LOGIA

A JOURNAL OF LUTHERAN THEOLOGY

LUTHER & THE FATHERS

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εἴ τις λαλεῖ, ὡς λόγια Θεοῦ

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. This name expresses what this journal wants to be. In Greek, ΛΟΓΙΑ 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 1 Peter 4:11, 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 considers itself a *free conference in print* and 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.

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The Cover Art features an original drawing by Allan Reed, pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church in Britton, South Dakota, done especially for this issue of *Logia*. Other works of his include the original artwork for the stained glass windows in the visitor's center at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

The drawing reflects the theme of this issue, Luther and the Fathers. Christ is in the background holding the Word of God in his left hand, symbolizing the Twelve Apostles (taken from an icon of Christ as Teacher). This shows the source from which the Fathers drew their doctrine.

Symbols of the Fathers come next, taken from various icon representations. In the foreground we see Luther examining the Fathers, showing his high regard for them.

Used by permission of the artist.

FREQUENTLY USED ABBREVIATIONS

AC [CA]	Augsburg Confession
AE	*Luther's Works,* American Edition
Ap	Apology of the Augsburg Confession
BAGD	Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich, Frederick W. Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*
BSLK	*Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche*
Ep	Epitome of the Formula of Concord
FC	Formula of Concord
LC	Large Catechism
LW	*Lutheran Worship*
SA	Smalcald Articles
SBH	*Service Book and Hymnal*
SC	Small Catechism
SD	Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord
SL	St. Louis Edition of Luther's Works
Tappert	*The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.* Trans. and ed. Theodore G. Tappert
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*
TLH	*The Lutheran Hymnal*
Tr	Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope
Triglotta	*Concordia Triglotta*
WA	*Luthers Werke,* Weimarer Ausgabe [Weimar Edition]

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The Evolution of Luther's Reception of the Early Church Fathers in Eucharistic Controversy

A Consideration of Selected Works, 1518–1529

Kent A. Heimbigner

The Lord Jesus was, as St. Paul states, the source of what the Apostle "traditioned" on to the Corinthians. St. Paul's words, "that which I traditioned on to you" (ὅ και παρέδωκα ὑμῖν) point already to the issue under consideration here. Earlier in the same chapter quoted above, St. Paul praises the Corinthians for "holding on to the traditions, just as I traditioned them on to you" (καθὼς παρέδωκα ὑμῖν, τὰς παραδόσεις). In the first century A.D., St. Paul was able to point to himself as the (or an) authoritative source of the tradition of that which the church is to receive as ἀπο τοῦ κυρίου, "from the Lord."

At the dawn of the sixteenth century, the picture is quite different. The trail of tradition leading back to the Lord Jesus was a millennium and a half longer. Luther clearly wanted to remain faithful to the pristine catholic and apostolic faith as it had been "traditioned down" from the Lord. I simply presuppose this fact for the purposes of this article. The question is, where was Luther to find the faithful "trail of tradition"? Several options were available. For Luther, perhaps the most appealing option would have been to examine the history of biblical interpretation, and to discover that the "trail of tradition" was one in which the fathers of the church spoke univocally on all issues of doctrine. Another option would have been to receive an established tradition, allowing that there would be points of divergence where someone took a tangential path off of the nevertheless clearly marked trail. Still another option would have been to bypass fifteen hundred years' worth of biblical interpretation, and appeal directly to the text. This last option was tried in many cases during the Reformation era, most often by the so-called radical reformers, and often with the result that the opinions and even the dreams of the particular reformers became the new device for authoritative interpretation.

The controversy between the Lutherans and the sacramentarians[1] regarding the nature of the Lord's Supper brought these issues to a head. How does one correctly interpret the biblical texts relevant to this issue? How were the words of the church fathers to be understood?

The role of the early church fathers in Luther's thought and particularly in his hermeneutics has been widely debated. His appeals to St. Augustine have understandably received the most attention. There is some doubt about the extent of his familiarity with the Greek fathers.[2] Erwin Iserloh sees an Augustinian Christological theme of Christ as sacrament and *exemplum* running through Luther's writings, almost from start to finish, with profound consequences for interpreting Luther's doctrine of justification.[3] Bienert, on the other hand, sees in Luther's quest to secure genuinely apostolic doctrine a movement away from St. Augustine and toward St. Athanasius, that is, away from a purely western way of looking at theology toward a theology more compatible with eastern (Greek) patristic thought.[4]

This essay argues for an evolution in Luther's reception of the church fathers. It appears that initially, he did not have to choose between loyalty to Scripture and loyalty to the fathers. He simply presupposed that the fathers always taught the Scriptures correctly. Over the course of time, however, as Luther's Sacramentarian opponents pointed particularly to St. Augustine to validate their position(s), Luther was forced to make what must have been uncomfortable choices. In the end, Luther clung to the words of the text, even when it meant a parting of ways with the "Father of Latin Theology." As for the normative authority of the church fathers, it appears that Luther went from believing that they spoke univocally, to believing that the theological views articulated by them produced dogmatic parameters, outside of which the truth could not be found, but within which one might find both erroneous (or at least ambiguous) and orthodox dogmatic formulations. Further, while Luther recognized quite early the dangers of the intrusion of Aristotelian philosophy into Christian theology, the controversy concerning the nature and meaning of the Lord's Supper led him also to recognize the dangers of using Platonic-Augustinian modes of expression, a danger he had not identified previously.

LUTHER'S RECEPTION OF THE CHURCH FATHERS IN THE HEIDELBERG DISPUTATION, 1518

The *Heidelberg Disputation* does not deal directly with the Lord's Supper. Primarily, it is a document dealing with sin, grace, and the freedom (or lack thereof) of the human will,[5] and extolling the "theology of the cross" over against the "theology of glory." Already here, one finds formulated "a bedrock statement of Luther's theology and that of the Lutheran Church."[6] Secondarily, however, this document provides a useful indicator of Luther's views concerning the Scripture, the church fathers, and his evaluation of certain ancient Greek philosophers. The forty

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statements were presented for the express purpose of allowing those who examined them to determine "whether they have been deduced well or poorly from St. Paul, the especially chosen vessel and instrument of Christ, and also from St. Augustine, his most trustworthy interpreter."[7]

Luther's praise of St. Augustine as St. Paul's "most trustworthy interpreter" befits the presentation of these theses to members of the Augustinian Order in Heidelberg. He probably chose his words for his audience. Nevertheless, there is every reason to believe they accurately reflect Luther's views. In 1518, Luther apparently considered St. Augustine "most trustworthy" in his interpretation of St. Paul. Luther repeatedly cites St. Augustine in the paragraphs which he offers to support each of his theses, never so much as intimating that St. Augustine might have been in error on any point.

In 1518, Luther apparently considered St. Augustine "most trustworthy" in his interpretation of St. Paul.

Concerning the reception of the church fathers, we find a noteworthy reference to St. Augustine's *Retractions* in the *Explanation.* Luther says Augustine writes "quite correctly" here, but he says nothing about the statement that St. Augustine "quite correctly" needed to retract. St. Augustine's need to retract some of his earlier statements shows that St. Augustine considered himself fallible. By implication, so should the rest of the church. If, however, Luther reached such a conclusion in 1518, not a word of the *Heidelberg Disputation* alerts us to this fact.

It thus seems that in 1518 Luther treated the church fathers, especially St. Augustine, as completely trustworthy interpreters of the Scriptures. Their reliability nevertheless functions in a strictly subordinate capacity: Luther does not consider them to be sources or guardians of an extra-scriptural tradition. The primary authority to which he appeals in 1518 is Holy Scripture, and the church fathers are appealed to only secondarily to establish the correct interpretation of Holy Scripture.

Of further interest is Luther's treatment of the ancient Greek philosophers. Theses 29–40 of the *Heidelberg Disputation* are listed under the subtitle *Philosophical Theses.* Most noteworthy is thesis 36: "Aristotle wrongly finds fault with and derides the ideas of Plato, which are actually better than his own."[8] The point could not have been missed in a world permeated by scholastic theology: the "Aristotelianization" of Christianity was a wrong turn, and Luther was making a complete break with Scholasticism.[9]

Three sources of authority emerge from Luther's *Heidelberg Disputation.* Scripture is primary. Secondary are the early church fathers, especially St. Augustine. Luther accepts their views as normative interpretations of Scripture. He uses Augustine as the measure of later theologians, such as Peter Lombard. Effectively, they are right (and cited as authorities) when they agree with Augustine, and wrong when they do not.[10] A third authority seems to be Plato, but one must be careful here. Luther finds Plato's ideas more compatible with Scripture, and more "reasonable" than Aristotle's. He receives Plato only as one who reasons well, however; one whose method of formulating philosophical matters can also be used for formulating theological matters. Luther never cites Plato as a source for theological truth.

LUTHER'S AUGUSTINIAN SACRAMENTALISM IN *THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY OF THE CHURCH*, 1520

In *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church,* Luther directly challenges the sacramental system of the Roman Church. Sacramentarianism was not yet an issue for Luther, but the battle with the official position of the Roman papacy was intensifying. The Leipzig Debate between Luther and Eck had taken place in the summer of 1519, in which Eck had pushed Luther to admit publicly his break with Rome. In February of 1520, Cajetan was in Rome with a commission examining Luther's writings for heresy. The universities of Louvain and Cologne condemned Luther in March. On June 24, 1520, the Pope issued the famous bull *Exsurge Domine,* giving Luther and his followers sixty days to recant or be excommunicated. Already in May, Luther had written a pamphlet entitled *On the Papacy at Rome.* By August, he released his *Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation.* Luther's religious reformation began decidedly to take political shape, and the hostility between Luther and Rome continued to intensify.

Spalatin was Luther's friend, as well as the personal chaplain and secretary to Elector Frederick the Wise. He had encouraged Luther (in the middle of December 1519) to express his views on the sacraments. *Babylonian Captivity,* which appeared in October of 1520, was Luther's response to Spalatin's encouragement. Luther passionately argues against the "miserable servitude" to which the Roman sacramental system had subjected Christian souls. Instead, he turns the attention of his readers particularly to baptism and the Lord's Supper. In these two sacraments (and possibly in the sacrament[?] of confession), one finds nothing but Christ, who is the fulfillment of God's promises.

Luther pens a threefold objection to the Roman bondage of the Lord's Supper. The first "captivity" is that the laity are denied the cup of Christ's blood, the second is the doctrine of transubstantiation, and the third is the notion that the mass is a sacrifice, that is, a work of man intended to appease God rather than a gift from God to man.[11]

Luther begins discussing the captivity of the withheld cup by denying that there are seven sacraments, and instead enumerates only three: "baptism, penance, and the bread."[12] As he begins to discuss "the bread," Luther appeals almost immediately to two separate passages from St. Augustine, to show that John 6 is not eucharistic. Both quotes allude to the idea that one can eat and drink the flesh and blood of Christ by faith, without physically eating.[13] The argument may have been persuasive regarding the interpretation of John 6, but such citations of St. Augustine would not serve Luther well later when he was attempting to correct the Zwinglians.

Luther then gets to the first point of his argument relative to the Lord's Supper:

> But now I ask, where is the necessity, where is the religious duty, where is the practical use of denying both kinds, that is, the visible sign, to the laity, when everyone concedes to them the grace of the sacrament [*res sacramenti*] without the sign? If they concede the grace [*rem*], which is greater, why not the sign [*signum*], which is lesser? For in every sacrament the sign [*signum*] as such is incomparably less than the thing signified [*res*].[14]

The English translation "grace" is unfortunate. The term *gratia* never appears in the Latin. Rather, Luther speaks of the "sacrament" as though it were a "sign," which, while it may deliver the "thing signified" (*res*), it may not be necessary for the reception of the *res*. While Luther does not mention St. Augustine by name, he uses Augustinian language.[15] One could argue that for Luther to speak like Augustine suggests an even closer identification with him than does merely citing him. In this document, such language serves Luther well in arguing that he is more consistent with Augustine than his papal opposition. A few short years later, he would find that the same language left too much room for sacramentarianism.

Transubstantiation was a novelty that had intruded into the church relatively recently (Luther says "in these last three hundred years," namely, since Lateran IV in 1215).

Concerning this first "captivity," Luther cites only one other early church father. St. Cyprian is observed to have administered "both kinds to the laity, even to children, indeed, to give the body of the Lord into their hands."[16] Luther's point is that Rome surely cannot condemn Cyprian as a heretic, and hence lay reception of both the body and the blood of Christ can hardly be branded heretical. St. Paul speaks of the practice as that which he "received" and "delivered." Luther further notes that not only the Bohemians, but also the entire eastern church practices the distribution of both the body and the blood of Christ to the laity.[17] Thus the practice of offering both the body and the blood of Christ to the laity came from the Lord; it was handed down by the apostle; it was attested by the fathers of the early church; and it remained the practice of the eastern church. Such evidence carries more weight with Luther than what was then the current Roman practice. He regarded Roman practice as aberrant.

The second captivity of the Lord's Supper under Rome was the dogma of transubstantiation. As Luther takes up the discussion of this point, his opening sentence immediately qualifies his objection. It is "less grievous as far as the conscience is concerned."[18] Even believing this dogma, the communicant still has the assurance that he is receiving the body and blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sins. Nevertheless, the dogma of transubstantiation is an unnecessary superimposition on the teachings of Scripture.

Luther proceeds to attack transubstantiation, not on the basis of the church fathers whom he could cite in support of his objections, but rather by demonstrating that it is the product of an essentially pagan, *non*-apostolic tradition. Transubstantiation was a novelty that had intruded into the church relatively recently (Luther says "in these last three hundred years," namely, since Lateran IV in 1215).[19] Luther offers the following explanation of the origin of transubstantiation and articulation of his own views:

> When I learned later what church it was that had decreed this [the dogma of transubstantiation], namely the Thomistic—that is, the Aristotelian church—I grew bolder, and after floating in a sea of doubt, I at last found rest for my conscience in the above view, namely, that it is real bread and real wine, in which Christ's real flesh and real blood are present in no other way and to no less a degree than the others assert them to be under their accidents. I reached this conclusion because I saw that the opinions of the Thomists, whether approved by pope or by council, remain only opinions, and would not become articles of faith even if an angel from heaven were to decree otherwise [Gal. 1:8]. For what is asserted without the Scriptures or proven revelation may be held as an opinion, but need not be believed. But this opinion of Thomas hangs so completely in the air without the support of Scripture or reason that it seems to me he knows neither his philosophy nor his logic. For Aristotle speaks of subjects and accidents so very differently from St. Thomas that it seems to me this great man is to be pitied not only for attempting to draw his opinions on this matter of faith from Aristotle, but also for attempting to base them upon a man whom he did not understand, thus building an unfortunate superstructure upon an unfortunate foundation.[20]

For Luther, ideas and doctrines could come from one of two places: from divine revelation or from human imagination. The former were always to be received as the dogma of the church; the latter could never be elevated to such a position. By appealing to St. Augustine and St. Cyprian in his discussion of the first "captivity," Luther demonstrates further that his views are traceable back to Scripture; that is, they are from the Lord, and therefore binding. By showing that his opponents' transubstantiationist views are traceable through Aquinas back to Aristotle, Luther demonstrates that they are of mere human origin, and are therefore not binding on the church catholic. "Let us not dabble too much in philosophy . . ."[21]

The third captivity Luther identifies is the opinion "that the mass is a good work and a sacrifice." He calls this opinion "by far the most wicked abuse of all."[22] This section of *The Baby-*

lonian Captivity contains only one passing reference to an early church father. Once again, the father of choice is St. Augustine, and the quote of choice is from Sermo 112, cap. 5: "Believe, and you have eaten."[23] Luther emphasizes the object of the belief. "But what does one believe, other than the word of the one who promises?" Thus, attention should be given to the gift God gives to his people in the mass. The problem with the notion of sacrifice is that it shifts the attention of the believer to what the people are giving to God.[24]

Not surprisingly, Luther almost omits references to the fathers on this point. The understanding of the mass as being in some sense a "sacrifice" is not novel. The "sacrifice" involved arguably was understood in ancient times to be the offering of grain and wine and the offering of prayers together with the reception of the body and blood of Christ. The Roman Church seems to have taken this "sacrificial" understanding of the mass to the novel extreme of interpreting it as repetitive of the sacrifice of Christ, and from this there sprang an array of abuses. Among these were the notions that masses could be said for those absent or even deceased, and the "merits" thereby earned could be applied to the absent or deceased person(s).[25]

Luther seeks to explain how the fathers understood the term "sacrifice" in association with the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Yet, in doing so, he does not cite any of them by name. Instead, he offers this:

> What shall we say then of the canon of the mass and the patristic authorities? First of all, I would answer: If there were nothing at all to be said against them, it would be safer to reject them all than admit that the mass is a work or a sacrifice, lest we deny the word of Christ and destroy faith together with the mass. Nevertheless, in order to retain them, we shall say that we are instructed by the Apostle in 1 Cor. 11 that it was customary for Christ's believers, when they came together for mass, to bring with them food and drink. These they called "collections."[26]

Luther's authority is Holy Scripture. His agenda is to teach about the mass in such a way that his teaching strengthen faith, rather than undermine it. If this agenda and the authority of Scripture were to demand abandonment of the early church fathers, as Luther says, "it would be safer to reject them all." There appears to Luther to be some ambiguity as to what the fathers meant when they spoke of sacrifice, and he puts the best, most evangelical construction he can on their words. It is important, however, that in this case he does not begin with the fathers and claim their support for his position. He begins with Scripture (and the principle of salvation by grace through faith), on that basis determines his position relative to the mass as a "sacrifice," and then devotes a few lines to show the possibility of harmonizing the fathers with a position that he admittedly derived from Scripture, not from them.

In this document Luther neither acknowledges that there are any differences in the teachings of the various early church fathers relative to the Lord's Supper, nor that he departs from any of them in any way. He is clear that his final authority is Holy Scripture. In discussing what the Scriptures teach about the Lord's Supper, he is comfortable with Platonic-Augustinian vocabulary, and finds Aristotelian-Thomistic formulations decidedly unacceptable. He seems to realize that constructing the dogma of the church catholic on the back of a pagan like Aristotle is a mistake. Luther does not yet evidence the realization that constructing the church's dogma on the back of a pagan like Plato is just as dangerous.

LUTHER'S APPEAL TO THE CHURCH FATHERS IN *THIS IS MY BODY*, 1527

The latter half of the third decade of the sixteenth century witnessed the decisive split between Luther and Zwingli concerning the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Robert H. Fischer identifies Zwingli's letter of November 16, 1524, to Matthew Alber as "what touched off the tinder."[27]

Martin Bucer's actions further strained tempers. Bugenhagen, a loyal supporter of Luther, had published a commentary on the Psalms. Bucer translated it into German, but took some liberties with the text, particularly by removing passages that presented a Lutheran view of the Lord's Supper, and inserting sentences that made room for a more Zwinglian interpretation. Bugenhagen naturally objected.[28]

Luther's agenda is to teach about the mass in such a way that his teaching strengthen faith, rather than undermine it.

The debate became full-blown in 1527. Zwingli produced an article against Luther's *Sermon on the Sacrament* in 1526, followed by *Amica Exegesis* in February 1527. Zwingli undertook to be "amicable" in the latter work, as its title might suggest, but he can hardly be said to have succeeded. Zwingli attributed the origin of Luther's views on the Sacrament (the Lord's Supper) to the Antichrist, and charged Luther with reverting to papalism.[29]

Luther was pressed by his friends to respond to the Zwinglian position. Some had apparently misinterpreted Luther's silence as reflecting his perception of weakness in his own position. Luther finally responded to the Sacramentarians with his tract *That These Words of Christ "This Is My Body," etc., Still Stand Firm against the Fanatics.* It was released in 1527, as was Zwingli's *Amica Exegesis.* These two works thus largely talked past each other.

Zwingli unapologetically stated that the Bible uses figurative speech, tropes, and alloiosis. He regarded the words "this is my body" to be an example of this. His primary reason for holding this position about the Lord's words was that, were they to be taken literally, an absurdity (or rather, at *least* one absurdity) would arise. Particularly disturbing to him was the notion that physical eating could have spiritual benefits.[30] Sasse correctly observes:

> There can be hardly any doubt that the deeper reasons for Zwingli's attitude toward the words of the Sacrament were not exegetical ones. No one—not even Zwingli—has ever doubted that grammatically the words can be understood as Luther understood them. He rejected this understanding only because he feared the "absurdities" of a literal interpretation.[31]

Zwingli approaches the text with certain presuppositions concerning what constitutes an "absurdity." Zwingli had a more exalted estimation of the capacity of fallen human reason to determine theological truth than Luther. This difference in anthropology between Luther and Zwingli accounts in part for Zwingli's negative judgment of Luther's simple, grammatically literal reception of the text. Also behind Zwingli's interpretation of the Lord's Supper was his Christology. Zwingli and Luther differ sharply on the dogma of the *communicatio idiomatum,* and this stands immediately behind Luther's response to Zwingli in *This Is My Body.* For Zwingli, the *communicatio idiomatum* was an alloiosis also, and as such his theology tended toward Nestorianism.[32]

This Is My Body may be roughly outlined as follows:

Introduction

I. Luther takes his stand on the words "This is my body." The burden of proof falls on the Swiss, who wish to interpret the text as meaning something other than what the words literally say.
II. Luther writes against the Swiss misinterpretation of "the flesh is of no avail," John 6:63.
III. Luther claims the support of the early church fathers for his position.
IV. Luther emphasizes that God works through *leiblich* (bodily) and *äußerlich* (outward) things.
V. Luther notes that Swiss appeals for peace lack sincerity, given Bucer's underhanded treatment of the publication of Luther's *Postil* and Bugenhagen's *Psalms Commentary*.[33]

The material relating to the early church fathers (part III in the above outline) is particularly revealing to the topic under consideration here. Luther begins by noting that "they [the Swiss] regard St. Augustine as their own."[34] He acknowledges that St. Augustine calls the Lord's Supper "a sacrament and a sign of the body of Christ." He does not acknowledge that this necessarily means St. Augustine thought of the sacrament as "a figure or sign of something future or absent."[35] Luther then proceeds to provide an impressive list (with his commentary) of St. Augustine quotes, which Luther believes support his position.

Most scholars today acknowledge that St. Augustine's spiritualizing and Platonic *signum/res signata* (sign/thing signified) understanding of the Lord's Supper (and much else as well) leaves room for a Zwinglian interpretation. Here was a man whose famous *Confessions* admit that he did not become a fully convinced catholic until he found a way to also remain a Platonist (which in his mind was tantamount to remaining intellectually respectable). It is doubtful that Luther intentionally misrepresented St. Augustine's views. More likely, Luther even at this point remained unaware of the subtle nuances of St. Augustine's thought and the full extent and impact that Platonism had had upon him.[36]

Luther then proceeds to provide an impressive list (with his commentary) of St. Augustine quotes, which Luther believes support his position.

Luther continues to assert, even at this point, that "Holy Christendom has, in my judgment, no better teacher after the apostles than St. Augustine."[37] Nevertheless, Luther no longer uses the Augustinian terminology of *signum* and *res,* as he did previously in *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* (1520). He still could not believe that the Augustinian terminology of "signification" might fairly be understood to mean that Augustine believed the sacramental bread merely "signified" the body of Christ, or that Augustine believed the body of Christ was not truly present in the Lord's Supper. Luther depicts the consciences of the Swiss as thinking:

> And especially since one or two sayings of St. Augustine stand there and assert quite clearly and lucidly that Christ's body is in the sacrament, and that a sacrament is not an empty, simple sign, as we say, therefore it is quite possible that in all his other sayings Augustine uses the word "sacrament" or "sign" in this way, and all his sayings do not help us at all.[38]

Luther still believes he holds and rightly reflects Augustinian theology. The Swiss were distorting the positions of the church fathers, and Luther is sure they knew in their consciences they were wrong. Augustinian terminology, however, had become a liability in Luther's debate with the Sacramentarians. Probably for this reason Luther drops the vocabulary of *signum* and *res.*

Luther proceeds from St. Augustine to a consideration of the use of the term *figura* by Tertullian, whom he (mis-)identifies as "the most ancient writer of all after the Apostolic period."[39] Luther never dismisses the appeal of the Swiss (notably Oecolampadius) to Tertullian because the latter was a heretic. Luther believes he makes his point more strongly if he can show that Tertullian is not teaching what the Swiss suppose him to teach. One way or the other, for Luther the fundamental issue is what the text of Scripture says:

> We are not at this moment discussing whether Tertullian and other teachers teach rightly or wrongly. For we wish to build our faith not upon men's but upon God's Word, the one rock. Not that we despise them, for they have surely had as good an intention as we can ever have, and

> they have offered their work for our benefit. But what we are discussing is whether the fanatics use the sayings of the fathers rightly, or whether they deal in lies, and we must see what the fathers really said.[40]

Luther then proceeds over several pages to demonstrate by way of detailed argument that Tertullian's *figura* is not to be equated with what the Sacramentarians mean by a "sign." Rather, according to Tertullian's usage, *figura* should be translated as *Gestalt*, "form."[41] Luther believed that Tertullian, like St. Augustine, believed Christ was truly present in the Lord's Supper. As for the Sacramentarians' attempts to appeal to the church fathers,

> It would be much better for them frankly to repudiate the holy fathers than to try with such deception and fraud to lure them over to their side and seduce the world under the name of the fathers, to whom before God and the world they are doing an injustice.[42]

Luther follows his discussion of St. Augustine and Tertullian with an examination of eucharistic references in St. Irenaeus, St. Hilary of Potiers, St. Cyprian, and then more of St. Augustine.[43] Luther still seems to presuppose the univocality of the early church fathers relative to the nature of the Lord's Supper. He believes they unanimously teach the real presence of Christ's body and blood "under" the respective elements in the Lord's Supper.

Once Luther completes his review of the church fathers, he returns immediately to scriptural argumentation. For Luther, truth was not being decided by the church fathers or by appeal to them. God's Word was the sole authority from which Luther intended to construct his doctrine. Nevertheless, Luther believes that the ancient fathers universally held the same scriptural understanding of the nature of Christ's presence in Holy Communion as he is confessing, and if they are to be honest, the Sacramentarians should admit the novelty of their views rather than claiming some precedent for them in the teachings of the early church or the Scriptures. Further, apparently to make it clear that he does not in any way give credence to Sacramentarian claims, Luther has ceased to speak in the Augustinian terms of "sign" and "thing signified."

LUTHER'S ARGUMENTS AT THE MARBURG COLLOQUY, 1529

During the mid- to late 1520s, Landgrave Philip of Hesse became increasingly aware of the threat posed to himself and other Lutheran princes by the Emperor and those estates that remained Roman Catholic. He saw the opportunity for the military strength of "Protestantism" to be greatly enhanced, if dogmatic agreement could be reached between the Zwinglians and the Lutherans. In June of 1529 Philip sent a letter to Luther, inviting him and Melanchthon to Marburg for a colloquy with Oecolampadius. In his reply, Luther steadfastly declared his unwillingness to concede anything to his opponents. Nevertheless, if the Landgrave thought the Swiss might at this time be willing to concede some of their opinions, he would come.[44]

The participants arrived in Marburg during the last days of September 1529. Witnesses of the proceedings provide records of what was said. Some are secondhand, some are firsthand; some are from sources sympathetic to the Lutherans, others are sympathetic to the Zwinglians. One nevertheless finds a remarkable consistency in what these various sources report, and the records are thus considered quite reliable.[45] The Latin eyewitness account of the Zwinglian Hedio from Strasburg is considered the most complete and reliable of the available sources.[46] Thus his text will serve as the principle document for the following discussion, with references to the other accounts of the Colloquy being made only when necessary for further clarification.

Luther believes the fathers unanimously teach the real presence of Christ's body and blood "under" the respective elements in the Lord's Supper.

The greater concern for a student of Reformation history is the difference between oral debates and written documents. In a written document one has the luxury of careful reflection before putting pen to paper. One usually has the further luxury of editing even what is initially written. In oral debate such luxuries disappear. Questions demand answers. If one ignores a question or takes too long to respond, such a person appears to hold the weaker position. So words get spoken more hastily. A spoken word cannot be removed from the hearing of others, even if it is reconsidered and retracted later. The inflections used cannot usually be transcribed.

Perhaps the well-thought-out written statements most faithfully relay the thought of the author. On the other hand, one may also argue that the unguarded "off-the-cuff" statements that are evoked during a debate may more accurately reveal what an individual really thinks. One can do little more than take note of these differences, leave it to the judgment of the reader as to how the evidence is to be weighed, and proceed to an examination of the evidence.

After a day of private meetings between individuals, the Colloquy began on Saturday morning, October 2, 1529. Though not the only point on which the two parties differed, the controversy concerning the Lord's Supper was certainly the most contentious issue dividing them at Marburg, and the topic was quickly taken up. References to the early church fathers played a surprisingly important role in the discussion.

Oecolampadius was the first to introduce patristic evidence into the discussion. Once again, the father to whom he appealed was St. Augustine. Oecolampadius warned Luther, relative to the latter's literal understanding of the words "this is my body," that "it is wrong to attribute too much to the element. Augustine . . . *On Christian Doctrine*."[47] Luther did not dispute St. Augustine's statement, but rather denied that it was applicable to the issue at hand.

The next noteworthy reference to the fathers is more generic, and comes from Zwingli. Zwingli appealed to Luther for latitude on the understanding of the nature of the Lord's Supper:

> you [Luther] yourself recognize that spiritual eating gives comfort. And since there is agreement on this point, which is the main one, he [Zwingli] begs, for the sake of the love of Christ [that no one be accused of heresy on account of this dissension]. The early fathers, even if they disagreed, nevertheless did not condemn one another in such a way.[48]

Whether Zwingli was doing a selective reading of the history of the early church or honestly was that ignorant of the patristic era, he clearly was in error. The early fathers, if they disagreed on a matter of doctrine or practice, often wrote quite harshly, condemning and even excommunicating their opponents. Nevertheless, Luther's response is noteworthy for the present study only in that he did not engage the issue of the patristic evidence, preferring instead to restrict himself to commenting on what constitutes a correct exegesis of the scriptural evidence.

The most important discussion of patristic evidence on Luther's part does finally come, and again it is in response to a citation of these sources by Zwingli. Zwingli had been arguing that the body of Christ is finite, occupying a limited space in heaven. Thus, by implication, it cannot be substantially present in the sacrament of the altar. At this point, Zwingli appealed to the authority of St. Augustine and Fulgentius:

> "If Christ's body is on high, it must be in one place," says Zwingli. He is saying nothing new; [see] Augustine and Fulgentius. Luther has set forth the idea that the body of Christ is everywhere; hence it is something infinite. Zwingli concluded: The body of Christ is in one place, nor can it be in many places.
>
> *Luther*: We shall find out to what extent you can boast about the fathers.[49]

Luther's comment waited until the next day for its fulfillment. Zwingli again broached the issue, this time quoting Fulgentius to show that the body of Christ was in one place. Luther's response was that Zwingli was quoting Fulgentius out of context. Fulgentius was attempting to show that Christ had a true body, contrary to the false opinions of the Manichœans. Fulgentius was not talking about the Lord's Supper. Luther answered Zwingli's Augustine and Fulgentius quotes with his own quotes from the same sources, which allowed the Lutherans to retain their position. Then comes the critical statement: "Luther's rule is: When the fathers speak, they are to be accepted in accordance with the canon of Scripture. Whatever they appear to write contrary to Scripture must either be interpreted or be rejected."[50] One is bound either to interpret or, if necessary, to reject those quotations from St. Augustine or Fulgentius that seem to suggest that Christ's body occupies only a limited space, and therefore (according to Zwingli's deduction) cannot be present in the Lord's Supper.

By Sunday afternoon Luther pressed the issue: "At the beginning of our discussion we took Scripture as our basis. Scripture is not against us. You add the fathers; they are not against us either. Among them you have two, Augustine and Fulgentius, on your side; the rest are against you."[51] Still, for Luther, the primary issue was not who had the most or the best early church fathers on their side. The only real issue was what the words of Scripture teach. At this point, the fathers may or may not serve as helpful illustrations. They can certainly be cited to show that the Lutheran position is not novel, and (as in the case of St. Augustine and Fulgentius) some of them also speak in such a way as to leave the possibility open that the Zwinglian position is not entirely novel. In the end, "it is necessary to subordinate the teachers to Christ."[52]

The only real issue was what the words of Scripture teach. At this point, the fathers may or may not serve as helpful illustrations.

In the course of the debate, Luther still allowed for the Augustinian vocabulary in which his education had steeped him:

> Luther admits that the sacrament is called a sign of a holy thing [*rei signum*]. Luther admits that the sacraments are also sacred symbols and that as such they signify and represent something which is beyond them and which transcends the intellect . . . . But when a person says that it is a mere sign [*purum signum*], this is hard for me to admit. There is a difference between natural signs and the signs instituted by God.[53]

Luther was not willing to call St. Augustine heretical for describing a sacrament as a *sacrae rei signum.* Nevertheless, such language was no longer Luther's terminology of choice. When compelled to use it, Luther carefully nuanced the distinction between natural and divine signs, and would not own the notion that the sacrament is a "mere sign." Luther probably believed he (and not his Zwinglian opponents) was correctly interpreting St. Augustine's use of "sign" and "thing signified." Luther, however, found himself able to express the meaning of the phrase "this is my body" more clearly if he avoided the language of signification altogether, and in 1529, this was what he preferred to do.

Luther's move away from St. Augustine went beyond his avoidance of the Augustinian terminology of signification. Luther was even prepared, at least for the sake of argument, to concede that at some points, St. Augustine speaks in a manner more conducive to the Zwinglian position than to his own. While the records appear to contradict in reporting whether Luther cited other early church fathers against the Sacramentarian interpretation of St. Augustine and Fulgentius, he certainly could have. What is important is that Luther no longer needed to have the agreement of St. Augustine before he could

believe his interpretation of Holy Scripture was correct. Whatever the fathers appear to write contrary to Scripture must either be interpreted or be rejected. With this as a guiding principle, none of the fathers, not even St. Augustine, can be considered a normative authority for Luther's interpretation of Scripture. Doubtless they still established for Luther the parameters within which orthodox interpretation can take place; there is no evidence that Luther would allow for an entirely novel interpretation of a text. Nevertheless, the fathers were now much more clearly subordinated to Scripture than they were in Luther's writings of a decade earlier. Further, Luther seemed much more clearly to allow that there are differences between the thought of the various early church fathers.

CONCLUSION

Assuming that Luther began his career as a "consistent Augustinian," did he remain so throughout his career, or did he eventually move away from purely Augustinian views and modes of expression? How one answers this question probably has as much to do with how one interprets St. Augustine as with how one interprets Luther. Furthermore, the answer will inevitably depend upon the topic chosen and the evidence examined.

The evidence presented in this essay suggests movement and change in Luther's appeal to the patristic corpus in general, and to St. Augustine in particular. Luther apparently began his career under something approaching the assumption that the early church fathers spoke with one voice on all points of doctrine, and that one could determine the correct interpretation of Holy Scripture simply by appealing to them, especially to St. Augustine. The controversies that embroiled Luther concerning the nature of the Lord's Supper pushed him to modify his initial assumptions.

In 1529 Luther more demonstrably subordinated the fathers to the Scriptures themselves. He never obviously departed completely from patristic precedent to formulate an entirely novel dogma, but he did allow for diversity of opinion among the early church fathers. When Luther was convinced that a particular dogma is the clear teaching of Scripture, he first attempted to "put the best construction on everything" and reinterpret the particular father in an orthodox manner. Nevertheless, for Luther, a particular patristic tradition no longer determined the apostolicity of that tradition. Rather, by determining what the Lord and his apostles taught in Scripture, Luther was then in a position to determine which early church father was faithfully expounding the apostolic tradition, and at which points. Luther stood willing to part company with a church father, even St. Augustine, if that was what was necessary to remain faithful to Christ. LOGIA

NOTES

1. This term is intended to be descriptive of those who did not recognize the bodily presence of the body of Christ in the Lord's Supper.

2. Wolfgang A. Bienert, "'Im Zweifel näher bei Augustin'? Zum patristischen Hintergrund der Theologie Luthers," in *Oecumenica et Patristica: Festschrift für Wilhelm Schneemelcher zum 75. Geburtstag* (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1989), 283.

3. Erwin Iserloh, "Sacramentum et Exemplum: Ein augustinisches Thema lutherischer Theologie," in *Reformata Reformanda. Festgabe für Hubert Jedin zum 17.Juni.1965* (Münster/ Westfallen: Aschendorff, 1965), 264.

4. Bienert, 290.

5. AE, 31: 37.

6. Hermann Sasse, *We Confess Jesus Christ,* trans. Norman Nagel (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1984), 48. Sasse continues, reflecting the spirit of Luther and of the *Heidelberg Disputation*, "Theology is *theology of the cross*, nothing else. A theology that would be something else is false theology" (italics original). Indeed, one may see the various points of Luther's theological development or evolution as corollaries to his refusal to compromise or modify his *theologia crucis.*

7. AE, 31: 39.

8. AE, 31: 42.

9. Heiko Juergens, "Die Funktion der Kirchenvaeterzitate in der Heidelberger Disputation Luthers (1518)," in *Archiv fuer Reformationsgeschichte* 66 (1975): 72–73.

10 Juergens, 73.

11. Frederick C. Ahrens and Abdel Ross Wentz, "Introduction to *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*," AE, 36: 7.

12. AE, 36: 18. WA, 6: 501.

13. AE, 36: 19–20. WA, 6: 502.

14. AE, 36: 23. WA, 6: 504. The Latin reads, "Obsecro autem, quœ est necessitas, quœ religio, quœ utilitas, laicis negari utranque speciem, id est signum visibile, quando omnes concedunt eis rem sacramenti sine signo? si rem concedunt, quœ maior est, cur signum, quod minus est, non concedunt? In omni enim sacramento signum, inquantum signum, incomparabiliter minus est quam res ipsa."

15. Kelly notes: "Augustine's distinction between a sacrament as a sign and the reality, or *res*, of the sacrament . . . Considered as physical, phenomenal objects, the bread and wine are properly signs of Christ's body and blood; if conventionally they are designated his body and blood, it must be admitted that they are not such straightforwardly but 'after a fashion'." Kelly nevertheless finds St. Augustine's language "fully consistent with his recognition of its [the spiritual *res*'] reality and actual presence." J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1978), 448.

16. AE, 36: 25–26.

17. AE, 36: 24–25.

18. AE, 36: 28.

19. AE, 36: 39; see also note 67 on that page.

20. AE, 36: 29. Sasse speaks of the contrast between the position of Luther and that of the transubstantiationists: "The doctrine of transubstantiation is condemned by Luther and the Lutheran Church because it is not consistent with Scripture—which speaks of the consecrated bread as still bread in 1 Cor. 11:26 ff.—and therefore is a false philosophical-theological theory that tries to describe the miracle, which mocks every description and explanation. But the doctrine of transubstantiation does at least want to hold firmly to the Real Presence. For this reason Luther always judged it more mildly than the Enthusiasts' and the Zwinglians' denial of the Real Presence. In this matter . . . the Lutherans stand closer to Rome than to the Reformed, even to the Calvinists." Further, "If Luther early in his career appealed to the consubstantiation taught by the Occamists against transubstantiation, he only did it to show that even within the Roman Church the doctrine of transubstantiation was not the only option. But the doctrine that two 'substances' exist along side each other, the substance of bread and the substance of the body of Christ, is also a philosophical method of explanation, which is not the teaching of our [Lutheran] church." Sasse, 123–124.

21. AE, 36: 34. For the full anti-Aristotelian argument, see pp. 31–34.

22. AE, 36: 35. Luther later refers to Pope Gregory I (590–604), but only to underscore his belief that the sacrament is still efficacious, even when celebrated by a wicked priest (55–56).

