of Religion. It was thus incumbent upon a new doctrine of the Eucharist to present the meal as "a dedication to the Christian society of Commonwealth," "as to the congregation of genuine confessors and friends of Truth, Virtue, and Humanity." In such a Eucharist, the altar should have the crucifix upon it, "not to excite the old ideas... but to direct our friends in the federation to Him, who in giving up His life that the right of Truth might conquer, gave to us an excellent example which we ought to follow." If this is the report we get from the mouth of a leader of the Bavarian Territorial Church in the early years of her existence, how should anyone be expected to have arrived at any thought whatsoever of associating any sort of idea of eucharistic division with the new "ennobled" eucharistic piety? Certainly, the young Frankish and Swabian "mystics," embittered by Stephani, drew their swords against him.¹⁹ But how little even they, the awakened, knew about limitations around the altar! Completely without prejudice, they wrestled with the idea of communing at the altar of their dear teacher in Erlangen, the Reformed pastor and professor, Christian Ludwig Krafft—despite the fact that each one of them without exception had come from a Lutheran congregation. In short, they had to learn from this Reformed preacher that Altar Fellowship presupposed Church Fellowship. At any rate, he quickly became an authority for them.

CLAUS HARMS

And so, those who at that time were appealing to the old faith had to contend with Rationalism first of all. And it is Claus Harms of Kiel who, in the view of many Lutherans, stands at the head of this movement—we find traces of his work even in the south of Germany (where in 1827 Pastor Christian Philipp Heinrich Brandt from Roth am Sand, who was later Löhe's Dean in Windsbach, published a sermon of Harms' entitled, *Wie wir die Trennung anzusehen haben, welche die sogenannten neuern religiösen Ansichten innerhalb unserer Kirche entstanden ist*). And it should come as no surprise that in his pastoral theology he specifically delves into how a pastor ought to conduct himself against the Rationalists in matters pertaining to the Sacrament of the Altar. We are all familiar with Harms's pastoral theology which grew out of his evening table talks with the theology students he had assembled around himself since 1820. First published in 1830, it was newly revised in 1837. In this present endeavor, I will be citing from the third edition of 1878 printed in Kiel.

In his *Pastorale* Harms (p. 227) proceeds from a strictly pastoral point of view in asking who takes the Supper to his own damage or scandal and therefore ought to be prevented from receiving the Lord's Supper. He examines the various points of view, handling various physical, psychological and moral conditions (an open life of depravity or secret drunkenness without repentance), considering them in connection with issues not only of parochial rights, but also with confes-

They had to learn from this Reformed preacher that Altar Fellowship presupposed Church Fellowship.

sion of sins, and personal preparation. This treatment occurs before he takes up the problem of permission on the basis of one's denomination (p. 228) to which issue he attaches the question as to the best way to deal with the Rationalists (p. 229). The very fact that he even brings up this last issue shows that he is not merely some repositioning theologian or renovator of existing opinions. Rather, it shows that he sees himself as one living in the Modern Era and therefore duty bound to demonstrate that this issue could not be handled merely on the basis of "objective Church membership." Rather, he had to turn to the previously mentioned points of view. Doubtlessly, here is something of great significance. Why Harms had to deal with the issue becomes clear when one reads the sermon published by Brandt (p. 3; pp. 11ff.). What separated Harms from the "alienated" (from "the many, many who are much less Lutheran than Catholic or Calvinist") could easily make the outward confessional differences appear just downright meaningless and could destroy home life and civil life and lead unhaltingly toward godlessness. But our pastoral theologian has given careful thought to the Rationalists who neglect the Sacrament. He knows of many Rationalists, yes even the greater part of them, "among whom one finds not even the slightest spite toward the Supper, yet who do not participate in it. . . . Do not hold it against a Rationalist if he stays away from the Sacrament. One should rather hold it against a Rationalist who does come to the Sacrament, especially if an Orthodox preacher administers it! Among the Rationalists there are . . . pious, highly conscientious, and even deep-feeling men who from afar regard us and our reverence for the altar with great joy and yet stand there with the great pain that they themselves do not have this faith. Why hold them in contempt? Rather, seek to make them, too, members of our faith!" One could now draw the conclusion that Harms's polemics have as their background some State Church ordinances concerning willful mockers of the Sacrament: Having long since lost their power among us, Harms is giving a warning against their reinstatement. But one ought also bring to mind the fact that, as this sermon demonstrates, Harms has other things to say about the new believers than merely piety, conscientiousness, and emotional depth. Nevertheless, one cannot remain untouched by his wish in this matter not to see those who had been led astray in a distorted mirror, to judge them from heaven above, but to help them come to a right understanding. And taking his intentions into consideration, we come to a better understanding of his warning against compelling such people to the Sacrament and of his advice on how to conduct oneself with Rationalists who wish to attend the Lord's Table.

He does not leave the communicant to answer to himself. And he does not think that he can, by doing that, somehow merely dispense the Absolution and Sacrament and still remain a good steward of God's gifts to the Church.

Harms's instruction of his students is presented in the form of a representation of his own praxis. He did not inquire into one's ties with Rationalism, and therefore knew no form of examination for determining the correct beliefs of his communicants (his appeal to the Pauline instruction on food offered to idols, "Do not ask questions," (1 Cor 10:25, 27) cannot, at any rate, be used as the scriptural foundation since the "judging" of 1 Cor 11:29 belongs to a dimension completely different from the withholding of judgment in 1 Cor 10). However, if one who is registering (Harms did at least have family registration in his office) declares himself to be a Rationalist who wants to participate in private confession and the Sacrament with Rationalist intentions, then Harms seeks to instruct him. Therefore, Harms does not satisfy himself in such situations by retreating to *his own* Lutheran points of view concerning Liturgy, the Confession of Sins, and the Eucharist. *He does not leave the communicant to answer to himself. And he does not think that he can, by doing that, somehow merely dispense the Absolution and Sacrament and still remain a good steward of God's gifts to the Church.* But what happens if a Rationalist will not be instructed? Then Harms gives him neither the Absolution nor the Sacrament: For Harms knows of his possible *duty* to refuse the gift of Jesus. And this ought to be taken very seriously inasmuch as it comes from a man who warns his students again and again against getting themselves into precarious situations. Here, concerning Absolution and the Sacrament, he knows the *necessity* of standing his ground, and does not shrink from his responsibility. And it is important to see what a practical role registration for communion played for him in carrying out those responsibilities.

We conclude this section with two sentences, the latter of which presents an enduring warning: "Would that there were no more Rationalists in the country, yes, in Christendom! But Rationalism shall remain with us until the Judgment Day like a weed." We'll want to heed that warning and impress it upon ourselves as we now turn to the question of how Harms dealt with the issue of admitting those of other confessions to the Lord's Supper.

As we have seen, one's denominational adherence ultimately determines how Harms deals with the issue of admission to the Eucharist (e.g. he does not reckon with the Rationalists in particular for any other reason than that they were a new sort of confession somehow tied with the old distinctions). Now indeed, Harms did not expressly emphasize (something which Hermann Sasse however correctly main-

tained against Harms's compatriot, Wilhelm Andersen)²⁰ that pastoral concerns (the provisions of one's moral stance, according to Harms) and the teachings which separate, lie on different levels, insofar as the one deals with questions of private confession and the Office of the Keys, and the other with Church Fellowship and church order. Nevertheless, from my perspective, it is abundantly clear that Harms takes into consideration some decisions which had long since been arrived at as well as the church boundaries which had long been in existence. Interestingly enough, he begins his treatment with "a confessor of the Mosaic religion." In this case, the issue is clear: A Jew will not even desire the Supper. (Harms could hardly have known that this issue would be cropping up occasionally today due to a number of mixed marriages. Nevertheless, he certainly would take issue with the modern view that since they have Christ in the Word of the Old Covenant, Jews are not a mission field but rather members of the ecumenical council. On the same note, he would hardly be able to agree with permitting Jews to commune—as is done already in the United States—with a formula especially for them during the distribution.) Matters were different, however, for members of the Greek or Roman Church. Harms does not commune them (there is one exception to this which I shall discuss later). They must first come over to the Lutheran Church before they can receive her Sacrament. On this particular issue, Harms declares himself to be in a state of disagreement with his own church leadership which at that time demanded only a simple declaration from such converts in the parsonage before the pastor and two witnesses. Rather, Harms held that previous instruction and an examination were necessary in such a case (albeit without any explicit declaration concerning their former fellowship). However, whoever does not want to convert does *not* receive the Supper. The above-mentioned exception concerns the Catholic on his deathbed. (Apparently such an understanding of the *in articulo mortis* weakens the dire certainty of death to the mere possibility of death or the nearness of death. Since Harms does not discuss that, though, he must have been certain of the correctness of his procedure. But his procedure—if I am seeing things in the right light—after starting with the seventeenth century is actually a child of the eighteenth. The natural course run in a discussion of the *periculum mortis*, which can easily go off into a discussion of *media vita in morte sumus* and demand a permanent suspension of church boundaries, is only a natural consequence showing the danger which is inevitably tied with separating the *in articulo mortis* from its original *Sitz im Leben*.) But Harms would only commune a Roman Catholic under both species. However, this provision, which must have seemed to him to be a Catholic's silent confession of the correctness of the Lutheran praxis, could just as well be understood as an implicit authorization for Roman Catholics to commune in a Lutheran Church. And the Reformed? "I would give the Supper to the Reformed (a) if they were to confess faith in the presence of Christ in the Supper, and (b) if our confession or preparation were agreeable to them." Harms is counting on the fact that both conditions could *not* be met in *each case*. But we shall now have to ask him what his formula "the presence of Christ in the Supper" actually means. Was he really clear on the differences between Lutherans and Reformed? Are we forced now to reckon with the fact that he is presenting only an insignificant demand? Throughout his thesis controversy which began in 1817, Harms

was working with the Augustana, the Apologia, and “C.F.” (as F.W. Kantzenbach calls it). Nevertheless, Kantzenbach has shown that Harms was hardly what one would consider well-versed in the writings of Luther when he did deliver his famous *Theses*. We also recognize that inasmuch as Harms did not abandon the Confessions in his own personal theological work after the controversy, he essentially became the first advocate of confessional Lutheran theology in the nineteenth century. Kantzenbach even gives Harms preeminence over Vilmar, Kliefoth and Löhe. And while he generally only speaks of confessional Lutheran theology’s “most powerful and decided impression” as coming through the Erlangen School, Harms is to stand distinct from that school by virtue of his lack of any philosophical-speculative tendencies bearing the stamp of Schelling or Hegel.²¹ If all of these facts seem to substantiate the claim that Harms’s formula demanded something deliberately insignificant, looking back on my own lectures on Harms, I should like to think of it rather as a certain lack of concision in his expression. Indeed, as his controversy with Lehmus the

We also recognize that, inasmuch as Harms did not abandon the Confessions in his own personal theological work after the controversy, he essentially became the first advocate of confessional Lutheran theology in the nineteenth century. Kantzenbach even gives Harms preeminence over Vilmar, Kliefoth and Löhe.

city pastor in Ansbach shows, Harms was completely clear on the fact that a difference existed between the Zwinglians and Calvinists and that one’s rejection of Zwinglian doctrine does not necessarily make him a Lutheran. However, assuming that Harms did indeed consciously provide only a minimal demand for the Reformed, still, within the framework of his struggle against Rationalism and his appeal to the positions achieved by the Lutheran Confessions, this must be seen as a massive step forward. One need only consider where most of his contemporaries stood even as late as 1830 and how they understood confessional differences! (Of course, whether we can still speak like Harms today after the theological calamities at Arnoldshain is a completely different question.)

HANNOVER

Kantzenbach has Harms as the instigator of the Lutheran renewal in Franconia, Hesse and Brandenburg—not to mention Schleswig-Holstein. But let’s broaden Kantzenbach’s perspective by taking a look at Hannover. One man who exuberantly greeted the completion of Harms’s pastoral theology was Ludwig Adolf Petri (1803-1873), who had been at the Church of the Holy Cross in Hannover since 1829. In a letter to Harms himself, Petri described Harms as “the cherished teacher of my Office” and thanked him for the “sanctification” which had come to him, his fellow preachers, and candidates at the semi-

nary in Hannover through Harms’s pastoral theology. Petri’s letter brought great joy to Harms precisely because its origin was the country of Hannover. For Göttingen had been “since time immemorial the seat of a moderate temperance union in the bad sense of the word.” “They had not imbibed the intoxicating chalice of Rationalism, but on the other hand, they certainly had not become drunk from the goodness of God’s House.” The problems in Hannover were blamed on Göttingen. And so Petri’s appraisal of Harms’s pastoral theology was a refreshing breath.²² Petri is a very important player in the Lutheran renewal. Without his work as a preacher, pastor, teacher at the seminary and *Gymnasium*, and author and speaker—all of which had wide-ranging effects (so much so that he was even recognized by the Erlangen Faculty with an honorary doctorate)—the movement would have hardly ever begun in Hannover. So where does he stand on the issue of Altar Fellowship? His biography offers two letters which are quite informative inasmuch as the perspectives shown in each complement each other in an interesting way.²³

One of the letters is written to a former confirmand in response to her question as to whether she could participate in the Supper in a Reformed congregation, since she was now living in a Reformed parsonage. Petri answered:

You may not participate in it. And if your friends, who have a completely different position on the Sacrament from yours, should ask you contrary to your expectation to take part, then answer, “The celebration of the Holy Supper according to the teaching of my Church is a sign of Church Fellowship. And so, I cannot participate in it with you without becoming a member of the Reformed Church [by virtue of my participation], thereby acting against my own Church: and that would be contrary to my conscience.”

It is true: He is not dealing here with a pronounced theological *Gutachten*, although as the letter goes on Petri does help out his confirmand with a brief introduction to the Reformed problems and positions. Nevertheless, the points of reference for Petri’s approach are clear: Altar Fellowship is a sign of Church Fellowship. And just as certainly as he wished to learn and teach how to operate within the framework of a true union, as another fragmentary letter shows,²⁴ he nevertheless described Altar Fellowship with the Reformed as being part and parcel of a false union. The other letter mentioned sheds more light on the issue. “From his heart” Petri “respects and loves believers within the Reformed confession,” and is aware of no inclination on his part to take issue with them. Now this second letter takes up the case of a Swiss girl (who had to this point been exclusively Francophone) participating in a Lutheran eucharistic celebration in Hannover. Petri emphasizes that the girl would surely hear the Evangel in the Church of the Holy Cross in Hannover, and—with no damage to her own soul—would certainly also become aware not only of a certain difference as to the ethnic culture, but also as to the ecclesiastical culture. But would it be necessary for her, in view of her short stay of a few months in Hannover, to go to Communion in a Lutheran Church? In such a short time, she would hardly be able to accustom herself to the German used in the Church, much less its Lutheran use of the Lord’s Supper. There was no way she would be able to take part in the Eucharist there “with a full

understanding and true blessing.” And so, “the separation in the Holy Supper must stand.”

The Reformed Swiss girl would in all likelihood feel repulsed by our altar which is decked out with a picture, a Crucifix, and burning candles. On top of that, she would understand even less of our Confession of Sins, of making a confession of sins and receiving from me an Absolution, which without exception precedes our celebration of the Supper. And least of all, she would not want to have to confess allegiance to our Lutheran faith. And among us, participation in the Lord’s Supper has this meaning: By one’s participation he either is, or is becoming, a Lutheran. Accordingly, in my view it would be an injustice if I were to admit members of other confessions and confuse their consciences.

He speaks here with desirable clearness and singularity of meaning. And we should recognize how Petri wields the ecclesiastical delineations as being decisive and determinative of his practice.

Next to Petri we now place August Vilmar, and we travel from Hannover to Hessen. Vilmar, who came into contact with Petri on a trip to Hermannsburg and Hamburg in 1858, first received knowledge of Harms’s Theses during his time as a tutor in Kirchheim in the *Beiderwandsgrund* (i.e., after 1820). In his young Rationalist days, Vilmar had become thoroughly upset about “Harms’s mischief.” He called him “a child of darkness,” “a wretched ‘Concordia formulist,’ an Orthodox theologian with skin as thick as parchment.” At any rate, he did not hold that position for long. A great change took place in Vilmar’s inner life in 1826–1827. And so it hardly comes as a surprise that Vilmar was able to praise Harms up and down in a speech he delivered on the Augustana in 1830 in Hersfeld.²⁵ Having been appointed to the faculty of the University of Marburg in Pastoral Theology, from 1859 onward, he lectured several times on pastoral theology. And in the bibliography for his instruction he recommended Löhe’s *Evangelische Geistliche*, but noted Harms’s *Pastorale* as being “of great and decisive significance”²⁶ (although as I see it, the word “decisive” was more to the historical value of Harms’s work than of its ongoing role). So what ever came of Harms’s instruction to his students in the hands of Vilmar? Do we see, as we do with Petri, a conscious and explicit advancement of the ecclesiastical nature of the celebration of the Eucharist and the confessional allegiance implied in one’s reception of the Sacrament?

Vilmar deals with the Roman Catholics in short order. In respect to communing in Lutheran congregations, they come into question only when they are in the diaspora. But even with the diaspora Catholics one senses a certain reserve, a certain “however.” But as far as I can tell, in his consideration, Vilmar must be dealing with some prescriptive law or some sort of old usage based on the Church Orders. Nevertheless, he knows that Lutherans have abused their ministration of the Supper with reference to communing Catholics. “Catholics can be admitted as well. Nevertheless, one must see to it that they receive the cup as well.”²⁷ Tom Hardt has sought to interpret Vilmar’s position in another way: His opinion is that Vilmar administered the Sacrament “to Roman confessors”(?) “since he held belief in the real presence as being the only necessary element.”²⁸ But that would mean that Vilmar considers the

“Among us, participation in the Lord’s Supper has this meaning: by one’s participation he either is, or is becoming, a Lutheran. Accordingly, in my view it would be an injustice if I were to admit members of other confessions and confuse their consciences.”

single dogmatic *loci* in isolation and that since they agreed somewhat on the *locus* of the Holy Eucharist, their common participation in the Eucharist became a distinct possibility for him. If such were the case, then Vilmar had taken the ecclesiastical delineations into consideration far less than had Petri—and even more weakly than Harms had. It would be interesting to see how Hardt would undergird his assertion. He would at any rate have to develop what he thinks it means that Vilmar makes a point of the fact that the kind of Roman Catholics who would commune with us would not worry themselves over receiving the cup of Jesus’ blood. By so doing, would not a diaspora Catholic have broken from his church on a very important point? Or is Vilmar only relaying Harms’s warnings?

In considering the veracity of Hardt’s assertion, Vilmar’s treatment of the Reformed has great importance.²⁹ Here he adduces Harms word for word. Then, from his own words Vilmar sheds light on a specifically Hessian situation: “The confessionally correct Lower Hessians” as confessors of the real presence of the Lord in His Body and Blood are to be admitted to the Sacrament in Lutheran churches everywhere. One might wish to put that in brackets, since it is a virtual impossibility that everyone would be able to distinguish who is Lower Hessian. But even more thought-provoking is the fact that Vilmar identifies himself with Harms’s formula and maintains, “Wherefore, there shall be Altar Fellowship between the two confessions in Hessen.” This apparently means that all Reformed (although all he means is all Reformed in Hessen!) would agree with Harms’s formula at least as it stands in Vilmar’s interpretation (“recognition of the real presence of the Lord according to His Body and Blood”). In any case, this settlement does not obscure what Vilmar describes in other passages as the *proprium* of the Lord’s Supper (that the Lord *gives His Body and His Blood to eat and drink*). At any rate, Vilmar is certain that “a strict Reformed Christian, due to his own conscience, must be kept from the Lutheran Supper.” Unfortunately, even this sentence is unclear. Is the strict Reformed Christian really held back by his (confessionally educated) conscience? Is it the duty of a Lutheran pastor to awaken the conscience of the “strict Reformed Christian” in order to keep him from the Lord’s Table? And at what point does a Reformed Christian begin to be a “strict Reformed Christian”? Where is Altar Fellowship with the Reformed “impossible” as Vilmar correctly emphasizes that it is?

Would we succeed in our endeavor to answer these questions by digging through even more of Vilmar’s writings? To

answer this question positively would be presumptuous on my part. But in any case, Hardt's assertion that Vilmar deals with the isolated *locus de reali praesentia*, and not with the issues of confession, church doctrine, and church bodies as entities, appears to be further substantiated by this passage on the Reformed. This renders an interesting picture: Petri, a chip off of Harms's block, who began in the direction suggested by Harms comes through to see explicit ecclesiastical delineations; while Vilmar, perhaps in consideration of special domestic hardships, uses Harms's formula in order to leave off his treatment at isolated *loci*, at individuals, and—in the best case—at special exceptions for whole territorial Churches. (One should not, however, overlook how many of our own contemporaries would not be permitted to the Eucharist by Vilmar, simply because of the fact that his formula, “the real presence of the Lord according to His Body and His Blood,” would strike them as being “Catholic”!)

BAVARIA

The area which stands as the clearest example of the controversy concerning the Lord's Supper during the nineteenth century is Bavaria. In the first place, this is largely due to the fact that the Union Church of Palatinate (under the Consistory in Speyer) and the Lutherans and Reformed from the East of the Rhine (under the Consistories of Ansbach and Bayreuth and the Deanship of Munich which had direct access to the highest ecclesiastical governing body) were united under one Superior Consistory in the “Protestant General Congregation” of the kingdom. Secondly, through the settlement of colonists from the Palatinate in the Fens of the Danube and through the active exchange of clergy, military personnel, and state bureaucrats between East and West Bavaria, the issue of the Union became very acute, even in the old-Lutheran regions of the Franconian Marches, Imperial Cities, knightly regions, and the Evangelical cities and villages of Bavarian Swabia. The first forty years of the twentieth century, especially after the defeat in the Second World War, saw a massive domestic German migration which brought so many problems for the *Landeskirche* as a whole to the East of the Rhine—and especially for Upper Bavaria—on how to deal with those from the Union. But the problems associated with that migration were perceptible already in the preceding century. And thirdly, on top of all that, in the regions of Lindau, Allgäu and even up into Bavarian Neu-Ulm, there was a significant migratory exchange with Switzerland and its Reformed Christianity. And the Catholics watched to find out how the *Landeskirche* would deal with the problems that had become hers in the above ways. Certainly, the questionable elements of the Union were not looked at askance only in Bavaria. Rather (as Herbert Heinhold showed)³⁰ serious misgivings about the idea of a Union were ventilated already in 1833 by Andreas Gottlob Rudelbach in his energetic criticism of the Prussian procedures. Nevertheless, the relationships in Bavaria were different from those in Saxony, and not necessarily more propitious toward the validity of the Confessions. For in Bavaria, they set their sights remarkably quickly (even before Löhe made his appearance on the stage) on the issue of Altar Fellowship between the various Church Fellowships which had come out of the Reformation.

As is well known, in his *Drei Bücher von der Kirche*, Löhe pronounced a judgment (which Rocholl later loved to cite), that the whole Lutheran movement within Protestantism

should have been well under way at the instigation of the Silesians' witness in 1817 who sought to bring into being an independent Lutheran Church. This remark points out how much the Silesian movement affected that in Bavaria. And the picture comes clear when we see just how many men took this saying as a directive for the Church in the problem at hand. All of these men stood in close relation to Johannes Gottfried Scheibel from Breslau who had entered the scene as a fearless witness for Lutheranism at the same time as Harms. During his life time, Scheibel was often slandered. But at his burial in Nürnberg, he was justifiably highly praised. In fact Löhe was at first one of the few who directed their view toward Schlesien since already by 1829, he knew Scheibel's view of the Lord's Supper quite well and recognized it as correct. And perhaps even Scheibel received more opposition from von Scheurl and Harleß than he gave to them after he had found asylum in Nürnberg in 1839 (at which time he received his share of opposition from Karl von Raumer). But in any case, Martin Kiunke was able to establish in his dissertation on Scheibel that the

Löhe had learned that a “yes” to the truth can be significant only in connection with a “no” to every half-truth and plain falsity.

Erlangers as well as the Nürnbergers and those in Löhe's circle saw Scheibel as the protagonist of the resurrected Lutheran Church.³¹ It was specifically Löhe who, in coming to grips with the figure of Scheibel and the Breslauers, overcame that kind of Lutheranism which had long since wished to acknowledge only a “positive” presentation of doctrine with no defense against false doctrine, in accord to the Kasseler Colloquium; a Lutheranism which perhaps had become known to Löhe personally through his extensive studies on Zinzendorf. Löhe had learned that a “yes” to the truth can be significant only in connection with a “no” to every half-truth and plain falsity. And the fact that later in his life, Löhe never left his office without passing under his picture of Scheibel resting on his deathbed perhaps shows what sort of obligatory power the figure of this man exercised over him. Löhe viewed Scheibel as a Lutheran pioneer. For Scheibel had embodied in life and practice what the Reformed preacher Krafft had made clear to his young friends from the Awakening: that Altar Fellowship is Confessional Fellowship and Church Fellowship.

Now Scheibel who had begun with Zwingli's understanding of the Supper was led further through his study of Holy Scripture.³² Through Scripture he was compelled to derive a realist doctrine of the Lord's Supper from Jesus' Words of Institution and from Paul's witness, to embrace the Lord's Supper as Christendom's sacrificial meal, and to find expressions used in Jn 6 as being of decisive importance for the cor-

Circumstances in the diaspora in the region of the Fens of the Danube were such that one and the same clergyman was obliged to represent Lutheran doctrine one moment and Calvinism in the next and so was unable any longer to take seriously any confession at all.

rect understanding of the Sacraments. These conclusions he arrived at were all *essentially* in agreement with Luther and Lutheran Confessions, and also with Ignatius of Antioch, Irenaeus of Lyon, and other early church fathers. His discovery and the authority of the corroborating witnesses empowered him to raise his voice in favor of the Lutheran doctrine of the Eucharist and to enter the ecclesiastical fray against an overwhelming host of superior opponents. And what is even more impressive, he was the only theologian on a university faculty at his time to be doing so. Yet for him, confession of the Supper was in no way “a single doctrine that exists for itself,” nor a mere “opinion that, in and of itself, is indifferent toward—or indecisive for—the rest of Christian truths.” No, for him “this sacramental rite was the focal point of the whole Christian Church and of every single church faction” (Kantzenbach should really have rather directed against Scheibel at least one portion of his polemics against Löhe).³³ On that basis, differences in the doctrine of the Supper were of such force as to divide the Church. So when one turns to the issue of Altar Fellowship, one cannot simply try to iron out all the doctrinal wrinkles. Rather, each church’s doctrine of the Supper must be viewed for what it is. And this he maintains despite the fact that he can praise the “profoundly awakened” Reformed theologians “who are constantly filled with thoughts of faith and God’s Word, whose sermons and writings are waking up whole congregations both in and outside of Germany . . . , who have become and still are a great and enduring blessing to thousands and thousands . . . !” But there is no reason to bring up more of what Scheibel says about Altar Fellowship when it is really his praxis and impassioned efforts which speak most clearly! And so two facts are important here: (a) due to Scheibel’s influence there came to be a group of Lutherans in Breslau who refused to participate in any solemn unionistic celebrations of the Supper and stayed clear of any administration of the Sacraments at the hands of clergy who had gone over to the Union; and (b) among Scheibel’s students there were pastors who even went so far as to reject the Union Agenda (which one could ostensibly use without going over to the Union). By wielding his influence in these two spheres, Scheibel was able to save the independence of the Lutheran Church in Prussia.

THE BAVARIAN CONTROVERSY

The controversy over Altar Fellowship in Bavaria took place in two different phases. The first of these is characterized by a Roman Catholic effort to direct Bavarian Protestantism to the contradictions of making the Lutheran Confessions binding.

This first step deals with the controversy between Adolf Harleß and Ignaz Döllinger on which Friedrich Wilhelm Hopf has reported.³⁴ This controversy came into being as a result of King Ludwig I’s demand that the military genuflect before the Corpus Christi procession, which, needless to say, placed not a few of the Evangelical soldiers in a situation which conflicted with their consciences. The Evangelicals resorted to an appeal to the Confessions in defense of those who refused to genuflect, especially to the Formula of Concord and its comments against the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation, its liturgical consequences, and its judgment concerning the impossibility of tolerating certain rites and uses *in statu confessionis*. Now Harleß, who at that time was a professor at Erlangen and a representative in the Bavarian Diet (and as such the most important speaker for the Evangelical side), had to recognize that in 1843, by pointing out some dubious practices within Bavarian Protestantism, Döllinger had sought to prove that the Protestants would cite the Lutheran Confession only when it could be used in a specifically anti-Catholic sense. Part of Döllinger’s arguments rested upon the fact that members of the Union and the Reformed were participating in the Lutheran Supper in the St. Matthew Church in Munich. He saw in that, as in other things, an irrefutable substantiation of a Union which would *de facto* place any Protestant valuation of the Formula of Concord “as the norm and decisive witness” outside of a position of power. Placing the catechism used in the Palatinate and Boeckh’s Bavarian Lutheran Catechism in opposition to one another, and comparing them with Luther and the old Prussian *Altlutheraner*, he came to the decision that there could no longer be any sort of talk about a Lutheran Church in Bavaria. What was the case in Munich was also happening in all of the other important cities of Bavaria. And circumstances in the diaspora in the region of the Fens of the Danube were such that one and the same clergyman was obliged to represent Lutheran doctrine one moment and Calvinism in the next and so was unable any longer to take seriously any confession at all. In Döllinger’s opinion, it was incomprehensible why such a pastor would not wish to take over caring for even the Jews of that region in order to get a better salary. “Through the Union whose tenets have been impressed and practically received in a place where people do not think of themselves as being of Union in name. . . what remains of the reputation which the symbolical books once enjoyed is completely buried.”

Adolf Harleß answered Döllinger in 1843 with his writing, *Die evangelisch-lutherische Kirche in Bayern und die Insinuationen des Herrn Professor Döllinger*. In his assessment, the *status controversiae* is this: The issue deals not with *if* some kind of form of Union celebration of the Lord’s Supper is a possibility within the Lutheran Church; *rather, it deals with* “if and under what provisos *in singular cases and special circumstances* permission can be granted to such as do not belong to the Lutheran Church to participate in a celebration of the Lord’s Supper according to the Lutheran rite.” Now, Harleß understands matters in such a way that for him the confessional distinction which must be made is not the responsibility of the admission-granting administrator of the Sacrament, but rather of the communicant who desires the Sacrament. He defends the thesis that participation in the Lutheran Supper as such must be understood as an act of confession much as participation in the Lutheran celebration of the Supper and confessional allegiance to the doctrine of the Lutheran Church concerning the Sacrament of the Altar are part and parcel of one another. The non-

Lutheran's request for admission to the Sacrament is an implicit agreement with the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper. And so, it is correct to lay greater weight on the side of him who, although not a member of the Lutheran Church, desires to participate in the Lutheran celebration. Nevertheless, Harleß is not satisfied (as it might appear at first glance) with a silently (so to speak) expressed agreement with the Lutheran Confession. For, on his part, he considers as reasonable certain clerical scruples concerning [the communicant's] attitude of indifferentism "if he were to wish to admit non-members of his congregation to the Sacrament without a specific indication of their agreement with the Lutheran Church in the doctrine of the Holy Supper." We shall not want to overlook this stipulation which desires a "specific indication"—not just from those who are not members of the Lutheran Church, but even from those who are non-members of the congregation. Therefore, Harleß does not align his question with the issue merely of "objective Church membership," rather, he sees the pastoral responsibility of the minister precisely over against the non-

He defends the thesis that participation in the Lutheran Supper as such must be understood as an act of confession much as participation in the Lutheran celebration of the Supper and confessional allegiance to the doctrine of the Lutheran Church concerning the Sacrament of the Altar are part and parcel of one another.

member of his congregation (first of all, even if that person is from another Lutheran church; and secondly, also if the person is a non-Lutheran) who "in singular cases and under special circumstances" would like to commune in the Lutheran Church, thereby making the Lutheran confession of the Sacrament his own. Naturally, as soon as Harleß describes the act of communing as an "open and ceremonial confession of the faith," one is again forced to ask whether a specific article must be brought out of the corpus of beliefs and if that article must be the one on the Holy Supper. Naturally, one must also ask in which form this "specific witness" must be given. Naturally, one needs to consider whether or not such an explanation could remain for long without certain consequences for ecclesiastical law (e.g., could one somehow be a Lutheran only for himself in a private manner and still belong to the Reformed Church?). Naturally, the clause "in singular cases and under special circumstances" must be brought under sharp critical scrutiny. Is the criterion for these "certain circumstances" met when, in a specific place, there happens to be no Reformed or Union congregation or when certain family relationships make a common participation in the communion something desirable? Nevertheless, despite all of these potentially dubious elements in Harleß's position, one must firmly maintain that he, just as Vilmar, considers agreement in the confession of the Sacrament as the prerequisite for impartation of the Supper and for Altar Fellowship.

Twelve years later, Harleß renewed and realized his position of 1843. In the meantime, he had been called into the leadership of the Bavarian Church. And in 1855, he was forced to express his views on an issue involving Lutherans within the Union whose home congregations were using solely Luther's Catechism and who unquestionably wanted to be viewed not as members of the Union, but as Lutherans. (There were still plenty of congregations in Pommerania and Minden-Ravensburg which laid a great deal of emphasis on the name "Lutheran" and who used the Lutheran Catechism and the Lutheran formula for distribution. In fact, many of these congregations had no idea about—and had experienced nothing of—the palladium of the Union, of the right that a Christian of another confession was supposed to have to participate in their sacramental rites. And they understood the Union purely as a mere administrative arrangement!) In a detailed writing addressed to the Erlanger academic association "Philadelphia" (the question must have had a very present importance for the Northern German students at Erlangen who had come to Bavaria), Harleß refused to regard the admission of such men as being a recognition of Union principles. And Friedrich Wilhelm Hopf in a convincing way found it telling that here Harleß placed the pastoral aspect of conscientious consideration toward the demand for agreement in doctrine before all other considerations, including those of ecclesiastical law and politics.³⁵ Of course, one must certainly ask Hopf if a Union-Lutheran's sacramental participation in a consciously Lutheran congregation can occur in such a way that it is understood that the communicant is thereby (as Harleß says) aligning himself "actually, openly, and ceremoniously" with the Lutheran Church's confession of the Supper but not criticizing and renouncing the Union. But wouldn't communing in a consciously Lutheran Church actually imply such a criticism and renunciation, especially since the Union by its very nature—as the history of Prussian Union-Lutheranism shows much too plainly—destroys any sort of confessional basis and sets any Confession out of power—not to mention that Harleß, with his emphatic "actually, openly and ceremoniously," might still be covering up his own uncertainty on the clarity of such a confession concerning the Sacrament?

The second stage of the Bavarian controversy, then, is played out not in conflict with Roman Catholicism, but rather in the controversy within the Church itself. As touches our discussion, this controversy is associated with the names of Franz Delitzsch and Wilhelm Löhe.

Franz Delitzsch, who for the sake of his Lutheranism came into a professorship only very late in life, was fetched from Rostock for Erlangen only with strong opposition from the High Consistory in Munich. (At any rate, that was the way things were for this High Consistory. Later during the movement begun by Löhe within the *Landeskirche* this regime was replaced by a High Consistory under the leadership of Harleß.) Now, when Delitzsch, a proven, conscientious Lutheran, came into his professorship in Erlangen in 1850–1851 he did not fail to jump right into the discussion on communion practice which, at that time, was being carried on with a great sense of urgency in Bavaria. Proof for this is his *Die bayerische Abendmahls-gemeinschaft* which was composed in 1851 as a "beginning of a thorough examination" and published in 1852 in Erlangen. It begins with the telling sentence, "The problem of Altar Fellowship has now become the shibboleth of the ecclesiastical movement in Bavaria, to which the Lutheran Church of all German

lands and even of neighboring foreign countries has turned its attention with most suspenseful sympathy.” From the following sentences in the foreword, it becomes apparent what Delitzsch wants and how passionately he wants it: “One perhaps gets . . . at least this impression that the stricter Ancient Church Lord’s Supper praxis does not stand in contradiction with the holy love which we owe to our brethren who are our fellow-redeemed and who as our brethren worship the One Lord. Lovelessness often has the appearance of love, and love often has the appearance of lovelessness. True love is of a spiritual essence. However, what is spiritual contends against our nature and always contains something of a paradox.”

You can find plenty of detailed material on Delitzsch’s confessional posture and expression in my essays “*Franz Delitzsch als Lutheraner*” in the *Festschrift* for Arno Lehmann planned for 1961 and “*Aus Franz Delitzschs späteren Jahren*” in *Friede über Israel*, volumes xliii and xliv (1960 and 1961). By pointing to them, I shall be able to be brief. These two essays

“In the face of the subjectivism of our time, a stricter Lord’s Supper praxis is made doubly necessary. On the threshold of the Holy of Holies, such a one must be brought to a cognizance and inner conviction of his lack of devotion. He ought not step over this threshold.”

make perfectly clear that the passage cited from the Foreword of 1852 indicates that Delitzsch allies himself to the praxis of the Ancient Church! Furthermore, he emphasizes that when this praxis of the Ancient Church existed in the Lutheran Church, “as long as it was kept pure from Philippist syncretism,” it was recognized as being “a generally applicable church practice” in dealing with the Reformed.³⁶ The pure doctrine of justification over against that of the Romans, and the pure doctrine of the Eucharist over against the Reformed are the two chambers of the heart of Lutheranism’s essence. In the face of this fact, the Lutheran Church could not be indifferent toward whether or not those who come to the Supper in their congregations had the correct perception of the Eucharist. “[The Lutheran Church] would lay aside the defense of the Fathers, conclude a false peace, foster ignorance, and sanctify indifferentism if she were to admit to the Lord’s Table the Reformed with their Zwinglian or Calvinist doctrine or the Union with their attitude of indifferentism toward distinctions. If her children do this, they do it without a mandate and against the spirit of their mother.”³⁷ Wherever the old praxis which rejected such Altar Fellowship (as was occurring in Bavaria) had fallen into forgottenness and ruin, it appears “well-nigh as the height of inhumanity itself;” and one could also “not deny that this praxis, exercised by those who have only an orthodox head and lack the love of a living faith, can become down right offensive and injurious to the soul.”³⁸ However, wherever it is wielded not by “a nominally Christian and pharisaical Lutheran pastor,” in

such an instance “the raw husk hides a sweet kernel, the hard muscle a costly pearl, the apparent gruffness a blessed duty.” For non-Lutherans who might be found within the Lutheran fellowship,³⁹ two things are indispensable: “First of all those who are unclear in their mind about the issues are to be brought to a conscientious ecclesiastical decision in a pastoral manner and the Office of the Ministry is to be so willed and inclined as to work toward this end openly, and especially with just as much wisdom and mildness as with earnestness and decisiveness; secondly for the sake of their consciences, attendance at our Supper is to be kept from those who are wittingly and firmly members of the Reformed Church and wish to remain so.” Delitzsch registers a strong objection against “the disease of our time:” “that an individual now isolates himself from his natural and ecclesiastical relationships to the same degree as an individual used to be completely absorbed in them. And accordingly, the modern individual dissolves all corollary duty and responsibility. As if the Church were not there, members of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches think that they are able to believe whatever they want.”⁴⁰ “That the confession of the Church hold sway over all of her members to such a degree that he whose faith stands in contradiction with the confession of his Church, finds himself in a contradiction with himself and his own conscience” must be maintained. “For such a one does not belong to the Church in an inward manner although he belongs to it outwardly. In the face of the subjectivism of our time, a stricter Lord’s Supper praxis is made doubly necessary. On the threshold of the Holy of Holies, such a one must be brought to a cognizance and inner conviction of his lack of devotion. He ought not step over this threshold.”

Let us take a break from this for a moment to reach for the book that was dear to Delitzsch his whole life long: his Confession and Communion book entitled *Das Sacrament des wahren Leibes und Blutes Jesu Christi*.⁴¹ Here there is a passage which is nearly corollary to the one just cited.⁴² Delitzsch had spoken of the Ancient Church’s perception of the Lord’s Supper as the highest act of confession “which the congregation laid before the Lord and each other.” It was therefore “the most serious and holiest actualization of its fellowship in the faith. . . . Thus it was in the Ancient Church, and now, in the midst of all of the chaotic multiplicity of convictions, grades of knowledge, and spiritual conditions, this unimpeachable principle of ecclesiastical praxis ought to remain: that admission to the Holy Supper is conditioned upon agreement with the confession of the Church wherein it is desired. Wherever this agreement cannot exist as a presupposition, the question ought to be posed as to whether or not this agreement is to be reached at all. For the Sacrament of the Altar should not be abused to foster indifferentism (apathy toward religion) and syncretism (confessional plurality). And a scrupulous church government shall, on the basis of ecclesiastical arrangements, have to see to it that every multifarious and confusing muddle of this faint-hearted, tepid time (which so shies away from profession) does not dominate the threshold of the Altar upon which the Body and Blood of Christ are administered because the Church does not sort out among her servants.” It is clear that Delitzsch, as an almost sixty-year-old man (he was born in 1813) remained true to his conviction of 1851. Yes, he even comes to its aid with concrete demands and warnings!

As we return to Delitzsch’s book concerning Altar Fellowship in Bavaria, we find that Delitzsch there defines the Luther-

an confession of the Supper as “a confession of the Body and Blood of the Lord offered under the bread and wine to be received orally, both by the worthy and the unworthy—for the latter of whom they nevertheless become a judgment.”⁴³ Where do the other Churches of the Reformation stand in relation to this confession? “The Reformed Church does not have this confession, and the Union Church denies its fundamental nature as well as the intrinsic principle of the differences of both Churches.” The result? “. . . Where the Lutheran Church is cognizant of her calling and does not fall from the same, she does not enter into fellowship with either of these Churches—and least of all Altar Fellowship.” What ramifications does this have for the ministerial office? Delitzsch: “. . . The ministerial office may not permit those from the Reformed and Union Churches—inasmuch as they wish to remain as they are—into an Altar Fellowship with our Church. And the clergy may not transfer the members of a Lutheran congregation into Altar Fellowship with them.” What ramifications does that have for Bavaria? “Mixed Altar Fellowship is justified under no emergency circumstance. For whatever is against the duty of faith cannot become a duty of love. In mixed congregations which are Lutheran in name and in confession” (such congregations had especially come into being in abundance in the south of Bavaria) “it must be openly explained that those who wish to participate in the Holy Supper are expected and demanded to give an oral profession of their heartfelt willingness to belong to the Lutheran Church in word and deed.” In view of those “who are convinced of the scripturalness of our confession but who have not been completely convinced to resolve to leave the Reformed or Union Church,” it must be seen to it that they “are warned with wise tenderness and for the sake of their own consciences to cease from the desire they have had up to this point. The concession to let them commune lays upon them obligations of which they are not yet cognizant. If they are honest, then the blessing of a salutary and accelerated conclusion to their crisis will be theirs. On the other hand, permitting them to commune is necessarily bound up with the danger that they might become slack or be lulled to sleep.” (It was solely on communing a dying person that Delitzsch wished to leave off with the confessional issue.)

In consideration of this position, it is nevertheless very impressive how Delitzsch creates for himself the objection that the praxis suggested by him might collide with a somewhat higher duty to permit such Christians to come to the Lord’s Supper “who admittedly belong to the Reformed or Union Church and yet have no fast opinion on ecclesiastical matters and desire the Holy Supper in all simplicity in order to secure their fellowship with Christ and as such probably would not receive the Supper without blessing.” He thinks that this objection, if it were to be answered positively, could only end up proving that in certain cases, the pastor might disregard whether or not a communicant belongs to the Lutheran Church. (In this we can certainly hear Harleß’s formulation of 1843!) But Delitzsch cannot “give an absolutely positive answer to this question.” Why not? “It is against the Lutheran conscience to cultivate ecclesiastical uncertainty and disguise the contrasts between the churches as if they did not exist.” (Fundamentally, our author had explained himself already with similar thoughts when he strongly censured the idea that one could seek to disguise the controversies between the churches, which yet is a public fact, “for the weak-spirited as if they never needed to become strong.”⁴⁴ At his time, such obscuring was

Wherever an un-Lutheran consciousness makes itself known, one ought decisively to oppose it and one ought not nurture nor defend any sort of uncertainty, but rather with all earnestness one ought to strive to raise it to certainty.

still going on. He further elucidates his position in his demand that “wherever an un-Lutheran consciousness makes itself known, one ought decisively to oppose it and one ought not nurture nor defend any sort of uncertainty, but rather with all earnestness one ought to strive to raise it to certainty.”)

Delitzsch supplied his writing with four appendices. The first one deals with the old praxis from an historical point of view;⁴⁵ the second is a reprimand of false conclusions which began with the right point of view;⁴⁶ the third diffuses false concerns;⁴⁷ and the fourth takes issue with the Reformed Church journal.⁴⁸ It will be of use in our present endeavor to adduce some things from the section on “false consequences.” “As long as the free Word remains unbound to censure false praxis within a Church, and as long as undefiled conscientious conduct is not prohibited, it is a false conclusion if one were to believe that he ought to leave that Church which esteems the Lutheran confession merely because of an un-Lutheran eucharistic praxis which exists in some places. . . . It is a false conclusion if one were to identify a pastor who had not yet convinced himself of his duty to exercise a stricter eucharistic praxis as being un-Lutheran despite his otherwise established Lutheran frame of mind. Just as little as the name ‘Christian’ is forfeited through one’s unknown omission to carry out his life’s duty, so little does the unknown omission to carry out an ecclesiastical duty in the line of confession cause one to lose the name ‘Lutheran.’”

These sentences from Delitzsch transfer us right into the area of tension which caused the altercation between him and Wilhelm Löhe. Through his writing on the Lord’s Supper, and more precisely, through what was just cited concerning “false conclusions,” Delitzsch sought to come to an understanding with Löhe.

Now in this connection, it is impossible to do justice to Wilhelm Löhe’s position by only taking up a few points. But I must be satisfied with just a few remarks. We turn first to the literature on Löhe which, fortunately, is quite abundant. First of all, I mention Friedrich Wilhelm Hopf’s “*Wilhelm Löhe als Zeuge des Altarsakraments*.”⁴⁹ Another essay of his provides a positive supplement to this.⁵⁰ Even more valuable in our pursuit is Hopf’s presentation, “*Wilhelm Löhe und die freien lutherischen Kirchen*.”⁵¹ Hans Kreßel’s character sketch entitled “*Wilhelm Löhe, der lutherische Christenmensch*”⁵² ought to be mentioned along with Siegfried Hebart’s “*Wilhelm Löhes Lehre von der Kirche, ihrem Amt und Regiment*”⁵³—a work which promises to remain important for many years to come. Most

We ought to fear that among many the way is being cleared for a change in principles and that, as the Germans are wont to do, a theoretical justification is being found.

importantly, however, volumes 5.1 and 5.2 of Löhe's works, collected and edited by Klaus Ganzert, ought to be studied.⁵⁴ Some service will be rendered by Löhe's sermons from 1866 on the Lord's Supper which I prepared for publication. Inasmuch as these sermons were extant only in transcript form, they are not found in Löhe's collected works. But more than likely, they are going to be published as a supplement.⁵⁵

Anyway, I do not see it as lying within the realm of our purposes here to make an in-depth investigation into the controverted points between Löhe and Delitzsch in 1851-52. We only adduce a sentence from the *Schwabacher Erklärung* composed by Löhe and some of his companions on October 9, 1851. They wished "to view those who . . . are taking part in the ecclesiastical sins of the Bavarian Protestants as not Lutheran; and to realize in our official relationships a suspension of every Church and Altar fellowship with them." It was only under these provisions that they would be able to remain within the *Landeskirche*. And so this permits us to see clearly the issue against which Delitzsch has brought his comments to bear.

Löhe and his companions, ten years after the *Schwabacher Erklärung*, in the fall of 1861, elucidated their perception of the ecclesiastical sins of the Bavarian Protestants in their petition to the General Synod being held at that time. The Synod passed over the petition in their agenda despite the objection of the representative of the Erlangen Faculty, the dogmatician and dogma-historian Gottfried Thomasius (although the petitioners had already to a certain extent expected such would occur). And since the contents of the petition still remain up to date or in some way significant for the present, you will permit me to reprint here a greater part of that petition:⁵⁶

. . . The Lutheran soldiers garrisoned in the Palatinate are not being taken care of. The soldiers from the Palatinate garrisoned on this side of the Rhine go to the Lord's Table wherever a pastor's ministerial conscience is not set against it. There are congregations in the Roman-Catholic regions where Protestants of various confessions attempt to satisfy their churchly needs. And to the present day, they have sought to bring this about through the creation of mixed congregations. Without any sort of conversion, and with no unity in truth, the various confessional relatives go together to the Sacrament. In those cities which lie nearer to Switzerland, Altar Fellowship is maintained in a quite unconcealed fashion with the Reformed.

And it has become abundantly clear that there is no indication even of the appearance of an emergency situation for the Reformed. Especially now with our present facilitation of this sort of exchange, without any great sacrifice on their part, they could get to churches of their own confession or could call a Reformed or Union pastor to their area to attend to their sacramental care. Furthermore, where the Reformed want to join up with Lutheran congregations on a permanent basis, no conversion to Lutheranism is demanded; rather, the border between the Churches is effortlessly transgressed. And still yet, clergy from the Palatinate are called to congregations on this side of the Rhine without a demand for their conversion. And in this case, even if some sort of preventative measure is in place from the authorities, nevertheless, the very involved congregations know nothing officially as to whether and even how these measures are carried out: With the general state of affairs in their Lord's Supper praxis, one certainly cannot simply tell them to have faith in the authorities. Our migrating population is not made aware of how things are dealt with in relation to the Holy Supper in the various German lands. This wandering population for the most part participates in the Reformed or Union Holy Supper. And vice versa, there is a great abundance of Protestants from the Reformed and Union areas coming to the Holy Supper in our congregations receiving the Holy Supper without any troubles. Even if one can concede that in singular places and in singular cases some sort of amelioration has taken place, nevertheless, on the whole . . . the situation has remained the same. It may well be that attempts have been made to take things further, but the power of circumstances and of temporal interests has held sway to this point. Yes, in some circles the zeal may well have become cold; every mention of great evil which is still with us is treated as tedium and is dealt with in short order with a mere "That won't work," as being an excess. Yes, we ought to fear that among many the way is being cleared for a change in principles and that, as the Germans are wont to do, a theoretical justification is being found for a thing which cannot easily be removed. In some places, one can already hear the serious propagation of the following: It is enough if a pastor distributes the Sacrament in the Lutheran form.

What in 1861 was a prophecy of the future is the *communis opinio* in 1960! [Ed. and most certainly in 1992!]

Furthermore, the protest points out the advances made by the impulse to subvert the Ancient Church praxis in establishing full Altar Fellowship between the Churches of the Reformation.⁵⁷

The proposition that the Sacrament of the Altar must be the uniting point for all the parties which have resulted from the Reformation; that is, that all Christian parties must actualize their unity as something above and beyond their confessions via participation in the Sacrament, in forgetfulness of and in spite of

their confessional differences—this proposition is traveling from West to East throughout the Reformed Churches and sects, grasping violently around itself and laying claim to the ecclesiastical law of the future Church. It cannot be denied that within the Lutheran Church itself this Reformed proposition has received a great deal of approbation: but it rises far above the entire distress and accords fully with the spirit of the nineteenth Century. And wherever it is accepted within the Protestant Church, it establishes peace, even if only by changing the differing confessional doctrines into mere private views.

If Löhe and his companions spoke in this manner to the General Synod, how did they speak to their congregations? How did they deal with the issue of altar division in their preaching?

We turn to the unprinted cycle of sermons preached during the week in 1866 which took up the Sacrament of the Altar.

The Church of all times has paid close attention to ensuring that the disciples who hold the Supper remain hanging on His mouth and His words.

In this series, on November 9, Löhe instructed his congregation concerning the issue at hand, using Ti 3:10 with its warning to avoid heretics.⁵⁸ The mandate of Christ to celebrate the Lord's Supper was binding on Jesus' disciples; however, part and parcel of being a disciple is to hang on the mouth of the Master and to take Him at His Word. "Could you imagine a disciple who would say, 'We wish to do what You have commanded. But as to Your convictions, we would rather dispose of those'? Wouldn't that be a mockery against discipleship? The disciples were of His conviction. And the teaching of their Master permeated their hearts. At any given time, only those who are united in the same conviction should hold the Holy Supper. . . . For this reason, the Church of all times has paid close attention to ensuring that the disciples who hold the Supper remain hanging on His mouth and His words." Löhe demonstrates this to his congregation from the Ancient Church practice of Altar Fellowship. In his treatment of the Age of the Reformation he speaks of Luther as having been "awakened" by God through the Holy Spirit "not to recognize those who take issue with the Words of God in the Sacrament—that was the second major portion of his work.... Just as the doctrine of justification by faith became ecclesiastically divisive, so also the correct doctrine of the Sacrament became divisive. That is one of the gifts of the Reformation. And we cannot reject it lest we destroy the structure of the Church.... If we give up the doctrine of the Supper as something ecclesiasti-

cally divisive, we concomitantly give up the Reformation." Löhe then comes to his own time. The congregation in Neuendettelsau had placed itself behind him with overwhelming unanimity in his battle for the Supper. Looking back on the principles he had adduced from the history of the Church, he says:

These are things with which we are very familiar. And we cannot speak of them without a certain amount of wistfulness. All of you know that in our circles the words, "Avoid a heretic," have a high value...and that your teachers [speaking before the congregation in Neuendettelsau, Löhe was thinking of himself and his colleagues, especially the Inspector of Missions, Friedrich Bauer and Löhe's own Vicar at the time—later his successor as pastor—Ferdinand Weber, a student of Delitzsch] have preceded others in this matter. You know our saying, that one cannot have a mixed Lord's Supper. However, we are not the only ones.... We have done nothing unfaithful in maintaining this. And for that reason, we have come to be called *Alt-lutheraner*, although we wish to be neither old or new Lutherans. Despite the great abundance of Lutherans just like us in America and here in Germany, nevertheless, in our very own Fatherland, we have not found the approval we wished to receive.... Unfortunately, we have been unable to bring our *Landeskirche* to the point where it recognizes the words of Paul and puts them into practice. That has made for some confusion: a certain laxity among some, and among others, a false rigidity. Some are even withdrawing themselves completely from the Sacrament.... We have given our testimony. And we have no guilt in the present predicament!

What did Löhe mean by the "false rigidity" of withdrawal from the Sacrament? Shortly thereafter, he comes to that point in a discussion of the Lord's command, "Do this." It echoes some thoughts which he had further developed in his *Gutachten in Sachen der Abendmahlsgemeinschaft*.⁵⁹ But in his sermon, one thing remains certain, "No one can go without the Sacrament." In the *Gutachten* of 1863 he speaks of the diaspora of sacramental Lutheranism throughout the *Landeskirche*. This diaspora is at one with him in their rejection of mixed communion. And it is a terrifying (and not completely outdated) picture which he offers of this diaspora.⁶⁰

Single families and persons are scattered throughout the land. These people are of our conviction. They have waited with us for redress. They have prayed for it and they have called out for it. Their pastors and congregations paid as little attention to their protest and presentations as did the whole *Landeskirche* to our united efforts. And just as we have made the *Landeskirche* uncomfortable on account of our striving, so have they made their pastors and congregations. And since after the outcome of the last General Synod all human help seems to have disappeared, they stand helpless, confused, and isolated. In some places, faithful pastors have been forced to soften up, or the shepherd who had been in the area is dead. In some places, it is that there is a lack of leadership, or that those who have been abandoned have not yet attached them-

selves to the successors of their shepherds, etc. But now, what is going to happen to all those poor people who to some extent have frantically remained firm in the testimony of their leaders? In some instances, they have withdrawn themselves from the Lord's Supper in their home congregations since they ... did not know to do any better and would rather have gone a step too far than not far enough in a time of protest and conflict. In some instances, they had the full right and duty to withdraw themselves. What else were they supposed to do with their convictions when on their altars it was not merely that un-Lutheran practice was tolerated, but it was even being fostered and elevated as a principle? Either their hope for improvement made going without bearable or they endured being viewed as desperate people when they would ask to receive a dismissal from their pastor to go to other altars where they did not have to fear any mixed communion. But what about now? Should the people, for

How did Löhe try to help this diaspora of sacramental Lutheranism? He promoted emigrations to America so that those who could not find pure altars in their homeland could find them in the Lutheran congregations there.

whom the Sacrament has become the star of hope and the heart of their earthly life just manage with a life-long *crede* and *manducasti*, even after all hope for an improvement has disappeared? Should they have to go on a pilgrimage in search of the ecstasy of the celebration of the Sacrament until they grow old? Or should they act as some have acted in certain circumstances? Tired of fighting, tired of waiting, should they just forget their convictions and their faithfulness to them? And without finding fault—or even being able to find fault—with their earlier restraint, and thus completely without remorse, should they just join up with the pastors and congregations which they used to avoid and henceforth participate in the Lord's Supper with the rest of the heap without any sort of eucharistic discipline? It could well happen with the resignation of bitterness and with a feeling of apostasy, that they abandon their first direction and take up another although they have no respect for the latter. Perhaps then in their sorrow and doubt, they would just become men of the world (there are abundant examples of this already). Perhaps then in vehement disdain of both of the directions they had formerly taken, they would give over their hungry souls to devour the delights of this world since they had not been able to receive the food and drink of eternal life

as they had wished. By reaching for an Altar Fellowship forbidden by the Lord, they would be swept even further away by the spirit of doubt and right into the fellowship of the world and the Devil. Are we supposed to tolerate this, dear brethren, and leave our own diaspora without advice? May the Lord forgive those who would rather have fellowship with the Reformed and Union churches than do their own duty and come to the aid of Jesus' destitute sheep.