23. AE, 36: 44. See also p. 19, especially note 33.
24. AE, 36: 44.
25. AE, 36: 35–36, 47.
26. AE, 36: 53.
27. AE, 37: xiii.
28. Heinrich Bornkamm, *Luther in Mid-Career 1521–1530*, ed. with a Foreword by Karin Bornkamm, trans. E. Theodore Bachmann (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 524–526.
29. Sasse, 114.
30. Sasse, 116–117.
31 Sasse, 118.
32. Sasse, 120–121.
33. AE, 37: 6–7.
34. AE, 37: 104.
35. AE, 37: 104.
36. Bornkamm (535) also believes Luther did not fully understand Augustine's views.
37. AE, 37: 107.
38. AE, 37: 106.
39. AE, 37: 108.
40. AE, 37: 109.
41. AE, 37: 110. For the entire text of Luther's arguments about Tertullian's meaning, see 108–114.
42. AE, 37: 115.
43. AE, 37:115–124.
44. Bornkamm, 633–634.
45. Sasse, 177–178.
46. Sasse, 179.
47. AE, 38: 18. Footnote 7 on this page refers to St. Augustine's statement concerning 2 Cor. 3:6 in *De doctrina christiana* III.5.9: "When a word that is meant figuratively is accepted literally, it is understood in a carnal way."
48. AE, 38: 20. The bracketed phrase is included in the AE; the bracketed names I have added for the sake of clarity.
49. AE, 38: 31. Notes 34 and 35 on that page provide the following information: St. Augustine's work *De praesentia dei* is the one being alluded to here. Fulgentius was a post-Chalcedonian bishop of Ruspe in Numidia (467–532). He was a proponent of the Augustinian understanding of grace.
50. AE, 38: 33.
51. AE, 38: 34. Collin's version records, "*Oecolampadius* asks them to bring up the fathers who are on their side; but they refuse" (62). The Lutheran Osiander records that Luther mentioned the names of "Cyprian, Cyril, Ambrose, Jerome, and many others" (69).
52. AE, 38: 35.
53. AE, 38: 34. See especially note 43 on that page: Luther's statement that "the sacrament is called a sign of a holy thing" is from St. Augustine, *De civitate dei* X.5. The Latin reads, "Lutherus admittit, ut vocetur sacramentum sacrae rei signum, concedit sancta symbole esse et sic, ut amplius aliquid significent et intellectui repraesentent . . . Qui autem purum signum esse dicit, hoc grave est mihi admittere. Aliud de signis nostratibus et de signus a deo institutis." WA, 30.III: 142.

Cyprian's On the Lord's Prayer

A Patristic Signpost in Luther's Penitential Theology

Mark Sander

The explosive reaction to Luther's *Ninety-Five Theses* cannot be overestimated. Between 1518 and 1519, circumstances compelled Luther to question not only the true authority of plenary indulgences, but also the character of Christian faith itself, and locus of the Church's true authority. Because of the radical nature of these questions, Luther's position as a member of the Church Catholic was considered (even by some of his peers) to be doubtful.[1] To contradict charges of heresy and schism, Luther referred increasingly to scripture and the church fathers.

Luther's use of scripture and the patristic witness was not, however, confined only to apologetics in this period. He was thinking already in terms of an orthodox catechesis; among his first contributions was an *Exposition on the Lord's Prayer* in early 1519. In it, he refers to the treatise *De Oratione Dominica* (*On the Lord's Prayer*) by Cyprian of Carthage (d. 258); there Luther found support for his uncompromising view of the Christian life as constant repentance:

> These petitions may well also be termed seven good lessons and exhortations. For as the holy bishop and martyr St. Cyprian suggests, they are seven reminders of our wretchedness and poverty by means of which man, led to a knowledge of self, can see what a miserable and perilous life he leads here on earth. Such a life is nothing but blasphemy of God's name, disobedience to his will, rejection of his kingdom, a hungry land without bread, an existence full of sin, a precarious sojourn, and an abounding in every evil. As we shall see later, Christ himself talks to them in this prayer.[2]

An investigation of Cyprian's treatise and Luther's exposition reveals that Luther's theology was reinforced by Cyprian's teaching of repentance; this in a critical period when Luther was moving from repentance as the means of Christ's grace to repentance as the condition by which one clings to Christ's grace. Luther also included in his exposition teaching from Cyprian on repentance as the only context for the church's unity. This almost certainly assisted Luther's confidence that final papal authority could be questioned within the pale of Catholic history and teaching.

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CYPRIAN AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

To understand Cyprian and his theology, one must first appreciate how both persecution and schism shaped them. The Decian persecution of A.D. 250 effected mass lapses from all the churches, due in no small part to the dire consequences threatened by the Roman empire.[3] Even more devastating for the church than lapse was the persecution's aftermath. A schism was developing from the church in Rome, where the self-appointed bishop Novatian insisted that the church retain only those who remained free of serious sin after baptism. As a result, it would have been nearly impossible for the lapsed to be saved.

As bishop of Carthage, Cyprian had witnessed how widespread the lapse was, and he was opposed to casual readmission of the lapsed to the flock. He had, however, seen some seek forgiveness for their weakness, and was not impressed with Novatian's unnecessary rigor.[4] Moreover, Cyprian worried that the locus of salvation would be blurred if there was no clear direction on the readmission of the lapsed.

Cyprian produced *De Oratione Dominica* (*On the Lord's Prayer*) in 252, which reflected in its catechesis the pressures of lapse and schism. Cyprian saw the Prayer as a proof that faith was characterized by constant penitence, and that the unity of the church came only from recognition of this.

Because the unity of the church's authority was in question, Cyprian begins by reminding the reader of the authority of Christ's teaching. "The evangelical precepts," he writes,

> are nothing else than divine teachings—foundations on which hope is to be built, supports to strengthen faith, nourishments for cheering the heart, rudders for guiding our way, guards for obtaining salvation—which, while they instruct the docile minds of believers on the earth, lead them to heavenly kingdoms.[5]

The Lord's Prayer is one such teaching. "He . . . himself also gave the form of praying . . . [and] advised and instructed us what to pray for."[6] The teaching of the faith brings confession of that faith, and the confession of faith is never far from the confession of sin. The Lord himself, who stands as the Christian's hope before God, has taught the prayer to give comfort to the sinner. "Let us when as sinners we petition on behalf of our sins, put forward the words of our Advocate."[7] This is in contrast to the attitude of the impenitent, who makes a show

of his faith. Cyprian shows penitent prayer and impenitent prayer in sharpest relief with the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector:

> Not by impudently lifting his eyes to heaven nor by insolently raising his hands, but striking his breast and testifying to the sin enclosed within did he implore the help of divine mercy, and although the Pharisee was pleased with himself, the other rather deserved to be sanctified, since he placed the hope of salvation not in confidence of his innocence, because there is none who is innocent; but confessing his sinfulness he humbly prayed, and he who pardons the humble heard the petitioner."[8]

Every petition therefore teaches the need for a life of repentance. The introduction, "Our Father, who art in heaven," establishes that the Christian's life is one gracious adoption into a righteousness like Christ's. The Jews of Christ's time, who "faithlessly spurned Christ who had been announced to them through the Prophets and had been first to them, but also cruelly slew him," demonstrate conversely that one can depend on one's status rather than one's adoption, and so fall away from faith.[9] Thus God does not trivialize the law with his children. Because we are sons of God by adoption alone, we are to behave accordingly, "that it may be clear that the Lord dwells in us."[10] Faith includes the eschewing of those things that we are by nature, the catalogue including idolatry, drunkenness, adultery, sodomy, and other sins.

God does not trivialize the law with his children. Because we are sons of God by adoption alone, we are to behave accordingly.

But unlike Novatian, Cyprian does not presume to damn those who have broken the law. More important is the faith that desires to be a part of God's protection. To pray, "Hallowed be thy name," is to ask that "we who have been sanctified in baptism may persevere in what we have begun."[11] But only God can keep one in a fear of one's sins:

> because our Lord and Judge warned the man who had been healed and quickened by him to sin no more, lest something worse befall him, we make this petition with constant prayers, we ask this night and day, that the sanctification and quickening which is assumed from the grace of God be preserved by his protection.[12]

God preserves his children by bringing them into his kingdom. God's kingdom reigns everywhere, but for God's kingdom to live in us is the real difficulty.[13] "There is need," he writes, "of continual prayer and supplication lest we fall away from the heavenly kingdom."[14] Again he reminds his congregations of the Jews, quoting from Matthew 8:9 to show their impenitence. The passage relates the faith of the heathen Centurion who depended upon Christ as God, despite his own unworthiness. Christ's reply was that "many will come from east and west and will eat with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the heirs of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." The Pharisees may not have engaged in grievous sins, but impenitent security put them outside of a relationship with God.

But if the faith of an individual is not appreciable simply by an outward obedience to the law, it still prays that God's will be done in him. It is to

> cling inseparably to his love, to stand bravely and faithfully at his cross; when there is a struggle over his name and honor to exhibit the constancy in speech with which we confess, under investigation, the confidence with which we are crowned; this is to wish to be a co-heir with Christ; this is to do the commandment of God; this is to fulfill the will of the Father.[15]

Because one understands how impossible the will of God is to do, Cyprian acknowledges that

> there is a struggle between flesh and spirit, and as they contend there is daily conflict with each other, so that we do not do the very things which we wish as the spirit seeks the heavenly and the divine, the flesh desires the earthly and worldly. Accordingly we ask that harmony be effected between these two by the help and assistance of God, so that, while the will of God is being done both in the spirit and in the flesh, the soul which is reborn through him may be preserved.[16]

The primary importance of "Give us this day our daily bread" is that God would preserve his people through the sacrament. "We ask that this bread be given daily," he writes, "lest we who are in Christ and receive the Eucharist daily as food of salvation with the intervention of some more grievous sin . . . are kept from the heavenly bread, be separated from the body of Christ as he himself declares, 'I am the bread of life which came down from heaven . . . .'"[17] Cyprian also gives an example of such who had a more grievous sin intervene. Those in particular who possess riches are ensnared in the "entanglements of personal property."[18] This was apparent to Cyprian during the Decian persecution. Cyprian had seen one of the primary conditions for lapse stemming from the spiritual temptation caused by wealth:

> Each one was desirous of increasing his estate; and forgetful of what believers had either done before in the times of the apostles, or always ought to do, with the insatiable ardor of covetousness, devoted themselves to the increase of their property. Among the priests there was no devotedness of religion; among the ministers there was no

> sound faith: in their works there was no mercy; in their manners there was no discipline.[19]

To increase wealth was to show signs of unbelief. If one did not believe that God could provide for his well-being (thus seeking this himself through the accumulation of wealth) then how could he trust the spiritual good that God gives? After all, as Cyprian writes, "since all things are of God, nothing will be lacking to him who has God if he himself be not lacking to God."[20]

The previous petitions point ultimately to the final three, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," "Lead us not into temptation," and "Deliver us from evil." There are two elements to his explanation. The first is the recognition of sin, for it is this which gives meaning to faith. When the Christian prays this petition, the "soul is recalled to a consciousness of guilt. Lest anyone be pleased with himself, as if innocent, and by exalting himself perish the more, he is instructed and taught that he sins daily, since he is ordered to pray for his sins."[21] Herein lies Cyprian's chief reason for having anathematized Novatian, and his belief that the Church was made up only of those who do not sin. Without the understanding that we are sinners, there is no peace or unity in the Church. God does not receive the prayer of any who do not first live in the mercy of God.[22]

That the Christian not be led into temptation and be delivered from evil speaks to how dependent he is upon God. With respect to the former petition, Cyprian writes, when we ask that "we come not into temptation, we are reminded of our infirmity and weakness lest someone extol himself insolently, lest someone proudly and arrogantly assume something to himself."[23] And to deliver from evil is to ask God for protection from all the diabolical assaults that would keep the Christian from persevering in faith. From this comes the great consolation: "when once we seek God's protection against evil, having obtained this, we stand secure and safe against all the works of the devil and of the world. For what fear indeed is there with regard to the world for him who has God as his protector?"[24]

The unity of the Church was the cause for which Cyprian was best known. And Cyprian discusses that unity in relationship to one's repentance throughout *De Oratione Dominica.* The catholicity of the faith is in the universal membership of penitent sinners. The penitence that characterizes faith in turn looks for unity; all are in the same boat of mercy alone. Already in his introduction to the prayer (in chapter VIII) Cyprian writes that "the Teacher of Peace and Master of Unity did not wish prayer to be offered individually and privately and one would pray only for himself when he prays."[25] The Lord's Prayer is not "My Father who art in Heaven," and we do not pray only for our debts to be forgiven, our temptation to be relieved, or that only we be delivered from evil.[26] At the end of the treatise, Cyprian reemphasizes this point:

> The Lord prayed and asked not for himself (for what would an innocent person petition for himself?), but for our sins, just as he himself declares when he says to Peter: "Behold, Satan was asking to have you, that he might sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith may not fail."[27]

For Cyprian, no one is beyond the pale of God's salvific work, and "so . . . we offer prayer for the salvation of all, so that just as the will of God has been done, that is, in us through our faith . . . so too on earth the will of God may be done, that those who are still earthly by their first birth may begin to be heavenly, born of water and the spirit."[28]

That the Christian not be led into temptation and be delivered from evil speaks to how dependent he is upon God.

The tenor of Cyprian's treatise is one of warning. It teaches the Christian that his life is one of sin, which must be addressed, lest he become convinced of his worth and fall away from the very forgiveness that is his only hope. This is possible for Cyprian only through a life of unwavering repentance. Luther's hamartiology could only support an assessment of human will as negative as that of Cyprian's.

LUTHER'S EXPOSITION OF THE LORD'S PRAYER, 1519

The means by which Luther was aware of Cyprian's theology may be assumed. With Tertullian's *De Oratione,* Cyprian's work on the Lord's Prayer was considered throughout much of church history to be definitive.[29] But reinforcement for Luther on the value of Cyprian theology may well have come from another patristic source. Intimately acquainted with Augustine's work as he was, Luther was almost certainly aware of *De Dono Perseverantiae* (*On the Gift of Perseverance*), where Augustine quotes directly from *De Oratione Dominica* to prove that the faith and righteousness of which Cyprian spoke was given and preserved only by God's grace. Augustine introduces his section on Cyprian with the statement that the Catholic faith taught (against the Pelagians) that

> the grace of God is given not according to our merits, since all the merits of the just also are gifts of God and are bestowed through the grace of God; [also] that no one lives in this corruptible body in justice howsoever great, without some kind of sins . . . .[30]

As Augustine progresses through this argument, he brings forth the underlying import of Cyprian's thought in the grace of God. For example, on the first petition Augustine writes,

> What the doctor [i.e., Cyprian], then, understands us to ask of him when, having been hallowed, we say: Hallowed

> be Thy name, is perseverance in sanctity, that is, that we persevere in sanctification. For when we ask for something which we have already received, what do we ask for except that it also be granted to us not to cease having it? Therefore, as the saint, when he asks God that he may be holy, is actually asking that he may continue to be holy; so certainly also the chaste man, when he asks that he may be chaste, the continent, that he be continent; the just, just; the pious, pious; and everything else that we defend as gifts of God.[31]

It was precisely the question of Pelagianism that raised its head during the period in which Luther wrote his Exposition on the Lord's Prayer. Luther's convictions about repentance depended wholly upon the culpability and uncooperativeness of the human will, which was not supported by the scholastic semi-Pelagianism of his time.[32] And for him, the Lord's Prayer and Augustine/Cyprian's anti-Pelagian view of the Christian life held support for Luther's insistence that the Christian life was one of repentance.

Luther's convictions about repentance depended wholly upon the culpability and uncooperativeness of the human will.

With his précis of Cyprian's teaching, Luther follows him through a discussion of the Lord's Prayer with comparably hortatory tones about the true nature of prayer itself. Prayer is again of humble motive and few words. "Shamoral prayer," he writes, "is the mouth's thoughtless mumbling and chattering."[33] There is oral prayer that is acceptable, but "it is impossible for one who prays spiritually and sincerely to be verbose."[34] Luther finds confidence in the authority of the Prayer since the Lord's own prayer reflects the sincerity of faith that is humble and succinct. Luther's contemporaries placed more importance on the rosaries and like prayers so "that consequently, the truly spiritual inner and true Lord's Prayer is despised. For every absolution, all needs, all blessings, and all men's requirements for body and soul, for life here and beyond are abundantly contained in that prayer."[35]

Having reinforced the penitent humility that characterizes prayer itself, Luther follows and elaborates upon Cyprian as he traces the thread of repentance through the Lord's Prayer. He too discusses adoption to the sonship of God in baptism, and warns of its delicacy in this life. Because God baptizes his children in Christ's name, it follows that the Christian's life exhibits the virtues of Christ according to the law: "For the name of God in which we were baptized works all this in us. But we should always pray that the name of God may abide in us, be active in us, and be hallowed."[36] The struggle of the Christian life is not a progression toward righteousness, but a retention of the righteousness that God graciously confers in baptism.[37]

This perseverance in faith relates to membership in God's Kingdom. God's Kingdom and the devil's kingdom in the Exposition are different only in nomenclature from Cyprian's distinction between the heavenly and earthly kingdoms. The need for the kingdom of God to come to them in the midst of the devil's (or earthly) kingdom is remarkable in both treatises. "Therefore we do not pray, 'Dear Father, let us come into your kingdom,' as though we might journey toward it, but we do say, 'May thy kingdom come to us.'"[38]

Whereas Cyprian uses St. Paul's discussion of the penitent struggle (Romans 8) to speak of the need for "harmony to be effected"[39] between the flesh and the spirit, Luther uses the same passage to speak of the need to kill the human will. God hears the cry of the man who "finds himself heavily burdened with his own self,"[40] and inflicts all sorts of ills upon the old Adam to "throttle" the human will so that God's will would prevail. To warn of the consequences of a vaunted human will, Luther elicits Cyprian's example of the impenitent Jews of Christ's time:

> God had begun to mortify their will to build the kingdom of his grace in them, to raise up the glory and honor of his name in them, and to establish his will in them. Now they refuse his divine healing hand. They fall back and cling to their own will, that old knave. Yes, like the Jews, they release the criminal Barabbas and kill the innocent Son of God, that is the grace of God which had just begun to take root in them.[41]

In this early work on the Lord's Prayer, Luther also employs a spiritual interpretation of the bread in the fourth petition. Cyprian wrote that Christ meets all needs, both spiritual and physical, and it is for him as the bread of life for whom we pray. Luther teaches similarly. When he asks rhetorically if we do not also pray for physical bread, he answers, "yes, this too may well be included in this petition. However, this petition refers principally to Christ the spiritual bread of the soul."[42] Luther limited this understanding to physical bread in his later catechesis, reflecting the providence of God the Father in the first article of the Creed. But the understanding of penitent reliance remains. In the Large Catechism Luther writes that this petition is directed chiefly at the devil, who is not satisfied with his temptation in spiritual matters, but drives people from God through physical misery as well.[43]

Luther of course relates the *Anfechtungen* to the trials from the left and the right that beset the Christian. These trials, Luther writes, are there so that "man may learn to know himself and God; to know himself is to learn that all he is capable of is sinning and doing evil; to know God is to learn that God's grace is stronger than all his creatures."[44] Luther's theological acuity is apparent here. The righteousness of God as interpreted by Pelagian theology was retaliatory, dependent upon reward and punishment. Cyprian ostensibly wrote in a like manner: power is granted two ways, as "punishment for sin or

for glory where we are approved."[45] But this too is God's chastening in order to bring one closer. Indeed, Cyprian warns against extolling one's self "lest someone think the glory of confession of passion to be his own."[46] This important distinction cannot have been lost on Luther as he struggled with the *Anfechtungen* that God allowed to occur, over and against the Pelagian notion of punishment.

The truly catholic teaching of the Lord's Prayer from Luther or Cyprian shows that the essential struggle for the individual Christian or the church is no different today.

Finally, Luther follows Cyprian in revealing the Prayer's import to the unity of the faith. He repeats Cyprian as he relates the importance of the Prayer being "Our Father," rather than "my Father." "Since prayer is a spiritual good that is held in common by all, we dare not deprive anyone of it, not even our enemies."[47] Again, where Cyprian emphasizes (in chapter VIII) that "we pray not for one, but for the whole people because we the whole people are one," Luther writes, "all of Christendom prays for him who prays for it. Indeed, in such a prayer he prays together with Christendom for himself."[48]

DISCUSSION

In no way could one conclude that Luther used Cyprian slavishly, blueprinting the latter for the former's devices. Each wrote his teaching on the Lord's Prayer with an eye toward his specific theological (and therefore pastoral) situation. Cyprian's was one that defined the mercy of God among the repentant lapsed against the prejudicial damnation by Novatian's party. In Cyprian's church, the question of free will is practically moot. In Luther's church, the scholastic teaching of free will as essential to Christian living compelled him to insist upon the cursedness of the human will, and the dependence that one has on Christ's mercy. Neither are the influences on Luther's early theology of repentance completely apparent in his later theology of repentance. Luther was still trying to define the penitent life in terms of Christ's righteousness. Luther had initially determined repentance as the nature of righteousness. While not a work of merit, the penitent state itself framed the certainty of salvation. But works like the Exposition demonstrate Luther's refinement in his understanding of the penitent state. The penitent state was that which sought consolation, knowing that it would be given by a gracious God. Penitence also was the guide and warning to the Christian of the perils in the world whereby one can fall from faith.

The truly catholic teaching of the Lord's Prayer from Luther or Cyprian shows that the essential struggle for the individual Christian or the church is no different today. The great threat to the church continues to be the assault on the ontology of faith, on the penitent condition. Without an understanding of the need for repentance and the condition of repentance, we cannot appreciate even for a moment the abundance of Christ's mercy to which all Christians cling. Cyprian reinforced Luther's conviction about the penitential nature of the Lord's Prayer. Such penitent faith, Luther reminds us,

> is what is meant by genuine obedience, a thing which unfortunately is entirely unknown in our day. Nowadays, idle babblers come along and fill all of Christendom with their chatter and mislead the poor people with their doctrines. They fairly shout from the pulpits telling us how to make a good will, a good opinion, a good resolve. Then they tell the people that if they have done this they can feel secure that all that they do is good. With this doctrine they merely create self-willed and stubborn people, bold and secure minds, who constantly contend against God's will and do not break or subordinate their own. They feel that their own ideas are good and should therefore prevail, and that whatever obstructs them must be of the devil and not of God. That gives birth to the wolves in sheep's clothing, to those arrogant saints who are the most pernicious people on earth. That is why one bishop fights and feuds and wars with another, one church with another . . . That is why there is dissension everywhere.[49] LOGIA

NOTES

1. Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther: His Road to Reformation 1483–1521,* trans. James L. Schaff (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 306.
2. AE, 42: 27.
3. "The requirement was for all free inhabitants of the Empire, men, women, and children, to sacrifice to the gods of the Empire, pour a libation, and taste sacrificial meat. The penalty for refusal was death." W. H. C. Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1965), 407.
4. "Some who are of the lapsed have lately written to me, and are humble and meek and trembling and fearing God, and who have always laboured in the Church gloriously and liberally and who have never made a boast of their labour to the Lord. . . . Thinking of which things and although they had received certificates from the martyrs, nevertheless, that their satisfaction might be admitted by the Lord, these persons beseeching have written to me that they acknowledge their sin, and are truly repentant, and do not hurry rashly or importunately to secure peace." Cyprian, Epistle 26, "To the Lapsed," in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,* vol. 5 (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, [1886–89] reprint 1980), 305.
5. Cyprian, *De Oratione Dominca*, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 5, 1.
6. Ibid., 2.
7. Ibid., 3.
8. Ibid., 6.
9. Ibid., 10.
10. Ibid., 11.
11. Ibid., 12.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid., 13.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., 15.

16. Ibid.
17. Ibid., 18.
18. Ibid., 20.
19. Cyprian, *De Lapsis,* in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,* vol. 5, 3. Given Christ's words to the rich young ruler, Cyprian can only surmise that such behaviour speaks to the deeper condition of faith; the rich, he says, believe that they possess riches, but in fact they are possessed. There is neither mercy nor discipline in works that are not directed from a love of God rather than money. This temptation reaches to the core of faith itself. He quotes from 1 Timothy 6:9: "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and in perdition." *De Lapsis,* 12.
20. *De Oratione Dominica,* 21.
21. Ibid., 22.
22. Ibid., 23. "Sic nec sacrificium Deus recipit dissidentis, et ab altari revertentem prius fratri reconciliart jubet, ut pacificis precibus et Deus possit esse pacatus." cf. J. P. Migne, ed. *Patrologiae Cursus Completus Series Latina* Tomus IV, *S. Cyprianus Pars II* (Paris: Accurante J. P. Migne, 1891), 553.
23. Ibid., 26.
24. Ibid., 27.
25. Ibid., 8.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid., 17.
29. Douglas Fusselman has contributed a helpful article on the Lord's Prayer's authority, and notes that "Robert L. Samson pointed out that Hilary, in his commentary on Matthew 'passes over the exegesis of the Lord's Prayer with a quick reference to the sufficiency of Tertullian and Cyprian.'" "Pray Like This: The Significance of the Lord's Prayer in Luther's Cahechisms," *Concordia Journal* 18 (April 1992): 135.
30. Augustine, *De Dono Perseverantiae,* trans. Mary Alphonsine Lesousky (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1956), 4.
31. Ibid.
32. Martin Brecht notes that "justification was generally understood, especially in the late middle ages, as a balanced combination of human accomplishment and divine grace. But it was precisely this that was Luther's downfall when he no longer was able to acknowledge sinful man's capability for achievement." *Martin Luther: His Road to Reformation 1483–1521,* 227.
33. Ibid., 20.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid., 22.
36. Ibid., 28.
37. It is at this petition where Luther points one last time to Cyprian by name. It is not our act of righteousness that hallows God, but it is a penitent plea that God would be set apart in us, "as St. Cyprian declares."
38. Ibid., 41.
39. *De Oratione Dominica,* 16, my translation: "inter duo ista ope et auxilio Dei condordiam fieri."
40. AE, 42: 49.
41. Ibid., 51.
42. Ibid., 61.
43. Large Catechism, The Lord's Prayer, 80, *Triglotta,* 721.
44. AE, 42: 74.
45. *De Oratione Dominica,* 26.
46. Ibid.
47. AE, 42: 26.
48. Martin Bertram, in a footnote in the American Edition, notes that Luther may have quoted Chrysostom here when he in fact meant Cyprian.
49. AE, 42: 47.

A CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

The editors of *Logia* hereby request manuscripts, book reviews, and forum material for the following issues and themes:

ISSUE	THEME	DEADLINE
Reformation 1998	Bondage of the Will	April 1, 1998
Epiphany 1999	Ethics and Theology	August 1, 1998
Eastertide 1999	Confessional Subscription & Doctrinal Statements	October 1, 1998
Holy Trinity 1999	Eschatology	February 15, 1998

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The Use of Irenaeus's Adversus Haereses *in Martin Chemnitz's* Loci Theologici

James D. Heiser

If one were to ask the average American Lutheran laymen how his faith had been influenced by a second-century bishop and a sixteenth-century theologian, one might well imagine a reaction of utter incredulity—the entire question would be so far removed from his frame of reference it would be essentially meaningless. In a society steeped in materialism, individualism, and a universalistic view of religion, an interest in such figures seems like an impractical, quaint antiquarianism. In an age obsessed with finding one's own path to God (or gods, or goddess, or Gaia), the early church certainly seems like a dead end.

Thus Martin Chemnitz, if recognized at all, belongs to a dimly remembered Reformation Day sermon—an item for the theological equivalent of a German Oktoberfest. And yet, *Si Martinus non fuisset, Martinus vix stetisset.* If this is true, and the second Martin is now unknown, can the first be far behind?

Chemnitz and the theologians of the Age of Orthodoxy (1580–1713) possessed a biblical vision of the church that has been essentially lost today: "Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord" (Eph 2:20–21 NIV). To believe in the holy catholic and apostolic church professes unity with the whole church throughout the ages. Although the voices of some of the faithful may not resonate as clearly in our age, they still speak to us today, rebuking at one time, encouraging at another. Lutherans such as Martin Chemnitz saw the great riches to be uncovered in the fathers:

> I decided that the safest way to educate and remedy my own simplicity would be to consult the fathers of the church who, in the times of pristine purity and learning directly after the apostles, were active in expounding this subject publicly and with characteristic diligence, and to hear them as they conferred among themselves and shared their well-considered and pious opinions on the basis of God's Word. For in this way, like Gregory's pygmies sitting on the shoulders of giants, we can more easily and correctly form a judgement on the basis of God's Word concerning this difficult question, we can acquiesce with more conviction to sound and simple teaching, and we can more safely escape the danger of falling.[1]

The following pages will offer some brief thoughts concerning the place of the fathers within Lutheran theology, followed by an examination of the place St. Irenaeus occupied in the theology of Martin Chemnitz's *Loci Theologici.*

THE PLACE OF THE CHURCH FATHERS WITHIN LUTHERAN THEOLOGY

The Harmony between the Sola Scriptura Principle and the Use of the Fathers

There is a mentality at work within modern American Lutheranism that automatically turns a wary eye upon anyone who would study the church fathers. The image of Luther's confrontation with the emperor at the Diet of Worms and the *sola scriptura* slogan are wedded together into a mentality that in turn merges quite easily with modern secular notions that turn the individual conscience into the final judge on all moral questions. Luther becomes a role model, not on the positive basis of his fidelity to the Scriptures, but only negatively, in his rejection of "authority." The result is a theological shell game in which either the iconoclastic Carlstadt or the fanatic Müntzer is swapped for the Reformer.

Such a modern reinterpretation does not yield a historical picture of Luther and the Reformation, nor does it do justice to the 1,500 years of catholic teaching that the Reformers fought to uphold. True, there was an effort to correct an excessive emphasis on tradition, which had taken away from the teaching authority of the Scriptures, but the Reformation self-consciously chose to emphasize its adherence to the teachings of the fathers. Although the quantity of patristic citations in the Confessions is not numerically large (fourteen in the Augustana and twenty-nine in the Apology, for example),[2] one should not be misled into believing this implies a lack of interest. As J. A. O. Preus observed:

> The comparatively small number of actual quotations or references to the fathers in the Confessions does not indicate a lack of interest in, or respect for, the fathers on the part of the Lutheran theologians, but rather reflects the

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> intended purpose of the Confessions. Confessions are the symbols or rallying points for the whole church: for the laity, for parish pastors, and for officials; they are not intended only for theologians.[3]

Instead of emphasizing a particular quantity of citations, the overall orientation of the Confessions bespeaks the catholicity of the Lutheran teaching—"This is about the Sum of our Doctrine, in which, as can be seen, there is nothing that varies from the Scriptures, or from the church Catholic, or from the Church of Rome as known from its writers. This being the case, they judge harshly who insist that our teachers be regarded as heretics."[4] Again, one finds at the Augustana's conclusion: "Only those things have been recounted, whereof we thought that it was necessary to speak, so that it might be understood that, in doctrine and ceremonies, nothing has been received on our part, against Scripture or the church Catholic, since it is manifest that we have taken most diligent care that no new and ungodly doctrine should creep into our churches."[5] The fathers and the early councils are repeatedly appealed to in the Augustana and the Apology as witnesses against innovations in the Roman Church, an appeal that only increased as the Reformation progressed, as can be seen in Martin Chemnitz's and Jakob Andreae's *Catalog of Testimonies* appended to the Book of Concord.[6] The use of the fathers was even more extensive in the private writings of the Lutheran dogmaticians.

The question remains, however, why did *sola scriptura* Lutherans bother to refer to the fathers? J. A. O. Preus identifies eight reasons:

1. There is a strong desire to remain within the tradition of the ancient pure church not only in teaching, but even in terminology.
2. There was a desire to show the unbroken tradition of teaching. . . .
3. There was the desire to identify with the ancient purer church and its interpretation of Scripture. *The point is often made that the closer one can get to the time of the apostles, the closer one gets to the correct teaching.*
4. The Lutheran theologians of the Reformation and confessional period wanted to establish authority for their own teaching.
5. The fathers were used by Lutherans to refute errors, both in the Roman camp, as Chemnitz does so brilliantly in his *Examen,* and also in the Reformed camp, as both the Formula and the writings of the Lutherans of the confessional period demonstrate.
6. The Lutheran confessors used the fathers to distinguish between the Scriptures and the writings of men, even the highly honored fathers themselves. . . .
7. The fathers were cited to help in establishing a normative interpretation for certain key doctrines and passages. . . .
8. Finally, it does not seem beyond the realm of possibility that the Lutherans were a little impressed with their own learning and wanted to display it to the supercilious and sophisticated Romanists, as well as to the ignorant and uneducated fanatics.[7]

In the *Catalog of Testimonies* Chemnitz and Andreae explain their use of the fathers as follows:

> Christian reader, these testimonies of the ancient teachers of the Church have been here set forth, not with this meaning that our Christian faith is founded upon the authority of men. For the true saving faith is to be founded upon no church-teachers, old or new, but only and alone upon God's Word . . . . But because fanatical spirits, by the special and uncanny craft of Satan, wish to lead men from the Holy Scriptures—which, thank God! even a common layman can now profitably read—to the writings of the fathers and the ancient church-teachers as into a broad sea, so that he who has not read them cannot therefore precisely know whether they and their writings are as these new teachers quote their words, and thus is left in grievous doubt,—we have been compelled by means of this Catalogue to declare, and to exhibit to the view of all, that this new false doctrine has as little foundation in the ancient pure church-teachers as in the Holy Scriptures, but that it is diametrically opposed to it.[8]

The fathers provided the Lutherans with terminology, helped frame their exegesis, and helped both to formulate and to support Lutheran doctrine. This did not mitigate against *sola scriptura,* since the Lutherans often disagreed with the fathers when they felt so obligated by God's Word. But the early Lutherans did not view themselves in isolation from the preceding history of the church. They were at ease citing the fathers in agreement or disagreement because they saw themselves within the continuity of catholic thought.

The early Lutherans did not view themselves in isolation from the preceding history of the church.

THE PLACE OF IRENAEUS IN THE THEOLOGY OF LUTHERAN ORTHODOXY

Irenaeus and the Lutheran Confessions

Irenaeus of Lyons was born in Asia Minor, quite possibly in Smyrna, sometime between 140 and 160 A.D. Having heard Polycarp, the Bishop of Smyrna and former student of St. John, as a boy, "Irenaeus was in touch with the Apostolic age."[9] Irenaeus became presbyter of the church of Lugdunum (Lyon) and was sent to Rome in 177, returning the next year to find that Bishop Photinus had been martyred during his absence. Having succeeded Photinus, Irenaeus made his lasting mark upon the church primarily through his writing *Adversus Haereses,* a work of five books directed primarily against Gnosticism,

and *The Demonstration of the Apostolic Teaching*, another apologetic work.[10] At first glance, Irenaeus of Lyons might not seem particularly influential in Lutheran thought. A survey of the Confessions reveals only five references to Irenaeus, two of which occur in parallel sections of the German and Latin versions of the Augustana. No reference is made to Irenaeus in the *Catalog of Testimonies*. In fact, Irenaeus is only directly quoted in Augustana XXVI: "Disagreement in fasting does not destroy unity of faith." The other three references only allude to Irenaeus's writings. Irenaeus's view on the "image of God" is declared in Ap II, 19 (Original Sin) to be in keeping with the understanding expressed by the Lutherans: "What else is this than that a wisdom and righteousness was implanted in man that would grasp God and reflect him, that is, that man received gifts like the knowledge of God, fear of God, and trust in God? So Irenaeus interprets the likeness of God." In FC SD VII, 14 (Lord's Supper) the reference is contained in a quote from Luther,[11] with Irenaeus cited in defense of the Lutheran teaching that "there are two things in this sacrament, one heavenly and one earthly." Finally, Irenaeus, together with Hilary, Athanasius, Basil, and Gregory of Nyssa, Theodoret and John of Damascus, is cited in FC VIII (Person of Christ) as using the terms "communion" and "union" to describe the relationship of Christ's two natures. Altogether, while Irenaeus had a place in official Lutheran teaching, it is possible to imagine the Confessions holding together quite nicely without making any of these references.

Melanchthon also thought highly of Irenaeus, referring to him as "in his time the only theologian in the western church who was still filled with the apostolic spirit."

Luther's and Melanchthon's Use of Irenaeus in Their Private Writings

Irenaeus is seen in a different light, however, when the *private* writings of the Lutherans are examined. Although the index of the American Edition of Luther's works contains few references to Irenaeus, Luther cited him in defense of his teaching on the Lord's Supper (for instance, AE 37: 115–120), and also against Erasmus concerning original sin and the righteousness of the law. As Luther wrote to George Spalatin in October 1516:

> Moreover [Erasmus] does not clearly state that in Romans, chapter 5, the Apostle is speaking of original sin, although he admits that there is such a thing. Had Erasmus studied the books Augustine wrote against the Pelagians (especially the treatises *On the Letter and the Spirit, On Merits and Forgiveness of Sinners, Against the Two Letters of the Pelagians*, and *Against Julian*, almost all of which can be found in the eighth volume of his works), and had he recognized that nothing in Augustine is of his own wisdom *but is rather that of the most outstanding Fathers*, such as Cyprian, [Gregory of] Nazianzus, Rheticus, Irenaeus, Hilary, Olympius, Innocent, and Ambrose, then perhaps he would not only correctly understand the Apostle, but he would also hold Augustine in higher esteem than he has so far done (AE 48: 24; italics added).

Melanchthon also thought highly of Irenaeus, referring to him as "in his time the only theologian in the western church who was still filled with the apostolic spirit."[12] Melanchthon was particularly drawn to Irenaeus's doctrine of the person of Christ. "Repeatedly [Melanchthon] declares that he wants to be in line with Irenaeus" because of his scriptural presentation of the doctrine of the Trinity.[13] A good example of Melanchthon's enthusiastic use of Irenaeus can be found in locus II, "The Person of the Son of God" of his *Loci Communes*:

> And if someone objects that the divine nature does not suffer or die, but Christ died, the answer is well-known, true, and necessary. Since there are two natures in Christ, the things which are proper to one nature do not hinder the presence of the other nature. Further, these are properties of the human nature, that its members become mutilated, suffer, and die. Therefore Peter clearly said, "Christ suffered in the flesh," 1 Peter 4:1. And Irenaeus with learning and piety says, "Christ was crucified and buried with the Word in quiescence, so that He could be crucified and die" [Bk. 3.19; MPG 7.941], that is, the divine nature indeed was not mutilated or dead but was obedient to the Father, remained quiet, yielded to the wrath of the eternal Father against the sin of the human race, did not use its power or exercise its strength. If you carefully consider this statement of Irenaeus, you will understand that the differences between the natures are reverently described, and that at the same time light is shed both on the greatness of God's anger against sin poured out against Christ and on the humility of the Son who remained quiet and obedient to the Father and did not exercise His power.[14]

Chemnitz's Estimation of Irenaeus of Lyons

It has been observed that for Martin Chemnitz (1522–1586), "dogmatics is the combination of two specific disciplines: history (church history and the history of dogma) and Biblical study (exegesis)."[15] This approach can be seen in his *Loci Theologici*. Structured as a commentary on Melanchthon's *Loci Communes*, Chemnitz's *Loci* was never finished, but instead was published posthumously by Polycarp Leyser in 1591.[16]

Chemnitz's *Loci* contains a special essay entitled "Treatise on the Reading of the Fathers or Doctors of the Church."[17] Largely built around summaries of the teachings of various fathers, Chemnitz pointed out the virtues and shortcomings of these fathers to demonstrate how best to learn from them without falling into the same doctrinal errors that occasionally snared

them. Although later Lutherans continued emphasizing the study of the fathers, Robert Preus determined that

> never again in a dogmatics was there a special section like this one on the importance of reading the church fathers. This innovation of Chemnitz's is not insignificant: Chemnitz is the first to bring the systematic study of church history and the history of doctrine into a book dealing specifically with Christian doctrine.[18]

Chemnitz's reason for writing such a treatise is quite practical, even pastoral, coming in response to the request of friends:

> For although one could with great usefulness speak at length on the way to read the fathers safely, and could demonstrate the fruitfulness of such study in addition to the study of the sacred canonical Scriptures, yet in this present instance it is necessary to speak only briefly concerning the writings of certain individual fathers. For it is useful, even necessary, that one who is about to read them has in advance a method worked out in his mind and knows what is especially important in the individual fathers and what stands out, where dangers need to be avoided, and in which areas they speak correctly and usefully.[19]

In essence, Chemnitz cautions his reader to know the context of the work in question. With an understanding of the general thrust of the particular father, as well as both his strengths and weaknesses, the reader is better prepared to use such research beneficially. Fortunately, Irenaeus is one of the fathers Chemnitz examines in this treatise, and he does so as follows:

Never again in a dogmatics was there a special section like this one on the importance of reading the church fathers.