How, exactly, did Löhe try to help this diaspora of sacramental Lutheranism? He promoted emigrations to America so that those who could not find pure altars in their homeland could find them in the Lutheran congregations there. He brought people to Neuendettelsau in order to make the altar of Saint Nicholas their home and through them to strengthen the confessionally conscious element of the congregation. Among those who could not leave their homes, he encouraged unlearned people to speak out in unpretentious simplicity against the clergy prominent through their official positions and social status. Of course with his depth of pastoral perception, he advised against following any sort of caprice in this deathly serious matter. He had pointed out that it would be possible for people to receive a release and commune in congregations where there were better conditions. And in a very responsible manner, he conjectured what ought to happen with such laymen as were unable, due to insuperable difficulties, to receive the Sacrament in another place, but in whose home congregations the doctrine of the Eucharist, the consecration, and the distribution were in good order from a confessional perspective (not taking into consideration the admission of the Reformed and United). He arrived at the following conclusion:⁶¹

Those ... who, as we, have received the great gift of grace to be able to recognize the ponderous importance and salutary affects of the Sacrament, are the least able to sentence themselves to doing without if it is in some way possible to get the Sacrament. And so, if all hope has disappeared to be able to dissuade the pastor with a selfless testimony from holding mixed Communion, then it is of utmost importance not to become an accessory of the sin of mixed Communion. However, if somehow he should be able to achieve that, at least I do not believe that it would be incorrect if someone in great anguish and desire of the soul were to permit himself to be driven to take the Body and Blood of the Lord from the hands of a Lutheran—I did not say Union or Reformed—but nevertheless a Lutheran pastor who practices mixed Communion. I advise this only under the assumption that such a one is unable to go on a pilgrimage and that he does not thereby become accessory to the guilt of mixed Communion.

In this case, Löhe would give the advice that such a person should go to the pastor in authority with one or two witnesses, explain his hunger for the Sacrament, but also his disagreement with the pastor's behavior which disobeys the apostolic prohibition, as well as his own spiritual conflict in the face of becoming guilty of the same by this procedure. Thereafter, he should register an official protest against this procedure both

We must point out the fact that for Löhe and his followers, it was not merely a question of confessional eucharistic discipline. Rather from beginning to end, it was an issue focused on arrangements for admission to the Eucharist in view of a Christian's life and a congregation's way of living.

before God and before the witnesses in order to reserve for himself the possibility of criticizing others. In this way, he should try, if possible, to commune in his own home congregation. Nevertheless, Löhe realized that this way still provided no solution for those who were not among the very simplest of the laity.

Nevertheless, in the sermon preached on November 9, 1866, Löhe did call this advice to mind, encouraging an active participation in the Sacrament even in such places where correct sacramental fellowship was not practiced—a participation, however, not lacking a censuring testimony against the false praxis. But he did not return to his advice without pointedly emphasizing how important it is to live according to the warning of Ti 3:10 or without calling into question the description of the Reformed Church as a “Sister Church.” In connection with that, he impressed upon his congregation the duty to point out to the Reformed the seriousness of issues pertaining to the truth—even in going so far as to deny them Altar Fellowship. The issue is one of love for the truth and not one of Lutherans’ desire to fight. “We have peacefully asserted the truth.” To this idea belong humility, and the prayer to God that He would use our faithful witness to win over our opponents. Yes, even intercession for the Reformed belongs to this province, the intercession that they might be strengthened in the truth and that “a correct Union of the children of God in the Spirit and in truth” might be brought about. Thus far Löhe’s sermon to his congregation!

The protest registered with the General Synod falls within the year 1861. The *Gutachten* comes in 1863 (in which Löhe presents his provision for dealing with Lutherans who have come over from the Union: They must swear confessional faithfulness for all possible cases in the future and deny mixed Communion before witness). The sermon was preached in the year of the German Civil War. And Löhe’s last word on the issue belongs to the end of 1868.⁶² His answer to a *Brüderliche Klage über Gewissensverwirrung* which came from the ranks of the old-Lutherans presents Löhe’s testament in the matter at hand better than the epistolary passage which Hopf places after 1870 (although one can say no more than that Hopf’s passage is probably later than 1867).⁶³ Löhe died on January 2, 1872. But anyway, in the article from 1868 we find Löhe’s famous saying, that “life would have no more worth for him unless he could trumpet throughout the whole world that Luther was right when he denied Altar Fellowship with Zwingli in Marburg for the sake of the Sacrament.”⁶⁴ There we also find Löhe’s testi-

mony as to the reason for all the mission and diaconical work he did outside of Neuendettelsau for the nation and the diaspora (that is what Löhe calls “internal mission”!):

When we founded the society for inner missions and then the deaconess house here, I had, I acknowledge forthrightly, no other designs than to put obstacles against the internal mission and deaconess work of the movement of the Union in my home regions. As for us, in our homeland, we were supposed to be engaged in mission work and *diakonia* from the perspective of the altar, and all for its glory—indeed, in such a way that no one could ever doubt our intentions in the least.... What I... wanted and still want is nothing more than to produce the proof that the Lord excludes neither my homeland, gathered as it is around *The Augsburg Confession*, nor therefore, us poor Lutherans (just because we have raised the humble standard of un-mixed Altar Fellowship) from either inner missions or the holy *diakonia* of the nineteenth century. Rather, I wanted to show that He could and would support us in spite of all the opposition we got from near and far. All of our action, no matter how little or how great, has not had, and still does not have, any other intention than to *honor the creative Words of our Most Holy Consecrator in the Sacrament of the Altar*. As among all of those who serve both Him and His people wherever they might be, we humble people from Dettelsau would like only to dedicate to His Altar all of our work together as a minute, yet always blooming wreath of thanks and praise.

What else could I do than to conclude with this citation which, as few of Löhe’s words, ought to be a serious summons for the Dettelsau of today to examine its conscience? Yet, it is precisely here, as earlier with the Ancient Church, that we must point out the fact that for Löhe and his followers, it was not merely a question of confessional eucharistic discipline. Rather from beginning to end, it was an issue focused on arrangements for admission to the Eucharist in view of a Christian’s life and a congregation’s way of living. I cannot follow up on that any further, but I see that I must emphatically mention these facts. I would just like to fulfill my duty to do that by directing your attention to the thorough pamphlet by Klaus Ganzert on church discipline as practice by Wilhelm Löhe.⁶⁵ Here you will find a wealth of bibliographical information, for the most part from volumes 5.1 and 5.2 of the *Gesammelte Werke*. However I would like to fulfill my duty also by giving the floor to Bruno Gutmann.⁶⁶

In Dettelsau, Löhe turned registration for communion into congregational self-examination. And so, for that reason, it occurred in God’s House itself. The pastor would stand before the altar with his heavy registration book which listed the names of all the communicants. To the right and to the left in the pews sat the members of the church council. Everyone who wished to register walked to the front alone. And before Löhe would write him into the book, he would ask the church council about the prospective communicant’s reputation and worthiness and their own

With a clear conscience, Löhe could tell his congregation that in view of his pursuit of the issue of the Supper, he had innumerable comrades in Germany and in America.

agreement to entering him into the book. This action must have had the affect of an old synodical court on the audience in the pews with their sharp and honorable farmer's faces full of judicious certitude. . . . The fact of the matter [is]. . . , that until 1805, there remained in existence in Brandenburgian Franconia just such village courts, comprised of either twelve or four farmer-jurors. . . . It was only in 1805 that this mysteriously kept remnant of old Germanic folk supremacy and communal self-accountability fell prey to the Prussian bureaucracy. Nevertheless, the instinct which lived on in it remained operative until well into the middle of the last century. . . . And so, under Löhe's hand it was simply a matter of maintaining this old corporate folk structure for a while on the level of the congregation in its last extant manifestation, as an instructive example of what could have been possible before it disappeared in the face of blind churchdom.

We got to Löhe from Delitzsch against whose writing Löhe argued with great clarity where it was needed, while Delitzsch was making explicit efforts to come to an "understanding" with the authors of the *Schwabacher Erklärung*. So please allow me to give the floor once again to Löhe. The following is the central passage of the *Schwabacher Erklärung* speaking against mixed Communion.⁶⁷

Can one go to the Supper under the appearance of unity and yet be unified in the Supper? If one does not view other differences as being a hindrance to Altar Fellowship, should not at least a difference of opinion on the Supper pose a hindrance? There can be nothing more despicable than a "Yes" and a "No" at the same altar, that is, division over the Sacrament at the Sacrament! It is despicable—it is a sin!

A sin against *Christ's Verba* .

A sin against the *Holy Meal*.

A sin against *the Church* which was molded into her unique character primarily through her fight for the Supper, who loses all that is hers when she loses her precious treasure.

A sin against *the confession* of the Church which is as holy in its antithetical maintenance of fellowship as in its thetical.

A sin against the far better *praxis* of our fathers who valiantly protected themselves against fellowship with the Reformed, and not only with the Reformed but also the *neutri* who wished to remain as they were.

A sin against *the congregations* who have been made unable to arrive at any sort of appreciation for the Holy Supper on this path since the path does not lead to a distinction.

A sin against *the heterodox* who lack the correct testimony concerning the Holy Supper, and thus cannot receive it.

A sin against *our own poor souls* since we cannot persist in so much sin after we come to know what we are doing without harm to our souls.

With this, we end our presentation of Löhe and of the second stage of the controversy concerning Altar Fellowship in Bavaria.

CARL F.W. WALTHER

With a clear conscience, Löhe could tell his congregation that in view of his pursuit of the issue of the Supper, he had innumerable comrades in Germany and in America.

How much one actually knew in Germany during the previous century about the correct Ancient Church Lutheran praxis of admission to the Holy Supper is apparent from an 1865 letter to Professor Hengstenberg in Berlin by a certain Schmidt, who was a Union Lutheran pastor in Brandenburg. Schmidt was supposed to become the superintendent of the *Landeskirche* in Küstrin. But during the deliberations preceding his instatement, the Prussian ecclesiastical government asked that he "preserve and further the Union" in the sense that he grant to the Reformed the right to participate in the Supper in Lutheran congregations. Connected to this demand were certain demands concerning the agenda, especially on the distribution formula during the Supper. Schmidt explained that to concede this supposed "right" stands in opposition to "the continued existence of the Lutheran confession guaranteed by the ecclesiastical government." One could, therefore, negotiate only for a "freely conceded common use" of the Sacrament of the Altar, but not demand it. For this reason, and because he did not want to relinquish his fight for winning back the Lutheran distribution formula for Küstrin, his prospective call to the position of superintendent fell through. One certainly finds ample grounds to take issue with him in his thoughts about the "freely conceded common use." But we must bear in mind that he seriously attempted to demonstrate the consequences of one's confession. And we shall not want to deny this Union Lutheran his due respect as one who gave up a promotion for the sake of his Lutheran principles!

Along the same lines, we can cite an example from the Saxon Lutheran Church, *Friedrich Edward Winter* (1810-1873) who was the benefactor of a rescue mission in Schwarzenberg. A small tome entitled *Erinnerungen an Pastor Winter zu Schwarzenberg* was put together by a Pastor Reuter in Elterlein and published in Annaberg as a memorial to him. Unfortunately, there is no date attached to the publication of this volume. Anyway, on page 47 of this book, the remark is made that "from his sermons" it is apparent that for Winter "as for a true Lutheran clergyman" the administration of the Sacrament was of highest import. Yes, he even viewed the administration of

the Sacrament as the dearest aspect of his office, as its very crown. “The sermons on the Lord’s Supper in particular, which he gave throughout the year, give testimony to the fact that the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ could never be commended highly enough to the congregation. The fact that the fruits of the Sacrament did not cease and that the number of his communicants always grew (even in our terribly unchurchly time when in so many places the reverse is true) was one of his greatest and most peaceful joys before the Lord.” It is no surprise to find a corroborating remark on page 48 which states that the aim of Winter’s confirmation instruction was always to prepare his students to participate in the Sacrament in a truly worthy manner! Then, a report on page 70 from a Saxon school inspector who had a very detailed discussion with Winter during his last days is very instructive. The inspector was of the opinion that “we must earnestly desire to draw confessions of the churches closer to each other and a fraternal cooperation with all who heartily believe in Jesus Christ as their Divine Saviour if we wish to preserve and strengthen

Walther impresses it upon his reader that the preacher does not have to be certain that those admitted to the Lord’s Supper are Christians with a living faith; rather, quite simply, “their non-Christian character must be neither demonstrable nor apparent.”

the Christian, churchly life of our times.” However, Winter “became ever more serious and finally explained with a certain decisiveness that although he respected and honored every faithfully minded Reformed and Catholic Christian, nevertheless, as an Evangelical Lutheran clergyman, he had to represent the confessional faith and worship of his Church in Word and Sacrament.” And it squares with this account that just a few days before, he had a long talk with a Reformed Christian who had wished to commune together with his Lutheran bride in Schwarzenberg. During this conversation, the groom relinquished his intentions due to Winter’s discussion of the different conceptions each Church had on the Lord’s Supper. Even so, Winter did express his readiness to hear the confession of a deathly sick Catholic woman who had called for him, and thereupon to pronounce the Absolution to her. But he decisively rejected the idea of administering the Holy Supper to her.

I intentionally adduced these two unknown figures and their positions, since the example of these two makes it clear that it was not just the prominent representatives of a renewed Lutheranism who pushed for the confessional praxis (Schmidt remained in the Union; Winter is presented on pages 59, and 63 f. as an enthusiastic representative of the position of Gustav Adolf-Verein).⁶⁸

Against that background, let us proceed from Germany to North America where we come into contact with a church

leader of great importance, Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther, and his position on the issue at hand. Walther put together his *Amerikanisch-Lutherische Pastoraltheologie* in 1872 which he had assembled from his various essays since 1865.⁶⁹ Here in §18 he takes up the issue of admission to the Holy Supper.⁷⁰ Four requirements must be met: (1) the person must be baptized; (2) the person must be able to examine himself; (3) the absence of the necessity of making a reconciliation or restitution before the reception of the Sacrament; and (4) it must be impossible to prove that the person in question is either not Christian or is a heretic who would on that basis receive the Sacrament unworthily. In relation to the third requirement, he explains in detail which forms of reconciliation are acceptable and when an upright desire for reconciliation is needed.⁷¹ Furthermore, he describes what should happen when the sin of the person in question is known only to his confessor and to the sinner himself. Even the issue of what sorts of careers exclude one from the Supper is dealt with—for the most part from old Lutheran instructions and not from those of the Ancient Church. He demands that those who have been excommunicated be rejected except for in the case of sudden death, where, nevertheless, the proviso is made that should recovery take place, public Confession and Absolution have to take place before the whole congregation. Also he handles the correctness and application of the sentence, “*Non remittitur peccatum, nisi restituitur ablatum.*” In the explanation of his thesis that only those can be admitted to the Holy Supper “who cannot be proven to be non-Christians or errant believers who would on that basis receive the Sacrament unworthily,”⁷² Walther impresses it upon his reader that the preacher does not have to be certain that those admitted to the Lord’s Supper are Christians with a living faith; rather, quite simply, “their non-Christian character must be neither demonstrable nor apparent.”⁷³ “To admit and refuse according to one’s own moralistic convictions is an irresponsible domination over consciences.” He deduces from Christ’s behavior with Judas that one ought, indeed, give a serious warning to those whose sins are still hidden, since they would receive the Sacrament to their injury. They ought to be encouraged to true repentance, but they should not be excluded. There must be a correct use of the necessary confessional registration. Then our author turns to the question of errant belief.⁷⁴ “Whoever does not confess faith in the fact that the true Body of Jesus Christ is really and truly present in the Lord’s Supper and is therefore received by all communicants, worthy and unworthy, such a one is unable to discern the Body of the Lord ... and is therefore not to be admitted to the Holy Supper under any circumstances. ... But even one who does confess this cannot be admitted in an ordinary way if he is not a member of our true-believing Church and is and wishes to remain a Separatist, Romanist, Calvinist, Zwinglian, a so-called Evangelical or Union-Christian, a Methodist, or Baptist—in short, a member of an errant fellowship. The reason for this is because the Sacrament, as much as it is a seal of faith, is also the banner of the congregation in which it is administered.” This idea of “in an ordinary way” which we just cited is explained by stating that the case of death provides an exception. Walther therefore unites the old praxis which knows of the *articulus mortis* among the excommunicated, with the modern conception which does not demand “objective Church membership” in the case of death. In any case, the latter is somewhat limited by Walther since he demands a true confession concerning the Supper even from a dying non-Lutheran.

The unquestionable decisiveness with which Walther penetrates the issues of one's confession concerning the Sacrament and one's church membership simply cannot be made to appear trifling by pointing out how strongly he depends upon the old Lutheran authorities for his position. Against that point of view, the special circumstances of North America (incidentally, Löhe points out just how quickly the great pressure to have Altar Fellowship among the members of all our confessions arose precisely in North America) could have easily brought Walther to the point where he just emphasized the impracticality of the old praxis (which in its day had been in use in confessionally closed territories) in a country where church membership was based completely on one's own will. Furthermore, the American scene should have caused Walther to maintain the "it-won't-work" attitude with far greater intensity than Löhe so often heard it in Bavaria—especially in view of the much more colorful confessional mixture of the Midwest. And so now, in view of Walther's position, we cannot avoid evaluating whether this "it-won't-work" attitude in Ger-

The unquestionable decisiveness with which Walther penetrates the issues of one's confession concerning the Sacrament and one's church membership simply cannot be made to appear trifling by pointing out how strongly he depends upon the old Lutheran authorities for his position.

many does not basically grow out of the territorialism inherent in ecclesiastical thought, according to which the "congregation" is not associated with the believers, but rather with a residential area. It is well worth emphasizing how close Löhe and Walther basically stand in the question we are addressing, even if it will have become clear that the situation in Bavaria for Löhe forced him to address pastoral needs which Walther does not in his *Pastoraltheologie*.

AFTER LÖHE

We have been led back to Löhe through our mention of C.F. W. Walther. Let us then ask whether Löhe's appeal to the conscience of Bavaria actually just died without effect. That would appear to be the case to the reader of the *Gutachten* on the Lord's Supper of 1863. Certainly, Andreas Hörger (1845-1894), to whom we can trace back the foundation of free Lutheran congregations in Ansbach and Memmingen, was able to point to the *deplorable* state of affairs within the *Landeskirche* in his battle against the Bavarian ecclesiastical government. Despite the fact that he was exonerated as being scripturally and confessionally correct, Hörger was nevertheless removed from his office due to his recalcitrance toward a regulation in the official hand book which was questionable in its use. All of this bears on our discussion since Hörger did indeed fight for correct eucharistic discipline! And the fact that the Lutheran rural

dean in Memmingen installed Reformed pastors in their office and the fact that in 1885, a resolution to remove the Lutherans from the Reformed parishes where they lived in Herbishofen and Grönenbach was rejected by the General Synod, do, of all things, fit into the list of facts in the ecclesiastical history of Bavaria, which is hard enough to understand as it is. And some of the observations originating during the period when Johannes Meisinger (who was called in 1904 as pastor to the groups once loyal to Hörger) sought to awaken a stronger free Lutheran Church in Bavaria are enough to show you just how right Bezzel was when in 1905 he emphasized again and again that the Bavarian Church was in dire straits.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, I mention Hörger and Meisinger only to lay to rest the claim that among those who listened to Löhe were not just those whom Ferdinand Weber, Löhe's successor at Saint Nicholas in Neuendettelsau, with an almost Kierkegaardian irony, characterized as "pulpit orators."

When I gave the bibliographical information for the second main division, I mentioned the name of *Gerhard von Zezschwitz*. Born in 1825, he was Professor Extraordinarius in Leipzig from 1856-61. During 1865-66, he was in Gießen, and then for almost nineteen years, he was the Ordinarius for Practical Theology in Erlangen, a post which brought him rich blessings. He died in 1886. He had expressed himself for the last time four years earlier in June of 1882 on the issue of Altar Fellowship at the general Bavarian pastors' conference. But let us now turn back to the practical suggestions and advice which he offered earlier in his *Kirchliche Normen berechtigter Abendmahlsgemeinschaft* of 1870 (if you study this, you will not be able to help remarking that these suggestions, too, are written with a serious view toward one's responsibility, also on those points where Tom Hardt feels as though he must take issue with Zezschwitz as well as Vilmar). An attack in a certain periodical from Berlin pressed for measures against Zezschwitz on the basis of some observations made. It was claimed that Zezschwitz's stance on the Lord's Supper issue would have long ago deprived the average pastor of his office. The article claimed that Zezschwitz, who was directing Union students in Erlangen *a limine* from going to the Supper in the Lutheran Church, was a fanatic who, on top of that, was even hurting Erlangen financially. The besieged "zealot" could only point out that certainly all who were present knew him as a man who sought to learn something from each Christian group which still could in any way be called the Church of Christ. On top of that, he claimed to be united in two things with the rest of the Bavarian clergy present: (a) that one ought to avoid acting lovelessly and unpastorally in the issue of the Lord's Supper; and (b) that the administration of the Sacrament has not been placed under the whims of our personal conception of love. Rather, administering the Sacrament is and remains a matter of the confessional Church. And should one act contrary to the principles of his confessional Church, he should know that he is guilty of the same. At any rate, a student had declared to Zezschwitz during registration that he was a member of the Union and wished to remain such. Zezschwitz refused to admit him. Yet, this matter was resolved in such a way that each of them went away as a friend and brother. The decisive questions for Zezschwitz vis-à-vis the Union-Lutherans who came out of the Prussian Union were: (a) How did they stand in relation to the Union as such? and (b) What was their official Lord's Supper praxis? "If someone declares to me that he will, as long as God grants him the grace to do so, give a testimony against the

“If things were to be according to my heart, I would let everyone come to the altar. . . . But then, my altar would not be a so-called pure altar. However, I do not have my heart to ask in these matters, but rather my obedience.”

false Union in word and deed, I will peacefully admit him to the Sacrament.” This practical question, however, needed to be asked because the reception of the Sacrament was not merely a matter of doctrine. (This brings to mind Löhe’s criticism against a purely intellectual Orthodoxism which, as such, had no practical consequences for sacramental life!). Zezschwitz verified that his ecclesiastical stance was clearly understood by a remark made by a student from the Union in the Palatinate whom Zezschwitz mistakenly questioned once after he did not take part in the academic celebration of the Supper. The student’s answer was full of respect for the spiritual position of the Lutherans.

Certainly, this is a special case. Nevertheless, this example shows how nearly 75 years ago in Erlangen one’s commitment to confessional eucharistic discipline did not excuse itself in the congregation of professors and students. Furthermore, this way of addressing the issue of the Union demonstrates that living in love does not exclude an assertion of the truth even though Eph. 4:15, albeit questionably, can be adduced as an argument against that: Wherever there is really love, such an assertion of the truth is understood by the other party.

When he fell seriously ill in 1861, Zezschwitz visited Neuendettelsau and there experienced Löhe’s cure of souls, which quickly turned him into a friend and disciple of the village parson. Löhe’s influence on Zezschwitz is detectable throughout the latter’s academic work. Zezschwitz in turn had a deep influence on Hermann (von) Bezzel who, after the Hessian Friedrich Meyer, was called as rector of the deaconesses’ institution at Neuendettelsau which he led from 1891 through 1909.⁷⁶ Although from 1909 through 1917, he was in charge of the Superior Consistory of the Bavarian *Landeskirche*, Bezzel said on his deathbed that being Löhe’s successor was the most cherished thing in his life. The year 1961 will certainly offer ample opportunity to memorialize Bezzel, who was born 1861. But right now we shall only mention that the last public speech of Bezzel’s was held in 1917 in Eisenach on the theme, “*Die Landeskirche zum Schutze des Bekenntnisses und in seinem Schutze.*” How did this man—who already as a young teacher in the *gymnasium* in Regensburg had voiced his approbation of Löhe’s “society for internal and external missions in the service of the Lutheran Church” which had as its core concern the push for Lutheran eucharistic discipline—how did Bezzel accept this concern and represent it?

Johannes Rupprecht is of the opinion (readily espoused today) that in the issue of Altar Fellowship between members

of the various confessional churches, Bezzel was inclined to exercise a milder praxis than Löhe.⁷⁷ But on what evidence is this maintained? Against this point of view, I cite a passage from one of his confirmation addresses from 1908: “One cannot expect of a man who sees in the Holy Supper the sum of Jesus’ work that he holds a doctrine different from the Lutheran as being correct on the Lord’s Supper.” What are the consequences of this? “Certainly, I myself believe that the pure altar is certainly the most worth striving for. And I believe that I myself know what I owe to the pure altar and what I have done in its honor.” In another confirmation address from 1904, he says, “Yes, pure altars!—even when it is hard on the heart. If things were to be according to my heart, I would let everyone come to the altar....But then, my altar would not be a so-called pure altar. However, I do not have my heart to ask in these matters, but rather my obedience.” How—according to the citations of Rupprecht—does Bezzel act as a communicant? In the address from 1908, cited above, he gives great import to the *publica doctrina* and its corresponding order of worship. In this vein, the following two citations complement one another: (a) “I go to the Holy Supper at every altar, provided that it is administered according to the Lutheran teaching;” (b) “I would not go to an altar of an outspoken Lutheran clergyman if the *publica doctrina*, which is publicly taught for all the world to see, is not that of my Church.” According to this last sentence, Bezzel would not, for example, commune at the hand of Lutheran-minded pastor, professor, or bishop from the Union Church in Baden! Along those same lines, Bezzel seeks to lead his confirmands in Neuendettelsau to the conclusion that they not go to any altar unless the celebration of the Lord’s Supper is done in the way that the Lord Himself gave it to His Church—and for Bezzel such a celebration is only that wherein the *publica doctrina* is Lutheran. Here he draws the borders of Altar Fellowship very clearly!

On the other hand, Bezzel would have offered the Sacrament to the Reformed on their *deathbed*. And in this we can see that he is, indeed, a student of Zezschwitz, just as we can when we take into consideration that he also would offer the Reformed the Sacrament in a case of *untolerably dire temptation*.

Georg Merz—who will open up another side of Bezzel’s thought for us—correctly remarked that Bezzel was inclined “to speak in a free-church manner in *Landeskirche* circles, and in free-church circles, in a *Landeskirche* manner.”⁷⁸ Up to this point, we have heard only citations from presentations made in Neuendettelsau (with its strong tradition of emphasizing altar purity!). However, in Neuendettelsau Bezzel appended to his “Yes, pure altars!” the remark that the profession of the communicants’ hearts to the Son of God and the certainty of “For me!” is more important than altar purity. And he did not fail to relate to his deaconesses how hard it was in many Bavarian-Swabian congregations to make good on the challenge of maintaining a pure altar. Now, one ought not to ignore the pointedness of Bezzel’s “Certainly—but” (of which Rupprecht makes ample use). It corroborates Merz’s observation and should make it abundantly clear that the Bezzel who consciously struggled towards the inwardness of personal piety (which alone would stand in the coming storms) in a congregation steeped in Löhe’s tradition of altar purity, yet must have perceived the removal of the limits around the altar for the sake of one’s confession to Jesus hardly as being an act of obedience. One must ask whether Rupprecht, in removing Bezzel

Faithfulness toward the Sacrament of the Altar is faithfulness to the Church.

from the context of Löhe, is not trying to mislead us into over-seeing that which binds Bezzel to Löhe in spite of the fact that Bezzel, due to the power of the dawning modern age, perceives all confessions which profess Jesus to have transposed into a sort of disposition which recalls Harms's confusion due to the apostasy of the Rationalists.