> Irenaeus [*Adversus Haereses*, MPG 7(1–2)] is by far the oldest among those whose writings are extant and of whom there is nothing doubtful. He sat at the feet of Polycarp, the disciple of John. Moreover, he wrote many things which were preserved by Jerome. But in our day only five books remain, and these indeed are rather badly translated, since Irenaeus in his own language speaks with great elegance. Epiphanius cites several portions from his Greek original. There is the rumor that somewhere a Greek copy is in existence, and it would be a worthy effort to try to bring it to light. For many things which are inadequately translated could then be understood more exactly. However, these books are most worthy of our reading because they deal with the main points of the Christian faith in a most fundamental way. For in those days heretics were rejecting the Scripture and obtruding onto the churches their own absurd ravings under the name of apostolic tradition. Therefore Irenaeus sets forth the true tradition which had been commended to the church by the apostles, namely, that the summary of the faith is comprehended in the creed (for he often cites the creed in almost the precise words), and he says that the tradition in all the apostolic churches is the same. To this he adds the text of Scripture and in many ways demonstrates which of the writings of the apostles are canonical. He summarizes the matter in two points, tradition or the creed, and the text of Scripture; and what does not agree with these, he rejects as heretical. We must carefully observe this in opposition to our adversaries who are trying to get the church to accept notable errors and manifest abuses on the grounds that the only traditions are the things which they say. In the second place, the pious mind will be greatly comforted when it sees that in the description of the heretics of that time the face of the papacy is already becoming evident with all its errors and abuses, such as anointing, extreme unction, and many other matters. Furthermore, a great many fine doctrinal points are contained in the writings of Irenaeus concerning nearly every article of faith, such as the two natures in Christ, the Eucharist, which is not a sacrifice as our adversaries imagine, and that the fathers in the Old Testament were saved by the same faith as the saints of the New Testament. Again, however, because even at that time he was disputing against the same notion which the Manichaeans later embraced, he speaks harshly and unfortunately concerning the free will. Again, because he was opposing who dreamed that there is one God who is the righteous God of the Law and another God who is the merciful God of the New Testament, he sometimes speaks carelessly regarding the distinction of Law and Gospel. But in other places he makes a proper and careful statement concerning faith in Christ and justification. He does not set forth a sufficiently accurate definition of original sin because he is speaking in opposition to those who attributed the cause of sin to God. We can read these points in many places in Irenaeus and, when we see clearly both the cause and the occasion of what he says and why he speaks the way he does, then his words can be read without offense and with real profit. There are some rather superficial statements, as in his explanation of Elohim, Adonai, Sabaoth, which are lacking in grammatical foundation. And when he says that Christ was almost fifty years old, he has no historical basis. The ancient church noted in him one basic error, namely, his holding to chiliasm, and there are in Bk. 5 a few seeds of this error in his handling of certain chapters of the Apocalypse.[20]

In summary, Chemnitz highlights four central points on which to praise Irenaeus and five to criticize. On the positive side, Irenaeus's *Adversus Haereses* (1) "deal with the main points of Christian faith in a most fundamental way," (2) "In the second

place, the pious mind will be greatly comforted when it sees that in the description of the heretics of that time the face of the papacy is already becoming evident with all its errors and abuses," (3) "a great many fine doctrinal points are contained in the writings of Irenaeus concerning nearly every article of faith," and particularly, (4) "he makes a proper and careful statement concerning faith in Christ and justification." Chemnitz identifies Irenaeus's shortcomings as (1) speaking "harshly and unfortunately concerning the free will," (2) speaking "carelessly regarding the distinction of Law and Gospel," (3) not setting forth "a sufficiently accurate definition of original sin", (4) making "some superficial statements," and finally, (5) holding to chiliasm.

The question remains whether Chemnitz actually followed these guidelines in practice. It has been estimated that Irenaeus is the father cited sixth most often in Chemnitz's writings.[21] How did Irenaeus benefit Chemnitz's work? The following section seeks to offer a preliminary answer to this question by examining the *Loci Theologici* of Martin Chemnitz. The chief aim will be to see whether Chemnitz's evaluation of Irenaeus's teaching in *Loci Theologici* matches that given in the treatise.

CHEMNITZ'S USE OF IRENAEUS IN *LOCI THEOLOGICI*

General Observations

Before we turn to the precise content, however, certain general observations seem warranted concerning Chemnitz's use of Irenaeus. First of all, virtually all attributed references to Irenaeus's writings come from his *Adversus Haereses.* Obviously Chemnitz could not have utilized *The Demonstration of the Apostolic Teaching,* since its text was not rediscovered until 1904.[22] No other surviving fragment of Irenaeus's work is quoted, but Chemnitz does make reference to works no longer extant, such as *De monarchia.*[23]

All five books of *Adversus Haereses* are utilized. Book 2, however, is only cited in the sections carried over from Melanchthon's *Loci Communes.* Book 4 is the book used most extensively by Chemnitz. Irenaeus citations occur in the following loci: I (God), II (The Person of the Son of God), IV (Creation), V (The Cause of Sin and Concerning Contingency), VI (Human Powers or Free Choice), VII (Sin), XIII (Justification), XIV (Good Works), and XVII (The Church).[24]

Irenaeus's Explanation of "the Main Points of the Christian Faith"

> *[T]hese books are most worthy of our reading because they deal with the main points of the Christian faith in a most fundamental way. For in those days heretics were rejecting the Scripture and obtruding onto the churches their own absurd ravings under the name of apostolic tradition. Therefore Irenaeus sets forth the true tradition which had been commended to the church by the apostles, namely, that the summary of the faith is comprehended in the creed. . . . To this he adds the text of Scripture and in many ways demonstrates which of the writings of the apostles are canonical. He summarizes the matter in two points, tradition or the creed, and the text of Scripture; and what does not agree with these, he rejects as heretical. We must carefully observe this in opposition to our adversaries who are trying to get the church to accept notable errors and manifest abuses on the grounds that the only traditions are the things which they say.*[25]

Irenaeus provided Chemnitz with a vital window into the dogmatic history of the early church, highlighting the course of early creedal development and profiling the struggle against the early heresies. Chemnitz considers the Apostles' Creed to be the most important of the early summaries of Christian doctrine, "For it is extant under the traditional name of the Apostles' Creed in almost the same words in Irenaeus and Tertullian, the oldest writers of the church. It is given the honorable name, 'the canon and rule of faith.'"[26] In fact, Chemnitz ends locus I, chapter III, "The Definition [of God]," with Irenaeus's rendering of the creed:

> The church has been planted throughout the world and to the uttermost ends of the earth by the apostles and their disciples and has received from them this faith which believes in the one God the Father, the Almighty who made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them. And in the one Jesus Christ, the Son of God who became incarnate for our salvation. And in the Holy Spirit, who through the prophets predicted the mysteries and coming of this dispensation, and His birth of the Virgin, His suffering and resurrection from the dead, and the bodily ascension into heaven of our Lord Jesus Christ, our God and Savior and King, according to the pleasure of the invisible Father, every knee shall bow of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and every tongue confess Him, and He will bring a righteous judgment to all [*Adv. Haer.* 1.10, MPG 7(1).550].[27]

Chemnitz also praises Irenaeus for his role in determining the parameters of the biblical canon

The parallel between this passage and elements of the creed as it is known today is striking, and the beauty of the formulation clearly had an impact on Chemnitz, since he made it his "last word" on the definition.

Chemnitz also praises Irenaeus for his role in determining the parameters of the biblical canon because he is well aware of the numerous pseudepigrapha circulated by heretics in the early church as they sought to legitimize their teachings. The canonical books had been challenged because

> Against these canonical writings the fanatics wrote opposition documents, which went under the titles of tradi-

tions, and they brought in many other and different teachings in which they alleged the apostles had taught in public meetings and private discussions with their followers whom they claimed as living witnesses. But Irenaeus and Tertullian prove from the form of the churches founded by the apostles that the true traditions or teachings of the apostles were not different but were absolutely the same as those signed by them and included in the apostolic writings. Therefore the form of the traditions in the apostolic churches in every way agrees with the apostolic writings. In this way the reliable canon of the New Testament Scriptures was established. But very quickly spurious writings began to be spread. However, those who were true disciples of the apostles exercised their judgment and rejected these adulterated writings.[28]

Chemnitz often returns to the wealth of knowledge in* Adversus Haereses *concerning the early heresies. This interest is based on the conviction that yesterday's heresies will be back tomorrow.

Chemnitz often returns to the wealth of knowledge in *Adversus Haereses* concerning the early heresies. This interest is not an idle curiosity, but is based on the conviction that yesterday's heresies will be back tomorrow. Chemnitz observes, for example, a common christological error in Valentius, Marcion, and the Anabaptists of the so-called Kingdom of Münster:

> First Valentius, Marcion, and very many others contended that Christ did not assume a true human nature or flesh consubstantial with Mary and with us but brought with Him from heaven a sidereal, heavenly, and elemental body. And to prove their opinion they misinterpret the following passages: 1 Cor. 15:47; John 6:62; 3:13. But at this point we are not contending merely against condemned ghosts of heretics, but the devil in our own time, under new colors, is recalling to light from hell heresies which long ago had been totally stamped out. For that horrible monster of most repulsive views in Münster had in its first line of battle an article which would destroy the true human nature in Christ. Therefore we must cling to the sure testimonies which confirm this part of the rule as a basic statement, that the Son of God assumed a human nature consubstantial with Mary and with us.[29]

Chemnitz also notes early heretical notions concerning the necessity of good works. In locus XIV Chemnitz again draws a parallel between the early heretics and sixteenth-century Anabaptists:

> It would be difficult to believe that such abominable filth could be brought into the church and mixed with its doctrine at the very beginning of the Gospel, if we in our own age had not experienced almost the same things in the case of the Anabaptists. Lest anyone think that we are doing them an injustice, we shall quote the words of the fathers with which they described the aberrations of their own era. Irenaeus [*Adversus Haereses*, 1.23 (new 24), MPL 7.678], discusses the statements of Basilides and his shameless life, and among other things he says that Basilides was indifferent to the practice of lust. Irenaeus, in discussing the heresy of the Carpocratians, says [*Adversus Haereses*, 1.24 (new 25), MPL 7.682], "They are so uncontrolled in their raving that they say they can do whatever irreligious and ungodly things they want to do. They say that good and evil are only matters of human opinion, since by nature nothing is evil." In 1.32 (new 29) [MPL 7.691], he describes the wild lusts of Basilides and Carpocrates thus: "Some people take the occasion from their association with Basilides and Carpocrates to practice promiscuous sexual relations, enter into multiple marriages and the neglect of their own families, and they say that such things as eating meat sacrificed to idols is a matter of indifference to God."[30]

Thus we see that Chemnitz makes use of Irenaeus just as he had outlined: Irenaeus is cited for his concise statement of the faith and for his efforts in establishing the scope of the biblical canon; and his refutation of the heretics addresses the faith "in a most fundamental way," which still speaks against modern heresies.

Irenaeus's Foreshadowing of "the Face of the Papacy"

> *In the second place, the pious mind will be greatly comforted when it sees that in the description of the heretics of that time the face of the papacy is already becoming evident with all its errors and abuses, such as anointing, extreme unction, and many other matters.*[31]

A survey of *Loci Theologici* and the *Examen* found no Irenaeus references to anointing and extreme unction, and none of the Irenaean quotes collected from the *Loci* yielded any such links between early heresies and the sixteenth-century papacy. Rather, what was found was a large number of links between the ancient heresies and the Anabaptists, as was shown above in 3.2.

Fine Doctrinal Points in the Writings of Irenaeus

> *Furthermore, a great many fine doctrinal points are contained in the writings of Irenaeus concerning nearly every article of faith, such as the two natures in Christ, the Eucharist, which is not a sacrifice as our adversaries imagine, and that the fathers in the Old Testament were saved by the same faith as the saints of the New Testament.*[32]

As noted above (see the quotation from the *Loci Communes* in section 2.2 above), Melanchthon was particularly drawn to

Irenaeus's Christology. This affection carries over into Chemnitz's theology, with the result that both the *Loci Communes* and *Loci Theologici* draw upon Irenaeus in formulating this locus, praising Irenaeus's understanding of the two natures. To his very strong endorsement of Irenaeus's formulation, Melanchthon adds: "Care behooves the pious, for the sake of harmony, to speak in line with the church. And it was not without good reasons that the ancient church approved some ways of speaking and rejected others."[33] Irenaeus's formulation is the *church's* formulation; his words are "pious" and "reverent."

It is precisely in defense of the expression "by faith alone" that Chemnitz praises Irenaeus.

Since locus xx (The Lord's Supper) was not included in the English translation of *Loci Theologici,* we have not examined Chemnitz's use of Irenaeus within that context. Irenaeus is used extensively in Chemnitz's *De coena Domini,* however. In chapter 10, "Arguments from the Testimonies of the Ancient Church," Irenaeus is a key church father quoted in support of the Lutheran position over against those of Rome and Geneva. For example,

> But there is no need for conjecture or books of divination, for Irenaeus himself clearly and specifically calls the bread also the body of Christ, the cup also the blood of Christ. . . . Nor are the words "body and blood" ambiguous. For Irenaeus in *Adversus haereses,* Bk. 5, ch. 2, adds a completely clear explanation. He says that the blood is nothing less than what flows from the veins, the flesh, and the rest of human substance, which was truly made the Word of God who redeemed us by His blood.[34]

And later Chemnitz notes,

> Further, the reader should note that Irenaeus does not base his argument, as the adversaries do, on our bodies receiving only the external symbols of the body of Christ and that from the soul a power afterwards redounds to our body. But Irenaeus argues in this way: "Just as that which is bread from the earth, when it receives the call of God is no longer common bread but the Eucharist, consisting of two parts, the earthly and the heavenly, so also our bodies when they share in the Eucharist which consists of these two things are no longer subject to corruption but possess the hope of the resurrection."[35]

As can be seen even from this small sample, Chemnitz utilizes Irenaeus's writings to support Lutheran teaching concerning the real presence.[36] At the same time the second citation, by referring to the Eucharist "consisting of two parts, the earthly and the heavenly," also wreaks havoc on the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation.

Finally, Chemnitz asserts that Irenaeus teaches that "the fathers in the Old Testament were saved by the same faith as the saints of the New Testament. . . ." Certainly this is an accurate estimation of Irenaeus's teaching, since one finds in 4.21:

> 1. But that our faith was also prefigured in Abraham, and that he was the patriarch of our faith, and, as it were, the prophet of it, the apostle has very fully taught [Gal. 3:5–9 are cited] . . . . For which [reason the apostle] declared that this man was not only the prophet of faith, but also the father of those who from among the Gentiles believe in Jesus Christ, because his faith and ours are one and the same: for he believed in things future, as if they were already accomplished, because of the promise of God; and in like manner do we also, because of the promise of God, behold through faith that inheritance [laid up for us] in the [future] kingdom.[37]

Chemnitz, however, does not hold up this teaching in *Loci Theologici,* but instead writes in locus xiii (Justification):

> An excessive amount of admiration for outward discipline and for natural human powers in the unregenerate brought great darkness over this article. Thus Irenaeus 4.30 [new 4.16, MPG 7(1).107] says, "The fathers before the promulgation of the Law were righteous by the natural law." . . . In short, Pelagianism was built out of many unfortunate statements of this kind.[38]

Irenaeus's "Careful Statement concerning Faith in Christ and Justification"

> *But in other places he makes a proper and careful statement concerning faith in Christ and justification.*[39]

A significant proportion of Chemnitz's locus xiii (Justification) is devoted to defending the Lutheran use of the terms *faith* and *grace.* It is precisely in defense of the expression "by faith alone" that Chemnitz praises Irenaeus. Chemnitz declares: "The expression 'by faith alone' in the article of justification was not dreamed up as something new and for the first time by our theologians, but it was always used in the complete consensus of all antiquity in connection with this article, as examples from the writings of the fathers testify."[40] Chemnitz cites Ambrose, Basil, Hilary, Chrysostom, and several other ancient writers before observing: "Therefore we can correctly say with Erasmus: 'This word *sola,* which has been attacked with so much noise in the era of Luther, was reverently heard and read among the fathers.'"[41] It is after this point that Chemnitz cites Irenaeus: "Note the clear use of the exclusive concept in Irenaeus [*Adv. Haer.*], 4.37–38 [MPG 7(1).1031–46], 'Men are saved from the ancient serpent in no other way than that they believe in Him.'"[42] This citation is not given the prominence of many of the other patristic citations, being tacked on after his citation from Erasmus, and one almost wonders if Chemnitz hesitated to use it. It is certainly one of the shortest references to the fathers in this section. Nevertheless, while one would not wish to defend the entire Lutheran

appeal to the fathers on this one quote, the overall argument is quite impressive, allowing Chemnitz justification for claiming patristic support for the phrase "by faith alone."

Irenaeus's Speaking "Harshly and Unfortunately concerning the Free Will"

> *Again, however, because even at that time he was disputing against the same notion which the Manichaeans later embraced, he speaks harshly and unfortunately concerning the free will.*[43]

As would be expected, Chemnitz's citations from Irenaeus on the free will are found in loci v (The Cause of Sin and Concerning Contingency) and vi (Human Powers or Free Choice). Chemnitz notes at the outset of locus v, chapter ii, "The Chief Controversies . . . Regarding the Cause of Sin": "First we must explain the controversies which in and outside of the church have corrupted and perverted the true meaning of this locus as given to us in the Word of God."[44] Irenaeus is praised in this context for writing his *De monarchia,* or *That God Is Not the Author of Sin,* against the Marcionite heresy, which "attributed the cause of sin to a god who . . . compelled men against their will to commit crimes."[45]

Irenaeus is again cited as Chemnitz argues against a Calvinistic double predestination.

Irenaeus is again cited in chapter iv ("Explanation of Certain Scripture Passages Which Can Be Raised in Objection") as Chemnitz argues against a Calvinistic double predestination. Chemnitz notes that certain Scripture passages were misused "even in antiquity . . . in opposition to the true teaching concerning this question, as we read in Irenaeus, Bk. 4."[46] The first passage Chemnitz treats—"I will harden the heart of Pharaoh" (Ex 4:21)—was also used by the Marcionites in defense of their teaching. Here the statements of Irenaeus needed to be "glossed" in later generations. As Chemnitz observes:

> The ancients with earnest and feasible interpretations tried to soften statements such as that of Irenaeus, where he says regarding the hardening of Pharaoh's heart: "Therefore God has given them up unto their unbelief and turned His face away from people of this kind, leaving them in the darkness which they have chosen for themselves" [*Adv. Haer.* 4.29, MPG 7.1064] . . . . Thus these expressions really refer to permission. But this permission is not to be understood in the sense that . . . God wills, approves, or aids crimes, or that God does not really care when men commit crimes such as the permission of tryants [*sic*], but God is not the efficacious cause, aiding, moving, or forcing our wills to sin.[47]

In chapter viii, "The Modes of Speaking," Chemnitz notes that "We ought to be careful in our ways of speaking on all subjects, but especially when we are speaking about God. . . . Therefore we shall first review at this point some of the formulas for speaking used by those who have upset the teaching of this locus."[48] Because of their historical setting, Justin Martyr and Irenaeus were most susceptible to poor terminology on this point:

> Before the time of the Manichaeans those who corrupted this locus used this method of speaking, as Justin describes: "All things which happen happen out of the necessity of fate. The wicked have been made such by fate." [MPG 6.392]
>
> Irenaeus gives us this formula: "When man sins, the power comes from God."[49]

Irenaeus's statements strike the modern reader (and obviously the sixteenth-century reader as well!) as inconsistent, rejecting Marcionite claims, which "attributed the cause of sin to a god" and yet proclaiming, "When man sins, the power comes from God." Such statements need careful interpretation for the danger of false doctrine to be avoided. Thus the explanation of "permission." Chemnitz's thrust here is as stated in TRFDC: "Again, however, because even at that time he was disputing against the same notion which the Manichaeans later embraced, he speaks harshly and unfortunately concerning the free will."[50]

Chemnitz addresses Irenaeus's "carelessness" again in locus vi (Human Powers or Free Choice). Chemnitz acknowledges that "This locus is very complicated and includes many questions which need verification,"[51] and he begins by determining the *status controversiae*:

> What kind of power does man possess after the Fall to render obedience to the Law, since our mind is darkened and our will turned away from God, and in our own hearts there is a stubborn resistance to the law of God? And since the law of God demands not only external, civil obedience but also the continuous and perfect obedience of our entire human nature, the question is what and how much the human will can do. And thus the title "Human Powers" is preferable to "Free Choice" or "Free Will."[52]

Chemnitz next determines to "say something about the term 'free choice,' for many perplexing matters are related to this expression."[53] Chemnitz explains:

> Justin uses three words: 1. *autexousion* (possessing a free will); 2. *eleuthera proairesis* (free will); 3. *to eph' hemin* (that which is in us). The same words were used by Irenaeus, as we can gather from the Latin translation. For he says that man is of a free opinion and that he has the power of choosing, and that that power is in us. . . .
>
> The translation of Irenaeus uses the terms "free choice" and "the power of free choice." Hence among the Latin writers the term "free choice" always continues in use. . . .

> Irenaeus, 4.37 [MPG 7.1099], puts it this way, "God has put into men the power of choice (*proairesis*) which He also has given to the angels."[54]

Chemnitz chooses not to argue directly against these fathers at this point, but instead notes the modifications in terminology that occurred during the confrontation with the Pelagians. When one is speaking of the state of the sinner before God, Chemnitz urges that "the words which Augustine correctly used in opposition to the Pelagian praise of freedom, such as: the enslaved will, the captive will, the destroyed, the loose will, the damnable handmaiden, stubbornness, and nonfreedom."[55] The term "free choice" should be limited to civil righteousness.

Chemnitz raises the matter of contradictory patristic citations in the final section of the locus, "Refutation of Arguments." Again, Chemnitz's concern is with the Pelagians:

> We must say something about the testimonies of the ancients by which Pelagius tried to prove that he had the agreement of the church of all antiquity. A consideration of this point has many uses. For there is no more illustrative example as to how imprecisely the fathers, outside of the controversies, spoke than on this locus. Likewise, it shows how the imprecise statements of the ancients have to be interpreted according to the analogy of faith. For when we read the arguments of Justin, Irenaeus, and Tertullian regarding free choice—which they used in opposition to the Marcionites and others like them—if the titles of the works did not tell us by which authors the books had been written, we would think that we were hearing the very words of Pelagius.
>
> Justin, *Apologia* [2.6, MPG 6.455], "Good works would not be praised, nor evil ones condemned, if man does not have an equal power to turn himself from one direction to the other." Pelagius spoke almost exactly the same words. Irenaeus, 4.71 [MPG 7.1099], "The power is not from God, but a good intention is always in man. And because of this condition He gives some good quality to all. Further, He has given to man the power of choosing, just as to the angels." Ch. 72 [MPG 7.1100], "All men are of the same nature, capable of keeping and doing the good, and able to lose and not do the good." Many more statements of this kind can be found.[56]

The intent here is certainly not to accuse Irenaeus of being Pelagian, since Chemnitz states the historical reasons why such "free-choice" terminology was selected. Rather, Chemnitz's focus is on the need for precision in one's theological terminology, which is precisely the criticism raised in the TRFDC. Such imprecise terminology must be explained according to the analogy of faith. Irenaeus's incautious use of "free choice" allowed the Pelagians to distort his teaching into a weapon against the orthodox faith. Indeed, the Pelagian controversy eliminated the freedom to use this term in the way Irenaeus did. While it was possible for Irenaeus to give such terminology an orthodox meaning before the Pelagian controversy, such freedom does not exist now.

> If a person does not recognize that these statements are improper, he is a manifest Pelagian. Nor was Pelagius merely a stammering child. For he could not only list testimonies from the ancients, but he could pile them up and amplify them. All those whose writings are extant, from the time of the apostles, he cited as sharing his views and speaking the same way. And for Augustine it was much easier to refute Pelagius and to establish the true doctrine from Scripture than to refute him from the fathers. Likewise, it proved to be of more importance to Pelagius to pile up citations from the ancient writers than passages of Holy Scripture. For this reason I have often marveled, since the writings of the ancients were held in such honor at that time, that Augustine could defend his own teachings which he drew from Scripture, while Pelagius had for himself such a long series of fathers who asserted the dogma of Pelagius in almost the same words. There is no doubt that Augustine had been divinely endowed with so great authority that his teaching was upheld and preserved against these corruptions.

Irenaeus's incautious use of "free choice" allowed the Pelagians to distort his teaching into a weapon against the orthodox faith.

> But we should observe by what line of reasoning Augustine dealt with this matter so as to ward off attacks. (1) From the clear testimonies of Scripture he established the true doctrine and refuted Pelagius. (2) He retracted many of his own statements which he had injudiciously made and quietly noted statements among the writings of others which were not quite correctly set forth. Finally, he freely approached the statements of the fathers which Pelagius used, and with a certain degree of helpful interpretation, which was often rather painstakingly discovered, he softened certain of these citations. And what he could not soften or where a better interpretation could not be made, he clearly rejected it.[57]

Augustine serves to make precisely the point that was later raised by Luther (in *The Bondage of the Will,* for example) and Chemnitz over against the "semi-Pelagian" Romanists: one cannot refute the Lutheran teaching on this doctrine by appealing to the fathers' use of inappropriate terminology, since these usages predate the controversies establishing the correct manner of speaking of the human will. Doctrine should be established on the basis of Scripture, not the incautious overstatements of fathers who were confronting a different heresy within a specific historical context.

Irenaeus's Carelessness "Regarding the Distinction of Law and Gospel"

> *Again, because he was opposing those who dreamed that there is one God who is the righteous God of the Law and another God who is the merciful God of the New Testament, he sometimes speaks carelessly regarding the distinction of Law and Gospel.*[58]

As in previous sections ("Free Will," for example), Chemnitz attributes Irenaeus's confusing terminology to his struggle against the Marcionites. Chemnitz's tone is almost apologetic during his discussion of "unfortunate statements of the fathers" in locus XIII (Justification):

> ***Thus we shall not deal with the lapses of those by whose labors we have been aided and whose gray hairs we ought to honor.***

> We have made the point regarding the reading of the history of the church so that we might consider how the ancient writers, when they were involved in controversies on the articles of faith, failed to deal with the doctrine of justification carefully and circumspectly. For often, when they were occupied with something else, they made many unfortunate statements that later on gave occasion for a gradual and serious departure from the purity of this article. . . .
>
> But it is not our purpose to be like Ham, who uncovered his father's shame. Thus we shall not deal with the lapses of those by whose labors we have been aided and whose gray hairs we ought to honor, but we will refer to them only as warnings so that we may be cautioned by their examples to be more careful and diligent in preserving the purity of this doctrine, so that we never give occasion to anyone to follow in these footsteps.[59]

Having said this, however, Chemnitz notes that such confusion was "widespread" and "the statements are very unfortunate" at best:

> 3. The confusion of Law and Gospel was widespread in the church, and even if we speak charitably, the statements are very unfortunate. They did not distinguish accurately enough as to what kind of righteousness the Law was describing, nor the purpose of the Law, nor did they define what the doctrine of the Gospel is, properly speaking, or what the righteousness of faith before God is, and why we must have another kind of righteousness than that of the Law.
>
> . . . So as not to prolong the list, even Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, and Eusebius, when they tried to distinguish the righteousness of the Law and the Gospel, only refer to the doctrine of works and only distinguish according to what is greater and what is less. As Clement says in his *Stromata*, 6.18 [MPG 9.398], the righteousness of the Pharisees was rejected because they only refrained from evils. And in Book 7 he says, "The Law prohibits only evil actions, but the Gospel also prohibits evil thoughts." We can read similar ideas in Irenaeus [*Adversus Haereses*, 4.42], Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem* [4.9], Eusebius, *Demonstratio Evangelica*, 4.2, and Chrysostom, *Homilia 16 in Matt.*[60]

Irenaeus's alleged confusion rests on an incomplete understanding of Matthew 5:20: "For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven" (NIV). In 4.13, Irenaeus explains the passage as follows:

> In the first place, [we must] believe not only in the Father, but also in His Son now revealed; for He it is who leads man into fellowship and unity with God. In the next place, [we must] not only say, but we must do; for they said, but did not. And [we must] not only abstain from evil deeds, but even from the desires after them. Now He did not teach us these things as being opposed to the law, but as fulfilling the law, and implanting in us the varied righteousness of the law.[61]

On this occasion, however, it is difficult to judge Irenaeus too harshly, particularly if one sees this statement not as three tasks to be completed for salvation, but in terms of justification and sanctification. The passage stresses faith in the Son of God for salvation "who leads man into fellowship and unity with God," and only then are "good works." In addition, the stress throughout this chapter is on works performed in the freedom of the gospel:

> For the law, since it was laid down for those in bondage, used to instruct the soul by means of those corporeal objects which were of an external nature, drawing it, as by a bond, to obey its commandments, that man might learn to serve God. But the Word set free the soul, and taught that through it the body should be willingly purified. . . . the working of the liberty is greater and more glorious than that obedience which is rendered in slavery.[62]

Chemnitz was also clearly alarmed by the severity of the practice of church discipline in the early church, no doubt in part because he saw in those practices the groundwork for what would become the Roman system of satisfactions, but also because he feared it inculcated the view that penitence and faith were not enough, thus depriving the penitent of hope:

> The older writers judged that with severity of discipline in receiving the lapsed, people could be held to the work

> of pious devotion and be deterred from security and levity which lead to sin. . . . Irenaeus, 4.45 [4.27, MPG 7(2).1036 ff.], cites the statement of a certain elder who had heard the apostles preach: "To those of former times the death of the Lord was the cure and remission of their sins, but in the case of those who sin now, Christ does not die for them any longer, but the Son will come as a judge. Therefore we ought to fear lest after knowing Christ we do something which is not pleasing to God, for we do not have the remission of sins again, but shall be excluded from His kingdom." These statements of this elder are sufficiently hard and unyielding.
>
> . . . And they tormented the souls of the penitent over a period of several years with their teachings regarding satisfactions before they were received back into the church. Hence the true doctrine of repentance, grace, faith, and the free remission of sins was greatly obscured, something the fathers failed to notice because of their overconcern with discipline.[63]

Once again, when errorists (the Montanists and the Novatians this time) arose and "destroyed hope and brought shame upon Christ," the fathers found it necessary to study Scripture and "study the unfortunate statements they and others had made which supplied the seeds for Novatianism. They retracted these statements and corrected them according to the norm of the Word of God."[64] Again, Chemnitz's clear criticism is the danger posed by inadequate doctrinal formulations.

Irenaeus's Inadequate Definition of Original Sin

> *He does not set forth a sufficiently accurate definition of original sin because he is speaking in opposition to those who attributed the cause of sin to God.*[65]

Chemnitz appears to have virtually ignored Irenaeus during his defense of Lutheran teaching concerning original sin. In fact, there is only one citation from Irenaeus in the relevant sections of *Loci Theologici* and the *Examen* combined! In his chapter on the "Definition of Original Sin," Chemnitz remarks that "Irenaeus says that it is a trap of the old serpent from which human beings are saved through Christ. Again, 'Bound by the chains of Adam, we were dead.'"[66] Obviously the quote is used in supporting of Lutheran teaching, thus avoiding a negative use of Irenaeus, as was the case in other articles.

Irenaeus's "Superficial Statements"

> *There are some rather superficial statements, as in his explanation of Elohim, Adonai, Sabaoth, which are lacking in grammatical foundation. And when he says that Christ was almost fifty years old, he has no historical basis.*[67]

It should be seen as a mark of Chemnitz's respect for the fathers than he excludes references to such "superficial statements" from *Loci Theologici* (TRFDC excluded, of course). As Chemnitz remarked in his discussion of the fathers' views on justification:

> But it is not our purpose to be like Ham, who uncovered his father's shame. Thus we shall not deal with the lapses of those by whose labors we have been aided and whose gray hairs we ought to honor, but we will refer to them only as warnings so that we may be cautioned by their examples to be more careful and diligent in preserving the purity of this doctrine, so that we never give occasion to anyone to follow in these footsteps.[68]

Perhaps because no one would likely fall into the errors cited by Chemnitz in TRFDC, he excluded further reference to them from *Loci Theologici.*

Irenaeus's Chiliasm

> *The ancient church noted in him one basic error, namely, his holding to chiliasm, and there are in Bk. 5 a few seeds of this error in his handling of certain chapters of the Apocalypse.*[69]

Since Chemnitz does not examine this error within the English translation of *Loci Theologici,* Irenaeus's chiliasm is not brought up in this context. When one consults the *Examen,* however, one finds Chemnitz's assessment of Irenaeus on this point. In his discussion of the sixth kind of tradition ("the catholic concensus of the fathers"), Chemnitz cites Irenaeus's chiliasm as a teaching rejected by the church:

> Lastly, when these mitigations or suitable interpretations of those things which had not been stated aptly or could not find a place, then the fathers expressly disapproved and condemned those things which did not agree with the rule of Scripture. . . . Thus the opinion of the Chiliasts is freely condemned in Irenaeus."[70]

Chemnitz clearly identified the closing chapters of book 5 of* Adversus Haereses *with charges of "chiliastic error."

And only a few pages later, in the discussion of the eighth kind of tradition ("traditions which pertain both to faith and morals and which cannot be proved with any testimony of Scripture"[71]), Chemnitz mentions Papias, who caused "very many men after him in the church to fall into the chiliastic error. . . . For the chiliastic opinion was embraced as being apostolic tradition by Irenaeus, Apollinarius, Tertullian, Victorinus, and Lactantius, as Jerome recorded."[72] Chemnitz clearly identified the closing chapters of book 5 of *Adversus Haereses* with charges of "chiliastic error." Indeed, Irenaeus cites Papias in 5.33.4 quite favorably concerning the end times, since "these

things are borne witness to in writing by Papias, the hearer of John, and a companion of Polycarp, in his fourth book. . . ."

CONCLUSION

It has been demonstrated that in most cases Chemnitz's use of Irenaeus's writings in *Loci Theologici* was consistent with his analysis of Irenaeus's strengths and weaknesses in the "Treatise on the Reading of the Fathers or Doctors of the Church." On occasions when other works such as *Examen* or *De coena Domini* were consulted, Chemnitz's use of Irenaeus was generally in keeping with the TRFDC profile. Chemnitz's work shows a remarkable consistency in this respect.

A love for the ancient fathers is not allowed to impinge upon the clear meaning of Scripture.

Of even greater interest to this writer, however, is Chemnitz's attitude toward the church fathers. A deep respect is communicated in the way Chemnitz treats passages that he finds less than satisfactory. Careful attention is paid to the way in which the historical setting may have led to a less than desirable formulation. Chemnitz allows the fathers to speak for themselves as far as possible, which lends toward a feeling that the fathers are not being manipulated to prove a point.

All this having been said, however, Chemnitz clearly points out the dangers found in certain formulations, often appealing to Scripture or a later church father to provide a better manner of speaking. As one writer has noted, "As there are rules for reading Scripture, there are also rules for reading the fathers judiciously. For example when writers in the tradition speak carelessly and incautiously before a doctrine has come into controversy, their word cannot be pressed to defend matters which are not in agreement with Scripture."[73] A love for the ancient fathers is not allowed to impinge upon the clear meaning of Scripture, but Chemnitz's adherence to the *sola Scriptura* principle was not, as one writer has claimed is sometimes the case today, "to ward off any appreciation of Christendom's great dogmatic tradition . . . ."[74] Instead, for Chemnitz, to be faithful to *sola Scriptura* means that one should not neglect all the study, meditation, and struggle that has ensued over the ages precisely over the question of what Scripture says.

Finally, it has been observed, "We are approaching a time that has many more similarities with the time before Constantine the Great than it does with the time of the Reformation."[75] In fact, this writer continues, "What is needed now is *a renaissance of Irenaeus*."[76] If this is the case, then we must begin to learn from that which has been handed down from the saints of that age, while remaining faithful to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. These are not mutually exclusive aims, but will instead deepen our faith and our knowledge of the church catholic. Chemnitz provides a superb teacher in this task because this is the same task in which he, and the other Lutheran fathers who followed him, engaged. As Robert Preus observed,

> It would be a grave mistake for any serious theologian to consign the theology of Lutheran orthodoxy to the limbo of irrelevant and outdated matters that concern only the antiquarian. For orthodoxy not only works under the Scriptures as the only source of theology, but it also is eminently catholic and confessional in its approach to theology.
>
> . . . They did not . . . whimsically jump on theological bandwagons, overwork precarious theological or philosophical motifs, or impose alien philosophical schemata on theology . . . they were eminently catholic in all their work. A tremendous amount of labor was plied by the orthodox Lutherans in presenting the contributions of the church fathers on every point of theology. For they claimed the church fathers as their own.[77] LOGIA

NOTES

1. Martin Chemnitz, *The Two Natures in Christ*, trans. J.A.O.Preus (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1971), 19.
2. J. A. O. Preus, "The Use of the Church Fathers in the Formula of Concord," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 48 (April–July 1984): 98.
3. Ibid.
4. *The Book of Concord, or The Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, ed. Henry Eyster Jacobs (Philadelphia: General Council Publication Board, 1911), 46.
5. J. A. O. Preus, "The Use of the Church Fathers," 67.
6. Ibid., 102.
7. Ibid., 106–108. Italics added.
8. Triglotta, 307.
9. Quasten, Johannes, *Patrology*, 4 vols. (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1950), 1: 287.
10. Ibid., 288–289, 292.
11. Thus a secondhand allusion to *Adversus Haereses*, IV, 18, 5!
12. "Irenaeus, qui vir unus illis temporibus mihi reliquus fuisse videtur in occidentis Ecclesia, qui vere Apostolico spiritu fuerit." P. Fraenkel, *Testimonia Patrum*, 84, as cited in E. P. Meijering, *Melanchthon and Patristic Thought* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1983), 67.
13. Meijering, *Melanchthon and Patristic Thought*, 70.
14. Martin Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici,* 2 vols., trans. J. A. O. Preus (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989), 1: 88. (The citation is from Melanchthon's text.)
15. Robert Preus, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, 2 vols. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1970), 2: 98.
16. Ibid., 48.
17. Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, 1: 27–33. The treatise will be referred to as TRFDC in this essay for the sake of brevity.
18. Ibid., 93.
19. Ibid., 27.
20. Ibid., 28–29.
21. Robert A. Kelly, "Tradition and Innovation: The Use of Theodoret's *Eranistes* in Martin Chemnitz' *De Dualus Naturis in Christo*," in *Perspectives on Christology: Essays in Honor of Paul K. Jewett*, ed. Marguerite Shuster and Richard Muller (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1991), 107. Kelly estimates that those fathers cited

more often than Irenaeus are John of Damascus, Cyril, Athanasius, Augustine, and Theodoret.

22. "For a long time not more than the title of this work (Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 5, 26) was known. In 1904 the entire text was discovered in an Armenian version by Ter-Mekerttschian who edited it for the first time in 1907." Quasten, 292.

23. Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, 1: 189.

24. It should be remembered that since loci IX, X, XI, XII, XX and XXI were not included in the CPH translation, they were not included in this study. This means that only loci III, VIII, XV, XVI, XVIII and XIX are believed not to contain any reference to Irenaeus's writings.

25. Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, 1: 28–29.

26. Ibid., 38.

27. Ibid., 62.

28. Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, 2: 468.

29. Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, 1: 106. Lewis Spitz observes: "The wildest adventure of the militant Anabaptists was the proclamation of the Kingdom of Münster . . . . Münster was declared the New Jerusalem which would be spared when all the rest of the world was destroyed, before Easter of that year . . . . In August 1534, after beating off an attack of the bishop's mercenary army, John [of Leiden] had himself proclaimed king of the New Jerusalem and the Messiah or anointed one of the last days foretold by the prophets of the Old Testament." *The Renaissance and Reformation Movements,* 2 vols. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1987), 2: 401–403.

30. Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, 2: 577.

31. Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, 1: 29.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. Martin Chemnitz, *The Lord's Supper*, trans. J. A. O. Preus (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1979), 152. Chemnitz's "paraphrase" of Irenaeus is almost a verbatim quote, for the passage in book 5, chapter 2 reads as follows: "For blood can only come from veins and flesh, and whatsoever else makes up the substance of man, such as the Word of God was actually made. By his own blood he redeemed us, as also His apostle declares, 'In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the remission of sins.' . . . He has acknowledged the cup (which is part of the creation) as His own blood, from which He bedews our blood; and the bread (also a part of the creation) He has established as His own body, from which He gives increase to our bodies." *The Ante-Nicene Fathers of the Church*, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmanns Publishing Company, 1989), 1: 528.