Bezzel expected there to be little or nothing in the way of blessings for such a person "as takes pleasure in erecting walls around the Holy Supper." Yet, that he would not have praised one's disavowal of the limitations set in place by confessional issues merely as an act of laudatory obedience appears to me necessarily to follow from his own position. Let me explain. From a letter written in 1911, it appears that Bezzel held it to be a distinct possibility that Free-Church Lutherans could even have a penitential relationship in the confessional with a Union-Lutheran.⁷⁹ Yet, in the same year he warned a young female student that she ought not to attend a seminary in Halberstadt for her career education.⁸⁰ Although the institution was well-suited to her needs, "Nevertheless, I cannot and wish not to advise you to attend an institution which is part of the Union." Then, in 1914 Bezzel was asked by a Vicar in the border region in Württemberg how he ought to conduct himself in relation to eucharistic admittance in the face of the deep-seated animosities which existed in the congregation entrusted to his care. Bezzel took the following decision: "If this spirit of unrecognition does not seem to want to subside; if no promise is made to lay aside the animosities—then you certainly can refuse the people admission to the Holy Supper, who, of course, can just run off in peace to Ulm to get the Sacrament."⁸¹ However, on this note, Bezzel told him to refuse the Sacrament only "to the clearly obstinate" (a piece of advice which bears a strong likeness to Walther's wise advice on refusal). Are we supposed to believe that he failed to be strict in issues pertaining to the faith when he himself desired that the Union be avoided in such a way but also that disciplinary limitations be placed around the Altar of the Sacrament in issues pertaining to love?

Johannes Rupprecht himself reported that during his years as president of the Superior Consistory in Munich, Bezzel "avoided as much as possible" "taking part in public joint celebrations of the Supper in Munich."⁸² The reason for this supplied by Rupprecht is that at the time there was still no Reformed congregation existent in Munich (in other words, that Bezzel at least personally rejected mixed communion among Protestants). However, on the very same issue, Georg

Merz characterizes Bezzel by stating that "he was so Lutheran that he did not participate in the Supper due to the lax eucharistic praxis in the churches in Munich."⁸³ I believe that Merz grasps the principle issues better. Manfred Seitz, however, attributes something more to Bezzel's motivation: "He was not certain what the clergy in Munich taught concerning the Lord's Supper."⁸⁴ And surely we are permitted to point out the fact that whenever Bezzel sought the Sacrament, he received it at 5:00 am in the sacristy at Saint John's in Ansbach (!) from the rural dean there who was in all probability (!) his very own confessor-father. We note further that these pilgrimages to Ansbach for the Sacrament within the framework of a confessional allegiance were not disputable by ecclesiastical law. I suppose one could also ask if the Holy Supper, in Bezzel's way of thinking, was not somehow too strongly coupled with the confession of sins (that is, with his private confession). And finally, one can point to the fact that in his last time of sickness in Munich, he wished to be served sacramentally by the district pastor there. However, it remains a telling sign that the leading man of the Bavarian Church stayed away from the Supper even in the place where his official duties were carried out—and *at least also on the basis of confessional sacramental discipline*. He was obviously not satisfied merely with the fact that the *publica doctrina* even in Munich was Lutheran. Yes, it remains a telling sign. And it remains a stumbling block for all quasi-Lutherans, even if one does not let things be as they were and even if one—from the point of view of Löhe—asks if the Holy Supper did not have too insignificant a meaning for Bezzel (the chapter on the Sacraments in Rupprecht's *Bezzel als Theolog* is in any case the second shortest of all his twelve chapters!). In *Bezzel's Stellung zur Kirchengemeinschaft*, in a very important spot, Rupprecht only supplies a quote from 1903, "Since it was matters pertaining to the Sacrament that caused the division, so also in matters pertaining to the same, a union will be brought about." We ought to and must maintain that Bezzel in any case did *not* mean that we should now bring about this union through personal unfaithfulness toward the ecclesiastical limits of Altar Fellowship. We can also understand in the same sense this message from one of Bezzel's confirmation instructions in 1904: "Faithfulness toward the Holy Supper, faithfulness toward this great institution of our richly merciful Lord Who in the night in which He was betrayed caused His love to overflow in abundance, Who, while we were requiting Him with our despicable thanklessness opened wide His heart; this faithfulness toward the Sacrament of the Altar is faithfulness to the Church."⁸⁵

CONCLUSION

When I accepted the assignment to undertake this historical overview, I asked two things: first of all, that I might be permitted to limit myself to a presentation of Church History, and secondly that I might keep myself from dealing with the present-day situation. We are all keeping a close eye on the present and its circumstances. And Hellmut Gollwitzer's article entitled "*Abendmahlsgemeinschaft*" provides a good introduction into the complex difficulties of the present.⁸⁶ We also take note of Erik Wolf's article "*Abendmahl VI. Rechtlich*."⁸⁷

Now, to be sure, I am of the opinion that at least a good portion of the issues and problems of the present are already hinted at in the historical presentation. Yes, one could even say that the modern issues had their very roots in the historical sit-

uation. And I would like to make myself known publicly on this: I believe that today we are not much different from the Lutheranism of the 1860s in which Wilhelm Löhe perceived such a lack in faithfulness and such an abundance of cowering men. In the time of the Prussian annexations, Löhe could inquire after the Battle of Königgrätz, who is that Prussian King, that Bismarck, to compel a Lutheran pastor to hold mixed communion when the pastor's heart is overflowing with love for his Savior and for His Sacrament and His congregation? But today it is just like it was then. At that time, Löhe's main complaint was not so much that the invitation made to the new provinces to participate in the Union was so strong, but that the knowledge of the pastors concerning their true duties was so weak. Together with this lack of knowledge came such a terribly minute will, so afraid of suffering, to carry out their duties. This all resulted in a lack of faithfulness on the part of the servant who really ought to hang from the very words of his Master and have regard for no one and nothing else.

Of course, some present-day issues which today touch us in a very real way, did not appear that way in the past. Many of the modern issues take place in a much different scenario than what I have presented as being the historical situation. But at any rate, I draw to your attention a very serious issue with which we are faced today: Many of the impulses to a sacramental life have their origin from outside of the confessional Lutheran movement from groups which have mixed communion. I mention the extremely bitter issue (which is of no interest to many of our ecclesiastical big-shots) concerning the suspension of Altar Fellowship between Churches of the same confession—in our case in Germany, between the Lutheran Free Churches and the *Landeskirchen*. This issue cannot be excused merely by saying that the Free Church Lutherans as a whole describe themselves as Lutherans *de facto*, while they describe those in the *Landeskirche* as Lutherans *de jure*. Nor can this be passed off by the Free Churches merely by dealing much too easily with the struggling and therefore sacramentally isolated and stunted Lutherans from the *Landeskirche* as mere beggars who by grace are permitted to the Lord's Supper—or credit them with cowardice, betrayal, and confusion of consciences. I mention these issues merely as examples. And I recall the terrible privation which resulted from the new way of thinking concerning correct doctrine in the last century. Our churches, once again, experienced literally generations of clergy who no longer cared to, and were no longer able to, teach. Rather, they only served as mediums for impulses and comforting words, for motivation and peace and quiet, for presenting issues and aspects. And the result of this all was that all across the spectrum in our congregations, we can no longer perceive that the people have any idea about the essence and the benefit of the Lord's Supper, no idea of the Church. And I believe that we shall be able to approach the issues and needs of today with a promising look for the future only if our incipient steps are taken with all seriousness, acting as *Seelsorger*—that is, if we even attain to and keep the courage and power to act faithfully toward the household of God. One thing (among others) which Wolfram von Krause emphasized untiringly within the framework of the Lutheran Brethrencircle was that Jesus' Supper is not the property of "the beloved soul," rather it was given and continues to be given to the Church for precisely this reason: because it is *Coena DOMINI*.

ADDENDUM

Since I was asked to say something more about the "Concord Churches" from around 1700, I would like to bring to your attention the following:

(1.) Karl Ludwig of the Palatinate had dedicated a church in Mannheim to holy concord, which was intended to be used by each of the three Christian confessions in his land for their worship. A common agenda for use in this house of worship was produced for both Lutherans and Reformed. However, this undertaking came to a halt when the French burned the city and the church in 1690.

(2.) On Easter of 1708, a joint church was dedicated in Friedrichstadt in Berlin. The "Lutheran" member of the mixed clerical ministerium there (a Reformed clergyman was the president) was the outspoken, lanky Pietist Joachim Lange. At the dedication, Luther's Catechism and the Heidelberg Catechism lay right next to each other on the holy table.

(3.) Between 1707 and 1716 in the *Waisenhauskirche* in Königsberg there existed an Altar Fellowship between the

Our churches, once again, experienced literally generations of clergy who no longer cared to, and were no longer able to, teach. Rather, they only served as mediums for impulses and comforting words, for motivation and peace and quiet, for presenting issues and aspects . . . we can no longer perceive that the people have any idea about the essence and the benefit of the Lord's Supper, no idea of the Church.

Reformed and Lutherans, where the preachers would receive the Sacrament from one another. In this instance, as in instance (1.), it was not just a matter of having a church building for the use of both confessions, but of realizing a real Union.

(4.) Likewise, in 1708 the cornerstone of the *Konkordienkirche* in Erlangen was laid. The Lutheran Margrave Christian Ernst of Bayreuth had married a daughter of the Great Elector, who was Reformed (by the way, this was his third marriage). And so now in this new church building courtly worship services were to take place alternating between the Lutherans and Reformed. In November of 1706 throughout all of Prussia, collections were raised for the building of this church!

In all of these cases, especially the one in Erlangen, political—if not also "aulo-political" (fraught with court relationships)—indifferentism is just as clearly perceptible as is shameful obedience to the whims of a nobleman. However, at least part of what went on was due (much as in Berlin) to a certain brand of Pietism playing out its animosities toward confessional theology.⁸⁸

AFTERWORD TO THE 1985 EDITION

This essay had its beginnings in a series of lectures delivered to a convention of the then-Lutheran Brethrencircle of Germany. In this recent publication at the request of the Flacius-Verlag, nothing was changed from its original form (excepting, of course, the correction of a couple of dates on Gerhard von Zezschwitz). Although a complete reworking of the material had a certain attraction for me, I still agree with the publisher that the developments of the last quarter of a century are sufficiently illuminated by what the first edition already offers. And so I would like to add only a few comments here.

On Part II: Ernst Koch published an instructive *Gutachten* on intercommunion from the period of later Orthodoxy, probably from the hand of Ernst Salomo Cyprian in the March issue of *Lutherische Blätter* (no. 87, vol. 9).

On Part III: Concerning Bezzel as Löhe's successor in his sacramental faith, look at my lecture delivered to the German-Swedish Convention in Schwanberg in 1962 which is found on pp. 85f. of *Der Kelch des Heils*, edited by Ernst Seybold (Ergerheim, 1963).

I also bring to your attention the planned supplement to Löhe's works which at the time of the earlier edition, I was only able to footnote. The new volume 7/2 of the *Gesammelte Werke Wilhelm Löhes*, published in 1960, contains Löhe's *Beicht- und Kommunionbuch* on pages 232ff. and 610ff., which underwent repeated editions since 1837. This new volume makes mention and use of the four editions which were published between 1837 and 1858, but ignores the fifth edition of 1871. This fifth edition is important for its foreword written by Löhe on Judica (April 3), 1870. This omission, which is to be explained merely as ignorance, is nevertheless very regrettable, since the Foreword contains Löhe's last word—and in a certain way, his last will and testament—on the issue of admission to the Eucharist. In the Foreword, Löhe confesses that with each new edition of the communion book he had hoped (yet in vain) for an amelioration in the general ecclesiastical situation in its Lord's Supper praxis and the configuration of its Altar Fellowship. "In the Lutheran *Landeskirchen* more or less the same old unionistic striving still rules the day, just as does the same old struggle for a general approbation of mixed communion." Löhe recognizes the confessional-political significance of the Prussian victories in 1866 and draws the conclusion "that we shall hope for a victory of the truth with closed eyes; that is, we can have hope where there is no hope." However, for this reason he says of himself, "he does not retreat in the least from the principles which he has always represented." Let it be noted that Löhe's expression here is to be adduced to the introduction to our presentation of Hörger, Zezschwitz, and Bezzel.

After the appearance of the first publication of this study, an expert the likes of Friedrich Wilhelm Hopf made the judgment that it would soon be a part of the indispensable defense of confessing and fighting Lutherans, and that it was especially suited for use in study groups. I must admit: I have not seen much either of this confessing and fighting or of such study groups (excepting the Evangelical-Lutheran Prayer Fellowship). That the easy way is the one that has been taken by many in this day in an age when the Church bows to the whims of the crowd still does not make the easy way the right way, not to mention the way of salvation. And so now again I lay this pamphlet in the hands of the friends of the Lutheran Church for their use. LOGIA

A GLOSSARY OF FOREIGN WORDS AND PHRASES

- a limine*: (Lat.) forthwith, from the very beginning.
Abendmahl und Kirchengemeinschaft in der Alten Kirche hauptsächlich des Ostens: (Ger.) *Eucharist and Church Fellowship in the First Four Centuries*. Translated by N.E. Nagel. St. Louis: CPH, 1966.
Abendmahl VI. Rechtlich: (Ger.) "The Lord's Supper 6.: From the Perspective of Ecclesiastical Law."
Abendmahlsgemeinschaft: (Ger.) "Altar Fellowship."
Abendmahlspredigten: (Ger.) Sermons on the Lord's Supper.
abstinendum est a sacris eorum quorum religionem. . . verbo Dei contrariam esse certi sumus: (Lat.) We must abstain from participating in the sacred rites of those whose religion we are certain is contrary to God's Word.
Acta Colloquii Montis Belligartensis: (Lat.) *The Acts of the Colloquy at Montbéliard*.
Altlutheraner: (Ger.) old-Lutherans.
Amerikanisch-Lutherische Pastoraltheologie: (Ger.) *American-Lutheran Pastoral Theology*.
Arcanum regium: (Lat.) the regal mystery.
Aus Franz Delitzschs späteren Jahren: (Ger.) "Some Information on the Last Years of Franz Delitzsch's Life."
avec le pain: (Fr.) with the bread.
Begegnungen: (Ger.) *Encounters*.
Beicht- und Kommunionbuch: (Ger.) *Confession and Communion Book*.
Bericht vom Heiligen Abendmahl: (Ger.) *Some Notes on the Holy Supper*.
Bezzel als Theolog: (Ger.) *Bezzel as a Theologian*.
Bezzels Stellung zur Kirchengemeinschaft: (Ger.) *Bezzel's Position on Church Discipline*.
Bibliothek der Kirchenväter: (Ger.) *Library of the Church Fathers*.
Brüderliche Klage über Gewissensverwirrung: (Ger.) *A Brotherly Reprimand on Confusing Consciences*.
Casus Conscientiae: (Lat.) *On Cases of the Conscience*.
Christlicher Unterricht vom Balgen: (Ger.) *Christian Instruction on Squabbles*.
Coena DOMINI: (Lat.) The Supper of the Lord.
cogite intrare: (Lat.) compel [them] to enter.
Collegium caritativum: (Lat.) College for Welfare.
Collegium irenicum: (Lat.) College for Peace.
communicatio in sacris [cum haereticis]: (Lat.) communion [with heretics] in sacred things.
communis opinio: (Lat.) the general opinion.
Consilia et Judicia theologica latina: (Lat.) *Theological Recommendations and Decisions*.
Consultatio de pace inter Protestantem inuenda: (Lat.) *An Inquiry into Considering Peace among the Protestants*.
crede: (Lat.) believe! (cf. Jn. 6)
cum: (Lat.) with.
Das bayerische Luthertum: (Ger.) *Bavarian Lutheranism*.
Das Sacrament des wahren Leibes und Blutes Jesu Christi: (Ger.) *The Sacrament of the True Body and Blood of Jesus Christ*.
De fide orthodoxa: (Lat.) *On the Orthodox Faith*.
de facto: (Lat.) in fact.
de jure: (Lat.) by law.
Der Kelch des Heils: (Ger.) *The Cup of Salvation*.
Die bayerische Abendmahlsgemeinschaft: (Ger.) *Altar Fellowship*

- in Bavaria.*
- Die evangelisch-lutherische Kirche in Bayern und die Insinuationen des Herrn Professor Döllinger:* (Ger.) *The Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Bavaria and the Accusations of Professor Döllinger.*
- Die Gewährung der Abendmahlsgemeinschaft an Reformiert und Unierte in ihrem Recht und ihrer Pflicht:* (Ger.) *The Continuation of Altar Fellowship with the Reformed and Union: Its Right and Duty.*
- Die kirchlichen Normen berechtigter Abendmahlsgemeinschaft:* (Ger.) *Ecclesiastical Norms for a Legitimate Altar Fellowship.*
- Die Landeskirche zum Schutze des Bekenntnisses und in ihrem Schutze:* (Ger.) *The Regional Church as a Protection for Confession and for Herself.*
- dissentium nulla fit mentio:* (Lat.) Let there be no mention of disagreement.
- Drei Bücher von der Kirche:* (Ger.) *Three Books on the Church.*
- Ecclesia Calviniana:* (Lat.) the Calvinist Church.
- Ecclesia Romana:* (Lat.) the Roman Church.
- ἐφόδιον: (Gr.) viaticum.
- ἐπίκλησις: (Gr.) calling down (the Eucharistic prayer).
- ἐπίστολοι συστατικά: (Gr.) letters of introduction.
- Erinnerungen an Pastor Winter zu Schwarzenberg:* (Ger.) *Memories of Pastor Winter in Schwarzenberg.*
- Erklärung mehrerer Geistlicher über ihr Verhältnis zur bayerisch-protestantischen Landeskirche:* (Ger.) *Explanation of Several Clergymen on Their Relationship to the Bavarian Protestant Territorial Church.*
- est:* (Lat.) is.
- Evangelische Geistliche:* (Ger.) *The Evangelical Clergyman.*
- fides quae creditur:* (Lat.) the faith which is believed (in distinction to *fides qua credo*: the faith with which I believe).
- Formula Missae:* (Lat.) *Formula for the [Latin] Mass* (found translated in *AE* 53, pp. 19-40).
- Franz Delitzsch als Lutheraner:* (Ger.) “Franz Delitzsch as a Lutheran.”
- Friede über Israel:* (Ger.) *Peace over Israel.*
- Gemeinde Bau aus dem Evangelium:* (Ger.) *Building a Congregation with the Gospel.*
- Gesammelte Werke [Wilhelm Löhes]:* (Ger.) *Collected Works [of Wilhelm Löhe].*
- Geschichte der Abendmahlsfrömmigkeit:* (Ger.) *A History of Eucharistic Piety.*
- Geschichte der evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland:* (Ger.) *A History of the Evangelical Church in Germany.*
- Griechische Liturgien:* (Ger.) *Greek Liturgies.*
- Gutachten in Sachen der Abendmahlsgemeinschaft:* (Ger.) *A Decision in Matters pertaining to Altar Fellowship.*
- Gutachten:* (Ger.) decision, decisions (the same form functions for the singular and plural).
- Gymnasium:* (Ger.) an academic high school.
- Heftiger Drang der Liebe:* (Ger.) *The Great Impulse of Love.*
- Hermann Bezzel als Theolog:* (Ger.) *Hermann Bezzel as a Theologian.*
- Hermann Bezzel, sein Leben, Wesen, und Wirken:* (Ger.) *Hermann Bezzel: His Life, Character and Work.*
- Hermann Bezzel Theologie, Darstellung, Form seiner Verkündigung:* (Ger.) *Hermann Bezzel: His Theology, Presentation, and the Form of His Proclamation.*
- Hermann Bezzels Stellung zur Kirchenzucht:* (Ger.) *Hermann Bezzel's Position on Church Discipline.*
- idoneus:* (Lat.) fit, appropriate, suitable.
- in articulo mortis:* (Lat.) in a death crisis.
- in oecumenis:* (Lat.) throughout the universal Church.
- in statu confessionis:* (Lat.) in a state of confession.
- Institutio:* (Lat.) *The Institutes of the Christian Religion.*
- Keine Kirchengemeinschaft mit Häretikern:* (Lat.) no Church Fellowship with heretics.
- Kirchliche Normen berechtigter Abendmahlsgemeinschaft:* (Ger.) *The Ecclesiastical Norms for Legitimate Altar Fellowship.*
- Kirchliches Leben des siebzehnten Jahrhunderts:* (Ger.) *The Ecclesiastical Life of the Seventeenth Century.*
- κοινωνία: (Gr.) fellowship.
- la manière de la manducation:* (Fr.) the manner of eating.
- Landeskirche:* (Ger.) regional and state church.
- lapsi:* (Lat.) the fallen, a specialized early Church term for those who had relinquished their faith in the face of persecution.
- le vray corps et le vray sang:* (Fr.) the true body and the true blood.
- Lehrbuch der Pastoraltheologie:* (Ger.) *Instructional Book on Pastoral Theology.*
- Letzte theologische Bedenken:* (Ger.) *Some Last Thoughts on Theology.*
- libellum pacis:* (Lat.) letter of peace.
- locus de reali praesentia:* (Lat.) the topic of the real presence.
- locus, (pl.) loci:* (Lat.) topic.
- Lutherische Blätter:* (Ger.) *The Lutheran Page.*
- Lutherischer Rundblick:* (Ger.) *Lutheran Panorama.*
- manducasti:* (Lat.) eat! (cf. Jn. 6)
- media vita in morte sumus:* (Lat.) In the middle of life, we are in death.
- ne quid dubitante conscientia facerent:* (Lat.) lest they should do something with a wavering conscience.
- neutri:* (Lat.) neutral.
- non remittitur peccatum, nisi restituitur ablatum:* (Lat.) The sin is not forgiven unless the offense is corrected.
- nota professionis:* (Lat.) a mark of one's confession.
- omnes unum:* (Lat.) All are one.
- Pastorale Lutheri:* (Lat.) *Luther's Pastoral Theology.*
- Pastorale:* (Lat.) *Pastoral Theology.*
- pax inter Protestantes:* (Lat.) Peace among the Protestants.
- per fraudem:* (Lat.) by fraud.
- periculum mortis:* (Lat.) peril of death
- pro me:* (Lat.) for me, on my account.
- profanatur sancta coena promiscua exhibitione:* (Lat.) The Holy Supper is profaned by indiscriminate administration.
- proprium:* (Lat.) the thing proper.
- publica doctrina:* (Lat.) open and official doctrine.
- quatenus tales sint:* (Lat.) to the degree that they are.
- quia substantiam hujus sacramenti corrumpunt:* (Lat.) because they corrupt the substance of this sacrament.
- quia:* (Lat.) because.
- sacramentaire, mysetérieuse, spirituelle et incompréhensible à nos sens:* (Fr.) sacramental, mysterious, spiritual, and incomprehensible to our senses.
- salva conscientia:* (Lat.) an unharmed conscience.
- Schwabacher Erklärung:* (Ger.) *The Schwabach Statement.*
- Seelsorge:* (Ger.) care for souls.
- Seelsorger:* (Ger.) curator of souls.
- Sitz im Leben:* (Ger.) original situation.
- Staatskirche und Freikirche, Union und Separation mit besonderer Rücksicht auf Bayern:* (Ger.) *State-Church and Free-Church, Union and Separation with an Especial View to*

Bavaria.

status controversiae: (Ger.) the point of the controversy.

Stimmen aus der Kirche über Abendmahlsgemeinschaft mit Fremdgläubigen: (Ger.) *Voices from the Church on Altar Fellowship with Errant Believers*.

Stimmen aus der Kirche über Abendmahlsgemeinschaft mit Fremdgläubigen: (Ger.) *Voices from the Church on the Issue of Altar Fellowship with False-Believers*.

sub utraque specie: (Lat.) under both kinds.

tantae necessitatis: (Lat.) of such necessity.

Tractatus de casibus conscientiae: (Lat.) *Treatise on Cases of the Conscience*.

tropus: (Lat.) trope.

uno corde credens, uno ore confitens: (Lat.) believing with one heart, confessing with one mouth.

Valentin Ernst Löscher und die Unionsversuche seiner Zeit: (Ger.) *Valentin Ernst Löscher and the Attempts at Union during His Life*.

vera ecclesia: (Lat.) the true Church.

vera fides: (Lat.) correct or true faith.

veram eucharistiam: (Lat.) the true Eucharist.

verba: (Lat.) words [of institution].

viva fides: (Lat.) living faith.

Wie wir die Trennung anzusehen haben, welche durch die sogenannten neuern religiösen Ansichten innerhalb unserer Kirche entstanden ist: (Ger.) *How We Ought to Regard the Separation Which Has Come into Being in Our Church as a Result of the So-called New Religious Views*."

Wilhelm Löhe, der lutherische Christenmensch: (Ger.) *Wilhelm Löhe, the Lutheran Christian*.

Wilhelm Löhes Gesammelte Werke, Ergänzungsreihe: (Ger.) *Wilhelm Löhe's Collected Works: Supplementary Series*.

Wilhelm Löhes Lehre von der Kirche, ihrem Amt und Regiment: (Ger.) *Wilhelm Löhe's Doctrine of the Church, Her Ministry and Governance*.

Zeitschrift für bayerische Kirchengeschichte: (Ger.) *Magazine for Bavarian Church History*.

Zucht aus Liebe: (Ger.) *Correction out of Love*.

ENDNOTES

1. The work is found in an English translation by S.D.F. Salmond in *The Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, vol. ix. (Scribners, 1898), second section pp. 1-101, under the title, *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*. The citation itself is found in Book iv, ch. xiii, p. 84, bottom of the first column. One would do well to read all of chapter xiii.

2. WA 30:III:558ff. This letter was published in 1533. Unfortunately, this letter was not translated and published in *The American Edition*. It has been translated by Jon Vieker and is available in reprint from the print shop of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

3. WA 30 III, 567, 13; cp. Walch (2) 17, 2019.

4. *Lutherische Blätter*, Nr. 65/XII (July 1960).

5. In the English-speaking world, vol. vii, pp. 529-593 of *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (reprint Eerdmans, 1975), would be of use.

6. Ambo is a specialized Ancient-Church term referring to the lectern or pulpit.

7. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. ix, 551ff.

8. *das Bekenntnis meiner Konfessionskirche*.

9. WA 12, 205-220. AE 53,15-40.

10. Published in 1606.

11. This quotation contains an excellent play on words. The common root for "uncertain" and "conscience" in German is "-gewiß". The preacher is therefore both "ungewiß" and "ohne Gewissen."

12. *Lutherische Blätter*, 1960, p. 76f.

13. p. 39.

14. On this, cf. Hardt's criticism of Elert's book, pp. 63f., which we have already mentioned (cf. p. 1, n.3 of the present paper).

15. "*die Erweckungsbewegung*"—in the history of the German Church, this movement was somewhat parallel to the "Great Awakening" in the United States, effected by the frontier itinerants.

16. "*Stimmen aus der Kirche über Abendmahlsgemeinschaft mit Fremdgläubigen*," Nördlingen: 1852, p. 39.

17. Cf. Spener's *Consilia et Judicia theologica latina*, Frankfurt, 1709.

18. "Church congress," a joint German Pan-Protestant annual meeting, supported by the large national churches of different confessions.

19. "Mystics" was the disparaging nickname used by the Rationalists for the so-called "old-Lutherans." Löhe was thus attacked as being a mystic.

20. *Lutherische Blätter*, 1958, p. 80.

21. *Zeitschrift für bayerische Kirchengeschichte*, 1959, pp. 197, 201ff.

22. Cf. E. Petri, *D. Ludwig Adolf Petri* (Hannover, no year), Part I, p. 57ff.

23. *Op. cit.*, Part I, pp. 233ff., 236ff.

24. *Op. cit.*, p. 234.

25. This according to Kantzenbach.

26. Vilmar, *Lehrbuch der Pastoraltheologie*, ed. Piderit (Gütersloh, 1872), p. 24.

27. *Loc. cit.*, p. 123.

28. *Lutherische Blätter*, 1960, p. 79.

29. Vilmar, *Lehrbuch*, p. 123.

30. *Lutherische Blätter*, 1955, 99. This issue was a *Festschrift* for H. Sasse.

31. Published as a manuscript in Kassel, 1941. Under scrutiny in the present endeavor is p. 405.

32. Cf. Kiunke, *op. cit.*, pp. 209ff.

33. *Op. cit.*, p. 204f.

34. *Lutherische Blätter*, 1955, 112ff. The "*Sasse Festschrift*."

35. *Op. cit.*, p. 120.

36. p. 13.

37. p. 13f.

38. p. 14.

39. p. 19.

40. p. 20.

41. I shall cite *Das Sacrament, etc.* according to the fifth edition of 1871. This edition Delitzsch had again reconsidered under prayer.

42. p. 55f.

43. p. 21.

44. p. 17.

45. p. 28-41.

46. p. 41f.

47. p. 42-45.

48. p. 45-48.

49. This essay is found in the 1947 yearbook (published in

München in 1946) of the Martin-Luther-Bund.

50. *Lutherische Blätter*, 1956, 137ff.
51. *Lutherische Blätter*, 1958, 53ff.
52. Berlin, 1960. Cf. esp. pp. 47 ff.
53. Neuendettelsau, 1939.
54. Neuendettelsau, 1954 and 1956.
55. Since the last German edition of this essay, these sermons have been published in *Wilhelm Löhes Gesammelte Werke, Ergänzungsreihe*, bd. 1, ed. Martin Wittenberg, *Wilhelm Löhe: Abendmahlspredigten* (1866).
56. The petition is found in *Löhes Gesammelte Werke*, bd. 5, abt. 2, pp. 866-867.
57. *Op. cit.*, p. 867.
58. *Löhe: Ergänzungsreihe*, bd. 1, pp. 141ff.
59. *Ges. Werke*, 5.2, 882ff. The work was written originally in 1863.
60. *Op. cit.*, pp. 892-93.
61. *Op. cit.*, pp. 898-899.
62. This last bit of information is false. See the "Epilogue of 1985" appended to this paper.
63. *Lutherische Blätter*, 1858, p. 77.
64. *Gesammelte Werke*, 5.2, p. 911.
65. *Zucht aus Liebe*, Neuendettelsau, 1949.66. *Gemeinde Bau aus dem Evangelium*, Leipzig, 1925, pp. 201-02.
67. This citation is from pp. 13-14 of the 1851 printing.
68. The Gustav Adoplf-Verein is a pan-Protestant society mainly anti-Catholic in its attitude.
69. I will be citing the 5th edition of this work which was published in 1906 in St. Louis.

70. *Op. cit.*, pp. 190-200.
71. *Op. cit.*, pp. 194ff.
72. *Op. cit.*, p. 190.
73. *Op. cit.*, pp. 192-93.
74. *Op. cit.*, p. 193.
75. Cf. Meisinger's *Staatskirche und Freikirche, Union und Separation mit besonderer Rücksicht auf Bayern*, published with no date.
76. According to Manfred Seitz, *Hermann Bezzel/ Theologie, Darstellung, Form seiner Verkündigung* (München, 1960), p. 26: "[his influence] was stronger than we had earlier thought."
77. We have in mind here Rupprecht's *Hermann Bezzel als Theologie* (München, 1925), pp. 252ff., and *Hermann Bezzels Stellung zur Kirchenzucht* (Neuendettelsau, no date), p. 12.
78. Merz, *Das bayerische Luthertum* (München, 1955), p. 46.
79. *Briefe*, edited by W. S. Schmerl (Nürnberg, no date), p. 211.
80. *Op. cit.*, p. 213.
81. *Op. cit.*, pp. 263-64.
82. *Hermann Bezzel, sein Leben, Wesen, und Wirken* (Erlangen, 1937), p. 130.
83. *Begegnungen*, ed. Hanns Lilje (Nürnberg, 1952), p. 9.
84. *Op. cit.*, p. 58.
85. *Bezzel als Theologie*, p. 165.
86. RGG(3) I, pp. 51 ff. Unfortunately, while this article does provide good information, it nevertheless leaves much to be desired.
87. *Ibidem*, p. 49f.
88. Cf. Paul Schreyer, *Valentin Ernst Löscher und die Unionsversuche seiner Zeit* (Schwabach, 1938), pp. 69ff.

LOGIA

A JOURNAL OF LUTHERAN THEOLOGY

A Journal Whose Time Has Come!

Are you looking for a journal which addresses issues from a truly Confessional Lutheran point of view? Are you tired of publications which either indulge in constant “party politics” or inflammatory rhetoric? Are you irritated with journals which claim to represent Lutheranism but defend a decidedly non-Lutheran view on important doctrinal issues? If you can answer yes to any of these questions then you need to subscribe to *Logia*. A wide variety of supporters have shared their positive reactions to our journal.

Congratulations on the development of Logia into a full-fledged journal. We certainly will all benefit from increasing theological and confessional reflection and study. I've always been fond of Gordon Rupp's comment that there is nothing so wrong with Lutherans that a good dose of Luther won't help.

Carter Lindberg
Professor of Theology, Boston University

I trust especially your intent to make the new journal a forum for good, confessional Lutheran discourse which is not encumbered by the interests of ecclesiastical partisanship and party spirit...There is no wide outlet for the presentation of confessional Lutheran discourse in our circles. Seminary journals are, of course, vehicles for some of that. Yet, there is certainly room for more. And what makes your enterprise so welcome is that it is sponsored by and edited by confessional, theologically informed and aware pastors. It is precisely from our pastors that the theological leadership is needed, and it is especially gratifying to me to note that what our seminaries hope to produce—pastoral theologians and theological pastors—is in this journal being realized. May God bless it and keep it worthy of its high intent.

William Weinrich
Professor, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN

Allow me to express my support for Logia which I hope will be scholarly and dogmatic in its approach and pan-Lutheran in its outreach.

Paul Hinlicky
Editor of *Lutheran Forum* and *Proecclesia*, Delhi, New York

The goal of the publication is noble, and I believe there is a place for it as it offers positive material on issues which need clarification and enlargement.

Waldo Werning
Discipling/Stewardship Center, Fort Wayne, Indiana

I have been glad to read of your plans to start such a new journal that seems to promote exactly those theological concerns that I have at heart. I wish you God's blessings for your preparations. I hope that this journal will be a well-heard testimony for the true catholicity of our dear Lutheran Church!

Dr. Gottfried Martens
St. Mary's Lutheran Church, Berlin, Germany

I shall look forward to studying your journal, and I pray that it may promote the cause of confessional Lutheranism and bring the blessings of God's Word to a wide readership.

Joel Fredrich
Northwestern College

I have enjoyed the current Logia a lot...and I look forward to the new journal.

Jim Voelz
Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis

It sounds like an exciting venture. All of us here certainly wish it well. We'll look forward to receiving the first issue of Logia. May it have a wide readership.

Armin Panning
President, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

In an era in which personalities and “politics” cloud the crucial issues before Confessional Lutheranism, I am looking forward to having a public arena which enables us to tackle the real issues facing us. Equally important is the fact that we will no longer be limited to the “converted.” It will enable us to rise above party spirit for open and forthright dialoge on those things that really matter: God's Holy Means of Grace in His Holy Church.

Harold Seinkbeil
Pastor, Elm Grove Lutheran Church, Elm Grove, Wisconsin

Subscribe Now!

Use the postage-paid card in the center of the journal

Two Sermons on the Holy Supper

Martin Luther



These sermons were preached by Martin Luther in his home on Maundy Thursday 1534. They are part of the House Postil, a collection of sermons based on notes made by George Rörer and Veit Dietrich. The first edition of the House Postil was printed in 1543. This is a significant fact. Luther's sermons and lectures were often transcribed by students. However, many were published after Luther's death, thus without his knowledge or approval. For example, the so-called Genesis Commentary was based on classroom notes and was obviously edited after Luther's death. The House Postil was printed with Luther's encouragement and approval. Thus it is a very reliable source for studying the theology of the older Luther. These sermons are from Sermons on the Gospels for the Sundays and Principal Festivals of the Church Year by Martin Luther translated by E. Schmid and edited by M. Loy (Rock Island, Illinois: Augustana Book Company, 1871). The critical edition of these sermons is found in Dr. Martin Luther's Werke, Kritische Gesamtausgabe, Volume 52 (Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus, 1915), pp. 205ff. We reprint the translations of these sermons here because they are not widely available and because of what Luther has to say about the fellowship aspect of the Lord's Supper, said clearly here but found rarely in Luther elsewhere. We are pleased to announce that Baker Book House has informed us that they will be offering a complete translation of Luther's House Postil in the near future.

ACCORDING TO A TIME-HONORED USAGE, MORE PEOPLE COME to the Lord's Table at this season than at any other time during the year. This fact, together with the urgent necessity that on a stated day the doctrine of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper be plainly taught the people from the pulpit, prompts us to consider now the words of St. Paul, which you have heard read in our text [1 Corinthians 11:23–26]. From these words we learn that this Sacrament was in no wise instituted or introduced by men, but by Christ Himself. In the night in which He was betrayed He instituted it for His disciples, yea, for all Christians, that it might be His testament to them, His parting gift, full of great comfort and blessing.

We Christians should therefore cherish this Testament as a treasure of the highest value, should love it dearly, and should make use of it cheerfully and frequently, deriving from it much joy and consolation, thus fulfilling the will of our dying Lord and Savior. His command in this regard is plain: He enjoins upon us the use of this Sacrament. True Christians will never disregard this command, but will readily and often find comfort in its fulfillment, even until that day when the Lord, who Himself gave us such a Testament, shall again come from heaven to judge the quick and the dead.

While the Pope yet held us in his sway we were frightened by the words of St. Paul: "He that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation to himself;" for no one taught us correctly what these words really mean. Hence the Holy Sacrament was dishonored; the people shunned it as death-bringing, and instead of regarding it as food unto life, they thought it dangerous and pernicious. The lying priests brought this about, though we richly deserved it by our own base ingratitude. Christ meant it so well with us, but we were careless and ungrateful; no wonder therefore that our joy was changed into sorrow, our happiness into weeping, and our blessing into a curse. We ourselves were to blame in this; we shamefully neglected the great and sacred treasure.

A similar calamity is now threatened by the Sacramentarians, who bring dangerous controversies into the churches by their false doctrines concerning the Sacrament; for they teach the people that in it we have naught but bread and wine, thus depriving the Christians again of the comfortable assurance of grace, which Christ has connected with this Sacrament and given to His Church. We must therefore avoid these false teachers, else they will drag us once more into the bitter woe which we endured under the Pope, when it had become customary to preach of this Sacrament in such a manner as to produce but fear and trembling, so that people refused to participate in it, and lost all the gladness and grace which this holy food can bring.

We were told that we must first confess all our sins, and do penance for them, before we could approach the Table of the Lord. To do this was, however, an impossibility. We were conscious of our sinfulness and feared to partake of this food, judging ourselves unworthy of it, so that no one could commune with a cheerful heart. Every one mistrusted this benign institution, fearing it to be a source of death, or a means of "eating damnation to himself," as St. Paul expresses it. Surely that was a most lamentable state of affairs, when the people became averse to the most blessed Sacrament.

But the Pope made the evil worse by inconsiderately compelling the terrified and trembling souls to come to the Lord's Supper at least once a year. He excommunicated every one who did not annually come to the Sacrament, and yet he only distributed it under one form, as it is called, in direct contradiction to the command of our Lord, who so instituted His Testament that His body and blood should be received not only by eating of the bread, but also by partaking of the cup. This form of the institution of the Sacrament the Pope trampled under foot, and still condemns as a heresy, the distribution of the Lord's Supper under a twofold form, even though

Christ really gives us with the bread His body to eat, and with the wine His blood to drink, as the words plainly state, in spite of the devil. Each one that eats and drinks, receives for himself in this Sacrament the body and blood of Christ as his own special gift.

Christ Himself thus instituted and ordered it. What a terrible abomination they made of the Sacrament, causing people to be afraid of it, and then forcing them to receive it, and what was worse than all, changing the form of the institution, in plain opposition to the command of Christ.

Imagine for yourself what pleasure you would have in such a compulsory eating and drinking. You would have as little relish for it as the sick man has for the wine whose very smell he abhors, but which he is forced to swallow. It was a necessary consequence that the Holy Sacrament proved ineffectual with the people in the papacy; for they could but receive it with the conviction of their own impurity and unworthiness, and yet through fear of excommunication they partook of it. No wonder that it was to them void of consolation and happiness.

But the Pope still further abused the Holy Supper and the Testament of our Lord, when by the assistance of his priests he made it a matter of merchandise in behalf of the dead, so that the mass was celebrated without devotion, merely for money and revenue. I think that this was, beyond all dispute, a most sacrilegious abuse of the Sacrament; and I have not the least doubt, if popery had remained in its glory, if the blessed Gospel had not been brought to light again, the living would finally have been entirely deprived of the Holy Supper, and it would have been applied only to the dead. Those of us more advanced in years can well recollect the pomp and ostentation with which mass for the departed was everywhere celebrated.

I mention these things in this connection to show how God punished an ungrateful world by permitting the Pope to distribute the Sacrament in a mutilated manner to a benighted people, who went to the Lord's Table as if to perform a work, not to receive a blessing, fearing the wrath and judgment of God.

In addition to this the Pope employed the mass as a soothing remedy for every kind of misfortune and disease. Let such perversions be to us a warning example, that we may not become similar despisers of the Holy Sacrament, but that we may receive it rightly, according to its institution and true meaning.

Tell me, is it not an exceedingly cheering word, when the Lord tells His disciples so graciously and kindly: "Take and eat, this is my body; take and drink ye all of it; this cup is the New Testament in my blood, this do in remembrance of me," and do it not only once, but repeatedly until the end of time? Our blessed Lord desired, by means of this Sacrament and Testament, to keep alive in us our remembrance of Him and our

faith. He therefore instituted His Supper as a constant memorial of His death, through which we are delivered from our sins and eternal misery.

In this we can see naught but condescension and love; there is no anger here nor vengeance; yea, parents could not deal more kindly with their children. Christ's chief desire, as He Himself declares, is that we shall not forget Him. It is His earnest intention that our whole being shall be impressed with the memory of His passion, that we may never forget how He died for us upon the cross and rose again from the dead. It was His purpose that coming generations should know Him as their Lord, that they might be saved by Him; and therefore, also, He earnestly enjoined upon Christians to instruct the young in His word, and to keep His remembrance sacred, that those who come after them may also be induced to worship Him in the congregation of believers, and own Him as their Christ and only consolation. For this reason the Lord made His Testament, and we ought never to weary in the remembrance of it. Surely, when true friends meet it is no burdensome task for them to sit together in conversation throughout the night, forgetful of sleep and rest; why then should we grow weary of learning and of preaching the precious truth that Christ the Lord is our Redeemer?

But the Sacrament of the Holy Supper was instituted not merely that by its observance Christ might be honored; for He can truthfully say: "I need not thy praise, I am the Son of God, whether thou glorifies me or not;" but also and especially for the reason that we stand in need of such a Testament and Supper, and that we might be benefited by it. Listen to the words with which He gives the bread: "Take, eat, this is my body, which is given for you," and with which, soon after, He gives the cup: "Drink ye all of it; this cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you, for the remission of sins."

This declaration is the Christian's most effective consolation; for he who really believes that Christ gave His body for him, and that He shed His blood for the remission of sins, cannot despair, no matter what sin, the world and the devil may say. He knows that this treasure wherewith his sins have been cancelled is far greater than all his iniquities.

But the consolation contained in this declaration stands not alone; Christ really gives us with the bread His body to eat, and with the wine His blood to drink, as the words plainly state, in spite of the devil. Each one that eats and drinks, receives for himself in this Sacrament the body and blood of Christ as his own special gift. Yea, this is the very truth which we must firmly hold: Christ suffered and died for me also, and not alone for St. Peter, St. Paul or other saints. To assure us of this truth Christ gave His Testament; for through it each one individually receives the body and the blood of Christ. It is therefore proper to say that through this Sacrament we obtain forgiveness of sins; for where Christ is, there is forgiveness of sins; here we have His body and blood, as the words declare; therefore he who eats and drinks, believing that the body of Christ was given for him, and that His blood was shed for the forgiveness of his sins, must surely have this forgiveness. Yet, it is not the act of going to the Sacrament, nor the eating and drinking, whereby we gain this divine grace, as the Papists falsely teach concerning the performance of their mass; but it is the faith in us which believes the words of Christ when He says: "I give you my body, given for you into death, and give you my blood, shed for you for the remission of your sins." Thus will our reception of the Sacrament tend to the strengthening of

our faith, and the chief and greatest blessing of this Testament will be ours.

Another benign effect of this Sacrament is the union, in faith and doctrine, which it produces among Christians, and which is so very necessary. To bring about true union among Christians it is not sufficient that they come together to hear the same preaching and the same word, but they must also meet around the same altar to receive the same food and drink. One may, perchance, hear me preach the word and yet be my enemy; but if one partakes of the Lord's Supper he, by that act, makes for himself, individually, a public confession of his faith, although there may be hypocrites now and then; and thus a more reliable union, between the Christians who unite in this Sacrament, is formed than if they merely had the Gospel preached unto them, though this may also cause them to be of one mind. Those of the same faith and the same hope unite at the Table of the Lord, while those of a different faith stand aloof. Agreement in the church is very desirable, and there should be no divisions in matters of faith. This union was properly called by a Latin term, *Communio*, a communion, and those who would not agree with other Christians in faith, doctrine, and life, were called *Excommunicati*, as being different in their belief and conduct, and hence unworthy to belong to the congregation of those who are of one mind, lest they might produce dissensions and schisms. By means also of the Holy Sacrament Christ establishes this union among the little company of His believers.

Our old teachers entertained very beautiful thoughts in regard to this when they said Christ took bread and wine for His Supper to indicate that, just as many distinct and separate grains of wheat, when ground together, make one loaf of bread, so we, being many, are one bread and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread, though each one is a distinct person and separate individuality, 1 Cor. 10. And again, as many clusters of grapes and many little berries, each distinct and separate, when pressed together form one delicious juice, one wine, thus it is with the Christians who have the same faith, the same confession, the same love and hope of salvation.

This was the interpretation of our fathers, and they were not mistaken in it. The Holy Sacrament has the effect to firmly join the Christians together in unity of purpose, doctrine, and faith, so that no one should stand alone, nor have his own doctrine or belief. The devil is sorely vexed at this, and is busy in endeavoring to destroy such unity and agreement. He knows full well what injury results to him, if we are united in our confession and adhere to one Head; hence he endeavors to tempt us, here and there, with false doctrines, with doubt, with lying insinuations in regard to the Sacrament and other articles of faith, hoping to cause dissensions in the Church.

It is true, offenses will come, yet it behooves us to guard against them, so that the devil may not entirely separate us. If one or the other insists on differing with us in the doctrine of the Sacrament, or in other parts of our faith, let us, who agree in one confession, be so much the more united in our faith in Jesus Christ; yea, let us be in this as one man. This, however, is only possible where there is unity in doctrine.

This, then, is an additional benefit of the institution of the Holy Supper. Our Lord gave us this Sacrament to bring about unity of faith, of doctrine, and of life. The external differences in the stations of life will, of course, continue; there is no equality there. Each one has his own duties to perform, which differ vastly from each other. A farmer leads another life than a

prince; the wife and mistress of the house has other duties to perform than the maidservant. Such distinctions must ever remain in our every day life. But in Christ there is neither male nor female, no prince nor tiller of the soil: They are all Christians. The Gospel, the promise and faith which I have, belongs equally to prince, peasant, woman, servant, and child.

Such equality is indicated by the Holy Supper, since in it we all receive the same food and nourishment, whether we be man or wife, matron or maid, father or child, ruler or subject. If we have the same faith we are heirs of the same heaven, though I may reside here and another in Jerusalem, and we are personally total strangers to each other; for we both have the same Lord, in whom we believe and hope for salvation. This union of faith causes the devil immense displeasure, and he is ever on the alert to sunder our communion; for he knows how his influence is thwarted when Christians firmly agree in faith and doctrine. Against these attempts of Satan, Christ instituted this Holy Sacrament as a means of uniting the believers.

From this it follows that this Sacrament is needed by every

This Sacrament is needed by every individual; and if we disregard it and fail to praise the Lord, and so sever ourselves from the communion of Christians, the loss will be ours, and will become greater the longer we abstain from the Sacrament.

individual; and if we disregard it and fail to praise the Lord, and so sever ourselves from the communion of Christians, the loss will be ours, and will become greater the longer we abstain from the Sacrament. It is true, indeed, that Christ has no need for Himself of our compliance with His ordinance, nor of our remembrance of Him; it is to our own advantage to do so; for if we are not in communion with Christ we are in communion with the devil, and will suffer great injury. Even if Satan cannot harm us externally, we still will carry with us in our bosom our bitter foe.

We ever have near us an advocate of evil, whether we eat or drink, whether we are asleep or awake, even our own flesh, the Old Adam. He accompanies us to bed and arises with us in the morning; he pleads unceasingly and eloquently, with the fixed purpose of estranging us from Christ and His Gospel. This advocate of evil whom we constantly carry about with us, and whose habitation is in our hearts, is ever intent on exciting us to become rich and great in the world, and sways us with the delusion that we have neither occasion nor time to go to the Sacrament. If we heed his lying counsels we will grow colder and colder in our love towards Christ and His gifts; yea, though we might even daily hear His word, this cunning tempter within us will bring it to pass that we do so merely outwardly, while in reality our devotion is a sham, and our thoughts are engaged with the business of this world. Show me the avaricious man who grows weary of his passion! Is it not

rather true that the covetous man becomes fonder and fonder of his idols from day to day, cherishing and pursuing with eagerness avarice and usury? The same is true in regard to other sins. The lewd person delights in his unchastity; he thinks and speaks about it with evident glee, and indulges in his wicked passion more and more. Such are the results of the instructions which the Old Adam gives: They lead to destruction.

Christ desires to counteract the sinister influence of the old seducer within us, who would fix our attention alone and chiefly on temporal things. Christ instead would have us be mindful of eternity, of Himself, our Savior, who died for us upon the cross. He would fain have us see our foolishness, so that we would gladly come unto Him, weary of our depraved life, exclaiming: "O Lord, we know how sinful we are and how unable to resist the allurements of evil, therefore we cry unto Thee for help; enable Thou us to shun the world and to love Thee truly." We stand in daily need of such remembrance of Christ in opposition to this pernicious advocate, this Old Adam within us, who clamors about our ears day and night, hoping to plunge us, beyond all help, into the cares and pleasures of this world.

To counteract this wicked purpose, Christ instituted His Holy Supper, that its celebration should remind us of the life to come. He takes the bread and the cup, and tells His disciples to eat and to drink, saying, "This is my body and blood, given for you, and shed for your sins," at the same time exhorting us to remember Him, and not to run merely after the things of this world, as we generally do. In the Holy Supper He gives us an opportunity to receive Him, to come unto Him, and to remember Him; for in Communion the benefit is ours; He has no need of it.

I doubt that the people would not fairly crowd to the Sacrament if money, or earthly gifts, were distributed there; yea, the blind and the lame would rush thither, regardless of intervening rivers and mountains.

We ought, indeed, to be ashamed of ourselves, when we think what a miserable set we are, always ready to run after money and perishable things, while we are so slow, yea, so averse, to come to the Table of the Lord, where a heavenly gift, even His body and blood, awaits us. Here, in this Testament, a precious treasure, salvation and happiness, is to be conveyed to us; but, alas, we flee from it as from poison or some terrible punishment.

How is it that we prize gold and silver more than this magnificent, precious treasure? The devil is the instigator of this our choice; he influences our old Adam, who is naturally backward and indifferent towards things eternal, and cares more for that which is temporal. This ingratitude and carelessness is very sinful, yes, much more than can be imagined; nevertheless we are often guilty of it, else we would seek more diligently the kingdom of heaven and its blessings, which are not transitory, like the earthly property, of which we are so much enamored. Let us never forget that we must in due time render an account of our behavior in this regard.

The Lord's Supper admonishes us not to be ungrateful any longer, but to realize, together with other Christians, with whom we confess our faith and share this most Holy Sacrament, what great blessings Christ bestows upon us through it, and how we should therefore serve and praise Him as our Lord, who not only died for us, but also gives us, as nourishment for our souls, His body and blood. He desires that we

should remember Him while we receive it for the strengthening of our faith and the preservation of unity among the Christians. Whoever refuses to comply with the command of the Lord, deserves to fall into the hands of the false teachers, who preach to him that in the Lord's Supper there is naught but bread and wine. In the papacy the doctrine concerning this Sacrament was falsified, for the Lord was not remembered as He had ordered it; and hence it resulted that no one knew what the Lord's Supper was, and why one should receive it. Obedience to the Church was considered the chief concern of all, and the result was idolatry and invocation of saints. God grant that we may retain the true faith and have a living interest in this matter. We have the doctrine true and pure again, we understand why we go to the Holy Sacrament, to remember the Lord with praise and thanksgiving for His mercy and kindness, and also to receive consolation and strengthening of our faith. Let our hearts then be firm and not doubt; let us be assured that God is pleased with us, and will not punish us for our sins, since Christ gave His body for us and shed His sacred blood for

Let our hearts then be firm and not doubt; let us be assured that God is pleased with us, and will not punish us for our sins, since Christ gave His body for us and shed His sacred blood for us.

us. Thus we will proclaim the death of our Lord correctly and fulfill His command: "Do this in remembrance of me."

In view of this, judge for yourself what kind of Christians those persons are, who stay away from the Lord's Supper one whole year, yes two, three and even more years? Such people are surely possessed of the devil; they either have no knowledge of their sins, and consequently take no thought how to be relieved of them, or else they are so wrapped up in the affairs of this world that they entirely forget the life to come. This is dreadful indeed. Whoever confesses to be a Christian and desires to live in accordance with his confession, must come repeatedly and often to the Holy Sacrament. Its blessings are very necessary for the Christian, as we have shown above.

This, however, does not apply to those who cannot receive the entire Sacrament as it was instituted by Christ, and hence refrain from participating in it at all. Such people must be satisfied with the word of Christ and the assurances of His Gospel, until God in mercy gives them an opportunity to enjoy again the Holy Supper in its entirety and purity, as Christ instituted it.

May God give us grace, through His Holy Spirit, that we may ever receive this blessed Sacrament to the glory of Christ, and to our soul's salvation. Amen.

SECOND SERMON

This text [1 Cor. 11:27–34] is of great importance and deserves to be attentively considered by Christians. We have already learned, from the previous sermon, how the people misunderstood these words, so as to deprive themselves of the comfort contained in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, yes, even shunned it as something dangerous.

It is true, Judas did not receive this Sacrament to his consolation or amendment. There were also many among the Corinthians, as St. Paul tells us, who received it unworthily, and thus brought upon themselves bodily and spiritual punishment. There is indeed a difference in the reception of this Sacrament; some partake of it worthily and unto eternal life, but others unworthily unto condemnation, inasmuch as they do not repent and have true faith. Hence it is of the first importance that we learn to know what is meant by the expression "eating and drinking worthily or unworthily."

The Papists taught that one should not partake of this Sacrament except he be entirely fit and perfectly pure. Such fitness, however, they made dependent upon certain works of penance, much eulogized by the priests, such as auricular confession, castigation of the body, fastings, prayers, giving of alms, and the like. These were accounted sufficient satisfaction for the sins committed. But such worthiness is of no account; for it is impossible by our own deeds to become really pure and worthy before God. Even the disciples were not perfectly pure when Christ gave them His Supper, for He tells them that they have need of washing their feet, by which He meant not washing with water, but the forgiveness of their sins.

Let us then learn to understand and to remember, in this connection, that they do not receive the Sacrament unworthily who know and mourn their wretchedness; who confess they are poor, miserable sinners; who experience many a temptation; who are yet affected by anger and impatience, by passion and intemperance. Such and similar sins adhere to us more or less as long as we live on earth, and if we earnestly repent of them, and do not continue in them against the warning voice of our conscience; if we seek their forgiveness and consolation in the misery which they brought upon us, we ought not to be deterred from coming to the Holy Sacrament. As long as the old Adam is within us, it will surely happen that impatience, wicked thoughts, and the like, will trouble us and cause us to sin. If we then had to remain away from the Table of the Lord until we had become entirely free from sin, we would, indeed, never be fit to come to this Holy Sacrament.

They, however, receive it unworthily who knowingly and intentionally persist in their sins, such as revengeful wrath, murder, fornication, adultery, and similar manifest sins and crimes. Christ instituted the Holy Sacrament unto the forgiveness of our sins, that we should forsake them and not continue in them. Judas received the Sacrament unto his condemnation and death, because he had determined to destroy the Lord, and did not recede from this his wicked purpose.