35. Chemnitz, *Lord's Supper,* 169.

36. Chemnitz also quotes Irenaeus in this context in the *Examen*: "Irenaeus says 'When to the cup with its mixture and the bread which has been broken the Word of God is added, it becomes the Eucharist of the body and blood of the Lord.' And that he understands this of the word of institution he explains when he says that the earthly bread receives the call of God, namely, when Christ declares concerning the bread, 'This is My body.'" Martin Chemnitz, *Examination of the Council of Trent,* trans. Fred Kramer, 4 vols. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1971–1986), 1: 227.

37. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 1: 492.

38. Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, 2: 471.

39. Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, 1: 29.

40. Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, 2: 541–542.

41. Ibid., 542.

42. Ibid.

43. Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, 1: 29.

44. Ibid., 186.

45. Ibid., 189. Chemnitz cited Eusebius's *Hist. eccl.* as his source of information concerning this non-extant work.

46. Ibid., 192.

47. Ibid., 194–195. Irenaeus continues in 4.29: "If, therefore, in the present time also, God, knowing the number of those who will not believe, since He foreknows all things, has given them over to unbelief, and turned away His face from men of this stamp, leaving them in the darkness which they have themselves chosen for themselves, what is there wonderful if He did also at that time give over to their unbelief, Pharaoh, who never would have believed, along with those who were with him?" *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 1: 502.

48. Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, 1: 215.

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid., 29.

51. Ibid., 226–227.

52. Ibid., 227–228.

53. Ibid., 228.

54. Ibid. The emphasis in Irenaeus is against notions of the "compulsion of God": "For there is no coercion with God, but a good will [toward us] is present with Him continually. And therefore does He give good counsel to all. And in man, as well as in angels, He has placed the power of choice (for angels are rational beings), so that those who had yielded obedience might justly possess what is good, given indeed by God, but preserved by themselves." *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 1: 518.

55. Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, 1: 229.

56. Ibid., 259.

57. Ibid., 259–260.

58. Ibid., 29.

59. Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, 2: 469–470.

60. Ibid., 470.

61. *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 1: 477.

62. Ibid.

63. Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, 2: 472.

64. Ibid.

65. Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, 1: 29.

66. Ibid., 280.

67. Ibid., 29.

68. Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, 2: 469–470.

69. Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici*, 1: 29.

70. Chemnitz, *Examination of the Council of Trent*, 1: 265.

71. Ibid., 272.

72. Ibid., 279.

73. Arthur Olsen, "The Hermeneutical Vision of Martin Chemnitz: The Role of Scripture and Tradition in the Teaching Church," in *Augustine, the Harvest, and Theology (1300–1650)*, ed. Kenneth Hagen (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1990), 325.

74. John F. Johnson, "Authority and Tradition: A Lutheran Perspective," *Concordia Journal* 8 [September 1982], 185.

75. Gustaf Wingren, "The Doctrine of Creation: Not an Appendix but the First Article," *Word & World* 4 (Fall 1984): 370.

76. Ibid., 361.

77. Robert Preus, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, 1: 35.

Inklings

Overheard in the Parish Hall Dept.—

Honestly Myrna, I asked the pastor why he wouldn't give up his cigars and he replied, "Who led your people Israel by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night." Vespers will never be the same again!.

The Priesthood of All Believers

Arthur Drevlow†

In Memoriam: Rev. Dr. Arthur Drevlow
January 12, 1918–August 29, 1995

Rev. Arthur Drevlow served Christ and his church as a parish pastor, and on the circuit, district, and synodical levels. Most notably, Pastor Drevlow served on the LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR).

Pastor Drevlow's dedicated, humble, and faithful service to Christ and his church was deeply appreciated by the members of his congregations, friends, and acquaintances. He attempted to rightly divide God's word of law and gospel as he applied it to the lives of his parishioners and to the church at large.

Art believed that, as a sinner, he too was under the indictment of God's law, and in need of God's grace in the gospel. It was that gospel which fueled his life and brought him the blessed gifts of eternal salvation in Jesus Christ his Savior.

Dr. Drevlow understood the importance of God's word for the life of the church. Thus he was a diligent student of God's Word, the Lutheran Confessions, Luther, and Walther.

Art's theological studies caused him to be asked to speak in public forums and to write for the church at large. One writing of special note in the 150th anniversary year of the LCMS is the book C. F. W. Walther: The American Luther.

Many young pastors, the authors of this tribute included, benefited from Art's wise guidance as a pastoral mentor. Art was always willing to discuss doctrine and practice. He encouraged a Christlike pastoral response to problems and difficulties, and faithfulness to Christ and his word.

Those whom Pastor Drevlow served, and those who had the privilege of serving with or learning from him, along with Virginia (his dear wife) and family offer thanksgiving to God for this faithful and dedicated servant of Christ. He who preached Christ crucified and risen has received by faith the blessings of Christ in all their fullness—the crown of everlasting life.

Armand J. Boehme
St. Paul Lutheran Church
Waseca, Minnesota

Eugene C. Chase
Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Morristown, Minnesota

Arthur Drevlow presented this paper at the St. Louis Free Conference, February 17, 1990.

To him who loves us
And by his blood has freed us from our sins
and has made us a kingdom, priests to God and his Father—
To him be glory and power forever and ever. Amen.

Dear priests, dear pastors:

"This people I have formed for myself; they shall declare my praise" (Is 43:21). A dramatic announcement, once shared with rebellious Israel, speaks to us of this latter day. By divine grace God was identified with Israel. Israel, however, abused this undeserved favor by various crimes, including serving other gods. Still, by continuing to deliver and honor wayward Israel, the Lord God Jehovah exalted his name. Accordingly, Israel was the recipient of the Lord's uncounted blessings and limitless patience. The long-suffering Lord blotted out their faithlessness and pardoned their many transgressions day after day. Israel indeed did nothing to merit deliverance from the Babylonian captivity. The lifting of the Babylonian captivity arose with the Lord God, who announced: "This people I have formed for myself; they shall declare my praise!"

Declaring the praises of the Lord is a challenge of the royal priesthood of our New Testament age. It has been included on this conference program to remind us of one of the Lord's distinct blessings to his believing children. This gathering also is to provide opportunity to examine the relationship of the priesthood of all believers to the pastoral ministry.

THE APOSTOLIC WITNESS

It must be recalled that as Christianity appeared upon the scene of history, it did not have a priesthood as had the church of the old covenant. Its leadership resided in the apostles, who served as pastors and teachers, and, for a time, as social workers. The latter activity the apostles called "serving tables" (Acts 6:2). Indeed, the early Christians were not without leadership, even though a priesthood was not found among them.

There is, therefore, a notable difference between the religious life of the believers of the Old and New Testament times. The priests of the old covenant served God in tabernacle and temple. Theirs was the right to enter the holy place. Once a year the high priest made his way beyond the veil of the temple into the holy of holies. The priests were the honored representatives of God's people. They spoke for the rank and file of believers before Jehovah's throne of mercy. In our New Testament day

each believer may approach God directly with his or her prayers as well as offering the sacrifice of heart and life. The priesthood of believers, inculcated by St. Peter and others, is one of our jewels in this age.

Unfortunately, a cloud has settled upon areas of the priesthood of all believers. The universal priesthood is being confused with the public ministry. St. Paul uttered some comments concerning this matter, and his pupil Martin Luther was led to say:

> For although we are all priests, this does not mean that all of us can preach, teach, and rule. Certain of the multitude must be selected and separated for such an office. And he who has such an office is not a priest because of his office but a servant of all the others who are priests.[1]

Luther's foremost American student, C. F. W. Walther, likewise was constrained to advise: "The holy office of the preaching or pastoral ministry is an office distinct from the priestly office which all believers have."[2] For Luther and Walther the universal priesthood and the holy ministry were not one and the same office. That their sphere of service might not be diminished by confusion regarding two distinct offices has caused this subject's inclusion in the program of this assembly. Hence we have begun with Isaiah the prophet and will continue with the apostle Peter and others of his colleagues in the New Testament.

What the Lord once announced through the prophet Isaiah is echoed by the apostle Peter.

> But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people who are his own, that you may tell others about the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light (1 Pet 2:9).

This apostolic utterance recalls the dignity of those chosen by God to "declare [his] praise." Unhesitatingly, the apostle Peter transfers the prediction of the Old Testament to New Testament believers. True, those addressed were tainted by many failings, yet these were washed away by the Great High Priest who bled and died for them. New Testament Christians, therefore, enjoy the privilege of having been made priests of God for the purposes of a holy propaganda in which the greatness and goodness of the Lord is to be exalted. St. Peter suggests a procedure that "royal priests" may follow. God has done great things for you: he has taken you out of the desert and darkness of death and brought you into the garden of life and light. This is something so tremendous that you ought to shout it from the housetops. Tell your peers what God has done for you and what he is eager to do for them as well as for the rest of the children of men.

REFORMATION CLARITY

In the pursuit of his reformatory labors, Martin Luther effected a thesis that represented a combining of Isaiah's and Peter's vision. Before his address to the German nobility, Luther was crystallizing a term: "The priesthood of all believers."[3] The concept of the priesthood of all believers surfaced in a sermon of Christmas Day, 1520. Then in his letter to the Christian nobility Luther launched an attack on what he termed the "pure invention that pope, bishop, priests, and monks are called the spiritual estate." The Wittenberg friar announced that God had elevated "all Christians [into] the spiritual estate." The only distinction among them was "that of office."

For those interested in seeking the occasion for this decision of Luther's, we turn to St. Paul's assertion in 1 Corinthians 12:12-13:

> For as the body is one and yet has many parts, and all parts of the body—many as they are—form one body, so also is Christ. Yes, in one Spirit all of us—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—were baptized to form one body, and we all were given to drink of that one spirit.

St. Paul's reference to "one baptism" and many forming "one body" led the great reformer to regard laymen and laywomen as "priests through baptism." The apostle Peter strengthened this concept by noting that baptized Christians constituted "a royal priesthood." This was strengthened further by a sentence from the Revelation of St. John: "With your blood you bought us . . . and you made us a kingdom and priests to our God" (Rev 5:9–10). This convinced Luther that the "priesthood of all believers" had biblical warrant.

For Luther and Walther the universal priesthood and the holy ministry were not one and the same office.

But, one might be pardoned for inquiring, had not Luther himself belonged to an order of "Medieval Priests"? That indeed he had. Yet his studies and observations led him to conclude that the term "priest" had been infected with considerable "papal abominations." In 1523 Luther was advising the council of the city of Prague:

> A priest, particularly in the New Testament, must be born, not made. He is not ordained; he is created . . . Therefore all Christians are priests, and all priests are Christians.[5]

In what must have shocked the church of that day, Luther insisted "that it is the duty of every Christian to espouse the cause of the faith, to understand and defend it, and to denounce every error."[6] Summing up the blessings God had bestowed upon his spiritual priests, Luther remarked: "Neither an angel nor a pope can give you as much as God gives you in your parish church." When after 1525 the authority of the laymen was raised so high as to demean the office of the God-ordained holy ministry, however, the reformer's voice sounded a clarion call for reform: "Although we are all equally priests, we cannot all publicly minister and teach. We ought not do so even if we could."[8]

In the effort to teach the spiritual priesthood of all believers, Luther preached and wrote. He gleaned the term "royal priesthood" from 1 Peter 2:9. And 1 Peter 2:5 yielded the information, "You are holy priests who bring spiritual sacrifices that God gladly accepts through Jesus Christ." As early as Exodus 19:5 God had instructed Moses to advise the Israelites:

> If you will listen closely to me and keep my covenant, among all nations you will be a treasure to me. . . . You will be a kingdom of priests and holy people to me. Tell Israel that!

In the reformer's estimation, Peter was using an Old Testament word that also is directed to New Testament believers. New Testament priests are to teach, to proclaim the good news of salvation through faith in the world's savior, Jesus Christ. The apostle Peter urges believers to advertise that wondrous act of God that transferred us from spiritual darkness into Christ's kingdom of light. This message is derived neither from feeling nor emotion, but from the Word of the Lord. Accordingly, the Letter to the Hebrews urges:

> Fellow Christians, with the blood of Jesus we can now go boldly into the Most Holy Place, by the new, living way that he opened for us . . . through his body (Heb 10:19).

Further, St. Paul appeals to his fellow Christians, that is, to the royal priesthood, to "offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God" (Rom 12:1). This pointed reference to "a living sacrifice" urges every Christian priest to live a life that aims to serve others.

THE AMERICAN LUTHER

This knowledge that Luther had drawn from St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. John was transferred to our North American continent by the American Luther, Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther. Pastor Walther, one of the younger Saxon pastors, emerged to prominence in the hour of spiritual trial in Perry County, Missouri. When Martin Stephan, the leader of the Saxons, proved himself unworthy of the trust the immigrants had placed in him, he was removed from his position and exiled. In the chaos that followed, youthful Pastor Walther immersed himself in a study of the Scriptures, Luther, and the Confessions of Lutheranism, to bring light into the spiritual darkness that had threatened to engulf these infant Saxon congregations. He later became widely known and respected as a parish pastor, professor and seminary president, synodical president and president of the Lutheran Synodical Conference. Although involved in professorial and executive duties, as circumstances permitted, Walther also served as pastor of the congregations in St. Louis.

Walther said that "a true understanding of the spiritual priesthood of all Christians by no means poses a danger to the holy ministry.

In 1987, the 100th anniversary of Walther's death, congregations in the synod were favored with a picture of the founding father, autographed with his favorite text, 1 Peter 2:9. In spirit we take ourselves to Old Trinity Church in St. Louis on the first Sunday after Epiphany in the early Saxon era. The text for the day included Romans 12:1: "I appeal to you, fellow Christians, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God." We hear the gaunt young pastor say:

> According to the testimony of the holy apostles all believing Christians are born priests; and the whole Christian Church is the temple, the house of God, in which they serve him day and night, under their only High Priest, Jesus Christ, who by his own blood entered in once into the Holy of Holies in heaven and obtained an eternal redemption for us.

Following this there is a skillful transition to the writing of the apostle Peter that is introduced by the words "Peter also proclaims to all the Christians to whom he is writing:

> You also are being built as living stones into a spiritual temple. As such you are holy priests who bring spiritual sacrifices that God gladly accepts through Jesus Christ . . . But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people who are his own, that you may tell others about the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light (1 Pet 2:5, 9).[9]

While insisting that the priesthood of believers should not mistakenly be regarded as the holy ministry, Walther said that "a true understanding of the spiritual priesthood of all Christians by no means poses a danger to the holy ministry, but rather teaches us to regard it as all the more sacred and precious." This message is also timely for us in the decade of the 1990s. It addresses a concern that troubled first Luther, then Walther. We modern sons and daughters of the Reformation will do well to contemplate:

> God has made the rule that certain persons are to administer His Means of Grace publicly, preach His Word publicly, administer His Holy Sacraments, and have the office of ruler and watchman among the Christians.[11]

Now what are the privileges and opportunities for the baptized Christians, the royal priests? Since we have recently recalled two anniversaries in our synod's life, let us note how contemporary our forefathers were. We turn to *Der Lutheraner* issue of January 8, 1861:

> What then . . . is a priest according to the Word of God? If we briefly put together what the Word of God says about it, we see that a priest is a person consecrated by God, who

possesses a twofold glory. The first consists in this, that such a person can deal with the holy God himself, approach him, stop before him, serve him, confidently pray to him for himself and for others and can offer him acceptable sacrifices.

The other glory which such a priest possesses consists in this, that he, as an angel or messenger and as a servant of God, can in the name of God deal with other persons, make the will of God known to them, bring them His Word, preach and interpret, and also bless them in His name.[12]

The various programs that utilize the theme "Tell the Next Generation" make it imperative that the royal priests have such a knowledge of the will of God that enables them to explain this will to their peers and bless them in the Lord's name.

From out of our past comes the instruction that the New Testament designates all "believing Christians" as spiritual priests. *However, "those who occupy the public ministry are never called priests!"* Paul in 1 Corinthians 4:1 calls those occupying the public ministry "servants of Christ [and] stewards of the mysteries of God." The congregation at Philippi was advised that Paul and Timothy were "servants of Christ Jesus . . . together with the pastors and deacons" (Phil 1:1). St. Paul's monumental address to the pastors at Ephesus was directed to those who were "overseers" or "bishops," "pastors [over] the whole, flock" (Acts 20:28). In none of these instances were they designated royal priests.

PROBLEMS TODAY?

It is becoming increasingly apparent that growing numbers of feminine "royal priests" are aspiring to the rank of pastors. In the ensuing battle over women's ordination, what will true children of the Reformation be saying and doing? St. Paul speaks succinctly also to feminine spiritual priests: "This is a statement that we can trust: if anyone sets *his* heart on being a pastor, *he* desires a noble work" (1 Tim 3:1). Must we not say it gently yet firmly in our day, and above all, say it: "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence" (1 Tim 2:12)? In an age in which thorough catechetical instruction must be regained, the prophet Hosea has a message for all of us: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hos 4:3). In pursuit of knowledge, we will be well advised to recall a portion of the Table of Duties that confirmands were once asked to commit to memory. It carries the modern heading "To Church Officials, Pastors, and Preachers":

A pastor must be blameless, the husband of one wife, not drinking too much wine, a man of good judgment and fine behavior, kind to guests, able to teach, no drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not one who loves money. He must manage his own family well and have his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a new convert, in order that he will not become proud and fall into the judgment of the devil. The people outside the church must speak well of him, so that he does not fall into disgrace and the devil's snare. . . . He is to be one who clings to the word which he can depend on, just as he was taught, so that by sound teaching he can encourage people and correct those who oppose him (1 Tim 3:2–7; Ti 1:9).

The blurring of the distinction between the priesthood of believers and the office of the public ministry has reached epidemic proportions. Granted, the apostle Peter addresses "newborn babes," telling them to "thirst for the pure milk of the word in order that it may cause you to grow so that you are saved" (1 Pet 2:2). Also young and inexperienced believers who still require the "milk" of the word are God's priests. They are not, however, his pastors.

The blurring of the distinction between the priesthood of believers and the office of the public ministry has reached epidemic proportions.

Christian priests are not, as supposed, "second-rate citizens." They have privileges and duties within the sphere of the church, the family, and the secular world. When the LCMS celebrated its centennial, among the many convention essays was one on "The Universal Priesthood of Believers." It spoke with disarming frankness:

Since all believers are priests and, as such, preachers and teachers, and since they exercise these functions publicly through the called servants of the Word, therefore it follows that they are responsible to God for the correct practice and the purity of doctrine of their respective ministers.

Then, in solid Missouri tradition, this assertion was buttressed with solid biblical undergirding. Time will permit only a few of his texts. "Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 Jn 4:1). Next the Bereans were held up as examples: "These people were more noble than those at Thessalonica—they were eager to receive the word, and every day they studied the Scriptures to see if those things were so" (Acts 17:11). Then the essayist reached the next sentence: "And many of them believed, and more than a few of them were prominent Greeks, both women and men" (Acts 17:12). To this passage the essayist attached a telling observation:

Here the believers exercise their prerogative as priests to judge the doctrines of the great Apostle. All did this—men and women, Jew and Greek—all priests![13]

In the Preface of this first volume of *The Abiding Word,* readers were informed that one hundred years after the founding of

the Missouri Synod, these essays were to give the readers "the fathers' faith in the children's language."[14] Testing the spiritual food on the table was not only a consideration in 1947. That biblical mandate was promulgated in the synod's infancy. On the Eighth Sunday after Trinity in 1842, Walther delivered his famous sermon "Sheep Judge Their Shepherds." The spiritual priests heard their chastened pastor say:

> O my beloved hearers, if you had once known that it was your duty to judge, you would not have been so terribly misled. Your pastors went down wrong paths, and without question you followed them in a false reliance upon men. However, how sad were the consequences. Therefore, recognize and preserve your rights. Test everything, and approve that which is good.[15]

Strange as it may seem today, not only the pastors but the people in the pews still have the "duty to judge." One reason for this grows out of our topic. In 1974 a Missouri Synod pastor authored a book bearing the title *Everyone a Minister*. In it he redefined the universal priesthood as the universal ministry of all:

> It was significant that it was the apostle Peter who in his two letters most explicitly described the ministry of the New Testament as a priesthood of all believers.[16]
>
> According to this catalog of titles (in 1 Peter 2:5 & 9) every Christian is claimed by God, belongs to a holy nation, is set apart for *a particular ministry,* has both a "kingship" and a "priesthood" of his own to fulfill in his life . . . . These titles raise all believers to the status of "ministers." They put all Christians in the role once performed by Old Testament priests.[17]

In 1983 a professor at Concordia Teachers College, Seward, Nebraska, wrote:

> The comment has been made by leaders in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod that the pastoral ministry is an endangered profession. There are many variables which contribute to this perception. The impact of Oscar Feucht's highly popular book, *Everyone a Minister,* is probably a significant factor.[18]

We are now inundated with the "everyone a minister" philosophy. *A Manual for Altar Guilds* states: "Worship renewal . . . has made altar guilds more aware of the *pastoral nature* of their work"[19] (emphasis added). More strident notes appear in the Report of the President's Commission on Women:

> Women can vote, but they can't read the lessons.[20]
>
> We are told that women can't be ministers, but, in time, will the church change its mind about that too?[21]
>
> What women want are opportunities to serve in *pastoral ministries*—to which all Christians are called—not the office of the pastoral ministry to which God calls men—and not all men at that.[22]
>
> Both my husband and I . . . believe that our LCMS forefathers continued an inaccurate vision of the church when they upheld cultural restrictions on women's roles.[23]

In the Fall of 1989 the Faculty of Concordia Teachers College, Seward, stated its philosophy:

> The role of laity in the Church will be a key ministry issue in the '90s. Laity are more than members. They are ministers. We affirm the doctrine of the universal priesthood of all believers . . . . One aspect of the role pastor/teacher is assisting the laity in accomplishing their ministry in the world.[24]

By this time you will begin to grasp the significance of an extended comment in *Accents in Luther's Theology: Essays in Commemoration of the 450th Anniversary of the Reformation:*

> There is an anticlericalism extant in the Lutheran Church that would seem to have as its objective the cancellation of the particular duties that Scripture indicates God assigned to a "ministry," or the minimizing of those responsibilities and of that office, which would suggest that a pendulum set swinging by men who sought to out-reform the Reformation has not yet come to rest.
>
> The attitude is apparent on the one hand wherever the pastoral or priestly responsibilities are challenged, and on the other hand wherever it is implied that the high privileges and opportunities of the ministry are somehow less than those that can be found where it is inexplicably claimed "the action is."[25]

The clouds on the horizon of Lutheranism were threatening already in 1861. In a pregnant editorial in *Der Lutheraner* of that year, the editor, Dr. Walther, enlightened ministers and royal priests by means of a conversational teaching device.

> If, according to God's Word, all believing Christians are really spiritual priests, as we have seen, what follows from this?—Are they by chance also all public preachers, ministers of the church, pastors, bishops? May they also, on account of the spiritual priesthood, interfere with the office of the public preachers, publicly teach side by side with them, publicly pray, publicly absolve and retain sins, baptize, celebrate Holy Communion and the like?—By no means![26]

Attention was called to St. Paul's question in 1 Corinthians 12:29: "Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers?" The editor responded: "The fact that the apostle asks these questions is clearly an indication that his answer is 'No!'" Then Professor Walther elaborated as follows:

> To appoint oneself as a public teacher on the plea that one is a spiritual priest, James declares, is an outrage, an audacity [*Frechheit*], which must expect, not a reward, but a grievous judgment.[27]

> Article XIV of the Augsburg Confession is also cited: "It is taught among us that nobody should publicly teach or preach or administer the sacraments in the church without a regular call."

Our Saxon forefathers, with Walther as their editor, contended against the view of papistical Lutherans that "the public ministry . . . flows from the spiritual priesthood of Christians." Walther concludes:

> Therefore, it was not men, not the Christians as spiritual priests, but the eternal High Priest Himself, Christ, the Son of God, and, because it is a work outside the Godhead, the Triune God Himself has established the Order of the Public Ministry. It is a creation of the great, all-wise God Himself, and an ordinance in His Church on earth, even as the secular government in the State.[28]

Thus it is by baptism that a Christian becomes a spiritual priest. It is by the call of the church that one becomes a minister. For this Walther cites the Smalcald Articles where the German text states:

> We have a sure doctrine, that the ministry of preaching comes from the common call of the apostles.[29]

Now what the ministers do publicly, by virtue of their call, the royal priests do where the Lord has placed them. The letter to the Hebrews shows a most necessary service of love. "Let us consider how we can stimulate one another to love and to do good works. We do this not by staying away from our worship services, as some are regularly doing, but by continuing to encourage one another" (Heb 10:24). Encouragement can and must begin in the family circle, where the father is the priest and the mother the priestess. One part of confirmation instruction must be given at home: experience in the regular conduct of family devotions. An example for every spiritual priest is Abraham; the Lord said, "I have known him." The Lord knew him to be a priest who would instruct his household "to do righteousness and judgment" (Gen 18:19).Yes, baptized Christians have a priestly duty to relate the Word of God to the skeptics and unbelievers of our age as well as to pray for the secular government and its myriad officials. Christ must be confessed so the believers may be missionaries to unbelievers to call them out of darkness into spiritual light. Christians are different; they are not like the world. And a Christian life is a great service on the part of any and every Christian priest.

It is by baptism that a Christian becomes a spiritual priest. It is by the call of the church that one becomes a minister.

So may you members of the royal priesthood and you ministers of the Word join in declaring the Lord's praises! "Blessed are those who have the right to the tree of life" (Rev 22:14). LOGIA

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16. Oscar Feucht, *Everyone a Minister* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1979), 65.
17. Ibid., 37.
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23. Ibid., 57.
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25. George W. Hoyer, *Accents in Luther's Theology,* H. Kadai, ed. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1967), 151–152.
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Missouri at the End of the Century

A Time for Reevaluation

David P. Scaer

The 150th anniversary of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) may be a time for celebration, but it is also an occasion for reflection, evaluation, critique, and repenting. It is a time for sitting on the front porch to escape the rain and for realizing that many of us are unwittingly parts of that history and sometimes its last remnants. Self-evaluation, even on a corporate level, is only beneficial if it leads to contrition, faith, and an amendment of life to do good works. Otherwise, historical self-reflection is useless. "For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who observes his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like" (Js 1:23–24).

But just how does one evaluate one hundred and fifty years? And is this the right time to do it? Matthew divided Jewish history into three spans of fourteen generations. Such a precise division challenges historical accident, but it provides us with a precedent in dividing our own Lutheran history into three epochs: 1546–1696 (the death of Luther and the Age of Lutheran Orthodoxy); 1696–1846 (Pietism-Rationalism-Schleiermacher); 1846–1996 (LCMS).

One hundred and fifty years after Luther's death, the period of classical Lutheranism was being quickly overtaken by a flaming Pietism (1696), which, like programs encouraging self-absorption, proved to be sterile. Its short and mercifully unproductive life was the narthex for Rationalism. The former was a disease of the heart, the latter of the mind.

At the end of another span of one hundred and fifty years (1846), Schleiermacher's *The Christian Faith* (1830) rang the death knell for Enlightenment Rationalism, but in another sense preserved its critical approach to biblical scholarship in tandem with the foundationless piety of Pietism. A Christianity was constructed out of a historical skepticism and a self-impressed piety. History and faith were separated without a final decree of divorce. Enlightenment destroyed the reasons for being religious and Pietism gave a reason for being religious to those who had no reason to be so. Like a water softener, this schizophrenic existence has constantly recycled itself in the last one hundred and fifty years (1846–1996). With only mild exaggeration we can say that anything the radical Jesus Seminar has uncovered by 1996 could already be found in David Friedrich Strauss's *Jesus* (*circa* 1846).

Paradoxically the heritages of Rationalism and Pietism, which Schleiermacher brought together to provide an ersatz certainty for the religious despisers, provided the stimulus for the regeneration of the confessional Lutheran movement. Until the present time, the LCMS has been the most obvious and prosperous survivor of the nineteenth-century confessional Lutheran revival. Even if the LCMS should choose another path, its first one hundred and fifty years were historically remarkable. Its current flowed against the tide and the world knew it. We still have a name recognition that would be the envy of any advertiser. "Missouri" has less to do with a geography and more to do with a religious conviction.

Even without such an even division of one hundred and fifty years each, those of us who have lived through the events in the LCMS since the middle of this century have the sense that one era was closing, even if the outlines of a new era were not perfectly clear. Personal links with C. F. W. Walther have, with Spanish-American War veterans, long disappeared. Few are those who sat at the feet of Francis Pieper. Those who knew the heroes are gone, and replacements for the heroes have not been found.

Those who began their ministries in the '50s are aware, from the nature and conduct of their ministries, that we have crossed a boundary within time. Abortion was a crime. Divorce was socially and not simply theologically unacceptable. "Day care center" was not part of the vocabulary. Mothers were not employed outside the home. Afternoon women organizations flourished. The word "engagement" had not been replaced by "relationship," and neither meant cohabitation. No one would have understood what was meant by "the significant other." Voters' assemblies were male, and only charismatic churches had women preachers. Hymnals were used for singing hymns. Regular churchgoers knew page five by heart. That was not a golden era, but it was a simpler one.

In marking a denominational anniversary, we must acknowledge that truth is not the permanent possession of a specific denomination, even ours, but truth is the confession of the faith once delivered to the saints by the apostles (Jude 3). Any church is faced with the temptation of judging any issue by the mind of the synod, namely, "what people think" on this or that issue. Then what claims to be a church becomes another organization. Problems are then resolved by pointing to the LCMS's "officially adopted doctrinal statements" without the-

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ologically engaging the Confessions of the church and the problems they address.[1] The existence of "officially adopted doctrinal statements" has allowed LCMS commissions to offer opinions on everything from gambling to church-state relationship. Such opinions invite the same kind of allegiance given to the Confessions.

The shapers of our history have been Walther and Pieper, Wyneken and Sihler, Pfotenhauer and Behnken. Any church's self-absorption with its own history stands in danger of giving birth to a sectarian mindset. Such a mindset is characteristic of any church that understands itself as a custodian of the truth, which of course it must do if it wants to be a church. A church that does not make this claim is not even recognizable to the world as a church. This leaves us in a Catch-22 situation. Our church—any church—must understand herself as a guardian of the truth, but at the same time not read her history as an exclusivistic *Heilsgeschichte*. A church that does not see itself as a custodian of the truth soon looses its claim to be church.

We must acknowledge that truth is not the permanent possession of a specific denomination, even ours.

Our problem is not yet an organizational problem, in which a bishop or a pope is blessed with being correct or infallible, but ours is a confessional self-assuredness, the belief that our historic confessional commitment is a guarantor of the future truthfulness of our church pronouncements. Continued self-assuredness, which cannot be confused with infallibility, requires continued self-critique. To her own embarrassment, Rome as an organization has failed with papal infallibility and tried to ignore and redefine it. Only the recorded history of Christ and the apostles is above critique.

We may be destined to being self-directed and so required to look exclusively at our own history, even if that road is covered with sectarian pitfalls, which clouds the search for pure objectivity, as if that were even theoretically possible. Like earlier explorers, we are obligated after our short journeys to leave maps that later theological cartographers may find hopelessly naive in their primitive understanding of the church. Ours may prove to be a less significant journey than that of the reformers or the LCMS founders, but our journeys are the stuff out of which Christ has built his church.

Each generation may have its own heroes, but many classmates of mine are more or less agreed that our generation was not provided with very many. The giants who commanded the admiration of an entire generation were gone. One septuagenarian is troubled that the names of Piepkorn, Lueker, Caemmerer, Franzmann, and C. S. Meyer are unknown to today's seminarians. P. E. Kretzmann, Ludwig Fuerbringer, and Stoeckhardt were only names to my generation and hardly pulled on the heart strings. With only few exceptions, heroes get only part-time employment. The lack of heroes in the 1930s and 1940s may be a determinative factor for a later malaise that has permitted externally acquired infections.

Even before the death of Pieper, the LCMS had lost its pristine vigor. It was perhaps a matter of aging more than anything else. A vigorously healthy body is more likely to have an effective immune system. Nothing in LCMS history prior to 1950 can match the diverse challenges faced since then. With our corporate body's defenses down, we had become susceptible to any number of theological viruses—and the heroes of that time are nearly gone. Their counterparts in ELIM, *Missouri in Perspective*, Seminex, and AELC—movements that threatened the core fibre of the LCMS—are no longer factors and their names are also not remembered. This is the history we want to recount.

Both the LCMS and Concordia Theological Seminary, now again in Fort Wayne, have a history of one hundred and fifty years. In the last forty years (1956–1996) both institutions may have experienced more changes than in any other comparable period. Many of us observed this history and were drawn into it, and so we were shaped by it. We were more controlled by events than we controlled them. This anniversary invites us to remember that the controversies of the 1960s and 1970s were the theological environment whose air our souls breathed. Evaluation of that time cannot be anything else but autobiographical.

In the period since the 1970s, what is distinctively Lutheran is in danger of being lost, because we cannot agree among ourselves what is distinctively Lutheran. If this is so, then this is only a replay of the eras first of Pietism and then of Rationalism. Lowell Green has pointed out the similarities between neo-evangelical forms of Lutheranism in our time and the "American Lutheranism" fostered by Samuel S. Schmucker. Ours may not be a new conflict, but rather a resumption of one that was never resolved. A pervasive Protestantism, which is more Reformed and Arminian than it is Lutheran, contaminates the ecclesiastical soil from which all American churches are nourished. After a Roman Catholic priest of the Byzantine Rite had sung the liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom, he claimed "Amazing Grace" as his favorite hymn. The same sub-ground aquifer may lead many of our parishioners to favor this hymn over "A Mighty Fortress." All American churches are drinking from the same stream.

It is easier to mark the end of an era than to recognize the beginning of new one. So if we can recognize that certain signs of the period of classical Lutheranism are not as evident today as a century ago, it is virtually impossible to provide precise blueprints for the future. People who make a difference are identified after they have served and very rarely before. Only in the midst of World War II did Churchill emerge as the great political leader of this century. Before that he was regarded as a gadfly and a nuisance.

As the LCMS goes into the next period of its existence, it will do so without such prominent names as Lewis Spitz, Walter Roehrs, Robert Hoerber, and John Klotz, all of whom have passed away. More significant in the last two years were the deaths of J. A. O. Preus in August 1994 and his brother Robert D. Preus in November 1995. Those who attended the memorial

services for Robert D. Preus instinctively knew that an age had come to an end.

When Robert D. Preus came to the St. Louis seminary in 1957, the LCMS was one hundred and eleven years past its founding. His brother J. A. O. Preus arrived in Springfield in 1958. For nearly the next forty years, both brothers were in the middle of what made the LCMS and its public theology what they were, as no other persons were. This is a value judgment and open to debate. The Preuses fascinated two generations as no other men had. Both were leaders and theologians, men of recognizable personality and character. They were not the issue, but without them the issues would not have surfaced, at least in the way they did.

THE PREUS BROTHERS

Perhaps we must wait for another generation, or even a century, before the contributions of J. A. O. Preus, a.k.a. "Jack," and his brother Robert D. Preus, a.k.a. "Robert," can be evaluated from a detached perspective, but then it may be too late to recapture the emotions they stirred when they entered the LCMS. The LCMS in the last half of the twentieth century is not the history of these brothers, but without them, our history would have probably been entirely different. Only God knows. Humanly speaking, what happened would not have happened without them. In life, and now in death, they have a name recognition that the native-born LCMS members do not have and will never have. We can offer any number of other prominent names, but only the Preus name will define our times.

A now-deceased uncle of mine spoke with the abundance of Christian liberty that is given to those who approach their centennial, saying that the LCMS would only be happy when the Preuses were gone. His sentiments reflected those of erstwhile colleagues who were indiscriminate in sharing their emotions. Now since both brothers are gone, we can expect historical evaluations, some of which will be brutally honest, even if we may question their correctness.

Even before he was gone, some announced themselves as "Preus watchers," a term that referred almost exclusively to Jack. They could be found in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS), where he had been a pastor before going to Springfield. A small and, in a sense, outcast synod had produced, if not the most significant, then its most controversial Lutheran leader of the century. "Preus watchers" were also found in the ELCA, of whose predecessor synod he was also a pastor. People who did not know him loved and hated him with the same intensity, and mostly for the same reasons. Often they were the same people.

One district president who was removed by Jack remembers with some fondness a visit to his home where he helped out in the kitchen. Everyone who knew him will recognize this as Jack. I have not read his funeral orations, but what was said probably described him as an "old Missourian." Yet there was something more complex about him. Besides a book that was written about him, *Preus of Missouri* (1977), two other outside analyses have been made, one by a friend after his death and one by a critic before.

Leigh Jordahl, a long-time family friend, writes kindly and warmly of Jack's faith, and finally critically: "Preus was not the theologian or church leader who was needed to forge a new way to overcome the delinquencies already apparent in the Lutheran controversies of the nineteenth century."[2] He was, however, both the theologian and the church leader who addressed the problems that came to a head for the LCMS in the 1970s.

This is a point acknowledged by Leonard Klein, who was not a friend. Klein was and remains closely associated with those involved with Seminex and the AELC. Klein holds that Preus was right in rejecting the notion that the "announcement of grace could pre-empt questions of dogma, authority, and meaning." ELCA antinomianism is the result of what Klein calls Seminex's "bizarre *Schwärmerei*."[3]

In his last conversation with Jack, Jordahl called his attention to "a Missouri flirting around with such novelties as Church Growth" and claimed that Jack was intrigued with the "evangelical catholics" of the ELCA—not that Jack would have gone along. It was part of his nature to keep people guessing. This is my observation. Jordahl may be right in seeing that Jack had not laid down a course for the LCMS, but there is only so much that one man can do.

Preus was right in rejecting the notion that the "announcement of grace could pre-empt questions of dogma, authority, and meaning."

We have not seen any written reviews on Robert, but oral tradition was flourishing even before he died. People loved and hated Robert with the same intensity that they loved his brother, but for different reasons. Jack was an organizer of the troops. Robert was the standard around which the troops, more unorganized than not, gathered. Even when deprived of office, he was the body around which the eagles gathered.

Brothers cannot avoid comparison and the Preuses were no exception. Both were theological and political animals, but here the comparison will stop. Robert had become a symbol and a rallying point at different times in his life for groups within the LCMS that are now increasingly disparate. So he may have been the last *universal* Missourian, as much as this was possible. His passing left both a political and a theological void.

While Robert was often at odds with LCMS officialdom, he *consciously* represented "old Missouri." His defense of biblical inspiration gave him immediate recognition with neo-evangelicals, with whom he fostered and cherished alliances when LCMS officialdom locked him out of his old haunts. Many advocates of Church Growth-like programs were allied and supported by him. At his death, his greatest admirers were those who showed a growing interest in the classical Lutheranism of the earlier period and who were seeing theology in terms of the old church liturgies.

Robert fits under Klein's critique that the LCMS isolated its doctrinal commitment from its liturgical life, but towards the end of his life, Robert recognized the dangers in the Church Growth Movement. Outwardly in the matter of forms, the liturgical products of Church Growth were not unlike a way of life with which Robert was most familiar. No one could accuse him of being liturgical.

Robert's dismissal from the seminary and synod provided a direction in his theology of which we have only threads. Out of these threads, had he lived, Robert would have woven a cloth. In defending the concept that "All theology is Christology," he came to see the legitimacy of the liberals' argument that the Scriptures and all doctrines had to be defined within the dimensions of the gospel, though this gospel was more than "the sheer announcement of grace," to borrow Klein's terminology.

Gospel for Robert Preus involved *both* theological and historical dimensions, which were missing from the "gospel-reductionism" of the liberal position. Gospel was both historical and theological Christology, now in uppercase. Robert's sermons were never doctrinal dissertations but a preachment of Christ. The substance of his later understanding was already there, but the final controversies made this existential for him in a way he had not experienced before.

Gospel for Robert Preus involved both theological and historical dimensions, which were missing from the "gospel-reductionism" of the liberal position.

Robert's removal from office helped him reshape his understanding of the ministry, which he published two years after his removal in *The Doctrine of the Call in the Confessions and Lutheran Orthodoxy*.[4] Previously Robert held that the ministry was established in Article XIV of the Augsburg Confession, while Article V dealt with the general ministry, or ministry in the abstract. Now he saw that the ministry was established in Article V. This book was indeed an attempt to set forth the classical Lutheran position on this issue, but it was also a defense of his own position as seminary president, and later also seminary professor, set against certain practices he found abhorrent in the LCMS.

In the conclusion to *The Doctrine of the Call,* Robert took issue with these now current or proposed practices: laymen preaching in churches; disposing of pastors without due process or because they are employees; placing pastors on "restricted status," whereby they are ineligible to receive calls; district presidents controlling call lists; district presidents or counselors talking to congregations apart from their pastors; temporary calls; forced retirement; and ministerial calls to women.

Robert took up these issues in 1990, almost seven years ago. These are now the very issues that are being proposed to the LCMS. I am convinced that as recently as ten or even twenty years ago, he did not see the issue of the ministry as the one that would disrupt in the LCMS. His own situation forced him to this conclusion, even though he had been the preeminent symbol and rallying point for all of Missouri's conservatives in the "Law-Gospel Debate."

THE LAW-GOSPEL DEBATE

During the 1970s a controversy broke out in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod over the role of the law and the gospel in theology. Afterwards similar debates over biblical inspiration, inerrancy, and history arose among the Southern Baptists and other Protestant denominations, but for Lutherans the debate over the Bible was connected with the law-gospel principle. Perhaps a majority of now-active LCMS clergymen were pastors or seminary students at that time. Their historical witness can serve as a needed corrective on my own interpretation of those events.

What is intended here is more of a theological appraisal of the movement and less an historical one, though on that account it is not ahistorical. Controversies necessarily produce exaggerated language and exorbitant claims for each position, from which I hardly exempt myself. Soldiers do know more about battles than those who visit battlefields only after the wounded have been safely hidden away and unsightly debris removed. On that account it is better to concentrate on the issues themselves, with the least possible attention to the participants in that debate, though complete abstinence from historical biography is impossible.

Formulating the point of controversy will be determined by where we begin our analysis. A date for the roots of the controversy in the 1940s would suggest that the issue of the '60s and '70s was a growing desire for LCMS participation in the ecumenical movement. This was an alleged but not proven goal of the *Statement of the Forty-Four.*

Placing the roots for the debate in the 1950s would suggest that the issues were biblical inerrancy and the use of certain methods in interpreting the Bible that cast doubt on its historical reliability. The end of John Behnken's nearly lifelong tenure in 1962 signaled the overt politicizing of the LCMS Theological differences took form in political organizing. Unlike his predecessors, Oliver Harms could not look forward to an election for life.

The election of certain district presidents and J. A. O. Preus as LCMS president in 1969 meant that concerns about the theological direction of the LCMS had become so public that congregations who implicitly trusted the synod were ready to replace certain church leaders. With two opposing groups emerging as virtually self-contained "churches" within the LCMS by the 1970s, clearly opposed theologies could be recognized. Until then the LCMS was faced with individual theological opinions, but in the 1970s quasi-official theologies emerged, one associated with the St. Louis seminary and the other claiming tradition.

By mid-decade matters had progressed far enough to allow representatives of each position to recognize and critically ana-

lyze the other's theology. In retrospect these alliances were not ideologically monolithic. We can put aside the issue that some alliances were often joined by some for political reasons and personal advancement. This is not unusual in church life, and only the totally naive will hold up hands in indignant horror.

Members of one group or the other had theological differences among themselves that were not evident to its members. For example, an undiagnosed Fundamentalism, which is now known as neo-evangelicalism, was seen as the equivalent of confessional Lutheranism. When asked what Lutheran influences a prominent theologian was making outside the LCMS, one college professor replied that the man in question was a defender of verbal inspiration, as if that were a uniquely Lutheran doctrine.

The failure to recognize these theological differences may be at the root of any discord and disharmony that the church experienced one generation later. This was as true for the conservatives as it was for the moderates. The break, which was finalized in 1976 with the LCMS president following a decision of the 1975 convention to remove some district presidents from their positions, was not absolutely catastrophic for the body politic. The LCMS maintained its shape and form with some districts taking the brunt of the schism. An inevitable gloomier forecast felt by some of us in the late 1960s and early 1970s did not materialize. The feared "liberals" did not storm the walls, as they had done in every other major Protestant denomination.

Though many issues were coming together in the 1970s, surfacing as the prominent one was whether the Scriptures or "the law and the gospel" were the determinative principle in theology. One writer noted that "at the heart of the discussions in our Synod is the question of whether the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is the *sole source* of our personal faith and the *center* of our public teaching." The author of this statement, who was a critic of the new position, agreed with his opponents that law and gospel formed the substance of theology, but he spoke for the traditional position in asserting that the governing principle for theology was the Scriptures.[5] He also noted that the new position was an "arbitrary polarizing of the gospel over against the Holy Scriptures," which was never known in confessional Lutheran theology.[6]

The new position was commonly called "gospel reductionism." Even though it had a somewhat negative ring to it, and was not used by its proponents, it was suggested by the title of an article by one of its leading advocates.[7] Adding to an intended or unintended confusion was that law and gospel were understood differently by the opposing sides. Gospel reductionism brought a number of factors together, including a legitimate Reformation principle that the law and the gospel provided an outline, goal, and content for preaching and theology.

Justification, the core Reformation doctrine, was carried out for the believer in the law, which condemned him, and in the gospel, which assured him of his salvation. Law and gospel gave meaning to the Reformation. In Articles IV, V, and XX of the Augsburg Confession (1530) and the Apology (1531), Melanchthon held that salvation was by the gospel and challenged any idea that works of the law made any contribution. A peculiarly Lutheran controversy resolved itself in the formulation of Article V in the Formula of Concord (1578), titled "Law and Gospel." It condemned the idea that the preaching of the gospel led to repentance and saw this a confusion of law and gospel.

Article VI of the Formula took the matter further and addressed the role of the law in the life of the Christian. The Formula acknowledged that the word "gospel" could be used in several ways, but in the strictest sense it was exclusively a proclamation of grace and not a conviction of sin. From the beginning, law and gospel became the characteristic principle of Lutheran theology and historically continues to distinguish ours from other churches, as the proponents of gospel reductionism themselves recognized.

Surfacing as the prominent one was whether the Scriptures or "the law and the gospel" were the determinative principle in theology.

The law and gospel principle was reinforced in the nineteenth century by C. F. W. Walther, the Missouri Synod's first president, whose *Law and Gospel* remains a standard for homiletics. The debates of the Reformation and the role of the law and gospel as a principle for preaching were not the issues that surfaced in the 1970s. Gospel reductionism of the 1970s was not a revival of the old controversy in which gospel was confused with law, nor was it a renewal of the question of what role the gospel had in preaching. Gospel reductionism was the claim that the law and the gospel, and *not* the Scriptures, were normative for Lutheran theology.

In gospel reductionism, justification was seen not merely as the chief, but as the only required doctrine. Other church teachings were relegated to a secondary position, as if they were nothing else than adiaphora. In comparison with the law and the gospel, other items were expendable. Law and gospel was used as a principle of exclusion rather than inclusion and as a method of analyzing the biblical data.

According to Reformation definition, law and gospel were diametrically opposed to each other and characterized God's revelation of condemnation and redemption. Redeemed by Christ, the believer is still not free from condemnation. In gospel reductionism, law and gospel went beyond describing the human dilemma in standing before a God who hates him for his sin and loves him in Christ and became the standard in evaluating the worth of other doctrines and the biblical documents. Whatever was not found to be in disagreement with the law and gospel principle was allowed.

As a principle in exegesis, gospel reductionism allowed any opinion of biblical interpretation, as long as the gospel as a message of forgiveness was proclaimed to the hearer. Evaluating a given pericope as either myth or history was allowed, if the message of forgiveness was quarried from the biblical text

and preached. Agreement on the literary character of any section of the Scriptures was secondary and freedom of opinion was allowed. What was previously considered to be a historical account might be considered poetic saga.

At that time Bultmann's definition of "forms" was the rage of the scholarly world, though little attention is given to them now. Some who identified with the new movement in the LCMS seem to have found this approach too radical. They held and still hold to recognizably conservative positions by insisting on the biblical history and, in certain cases, even defending it. Among these are some now in the ELCA.

Gospel reductionism did not introduce an entirely new way of thinking, though the terms were mid-twentieth-century vintage. Rationalism in the seventeenth century had already made a distinction between the Scriptures and the Word of God. This type of thinking has persisted to the present time and is characterized by pointing out that the phrase "Word of God" in the biblical documents has other meanings besides the Scriptures themselves. A one-for-one equation between Bible and Word of God was against the biblical evidence.

Gospel reductionism regarded gospel, that is, the word of forgiveness, as the Word of God in the primary sense.

This position was, of course, defensible but hardly new. Peculiar to the new position is that the Word of God was looked upon as an overarching category out of which any number of sub-categories are derived: words spoken by God, prophetic and apostolic word, Scriptures, sermons, hymns, liturgies, Christian testimonies. These sub-categories can be labeled as Word of God, insofar as they provide significant witness to that Word of God, but are not identifiable with it. They are bearers of the Word, but they are not ultimately authoritative Word of God, an honor reserved for the gospel.

Gospel reductionism regarded gospel, that is, the word of forgiveness, as *the* Word of God in the primary sense. Scriptures were the Word of God only because, or insofar as, they proclaimed the gospel, that is, the word of forgiveness. It was something like the old liberal platform that the Bible *contains* the Word of God, but not exactly. The newer concept was more fluid. On one occasion a certain portion of the Scriptures could be the Word of God and on other occasions not. Sections of the Bible that were found not to proclaim gospel could be discounted as Word of God, at least on that one occasion when they were heard. Oral proclamation was more likely to be Word of God than written Scriptures. One pericope could be, and could not be, the gospel depending on whether it accomplished its goal in preaching the gospel.

Such a view flew right in the face of the traditional doctrine of inspiration, which had been brought to prominence by the publication of Robert Preus's *The Inspiration of Scripture*, a study of the classical Lutheran position on this issue. His stature in the LCMS as an opponent of gospel reductionism was directly connected with the position he set forth in this book.

The theoretical understanding of Word of God as law and gospel had direct practical implications for the LCMS. The law-gospel principle allowed for the ordination of women as pastors, an issue under consideration first in the American Lutheran Church (ALC) and then the Lutheran Church in America (LCA) in the 1970s, though its proponents in these churches acknowledged that specific Bible passages disallowed it. Biblical and historical evidences were against the practice. The fragile LCMs-ALC fellowship, which was initiated in 1969, was in danger of being disrupted by the latter's declaration of fellowship with the LCA and their intent to ordain women.

At this juncture the law-gospel principle served LCMS proponents of fellowship. Placing women as pastors did not directly oppose the gospel as the Word of God proclaiming forgiveness, and so they could be ordained, it was argued. At least one woman was admitted to the regular M.Div. program of the St. Louis seminary and was assigned to vicarage. Lines were being drawn.

The law-gospel principle also was used to show that a sufficient basis for fellowship between Lutherans and other churches was already in place.[8] No longer was it a matter of coming to agreement on the specific doctrines that previously divided churches from one another, but whether the gospel was being preached in these churches. What was happening replaced what had happened. Result was more important than source or origin.

The ELCA has now used similar arguments to achieve alignment with the United Church of Christ, the Reformed, and Presbyterian Churches. Classical Lutheranism could express its material principle in several ways: forgiveness, justification, law and gospel, or Christ. Scriptures as the source of theology were the formal cause. In gospel reductionism, the material principle was transformed into the formal one. Justification, or the law-gospel principle, was both source (formal principle) and content (material principle). Law and gospel became the norm.

In gospel reductionism, something was true, or allowed, if the law and gospel were *effectively* proclaimed. Where a word had created faith, that word could be recognized as the gospel or the Word of God. The result indicated the nature of the proclamation. Only when the proclamation was accepted by the hearer could that proclamation be recognized as gospel and hence as the Word of God. Faith became the final arbiter. This is easily recognized as an existentially influenced theology, which it was. Objectivity was swallowed up into subjectivity.

The background and the substance for the new position was twentieth-century neo-orthodoxy, especially the Swiss theologians Karl Barth and Emil Brunner, as well as the Scottish theologians Don and John Baillie, who had put this peculiar understanding of the Word of God in the center of their theologies. John A.T. Robinson, bishop of Woolwich, represented this thinking for awhile in England. Paul Tillich played the same role in the United States. Though Barth, Brunner, and Baillie were not Lutheran, they used theological terms familiar to Lutherans.

At first many Lutherans may not have been aware that these terms were given other definitions. Rudolf Bultmann also belonged to the movement and spoke in recognizable Lutheran terms. He made his mark as a New Testament scholar with his method of demythologizing, but his theology was recognizably Lutheran, especially in the pulpit. Piety, in this case Lutheran, survived in a Nestorian arrangement with complete historical skepticism.

Neo-orthodoxy was not without European Lutheran critics. The Swedish theologian Anders Nygren and the German Lutheran scholars Werner Elert and Paul Althaus Jr. were the most prominent. They recognized that neo-orthodoxy, with its redefinition of terms and its lack of attention to biblical history, was hardly compatible with Lutheran theology, and they engaged it in polemical dialog. Some Lutherans in America took a more positive attitude to neo-orthodoxy and saw in it an opportunity for expanding their theological horizons.

For all of its failings, neo-orthodoxy offered a substantive theology compared to the lightweight liberal theology that dominated the American scene long after it had lost its credence on the European side of the Atlantic. Neo-orthodox theological fibre may account for its popularity in America among conservatives, including neo-evangelicals. The president of one seminary assured the synod that his institution was "doing theology." It was!

The influences of neo-orthodoxy among Lutherans, including the LCMS, may be more difficult to decipher. With the loss of German as the theological language in the LCMS by the end of the 1920s, and the problems in maintaining contact with the Continent during the Second World War, leading American Lutheran theologians may have become less informed about European theological developments than, for example, did Francis Pieper. Pieper's bibliographical knowledge was encyclopedic and is still unmatched today.

The war had cut the Missouri Synod off, not only from her sister churches in Germany, but from the general theological developments there.[9] Thus when neo-orthodoxy took hold in American soil in the 1950s, many theologians of the conservative churches were not fully equipped to analyze it and were susceptible. Failure to analyze neo-orthodoxy allowed its introduction into the LCMS. One district official described the new method as reading the Bible, praying, and then interpreting it.

Something more complex was afoot, but such simple, and yes, naive explanations of what this was were not uncommon. It would be equally false to say that everyone who had been dissatisfied with traditional LCMS theology and practice in the '30s and '40s were "gospel reductionists," though they made common political alliance with them. The gospel reductionism movement did have informed, committed, and articulate spokesmen who came to be associated with Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and Valparaiso University in Indiana, either as faculty members or as writers for their scholarly publications. Memoirs and autobiographies may still uncover theological and political alliances.

Neo-orthodoxy does not attract the attention it did in the 1950s through the 1970s, and in a sense we are visiting battlefields of wars from which the soldiers have longed departed. Some well-known combatants have enlisted in other armies. One suspects, both intuitively and from personal knowledge, that those who then used its phrases may not in every case have known neo-orthodoxy's origins as a protest in the 1920s. This protest was directed against the optimistic liberal tradition that was spawned by eighteenth-century Rationalism and then nurtured by Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher, Albrecht Ritschl, and finally by Adolf von Harnack.

When neo-orthodoxy took hold in American soil in the 1950s, many theologians of the conservative churches were not fully equipped to analyze it and were susceptible.

From our point of view, neo-orthodoxy was "liberal." On the European shores it was conservative, hence the term "neo-orthodoxy." European liberalism had met a sudden death with the Great War (1914–1918), which destroyed the idea that a heavenly society on earth was within human grasp. Its American cousin was not scarred by the ravages of the war and survived in the form of the Social Gospel, which followed the rationalistic tradition of reducing biblical history and theology to bare but recognizable minimums. These liberals were not historical agnostics in the sense that the Jesus Seminar is. Harry Emerson Fosdick, who was removed from Princeton Theological Seminary, perpetuated the old optimistic liberal tradition into the 1960s. American theological liberalism lingered into old age and died a natural death.

To American Protestantism, which had not known the ineffectiveness of Continental liberalism, neo-orthodoxy may have appeared as nothing more than a mild diuretic. Barth, the consummate theologian of the twentieth century, had been politically involved and was not above addressing societal ills and national evils. He was a mover behind the Barmen Declaration. To many conservatives neo-orthodoxy, with its protest against liberalism, may have seemed simply a revival of classical theology. It seemed to be similar to the repristination of confessional theology in the 1830s and '40s among Lutherans in Germany and Anglicans in England, which of course, it was not.

Still, Barth was a scholar of the classical Lutheran and Reformed theologians as few men have ever been. His theological presentations are the most valuable of this century, and serious doctrinal scholars must engage him and, where necessary, accept his corrections. Underlying his theological program were principles that may have sounded traditional but were built on an existential foundation and would have appeared strange to the leading parties in the Reformation and post-Reformation debates. At that time all agreed that the Bible was the Word of God and hence the source of theology.

Barth's definition of the Word of God as encounter between two subjects, one giving and another receiving, does not belong to Reformation theology, though some in our circles attempted to cite Luther in its defense. Rudolf Bultmann provided an existential definition of gospel, which he had borrowed from the philosopher Martin Heidegger, a colleague at the University of Marburg on the philosophical faculty. Forgiveness was the willingness to accept oneself. The gospel was the proclamation that effected this. Scriptures could be equated with the Word of God if they proclaimed gospel to effect a new self-awareness and self-acceptance. These views were exported to the United States and appeared in the traditional Lutheran dress of law and gospel in gospel reductionism.

For neo-orthodoxy Scriptures were the Word of God only insofar as they were believed as gospel.

For all the objectivity neo-orthodoxy claimed for its definition of the "Word of God," the Word was dependent on a subjective reception of it by the hearer. Thus neo-orthodoxy fundamentally did not advance beyond the liberalism it claimed to displace. In fairness to neo-orthodoxy, the liberalism originating with Schleiermacher saw the Scriptures as nothing else than the expression of the community. For such a liberalism, the transcendental was only an expression of a commonly held self-consciousness.

For neo-orthodoxy Scriptures were the Word of God only insofar as they were believed as gospel. If all the Scriptures were accepted as the gospel, then they could all be reckoned as Word of God. Just the opposite was equally true. If the Scriptures did not effect any change in the hearer, they were not gospel and hence not Word of God. It could be said and it was said: "All the Scripture was the Word of God" and "None of the Scriptures were the Word of God." Totally opposing statements were true according to the situation. Aristotle's law of self-contradiction, that a thing cannot both be and not be, was inoperative.

Any number of problems surface in this program. Since unbelievers cannot be convicted by a word that is not Word of God, any objective basis for a world judgment is removed. Barth did not write his volume on eschatology and thus avoided resolving the dilemma. In this position, history and theology operate in their own spheres and so historical questions are not necessarily related to theological ones. Without a necessary historical base for the proclamation, no reason exists for not substituting a historical base from another religion. The creedal substance of Christianity (*incarnatus est*) was compromised. On the possibility of revelation in other religions, the proponents of neo-orthodoxy were silent, even though they vigorously protested liberalism's denial of the uniqueness of Christianity.

Neo-orthodoxy's familiar language provided points of contact, contagion, and confusion in American religion. This is simply to say that responses to it were not uniform. The form that neo-orthodoxy assumed in LCMS gospel reductionism was easily recognized as a variant of its European forms, which were first offered prominently by Barth, Emil Brunner, and Bultmann. Barthian neo-orthodoxy placed the gospel before the law and had to be adjusted to fit the Lutheran formula that law precedes the gospel. "Encounter," the code word among the neo-orthodox theologians for the moment of revelation when God and man met each other, made its way into the common LCMS vocabulary.

The "gospel reductionists," as they were commonly called in the LCMS, preferred to be called "moderates," though both names were of their own choosing. Their most strident opponents called them liberals, because some of them held a view of biblical history that was little different than what was offered by eighteenth-century Rationalists and nineteenth-century German New Testament scholarship. Gospel reductionism was an amalgam of Barth and Bultmann's positions set forth in Lutheran terms, though Bultmann's vocabulary needed little translating.

Gospel reductionism was offered to the church through the pages of the *Concordia Theological Monthly* of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and an officially adopted document, *Faithful to Our Calling, Faithful to Our Lord*. The latter document was set forth both as a statement of common belief and a collection of individual testimonies, which comprised an accompanying publication. Critics of the new position were said to be more versed in what the new theology involved than its proponents.[10]

Spokesmen for gospel reductionism looked to the late German Lutheran theologians Paul Althaus[11] and Werner Elert of the University of Erlangen. Althaus and Elert were, ironically, contemporaries and the original critics of neo-orthodoxy, especially Barth's inversion of law and gospel. Althaus and Elert, from today's perspective and even from that of the 1930s through the '50s, would be recognized as conservative.

Werner Elert, along with his erstwhile colleague Hermann Sasse, are revered as confessional Lutheran icons. They had no use for Bultmann's negative judgment on biblical history or Barth's agnosticism towards the objective history to which the life of Jesus belonged. Ironically, the law and the gospel reductionist theology of the Missouri Synod in the 1970s, which claimed reliance on Elert and Althaus, allowed for Bultmann's historically radical exegesis and worked with Barth's definition of the Word of God as encounter.

This prior history was not widely available in the LCMS even as late as the 1970s and made theological assessment impossible. It was inconsistent with itself. Some prominent spokesmen of gospel reductionism saw biblical history as essential to their definition of the gospel,[12] a position that was not Barth's. Even at the time of the controversy, the newer theology neither pretended to be fully developed nor to be the position of all its adherents. The second volume of *Faithful to Our Calling* contained individual testimonies. Confessional theology operates from commonly accepted documents and not what this or that person believes.

A Statement of Biblical and Confessional Principles provided a theological conclusion to the controversy, at least for that moment. A division in the church provided a political conclusion to the controversy. If the controversy had not fractured the church, it might be passed over. The rupture did raise the question of how the law and the gospel functioned in Lutheran theology and thus struck at the core of what a Lutheran church was all about.

A then-LCMS clergyman's published dissertation provided a hint on how this movement wanted to understand itself. As Walther had made the law-gospel the basic principle for practical theology, that is, pastoral care and preaching, the church now had an opportunity and obligation to apply this same principle to exegetical and dogmatical theology.[13] When the dissertation appeared, Barth and especially Bultmann had long since constructed their theologies along these lines, and their ideas were gaining ground in the LCMS.

This dissertation was a rationalization—that is, it provided a rationale for what was then happening in the LCMS, though it seems as if this *apologia* attracted little attention. New theologies dig through graveyards of history looking for church fathers. Gospel reductionism was not a populist movement among the laity, as for example Fundamentalism was and Evangelicalism is now. Some lay persons interpreted the newer message in terms of the classical Lutheran position. Neo-orthodoxy's ambiguity allowed for this. It also appealed to the agnostic in many Christians.

As a theology neo-orthodoxy was esoteric and was attractive to those who had raised questions about the biblical history, but who were not ready to surrender traditional Lutheran worship and theology, or at least to give the impression that they did. Religion is valuable apart from its truth claims. Here neo-orthodoxy's agenda was carefully followed. Gospel reductionism presented itself as a Lutheran theology without demanding commitment from the hearer to a particular biblical history. Belief in the gospel did not require belief in the biblical history. Theology could exist without, or apart from, insisting this or that recorded episode in the Bible.

For Lutherans a bifurcated approach in doing theology was not new. In the nineteenth century the Erlangen theology claimed a double commitment, one to the God-consciousness principle of Schleiermacher and the other to classical Lutheran theology. Von Frank and Ihmels carried water on two shoulders and eventually the water shifted to Schleiermacher's side. Pieper recognized and condemned this kind of inconsistency. Lutheran theology was hardly the result of the individual or the collective religious consciousness of the church.

In practice the Erlangen theology was comparatively mild. It did not adopt the radical historical methods of David Friedrich Strauss in that time or of Bultmann in our times. Twentieth-century neo-orthodox forms of bifurcating faith and history were hardly so benign. Barth ignored questions of historical authenticity. Bultmann, in the tradition of the nineteenth century, flatly denied the miraculous, including the virgin birth and the resurrection. Both had well developed and, on many points, acceptable theologies! It was their historically agnostic attitude that attracted wide attention among the people and caused alarm in the LCMS and led to the political upheavals of the '70s.

Promoters of gospel reductionism were careful in informing their congregations with as few details as possible. Historical doubt was raised about the Old Testament prophet Jonah, who, so it was thought, was historically remote and hence inconsequential. Few would care if he had existed or not. His sojourn in the fish seemed to be as much the product of poetic imagination as it was history. The example of Jonah was so often raised by public speakers explaining the new method to LCMS congregations, that one suspects that it was part of a prearranged script, similar to the methods of Jehovah Witnesses who are well versed on only certain Bible verses. Missionaries for the new movement introduced themselves as conservative or confessional Lutherans, but their attitude to biblical history gave a glimpse into the new method. At the time of the controversy, the resurrection of Jesus was kept off the table, but it was not unusual for some to suggest that the virgin birth may be more of a theological truth than an historical one. Here the neo-orthodox bifurcation was recognizable. Even the uninformed could recognize that something in the theological-historical distinction was amiss, even if they did not know how gospel reductionism was constructed.

Clearly such distinctions between theology and history must be made, but the distinction is not a reason for eliminating one or the other. Traditional liberalism simply dismissed the resurrection and virgin birth as legendary accretions and did not attempt to look for theological value in them. Neo-orthodoxy found value everywhere in the Bible, but made its history secondary to the point of exclusion, if necessary. Fundamentalism requires belief in the historical, but often without seeing and requiring acceptance of the theological truth. *There is a theological rationale to the virgin birth as there is to the resurrection.*

Gospel reductionism presented itself as a Lutheran theology without demanding commitment from the hearer to a particular biblical history.

In classical Lutheran theology, law and gospel serves as a principle of theological integration around a christological core. But this principle was never intended or used as an autonomous standard of what was historically authentic in the Scriptures. Nor was it intended or used as a judge and norm to determine what was acceptable or not. It was not so much *a doctrine* among other doctrines, but the principle or method of applying the biblical data and doctrines in preaching. The goal was to convince the hearer that his sins had been forgiven because of an objective atonement that had taken place in the *historical moment of the cross.*

Historical crucifixion could not be equated with but was the occasion for the atonement. Virgin birth or conception was not

the incarnation, but was the occasion for it. *Supernatural realities are encased within historical moments and so are dependent on them.* The same is true of the sacraments. Water does not bring about regeneration, but is the occasion for it. Take away the history or the physical matter and Christianity deteriorates into a gnosticism.

Gospel reductionism, by disparaging the scriptural revelation as Word of God and making its history a secondary feature, had no firm foundation on which its gospel principle could be located. One proponent found support for the new principle of equating the Word of God with the gospel in Luther's Small and Large Catechisms.[14] This was overtly Lutheran, but it amounted to making the Lutheran Confessions an independent source of theology before or apart from the Bible. Lutheran theology, at least in this form, took on a life of its own. Law-gospel as a source (formal principle) for theology was a caricature of the sixteenth-century Reformation doctrine. In any event, a sixteenth-century principle cannot provide a normative principle for biblical hermeneutics.

In Barth's proposal, gospel without the law had the honor of being Word of God. For gospel reductionism, law and gospel and not the gospel was proposed as a formal principle in theology, though in practice the law was assumed into the gospel.[15] The first LCMS version of neo-orthodoxy was a variation on Barth: not gospel-law as Barth proposed, but law-gospel. Here the Lutheran version was unstable and had to be resolved. While stressing the gospel as *the* Word of God, it had to extend a similar honor to the law, if it were to be traditionally Lutheran.

In classical Lutheranism, the law and the gospel cannot be separated from their origin in histories of Israel and Jesus.

This Lutheran variation of neo-orthodoxy had within itself the seeds for its own philosophical self-destruction. Gospel reductionism, as the wording of the phrase suggests, eventually eliminates the law as the first Word of God or as Word of God in any sense. This results either in antinomianism or includes the law's function in the gospel, as Barth did. That view was condemned in Article v of the Formula. Lutherans are more likely to move gradually in the direction of antinomianism, which allows biblical imperatives to become ethical parentheses, that is, culturally bound commands inapplicable to later cultures.

Making the gospel the norm for the Scriptures is a self-authenticating principle and hence unsatisfactory. It is defined by, or in, one's own encounter (that is, one's experience) and not judged by an external authority like the Bible. This conclusion is not even the result of any historical-critical method but the intrusion of a neo-orthodox theory set forth in Lutheran terms. Historical-critical methodology, with its claim to scholarly (scientific) objectivity, does not produce or cannot verify the law-gospel principle of gospel reductionism. At best it comes from a Lutheran environment into the text, but is not necessarily drawn out of the text. Critical New Testament scholars would have found it strange to make normative such a prior dogmatic truth as "gospel."

If the new approach was a protest against the "Lutheran fundamentalism" of Pieper's dependency on the Scriptures as the norm of theology, it was misdirected. It paid little attention to what he had said about the gospel being the purpose and core of theology. This is clear from the first pages of his dogmatics, where he distinguishes the true religion from false ones in their failures to make the gospel normative and the core for their theologies.

First of all, Pieper's assessment was right. Second, gospel is a doctrinal norm, but not gospel as the mere declaration that sins are forgiven, but the gospel as the projection of the events of salvation into the present through preaching and sacraments. In Lutheran theology, it was not simply enough to demonstrate that this or that doctrine was taken from the Bible, but it had to expound Christ. Any claim that classical Lutheran theology operated from a bare doctrine of biblical inspiration and inerrancy, as if it were a variant form of Fundamentalism, is simply wrong. A theology that is not normed by the gospel and served by it is not Lutheran.

Both the Reformed and the Arminians (Methodists) do not work with such a christological principle, and so the former tend towards legalism and the latter to humanism. Lutherans do not recognize independent, autonomous religious truths that are without a necessary connection to Christ. This is true also of biblical inspiration. The Spirit of God who inspires the Scriptures is the Spirit of Jesus. God's Spirit is defined by the cross and has his origin for the church in the crucifixion of Jesus. *On that account* the Scriptures contain and define the redemptive word of the gospel, and the gospel in turn opens up the Scriptures. One does not know the intent of the biblical authors without Christ. Gospel is not superimposed on the inspired Scriptures, but it belongs to their origin, content, and fibre.

In classical Lutheranism, the law and the gospel cannot be separated from their origin in histories of Israel and Jesus, as Bultmann and his disciples had done. Without the historical moments of the cross and resurrection, there is no atonement and justification, and the law and gospel lose their foundation and approach the hearer with an *empty* Word. Message remains nothing else than message. Confessional Lutherans hold that gospel interprets the saving events, but in no way constitutes them. Gospel proclamation cannot be substituted for redemptive history. In gospel reductionism the gospel as a preached message took on a life of its own, as the Word of God did with Karl Barth. As a principle for its theology, classical Lutheranism never intended the law and gospel to be used as a hermeneutical tool permitting historical sections of the Scriptures to be understood as myths, legends, or tales. Gospel provides no license to find the biblical history irrelevant. Just the opposite is so. It requires that this history be affirmed.

Gospel derives its life from *incarnatus est* and *crucifixus est.* As previously mentioned, law and gospel as a principle is not a

doctrine alongside other doctrines in that it reveals *something,* but it provides the key in *applying* that which is already revealed, that divine something, that is, *all biblical history and doctrines.* It does not teach us *something* we did not know before, but takes what has been revealed in Christ and applies it to believers and unbelievers, so that they might be convicted of sin and believe. Law and gospel bring the historical realities of salvation into the history of the believer. Gospel reductionism put the higher value on the history of the hearer at the expense of the biblical history. Ultimately the history of the believer becomes the only history.

Neo-orthodoxy's hold on American Lutheran theology was quickly usurped by the theologies of hope, history, revolution, and feminism, but it was the first effective, external irritant into the theology of a confessional Lutheran church body known for its conservatism. The results of this intrusion into the LCMS were controversy, disruption, and schism which led approximately three hundred congregations out of the LCMS into the newly formed Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC). The AELC recognized former professors at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, as their faculty, which was organized as Christ Seminary in Exile, commonly known as Seminex. The AELC provided the catalyst for bringing the two other large synods into joining it in forming the ELCA in 1986.

Gospel reductionism was clearly a parochial theology, peculiar to the LCMS. It evoked sympathy from a scholarly world who was concerned that academic freedom was being stifled. But external reinforcements soon dissipated. Future generations may conclude that the eruptions of 1970s were hardly more politically motivated than theologically. Of course the same could be said of the fourth-century Arian controversy. In a real sense the AELC was responsible for the formation of the ELCA, which has stretched out its ecumenical hands in every direction and provided an institutional basis for all kinds of theological currents.

The ELCA's most severe critics are its own members, some of whom were associated theologically or politically with the "gospel reductionist" movement of the 1970s in the LCMS. The ELCA theological and political agenda place it in the Protestant mainstream. Its proposals are indistinguishable from the Episcopal Church, with which it is appropriately negotiating ecumenical accommodation, or the Reformed churches, with whom this has already been accomplished. In the rapid change of church boundaries and theologies, the 1970s controversy, which then captured headlines as a major church catastrophe, today attracts little attention for theological discussion.

The 1970s controversy, as disruptive as it was at the time, was only a brief expression of larger movements coming together in a small corner of the church. Bultmann has been replaced by the *Jesus Seminar*, which arrives at the same historical minimalism as he did, but without his attempt to construct a gospel for preaching, ill-defined as that was. Barth as a theologian is unmatched by any other in the twentieth century, but his gospel-law inversion has created a social gospel of its own making.

Barth was superseded by Moltmann and Pannenberg, both of whom saw theology in terms of global history. From this evolved the theologies of revolution. Some who were prominently associated with the movement in the 1970s have confronted its extravagant conclusions and retreated to more traditional views. Perhaps some of these never accepted these radical views, but were more politically than theologically motivated. They were caught up in the movement and its goals without ideologically understanding it. Others knowingly have followed Bultmann's radical path.

Law and gospel do not constitute a principle to determine the least common denominator of belief, but they embrace all Scripture and doctrines and so affirm them as binding.

If the dispute showed that the law-gospel principle cannot be substituted for the Scriptures, it also cautions that Lutheran theology cannot be done without it. A theology without the law and the gospel at its heart, and in all its parts, is not Lutheran and will quickly degenerate into Reformed or Arminian theology in the conservative form of neo-evangelicalism. Little would be gained if the church escaped from the historical relativism of Barth and Bultmann to find refuge in the legalism of neo-evangelicalism, which belongs to American fundamentalist tradition but not confessional Lutheranism.

Confessional Lutheran theology, because of its dependency on the law and the gospel, is always precariously positioned. This is the nature of Lutheran doctrine, as Luther, the Lutheran Confessions, and Pieper constantly point out. Preaching law and gospel is more of an art learned through experience than a science taught in textbooks. Those who are versed in orthodoxy can preach its doctrines as law and so destroy the gospel. Confusing law and gospel sows the seeds of doubts and destroys salvation. The misapplication of law and gospel, as the source of theology in gospel reductionism, held within it the seeds of historical agnosticism and the destruction of the faith.[16] There are many personal tragedies left in its path. Some no longer pursued the ministry. Others left it. And still others left the faith.

Law and gospel do not constitute a principle to determine the least common denominator of belief, but they embrace all Scripture and doctrines and so affirm them as binding.[17] In one sense law and gospel are ancillary to other doctrines, but in another sense they are the only doctrine in providing the covering and form in which all Christian truth is revealed to man for his salvation. Without them all other Christian teachings are without effect.

THE AFTERMATH

The law-gospel controversy came to a conclusion in 1974 with the formation of Christ Seminary in Exile, the removal of certain district presidents, and the organization of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches with dissident LCMS mem-

bers in 1976. *A Statement of Biblical and Confessional Principles* was acknowledged as the official position of the LCMS. Lines between the LCMS and what would become the ELCA were clearly delineated. The ELCA became less of a church and more of social movement in the style of mainline Protestant denominations.

The LCMS had a recognizable doctrinal position in which the doctrine of biblical inspiration and inerrancy were prominent. Miracle stories were not legends or myths. Adam and Eve were historical and the parents from which all were descended. It was expected by all that LCMS would enter into a period of peace, happiness, and prosperity. So it was thought. Perhaps one controversy came to an end, but the LCMS did not live happily ever after with itself. Another controversy soon surfaced at the Fort Wayne seminary.

The Fort Wayne seminary provided in miniature a barometer of the general climate in the Missouri Synod, and for that reason may have attracted first intrusive interference and attention. That intrusion was said to be an organizational revision, but underneath were different theological approaches. In a presentation made to the Fort Wayne seminary faculty on September 13, 1996, Dr. Schoer, professor and former head of the Department of Psychology of the School of Education at the University of Iowa in Iowa City, and recently elected to the LCMS Board of Higher Educational Services, bluntly said that within the LCMS there are several churches, but he did not delineate the boundaries of these churches. He used the old saw that synod means walking together, and it was recognizable to him that this was no longer so.

Since we are in the middle of dividing waters, it is difficult to identify the currents with precision and locate their origins or to forecast the future, except in the broadest terms. Former lines dividing liberals and conservatives are not descriptive of the current situation. We must look elsewhere for answers. What is offered here is only tentative and open to immediate correction.

Former lines dividing liberals and conservatives are not descriptive of the current situation.

In attempting to analyze what happened in the late 1970s in the LCMS, I would like to use the analogy of World War II and the rise of Soviet imperialism in its aftermath, something few could predict, but which some like Winston Churchill were aware of. At the war's conclusion our country was intent in bringing its troops home and was in no mood to address the problems fast arising in eastern Europe. Within three years it had fallen under Russian domination, where it lay for nearly half a century. What might have been resolved in 1945 is still now struggling for resolution. We are now struggling for resolution in Missouri.

By 1976 the LCMS had gone through a tiresome theological struggle of twenty years. Theological peace was proclaimed with no commitment to theological self-examination. In other words, the LCMS was not ready or willing to examine the norms by which it saw errors in the approach of others. This was particularly true of views on the Bible, the issue that separated conservatives and liberals. Moderates may have offered a definition of the gospel in gospel reductionism that hardly fit the New Testament and the Lutheran understanding of this word, but gospel reductionism might reflect the proper and necessary view that the Bible serves the gospel—or put in another way, without the gospel the Bible is not understood properly.

In conversations with Robert D. Preus, he did concede the value of the outward form of this argument, though he opposed the definitions allowed by the moderates in the 1970s. Views of the Bible offered by conservative Lutherans, though stated in similar or the same terms, were really different from those of neo-evangelicals, but were in danger of being blurred. Since the neo-evangelical theologians were being read and admired widely within LCMS circles, these differences soon were no longer recognized. This blurring may have already happened decades before.

LCMS theologians and neo-evangelicals and their forebears had recognized a kindred spirit each in the other. Pieper saw value in the position of Charles Hodge. Robert Preus and Carl F. H. Henry were heroes honored across party boundaries. Both groups accepted the Bible's inspiration, inerrancy, and infallibility and were committed to its historical character. They saw that the real enemies were those who denied these kinds of things. It would be natural that some Lutherans might come to think of themselves as neo-evangelicals, but would retain a sacramental practice by baptizing infants and holding to Christ's real presence in the Lord's Supper.

Obviously this is a simplistic observation, but in our own eyes and the eyes of others, this may have been the case more than we would like to acknowledge. Our sacramental position did not prevent our involvement with neo-evangelicals on both scholarly and parish levels. LCMS pastors have been known to recruit for the Billy Graham rallies, and some of us have been involved in writing for neo-evangelical publications. Agreement on the origin and nature of the Scriptures provided a basis for serious discussion, which was not possible even with some Lutheran groups, but it was not and is not a sufficient basis for church fellowship. Under closer examination such a minimal agreement may have been superficial, since it covered up fundamental differences on how we view the Bible.

Though at first glance it appeared that Dr. Schoer was the first to suggest that the LCMS had within its walls more than one church, an editorial by Leonard Klein in *Lutheran Forum* had posited this in 1995.[18] Rather than speaking of churches, it might be better to speak of streams of thought, because organizations or associations representing these schools of thinking are still in the state of incubation and formation. Several publications taking up the various causes are now afloat in the LCMS. Clear evidence of the divisions were the doctrinal charges raised by some individuals against others who in the 1970s had shared the same conservative views as they.

When I later brought up Professor Schoer's observations in a conversation, I was asked what these different churches might be. I had not given the matter any thought, but I spontaneously offered these three options.