Some people are shocked by this example; they know that they are guilty of hatred, malice, and other sins, wherefore they will not come to the Lord's Supper, but postpone it from day to day, and from year to year, simply because they are unwilling to give up their anger and their hatred. Such persons commit a twofold wrong; they cling tenaciously to their sins, and also wickedly despise the command of Christ to partake of His Sacrament. These people should desire to put an end to their

We must discover that we are really sinners, and then come to the Table of the Lord for comfort and relief; but he who will not confess his sins nor amend his ways, should by no means come to this Holy Sacrament.

wrath and envy, should strive to desist from sin, and should long to obtain, through the reception of the Holy Sacrament, remission of sins and strengthening of their faith. If then there is yet remaining a glimmering of sin and weakness, if now and then evil thoughts and passions make their presence known, we must cry unto God and pray: O Lord, give me a peaceable, kind, and loving heart, and cleanse me from my sins, for Christ's sake. Thus can we come to the Supper of the Lord in faith and hope, without being terrified by this saying of St. Paul; for this does not pertain to those who long to be liberated from the bondage of sin, but to those who are therein, and do not desire to be freed, but rather find pleasure in their wickedness and defend their evil deeds. The Corinthians were such people; wherefore the apostle tells them: "I praise you not," indicating that they were not penitent and yet desired to be praised as good Christians.

The custom prevailing at that time in regard to the Lord's Supper was different from the present. The Christians came together in the evening, and each one ate whatever he had, in the presence of the others. Sometimes it happened that a part ate and drank too much, while others who had nothing suffered want. Such conduct the apostle condemns. He declares it to be damnable, if persons deliberately sin, and then go to the Sacrament as though nothing had happened. They who act thus, eat and drink the Sacrament unworthily, and God punishes them with sickness and other afflictions.

You observe that such wickedness is far greater than the shortcomings of wavering hearts which, seeing the error of their ways, return to the path of duty and earnestly pray: "O God, we have done evil before You; forgive us our many sins." Christ will surely pardon them, and invite them to His Supper; He does not invite the self-righteous and saintly, but just these poor sinners, who on account of their guilt are greatly troubled and in sorrow. This He means by the words: "This is my body given for you unto death, this is my blood which is shed for the remission of your sins." Surely, they must have been great and guilty sinners for whom such a glorious sacrifice and such a great ransom was offered. The great requirement, therefore, is this: We must discover that we are really sinners, and then come to the Table of the Lord for comfort and relief; but he who will not confess his sins nor amend his ways should by no means come to this Holy Sacrament.

It is often the case, and strangely so, that those who need not fear, to whom God is merciful and whom He would have as His children, are sorely troubled with fear, while those who

ought to tremble with terror are entirely unconcerned and do not think of their sins, but continue straight on upon their wicked course, as would a rifle ball when once discharged. We see this in the example of the Papists. They scorn and persecute the word of God, put to death the faithful Christians, and force people, in violation of their conscience, to commit idolatry; still they think themselves pious and holy, and are right merry in their delusion. On the other hand, the little company who do not sin intentionally are diffident and frightened; they lament the sins of which they were once guilty, and wish that they had never occurred. Thus it is, those who might have consolation do not lay hold upon it, while they who ought to fear are secure and devoid of every terror.

In reference to this fact the apostle Paul says: "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." To examine one's self means to consider well in what condition we are. If we find that our hearts are hardened, that we are not willing to refrain from sin, and that we do not fear its presence, then we may well conclude that we should not go to the Sacrament; for we are then no Christians. The best thing we could do, under such circumstances, would be to put a stop to such wickedness, to repent, to trust faithfully in the promises and mercy of God, and to unite again with Christians in the participation of the Holy Sacrament. If, however, we are unwilling to do this, we ought not to approach the Lord's Table; for we would surely eat and drink damnation there. Let us carefully meditate upon what eternity has in store for us, if we thus fall under the judgment of God. If we are mindful of this, we will not be slow to repent, to put aside anger and other kinds of wickedness, and to make our peace with God in His Holy Supper. Again, if our hearts are contrite, if we confess our sins before God and are heartily sorry on account of them, if we believe that God in mercy, for Christ's sake, will pardon us, then we are well prepared and can confidently say to the Savior: "O Lord, we are poor sinners, and therefore come to Your table to receive consolation." If we approach the Sacrament in such a spirit, we shall be truly ready and receive the richest blessings. In behalf of such contrite and sorrowing souls the Lord's Table was prepared, so that they might find there consolation and joy. Those, however, who are without penitence, and who continue in their haughtiness and sin, will not be relieved of their fear and will surely be damned.

Some of the old teachers in the Church understood this word of the apostle: "Let a man examine himself," as excluding from the Sacrament all persons who are guilty of manifest crimes punished by the civil government, such as murder, adultery, lewdness, and the like. This is a mistake; for, as we have seen above, only those who willfully continue in their sins, and will not amend their lives, are cautioned to refrain from partaking of the Sacrament. These would only augment their account of wrath; for by coming to the Table of the Lord they make a pretended profession of Christian faith, of which not the least symptoms are discernible in their lives.

Whosoever has been guilty of these great sins, and has repented of them, ought not to be deterred by them from seeking absolution and receiving the Lord's Supper. Let him come and pray unto God to give him strength to avoid such wickedness in the future, and to lead a better life. Likewise our infirmities, which daily vex us, ought not to keep us away; for of these we shall never get rid entirely while we live in this world. If it were then our determination not to come to the Sacrament until we were perfectly righteous and pure, we would be compelled to stay away from it forever.

I can speak from my own experience in regard to this, and I know the effects of the avoidance of the Lord's Supper. I was under the influence of this devilish delusion, and became more and more a stranger at the Lord's Table. Avoid this error, my hearers, and see to it that you come often and well prepared; if sin and crime rest heavily upon your souls, forget not then your Lord and Savior, think of His death and sacrifice for sinners; repent and trust in Him. This, and no more, He requires of us as worthy guests at His table.

Our great infirmity and daily transgressions, for which we need support and forgiveness, as well as the unity of faith and confession thereby established in the Church, make it an imperative necessity that we should frequently celebrate and receive the Lord's Supper, thus fulfilling His command: "Do this in remembrance of me." Therefore, whosoever comes to the Table of the Lord as a poor sinner, is yet worthy and well prepared; nor will he eat and drink damnation to himself; but he will receive the body and the blood of Christ worthily, unto his soul's salvation. May God grant us this blessing through His Holy Spirit, for the sake of Christ Jesus, His Son, our Redeemer. Amen. LOGIA

REVIEWS

“It is not many books that make men learned . . . but it is a good book frequently read.”

Martin Luther



Review Essay

Memoirs in Exile, Confessional Hope and Institutional Conflict, by John H. Tietjen. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990.

OFTEN THERE IS AN ADVANTAGE IN REVIEWING A BOOK AFTER IT HAS received other reviews. There is also a bit of guilt involved by procrastinating so long. In the present case I am glad, because the reviews I have read of Dr. John Tietjen’s *Memoirs* have not been kind or fair to him nor empathetic to his struggles and situation; and, with the exception of a review by Leigh Jordahl, have shown little understanding of what was happening before, during, and after his tumultuous administration as president of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. With this review I wish to give John Tietjen and his many colleagues, friends and followers a fairer hearing and a fairer commentary on his memoirs. I was his colleague and next-door neighbor while he led the seminary and I know the background and all the principals, all the issues and events of those turbulent years (1969-74) which changed more than most realize—or might care to admit—the LCMS and the lives of Tietjen and all of us involved.

Tietjen writes not a history, autobiography, apology or hagiography, but his memoirs, a unique genre. One’s memoirs may be limited to only part of one’s life, and may be selective and presented in any way and for any purpose the author desires. There is a risk in writing memoirs, especially if one’s readers choose to judge one’s memoirs by strictly historical and critical standards. Memory is often fragile and not always accurate, even in the most honest and most scrupulous of men. “We construct meanings and remember our constructions,” Jeremy Campbell points out in his *Grammatical Man* (p. 226). And he goes on to say,

There is evidence, too, to suggest that we reconstruct information when retrieving it from memory. Only the gist of the information is stored. The details are added at the time of recollection, on the basis of what we expect to have been true. Reconstruction may seriously distort that original information, but the rememberer may be quite unaware of the distortion. If the material given to us is consistent with our knowledge and expectations, it is more likely to be recalled correctly, but if it is inconsistent, then there are likely to be systematic distortions.

This will be true of Tietjen’s memoirs or those of Vespasian or Benvenuto Cellini or anyone else. But allowing for this, Tietjen’s *Memoirs* will be of great value to the historian, the Lutheran theologian, and anyone who cares to know what happened at Concordia Seminary and Seminex while John Tietjen was president or how it feels for a minister of the Word to be put out of his call and to undergo such extreme experiences as John Tietjen did. For John Tietjen is without doubt a principled, sincere, and honest man—that is clear from his *Memoirs* and his history. And so, although employing a narrative style throughout, reminiscing and, like Herodotus, reconstructing past conversations as they would probably have taken place, Tietjen offers the reader a true account of things and the reader will learn much from his book.

Tietjen briefly outlines the purpose of his book in a preface. He owes a debt to posterity, to tell what happened as he experienced it and to give his side of a very partisan struggle. His purpose is to write without recrimination or self-justification. Throughout the book he traces a recurring theme in the history of the church, the tension between “Confessional hope and institutional conflict.” I think he succeeds, and better than one would expect from one so deeply involved in “institutional conflict,” i.e. church war.

The book is written in an epic form. The obvious theme of the story is a great contest, or war, between two individuals, each with large followings, representing two divergent ideologies, loyalties, parties, theologies, and theories of politics in the church. Each side is in search of its own “Confessional hope” in the midst of institutional conflict. The protagonists, or heroes, in the unfolding drama are Dr. John Tietjen, newly elected president of Concordia Seminary, and Dr. J.A.O. Preus, newly elected president of the Missouri Synod. Each of the two great warriors has his own army, his elite or scraggly “troops” (as they were so often called during the controversy), his inner council of strategists and his own machinery and style of warfare. This is the plot of Tietjen’s epic.

There is a little understandable schmaltz and occasional rhetoric in the book—and some errors as Tietjen at times recounts not his, but others’ perceptions and stories. For instance, early in his memoirs Tietjen relates at least one fictitious account provided him by Fred Danker, a highly original and imaginative professor who believed in redaction criticism—and practiced it. According to Danker I had engaged in conversation with Jack Preus, my brother, in my seminary

office commencing at 3:15 p.m. March 29, 1970. From outside my window in Sieck Hall Danker allegedly heard us speaking. During this conversation I allegedly told Jack that the exegetical department was “clamming up,” not publicly admitting what they really believed and had taught. Jack had told me that he was planning to conduct an investigation of the theology at the seminary. Now this account is clearly fictitious. Jack never visited me in my office at the seminary. My home with its privacy was right nearby. It was physically impossible to listen to a conversation through my office window. Danker, two offices down the hall, could, if he wished, listen through my door which was, conveniently, almost always open. But more importantly, the date is wrong. A half a year before Prof. Martin Scharlemann and I had told Jack that the exegetical department was no longer speaking openly about its uncritical use of the historical critical method. And almost immediately after he was elected president of the synod Jack had made it clear that he was going to investigate the theology of the seminary—at least the exegetical department—according to the criterion of the *Book of Concord* (see Preface, p.14). Perhaps Tietjen inserted this piece of fiction for literary purposes. At any rate it illustrates the danger one faces when one who writes memoirs cites as fact other people’s recollections.

But I am getting sidetracked and ahead of myself. Tietjen’s plot itself is right on target. It fits the facts in the controversy and the events we all lived through, as well as his basic theme.

Like many epics Tietjen’s *Memoirs* start *in medias res*. To understand the plot the reader will require some background and context. Early in 1969 Dr. Alfred Fuerbringer unexpectedly retired from his call as president of Concordia Seminary, while remaining on as a non-teaching professor. The call process for a new president was immediately implemented by the Board of Control, and Dr. John Tietjen, who had received few nominations compared with many others, including Dr. Ralph Bohlmann, a young professor, and Dr. Martin Scharlemann, a seasoned professor, was chosen—a surprise to almost all. The electors were the Board of Control, the Board for Higher Education; Rev. Kurt Biel, president of the Missouri District, and synod president Oliver Harms, who in the nature of the case could control the election. Harms, who was strongly pushing fellowship with the American Lutheran Church, was persuaded that Tietjen would be an ideal president to lead the seminary and thus also the synod to a more open posture toward the ALC and world Lutheranism. At the 1967 New York convention Harms had tried (unsuccessfully) to get the LCMS to declare fellowship with the ALC. This was to have been the first step in an elaborate scheme devised by Dr. Richard Jungkuntz, executive secretary of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, and Dr. Walter Wohlbrecht, executive secretary of the LCMS, and others, to bring the LCMS into membership in the Lutheran World Federation and ultimately into the orbit of the World Council of Churches. If not clearly delineated and outlined, the plan had at least been adumbrated in a book written by Tietjen in 1966, entitled *Which Way to Lutheran Unity?* In this book Tietjen clearly broke with the historic Lutheran doctrine of Church Fellowship and offered a “union” definition of “Confessional Lutheranism” and a new formula for inter-Lutheran relationships. Harms was under the influence of Wohlbrecht and Jungkuntz and other leaders at

the seminary. And they were following Tietjen’s prescriptions. There was always the outside chance that Harms would not be elected at the Denver convention in 1969, so the election was made, the call extended and accepted with celerity.

But things went wrong at Denver. Harms had not counted on the mounting dissatisfaction throughout the LCMS toward the St. Louis seminary faculty. Except for Scharlemann and a few professors in the department of systematic theology, the exegetical department had taken over the theological leadership of the school. The so-called historical critical method with its fuzzy, non-Christian presuppositions and its ever-changing, bizarre, sometimes irrelevant, sometimes heretical conclusions was used with uncritical abandon by the members of the department; and the faculty and students were confused by this departure from the *sola Scriptura* principle and the canons of responsible exegetical scholarship.

But many of the pastors and lay people in the synod were not confused; they were suspicious and angry. Harms was defeated at the convention. He came out of the first ballot with a solid plurality of the votes. Wohlbrecht, who had been pounded in the pages of *Christian News* by Dr. Waldo Werning and other anonymous writers as “boss Wohlbrecht,” then made the supreme mistake of issuing an impassioned *ad hominem* Phillipic from the floor of the convention against Preus, who was second in the balloting, something Wohlbrecht but not the convention knew, having been provided the information by a “mole” on the floor election committee. Jack was permitted to take the floor to defend himself and disavow Wohlbrecht’s charges that there had been illicit politicking by *Christian News* and others in campaigning for his presidency. This gave Jack more exposure. In the sixth ballot Jack had picked up the supporters of the three other candidates, Dr. Edwin Weber, Dr. Theodore Nickel and Dr. Victor Behnken, and won the election by a scant four votes.

The Harms-Tietjen forces understood far better than the disorganized Preus supporters the significance of Jack’s election. It meant the setback and possible disintegration of the entire ecumenical program which had been so carefully planned for Missouri. Even if the LCMS in Denver established the first step of fellowship with the ALC, Preus would do nothing actively to implement it. But worse—and something not fully realized by Wohlbrecht, Harms, Tietjen, and others outside the seminary community—Preus was committed to finding out what was taught at the seminary concerning Biblical authority, inspiration and inerrancy and just how the Bible was being interpreted—and to do something about it.

There was a tremendous amount of positioning and politicking before and after the Denver convention. On the Harms-Tietjen side, meeting before and during the convention, were prestigious pastors, leaders, and officials: Dr. A.R. Kretzmann, Dr. O.P. Kretzmann (in his last appearance at an LCMS convention), Pres. Rudolph Ressmeyer, Pres. Bertwin Frey, Rev. Dean Lueking, Rev. Harlan Hartner, Prof. Richard Caemmerer, Tietjen himself, and lesser figures (few of whom are mentioned in Tietjen’s book). On the Preus side, meeting before and during the convention, were, in the main, active laymen and pastors who had not gained a great deal of renown: Mr. Larry Marquart, Mr. Glen Peglau, Mr. Richard Hannenberg, Rev. O. A. Gebauer, Pres. Edwin Weber, Rev. Waldo Werning,

REVIEWS

Mr. Art Brackebusch and many others. Tietjen's supporters were convinced that Jack was using Rev. Herman Otten which was not true. Although Jack had some communication with Otten, others (e.g. Peglau and Werning) were writing regularly for Otten's magazine. Jack's supporters were worried that Harms would somehow steal the elections; Tietjen's were concerned that Preus was controlling Otten. Both concerns were unfounded.

And now the Tietjen epic unfolds. With force and pathos he tells his story, relating the events and battles of the war as he experienced them. Anyone who went through these struggles, as I did, a foot soldier on the other side, bitter struggles between good friends and colleagues and Christian brothers, cannot fail to be impressed by Tietjen's story. And the dispassionate outsider too will learn much about the dynamics and phenomenology of theological warfare. And anyone at all—whatever his theological predilections may be—who reads Tietjen's memoirs will find himself in sympathy with a man who is thrust into leadership of a cause he does not fully understand, a position (president of Concordia Seminary) for which he has no experience, and a church war which from the outset (one perceives from his *Memoirs*) he senses he will not win. I lived through these events of Tietjen's tenure at the seminary, and never saw him compromise or bend. From his book I see something different: how hard it is for a man and how hard it is on a man to go through five years of bitter theological and ecclesiastical warfare and then to be put out of his divine call. Tietjen, who always seemed to me to be a strong and private man, bares his soul in his book. He reveals his deep feelings, his frustrations, his disappointments, even his bitterness at times. His *Memoirs* are worth reading for that reason alone. Church wars take heavy toll.

But now I wish to offer some observations and commentary on the book and on the war. And I hope they may be helpful to Lutherans who seek to retain their confessional identity and to anyone who might read these pages.

1. Tietjen, for all his background in Lutheran church relations and as director of the Division of Public Relations for LCUSA, really did not understand what was happening in ecumenical endeavors worldwide or at the seminary. Fellowship with the ALC was foisted on the LCMS. The rank and file, engrossed in their own parochial interests, didn't really care. Outreach and missions had slowed down. The "glory days" of the seminary were coming to a close, although the faculty was unaware of the fact. The seminary, with its embarrassment over its past (Pieper was not even used as a textbook in some dogmatics classes), its pedantic, unproductive interest in "scholarship" (few books of substance were produced by faculty members in the years preceding Tietjen's arrival), its preoccupation with un-Missourian and un-Lutheran theological fads emanating from just about any source and touching just about any topic and its exalted opinion of its own uncommon consequence impressed Tietjen long before he received his divine call to be president. Like the faculty, he failed to see that the seminary had grown apart from the synod and had lost the synod's confidence. Like the faculty, he was unaware of the poverty of the ecumenical movement, the continuing involvement in Lutheran union and fellowship negotiations, the historical critical method, and other concerns. Lutheran pastors

and people were not interested in those kinds of things, not even if they were baptized with "Lutheran presuppositions" or the predicate "Confessional."

2. A word about the two combatants in the conflict. Tietjen seemed to exude self-confidence and determination. According to his *Memoirs* he was strong on the latter, weak on the former. Jack, folksy, hesitant and jocular in demeanor, seemed almost to lack confidence and purpose. But underneath was a man of supreme self-confidence and iron determination. Jack was a chess player, moving pawns and bishops and horses back and forth, always protecting the king. Tietjen was Shakespeare's Henry V at the battle of Agincourt, haranguing and leading his troops. Each knew exactly what the other's goal and game plan was. Tietjen's goal, in brief, was to lead the seminary and the synod into pan-fellowship with nominal Lutherans worldwide on the basis of formal Confessional loyalty and into a more open posture toward new and progressive theological trends (i.e. the historical critical movement). Jack's goal was to lead Missouri to maintain the authentic Confessional Lutheran doctrine and practice it had had since its inception. To achieve this goal he had to turn the seminary around, if not like Saul of Tarsus, then like a ship at sea. And to achieve this goal he had to get rid of Tietjen and keep the faculty majority off balance.

To carry out their objectives neither saw fit to employ theological means. There was a reason for this. Jack saw and insisted from the very first that there was a serious controversy in the synod, emanating from the seminary and centering in the doctrine of Scripture, but spreading out to articles touching the Gospel itself. But Tietjen, egged on by a militant faculty majority, which was alarmed by the threat of a full-scale investigation, adamantly and without making any investigation himself, refused from the outset to admit that any false doctrine was taught at the seminary. He canceled all meetings between the exegetical and systematic departments, saying that it would be disastrous if the church learned how great the cleavage in the faculty was regarding the historicity and reliability of such pericopes as Genesis 3 and the stories of Jesus' miracles and sayings. His actions were too late. The students knew what was being taught, and so did the pastors throughout the synod. The faculty opposition to an investigation only made Jack more suspicious and determined to find out what was really being taught. Tietjen's *Memoirs* trace the many faculty and other meetings and the negotiations which were calculated to blunt an investigation, but inexorably led to what was finally a fair and honest inquiry.

Since it was not possible to debate according to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, both adversaries employed the strategies possible for them. Tietjen, a master in media and public relations, got to the press. His advisors and cohorts smeared Preus as a Caiaphas and "Chairman JAO," while Tietjen marked him as un-Lutheran and un-Confessional and "legalistic." In the last stages of the controversy Jack was branded as one who obscured the Gospel. I rather doubt that Tietjen himself was responsible for that type of slander, but it was all over the campus and in the papers, religious (*Missouri in Perspective*) and secular. Only *Time* and *Christianity Today* gave Jack and the old-Missouri type of Confessional Lutheranism a fair hearing.

Meanwhile Jack resorted to "canon law," the *Handbook*.

He quickly studied and learned *Kirchenrecht* and soon after his election was deftly and masterfully deploying the *Kirchenregiment*. Ralph Bohlmann was his “court theologian.” Ralph was the executive secretary of the CTCR and on leave much of the time from the seminary. He wrote many things for Jack, including the “Statement on Scriptural and Confessional Principles” which was used to “evaluate” (p. 105) the faculty theologically. Previously Ralph and I had met a few times with Dr. Paul Zimmermann, chairman of the investigation committee, at the Mark Twain Hotel in St. Louis to help Paul ask the right questions of faculty members who were reluctant to answer questions forthrightly during the investigation. We felt justified in such action, for certain faculty members had made it clear that they were not going to answer unequivocally the questions asked by Zimmermann’s investigation committee. It was only toward the end when it was too late that Tietjen and his supporters used theology as their weapon and accused Jack and his supporters of aberrations in respect to Law and Gospel, legalism, etc., a belated and futile attempt to justify their position on doctrinal grounds. They protested their own “confessional position” and stance, without ever explaining what it meant (p.227, 260 *passim*)—theirs was not a *quia* subscription to the Confessions; how often did Tietjen proclaim that they were not bound by the exegesis of the Confessions?—and imputed to Jack and the synodical leaders a bogus theological position supposedly based upon synodical tradition rather than Scripture and the Confessions. But the counter attack was incredible. In the end few really believed such an argument.

However, Jack was vulnerable on another front. Again and again, using the *Handbook*, he harkened back to the position of the synod, rather than that of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions; and his only act of discipline was to put out of office four district presidents for violating the *Handbook* (because they had ordained Seminex graduates in LCMS congregations) rather than the Scriptures or the Confessions. Thus, Jack for good and necessary reasons set in motion a bad precedent which has been followed to this day, to the detriment of the LCMS.

Tietjen saw this, but again too late. To a group of sympathetic district presidents on May 17 after the Seminex walkout, he said:

Look what is happening to this church of ours that bears Luther’s name....We have reinvented canon law and call it the *Synodical Handbook*. We carry it around in our briefcases and rarely make a move without consulting its bylaws. The Commission on Constitutional Matters, which in times past met rarely, now meets almost every month to hand down rulings about how the bylaws have to be understood, adding bylaw on top of bylaw....Maybe it’s time for another bonfire.

3. There was a marked difference between Tietjen and Jack as they played their roles in the controversy. Tietjen was an intensely loyal man, loyal to the students who supported him, to his friends and colleagues on the faculty and in the Church at large; loyal to a fault, for he trusted not only the integrity but the judgment of his advisors. Throughout the *Memoirs* Tietjen tells us whom he listened to: many of the group mentioned

above, but mostly colleagues at the seminary, especially his close friend, Prof. John Damm, and his brother-in-law, Prof. Andrew Weyermann. This was sometimes a big mistake, for their counsel, often colored by their close involvement in the many battles, was bad and counter-productive. And it seems from the *Memoirs* that Tietjen rarely disdained the counsel given. Always loyal, he kept the loyalty of his allies; and he kept his many friends. But he made serious mistakes.

Jack, on the other hand, while seeking advice from friend and foe, competent and incompetent, and almost anyone who happened along, rarely trusted the judgment of others. Dr. Herbert Mueller, the secretary of the Commission on Constitutional Matters, was perhaps Jack’s most trusted and important consultant as Jack strove to abide always by the *Handbook*. Those who tried to impose their counsel on Jack, often in virtue of their “support” in his election, were quickly but amiably “tuned out” by Jack. That wasn’t always easy for Jack, for some of his would-be counselors were very aggressive. Less than a month after the Denver convention Dr. Waldo Werning invited himself to Jack’s lake cabin in Ontario to advise him and see if Jack might appoint him to Wohlbrecht’s position as CEO of the synodical Board of Directors. Shortly thereafter Mr. Glen Peglau, another Preus supporter, invited himself up to the lake cabin to advise him and see if he could secure Jack’s appointment to the CCM. Werning and Peglau knew where the power was. Neither ever received anything from Jack (cf. *Memoirs*, pp. 223, 251), and he did not take their advice. Thus, Jack made enemies and lost friends. But nobody ever ran him.

Tietjen, however, was a captive of his friends and cohorts and sycophants, like an ungifted field marshal directed and led by headstrong and inept lieutenants. His intense loyalty became his undoing. He was, at bottom, a follower, impressed by well-meaning, impractical mentors, not a leader. But leadership had been thrust upon him. Unlike Jack, he was always reactive in ecclesiastical warfare, off balance, on the defense. And without the Word and the Confessions he had no defense, no strategy, no direction. His supreme mistake was to follow someone’s harebrained idea to start a “Seminary in Exile,” one of his few proactive decisions. Thus, he and the faculty not only violated the Scriptures and Confessions by abandoning their calls (AC XIV), but they broke the *Handbook*, and were left defenseless.

4. There is a lesson to be learned from the Tietjen-Preus conflict. In any war a general must never underestimate his adversary. Tietjen did this; Jack did not. Jack was not only a good theologian, a good scholar, a sincere confessional Lutheran and good church politician; he was a superb tactician in the art of ecclesiastical warfare. Tietjen, leaning on the counsel of his friends and advisors, for the most part so contemptuous of Jack and his supporters, never knew what he was up against. Moreover, he did not realize or even consider that Jack was utterly sincere as he sought to supervise the doctrine taught at the seminary and in the synod. Finally, Tietjen and his colleagues did not ever sufficiently understand the thinking of ordinary Missouri Synod pastors and people. Jack did. They were God-fearing, pious people who wanted to remain Lutheran and who believed the Bible. They were not interested in ecumenical relations with other church bodies, and they were confused and frightened by the so-called historical critical method

whose apologists could never explain it and rarely knew what it was. They were parochial in the good Lutheran sense of the word. And they should never have been taken for granted.

In 1833 the *opus magnum* of the renowned Prussian general, Karl von Clausewitz, was published posthumously. It was entitled *Vom Kriege* and presented an exposition of his philosophy of war. In succeeding generations it became the basis of military studies and action not only in Prussia, but in war colleges all over the world. It is doubtful if Tietjen or Jack will ever write such a *Leitfaden* on ecclesiastical warfare in our country where the constraints of the First Amendment obtain and such an effort might appear unbecoming. But the outline of the manual has been clearly provided in Tietjen's *Memoirs*. The *Memoirs* tell us as much of Jack's philosophy of war and his victorious campaigns as the failures of Tietjen and the debacle of the St. Louis faculty. And the *Memoirs* offer invaluable advice to future bishops, church presidents, superintendents, and other officials within the Lutheran Church.

Two important questions must be broached in conclusion. First, was the bitter and costly war justified? Was it a "just war"? I am persuaded that in retrospect both parties would now say yes. For the *causa belli* was the preservation of the *sola scriptura* principle and the Gospel. And it is not an option for any Christian to fight such a war, but his duty and privilege.