1. First might be those who look for a repristination of what the LCMS was before the controversy. Problems can be resolved with reference to the LCMS premier theologians, Walther and Pieper. They are more likely to use the 1941 hymnal and look for a revival of what they remember the LCMS to be in their youth in the 1940s and 1950s. Often theirs is not merely the hope but the belief that the LCMS will always come out on the right side of any issue.[19]
2. A second school of thought has much in common with a revival of Protestant fundamentalism now in the form of neo-evangelicalism. This group is more likely to promote the use of evangelism and stewardship programs and to use different forms of worship and music, which are frequently borrowed from evangelistic and charismatic song books. In Klein's opinion, which seems correct, this group has been allowed to flourish because the LCMS insists on particular doctrines, but considers liturgy to be an adiaphoron.
3. Members in the third group have renewed interest in the Lutheran Confessions, especially the Small Catechism, which may be regularly recited in liturgically regulated church services with a weekly commemoration of the Sacrament. Many of them have a scholarly interest in exegesis and in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Lutheran fathers. They can cite Chemnitz and Johann Gerhard and are not uncritical of Walther. This group may be exercising sizable influence in the LCMS, but to date has not been recognized by outside observers.

LCMS commissions and committees are given the assignment, or so it appears, of providing a united front and generally express themselves in terms that are acceptable to the group that looks for a resurrection of old Missouri. Over diverse streams forming one flood, the officially made LCMS pronouncements are heralded forth. In some way we now have a third layer on top of the Scriptures and Confessions. As valuable as official statements are, they are often cited as if further theological discussion on these issues is inappropriate, but self-citation brings a church to the brink of sectarianism.

The three options set forth above are offered as tentative hypotheses, but we should explore the role of the Bible in Lutheran and neo-evangelical theologies. Leonard Klein, in an editorial complimenting the late J. A. O. Preus, writes, "Biblical inerrancy is an honorable theological opinion, but it is not the touchstone of orthodoxy."[20] Here he hit the nail on the head. The conservative Lutheran position on the Bible has allowed some of us to be associated with neo-evangelical groups who require such subscriptions to biblical inspiration and inerrancy for membership. Such agreement, however, exists only in the *materia,* the outward shape, and not the *forma,* the substance or content. So it happens, even among Lutherans, that if one asserts a prior belief in biblical inspiration, he is given the guarantee, or gives others the guarantee, that what he is about to say *must* be true. This is hardly the case as we look at neo-evangelicalism, which accommodates both John Calvin and John Wesley in seeing that the purpose of Christianity and the Bible is to lead the believer into a life of holiness, which is understood in ethical or moral terms.

Calvin understood the third use of the law as restraint from sin and saw this as the law's chief purpose. Wesley made progress toward moral perfection the focus or centerpiece of his system. For both theologians, the Bible has a regulatory purpose and provides rules or directives for all aspects of life. The contemporary code term for the legalism of neo-evangelicalism is "biblical principles." God has placed into the Bible principles for maintaining health, including diets and exercise and regulating fat and alcoholic intake; acquiring and keeping wealth, including principles for investing and saving money; stewardship; psychological happiness; sinless lives; happy marriages;, successful parenting; evangelism; and more.

The contemporary code term for the legalism of neo-evangelicalism is "biblical principles."

Bible classes in some of our churches are, wittingly or unwittingly, issue-oriented along these lines. Materials for these programs can be found on the shelves of Evangelical bookstores, advertised in such Evangelical magazines as *Christianity Today,* heard on radio stations, and watched on television stations. Personal problems can be resolved by putting together the right combination of "biblical principles." Promise Keepers belongs to this general movement. These programs speak to what we assume are our needs. They promise success and frequently instant gratification. Our moral resolve is the chief factor.

We cannot underestimate the attractiveness of this approach for our people. And we cannot dismiss out of hand good counsel, even from neo-evangelical circles. But such good counsel belongs to natural knowledge and not the gospel. After all, this is the purpose of the Book of Proverbs and, in a negative sense, is also the goal of Ecclesiastes.

Lutherans see the Scriptures entirely in terms of law and gospel; that is, ours is a christological approach. Christ is the content of the Scriptures through which he leads us from unbelief to himself. He is himself the *formal principle, the material principle, and the final principle.* As he takes the outward form of water, bread, and wine in the Sacraments, so he takes the outward form of words in the Scriptures. Just as the Jews did not recognize that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God, so unbelief does not see that the apostolic and prophetic Scriptures are the shell in which the Redeemer is present. In the Scriptures Christ is both preacher and sermon! Here are not laws and principles, but Christ himself drawing all men to himself.

Such different understandings of what the Bible is may account for the dispute that arose over the role of Christology in dogmatics. Though the late Robert D. Preus was not the author of the view that theology had to be defined christologically, he was its defender. He was accused of holding a non-acceptable opinion, from which he was later cleared. A christological view of the Bible and theology was hardly a radical opinion foreign to Lutherans. Luther had said as much and even worse. Without Christ the Scriptures are nothing: so said the Reformer.

The controversy, whose theological resolution begged for an exploitation, may have shown how two groups within the LCMS had grown apart from each other. Anathemas point to different and real points of view. Theology cannot be atomized or fragmented into parts and pieces, or even individual doctrines, but all doctrines are only amplifications and reflections on the one doctrine of Christ. Remove Christ and we are left with the law.

Our topic has focused on Missouri's controversies of the recent past and the present. Controversies are never pleasant, but they are inevitable. Satan cannot be prohibited from entering the field and planting his seed. God grant rest to those who, in a real sense, were already dying for our sakes while they were living. May he grant to us the grace to live that we may die with Christ. LOGIA

NOTES

1. In response to a letter on whether Walther's *Kirche und Amt* was accepted on the same level as the Confessions with a *quia* subscription and not only with *quatenus,* the editor replied that this book, the "Thirteen Theses" on predestination, the *Brief Statement,* and *A Statement on Scriptural and Confessional Principles* are "officially adopted doctrinal statements of the Missouri Synod." See *Reporter* 22, no. 8 (August 1996): 9. This raises the question of whether such documents are on a level with the Confessions or whether they surpass them in their binding value. Certainly they are open to the same critical analysis given the Scriptures or Confessions. Or are they?

2. Leigh Jordahl, "J. A. O. Preus," *Logia* 5, no. 2 (Eastertide 1996): 49.

3. Leonard Klein, "J. A. O. Preus," *Lutheran Forum* 28, no. 4 (November 1994): 7.

4. Luther Academy, Monograph #1, April 1991. Since he was removed from office in September 1989, he must have begun work on this book almost immediately.

5. The Faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, *Faithful to Our Calling, Faithful to Our Lord* (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary, 1973). Reviewed by Eugene F. Klug, *Springfielder* 37, no. 1 (June 1973): 67–74.

6. Klug, 70.

7. Edward Schroeder, "Law-Gospel Reductionism," *Concordia Theological Monthly* 43, no. 4 (April 1972): 232–247.

8. Robert W. Jenson found a common basis for intercommunion with Episcopalians since Lutherans agreed with them on the gospel. This appeared in the same issue of the *Concordia Theological Monthly* [43, no. 4 (April 1972)] as did Schroeder's "Law-Gospel Reductionism."

9. Proponents of gospel reductionism claimed roots for their position in the positive reactions that Missouri Synod representatives had to German theologians at Bad Boll after World War II. F. E. Mayer wrote that "The doctrine of inspiration does not stand in the relationship of *apriori*, but of *aposteriori* to our theology. It is not the broad basis upon which the pyramid of dogmatics is built." *The Story of Bad Boll* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1949), 14. This statement is true. Isolating the Bible as an autonomous source of truth is characteristic of Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism, and left without criticism leads to legalism. As true as this statement may have been, later interpretations of it allowed for the Scriptures to be separated from the gospel, and then to be replaced by the gospel as the source of theology.

10. So writes Richard John Neuhaus in *Forum Letter* 4, no. 4 (March 1975): 4: "Scaer challenges the ELIM [Evangelical Lutherans in Mission, the political group supporting gospel reductionism before the split in the Missouri Synod] people to correct what he views as the faults and ambiguities in the statement. In doing so, he demonstrates more seriousness about the statement than has been generally evident in ELIM circles." They used the term "evangelical" of themselves because of their commitment to the gospel as the norm of faith.

11. Paul Althaus, *The Divine Command*, trans. F. Sherman (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966).

12. "Their [the Apostles'] proclamation does not create history. On the contrary the history through the Spirit creates its proclamation." Paul G. Bretscher, *After the Purifying*, 32nd Yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association (River Forest, IL: L.E.A., 1975), 29.

13. Robert C. Schulz, *Gesetz und Evangelium* (Berlin: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1958), 168. "With this American Lutheran theology faces its most important task: to make the law and the gospel the basis for its exegetical and dogmatical theology, as Walther made for practical theology." Translation by writer. In an unpublished work the same author suggests that preaching be done on the superficial meaning of the text without attention to the history behind it. This is, of course, Barth's method, even if there was no intention to copy it.

14. Bretscher, 1–13, 18.

15. Bretscher, 18. "The closest synonym for 'the Word of God' is 'the Gospel' in all its senses, including also the antithetical 'Law'."

16. Arguments for the ordination of women proceed in Lutheran circles from the freedom given by the gospel. This is only possible where the gospel is defined separately from the law. Not surprisingly, those involved in the gospel-reductionist movement in the 1970s proceeded almost immediately to ordain women.

17. As of this date an analytical history of the controversy has not appeared. Mention has been made of an analysis done by Eugene F. Klug of an official statement. Additional information and bibliographical data can be obtained from two of my articles that appeared during the midst of the controversy: "The Law Gospel Debate in the Missouri Synod," *Springfielder* 36, no. 3 (December 1972): 156–171; and "The Law Gospel Debate in the Missouri Synod Continued," *Springfielder* 40, no. 2 (September 1976): 107–118. I have deliberately refrained from including the names of those who were prominently involved in espousing the law-gospel theology of the 1970s, because the positions of some have noticeably changed. The danger facing the Missouri Synod today are forms of Reformed and Arminian Protestantism in such movements as Church Growth.

18. "What Is to Be Done," *Lutheran Forum* 29, no. 2 (May 1995): 6–8.

19. Klein refers to this faction as "politically correct Missouri" in "What Is to Be Done."

20. Leonard Klein, "J. A. O. Preus," 7.

Colloquium Fratrum

"Through the mutual conversation and consolation of the brethren . . ."
Smalcald Articles III/IV

Response to Steven Hein
"Sanctification: The Powerful Pardon" (Logia *6, Epiphany 1997*)
by Paul R. Raabe, Professor of Exegetical Theology,
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

I agree with Steven Hein's desire to distinguish the Lutheran view from the various Protestant views. I also appreciate how he treats sanctification in a gospel-centered way by emphasizing the powerful impact of pardon and by linking the Spirit and sanctification to the same gospel that justifies. Yet perhaps more needs to be said, although I realize that it is impossible to discuss all aspects of the topic in one article.

The article focuses on the crushing force of the law and the liberating and empowering impact of forgiveness, the former addressed to self-righteous and complacent sinners and the latter to sinners burdened in conscience with guilt and despair. I wonder, however, if this covers the entirety of the New Testament witness on the subject. When Hein says, "such talk about what sanctification is and how Christ accomplishes it, even when joined with 'exhortations and encouragements' to do good works, is not the same thing as receiving the saving gifts of the gospel in the proclaimed word and in the holy sacraments," I assume that he is not opposing the *New Testament* use of exhortation and encouragement to do good works. After all, the New Testament is replete with such hortatory material addressed to Christians.

To take a simple example (although I realize that there is a text-critical question here), in John 8:11 Jesus says to the woman caught in adultery, "Neither do I condemn you." With these words Jesus, the one with divine authority to judge and the one truly without sin, pardons her. But why does he not stop there? Why does he add, "Go and sin no more"? Certainly his intent is not to crush her again with the law. Nor are these words simply a restatement of the pardon. How would you characterize such use of imperatives? I am not sure what to call it; perhaps "gospel-based exhortation." At any rate, it seems to me that we need to find a way to incorporate this type of New Testament hortatory material into Lutheran pastoral theology and practice.

Steven Hein responds to Paul Raabe

I am pleased and honored by Professor Paul Raabe's kind words of agreement and appreciation for my recent article in Logia, *"Sanctification: The Powerful Pardon." It is gratifying to receive praise from a fellow servant of the Word whose concern for the gospel and teaching it faithfully is at the caliber of that which Paul and his colleagues at Concordia, St. Louis, are about for the church. That much more needs to be said on the subject of sanctification goes without saying—but acknowledged at the end of my article. Professor Raabe notes appreciably the focus in my article on the empowering impact of the gospel for faith, life, and works, but wonders if my treatment of works has embraced the entirety of the New Testament witness. Certainly not! I noted especially as absent, but important, the whole matter of how vocation shapes and particularizes the works of faith in the Christian's life. My objectives about good works were modest: "to note their role in God's work of sanctification and how they are produced" (22).*

More to a point of concern, however: Dr. Raabe wonders, but assumes I am "not opposing the New Testament use of exhortation and encouragement to do good works," something he suggests might be labeled "gospel-based exhortation." He raises this thought in light of my concluding remark: "talk about what sanctification is and how Christ accomplishes it, even when joined with 'exhortations and encouragements' to do good works, is not the same thing as receiving the saving gifts of the gospel in the proclaimed word and in the holy sacraments." Professor Raabe's keen eye has indeed caught some subtle gist of my article. I would like to clarify my statement. Good works (coram Deo) *are spiritual things and therefore are never empowered by the law. Rather, they are motivated and empowered by the gospel.*

I realize that Paul and other colleagues at St. Louis have argued elsewhere that the matter of works and their production in the Christian life should be viewed on a "practical, down-to-earth" level as aided by hortatory uses of the law. They have maintained that New Testament hortatory material should, in part, be seen as positive, encouraging, and persuasive. We are invited to see Jesus' words to the woman caught in adultery in this way. (For a more detailed discussion of this view, see Paul R. Raabe and James W. Voelz, "Why Exhort a Good Tree?: Anthropology and Paraenesis in Romans," Concordia Journal *22, no. 2 [April 1996]: 154–63.) Here Raabe suggested that the hortatory law sections found in the middle (6, 8) and ending chapters (12–16) of Romans should be understood, in part, as encouragement for positive decision-making by Christians in choosing their works.*

This hortatory material in Romans allegedly treats Christians "as if they are a third party standing between two powers, sin and the Spirit," or as if the Christian were a "charioteer" with a bad and a good horse. The apostle Paul uses the law (by analogy) to

urge the individual "to let the good horse lead and resist the bad horse." Not that the power of the gospel is denied. Raabe's argument is that the Spirit indeed empowers the Christian life and produces sanctification; but all of this in a "deeper, theoretical and ontological" sense. On a more practical level, he interprets Paul as advancing positive and negative arguments with the law to encourage sanctified living. All of this is done, not on the deeper theoretical level where the Gospel operates, but rather in terms of the practical, everyday life of Christians "as concrete, down-to-earth human beings" (see especially Raabe and Voelz, 160–61). In this vein, professor Raabe senses a need "to find a way to incorporate this type *of New Testament hortatory material into Lutheran pastoral theology and practice"* (emphasis mine). *Am I opposed to this understanding of law in the New Testament? Yes and no.*

There are two basic things servants of the Word always need to keep in mind when considering the law. First, the law was added because of sin (Gal 3:19). God uses his law to deal with sinful humans—spiritually and temporally—but each in quite different ways. Spiritually, he prepares sinners for receiving the gospel by revealing what we cannot be and do. In our temporal affairs, he does the reverse. He uses the law to promote (even coerce!) fair play and just relations in our fallen worldly communities. He would mold us for good earthly citizenship—something we sinners can be and do. In both instances, because we are sinful beings, the imperative "thou shalts" of the law hound us spiritually and temporally. Only in the better day coming shall we who are in Christ be free of its slavish character.

In addition to these divine uses, the law unfortunately has some bad side-effects. It magnifies sin and incites rebellion (Rom 6:13, 20). As it is lodged in the heart (the devil's playground), the unholy spirit uses the law to convince us that we either do not need the gospel or we have forfeited our right to claim it. Here the law is used as a weapon against the gospel.

Second, we need to remember and appreciate that the law, when rightly applied as noted above, is always eminently practical, even for Christians. It is surely practical in the management of our temporal affairs and dealings with others. The law teaches us the stuff of temporal uprightness and that life will usually go better for us if we follow the rules than if we break them. Here, the law nurtures wisdom and civil righteousness—matters that Luther rightly distinguished as "below us"—where we indeed exercise free will. All of this, of course, applies also to the non-Christian. In this sphere, I would agree with Professor Raabe that the law not only threatens, but also encourages and even entices in very practical ways to influence our decision-making. On this level we can frame out persuasive arguments. We can even cajole: "C'mon, Davey! Do what the law says; you will be glad that you did. Atta' boy, Dave!"

From this point on, however, I think Lutherans, following Luther's lead, must draw a big line—but not to rule out some practical use of the law in the spiritual sphere of life. Raabe is right: the hortatory material is there in Romans and elsewhere throughout the New Testament, and much of it is dealing with more than civil use of the law. Rather, we must draw a line that would exclude all pretensions of human free will. Luther reminded the church, first in his Heidelberg Theses *and later in his* Bondage of the Will, *that in spiritual matters there is no free will—not even for the Christian! Any conception of human freedom in things above us is a figment of the imagination. Raabe's analogy of the charioteer does not fit any human being before or after the Fall in the area of spiritual matters. The Christian simply does not occupy some neutral position for choice between sin and the Spirit. The will is bound, not obliterated, but captive and ruled "from above." As Luther graphically put it, one is "ridden in life as a mule" either by God or the devil. When the law is applied to spiritual matters* (coram Deo), *things above us, the human will must always be considered bound.*

The Apostle taught that as we Christians are a new creation in Christ, we are captivated—slaves to God and righteousness (Rom 6:18, 22). Yes, we are free from the bondage of sin, death, and the devil, but now bound in a slavery to God (Luther's analogy of a mule ridden by God) and the works of God. Here, as expressed in my article, we do as we are in Christ. Nevertheless, the law is indeed recognized as still needed and applied by God in the lives of Christians for the simple reason that apart from Christ we remain sinners. Apart from baptism into Christ, Paul considered himself fleshly self—and thus we too, like he, are "sold as a slave to sin" (Rom 7:14, 18). Because of this latter slavery, the Christian's sanctification is incomplete, and he needs the law continually—but not for encouragement or choices in spiritual things. There simply is no level or dimension of spiritual works where the Christian can be encouraged to make some autonomous "right decision." There are no decisions for Christ—not with faith nor with its works. We simply do, willfully, as we are ruled in the flesh and in the Spirit—by the devil and our Lord Jesus Christ. We must interpret Paul's use of paraenesis in light of what he teaches about the dual slavery of the Christian: bound in Christ and bound apart from him to sin, death, and the devil. The simul *character of this duality means that our works always have a mixed, good tree/ bad tree character to them in this life. They flow from what we are as sinner and saint.*

Because the Christian in this life is still Old Adam apart from Christ, Formula of Concord VI recognizes the continual need for hortatory law in the Christian's life.

For the Old Adam, like an unmanageable and recalcitrant donkey, is still a part of them and must be coerced into the obedience of Christ, not only with the instruction, admonition, urging and threatening of the law , but also with the club of punishments and miseries, until the flesh of sin is put off entirely and man is completely renewed in the resurrection. There he will no longer require the preaching of the law or its threats and punishments, just as he will no longer require the Gospel (SD VI, 24).

Note the strong verbs above—and nothing so kindly and positively motivational as "encourage." Law, simply, is never credited with empowering sanctification or motivating works of faith. Not on any level! This the Holy Spirit through the gospel is credited with exclusively (SD VI, 11). Rather, the law is needed to put down and crucify the Christian as flesh. God uses his law to expose false godliness and reveal what we ought be and do (tertius usus). *Christians need this on account of the flesh and the Devil's deceit (SD VI, 20). All the while, a wrathful God indicts us for missing the mark—we aren't, we don't, and we can't measure up to how he created and redeemed us to be and do.* Lex semper accusat!

Christians need this too. All of this is eminently practical as it is assuredly spiritual. Such law leads to and prepares for the gospel to be received. Here God's foolishness justifies, sanctifies, and empowers the fruit of faith . . . entirely! As God has his way with us, the

spiritual heartbeat in the sanctified life of the Christian remains always the same—law/gospel, back and forth, again and again—but never gospel/law and surely not law/gospel/law.

And what of professor Raabe's term "gospel-based exhortations"? I would rather we used such terminology to describe those imperatives in the New Testament that are invitatory for the blessings of the gospel. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." "Be baptized for the forgiveness of sin and you will receive the Holy Spirit." "Take and eat, this is my body." And so on. The imperative case in such instances should be understood passively as in merely heeding an invitation to receive what is to be freely given. Others have called these gospel mandates, divine imperatives, or gospel imperatives. They are not law. To employ such terminology to describe what is clearly law material seems to me to be rather contradictory and likely to cause confusion.

Concerning the pericope of Jesus' encounter with the woman caught in adultery in John 8, what should we call his words "go and sin no more"? I think, admonishment: Jesus is admonishing her. Whether she was crushed unto repentance before or whether this now ought to crush her (a result), the text simply does not say. Jewish vigilantes were bent on carrying out the old prescribed civil penalty for adultery, death by stoning. Yes, they were indeed vigilantes—taking the law into their own hands. The Jews were now under Roman rule where only Roman due process could legally condemn one to death. Jesus ruffled many feathers with his insistence that Caesar should be rendered his due. The Apostle Paul did the same in Romans 13 and 1 Timothy 2. It would seem natural to interpret Jesus' words "neither do I condemn you" as parallel in meaning to the sense of condemnation that was contextually being threatened. The woman was about to be stoned to death! Jesus is compassionate to the woman by putting down anarchy.

I thank Paul for his response and his contributions to the wider discussion of sanctification and hortatory material in the New Testament. I hope both our contributions help to clarify the salient issues and sharpen our understanding of what it means to have a scriptural and confessional grasp of God's sanctification of the Christian.

Response to Oliver Olson

"Robert Bellarmin and Martin Chemnitz: On the Antiquity of the Roman Canon" (Logia 6, Epiphany 1997) *by Leonard Klein*

The theological gravamen of Oliver Olson's "Robert Bellarmin and Martin Chemnitz: On the Antiquity of the Roman Canon" seems to be that those who defend a full eucharistic prayer are granting or are bound to grant Bellarmine's and Trent's claim about the antiquity of the canon. This is poor logic. The Roman canon is likely very old, since parts of the prayer can be traced to the formularies of the fourth and even late third centuries, but this is irrelevant to the theological argument on either Olson's side or the other.

It is not the relative antiquity of the Roman canon that has moved most Lutheran liturgical thinkers and many Lutheran theologians to acknowledge the importance of a prayer of thanksgiving. It is liturgical study in general and biblical exegesis. Historical research finds no evidence for the notion of the Verba alone as consecratory in the ancient Church, and prayers of thanksgiving are universal in the ancient churches and in their modern heirs, Roman, Greek, and Oriental. The reason for this is biblical—Christ's command to give thanks with bread and cup and to do so "for the remembrance of me" could and can be read no other way. Even if the Roman canon were a medieval construction, this would not change.

The abuse of eucharistic sacrifice and the misunderstanding of it as propitiatory is a medieval distortion. Unique features of the Roman canon exacerbate this, but "abusus non tollit usum," and Melanchthon was able in the Apology explicitly to approve the Greek anaphora's use of the term "unbloody sacrifice." The continuing rear guard action against eucharistic prayers since the creation of the *LBW* is not a necessary result of any Reformation insight. It is a polemical excess that places Lutherans at odds with a usage that is as universal as any usage can get. Indeed, it places us at odds with the clear sense of Jesus' eucharistic words.

Oliver Olson responds to Leonard Klein

Pastor Klein has detected "poor logic" in what I "seem" to argue in my recent Logia *article, "Robert Bellarmin and Martin Chemnitz: On the Antiquity of the Roman Canon." Since the matter, as he says, is critical, I have taken time to write out some arguments that do not have to be guessed at.*

The prayers "that were universal in the ancient churches" to which he appeals have little to do with the rigid prayers read a thousand years later. According to scholarly evidence, the earlier prayers were free, mostly improvised. A millennium later they had frozen into rigid canons (to use the legal term). Embarrassing for those who appeal to the authority of liturgical orders, the centuries-long tradition ended in a contradiction. In the East, it was firmly held that the action that consecrated the elements was the petition for the descent of the Holy Spirit (invocation, epiclesis); *in the West, it was the petition that quoted the Words of Testament (remembrance,* anamnesis).

Martin Luther corrected the contradictory traditions: the initiator of the sacrament, he taught, is God, not the church. Just as God is the initiator in baptism—even though fundamentalists teach that baptism is a public confession by someone already saved. He did not eliminate the element of thanksgiving, but assigned it its proper place after the reception, indeed, "a necessary result of a Reformation insight." True to the ancient insight that lex orandi is lex credendi, *in* The Babylonian Captivity of the Church *he insisted that God's action toward us not be confused with our prayers to him. Eucharist also properly continues on Thursday afternoon when we help that old lady across the street.*

Much more recently, another attempt—less fortunate than Luther's—has been made to correct that contradictory tradition. Liturgical writers have decided that the Eastern locus of human "action" does not contradict the Western locus; the various emphases can be combined. The liturgical key word is the church's "action." Some creative nuns have, in fact, taken "action" to include dancing in the aisles. A full eucharistic prayer, accordingly, includes both epiclesis and anamnesis. *It is that newly-minted (and therefore non-catholic) Eastern-Western mix that Klein had in mind when he wrote that "the mass without a full great thanksgiving is not fully the mass"* (Ad Fontes : A Journal of Evangelical Catholic Lutheranism *2, 13, emphasis added*). *Is he saying, by the way, that four centuries of Lutheran communion services have been invalid?*

When "action" is accepted as a valid presupposition, everything is in place for errant doctrines, including insights from a discernible universal ritual pattern. According to Matthias Flacius, "the whole papacy is in the canon" (Widder den Auszug des Leiszischen Interims, oder das kleine Interim (*Magdeburg: Christian Lotter, 1549*), *B ij r*). *One of the most important errant teachings is the recently-developed Roman Catholic doctrine of "re-presentation," which has sent five hundred years of Lutheran objections against sacrificing Christ again to the scrap heap. By means of re-presentation—so goes the argument (with the help of "mystery theology" imported from pagan Greece)—the action of the eucharist is identical with the action at Calvary. Time is somehow canceled out, and the believer at mass is at Calvary. Thanks to his membership in the body of Christ, worse still, the believer's self-sacrifice is part of Christ's action. The unavoidable—and unacceptable—logical conclusion is that the believer participates in the atonement.*

Lutherans are well-advised to observe the statement in the international discussion with the Roman Catholics on the mass, that Christ's sacrifice and our self-sacrifice should be kept strictly apart. We are quite good at analyzing doctrinal statements; to deal with strange doctrines developed in the unaccustomed arena of the liturgical movement, we have to practice what can be called "ritual hermeneutics," the analysis of the intrinsic meaning.

Nor should we be persuaded that catholicity is established by counting noses, which seems to be Klein's presupposition when he invokes a ritual "as universal as any usage can get," and when he denies catholicity to the Lutheran Church while granting it to the Roman, Greek, and Oriental (monophysite?) churches. No matter how multitudinous the noses of those who read their various canons, however, when their ritual is the matrix for the notion that the church is the initiator of the sacrament, they are in error. The catholic interpretation is that the mass is God's testament to us.

He may be right that prayers of thanksgiving were universal in the ancient church. Like the Council of Trent, he refers to evidence from the fourth century and the (much less conclusive) evidence from the third. Parts of the prayer, Klein argues (in the fashion of Trent), "can be traced to the formularies of the fourth and even late third centuries."

But he may also be wrong. What about the first and second centuries? The standard Lutheran argument is that we don't know. We have to choose between tradition and the Bible. To assume (as Roman Catholics do) that the development up to the fourth century (at a time which produced egregious doctrinal errors!) was fully reliable, is not advisable. Luther was guided by his watchword: sola scriptura. *All we know about the completeness of the sacrament is given to us in the four biblical accounts. "On them we must rest, on them we must build as on a firm rock if we would not be carried about with every wind of doctrine . . . . For in these words nothing is omitted that pertains to the completeness, the use, and the blessing of the sacrament"* (*AE, 36: 37*). *Pastor Klein has something else to say about the matter of "completeness," that "the mass without a full great thanksgiving is not fully the mass"* (Ad Fontes [*1988*]: *3.*). *Whom shall we believe, Leonard Klein or Martin Luther?*

A controversy against someone else would be more satisfactory, since Klein sometimes (when he agrees with Luther) gets things thunderously right. It was he, to name a shining example, in the matter of the homosexual ordinations in California, who admonished the bishops to turn from their mutterings about "ELCA policy" and to dare say "thus saith the Lord!" But what are we to think when a Lutheran pastor calls agreement with Luther "polemical excess"? He, in fact, is claiming higher ground than Luther occupied, superior insight. But his appeal to the authority of "liturgical study in general and biblical exegesis," is, of course, inadequate. For one thing, that "Christ's command to give thanks with bread and cup and to do so 'for the remembrance of me' could and can be read no other way" is exegetically inaccurate. The command binds us primarily to remember (*by eating and drinking!*), *not to give thanks. "Thy testamental cup I take," goes the hymn, "And thus remember Thee." Not the least important aspect of the controversy is the* exact *meaning of the words "this do."*

Nor is an appeal to "liturgical study in general" impressive when one considers that much of liturgical study has been done by those bound not to impartial scholarship, but—by Eastern and Western ordination vows—to the primacy of "action."

The historic arguments for the Lutheran position are, in fact, extensive and persuasive. It is unfortunate that not only do we have a legacy of simplistic misunderstanding of the word adiaphoron, *but also that, having abandoned the study of Latin and other European languages, our notions about the liturgy are being shaped to a large extent by articles and books in English, mostly by writers from other traditions. My article about the controversy between Cardinal Bellarmine and Superintendent Chemnitz is an attempt to recall just one episode from the Lutheran past.*

Since the controversy on the ritual direction of the liturgy has not taken place, there can hardly be any talk of a "rear-guard action." That lay people who have never heard anything about the old controversy approved of the eucharistic prayer during the August ELCA assembly is hardly conclusive, nor is their decision to be taken seriously as authoritative. (Did anyone inform the delegates in Philadelphia that they were voting against Luther?) For us as a church, rather, to reassess the liturgical doctrine honestly, it is necessary to make up for years of neglect, and to resurrect the old discussion from Latin and from other European languages.

For one thing, Pastor Klein cannot claim Melanchthon's authority. Like Klein, Melanchthon believed that the matter was critical, so critical, in fact, that it should be referred to an ecumenical council. "In the canon there are still some very difficult and highly important disputations . . . indeed, in a proper council, it will be the most important matter" (Corpus Reformatorum, *VII, 214*). *He even claimed that by hindering the introduction of the eucharistic prayer he had saved the Reformation. In the fall of 1549 he reported with relief that the Reformation doctrine had been preserved "because the contention concerning the mass and the eucharistic prayer is postponed for further consideration"* (CR, *VII, 292.*). *The discussion at that time, be it noted, was not about the Roman canon, but about a text revised under Protestant auspices to eliminate sacrificial language. Melanchthon insisted that in the Lutheran orders all essential parts of the mass had been retained: consecration, distribution, reception, prayer for forgiveness, and thanksgiving. By "thanksgiving," it should be noted, Melanchthon did not mean a eucharistic prayer, but rather the collect of thanksgiving. The canon of the mass, he wrote, was "something that could not be accepted without impropriety"* (CR, *VII, 297*).

Reviews

"It is not many books that make men learned . . . but it is a good book frequently read."
Martin Luther

Review Essay

Bioethics: A Primer for Christians. By Gilbert Meilaender. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996.

Bioethics is an important issue because it strikes at the core of religion: what is the meaning of life? It is not an esoteric topic that the laity can leave to theologians to debate: steadily increasing numbers of families have to make difficult decisions about how new life is to brought into the world, or how loved ones ought to be ushered from this world. As we approach the millennium, it becomes increasingly rare that these issues do not involve medical technology. Yet bioethics as a discipline has a short history, perhaps thirty years. But it draws ever-increasing attention from the church, driven as the ethical problems are by the accelerating pace of technological advances in human ability to manipulate life. Although the issues focus on the very meaning of human existence, the field has largely developed outside of the influence of Christian institutions. Few of the journals, organizations, or degree programs in the discipline are sponsored by religious organizations, and few address the issues from particular religious perspectives. Because many of the issues involve technologies and dilemmas that are not explicitly addressed in the Bible, it may not be clear to many if there even are distinctly Christian ways of considering issues like organ transplantation, artificial reproduction, gene therapy, living wills, and so on. Even when Christian positions have clear historical and scriptural bases regarding practices like abortion and euthanasia, technological advances have muddied the waters surrounding these issues.

To clarify these murky waters, Gilbert Meilaender adds some alum in the form of his new book, *Bioethics: A Primer for Christians.* This short book is intended to help Christians recognize that there *are* distinctively Christian ways of approaching the dilemmas created by advances in medical technology and that the Christian vision of bioethics is frequently at odds in fundamental ways with the imperatives of contemporary Western culture. Meilaender taught at Oberlin College for nearly twenty years before moving recently to Valparaiso University, where he holds the Board of Directors chair in Theological Ethics. He is a regular contributor on the subject of bioethics to both conservative (such as *First Things*) and mainline (such as *Christian Century*) publications. Thus he tries with his writing to bridge the gaps between scholarly and lay audiences, and between conservative and liberal theological camps. Though he writes from an orthodox Lutheran perspective, in this book he addresses Christians generally (though he notes that he takes stands with which not all Christians will agree). Although he is focused on a Christian audience, he invites non-Christians to "listen in" on the discussion.

The book consists of eleven chapters plus an introduction, and can be divided into roughly four sections: an introduction to the Christian view of the meaning of life; a series of chapters addressing topics related to the genesis of life (artificial reproduction, abortion, gene therapy, and prenatal screening); chapters on end of life issues (suicide and euthanasia, refusal of medical treatment, determination of who decides the course of treatment for the patient, and organ donation); and a final set of chapters regarding medical research and the purpose of medicine. The book might have been more descriptively entitled "Medical Ethics" as the list of topics covered excludes non-medical bioethical issues such as animal rights, agricultural and environmental ethics, intellectual property (such as patenting genes and life forms), genetic engineering in production of food and pharmaceuticals, transgenic animals, and so on. But perhaps any "primer" can be criticized on the basis of what it does not cover. By focusing his attention on topics directly related to human life, Meilaender is able to emphasize a thematic unity that enables the reader to see how the use of a few key principles derived from widely accepted Christian doctrines can help one deal with a whole series of problems in a self-consistent way.

G. E. Veith has argued that the view of ethics as transcendent principles has been largely supplanted in contemporary culture in favor of a stew of utilitarian ethics (what is useful; what gives tangible results), autonomous ethics (what provides self-fulfillment or quality of life), and existentialism (construction of meaning to life via free choices), all mixed together with little regard for intellectual cohesiveness using the spatula of cultural relativism.[1] While Meilaender does not make this argument explicitly, similar concepts repeatedly arise as he shows that a Christian concept of bioethics is frequently at odds with the secular *Zeitgeist.*

The following appear to be the key principles by which Meilaender thinks Christians ought to evaluate a bioethical

dilemma or new medical technology. One is our need to accept ourselves as finite creatures subject to the limitations God has placed upon us. Another is our recognition of the intrinsic value to God and to the community of each life, regardless of ability or accomplishment. A third is the realization that we exist within the context of human societies, with obligations as well as rights. Meilaender further insists that we must also avoid an intellectual separation of person and body that makes the body into a mere thing to be manipulated. Finally, that Christians cannot fall prey to the notion that there can ever be technological rescues from our fates as sinners in a fallen world—fates that include suffering and illness as well as death.

Since technology is devoted to overcoming human limitations, and many of the contemporary bioethical questions are driven by advances in technology, it is not surprising that much of the book is devoted to attempts to define ethical limits. Since unrestricted freedom is one of America's most cherished values, I can argue that the concept of limits is where the Christian ethic may be most at odds with the ethic of American culture (though there are also important differences between Christian and secular views of individual worth, and the individual's relationship to society, that contribute to their divergence on bioethical issues). In the Christian view, we are not given our lives to do with as we please; rather, we are given our lives to enter a relationship with God, subject to God's will, not ours. The idea of voluntarily subjugating ourselves to the limits placed upon us by another is an idea that our society finds not simply objectionable, but incomprehensibly strange! But the seeming freedom that new technologies can give—the ability to identify and possibly cure genetic diseases, for example—also burdens us with greater responsibilities. Meilaender recognizes that if life can be created or modified to meet human objectives, then the human creators can and will be held responsible for the outcomes of such exertions of the human will. This reality is not new, of course; since the Garden of Eden, new knowledge and new freedoms have carried new burdens. Not that all new technologies or the responsibilities that come with them are to be avoided, but that technological advances are not without their problems, and that voluntary acceptance of limits with regard to what we *ought* to do as opposed to what we *can* do is not without its benefits. The alternative to voluntary, ethical limits is, as Meilaender notes, "the tyranny of the possible, the pressure to assume that we are obligated to do whatever we are able to do" (93).

One example of the limits to which Meilaender perceives Christians to be subject is with regard to germ cell gene therapy. This is the deliberate modification of the genes in reproductive cells, thereby altering all future generations of one's offspring. The potential benefits of germ cell therapy are unambiguous: permanent elimination of genetic defects and the perpetuation of desirable traits. The problem is that this treatment makes humanity the patient, rather than an individual. In its nature, Meilaender sees germ cell therapy as a conceit that we are capable of self-creation without limits. By its very nature, gene therapy denies that individuals have value as they are. In fact, it can be seen as the ultimate case of parental interference in the lives of their children. Yet Freeman Dyson, noted physicist and writer on the relationships between science and society, believes that humanity will be unable to resist taking advantage of the ability to "improve" itself genetically.[2] If so, the implications of Christian rejection of gene therapy may become profound, as society at large may refuse care (via denial of insurance or other benefits) to "defective" humans conceived in defiance of secular norms.

Such limits arise again in the area of artificial reproductive technology. Meilaender emphasizes the idea that conception of children ought to be thought of in terms of procreation or begetting, not reproduction. A person begotten is fully equal in terms of intrinsic value and dignity to the parents whose relationship brings that person into existence, whereas a reproduction owes its existence to the deliberate decision and will of the one(s) who decided to create it. Meilaender insists that no one ought to be able to say to another, "I created you." He does not see as a mere linguistic artifact the fact that procreation or begetting are the biblical descriptions of the relationship between parents and children, or that the Nicene Creed explicitly defines the relationship of the Son to the Father as "begotten, not made." Children must not be thought of as creatures designed to fulfill the desires of their parent(s) but as people who present themselves to us, asking for our care. While he does not believe that all human intervention in natural processes is wrong, he insists that there are lines to be drawn. And just because such boundaries are difficult to find does not mean that we should not try to define them (an argument he uses throughout the book). He notes that desire for children by infertile couples is not wrong, but that infertility could be taken as a sign that God is directing them in another direction of service. The key point is that we are not to think of procreation as either a "right" or an exercise in self-fulfillment or self-expression.

Perhaps the most surprising argument for limits Meilaender makes is with regard to organ transplantation. Organ transplantation is widely considered an unqualified good, a way of creating something good out of death. To Meilaender, such a view usurps God's role in making life meaningful and in its assumption that life is the ultimate good. Do we in fact have the freedom to decide how to use our deaths to the benefit of others? Because of the idea that we are limited creatures responsible to God first and humans second, Meilaender thinks that the Christian probably ought to say no. He has serious misgivings about considering the body as a repository of useful parts to be swapped according to human definitions of goodness or benefit—a "noble form of cannibalism," to use the arresting phrase he takes from Leon Kass. Such a view flies in the face of "deep-seated notions of the sacredness of life *in the body*" (89, emphasis his), and is a view more compatible with non-Christian concepts of a mind/body dualism. While not rejecting this path, he suggests that Christians ought to reflect more deeply about the implications of unlimited organ donation. While this is not yet an argument convincingly made, in my opinion, he does give reason for pause in our society's unceasing efforts to thwart death, even to the extent of treating the body as a "useful pre-cadaver," to borrow a phrase from Paul Ramsey, another ethicist Meilaender quotes at several points (100).[3]

With regard to the abortion controversy, questions of limits, personhood, responsibility to others, and the definition of life become fused. While pro-choice advocates can list many benefits that accrue to the mother who terminates her pregnancy and support her right to make such a choice in any case, Meilaender considers these arguments foreign to the Christian ethic. He states that any perceived lack of clarity in Scripture regarding the wrongness of abortion is due more to societal pressures than Scripture itself. He discounts as dehumanizing the argument that a fetus is not a person and rejects the privacy argument as one that establishes the view that pregnancy and children are the province of women alone—an argument that ultimately relieves men of their responsibility in these matters. Still, there are difficulties in this area that confront orthodox Christians. While the Bible clearly values fetal life, it does not establish the precise point at which individual life begins. Meilaender outlines reasons to believe that personhood may begin somewhat later than fertilization—but not more than two weeks later. While this distinction has no bearing on the abortion of fetuses, it does affect contraception, experimentation on zygotes, and so on. He questions whether a mother ought to be required to sustain fetal life when it threatens her own life, or when it can be viewed as a continuation of an assault on the woman by another adult (as with rape or incest). She may willingly accept this burden and risk, but ought not be required to do so. The difficulties here, he explains, are that the mother-fetus bond is completely unique, and no adequate analogy can be drawn to understand it. In such cases, as in others illustrated in the book, we must continually struggle to bring our wills in line with God's even though this may mean shouldering burdens we did not ask for or choose to carry and the suffering they bring along. Again, we must learn to accept our limits.