Second, who won the war? According to Tietjen's honest account Jack won almost every major battle between the two adversaries. But not just Tietjen and Jack participated in the conflict. Thousands of others—professors, pastors, people throughout Lutheranism—were involved to some degree or another. Who, then, really won and who lost? Perhaps a few observations are in order from one who was close to all the events and the major figures and groups evolved.

I think Jack left the synod better than he found it. In this sense he was victorious. No longer were professors of theology offending students and the church with bizarre and heretical conclusions offered as the "assured results" of modern exegetical scholarship. *Sola scriptura* and its necessary concomitant, Biblical inerrancy (according to the Confessional Lutheran understanding), were affirmed and practiced at the seminaries. "Gospel reductionism," with its accompanying denial of the third use of the Law and its ethical relativism, never clearly articulated and never clearly understood, faded away. Incipient universalism, the bane of mission endeavors, which had invaded segments of the faculty and pervaded the mission staff (in strenuously combatting this Dr. Waldo Werning got into his trouble with Jack [p. 251]) no longer raised its ugly head. Missions began to perk up. The synod again came to the support of the beleaguered St. Louis seminary. A high degree of conscious unity under the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions was restored.

But there were ominous signs of malaise accompanying the uneasy peace, won in part, ironically, by the departure of hundreds of congregations and pastors and almost an entire talented theological faculty. Working under the shadow of former teachers the revived St. Louis faculty, not fully trusted by many in the synod, was not sure of itself. And neither of the two seminaries was able to exert the theological leadership necessary to fill the vacuum left by Seminex. The pastors and lay people are war weary and not able to fight old or new enemies

at the gates. Today Missouri is closer to many of the goals Tietjen and his colleagues set than when he and his colleagues left the synod. Recognition of the ELCA and some level of cooperation or "fellowship" seem close at hand, if the present administration gets its way. A more active role in inter-Christian relationships seems already in place. At least part of Tietjen's agenda is now Missouri's agenda. Adherence to Biblical inerrancy still prevails, but is rarely any longer a factor in Missouri's discussions with other Lutherans and seems to have little hermeneutical significance as many pastors and teachers in the synod do their Bible study and teach in the church. Missouri still seems not to have learned that there is a Lutheran hermeneutic, based upon Scripture itself and consonant with the Lutheran Confessions, and this must be operative in the lives and activities of the ministers, schools, and parishes of the church. The influence of Tietjen and his colleagues is still alive in Missouri.

A final observation: Tietjen and his colleagues often warned that the synod in its fear of liberalism and a low view of Scripture would be caught up in the opposite extreme, "fundamentalism"—subjective, triumphalistic Evangelicalism. Jack and many of his supporters were acutely aware of this danger. And during his administration the various manifestations of this great movement were quite effectively resisted. Today Missouri stands in grave danger of being affected by this amorphous, emotional, noncredal, undefinable, increasingly neo-Anabaptistic movement which now permeates American culture. Not that the synod will succumb or capitulate overnight. But the influence of what can be accurately called the Methodization of American religion is quite apparent in Missouri's church life and programs. The historic liturgy is being abandoned in some congregations. Laymen without calls are carrying out the work of the public ministry of the Word. Though called "church growth" principles, the fundamental tenants of this movement are more compatible with Erasmian humanism and the blatant synergism or the course fanaticism of Luther's day. Sadly such principles are preferable in some quarters to a Lutheran Word and Sacrament ministry. Open communion is becoming common if not rife, in many congregations. Missouri's historic doctrine and practice of Church Fellowship seems to be changing to a more latitudinarian position. The doctrine of the Ministry of the Word and the divinity of the call to that office are eroding and being challenged in certain quarters. Church officialdom is claiming and gaining more power. The people are listening more and more to TV evangelists, and don't like being criticized for doing so. Most of these gradual developments would have been opposed by Tietjen, all of them by Jack.

So who won the war? No one and everyone. This verdict will be not only the judgment of history, but is most surely God's verdict (Rom 8:28,37).

Robert D. Preus
President, Concordia Theological Seminary
Fort Wayne, Indiana

The Foolishness of God: The Place of Reason in the Theology of Martin Luther by Siegbert W. Becker. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1982.

Reason is a big red murderess, says Luther, the devil's bride, a damned whore, a blind guide, the enemy of faith. Luther also says that reason is God's greatest and most important gift to man, a glorious light, a most useful servant in theology, something divine. Luther's words exemplify the line of demarcation which must exist between reason and revelation. Luther's scathing words are uttered when reason becomes the "judge of religious truth." However, Luther praises reason when it is viewed as a gift from God and is used to serve Scripture and theology. Luther's statements must remain in their context or one may assume that Luther is either saturated in irrationalism or intoxicated with scholasticism.

Luther's historical context is crucial. In his war with Aristotle and scholasticism, Luther saw that it "manifested an idolatrous trust in the powers of reason." Dr. Becker writes: "Because of its favorable estimate of reason, scholastic theology had concocted a synthesis of reason and theology. . . . He (Luther) was sure that this marriage ought never to have taken place, and he expressed great concern over any attempt to mix theology and philosophy." Luther drew a sharp line of demarcation between philosophy, which deals with matters known by human reason, and theology, "which deals with things apprehended by faith."

Scholastic theologians held that it was possible "to lead men to the very threshold of the mysteries of the Christian faith" by philosophical methods and arguments. They believed that it was possible "to establish so much of Christian theology by rational argument that the final step of accepting the revelation of God in Scripture became relatively easy." (Some things never change!) Dr. Becker does a fine job of shepherding his readers through the thick and cluttered path of scholastic and rationalistic thought.

Chapter II discusses Luther's natural theology. The first two sections are intriguing. They are: The Hidden God and The Masks of God. Understanding Luther's entire concept of God and the nature of man is crucial in order to grasp Luther's natural theology. Dr. Becker reminds the reader that since the fall "God is a hidden God . . . God is everywhere, but He permits men to grasp Him nowhere." God's will is found only in His Word: the remainder of God's will, which He has not revealed, is not man's business.

Man's nature is "so corrupt and ruined by sin that it is not able to grasp what sort of God He is in His bare majesty." God in His mercy hides from us that which would destroy us if we were to gaze at it. God hides Himself behind His Word (a mask) so that He might reveal Himself to us. Luther: "A man hides what he is in order to deny it; God hides what He is in order to reveal it." Luther believed that God used many different masks, i.e. the breeze in the Garden of Eden and Scripture. However, "the supreme disguise in which God reveals Himself to men is the Incarnation."

Chapters III and IV spell out Luther's view of reason in relation to revelation. In Chapter III the reader learns why reason, as a great gift of God, can be lauded within its own sphere as exemplified by a discussion on hermeneutics. The ministeri-

al role of reason is seen as being crucial to a proper interpretation of Scripture. Chapter IV reveals Luther's "most intense fulminations" against reason. Reason becomes the Devil's whore and blasphemous when it places itself above God's revealed Word. When this happens the Gospel will be turned into Law. Reason will judge only by what it sees. Since God is hidden in His Word, God will no longer be known. Faith and reason coexist only when faith "treads underfoot all reason, sense, and understanding. It puts everything that it sees out of sight and wants to know nothing but God's Word." What reason knows about God's will is known purely by faith which hears His Word!

Chapters V and VI present ways in which reason and God's word function within their respective spheres. Chapter V explains Luther's apologetics. Only Scripture defends Scripture. Luther, however, aptly demonstrated against Erasmus and Zwingli that reason can and should be used "to cut her own throat with her own sword." In Chapter VI Dr. Becker shows how Luther's theology has had a clear influence on Lutheran theology. This chapter briefly covers several doctrines where reason and revelation clash.

The Foolishness of God covers a topic which needs discussion in Christ's Church. The Church Growth Movement (CGM), "Christian" psychology/counseling, Closed Communion, interpersonal relationships, the Charismatic Movement, and the doctrine of Church Fellowship—each of these has its place within its own sphere. These are either a product of reason (psychology, sociology, interpersonal relationships, CGM) or they are revealed in God's Word (fellowship, closed communion, love of neighbor). That which is a product of reason does not *a priori* dismiss its use within Christ's Church. Reason becomes the Devil's whore only when it assumes authority over God's Word.

Reviewed by Mark Sell
Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church
St. George, Utah

Confessing the Faith: Reformers Define the Church, 1530–1580 by Robert Kolb. Concordia Scholarship Today. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1991. 181 pgs. Paper. \$14.95

Part intellectual history, part dogmatics (addressing the nature of confessional subscription), part the personal appeal of Robert Kolb for the Lutheran Church of today to become again a confessing church in the full sense of the term, *Confessing the Faith* is yet another offering in a relatively new series from Concordia Publishing House.

Kolb demonstrates a rigorous study of the writings of second-generation Lutheran reformers, concentrating on the development of the Lutheran confessional tradition from its birth at Augsburg to its full definition in the Book of Concord in 1580. Central to this development is the role the Augsburg Confession played as the chief public statement of Lutheran faith and practice and as the model of what it means to confess. Kolb presents the key ideas of late Reformation theologians as they relate to confession as action, as body of teaching, as document, as secondary authority for norming the teaching of the Evangelical faith within the Lutheran confession, and for communicating that teaching to other confessions. In short, Kolb

defines for the reader the late Reformation understanding of what it means to be a confessing Christian and presents that definition as a model for the Christian church today.

Kolb's work should find a large audience in beginning and mature students of the Lutheran Confessions. There is no question more timely for the Lutheran Church than the question of confessional subscription, despite the fact that Missouri Synod theologians have brought that question to the fore in theological and ecumenical dialogue for more than a century.

There are a few points in the book which indicate that perhaps more work needs to be done for us to comprehend the confessional understanding of the sixteenth century. Did second-generation Lutheran theologians see the various confessions which found their way into the Book of Concord as authorities which determine the principles of Biblical interpretation in the Lutheran Church? In various places, Kolb seems to indicate that the Lutherans replaced the authority of popes and councils with that of confessional documents (pp. 39–40, 96–98). If so, Luther's principle of *sola scriptura* failed to capture fully the minds of his followers. Yet the documentary evidence which Kolb presents indicates that for Lutherans throughout the sixteenth century, the confessions have authority because they repeat the Word of God clearly, and not because they define the proper interpretation of that Word (pp. 24, 48–49 [cp. p. 111], 52). Confessional documents exist to proclaim the teaching of Scripture for the sake of church unity, not to determine what the meaning of Scripture must be. Claims of the catholicity of the Lutheran Reformation stand or fall with the *sola scriptura* principle; if the confessions themselves are authorities which determine the content of Scripture, the Lutheran Reformation loses its claim on the conscience of every Christian. Perhaps Kolb's choice of words in indicating that the confessions served as guides for interpreting Scripture invited the unfortunate comments of the publisher in the Foreword which also call into question the catholic claims of the Lutheran Reformation, when he writes: "Lutherans can enthusiastically engage in theological dialogue, respectful of the views of others while maintaining their personal understanding of the faith as described in the Lutheran Confessions" (p. 8).

The timeliness of even this problem in Kolb's work is evidenced by current debates as to the essential presuppositions of the Lutheran confessors. Hermeneuticians and exegetes refer to the inevitable "hermeneutical circle." Yet our sixteenth-century fathers believed that the doctrine Luther taught and confessed was drawn from the Word of God alone. They pointed much less than we today to Luther's personal struggle for the authority of confessional documents. Theirs was a faith willing to confess that God's Word was living and speaking to the specific questions of dogma and life which confronted them in their historical context.

A second criticism of the book is that Kolb concentrates on the views and ideas of theologians while neglecting the role of events in shaping the development of confessions in sixteenth-century Germany. For example, Kolb merely mentions the legal status achieved by the Augsburg Confession in the Peace of Augsburg of 1555. Yet political forces which significantly shaped the Augsburg Confession in 1530 also had a great deal to do with the prominence of the Augustana in the years leading

to 1580, as well as the shape of Lutheran unity that was achieved by the Formula of Concord in 1577. It seems that the task of the historian is specifically to address the interaction of events with the ideas of important persons, and not simply to concentrate on the ideas alone. Relating the development of the ideas of late-Reformation theologians to the unfolding of crucial events in this period would have significantly improved this book.

As a text for beginning students and mature scholars alike, *Confessing the Faith* should provoke a great deal of discussion and investigation of crucial issues in confessional Lutheran theology. Most of all, Kolb's exposition of the development of the Lutheran confessional movement provides fundamental definition to the crisis of confessional theology in the Lutheran Church in these waning years of the twentieth century and the new horizons of the twenty-first.

*Reviewed by John A. Maxfield
Pastor, St. John's Lutheran Church
Morrisdale, Pennsylvania*

Logia Forum

SHORT STUDIES AND COMMENTARY

LÖHE'S NIGHTMARE

Have you ever had a nightmare so real that you awoke with a start, breathing a sigh of relief that it was “only a dream”? But what if the dream came true? Wilhelm Löhe had a dream one evening that he attended the funeral of the Lutheran Church and the people heaping dirt on the coffin were Lutheran pastors. As we observe the goings-on throughout various Lutheran churches, we wonder if Löhe's nightmare was not a prophetic vision of things to come. As pastors replace solid liturgy with pietistic fluff, as we observe church administrators promoting positions which run quite contrary to Scripture and Confessions, as we hear of the instruction students receive in supposed Lutheran theological institutions, we wonder if we are not witnessing the burial of Lutheranism. Perhaps we'd better pull the coffin out of the ground and kick in the grave diggers. Who is responsible for our current state of affairs?

It is time for the faithful parish pastor, the man in the pulpit, to look beyond the walls of his church. He must recognize his responsibility to speak out on these issues and his duty to call on the Church to resurrect and revive the orthodox, Confessional Lutheranism of old—challenging it to speak to the issues of our day. Renewal in the Lutheran Church will not come from the seminaries or institutional office buildings. The political pressures brought to bear are simply too severe for either academics or bureaucrats to speak with a prophetic voice to the church. Anemic theology will result if the parish pastors of our churches do not reclaim the position of leadership in our church bodies.

The place to look for a true renewal in the Lutheran Church is the parish. Confronting issues on the “front lines” of the Church with careful reflection on our dogmatic tradition is where true renewal will be found in the Lutheran Church. Are there grave diggers waiting to bury Lutheranism? Yes, they may not even realize it, but they are standing there, shovels in hand. As methodologies and programs and techniques continue to inundate our church with Evangelical “style” it is little wonder that the substance of Lutheranism is viewed, more and more, as a detriment, even a road block to statistical growth. Löhe's nightmare is closer than ever to being a vision of the future of American Lutheranism. Only the most giddy optimist would claim that the smaller Lutheran bodies are immune from the problems which are found elsewhere. There

are dangers from the right and the left. Theological inbreeding in smaller Lutheran bodies leaves them defenseless when confronting challenges from groups which can echo quite well their “inerrancy” view of the Scriptures. A myopic parochialism afflicts some of us in Lutheranism. We seem to have convinced ourselves that our particular incarnation of the Lutheran church is the true, visible church on earth—and to the devil with the rest! While a “no holds barred” debate on issues of significance is most healthy, it must not flow from a suffocating view of church history. All the great eras in Lutheranism which produced a true renewal were eras marked by a recapturing of our broad, evangelical, catholic, orthodox past. We sometime wonder if perhaps Lutherans in the more conservative bodies have persuaded themselves that church history is summed up simply by invoking the names of Jesus, St. Paul and Luther, Chemnitz, Gerhard, etc. If we are to take seriously the commitment of these blessed fathers we will discover a great consensus which invites us to a true renewal in the Faith.

CONSUMERISM AND THE CHURCH

There are voices shouting at the church, voices wanting to “help” the church. Some are new and some have been around for centuries. Some shout from outside the church, some are so far inside they need only whisper to be heard. One of the newer voices is called consumerism.

I recently listened to an interview with the director of consumer marketing for *Time*. I was struck by the fact that no matter what the subject matter, the bottom line was the same: image, numbers, response, attention spans, success expectations, and “what the game is now.” It was fascinating to learn how both trivial matters and life-and-death matters are marketed in our advanced age of communication for all the people of the world. The supreme bottom line was clearly “what the greatest number of people want.”

The church is involved in life-and-death matters, and for that reason, its bottom line has always been what all people need, not what the greatest number of people want. The church's bottom line has never been determined by a committee of experts, and it has not had anything to do with the latest thinking of the world—until quite recently, that is. There exists in the church today serious confusion concerning the bottom line.

The voice of consumerism is saying “church by survey.” Consumers know what they want and if the church is smart it will listen, because if it listens carefully and responds wisely, it will surely mean a result of “growth” and “success.”

But the church is not what the world thinks it should be. The ways of the church and the ways of the world have always been in conflict, and any attempt on the part of the world through a whole host of voices to make sense out of the foolishness of the Body of Christ, the Church, should be seen for what it is and ignored. However, a very different thing is happening. The “helping” voices of the world are being invited to teach the church how to “market” the Body of Christ. The effects of these persuasive voices on all aspects of the Church’s life and teaching are boundless and need to be examined. This article narrows the discussion to the effects on worship practice in the Lutheran Church.

The very center of the Church’s life is its worship. And the very center of worship is God’s Means of Grace, His Word and Sacraments. The Confessions define the Church as the gathering where the Word is correctly preached and taught and the Sacraments are properly administered (Augsburg Confession VII, I). Prosper of Aquitaine, Martin Luther, Hermann Sasse, and many others have observed that, in the end, the Church’s beliefs are determined by the Church’s practice: *lex orandi, lex credendi*. Therefore, what we do is extremely important! The worship life of the church carries the belief of the Church to the Church.

Some today will argue that to talk of worship practice is to talk of worship style. And if this is only a matter of style, then surveys will provide the data for success, which is, to them, numerical growth. It’s all really very simple, according to a major voice of our time. But the world does not understand the Church, and it never will.

Numerical growth and spiritual growth are two very different things. Worship is about spiritual growth. Worship is about what God’s very own children desperately need from Him—divine food—and secondarily it is about a response to the food. The worship practice of a church is how this food is served when the faithful come to be fed. The result of the rich meal is spiritual growth for all who believe in it. Numerical growth is a totally different subject.

— Richard Resch

From *The Bride of Christ*, Volume XV, Number 4.

FICTIONAL ETHICS

Anybody looking for a good example of fictional ethics should order a copy of the ELCA’s report entitled, *Human Sexuality and the Christian Faith: A Study for the Church’s Reflection and Deliberation*. Prepared by the Division for Church in Society, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, this 55-page study is quite remarkable. In a recent issue of the ELCA’s *The Lutheran*, Presiding Bishop Herbert Chilstrom takes great care to explain that this is only a study document and will certainly be modified before it is brought to the church-wide assembly. This leads one to wonder just what is in this study document which causes Chilstrom to explain in painful precision that this is only a study.

Opening to the introduction of the document, we again note the great care taken to assure the reader that this is only a study. In fact, set off in a separate shaded box, we read, “This study does not have official policy status. Readers should not presume that positions they perceive in it will necessarily be those of the eventual social statement. . . .” Now one’s interest is quite high. Just what does this “study” suggest? The first chapter, “Voices and Issues of Sexuality Today,” is quite sober. It offers a collection of probing statements and points out trends in our culture. It indicates that the three areas of concern regarding sexuality of which the church needs to be most aware of are: 1) Sexual Abuse; 2) Gay and lesbian relationships; and 3) Genital sexual relationships outside of marriage. This document is very, very blunt.

Generally, one can accept the first chapter without too much concern, even though one suspects what must be coming. However, when one reaches the chapter on “Human Sexuality in the Bible” it is all too clear, painfully clear, that this document, for all the pious claims to be sensitive to the Biblical witness, wants rather to impose a feminist and libertarian construct on the Biblical witness. Higher critical assumptions abound regarding the origin of the “Hebrew Scriptures.” Jewish culture is said to be hopelessly lost in “gender hierarchy.” Throughout the section on this study of the Scriptures are numerous references which call into question the traditional understanding that homosexual orientation and activity is a sign of the fallen order. Instead the reader is led to question if, just perhaps, all those harsh statements about homosexuality are not rather condemning homosexual activity on the part of heterosexuals, or homosexual activity which is “exploitive,” and the suggestion is made that perhaps, just maybe, if we all think clearly about this, then “there is reason to question how appropriate (Rom 1:26–27) is for addressing same-sex relationships in which there is mutual love and commitment” (p. 23). Later in the study the question is put more directly, set off in a shaded box: “Is it possible that some committed lesbian or gay relationships might be signs of the transforming love of God’s new creation in Christ, a love that is continually crossing old boundaries? Or are they violations of God’s intention?” (p. 45). It is painfully clear that this document represents a radical departure from orthodox Christianity, not to mention Confessional Lutheranism. In that regard it may serve a useful purpose for those pastors who labor to articulate the differences between the ELCA and the other Lutheran churches in America. Here is but a case study in what results when the church subjects its theology to the ravages of higher criticism with a feminist and sociological construct.

While there are certainly many worthwhile observations and comments in this document (really, there are!) the general tone of the document is thoroughly anti-nomian, libertarian, and smacks of the leftist agenda which seems to predominate at the ELCA’s national headquarters. This document will serve a valuable function if the link between the higher critical approach to the Scriptures and this gross example of conditional ethics is drawn by faithful laypeople and clergy in the ELCA. How many pastors of the ELCA will be honest enough to admit that this is the core problem? If everything the Scriptures says so plainly about sexuality which runs counter to what pop culture considers to be true is disregarded, reinter-

preted, relativized, and otherwise twisted, then is it really any wonder that the suggestions and directions this document takes lead the church away from a truly Biblical sexual ethic? At the risk of kicking a church while it is down, may we not wonder if there is a link at between the ordination of women and a new ethic in the Church which is well-reflected in this document? To date the document has received mixed reviews among ELCA leaders. Thankfully the ELCA bishops have urged that the document be revised and reviewed carefully. The commission responsible for the document has set the timetable back a bit. However, simply by its appearance the document has encouraged the Sierra Pacific Synod of the ELCA to approve a resolution calling for “pastoral blessing of monogamous, conventional, same-sex relationships.” Thus a “study” document takes on the status of an authority, no matter how tentative it pretends to be.

A SEARCH FOR GREENER PASTURES

The common criticism leveled against liturgical churches is that they are cold and unfeeling. “I left that church,” the saying goes, “because I wasn’t being fed.” No greater indictment could be leveled against any church calling itself Christian. The Good Shepherd, who has given his life for the church (Jn 10:11) has specifically left instructions for the care and feeding of his sheep (Jn 21:15–17). Pastors, whose very name means “shepherd,” are charged to keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood” (Acts 20:28). The faithful church will always see that the flock is fed, not with junk food, but with the solid nourishment of the Word and Sacrament.

What people mean when they say they’re not being fed, however, usually has less to do with spiritual nourishment than it does with spiritual taste buds. What they really mean is that they’re looking for a different emotional climate. In our consumer society, Christian people tend to shop for the church where they find the right mix of preaching and worship to suit their tastes. Here style is often more important than content, atmosphere more important than doctrine. A church with an appealing style of worship will be more likely to attract the attention of the Evangelical “shopper” in today’s church market.

Evangelical churches are quite adept at finding worship styles that please their constituency. Popular musical styles are used, and on Sunday morning in most Evangelical churches of America people can hear the same music they’ve been listening to all week with sacred lyrics added. The Christian church has often borrowed musical settings from the culture it lives in. The hymns of Martin Luther are a case in point. Many of his original hymns are set to tunes from the popular music of his day. “Why should the devil have all the good music?” was his rather pointed question; one which modern Christians would do well to ponder.

However, the main weakness of Evangelical Protestant worship isn’t the musical forms it borrows from our culture, but the focus it encourages. The spotlight in much of Evangelical worship is not on God, but on the feelings aroused within

the worshiper. The “praise the Lords” of its enthusiastic worship are often followed by a rhetorical question: “Don’t it make you feel good?” Having borrowed the musical styles of our culture, Evangelicalism has (perhaps inadvertently) borrowed its attitude as well. Worship has now become entertainment. The results in some corners of Evangelicalism have been extreme. “The Holy One of Israel has become our buddy, our pal, our friend . . . When a group of singers can gyrate all over the stage and croon sentimental mush about God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, and people clap and shout and stomp their feet, then surely our religion has been reduced to the lowest level of commercial entertainment.”

Worship forms are never ends in themselves. The Lutheran church never has insisted on uniform worship rites in all its congregations. Nor is there any virtue in worship conducted in a cold, detached, formalistic way as though there were something distasteful about human emotion. There’s no correlation between a service’s sterility and its orthodoxy. Confessional Lutherans aim to worship God in spirit as well as in truth (Jn 4:24).

There’s more at stake here than meets the eye. Worship is never merely a matter of personal taste. It’s a travesty to see churches acting like fast food chains, each trying to get more customers by outdoing the others through advertising and packaging techniques. The gospel is not a product to be sold; it is a message to be proclaimed. It’s time to ask whether the church in America today can afford to go on compromising the gospel by its consumer approach to worship. Has the gospel become just another sales pitch? Have we lowered God to the level of a media manipulator? Has he become just another used car salesman or fast-talking appliance store hawker in the public eye? This calls for sober evaluation and honest repentance.

There is another way of worship. It’s the kind of worship which flows out of the gospel itself. Conservative Christians are concerned about orthodox preaching; it’s time we take an active interest in orthodox worship as well. Here we can learn from other generations. In a similar age of decline in the church’s worship life Wilhelm Löhe (d. 1872) stressed the intimate connection between doctrine and worship forms: “The truth faith is expressed not only in the sermon but is also prayed in the prayers and sung in the hymns.”

Which response is, in fact, the most faithful to the gospel of Christ—the subjective, entertainment atmosphere encouraged in much of what passes for Christian worship today or objective praise of the God who comes to us in his Word and sacrament?

I have demonstrated that God works in this world of ours in surprising ways: first in incarnation of his Son, then in the word of the gospel, which from first to last is the message of Jesus Christ and him crucified. This word in both oral and sacramental form might be a stumbling block and foolishness to the unbeliever, but it is the very power and wisdom of God to those who are being saved (1 Cor 1:18–24).

The wisdom of God is hidden—hidden under the cross. There in lowly weakness God hid himself from human wisdom so that he might be more clearly known by those who believe in him. This is what the new Testament refers to as “mystery”: that God reveals himself powerfully when he comes to us in

the weakness of the cross of Christ. This mystery can never be grasped by human intellect; it is only revealed to those who trust in him.

No one is surprised when foreign visitors don't understand American football. There is nothing particularly logical about its rules. It has its own peculiar atmosphere and its own "liturgical" forms: cheerleaders, bands, officials, etc. Anyone can eventually become a football fan, but we don't expect everyone immediately to appreciate fully the game.

That's the way it works in football. For some strange reason, however, many have the idea that Christian worship should be immediately accessible to the man off the street. If we take the New Testament seriously, we see this is impossible. No wonder, then, that St. Paul wrote that those who hold the apostolic ministry should be regarded "as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor 4:1 [RSV]). The whole life of the church is caught up in the supernatural life God gives to his people through lowly natural channels: the oral word, water, bread and wine. We come to worship, then, not as we would to to a concert or a rally, expecting to be entertained. We come expecting to meet God. His Word and his sacrament throb with life and vitality. It is the life and vitality of God himself.

If worshipping with ancient liturgical forms seems unnatural to us, it is only because we have failed to grasp that we are in "unnatural" surroundings. Here, in this place and at this time, in, with, and under lowly natural means God has chosen to reveal the reality of his presence. Liturgical worship is the historic way the church has chosen to acknowledge the profound mystery of God's presence in its midst. These forms of worship may indeed seem unnatural to some, but this is the way the church removes its shoes; the place on which it stands is holy ground (Ex 3:5).

Liturgical worship feels unnatural to us because it does not always reflect our "natural" feelings. Rather, it teaches us what to feel when God meets us in his Word and sacrament. It's time to recognize Christian worship for what it is: Christ at work through his Word and sacrament. Rather than focusing on the mind and heart of the worshiper, worship should point to God who meets us there. Growth in understanding worship comes along with growth in understanding his Word.

Liturgical worship needn't be dull. What virtue is there in rattling through worship forms as if we were reading the telephone book? These are not merely outward forms. They represent a rich legacy. An appreciation of this liturgical legacy brings with it fresh energy and renewed vitality in every age. In the historic words of its liturgy the church joins with Christians of all time in giving praise to the God who has created, redeemed and sanctified it. There is after only one church—both militant and triumphant, living here and living in heaven.