Not unlike abortion, suicide and euthanasia turn on the questions of what gives life value, and how we are called to help the weakest members of our communities. Suicide and euthanasia also deny God's right to define our lives and that we are dependent beings. In the case of suicide the individual is making this statement, while in the case of euthanasia the society that accepts it is making this denial. Meilaender identifies two prongs in the arguments made in favor of human-induced death: self-determination and the relief of suffering. Their danger to societies is that even though they are packaged together they are easily uncoupled, and the classes of people to be killed inexorably expand from the suffering and dying to the inconvenient and undesirable. Neither premise can be justified from the Christian perspective. With regard to the premise of self-determination he notes that the point of death is a peculiar place to attempt to deny our limitations as created, finite beings. With regard to suffering he states that the Christian ethic is to maximize care, not to minimize suffering. While suffering is not a good or desirable thing (even Jesus in Gethsemane asked his Father for relief), God can use it for good; such examples certainly appear in Scripture, not the least of which is at the cross. In this context we must accept our status as created beings and recognize that what God asks of us is "to live out our personal histories—the stories of which God is the author—as faithfully as we can" (65). Most surely we must avoid the hope that medical technology can ever rescue us from death.

While seeking death is clearly wrong, seeking life at all costs or denying the inevitability of death are not Christian either. Thus refusal of treatment that might prolong life is not necessarily wrong; the distinction Meilaender makes is intent: is death the goal of the chosen path or simply the end result? This distinction is not necessarily an easy one to make (he offers soldiers on "suicidal" missions and Christian martyrs as analogies), but the key concepts are that treatment may be stopped when it is either useless or excessively burdensome. This raises the question of who makes the decision to stop treatment, especially when the patient is incapacitated. While historically this had been left up to the doctor, the current view in the medical establishment, driven by the concept of personal autonomy, is that the patient should decide. Again, Meilaender brings in the concepts of limits, dependence, and a concept of personhood that is independent of ability, to argue against pressing this view to accommodate use of living wills, through which the patient effectively tries to control his or her treatment from a condition of utter dependence. Rather, Meilaender favors a health care power of attorney that simply specifies the person to make the decision on behalf of the patient—to define the person upon whom he depends.

How are we to decide what are appropriate limits? This is rarely easy and is a decision that lends itself to dogmatic pronouncements, but Meilaender notes that these are issues that are best considered prior to any personal crisis that might force a poor decision under the circumstances.

> Whatever could be done we would be tempted to do, and we are therefore helpless in the face of the relentless advance of this technology . . . [we] need to develop the trust and the courage that will enable us sometimes to decline to do what medical technology makes possible. There are circumstances in which we can save life only by destroying the kind of world in which all should want to live. In learning to say no, in becoming people who give thanks for medical progress but do not worship it or place our trust in it, we may bear a different life-giving witness to the world (103).

As a Christian layman interested in bioethics and as a professor who trains students and carries out research in biomedical engineering, I found the most valuable aspects of this book to be not the specific conclusions or recommendations that Meilaender makes. Rather, it was his demonstration that a Christian can establish a set of theologically grounded principles for approaching difficult contemporary issues, and then try honestly to follow these principles to their conclusions, come what may. This contrasts with a common perception among many in society (including many of my students) that ethical reflection is simply a means of justifying whatever decision one has already made.

Thus I recommend the book to both pastors and laity, especially those who have not considered such issues deeply before—not as a book of answers to difficult questions, but as a means for learning to think about these questions. Because of

the rapid pace of change in this field, a book of "answers" could never stay current anyway. Even this book, while published in late 1996, does not address the hottest issue in bioethics of 1997: human cloning. Professor Meilaender could take the principles he laid out in this book regarding reproductive technology, however, and apply them directly to the cloning question, as he did in his address to the national Bioethics Advisory Commission.[4] Since questions in bioethics arise in each Christian's life in the most personal ways, and since dogmatic answers will rarely be available, training in ethical reflection is quite important in my opinion. The church cannot leave her members alone at the self-help bookshelf at the mall. Unfortunately, any Christian so inspired by this book will be hampered by its lack of a recommended reading list for further study; and with less than forty footnotes, few of them to other books on bioethics, Meilaender does leave those people hanging who are inspired to study these issues further. While I think he has been successful in presenting an internally consistent way to think about such issues, I think he has been less successful in providing arguments that can persuade skeptics that these issues are worth the effort they take to work through. But that, I think, is the subject of another book, or at least another essay.

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NOTES

1. Gene Edward Veith, "Living in a Post-Modern Age," Logia Tapes (1995).

2. Freeman Dyson, *Imagined Worlds* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).

3. Interestingly, this seems to be a case where careful bioethical thinking, rather than placing limits on technological development, actually provides an impetus to a particular line of research—that of the creation of bioartificial organs. In this research area (one in which I am active), the ultimate goal is to learn how to rebuild an organ using the patient's *own* cells. Were this technology to become widely successful, the need for organ donors would be greatly diminished.

4. Gilbert Meilaender, "Begetting and Cloning," *First Things,* no. 74 (June/July 1997): 41–43.

For All God's Worth. By N. T. Wright. Grand Rapids/Cambridge: William. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997. 136 pages. Paper.

What is true worship and the calling of the church? N. T. Wright says true worship is to worship God for all his worth and the calling of the church is to reflect God's image in the world. Wright says it's all about celebration and healing. "And so, as celebration leads to healing, healing leads back to celebration. It is all God's work; and those who find themselves called to it must, quite simply, 'serve God and be cheerful'" (22).

In the introduction Wright asks, "How can you cope with the end of the world and the beginning of another one? How can you put an earthquake into a test-tube, or the sea into a bottle? How can you live with the terrifying thought that the hurricane has become human, that fire has become flesh, that life itself came to life and walked in our midst?" (1). Wright says that "the way through is by sheer unadulterated worship of the living and true God, and by following God wherever he leads, whether or not it is the way our traditions would suggest" (1).

Throughout part 1, entitled "The God Who is Worthy of Praise," Wright emphasizes that reflection on what God has done in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ leads to true worship of God for all his worth. Wright says, "When we realize once again that our God is the one who loves us into new life, then we really know how to celebrate. True celebration, in turn, sustains true humanness. As we glimpse the living God, we are transformed into his likeness" (16).

In part 2, entitled "Reflecting God's Image in the World," Wright teaches that by holding to Christ in true worship you will imitate Christ and will bring the healing of Christ into the world. He says,

> What is our calling then? We are called, simply, to hold on to Christ and his cross with one hand, with all our might; and to hold on to those we are given to love with the other hand, with all our might, with courage, humor, self-abandonment, creativity, flair, tears, silence, sympathy, gentleness, flexibility, Christlikeness. When we find their tears becoming our own, we may know that healing has begun to happen; when they find Christ in being held on to by us, whether we realize it or not, we are proving the truth of what Paul said: God made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, so that in him we might embody the saving faithfulness of God (99).

What is true worship and the calling of the church? Is true worship, as Wright says, to give God all his worth, or is it confessing that Jesus Christ gives us all God's worth in and through the gospel? I submit that it's the latter. True worship begins with God, who gives us the love, life, forgiveness, and righteousness that Jesus won for us at the cross by way of the Holy Spirit working through the Word. True worship is not simply reflection and action based on what the Lord has done, but it is reception and confession of his gifts given in the gospel.

Wright talks about the Holy Spirit's implementing what Christ has achieved, but not by way of the gospel. He says it is through us who reflect on the gospel. "And, as St. Paul insists, the God who sent the Son is the God who sends the Spirit of the Son, to put into practice, to implement, what the Son achieved." Wright does not speak of the Word as the very means by which we receive what Jesus accomplished for us at the cross. For him, we are the means by engaging in worship. "The Spirit does it by dwelling within Christians and enabling them to stand, in prayer and suffering, at the place of pain" (30). Wright says again and again that it is all God's work, but then leaves it up to us!

What is the calling of the church? Is the calling of the church, as Wright implies, simply to come together, to get along, and to be overwhelmed by love, or, is it faithfully to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ? It is the latter, because it is by way of the

gospel that the Lord makes us one with him and each other through the forgiveness of sins. For Wright, however, unity and love do not come by way of the Lord's word in repentance and faith, but by our showing the love God showed us. God's word and sacrament for Wright are to be seen as symbols, or signposts of what we are to do in the world, instead of the very means by which we receive salvation. He says, "Galatians 2 gives us, therefore, not just a truth to glimpse but an agenda to act upon. The way forward is unlikely to be merely a matter of doctrinal definition. It will mean going wider, into the world that, properly understood, doctrine reveals: the world of symbol and praxis" (109). As a result, he uses Galatians 2 to justify his saying that there is not "anything that should keep us from full and glad eucharistic fellowship" (110). "Paul does not want the Galatians to wait until they have agreed on all doctrinal arguments before they can sit down and eat together. Not to eat together is to get the answer wrong" (109). For Wright, what makes us one is not the gospel, the Lord's very body and blood given and shed for the forgiveness of sins, but our love for one another.

I do not recommend this book; I believe Wright is wrong. Our salvation comes not by our cheerful service of God, but by God's service to us through the gospel of Jesus Christ. Reception and confession of the gifts given in the gospel is the true worship and calling of the church.

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Augsburg Today: This We Believe, Teach, and Confess. Edited by David L. Mahsman. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1997. 119 pages. Cloth.

One of the useful sermon or Bible class illustrations to be mined from this resource comes in Chapter 2, written by the Reverend Joel Lehenbauer, Assistant Director of the LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations. In his commentary of Articles 2 and 19 of the Magna Carta of our faith, Lehenbauer relates the story of a man who, when attending church for the first time, turns to his neighbor in the pew and whispers, "What's this business of 'sin' the pastor keeps talking about?" "I think it's something to do with Adam and Eve," comes the friendly reply. "Oh," concludes the first-time worshiper (his countenance marked by a smile of relief), "then it doesn't have anything to do with us."

Of course, upon completion of adult catechesis, this man would think back to his initial answer and wonder how he could have ever said such a thing. Through the faithful teaching of his pastor, this gentleman would come to understand that "no event in history has ever had more to do with us than the sin of our first parents" (27).

Spotlighting the Augsburg Confession's articles of faith and doctrine are fifteen authors, among whom are Missouri Synod District President Dr. Richard Kapfer (Article v), Dr. David Scaer (Article xvii), and other LCMS seminary professors, and Rev. John Pless (Articles xi and xii), whose decade-plus faithfulness in the campus ministry setting has helped steer men to our seminaries and mold countless appreciative, unadulterated Lutheran laity. Each brings a welcome peal of confessionalism blended with contemporary insights. The church is indebted to the Rev. David L. Mahsman, Executive Editor of *The Lutheran Witness,* for putting in study-guide form the collection of essays devoted to Articles i–xi, originally written for and appearing in the *Witness's* series "We Believe, Teach, And Confess" (January 1995–May 1996).

Mahsman, himself the author of two of the essays, refers to the "'new' quest for spiritual satisfaction" in his Introduction to *Augsburg Today,* adding that it "ought come as no surprise." Anyone who doubts this is a "pick-and-choose" or "cook-up-a-personal-religion" world should be in a league with those who are surprised that the death of the princess dominated the news. Anyone who has been deceived or knows one who has been left empty or uncertain after pushing away from the world's table of delights will be led to rejoice in the true and eternal satisfaction that God reveals to us through Holy Scripture, his Word of truth. Pastors who are not challenged to introduce this book in adult instruction and Bible Classes ought not be surprised if they have some members questioning the Augsburg Confession's faithfulness to Holy Scripture or remaining in the dark as to its content.

Students or readers will appreciate the ready reference of the text of the Preface and Articles i–xi included in the forefront of the book. This study guide includes questions for reflection and discussion drawn from the treatment of the articles, supplied by four parish pastors who give evidence of their experience in leading many to a deep understanding of Lutheran faith, catholicity, and the gospel. Keeping classes and Christ's flock faithful to the good deposit of Lutheran doctrine and life are the answers and comments to these questions on the last twelve pages of the book.

Both catechist and catechumen for whom these brief chapters whet the appetite for further study will benefit from the suggested reading of the Scriptures, selected portions of the Small Catechism, and other supplemental sources.

This book, used and savored, will bring edification to God's people and guide us to praise the glory of his name today and tomorrow.

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Luke 1:1–9:50. By Arthur A. Just Jr. St. Louis: CPH, 1996. 416 pages. Hardcover.

It was indeed a joy to read the announcement of the Concordia Commentary Series, especially when those involved in the project were identified. With anticipation I awaited the arrival of the first volume in the series, *Luke 1:1–9:50,* by Rev. Dr. Arthur Just. At the outset two things must be said. The reading of this first Lukan volume causes eager anticipation of the second volume. If this is setting the pace for the whole of

the Concordia Commentary, the price and the wait will be justified and Christ's church richly blessed.

As Dr. Just proceeds, one cannot help but see that a proper understanding of St. Luke will be more than a historical quest, since the Gospel addresses concerns of the church in every age. Seriously read, it will give pause to those who have embarked on "contemporary pursuits" with regard to the doctrine and liturgy of the church. The "pattern of sound teaching" of which St. Paul speaks is evident in this volume from beginning to end.

Dr. Just's Introduction could stand by itself. It provides a wealth of information as it instructs us in seeing that Luke is a book of the church, a book that is catechetical in nature, and a book that indeed assumes and instructs the catechumen in the way of Christ which flows from him as the catechumen receives his gracious gifts in the Divine Service and within his church. The whole of the Introduction is creedal in nature and moves beyond sterile analysis to the vibrant life of those within the body of Christ. In this sense, the commentary is somewhat unique, since it is set in the midst of the church. It does not purport to deal with Luke apart from the church in which it is to be used. Thus the introduction goes beyond the usual topics of date, place, time, and author, and speaks of the place of Luke's Gospel in the early church and what it says regarding life in that community.

The Gospel, then, is used in the making of Christians. It is used within the worshiping community to move people to and from baptism and to incorporate them into the body of Christ at the table of the Lord. The very language used moves in the face of certain contemporary trends and theologies that would make liturgy and catechesis subject to the whim of the current society. Evangelization is accomplished through catechization, the preaching and teaching of the Word. One mark of the "success" of such catechesis is that the assembly of the faithful as catechumens are gathered with them to receive the body and blood of Christ.

The gifts received in such gathering do indeed strengthen the believers in faith toward God and in love toward the neighbor. Gone are the faulty contemporary concepts of evangelism, worship, and assimilation, not to mention the idea that statistics are a measure of success for such endeavors. It is this reviewer's opinion that we would be best served not to use the terminology of evangelicalism and American Protestantism, and that we should most certainly not fall into the trap of measuring the success of the word by how we are doing in comparison with other American denominations.

With the obvious focus on the gathering of the catechumens and the baptized communicants in the Divine Service, Dr. Just's tracing in diagrammatic form of the development of the church is interesting and helpful. It demonstrates the development of the church from the ministry of Jesus to the layout of churches in this century and traces the move from the "house church" of Luke's time. In parallel fashion, it traces the gathering from table fellowship to the eucharistic table fellowship of our day with its Service of the Word and eucharistic setting (6).

The Christian life is marked in three major stages: separation, transition, and incorporation. Separation begins when one hears the gospel and is "called by the Holy Spirit." The person receives the message that Jesus is the way and the truth and the life, and comes to know that this new way calls for separation from the sinful practice of natural man. This new life is understood in the light of the unified revelation of the Old and New Testaments. The catechesis that takes place is christological in instruction and in the lifestyle that comes about.

The transition takes place at the moment of baptism as God kills and makes alive. Baptism is death to the old world and resurrection to the new. Baptism of infants marks both separation and transition.

Incorporation comes primarily in the Lord's Supper. The baptized continue to be nourished and sustained in the holy supper, where they are "sanctified and kept in the one true faith." The supper is also the table fellowship, the place where Christ joins his body together now and forever.

> This passage that involves *separation/catechesis, transition/Baptism, and incorporation/Supper*, may be called Christian initiation. The process of evangelization that sent the church into the highways and the byways to seek the lost (Luke 14) and proclaim the Gospel of release (Luke 4) had as its goal the enrollment into the process of initiation that begins with catechesis and climaxes with Baptism and Supper. *The rhythm of the early Christian communities was the rhythm of evangelization, catechesis, Baptism, and Supper. This pattern was established by the earthly ministry of Christ himself, in fulfillment of the pattern of the OT* (9).

It is not at all unreasonable to suggest that the pattern established in the early church and demonstrated in the New Testament was the only way that the church continued as it "made Christians." Due to the conservative nature of liturgical and catechetical documents, Dr. Just sees reason to believe that what is present in the second and third centuries sheds light on what was done in the first century (9). The pattern remains.

The word *catechumen* is used throughout the commentary in the broad sense of "believers."

> The use of the word "catechumens" intends to reflect that all believers, those not yet and those already baptized, "echo" the teaching of Jesus in their confession and witness. The baptized are members of a lifelong catechumenate as they daily die and rise in Christ (13).

This emphasis is helpful as the church near the end of the twentieth century seeks its way. Its way does not change, nor does the gospel, just because the society and circumstance continually evolve. Dr. Just's contention at this point will indeed challenge much thinking in our ecumenical, pluralistic, and relativistic day.

Two audiences of Luke's Gospel are described. The first audience is comprised of the twelve, the seventy (-two), the crowds/people, and the religious establishment—in other words, those actually present for the historical events in the Gospel. This first audience never understands the gospel until the end of the story. They do not understand until after the resurrection and Pentecost (13).

> The second audience is the community of believers who received Luke's gospel. It is composed of catechumens: both those preparing for baptism and those already baptized, who continue to be catechized and who commune with Christ in the Eucharist. These are liturgical Christians who are living in a eucharistic community. They receive and use Luke's gospel in the context of liturgy as part of the Liturgy of the Word, along with reading from the OT and other NT documents. The difference between the first and second audiences is that Luke's eucharistic community of catechumens *know the end of the story*—they know that Christ has gone to the cross risen, ascended and that after Pentecost he is continually present in the church through his Spirit. Jesus' presence in both his human and divine natures is just as real in his church now as it was in his earthly ministry. It is a *real presence* in body as well as in spirit. It comes through the proclamation of the Word and the administration of the Lord's Supper (14).

Just further defines his terms:

> Thus, a catechumen among this second audience includes any hearer of the Word, whether baptized or unbaptized. "Hearers of the Word" became a technical term for catechumens in the third century (Hippolytus' Apostolic Tradition). When used in reference to Luke's church (c.a. A.D. 60), it includes all catechumens—both those preparing for baptism and the baptized, who hear the Word in preparation to receive the Sacrament (15).

In a discussion of the periods of evangelization in the first century, Just enumerates five: the first, A.D. 28–30 includes Jesus' ministry; the second, A.D. 30–46, includes the Jewish ministry by Peter (Acts 1–12); the third, A.D. 46–58, is the Gentile mission of Paul (Acts 13–28); the fourth, A.D. 58–70, is marked with established congregations (Captivity Letters); and the fifth, A.D. 70–100, is the Post-Temple Church. During these periods the church moved from a relatively small group around Jesus, through the house churches, and finally into larger congregations that were modeled on the earlier periods. Of special interest is the notation by Dr. Just that the significant numbers of Acts are found in the mission to the Jews—for whom Jesus was the culmination of catechesis begun in the Old Testament. In the second half of Acts one no longer finds such emphasis—in fact, just the opposite, as the lengths of time that Paul spent in various places are noted. With the Jews the catechesis was half-done; but with Gentiles one began at the beginning. One could legitimately describe every hearer of Luke's Gospel from the first century as part of a group who "knows the end of the story," but who are part of that life-long catechumenate. The catechesis of those in the present day may be long and thankless: its success is finally and only the work of the Holy Spirit, who alone can "call by the gospel" and "enlighten with his gifts," of which Luke is part.

As the commentary continues, several motifs that run through the Gospel are noted. In this way justice is done to the context and historical setting of the original as the author seeks to consider fully the first-century hearer's understanding of Lukan themes. Luke makes it clear that this book is a narrative with the specific end of informing and bringing the hearer to faith in Jesus Christ. Reading in that fashion, the hearer is alert to changes in theme and motif. In his introduction, Dr. Just spends time with motifs of the journey, the prophet, and table fellowship and real presence. In other excurses he deals with the infancy narrative, baptism in Luke-Acts, prophet Christology, the opponents of Jesus, Jesus' table fellowship, the Lukan beatitudes, the travel narrative, and the Old Testament witness to Christ. With the exception of the three covered in the introduction, the rest are placed in appropriate places throughout the book. Each excursus and each definition and discussion of the various motifs provides a great deal of food for thought. In the course of these discussions and within textual commentary, catechetical and confessional themes are noted or readily seen.

The Gospel of Luke was written for a specific purpose. For that reason, Dr. Just also pays particular attention not only to the macrostructure of the Gospel but also to the microstructure. He says:

> This commentary will regularly offer the reader a microstructure of a passage. Some of these will be more elaborate than others, but all are intended to assist the reader in discerning the meaning of Luke's text. *For the preacher,* such attention to the text's structure may be the first step toward a sermon outline, since the structure of the evangelist's text may be a proper vehicle for the preacher's message. The search for biblical preaching has led many to suggest letting the structure of the sermon imitate the structure of the text. Thus the logical flow of the text will be the flow of the sermon, combining exposition, interpretation of theological significance, and application as the story of the text unfolds. Instead of a propositional approach in which the text is rearranged into a logical structure, the sermon progresses as naturally as the text does, and it includes the text's idiosyncratic tendencies that are common to human language and speech (32).

The theological themes of the commentary are summed up by Dr. Just: "To sum up the theological themes of this commentary: The Lord (*Christology*) is present (*sacramentology*) in his church (*ecclesiology*) both now and not yet (*eschatology*)" (3). The whole of the book runs in the way of inaugurated eschatology. To that end, the commentary provides a fresh translation of the Greek, textual notes, and then commentary for each of the sections of the book of Luke.

This volume will be a valuable addition to the pastor's bookshelf, and should find regular use as he administers gospel and sacraments. It would also be an excellent text in the seminary classroom. The commentary is indeed solidly confessional and christological, and goes beyond the academic in its approach. It bridges the mythical gap between what is theological and what is practical—a false distinction all too often noised about. It is

an ecumenical volume in that it seeks the truth that frees, and it will speak to the whole of the church the gospel of Jesus Christ in order that all might know him, die in him, and rise up with him to all eternity.

This is a marvelous volume. We look forward to the second Lukan volume, and even more, we look forward to hearing from Dr. Arthur Just in other arenas.

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The Mystery of Romans: The Jewish Context of Paul's Letter. By Mark D. Nanos. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996. 435 pages. Paper.

Over a decade ago James Dunn announced the arrival of a "new perspective" among scholars concerning Paul's view of the law ("The New Perspective on Paul," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 65 [1983]: 95–122). This new perspective has emphasized that first-century Judaism was not a legalistic religion that called for obedience to the law as the means of salvation. Many holding to this perspective have also argued that Paul's concern with the law, especially in Galatians and Romans, centered on the Jewish (or Jewish-Christian) requirement for Gentiles to obey the ceremonial law of the Old Testament in order to be considered part of the covenantal people. Therefore, more scholars are steering away from the traditional reformation emphasis that the doctrine of justification by faith is central to this epistle and are focusing more on the continuity of Paul's teaching of the law with that of first-century Judaism. This volume by Mark Nanos is another in the growing number of works since E. P. Sander's *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (1977) that testify to how this understanding has taken hold and is becoming the pervasive perspective among Pauline scholars.

Nanos's contribution to the "new perspective" discussion lies in his central thesis that Paul wrote Romans to correct a growing lack of concern and understanding among Gentile Christians in Rome about "their inherit responsibility to the Law and to the Jewish people" (35). To be more specific, he asserts that the so-called mystery of Romans is revealed when the reader realizes that Paul was confronting a "Christian-gentile exclusivism" that downplayed the use of the Noahide commandments as outlined in the Apostolic Decree and regarded the non-Christian Jews as excluded from God's purpose because they had been replaced by the church. One of the pillars supporting his thesis is the priority of the Jewish mission in Paul's two-step missiology as discussed in Romans and illustrated in Acts: "To the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom 1:16). Nanos places much emphasis on the salvation of "all Israel" in Romans 9–11 and the "obedience of faith" for which Paul calls (Rom 16:26). Nanos's focus on Paul's concern for the Jews even leads him to argue that the "weak" of Romans 14:1–15:12 were non-Christian Jews. Brief appendices on the light that Galatians sheds upon Romans and the problems of reading this epistle through the lens of the *Edict of Claudius* conclude the volume.

Two positive things can be said about this study. First, unlike many scholars, Nanos demonstrates a genuine appreciation and use of the data from Acts as reflection of the historical situation. He gives a very sympathetic reading of the events of the Apostolic Council. Second, Nanos exhibits a deep concern for the Jewish setting of Paul's theology. He gathered together helpful information on the historical situation, especially concerning Jewish synagogues in Rome and Paul's ongoing concern for the Jewish community. He does, however, overstate the common life that Christians shared with non-Christian Jews. This is visible in statements like these: "Early Christians had no concept of their faith apart from association with the Jewish synagogue" (72); "the Romans 13 instructions may have been directed to Christian gentiles who needed to be reminded about subordinating themselves to the governing authorities of the synagogues to which they were attached; Meetings in Christian homes 'took place under the authority of the synagogue'"(333); "Paul did not see faith in Jesus Christ as a break with Israel and his fellow Jews of the Diaspora" (111); "and Jews that are hardened are suffering, but will not be destroyed" (260).

There is much in this volume that will make Lutherans uncomfortable. Far from emphasizing the centrality of justification by faith, Nanos persistently argues that Romans was written to remind these Gentile Christians of the importance of their "obedience of faith." This dominant focus on the law is epitomized by the following assertion:

> Romans is rather a call to the newly believing Christian gentiles of Rome to recognize the preeminent place of Israel . . . and thus the importance of the obligation incumbent upon these gentiles to obey the Judaic norms of righteousness and purity in their new faith as they associate with the Jews of Rome (38).

Nanos cautions his readers about falling into "Luther's trap" by interpreting Romans as proclaiming a "law-free gospel" (337). Here he misreads Luther's passionate distinction between law and gospel as a rejection of the ongoing relevance of the moral law in the lives of Christians, both Jewish and Gentile.

In his zealous emphasis on Paul as a Torah-observant Jew, Nanos spends far too little time with the christological content of Romans. This means that his articulation of the "mystery of Romans" is woefully lacking the very gospel that dominates this epistle and led to the significant role it has played in the church, especially during the Reformation. Therefore, this interpretation of Romans contains both a new and disturbing perspective. If the reader wants to probe further the questions raised by this "new perspective" on Paul's view of the law, I recommend reading Thomas Schreiner's *The Law and Its Fulfillment* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), which is, unfortunately, now out of print.

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The Revolt. By S. Wise Bauer. Dallas: Word, 1996. $12.99.

The Revolt is a novel that asks the question, Just what would a viable, working theonomic government look like if theonomy had legs, not just the theoretic shell of wishful thinking? Like most wishes-come-true, the reality takes on the garb of a nightmare.

The protagonist, Dr. Kenneth Balder, founder of the California Institute for Theonomic Law, has constructed a model justice system that Charles Merriman, governor of Virginia, intends to implement, a system of civil law based on the Ten Commandments. To do this, Merriman leads Virginia to secede from the United States. Merriman justifies this action on the presupposition that the United States Constitution is flawed at its foundation. The innate Enlightenment goodness of man, so Merriman's reasoning goes, is that stillborn document's point of departure. Balder becomes Merriman's chief of staff. Of course, a major selling point for the Virginia public is the abolition of those ever-increasing and oppressive U.S. taxes in favor of a flat nine percent income tax. It's a time-honored American tradition: Any tax we can't vote away is oppressive. To Balder's credit, however, the tax rate is small motivation to him. He is more concerned with moral justice, mercy, and accountability, though he is frighteningly capable of applying those standards rigorously.

Matters run awry early on. North Carolina quickly joins the secession, with the possibility that Tennessee, Kentucky, and West Virginia might come along, all states that have suffered from the federal government's hostility to the tobacco industry. Merriman quickly turns out to be vulnerable to the expediency of popular opinion, and this creates a sense of foreboding in Balder.

The real crisis, however, comes when a strict application of theonomic law puts Balder between a rock and a hard place in his personal life. The theonomic state fails to be the hopeful, manageable paradise because it is no better than the depraved people who run it, including himself. For Balder, it turns into the severe crucible of personal sanctification. As he plumbs the depths of the law in quest for its civic efficacy, it bites him like a lurking snake, convicting him of sin, showing him personal sin otherwise well camouflaged in the rank undergrowth of his tidy systems of thought.

It's an old problem, the confusion of the first and third uses of the law. Towering figures in church history have been bedeviled by it from Leo the Great to Gregory the Great to Ulrich Zwingli (who paid for his misunderstanding with his life on the battlefield). Calvin seems to have been unable to fully mitigate against this effect of Zwingli on the Reformed faith, for we find our New England Puritan forefathers and their "Shining City upon a Hill" making the same mistake of confusing the first and third uses of the Law. Michael Horton has so poignantly noted that within three generations, this New Jerusalem in Massachusetts was becoming a Unitarian cesspool (Michael Scott Horton, *Made in America* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 15–27). The only way one can stir the first and third uses of the law together in the same pot is to discount human depravity.

Ironically, in Jesus' first major sermon, he deals with two of the Ten Commandments (murder and adultery), but he only treats the heart, that is, unleashes the convicting power of the law, for out of the heart are the issues of life. We would do well to prioritize our understanding of the law the way our Lord does. In this way all three uses would retain their full power. Did Jesus delegate power and authority to us? Certainly! We must speak comfortably to Jerusalem with the flabbergasting news that she has received a double reward from the hand of the Lord in place of her (our) sin. But as for the sword, can there be any ambiguity to the command, "Put away your sword, Peter?"

Systems of theology (especially eschatology) have tracked with the general public outlook down through history. In the late nineteenth century, postmillennialism was in great vogue while the sun never set on the British Empire. Things never looked rosier. By contrast, consider the high fashion of premillennial dispensationalism at the apex of the Cold War. ("Will Russia invade Israel?") In the same way, theonomy is a theological system peculiarly suited to the sentiments of our time. We are worried and angry, mad as hornets, and this time it's not a Cold War threat. No, it seems our own government is foisting a heavy tax load on us. It is poisoning the minds of our children in public schools. It is fostering a burgeoning prison culture. It is using our tax dollars to murder unborn children, and it is aiding and abetting sloth with a welfare state. Doesn't it make sense to replace such a decadent and impotent system with one based on the Ten Commandments? I suspect most Christians are less than content with our present government.

Martin Luther once wisely said, "When God wills to punish a people or a kingdom, he takes away from it the good and godly teachers and preachers, and bereaves it of wise, godly, and honest rulers and counselors, and of brave, upright, and experienced soldiers, and of other good men" (*Table Talk* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 47). If Luther is correct, the proper course is not to wrest Caesar's sword from him. No, we ought rather to repent and cry to God for mercy.

Bauer wisely leaves the history of the "Reformed American States" incomplete. Kenneth Balder wistfully concedes that the new Christian legal system might even effect a visibly civil righteousness, but the canonized hypocrisy that comes with it is a high price he had not anticipated. It is a bitter pill. *The Revolt* is a tale worth reading, for the painful confrontation with the law will drive us to Christ where we will always hear good news, news that Christ died for lawbreakers, even us.

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The Problem of Suffering—A Father's Thoughts on the Suffering, Death, and Life of His Children. By Gregory Schulz. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1995.

The Problem of Suffering by Gregory Schulz, all sixty-nine pages of it, took me an entire week to read. It was not my lack of ability that prevented a faster reading. It was genuine visceral lassitude and depth of insight provoked by the account of a suffering fellow-Christian that took time to fathom and to savor

respectively. Gregory Schulz, Lutheran pastor and professor of philosophy at Wisconsin Lutheran College, has laid bare his soul to us in this account of the suffering of two of his children, one of whom died and another of whom continues to bear his burdens with the help of God. This is not a book that should be read in one sitting. It is a book to be read two or three pages at a time and pondered. Writing an account of his own grief following the death of his infant daughter, Kyleigh, the author invites the reader to enter into this suffering in order to learn the meaning of the gospel. Kyleigh died shortly before her first birthday. Stephan, a son, continues to struggle with life-threatening illness.

In spite of being a seasoned hospital chaplain who attempted to comfort people like the Schulzes, I found the reading of this little book to be difficult as it recalled the many I knew who had suffered in helplessness as loved ones died. As Greg Schulz conveys, it is not that the promise of the resurrection does not comfort, but that the pain of losing a loved one until that time must inevitably be faced. One does not read a book such as *The Problem of Suffering* to wallow in soap-opera melancholy. Nor is this a book to read to analyze the psychodynamics of death and dying. This book needs to be read as a means to facing our own mortality, our own weakness of faith in the face of pain and suffering, and our own unwillingness to live without answers other than Christ himself. Without the crucified and risen Lord to accompany our reading, such a book would have little more to offer the grieving than sentimentality or despair. But the author takes us away from both of those and leads us beside the "quiet waters" of God's grace and mercy. He is a preacher and he preaches well even in this volume.

Making quick work of theodicy by denying a need for it, this book gets to the heart of the matter by building on Kenneth Surin's quotation, "The Christian who takes the atonement seriously has no real need for theodicy." The aim of Christian ministry is not to justify the ways of God to a suffering father for the illness sent his daughter by God. Nor ought it be denied that God sends suffering, says the author. "God himself causes our suffering. He is not the cause of sin, mind you—but he is the cause of our suffering." He continues, "Sin and death are the wages of Adam's sin and mine. But suffering—the 'NO' which I scream as I see my children's pain—this is gift from my Father. It is a gift to teach me that our pains have purpose and meaning. I am having labor pains." It becomes clear that the loss of one's own child is addressed not by theodicy, but by the realization that although no human father would choose such suffering for his own child, our heavenly Father did, and out of love for us, sent his Son to suffer and to die. Never have I seen so close a connection drawn between the comfort of the gospel at the death of a child and the death of God's own Son than in *The Problem of Suffering*. This human father is taught and teaches us that God the Father knows what it means to lose a Son to suffering and death.

Although it is impossible for us to understand, the author teaches us that God's love prompts suffering, his own and ours. This same human father teaches us that the victory of the resurrection does not take away our pain entirely in this life. But it is enough! And leaving our children to the care of God in this life and the next is what faith is about.

Throughout the book there is a joyful connection to the suffering of this author and father and the word and sacraments. Baptism provides the paradigm for understanding the suffering of his daughter. She is being drowned in order to live. She dies in order to rise. With the pain of her loss no less diminished, this father gives us the assurance of ultimate comfort and peace fully realized only in the resurrection. It is refreshing to see the absence of a psychology of dying and the richness of a theology of human suffering. Hospital chaplains nourished too much on Kubler-Ross's "stages of dying" would do well to return to the stage of God's dying and rising in the life of this grieving father. He has written a poetic psalmody that teaches us the way of the Lord.

Finally, it is a delight to see the interwoven lives of the saints before us such as C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, and others who suffered the same sufferings and questionings and arrived at the same joyful hope, which is Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. In this volume we are led down through the generations beyond father and child to the blood of Christ, which cleanses all sinners and makes us brothers and sisters in Christ. One must deeply respect the intellectual honesty and faithful witness that this grieving father has given us in the small but powerful book. It is must reading for all who want to live the faith rather than explain it.

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The Lord's Supper (Expanded Edition). By Martin E. Marty. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1997. 88 pages. Paper.

Not by any stretch of the imagination is this a dogmatics book that explains the church's teaching on Lord's Supper. An exegesis of the various biblical records of that night in which Jesus was betrayed, you will not find here. These eighty-eight pages are not a guide for belief or liturgical action. What is it? It is a book that revolves around *you*.

In the first chapter, well-known author Martin Marty explains that what is most important about the Lord's Supper is that it is "for you." His writing employs the often shunned second person, *you*, in order to place the reader personally in the context of what most people know best: a service of Holy Communion. In the liturgy of the congregation and in the piety of the individual's devotion, Marty illumines the reason for the reader's feelings, experience, and action. He explains what you, the reader, are doing and thinking as you prepare for Lord's Supper (chapter 2), participate in the divine service (chapter 3), receive Christ's body and blood (chapter 4), and finally, begin a new week (chapter 5).

Like a good communicator, the author knows enough about life in the pew that the reader is convinced that this book is indeed about "you." During my youth, a pastor once knocked me off my holy horse by suggesting that I couldn't pray

through the Lord's Prayer without thinking of something else. I couldn't; I still can't. If I have trouble with twenty-five seconds of prayer, you can imagine all the mind vacations I take during an hour service. Marty includes these honest appraisals of human nature. He even tells the snide remarks that we have thought, but wouldn't want to say lest we seem at best irreverent, or at worst irreligious. Marty writes,

> You let some passing thing distract you. A scuff on the shoe of the minister. The choir singing a bit flat. A candle dripping on the new church carpet. Had you remembered to have the spot removed from the back of your coat? Who donated those altar flowers? Will I get a raise this week?
>
> Here you are, back in your seat. Should you feel guilty about having let the moment pass? Isn't it just human nature to have a wandering mind? You really don't believe the people who claim they can clear their heads and have pure and constant contact with God. There must be a lot of hypocrites here. Why did so little happen? (56).

Interwoven between the how-did-he-know-I-do-or-think-that stories are the snippets of church history, modern stories, or religious quotes that teach the reader the reason for his actions. In order not to lose the second-person flow, these sections are commonly introduced by, "You remember that/when . . . ." Whether the reader would know that the offering of bread and wine by members of the congregations during the offertory ceased at the time of the Reformation in order to play down the idea that the mass was a sacrifice to appease God is unimportant. If Marty says that I remember that, then I do. To deny that knowledge would be to turn away a compliment. I wouldn't, and neither would "you."

The use of the second-person "you" not only sweetens the gospel message, but it also makes the law more offensive. At times I'm told, "You believe this," or, "You do this," and I don't. Though this book is not heavy reading by any means, when I was accused of my sin, I needed to be careful to understand Marty's point of comparison, lest I retaliate and accuse him falsely. When he puts down those teachers whose people have been "run through the catechism," Marty is not despising the Catechism and its use. When he asks, "Who are we to build fences [around the Supper] where the Host does not?" he is not advocating an ecumenical "anything goes" in the church. Similarly, just because Jesus said, "Beware of the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and love to be greeted in the marketplaces and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets," it doesn't follow that Jesus is against liturgical vestments or despises a kind hello at the grocery store.

One of the banes of a seminary education is that each sermon, book, and conversation is now heard through a critical theological ear. Like a movie buff who can connect favorite quotes with movies and actors, I am quick to accuse the person who unwittingly uses a loaded theological word or phrase with the corresponding heresy or church council that dealt with it. A word of warning for the ordained: this book does not use traditional theological language and can't be judged on those grounds. For example, I read the first chapter to my wife in order to test my hypothesis. Not knowing who Martin Marty was, she responded, "The way he writes he makes me think he's not a Lutheran. Is he?"

The back cover explains that this is a new release/expanded edition of the original, which was first published in 1980. It says that *The Lord's Supper* is recommended for individual readers and study groups. Although the words are not theologically hard, they are not necessarily brought down to the average pew sitter. Following the chapters is the section "Questions for Reflection and Discussion," which include five to eight serendipity-type questions. For those who have already been "run through the catechism" and think they know it all, a good leader could generate quite a bit of Lord's Supper application with these questions. For those who are new to the faith, let yourself run through "the familiar Small Catechism assembled by the reformer Martin Luther," as Marty calls it.