Like passengers on a train in a dark tunnel, Christians rejoice to be part of a vast company who have passed through the darkness of this world into the brilliant sunshine of God's glory. This means that worship is always an echo of the distant triumph song of those who even now rest from their labors in God's eternal presence. Such worship can be many things, but never listless or lifeless.

The Lutheran church has a rich legacy to offer in its worship. Here is reality, not symbolism. Here we have real contact

with God; not as we come to him, but as he comes to us. He meets us in the proclamation of the Word. Here the Son of God distributes his actual body and blood for the assurance of the forgiveness of sins. Here the people of God gather to offer him their thanks, their praise and their prayer. This is the real thing!

It's time for a new initiative in worship. People are longing for God. Where are they going to find him? In the shifting sands of their inner life or on the solid rock of the word of his gospel? How are they to offer him their thanks and praise? With trivial methods borrowed from the entertainment industry or in worship forms which focus on the praise of God's gracious glory? This is the kind of worship which lifts the heart while it exalts Christ! And this is what Lutheran worship does.

— Harold Senkbeil

from *Sanctification: Christ in Action*, pgs. 174–182
reprinted by permission of Northwestern Publishing House

JUST A BIG MISUNDERSTANDING?

A person who knows little church history and even less theology would conclude that when Luther and Zwingli disagreed with each other at the Marburg Colloquy in 1529 over the issue of the Lord's Supper it was all just a big misunderstanding. That is what a call for full communion among the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the United Church of Christ, the Presbyterian Church (USA), and the Reformed Church in America would lead the reader to conclude on the basis of its pained explanation of why all those nasty anathemas in the Lutheran Confessions really can no longer be accepted today.

Led by Timothy Lull, the new editor of *Dialog*, the representatives of the ELCA have recommended to their church body that there be full communion between the Reformed and the Lutherans featuring full Altar Fellowship. Lull calls on the ELCA to declare full communion at the 1993 Assembly. The document which proposes implementation of "full communion" is entitled *A Common Calling: The Witness of Our Reformation Churches in North America Today. The Report of the Lutheran-Reformed Committee for Theological Conversations*. The statement views "confessionalism" as a particularly nasty development in the church. "When the body of writings assembled in the *Book of Concord* (1580) became the standard of doctrine under Lutheran princes in their territories, the stage was set for the tradition of a strong-headed, self-conscious, polemical Lutheran confessionalism" (p. 15). The tactic employed by the document is very simplistic: Affirm the historic confessional commitments of each church body and then suggest that it is possible to retain this commitment while compromising it at the same time. For example one reads, "Under the same Gospel there will still be different emphases, even different modes of thought, in which the whole of the Gospel message will find its expression. Honest differences of interpretation, even of an interpretive framework, must be allowed" (p. 33). If one did not know better, this statement would sound quite reasonable. However, what is being discussed here is not a difference over minor details. What is at stake is the Gospel itself. Indeed, if we apply the same assertion to the Early Church's struggle with Arianism we recognize how

foolish and muddle-headed it is to call for “reconciled diversity.” It is a good guess that the party of Arius would have been willing to agree to such a position. After all, it was a disagreement over just one word, not even a word in the Bible, unlike the Words of Institution. Could there not have been some compromise, some sort of “live and let live” approach which would have permitted the Arians to retain their ὁμοίουσιος while the Athanathians could keep their cherished ὁμοούσιος? What was a little difference in vowels, among brothers in the faith? Should they not have put aside their differences for the sake of their common “mission”? Should they not have discarded their exclusive dogmatism for the sake of their “essential unity” in the Gospel?

Cast in this light, the premise of *A Common Calling* is revealed as the fraud it is. The document attempts to discount the differences between the Reformed and the Lutherans. It claims that the debate between Reformed and Lutheran strike the contemporary Christian as “esoteric and purely scholastic” (p. 34). So what? Did it appear any differently to the good lay-folks of the sixteenth century? In what may be the understatement of the century, the document concludes that, “There can be no doubt, however, that different understandings in this matter contributed greatly to the de-facto [sic] division of the churches” (p. 34). Unless we are willing to say, “Yes, Luther was a most sincere fellow, but he was just too much of a fanatic when it came to the Lord’s Supper,” we can not blithely dismiss historic differences as casually as does *A Common Calling*.

A Common Calling points to the Marburg Colloquy (1529) as the great hope and model for union between Reformed and Lutheran. It claims that Luther and Zwingli agreed on everything but that nagging little detail about the presence of Christ in bread and wine. This interpretation of the Marburg Colloquy is an oversimplification and even a misrepresentation of the facts. Preliminary discussions between Luther and Oecolampadius and between Melanchthon and Zwingli led Melanchthon to write to Elector John of Saxony, “. . . we find many other articles (besides the one on the Lord’s Supper) which they also teach wrongly. Such articles, therefore, must also be dealt with in the colloquy” (Sasse, *This is My Body*, p. 181). It was clear to all present at the colloquy that the difference on the Supper was the most obvious distinction between the “world view” of Zwingli and Luther, but there were even more differences.

Already during the first session of the colloquy, Luther expressed his conviction that the difference over the Lord’s Supper was central to the debate, but also other articles of the Faith must be discussed. Zwingli said, “The discussion should deal with the Lord’s Supper. After having finished that, we can readily discuss all the rest” (Sasse, p. 186). Luther then asserted, “I for one cannot admit that such clear words present a hermeneutical problem. I do not ask how Christ can be God and man, and how His natures could be united. For God is able to act far beyond our imagination. To the Word of God one must yield. It is up to you to prove that the Body of Christ is not there when Christ Himself says, ‘This is My body.’ I do not want to hear what reason says. I completely reject carnal or geometrical arguments, as, for example, that a large body could not fill a small space. God is above and beyond all mathematics, and His Words are to be adored and observed with

awe. God, however, commands: ‘Take, eat; this is my body.’ I request, therefore, a valid proof from Holy Writ that these words do not mean what they say” (p. 187). Then Luther wrote the words, “*Hoc est corpus meum*” in chalk on the table and covered them with the table cloth. This was Luther’s final word on the subject. The issue of the actual meaning of the *Verba* was the key to the division, and consequently, it revealed other far-reaching divisions. *A Common Calling* misrepresents the historical facts. That the “agreement” reached was basically a fraud on the part of Zwingli was revealed by subsequent history. Zwingli was able to agree to matters on his own terms. Zwingli added a gloss to his copy of the Marburg Colloquy on the critical point of the Real Presence writing, “The Sacrament is the sign of the true body, etc., consequently it is not the true body” (p. 226). This note reveals that the disagreement between Luther and Zwingli was not a wrangling over minor details. *A Common Calling* chooses to accept the subterfuge of the Reformed position on the Real Presence and cares not at all that it is a position which explicitly denies the actual presence of Christ in the bread and wine of the Holy Supper.

Another fundamental error is embodied in *A Common Calling*. It assumes that Church Fellowship must be determined on the basis of sincerity, not dogmatic confession—the confession of an objective *corpus doctrinae*. Again, we return to our Arian/Athanasian analogy. Why could they not have agreed with one another? Both parties were sincere and each had a zeal for the “Gospel” as they understood and defined it. According to the thinking embraced by *A Common Calling*, this should have been “enough” for fellowship. The same may be said for Luther and Zwingli. Both were very sincere. So why did Luther refuse to extend the hand of fellowship to Zwingli and consider him a brother in the faith? As Sasse explains, “The question for Luther was whether or not the Sacraments, as Means of Grace, and whether the Sacrament of the Altar, as the Sacrament of the true Body and Blood of Christ, were rooted in the Gospel and therefore essential for the Church. He could not but answer this question in the affirmative. A church without the Sacrament as a real Means of Grace was for him a church without Christ...” (Sasse, p. 230). *A Common Calling* is an abject surrender of the Lutheran confession. If the ELCA embraces this document as its own, it will certify that it is not a Lutheran church, in spite of its use of the word “Lutheran.”

A Common Calling is a glaring example of the problem with much of modern Christendom. It views Luther as a recalcitrant, stubborn impediment to ecumenical endeavor. Indeed, how offensive to ecumenical sensitivities is Luther’s *Short Confession* in which Luther wrote that anyone who does not believe that the “Lord’s bread in the Supper is His true natural body, which the godless or Judas received with the mouth, as well as did St. Peter and all other saints; he who will not believe this should let me alone and hope for no fellowship with me; this is not going to be altered.” These words are embraced as binding dogma for the Lutheran Church by the Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration VII.33. All claims to the contrary, if a church does not make Luther’s words her confession *and practice* then that church is not Lutheran. Romantic sentimentalities aside, there is no Lutheranism without Luther’s confession of the Supper. We can sing Lutheran

hymns, read Lutheran catechisms and worship with traditional Lutheran forms, but unless our doctrine remains Lutheran, there is no Lutheranism. These words strike many people of our day as indicative of the “stubborn determination to sacrifice everything on the altar of dogma” (Sasse, p. 237) which characterizes a stereotypical orthodox Lutheranism. Sasse’s judgment applies to *A Common Calling*: “Legendary simplifications of historical facts—another is the view that it was Luther who commenced the controversy on the Sacrament—are due not only to a lack of real knowledge and to the regrettable influence of average textbooks . . . but also to the fact that modern Protestantism is hardly able to appreciate a real confessor, and to understand that there is an eternal truth which must not be compromised” (Sasse, p. 237–238).

The apathy of clergy and laity alike in all Lutheran synods must be overcome if the church is to give a clear confession in light of *A Common Calling*. And lest any other Lutheran church body become too smug, it need only examine the mote in its own eye when it comes to the practice of Closed Communion, a test case on whether or not we still accept Luther’s position on the Holy Supper. We face today, as exemplified by *A Common Calling*, a complete breakdown of our theology. There is no way to excuse, ignore, or otherwise pretend that this reality does not confront all Lutherans today. The Lutheran church today must throw back the table cloth and point to the words which Luther wrote, “*Hoc est corpus meum*,” and declare, “This is final.”

BRAVE NEW CHURCH

Some say television is relatively harmless, others argue that the boob-tube should be tossed out with the rest of the household trash. Somewhere in the middle there is the truth. We suspect there may be more of a case to be made for sending the television to the dump than many would be willing to make. Neil Postman, in his book entitled *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business* (New York, New York: Penguin Books, 1985), offers a piercing analysis of the influence of television on American culture, specifically on how people formulate their opinions. Though now seven years old, Postman’s observations are as true today as if they were written only last week. We wonder though if there may not be more made of Postman’s arguments than a simple application to the evils of television. Application of Postman’s thesis to the church seems appropriate. In an age which clamors for “user-friendly” liturgy and the consequent theology which results, the applicability of Postman’s arguments are striking. We quote from the foreword to his book:

“We were keeping our eye on 1984. When the year came and the prophecy didn’t, thoughtful Americans sang softly in praise of themselves. The roots of liberal democracy had held. Wherever else the terror had happened, we, at least, had not been visited by Orwellian nightmares. But we had forgotten that alongside Orwell’s dark vision, there was another—slightly older, slightly less well known, equally chilling: Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World*. Contrary to common belief even among the educated, Huxley and Orwell did not prophesy the same thing. Orwell warns that we will be overcome by an

externally imposed oppression. But in Huxley’s vision, no Big Brother is required to deprive people of their autonomy, maturity, and history. As he saw it, people will come to love their oppression, to adore the technologies that undo their capacities to think. What Orwell feared were those who would ban books. What Huxley feared was that there would be no reason to ban a book, for there would be no one who wanted to read one. Orwell feared those who would deprive us of information. Huxley feared those who would give us so much that we would be reduced to passivity and egoism. Orwell feared that the truth would be concealed from us. Huxley feared the truth would be drowned in a sea of irrelevance. Orwell feared we would become a captive culture. Huxley feared we would become a trivial culture, preoccupied with some equivalent of the feelies, the orgy porgy, and the centrifugal bumblepuppy. As Huxley marked in *Brave New World Revisited*, the civil libertarians and rationalists who are ever on the alert to oppose tyranny, ‘failed to take into account man’s almost infinite appetite for distractions.’ In 1984, Huxley added, people are controlled by inflicting pain. In *Brave New World*, they are controlled by inflicting pleasure. In short, Orwell feared that what we hate will ruin us. Huxley feared that what we love will ruin us.”

May the church be veering toward the Huxlian fear of triviality? As the countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union emerge from their Orwellian nightmare will the West have anything to offer them? Or will they be subjected to a new tyranny, the tyranny of the trite, banal, and trivial, in short a *Brave New World* of theological glory without the cross?

WHERE IS THE MOTE?

Yet another “unofficial” publication has begun circulating in Missouri Synod circles. *Voices/Vision* is edited by Mrs. Dot Nuechterlein, who claims, “We are not - and do not intend to become - a ‘political’ organization.” Their stated purpose is “studying the Biblical basis for our understanding of who we are as God’s children, male and female....Others are examining the more ‘practical’ issues of how best to serve, and we do not intend to trespass on their tasks. Our goal is simply to be engaged with theology and doctrine.”

Why an examination of issues that others are presently addressing should be considered “trespassing” is not immediately clear, but a further disclaimer gets to the point: “As a group we do not ‘promote’ women’s ordination. (Some think ordination may be an inevitable outcome of a change in understanding the Word, while others think a focus on ordination merely clouds the fundamental problem, which is understanding our relationship to God and to one another.)”

To set out to study doctrine apart from its “practical application” is at best naive. The Scriptures were not written in a vacuum. They were not addressed to a vacuum. And we are only kidding ourselves if we think we can study them in a vacuum today - especially when the issue in question is a hot topic like women’s ordination.

It should be remembered that refusing to ordain women is not a sectarian idea peculiar to the Missouri Synod. From the perspective of nearly two millennia of New Testament Christianity, it must be admitted that the ordination of women is a

recent innovation. Even in the context of contemporary Christendom, there is still a majority that finds the practice to be prohibited by Scripture and incompatible with the consensus of the church catholic. In fact, Greek Orthodox representatives to the National Council of Churches recently withdrew from the NCC because they could not go along with the ordination of women.

The issue is not merely a desire on women's part to "use their gifts" in Christ's service. If that were the case, they would be glad to do so in keeping with our Lord's clear mandates in Holy Scripture. The Missouri Synod, particularly with its Deaconess program and teacher programs, offers many avenues of service to women. Ironically, there are more women in full-time church work in the Missouri Synod than in the ELCA - and probably all other protestant denominations combined.

Voices/Vision echoes the logic often heard elsewhere: if a woman has the gifts to do the job, she should be ordained. Therefore refusing ordination to women amounts to despising the gifts God has given to his Church. But such an argument is neither compelling nor convincing, and frequent repetition is no substitute for clear thinking.

To say, "Because I can, I should" is to draw an unwarranted conclusion. It simply is not true that because my car can do 120 miles per hour therefore I should drive it that fast. If a prostitute can excite you in ways that your spouse cannot, you are not thereby justified in committing adultery. If God intends that we must do all the things he has given us the ability to do, why is "self-control" listed as one of the fruits of the Spirit? (Galatians 5:22-23)

In the heat of the controversy it is often forgotten that the Bible does not leave ordination open to all males. There are certain qualifications that not all men can meet. (I Timothy 3:1-7) Furthermore, even if a man does possess the ability to do the job, he is not to preach or administer the sacraments publicly unless he be rite vocatus. (CA XIV)

The call is a gift of God. (Ephesians 4:11) God does not owe a call to a man who acquires a seminary education. God does not owe a call to a woman just because she appears to be able to do the job - even if she seems to be better qualified than some men. In the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, when the men who had worked all day began to complain that it was not fair that others who had worked only one hour should be paid a full day's wage, the penetrating question that was put to them was, "Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?" (Matthew 20:15) Likewise God certainly has the right to distribute his gifts (including calls to the pastoral office) as he pleases. (I Corinthians 12:11) If Christ or his Church can be compelled to extend a call on the basis of the merit of the applicant, the call ceases to be a gift.

But do the Holy Scriptures require that women be denied ordination to the pastoral office? The passages traditionally cited are addressed in a little book from the American Lutheran Publicity Bureau that has been hailed as "the most significant publishing event in recent Missouri Synod history." The title, *Different Voices/Shared Vision* reflects the fact that it was produced by some of the same people who are behind the *Voices/Vision* newsletter.

Since we know that in all things God works for good, we can look for some good to come of this challenge. If nothing else, it is becoming clearer that there are voices within Missouri advocating the ordination of women - perhaps not the con-

spiracy some fear, but voices that ought to be heard and answered. Whether we like to admit it or not, this is a profound struggle prompted by the feminist and egalitarian forces that have impacted our entire culture. But while the battle is also being fought in the political arena, our response to this crisis must be thoroughly theological if we want to be helpful to the people who are so deeply concerned about these issues. Hopefully the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod will learn to articulate its position in ways which do not resort to the simplistic proof-texting which satisfied most people a generation or two ago. There is room on both sides of this issue for more careful speech and clearer vision; we would all do well to take to heart Jesus' warning about the mote and the beam. (Matthew 7:1-5)

Voices/Vision says, "Due to an 'impossible to comprehend' gaffe, our book's editor thought he had permission to include with our conference papers an article on women's ordination. This is unfortunate, because there are those who now will not read the first 84 pages, being put off by the presence of the final dozen. We wish profoundly that this had not happened." The reference is to an Afterword by Paul R. Hinkley entitled "Why Women May Be Ordained" and an Appendix by George L. Murphy which is actually a reprint of an article that appeared in *Lutheran Forum* under the title "An Appeal to Missouri For The Ordination of Women".

Having read the book before I became aware of the consternation its authors felt toward their editor, I find it difficult to sympathize with them in their vexation. Even without the final dozen pages, the book is clearly aimed at providing an exegetical and theological basis for the ordination of women. Elizabeth Yates' final word on I Corinthians 14:34-36 is that "this passage cannot responsibly be used as a proof-text for anything as significant as the role of women in the ministry of the church." When Marva Dawn calls ordination "a theological construct which has no specific basis in the New Testament," she does not mean to imply that therefore it is not worth contending for the ordination of women. The agenda is clear.

Summing up her comments on I Timothy 2:8-15, Dawn insists, "This passage does not entail the issue of whether the teaching of the women is public or private, and it is certainly not asking questions about ordination." But in her haste to read the passage in the context of I Corinthians 11, she ignores the more immediate context of I Timothy 3 and never even mentions the fact that I Timothy is a pastoral epistle.

Richard Hinz's chapter is noteworthy because of who he is, but what he has to say is superficial and disappointing. Hinz says, "If the hearer might be offended by the freedom which women observed in not having their heads covered, when societal mores expected them covered, Paul was not above asking believing women to cover their heads. If the hearer thought that verbal participation by women in a church service resembled too much the license practiced by women of the street, then Paul would suggest that women keep silence." Hinz evidently fails to realize that in the Graeco-Roman world there was nothing unusual or offensive about priestesses. On the contrary, the restrictions Paul places on women's participation in the public ministry might well have seemed strange or offensive to the gentiles. Thus Hinz's argument is turned on its head and leaves us to draw the absurd conclusion that the Apostle Paul did not permit the Gospel to have free course in his own day.

Marie Meyer has written the heart of the book, both in the sense that her two chapters are sandwiched by all the other shorter articles, and in the sense that she seems to have thought most deeply about the issues. Her attempt to place the discussion in the context of Christology and Luther's *theologia crucis* is laudable. But David Scaer might be amused at the suggestion that his Christology provides a theological framework congenial to Mrs. Meyer's purpose. And it is provocative to speculate that if Martin Luther had consistently followed his theology of the cross through to its logical conclusions he would have supported the ordination of women, but I wouldn't bet the rent on it.

If Meyer is dismayed at the liberties taken by her editor, her proofreader deserves to be fired. She evidently intends to distinguish "Man" as *homo sapiens* from "man," the male of the species, but I counted at least 25 instances of "man" where it seems she must have meant "Man."

Addressing the "Order of Creation," Meyer asserts, "When men are taught their identity is in being the one for whom woman was created, and women are taught their identity originates in coming from and for man, neither man or woman is free to know self in terms of their relationship to God. Rather than knowing self as Man, not God, they are superordinate males and subordinate females." But it simply does not follow that men and women who recognize that God has created them male and female are thereby precluded from seeing themselves as creatures of the Creator.

Again Meyer claims, "In stating that God 'chooses' to act authoritatively among Men through man, woman is separated from God and man." [I would have used the word "distinguished" rather than "separated," but so far I think I can agree. The problem comes with the conclusion she draws from this fact.] "Dependent upon man for Creator-goodness in her life, she is not a true counterpart because she is not joined to God in the same way man is, nor is she free to act upon what she receives from her Creator. If God separates men and women on earth by using man as the channel of his goodness they cannot possibly share the same relationship with God."

What does it mean that both men and women are baptized? What does it mean that both men and women are invited to the Supper? Do not men and women hear God speak as they read their Bibles? When God chooses to call men to the Office of the Holy Ministry, he does nothing to clog the channels we Lutherans commonly refer to as the Means of Grace. Both men and women are included in the Royal Priesthood. A woman is free to pray directly to God without depending on any man to intercede for her. The Creator's distinction between male and female does not place man between woman and God.

Moving on to a discussion of "Christ As Head Of The Church," Meyer says, "Nothing in the life of Christ indicates he used authority, power or freedom belonging to him as God, to establish himself in a position of authority over any man or woman." But Jesus bluntly told the hostile scribes that he would heal the paralytic "so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." (Mark 2:10) Likewise his prelude to the Great Commission was, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." (Matthew 28:18)

Like Hinz, Meyer wants to emphasize the "servanthood" of Christ and of the pastoral office. The New Testament certainly supports this idea. But to conclude that an office of ser-

vice cannot also include the responsibility to exercise authority is to propose a false dichotomy. Jesus certainly was the suffering Servant foreseen by Isaiah, but his authority was evident when he made a whip, marched into the Temple and overturned the tables of the moneychangers. Jesus emptied himself and took the very nature of a servant (Philippians 2:7) but he also amazed the crowds who heard him preach "because he taught as one who had authority, and not as the scribes." (Matthew 7:29)

Although his thesis is simply untenable ("Why Women May Be Ordained"), Hinlicky hits the nail on the head when he points out, "It is a dubious achievement in any event to 'ordain' women to an office that is therewith secularized and stripped of authority. Why, it's just another raw deal for women - finally to admit them to the pastoral office at the very moment in history when we are downgrading the pastoral office to nothing more than a jack-of-all-trades hand-holder and cheerleader!"

We cannot give an adequate answer to the question of women's ordination until we can define more clearly what it means to be ordained. There are far too many Lutherans who have embraced the idea that the priesthood of all believers means that everyone is a minister. But if everyone is a minister, no one is a minister.

I Peter 2:9 must be understood in its original context if we are going to be ready to give an answer to those who want to equate baptism and ordination. It requires a breathtaking ignorance of church history to suppose that the early church was an unstructured and spontaneous movement that turned the Roman Empire on its head because the "lay ministers" did all the missionary work. Maybe God will use the challenge articulated by *Voices/Vision* to inspire us to do the serious theological work that needs to be done on this issue.

— Michael Albrecht

LOGIA is a journal of Lutheran theology. As such it publishes articles on exegetical, historical, systematic, and liturgical theology that promote the orthodox theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. We cling to God's divinely instituted marks of the church: the Gospel, preached purely in all its articles, and the Sacraments, administered according to Christ's institution. The name *Logia* expresses what this journal wants to be. In Greek, *Logia* functions either as an adjective meaning "eloquent," "learned," or "cultured," or as a plural noun meaning "divine revelations," "words," or "messages." The word is found in Acts 7:38 and Romans 3:2. Its compound forms include ὁμολογία (confession), ἀπολογία (defense), and ἀναλογία (right relationship). Each of these concepts and all of them together express the purpose and method of this journal. *Logia* is committed to providing an independent theological forum normed by the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. At the heart of our journal we want our readers to find a love for the sacred Scriptures as the very Word of God; not merely as rule and norm, but especially as Spirit, truth, and life which reveals Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life—Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore, we confess the Church, without apology and without rancor, only with a sincere and fervent love for the precious bride of Christ, the Holy Christian Church, "the mother that begets and bears every Christian through the Word of God," as Martin Luther says in the Large Catechism (LC II.42). We are animated by the conviction that the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession represents the true expression of the Church which we confess as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.

LOGIA (ISSN #1064-0398) is published quarterly by the Luther Academy, 2829 Fox Chase Run, Fort Wayne, IN 46825-3985. Second class postage paid (permit pending) at Dearborn, MI and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Logia*, 800 S. Military, Dearborn, MI 48124. **Editorial Department:** 1004 Plum St., Mankato, MN 56001. Unsolicited material is welcomed but cannot be returned unless accompanied by sufficient return postage. **Book Review Department:** 1101 University Avenue SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414. All books received will be listed. **Logia Forum and Letters Department:** 305 Cherokee Dr., Vincennes, IN 47591-1909. Letters selected for publication are subject to editorial modification, must be typed or computer printed, and must contain the writer's name and complete address. **Subscription & Advertising Department:** 800 S. Military, Dearborn, MI 48124. Advertising rates and specifications are available upon request.

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION: US: \$18 for one year (four issues); \$36 for two years (eight issues). Canada and Mexico: 1 year, \$25 U.S. currency; 2 years, \$50 U.S. currency. Overseas: 1 year, air: \$35 U.S. currency; surface: \$25 U.S. currency; 2 years, air: \$70 U.S. currency; surface: \$50 U.S. currency.

Copyright © 1992 The Luther Academy. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without written permission.

EDITORS

Michael Albrecht—*Pastor, St. James Lutheran Church, West St. Paul, MN*
 Joel Brondos, Logia Forum and Letters Editor—*Pastor, St. John Lutheran Church, Vincennes, IN*
 Scott Murray—*Pastor, Salem Lutheran Church, Gretna, LA*
 John Pless, Book Review Editor—*Pastor, University Lutheran Chapel, Minneapolis, MN*
 Erling Teigen, Editorial Coordinator—*Professor, Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, MN*
 Jon Vieker, Technical Editor—*Pastor, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Union Lake, MI*

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Ulrich Asendorf—*Pastor, Hannover, Germany*
 Alan Borcherding—*Professor, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN*
 Charles Cortright—*Pastor, Our Savior's Lutheran Church, East Brunswick, NJ*
 Burnell Eckhardt—*Pastor, St. John Lutheran Church, New Berlin, WI*
 Charles Evanson—*Pastor, Redeemer Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, IN*
 Ronald Feuerhahn—*Professor, Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis, MO*
 Lowell Green—*Professor, State University of New York at Buffalo, NY*
 Paul Grime—*Pastor, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, West Allison, WI*
 Matthew Harrison—*Pastor, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Westgate, IA*
 Steven Hein—*Professor, Concordia University, River Forest, IL*
 Horace Hummel—*Professor, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO*
 Arthur Just—*Professor, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN*
 John Kleinig—*Professor, Luther Seminary, North Adelaide, South Australia, Australia*
 Gerald Krispin—*Professor, Concordia College, Edmonton, Canada*
 Peter K. Lange—*Pastor, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Concordia, MO*
 Cameron MacKenzie—*Professor, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN*
 Gottfried Martens—*Pastor, St. Mary's Lutheran Church, Berlin, Germany*
 Kurt Marquart—*Professor, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN*
 Norman Nagel—*Professor, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO*
 Martin Noland—*Pastor, Christ Lutheran Church, Oak Park, IL*
 Wilhelm Petersen—*President, Bethany Seminary, Mankato, MN*
 Hans-Lutz Poetsch—*Pastor Em., Lutheran Hour, Berlin, Germany*
 Robert D. Preus—*President, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN*
 Clarence Priebbenow—*Pastor, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Oakey, Queensland, Australia*
 Richard Resch—*Kantor, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, IN*
 David P. Scaer—*Professor, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN*
 Robert Schaubley—*Pastor, Zion Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, IN*
 Bruce Schuchard—*Pastor, St. James Lutheran Church, Victor, IA*
 Ken Schurb—*Professor, Concordia College, Ann Arbor, MI*
 Harold Senkbeil—*Pastor, Elm Grove Lutheran Church, Elm Grove, WI*
 Carl P. E. Springer—*Professor, Illinois State University, Normal, IL*
 John Stephenson—*Professor, Concordia Seminary, St. Catharines, Canada*
 Walter Sundberg—*Professor, Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary*
 David J. Webber—*Pastor, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Brewster, MA*
 William Weinrich—*Professor, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN*
 George Wollenburg—*President, Montana District LCMS, Billings, MT*