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Briefly Noted

Subversive Spirituality. By Eugene H. Peterson. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing House, 1997.

Over the past twenty-five years, Eugene Peterson has authored books, articles, and poetry that speak both to the spiritual life of the laity as well as the challenges of pastoral ministry in a consumer-driven society. For most of those twenty-five years, Peterson served as pastor of Christ Our King Presbyterian Church in Bel Air, Maryland; he is now James M. Houston Professor of Spiritual Theology at Regent College in Vancouver, British Columbia. In *Subversive Spirituality* Peterson draws together occasional papers, poetry, biblical studies, pastoral reflections, and interviews that speak to the life in the Spirit shaped by the Word of God and prayer.

The lead essay in this anthology is "Saint Mark: The Basic Text for Christian Spirituality," Peterson's inaugural lecture at Regent College. Here Peterson explores the cruciform shape of discipleship in Mark's Gospel as the pattern for the Christian life. This essay serves as something of a preface for reflection on spirituality, anchoring it in the story of Jesus. There is much in this volume to challenge, edify, and refresh. Peterson is a servant of the Word who is a craftsman with words.

Scripture and Memory: The Ecumenical Hermeneutic of the Three-Year Lectionary. By Fritz West. Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1997.

"The history of the three-year lectionaries witness to the evolution of an ecumenical hermeneutic"(3). So begins Fritz West's scholarly study of the interpretative character of the *Lectionary for the Mass* and the *Revised Common Lectionary.* West contends that the scriptural narrative takes on two critical forms: the canonical and the calendrical. The calendrical form of the narrative is expressed in lectionaries; thus "it (the lectionary) does not so much displace the canon as offer a focused interpretation of it" (27). The remainder of the book is an explanation of and apologetic for the *Revised Common Lectionary* as a sign of ecumenical liturgical consensus. While West's argument on behalf of the *Revised Common Lectionary* is unconvincing, his book does serve to make the point that the lectionary does shape the church's memory, and as such it is a hermeneutic. In other words, one must pay careful attention to the heremeneutical presuppositions at work in lectionary revisions.

Christ and His Church. **Union and Confession, Volume I.** Translated by Matthew C. Harrison. Edited by Ronald R. Feuerhahn, Matthew Harrison, and Paul T. McCain. St. Louis: Office of the President, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1997.

Written in 1936 in the wake of the formation of the *Deutsche Evangelische Kirche* (DEK), Sasse laments the lie in the church. This is not merely the lies that have been told "because of cowardice and weakness, vanity and avarice" (1), but "the pious lie." Sasse continues: "The most fearful thing about the pious lie is that it will lie not only to men, but also to God in prayer, in confession, in the Holy Supper, in the sermon, and in theology. The pious lie always has the propensity to become the *edifying* lie" (2). Sasse is prophetic as he calls the church of his day to repent of the lie of outward unity where there is no unity in confession, the lie of honoring Luther while rejecting his doctrine. The appearance of this essay in English some sixty years after it was first published is indeed timely, as the issues faced by Sasse in 1936 have been resurrected in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's decision to enter into church fellowship with three Reformed bodies.

Martin Luther's Christmas Book. Edited by Roland Bainton. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1997.

Augsburg Publishing House has issued a reprint of this devotional classic, originally published in 1948 and out of print for many years. Yale Luther scholar Roland Bainton condensed Luther's Christmas sermons on the annunciation, visitation, nativity, shepherds, Herod, wise men, and presentation and set them in a readable format. Woodcuts from Renaissance and Reformation artists enhance each of the sermons.

Christian Worship: Handbook. Edited by C. T. Aufdemberge. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1997.

Prepared under the auspices of the Commission on Worship of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, *Christian Worship: Handbook* is a companion volume to the hymnal *Christian Worship.* This book of just under a thousand pages will be appreciated by those who use any of the current Lutheran hymnals, however. The editor, C. T. Aufdemberge, a professor of music at Northern Arizona University, has assembled the stories of the hymns in *Christian Worship* as well as relevant biographical sketches of their writers. The full text of each hymn is printed, including stanzas omitted by the editors of *Christian Worship.* Among the many helpful features of this volume are a bibliography of eleven pages and a nineteen-page listing of hymn collections. *JTP*

Logia Forum

Short Studies and Commentary

Righteousness: A Concrete Path

An exposition for the journey drawn from Micah 6:1–8, preached by the Reverend Dr. Norman Nagel in the chapel of Sts. Timothy and Titus, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, Epiphany 4, 1996. Tsadaq *is the transliteration of a common Hebrew word that every seminarian ought to know, a word that means "to be just" or "to be righteous." To translate the plural noun form* tsadeqoth *might be something like "righteousnesses"—but that is perhaps too abstract even to be a "proper" noun in English lexicons. YHWH is God's personal name, often translated "Lord." It is YHWH who keeps righteousness concrete by his mandated gifts where they are received in faith.*

If there's no beginning and no arrival, there's no journey, and there's only one journey that does get you there to the destination, and that is what today's Scripture tells us about.

The beginning was from Egypt, from the house of bondage, and despite what may have happened on the way, however hopeless their situation, they did get to Shittim, last camp before crossing the Jordan, and so into the Promised Land to Gilgal.

What the Lord said, what he promised, he did. Right. Right. He did it right. That's what the Lord does. He does it right, and what he does is right because he does it. He is *tsadaq. Tsadaq* is his verb, and when he does *tsadaq,* what he does are *tsadeqoth YHWH*, a whole bunch of them. The Lord has his prophet remind them. He hasn't become some other sort of Lord than what he said.

That's the problem; they were wanting him to be some other sort of Lord. They had their specifications, their timetable for him, and he was not delivering on their terms. Actually, it was a whole lot worse than that. The Lord was not delivering on his terms, his words, his promises. That's *Anfechtung.* If you can't rely on the Lord, is there anything left to rely on? They were giving up on God, but he does not give up on them. To this bottom point is where his words reach to them, where they'd slumped, dropped their bundles, wearied out. What's the use? Why go on? He's quit on us.

> O my people, what have I done to you?
> In what have I wearied you? Answer me.

The Lord was the one accused. He faced the charge of not doing right by his people. Witnesses have been called who cannot be hobbled. They've seen it all happen. What the Lord has in fact been doing is *tsadeqoth YHWH*. He has done it right all the way, as surely as his name is YHWH.

There's nothing to do then but drop the charges. He's not on trial, we are. So let's cut our losses and try to recoup. How to square him off we know: "God most high." We'll do all the things he has laid on us to do, and then some. That should bring him 'round.

But the Lord will not let them off with just performances. He loves them too much. They are his people: he does not quit on them, he does not quit his name. He does his name, and so he does his *tsadeqoth YHWH*. He *tsadaq*s them. That's what happens to those who journey with him. Freed from the destructive notion of their having him along traveling with them they may rejoice to know they travel with him. He does the journey, and brings them along with him. He brings them along with his *tsadeqoth YHWH*. Justices, righteousnesses—pitiful abstractions. Not some notion, concept, high idea, but what actually happens yesterday and today: just deeds, saving justice, *Heilstaten, YHWH*'s saving acts.

Nothing of these happen unless the Lord does them, and what he does is right, and that's just like him. They happen as he does them to his people, who belong with him, as they journey with him who does them right. That is his way; that is how the journeying goes, goes thus surely to the destination. So you travel with him. What's from him flows on back and forth between you as you do right by one another. You know that.

He has told you, O man, what is good.
What he does he looks to see in you together:
To act justly, and to love mercy,
And to walk humbly with your God.

All quite day-by-day, journeying-specific. Right. That's how he does it. He does it right. He gets you there with him, all the way. Tagging along with him does things to you, each day of the journey forward to his sure destination. Amen.

Forgetting Self-Chosen Forms

Luther wrote this Admonition concerning the Sacrament *in 1530 during his stay at the Coburg. This sampling can be found in AE 38: 105–106.*

Because everyone wants to be reverent and devout, in order to honor Christ's sufferings and to worship God, one person undertakes this, another that. One person goes to Rome, another becomes a monk, a third person fasts. Who can enumerate all the forms of divine worship which we have up till now instituted and observed on the basis of the devil's inspiration and our own devotion? Because of them we have obscured and forgotten this lofty, beautiful worship, namely, his remembrance and the glory of the passion of Christ, which worship God himself established and to which he bore witness that he was indeed well pleased with it. . . .

Now, if you want to engage in a marvelous, great worship of God and honor Christ's passion rightly, then remember and participate in the sacrament. In it, as you hear, there is a remembrance of him, that is, he is praised and glorified. If you practice or assist in practicing this same remembrance with diligence, then you will assuredly forget about the self-chosen forms of worship, for, as has been said, you cannot praise and thank God too often or too much for his grace revealed in Christ.

Preferring Piety to Orthodoxy

V. E. Loescher, Timotheus Verinus: Book 2*, translated by James Langesbartels (Unpublished translation), 2-1.*

It is an evil in the church that arises in the context of the pursuit of piety. That is, it is a searching, striving, and demanding of piety that is ill-conceived and established in a sinful way. It creates an antithesis between (1) piety and its pursuit and (2) revealed truth and its pursuit. Moreover, it causes truth to be dependent on piety. Pietism completely absorbs truth into itself and so it nullifies the truth. By all this the church of Christ is thrown into confusion and a raft of other unholy things find their way into it.

The evil of Pietism is among us as long as the pursuit of piety stirs up and sustains a conflict and sets up an antithesis between itself and even one important point of religion. It is among us as long a person believes and teaches that piety must be pursued more strenuously than orthodoxy and given preferential treatment. Furthermore, it can come to the point that the truth and form of theology (namely, the Word of God), the office of preacher, justification, matrimony, the church, and other matters are all put into a dependent relationship to piety, in which case the evil shows itself more forcefully and clearly.

Finally, it can come to the point where people think that wherever piety is not found in the form and to the degree hoped for, then no Word of God, no activity of the Holy Spirit, no light of grace, no office of teaching, no matrimony, no church can exist. Thus Pietism has fully matured and come out into the open.

Unconverted Pastors

From the writings of Bo Giertz as recorded in Minister's Prayer Book: An Order of Prayers and Readings*, edited by John W. Doberstein (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 267–269.*

An unconverted pastor is a great asset to the Adversary. Even a pastor may be unconverted. He may be so in such a subtle and hidden way that he may even be very zealous and active, without ever realizing that his real, chief sin is the innermost ego-centricity and self-trust of his heart. He may also be unconverted in such an obvious way that people see it and take offense.

When it comes down to it, the Adversary has no better ally than the pastor's own Old Adam. With his help, the holy ministry can be transformed into something exceedingly unholy. The pastor becomes sensitive and power-hungry and insists upon respect for his position instead of cheerfully bearing the reproach of Christ. He becomes a master instead of a shepherd. His concern becomes not the salvation of souls, but his own position among men. Then the authority he has received "to build up and not to destroy" becomes an instrument of destruction that tears down the congregation and scatters the flock instead of gathering it.

It is just as bad when the pastor, purely out of regard for his own person, does not dare to be a pastor, when he blunts the edge of his Lord's message and becomes a harmless cipher who says nothing and is content to hold his peace when he should be preaching repentance in the name of his Lord.

There is just as much egotism in a pastor's carnal pride as in his carnal modesty. Perhaps the most perilous temptations of his calling are these two. On the one hand, there is the egotism which always demands the center of the stage and the deciding vote always craves the head table and wants to be the chief speaker of the evening. On the other hand, there is the craven complacence which refuses to risk its popularity, which is careful to avoid declaring that nothing except faith in Jesus Christ can save a single person in this world and nothing but the Word of God can give us this faith. Or which says it now and

then to satisfy its conscience, but says it in such an involved or abstract way that nobody who hears it would ever conclude that, without this faith and this Word, we shall in actual fact be eternally lost.

The pastor must be at once both fearless and unassuming: bold and frank in the name of his Lord, but humble in his own name; ready to turn the other cheek when he is exposed to personal affront, but of a holy stubbornness when it is a matter of holding fast to the Word of his Lord. His forehead must be adamant against the insults of the world, but his heart must be so sensitive that none in the congregation can fall or suffer misfortune without the pastor sharing his suffering.

Therefore, there is a somber seriousness in that saying of Chrysostom: *Mirum est si sacerdos salvetur*—It is a miracle if a pastor be saved. So serious is this, that it is best that we be immediately reminded of what the Saviour said to his disciples when it began to dawn on them how hard it is to attain to eternal life: "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Hymns and the Collective "We"

From Carl J. Schindler's translation of Werner Elert's Das Christliche Ethos, *titled in English* The Christian Ethos *(Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1957), pages 361–362. Does anyone know whether a translation is available of the second portion of this work? Please e-mail me at stimme@aol.com.*

Prayers of petition are most real when every other avenue of escape is blocked. Adoration reaches its summit in the full surrender of the last remnant of egoism. "They all pray, sing, and give thanks together, and there is nothing here that one keeps or does for himself; what each one has belongs also to the others" (WA 49: 600). In the collective adoration of God there can be no isolation, no withdrawal into oneself, and therefore no loneliness.

In the "we" hymns of the Apocalypse we can still detect the faint echoes of previous anguish. But after "the accuser of the brethren has been thrown down" (Rev 12:10), there is nothing left but praise and adoration for the Almighty (Rev 19:6). In adoration, the "we" of the Te Deum embraces all times and places. In the "Thrice Holy" of the Communion service it joins with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven in a hymn of praise. "All mortal flesh be silenced, stand in awe and trembling, oblivious of all things of this earth" (*Liturgy of James*). This worshipful silence before the *mysterium* is then broken by songs, by shouts, by praise as the *epinikios hymnos* (hymn of victory) is sounded.

Notwithstanding the immensity of this all-embracing collectivism of adoration, the praying, singing, enthralled individual is not swallowed up as in a cosmic mass. He slips into that "we" at exactly the spot which has been reserved and held open for him because there can be no gaps in the collective "we" of Christendom. In this "we" occurs the final miracle of salvation, the reality of a subject who is no longer shut off in isolation.

This miracle is experienced by anyone who participates in the singing of a Lutheran chorale—provided he actually joins in the singing, and does not merely read it, or experiment with "the effects upon him." When we join in the congregational singing we discover that the surrender of our privacy is not a deprivation of our freedom. That is only a wrong notion to which we cling as long as we look upon the collective "we" as a powerful, alien force. Hymn singing binds us to others—the pace, the progress, the thought content are prescribed for all alike. You can safely trust yourself to this guide, you can submit with sincerity to the message of the hymn. It is not only an educational device but essential for the objective ethos at work.

Unity and Confession

Thanks to the provisions of the Reverend Dr. Alvin Barry, the translating and editing work of Ronald Feuerhahn, Matthew Harrison, and Paul T. McCain, little volumes of Hermann Sasse's essays are springing forth—and at reasonable prices. The first 58-page volume came out in paperback last October and is available for about $4.50 plus shipping and handling. Write: The Office of the President, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 South Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122. The following comes from pages 50–51.

For it is not the case, as one who had a superficial knowledge of our age of orthodoxy stated, that a Lutheran is bound to see in the Reformed church a form of the "devil's church." That would be entirely un-Lutheran, nor did orthodoxy have this view. In all its unambiguous rejection of those things which were viewed as false doctrine, and in all its struggles against the church-political methods to Calvinize all of the German lands, it never denied that the church of Christ is also in Scotland or Switzerland.

That false doctrine must be fought, and that there could be no church fellowship where there was no unity on the basic understanding of the Gospel—that was indeed an understanding which had been learned from Luther, and which neither the Old Lutheran Church nor the Evangelical Lutheran Church of later times would have given up. Whoever does give it up—as the Enlightenment and Pietism did—abandons the Reformation. And not only that: he abandons the church altogether. For since the Reformation raised the great question of the pure doctrine of the Gospel for all of Christianity, the church exists only in, with, and under the form of confessional churches. No one can belong to the church unless he affirms a confession—be it old or new.

That these confessions contradict each other, that we from our understanding of Scripture, out of deep conviction of faith, must consider another view of Scripture as mistaken, that is the cross which the church must bear as the church militant. But if one is tempted to doubt the correctness of the proposition that full church fellowship presupposes the full fellowship of faith, doctrine and confession, let him study the unspeakable and deplorable plight of the churches of the

Reformation, seen in their deepest humiliation in the history of the modern unions. This history can teach us what the church's confession is, and what the struggle for God's truth in the church militant means for a world which faces the threat of being drowned by the lie.

Funerals as Corporate Worship

From William Willimon's Worship as Pastoral Care *(Nashville: Abingdon, 1979), 114–117.*

The trend toward private ceremonies and small family services may be bad for pastoral care and worship in the church. Such closed, small group settings lost the whole meaning of the funeral as a communal acting-out process. To deny community participation in the grief process is to cut off grieving persons from the major resource for dealing with their grief.

A funeral may be primarily for the grieving family, but it is not exclusively for them. It is for all of us. *A funeral, like every other act of Christian worship, is for the church!* True Christian worship is never a private matter. Every science of worship should be a communal, participatory event. Positive pastoral values are lost when any worship service—wedding, funeral, baptism, or eucharist—becomes a private, noncommunal affair.

To define a funeral as being "for the living" or "for the family" raises theological questions. As we noted in an earlier chapter, Protestant worship has too often degenerated into emotional manipulation of people because the people are often thought to be the reason for and the central focus of worship. If a funeral is for the family or if a wedding is for the bride and groom, then whatever the family or the bride and groom want should be the basis of the service. The family's wishes become the only values that guide the service. If the service is for the family, then what makes it a specifically Christian service, and what makes it a service of *worship*?

Against the definition of the purpose of a funeral as being "for the family," I argue that the purpose is the same for a funeral as for any service of Christian worship: to worship God. The primary reason for our congregating to worship is not to focus upon ourselves and our desires but to focus upon God and God's relationship to us. The centrality of the funeral within the grief process, at least for the church, is not that a funeral is a good therapeutic aid to psychological well-being (which it often is) but that a funeral is an excellent time to focus upon God and our life and death in the light of God's love for us in Jesus Christ.

It is pastorally unwise and theologically questionable to let the dead person's life, no matter how saintly that life may have been, become the center of attention at a funeral because, finally, the most relevant thing at the time of death is the never-ending grace and love of God. This is not to say that our funerals need to become more theological and less pastoral. Rather it is to say that as our funerals become more explicitly and intentionally theological they will become more pastorally helpful. . . .

How helpful it is to a grieving family, shocked, bereft, and speechless, to be brought into a funeral that is a true service of worship and to be encouraged to rise to their feet and join the congregation in singing something strong like "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," or "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise." As a pastor, I have been deeply moved by seeing a grieving family rise to their feet during the affirmation of faith and, with tears streaming down their faces, not believing yet believing, not understanding yet hoping, joining with their fellow Christians in saying, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth." Or ponder the pastoral significance of the use of some of the great psalms within the funeral service, so penetrating in their honest confession of frustration and loss ("My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?") and yet also encouraging in their honest vision of hope.

The quiet, firm sureness of the pastor in leading a funeral service, combined with pastoral openness and acceptance of a family's feelings of grief, will say much to the grieving family and the congregation as a whole about Christian response to death. Giddy, Pollyanna, pasted-on smiles and back-slapping assurances are as theologically and pastorally out of place as cold, bleak, impersonal morbidity. My contention is that carefully planned, theologically full, and well-led funeral liturgies will do much in helping us to help the grieving people and the congregation as a whole in the time of the life crisis of death and bereavement.

To Observe and Protect

In this issue's Forum, I have included the editorials of two better-known theologians from our midst, Martin Noland of Oak Park, Illinois, one of the Logia *editorial staff, and David Scaer of Fort Wayne, Indiana, a* Logia *contributing editor. Collected over the past several months, these pieces reflect upon and add resources for the discussion of several issues facing us these days.*

Noland: Two Kinds of Lutherans

The August 1997 fellowship declarations at the convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) clearly demonstrate that there are two kinds of Lutherans in America. The adopted statement "Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification" (JDDJ) from the Lutheran-Catholic dialogues is being circulated by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) to its member churches, as well as being considered by the Vatican. The JDDJ contains a redefinition of the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith, which the Augsburg Confession declares to be "the chief article in the Christian life" (AC xx, 8) and which the Apology asserts is "the main doctrine of Christianity" (Ap iv, 2).

The redefinition of justification by faith in JDDJ surrenders and obliterates Luther's distinctive reformation discovery, namely, that the Biblical term "righteousness" is used in two different ways in Scripture. Luther felt that he "was altogether born again and had entered paradise itself through open gates" (AE 34: 337; cf. WA 54: 179–187) when he realized that the righteousness of God, revealed by the Gospel, is a passive righteousness in contrast to the active righteousness of man. On Luther's Reformation breakthrough see Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther: His Road to Reformation 1483–1521* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 228–231 (*Martin Luther: Sein Weg zu Reformation 1483–1521* [Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1981], chapter 6, part 5).

Luther first publicly announced this Reformation breakthrough, in terms of the distinction between the two kinds of righteousness, in a sermon by that title dated sometime between fall 1518 and Easter 1519 (AE 31: 297–306; WA 2: 145–152). At that time, he distinguished between alien and proper righteousness. After preaching and teaching this distinction for many years, Luther settled on the terminology of the proper distinction between passive and active righteousness. Luther set forth his most brilliant and enduring explanation of the two kinds of righteousness in the introduction to his 1535 *Lectures on Galatians* (AE 26: 4–12). In that introduction Luther wrote, "This is our theology, by which we teach a precise distinction between these two kinds of righteousness, the active and passive, so that morality and faith, works and grace, secular society and religion may not be confused" (AE 26: 7).

A little further on he asserted,

> We always repeat, urge, and inculcate this doctrine of faith or Christian righteousness, so that it may be observed by continuous use and may be precisely distinguished from the active righteousness of the Law. (For by this doctrine alone and through it alone is the church built, and in this it consists.) Otherwise we shall not be able to observe true theology but shall immediately become lawyers, ceremonialists, legalists, and papists (AE 26: 10).

Touché! How has JDDJ surrendered and obliterated Luther's distinction between the two kinds of righteousness? I will quote only from the sentences that the LWF and the Catholics agree they hold in common. Under the heading "Common Understanding of Justification," the Joint Declaration states,

> Justification thus means that Christ himself is our righteousness. . . . [Faith] leads believers into that renewal of life which God will bring to completion in eternal life . . . . [The] message of justification directs us in a special way towards the heart of the New Testament witness to God's saving action in Christ: it tells us that as sinners our new life is solely due to the forgiving and renewing mercy that God imparts as a gift . . . . Therefore the doctrine of justification, which takes up this message and explicates it, is more than just one part of Christian doctrine" (JDDJ, 16–18).

Here "justification," the predicate noun form of "righteousness," is defined both as the work of Christ and as our "renewal of life." But the term "justification" is always used in Luther, the Lutheran Confessions, and the orthodox Lutheran fathers only to indicate the passive righteousness. This passage in JDDJ thus becomes a new hermeneutic, replacing Luther's definition of justification with the Roman Catholic definition. Furthermore, this passage states that the "heart of the New Testament witness" is "new life," in other words, active righteousness.

The quotations from the Augustana and Apology previously noted clearly state that justification by faith, that is, the passive righteousness, is the heart and core of the gospel. Under the heading "Justification as Forgiveness of Sins and Making Righteous," JDDJ's theological rationale for the redefinition of justification is given: "When persons come by faith to share in Christ, God no longer imputes to them their sin and through the Holy Spirit effects in them an active love. These two aspects of God's gracious action are not to be separated, for persons are by faith united with Christ, who in his person is our righteousness: both the forgiveness of sin and the saving presence of God himself" (JDDJ, 22).

Faith is directed to the divine nature of Christ indwelling the believer, the error of Andrew Osiander condemned by the Formula of Concord (FC SD III; especially FC SD III, 63). The present-day error is probably due to the influence of the Christology of Karl Barth. Finally, under the heading "Justification by Faith and through Grace," JDDJ asserts: "[Christians] place their trust in God's gracious promise by justifying faith, which includes hope in God and love for him. Such a faith is active in love and thus the Christian cannot and should not remain without works" (JDDJ, 25).

JDDJ defines faith as one of the Catholic "theological virtues," which always includes the other virtues hope and love. Furthermore, faith is defined as being active, that is, as active righteousness, not as passive in receiving the righteousness of Christ. The Catholic definition of faith as an active virtue comes from Thomas Aquinas, who in turn saw all virtues as necessarily "active" according Aristotle's definition in the Nicomachean Ethics.

Thus there are two kinds of Lutherans. According to the Joint Declaration, the LWF-ELCA kind makes no clear distinction between active and passive righteousness, understands justification to include both righteousnesses, and understands faith to be an active virtue. The Synodical Conference kind follows Luther in making a clear distinction between active and passive righteousness, understanding justification to be exclusively a result of the passive righteousness, and faith as a passive response to this righteousness of Christ. The difference between the two kinds of Lutherans is in their definition of the key Reformation phrase "justification by faith."

Noland: Woman's Suffrage and the Bible

May a congregation or pastor of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod be expelled for teaching that woman's suffrage is contrary to Scripture? Apparently so, according to a recent binding opinion of the synod's Commission on Constitutional

Matters (CCM). Some may say, "Who cares what the CCM says?" The answer is: someone who was expelled because of the CCM ruling, or who might be.

The CCM argued that the 1969 convention declared this issue an "open question." Therefore anyone who claims that the Bible speaks to this issue allegedly holds a position contrary to the synod and its confessional articles. The CCM, however, functions like a dumb computer. It only answers the questions it is given. It often fails to point out errors of question-framing, which question-framing is often the real source of disputes in the church.

The CCM should have first asked this question: Can the church decide which questions are open or closed? C. F. W. Walther complained that Grabau and von Rohr had declared the topics of church and ministry to be open questions, even though many aspects of these topics were clearly addressed in the Lutheran Confessions (see *Der Lutheraner* 10 [1854]: 93; also see Theodore Tappert, ed., *Lutheran Confessional Theology in America 1840–1880* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1972], 63). Walther and Francis Pieper both agreed that the decision whether a question is open or closed rests solely with Scripture, otherwise the sola Scriptura principle is breached.

Is woman's suffrage addressed by Scripture? Not directly, but there are Scripture passages that address some of the powers that accrue to women when they vote. One of the problems associated with the suffrage issue is that the church polities of the apostolic era find little correspondence to the present. Although there were occasions in which votes were cast, there is no evidence that there were regularly constituted voters' assemblies. If women were not members of voters' assemblies in the New Testament because such assemblies did not exist, then one cannot argue on the basis of example. If one accepts only arguments by example, then woman's suffrage is indeed an open question.

The resolution of the problem of woman's suffrage is found by dividing "suffrage" into its constituent parts, namely, various rights and powers. Voters in typical Missouri Synod constitutions today have broad-ranging powers, that may be too broad in many cases. In many parishes, the problem with woman's suffrage is not the women, but that the voters' constituted authority overlaps or supersedes the powers and authority of the pastor defined by the Lutheran Confessions.

How many Missouri Synod constitutions take seriously this statement of the Augsburg Confession:

> Bishops and pastors may make regulations so that everything in the churches is done in good order, but not as a means of obtaining God's grace. . . . It is proper for the Christian assembly to keep such ordinances for the sake of love and peace, to be obedient to the bishops and parish ministers in such matters, and to observe the regulations in such a way that one does not give offense to another and so that there may be no disorder or unbecoming conduct in the church" (AC XXVIII, 53, 55)?

The Lutheran confessors believed that the pastors, not the voters, decided matters of adiaphora.

In many Missouri Synod congregations, the voters make the regulations that the clergy are expected to observe. This reverses the order set forth by AC XXVIII above. Pastors who accept parish calls in the Missouri Synod must agree to abide by this reversed order, but this does not mean that the reversed order is divinely inspired. If woman's suffrage is introduced with the hope that women may also make regulations that bind the clergy, then it is entirely contrary to the Lutheran Confessions and the Bible (for example, Mt 20:25–28).

It is true that lay voters have the power of electing and calling their pastors (Tr 63–72), by which they establish his authority for that particular parish. If one assumes that all voters come to the call meeting with holy hearts devoted to God's Word, then the vote of women in the call meeting would seem to be acceptable. But experience has shown that women at call meetings make the issue of woman's roles their chief criterion for candidates. Where this behavior is repeated through a series of pastors, the parish becomes more and more feminized, eventually approving woman's ordination. Thus experience teaches that, at least in our present climate, women should not be given the power to participate in call meetings.

Pastors have several different powers granted to them by Christ and confirmed by the Lutheran Confessions. The Apology of the Augsburg Confession divides these into the power of order (*potestas ordinis*), that is, the ministry of Word and Sacraments; and the power of jurisdiction (*potestas iurisdictionis*), that is, the authority to excommunicate and absolve (Ap XXVIII, 13–14). It is noteworthy that this same division of powers is mentioned in 1 Timothy 2:12, where women are prohibited from exercising these powers over men in the church.

It is my opinion that the term *authentein* in 1 Timothy 2:12 prohibits the exercise of *the potestas iurisdictionis* by women over men. Thayer's pre-feminist Greek lexicon (Harper and Row, 1889) gave the following definitions for *authentein*: to kill with one's own hand; to do a thing oneself; to author; to act autocratically; to govern; and to exercise dominion. These are magisterial functions associated with the power to judge and execute—what we would call the power of adjudication. In any event, the term *authentein* is a critical term for the issue of woman's suffrage, and it needs more scholarly study.

What if a voters' assembly limits itself to matters of finances, property, material goods, and the social welfare of the church? Here there is a degree of freedom exhibited in the New Testament. Paul mentioned that the church met at the house of Priscilla (Rom 16:5; 1 Cor 16:19), Nympha (Col 4:15), and Lydia (Acts 16:15, 40). I can't imagine that the church decided to redecorate the house of their benefactresses without their enthusiastic consent. Paul also highly regarded Phoebe the deaconess, who administered physical goods for those in need in the church (Rom 16:1–2). Here is a strong case for women's ministry to women in the office of deaconess, even to the extent of women exercising the *potestas ordinis* and *potestas iurisdictionis* over women, in conjunction with the parish pastor.

Is woman's suffrage contrary to Scripture? Yes, it is contrary to Scripture if the powers that accrue through such suffrage overlap the powers of the pastor. No, it is not contrary if such suffrage is limited to finances, property, material goods, and

the social welfare of the church. Perhaps it is time for the confessional Lutheran synods in America to reconsider the issue of the general powers and rights of voters' assemblies, in order to accomodate in good conscience the voice and vote of women, without the present confusion.

In the meantime, woman's suffrage is a divisive issue, which is not helped by the CCM's binding opinion. Many faithful pastors have to labor under situations that they know are contrary to Scripture, but that they accept with hope that the gospel will someday predominate, and with love toward the ignorant and obstinate. Whoever expels such pastors who teach faithfully and practice lovingly, must be filled with the world's scorn toward the cross of Christ.

Noland: The Enduring Relevance of the Brief Statement

The 1932 *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod* attained its 65th birthday this past year. Originally drafted for the purpose of fellowship negotiations with the American Lutheran Church, over the years the *Statement* developed the reputation for being a standard for the doctrinal position of "Old Missouri." In my opinion, the *Statement* continues to be relevant and useful, because it identifies the chief opponents of confessional Lutheranism within and without the congregations associated with the old Synodical Conference.

The *Brief Statement* is organized as a treatise of systematic theology, following the order of loci often found in Lutheran dogmatics. This "systematic theology" structure conceals what is actually a very powerful polemic against three movements in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Protestantism: liberal Protestantism, American evangelicalism, and ecumenism. Those who subscribe to the *Brief Statement* in effect make three statements: "I am not a liberal Protestant," "I am not an American evangelical," and "I am not an ecumenist." Those who oppose the *Brief Statement* in effect want to make some accommodation with one of these movements.

The *Brief Statement* implicates liberal Protestantism when it condemns the false doctrines of scriptural errancy (1–3), unitarianism (4), evolution (5), and the use of culture and science to redeem the soul (7). The *Statement* implicates American evangelicalism when it condemns the false doctrines of synergistic conversion (10–19), *intuitu fidei* (36), immediate operation of grace (23), and the use of new methods alongside the means of grace (22). ("New methods" in our day include the Church Growth Movement and "entertainment evangelism.") The *Statement* implicates ecumenism when it condemns unionism (28), the false idea of open questions (44), and the refusal to subscribe unconditionally to the Confessions of the church (45–48). The *Statement* implicates all three movements when it draws a careful distinction between the spheres of church and state (34).

The *Brief Statement* also articulates the doctrines of church and ministry found in the Missouri Synod (24–33). Although some may feel that Missouri's congregational polity is not Lutheran, I find that the *Brief Statement* stays almost completely within the ecclesiological parameters drawn by the Lutheran Confessions.

In two places, the *Brief Statement* adheres more closely to Luther and the Confessions than Walther does. First, Walther argues that a case of necessity proves that every layman has the essential right to distribute the word and sacraments (C. F. W. Walther, *Church and Ministry* [St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1987], 272–273; Ministry VII, 2). The *Statement* does not argue this way. Second, Walther argues that the spiritual rights of the church are possessed by all Christians perpetually (Walther, 268–270; Ministry VII, 1). The *Statement* argues that such rights are possessed by all believers *originally* (30). This means that some of these rights are relinquished when the Christian enters the spiritual condominium that is the church (see AE 40: 34).

In two other places, the *Brief Statement* adheres more closely to Walther than to Luther and the Confessions. First, the *Statement* repeats Walther's rejection of the divine origin and status of ordination (33; cf. Walther, 247–48; Ministry VIB). Second, the *Statement* strictly limits the authority of the pastor with these words: "We reject the false doctrine ascribing to the office of the ministry the right to demand obedience and submission in matters which Christ has not commanded" (32). The Augsburg Confessions says, in contrast,

> Bishops or pastors may make regulations so that everything in the churches is done in good order, but not as a means of obtaining God's grace. . . . It is proper for the Christian assembly to keep such ordinances for the sake of love and peace, to be obedient to the bishops and parish ministers in such matters (AC XXVIII, 54–55).

The difference between the Augustana and the *Brief Statement* in the matter of traditions and regulations is that the former prohibits pastors from making religious regulations *contrary* to the Word of God (AC XXVIII, 23–28), while the latter prohibits them from making any religious regulations *in addition* to those found in the Scriptures. This particularly becomes a problem in the area of worship. The Augustana vests the right of regulating worship with the pastor, who presumably has the theological competence to know when a practice runs contrary to Scripture. The *Brief Statement* vests the right of regulating worship with the congregation, or more precisely, the voters' assembly, since the vast majority of decisions about worship are not directly addressed by Scripture.

In spite of these problems, the *Brief Statement* should continue to be studied by confessional Lutherans. Until something better is written and adopted, it will continue to tell us who we are not.

Scaer: A Second Look at Promise Keepers

Attention given by the media to Promise Keepers, most of it negative, during their October rally on the mall on Washington, DC, gives us a chance to take another look at it. Among the dangers of Promise Keepers, at least in the eyes of the fourth estate, is that it may eventually lead men to assuming responsibilities for their families, deeper devotion between spouses and their children, the abolition of abortion, and to

greater religious devotion among its members. So far, it sounds pretty good. Its detractors also claim that it is a religious front for a political movement with extremist right-wing views. This slightly exaggerates even the hyperbole.

Lutherans pastors will find several reasons for discouraging their members from participating in Promise Keepers, though they will surely want to address the needs raised by the group. Unionism might be one good reason to stay away, but American toleration makes this a virtue, not a sin. Add to that the decision-like practices, which suggests an underlying synergism, though its leaders are hardly complex Arminians. But like earlier movements, Promise Keepers is responding to deeper problems that at the same time can disrupt church and society—which are not as neatly divided for most Christians as a two-kingdoms doctrine may require. Apart from its inadequate remedies, which on the surface may be too morally optimistic (we really cannot overcome sin, though we pray and struggle to do so), the Promise Keepers movement forces us to look beneath the surface for the real currents that lead its formation. The prolonged discussion that follows here was suggested by a question raised by a woman in a Bible class: "But Pastor, isn't the real problem with ordained women pastors is that the men do not want to do their job?" She was so right as to cut the heart of any theologian.

To get a perspective at what we are after, look at the theologically explosive, quick change of events of the 1960s, which began with a firmly entrenched, benign, mainline Protestantism, which was soon disrupted by the proclamation that God was dead. It is hard to escape the conclusion that the rapid rise of Neo-Evangelicalism and the charismatic movement were reactions, which were totally unpredictable, to a religionless world of J. A. T. Robinson's *Honest to God,* Thomas Altizer's "God-is-dead" theology, and Joseph Fletcher's *Situation Ethics.* These pace-setting names have not found their way into bibliographies for years. Evangelicalism is so permanently attractive—and not only theologically so—that its Zondervan publishing house was picked by Harper-Collins.

At a time when Christianity was on a steep slope scraped out by exegetical methods that made finding an historical Jesus remote, any revival in recognizing the Bible as the authoritative Word of God was beyond the pale of pious imagination. Were we wrong! For good or for bad, Evangelicalism remains a fixture in religious and political life. The 1960s brought us to the brink of a religionless Christianity—at least one with a God who was dead, though there was vibrant debate about the time of death. All that matters for nothing now.

At the approach of the third millennium, God is alive but is in the process of being feminized. "She will hear our prayers." So much for Our Father. An evolutionary atheism—God died gradually, but was certainly dead by the end of World War II in 1945—has given way to a feminization of God with the marks of ancient paganism. Feminine religions, beginning with "Mother Earth," are non-transcendental and hence pagan. In its more pronounced forms, God is found in the woman. Feminism is a philosophy that first found a footing in society and government regulations and then gradually and unevenly seeped into the church through both practice and actual theology. Its affect on the church can be determined simply by asking anyone over age fifty or sixty what he or she remembers of church life as a child and by making a comparison to what it is now.

Let's take an example from the military. Not long ago the guards at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers were all men. Today women wrestle with loads which once belong only to the male domain. Women are now engaged in every aspect of church life, including the office of bishop, which must put a new twist on Paul's "let the bishop be the husband of one wife." The grasp of feminism on the church is not uniform and differs from denomination to denomination. For example, the ELCA has two thousand women pastors. The Roman Church and LCMS have none, but we both have girl acolytes. The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible goes in the direction of gender-neutral vocabulary, even when it is in clear violation of the original languages. After a proposed reedited New International Version headed towards the same route—even Bible-believing Evangelicals are not immune to feminism— its publishers decided against it. The Lutheran World Federation virtually requires that all its members practice ordaining women pastors, but the LCMS-related International Lutheran Organization opposes the practice.

Some conservative-minded LCMS pastors who oppose the ordination of women may do so only on the basis of biblical citations without seeing any connection between these ordinations and current feministic philosophies that can be seen everywhere in society. For whatever reason, they have yet to see that the same philosophy that wants to call God "she" expresses itself in the ordination of women and a genderless vocabulary. Chairman becomes chairperson, which, because of its awkwardness, becomes chair. (So what does the chair sit in?) All this hangs together. On the opposite side, the writers connected with *Lutheran Forum* are ferocious opponents of feminine references to God, especially in the liturgy, as gnosticism, but endorse, generally with unrestrained enthusiasm, the ordination of women. They also fail to see the connection, but with them the results are fatal.

Enter the Promise Keepers on an entirely different front: the family. Certain leaders of American intellectual thought have recognized that the movement is based on principles against which feminism originally rose in opposition. For the sake of brevity, the basic tenet of Promise Keepers is letting men be men among themselves and in their God-determined relationships with women. They find a charter in Ephesians 5:21–22: "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord." It would be hard to recall another time when Bible passages were spread across television screens, or when announcers could refer to St. Paul and Ephesians assuming that the watchers knew what they were talking about.

Any suggestion of any intended abject subordination in the biblical text is removed by the remainder of the pericope, verses 23–29, to which the Promise Keepers refer:

> For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. As the

> church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. Even so husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body.

A quick glance finds here references to Christ's relationship to the church, atonement, baptism and its efficacy, and the church as the body of Christ, enough to keep a pastor busy in sermons and Bible classes for weeks. The upshot of this is that the passage speaking of the wife's subordination to her husband, which is basic to the Promise Keepers program, is not found among incidental items (adiaphora), but among those which are basic to Christian faith. Better still, without these principles Christianity could not be Christianity.

This is not an endorsement of Promise Keepers, but only a recognition that at the base of their program are realities that are also fundamental to all Christian doctrine, which includes that only males can be pastors. Promise Keepers leaders may not necessarily see that their principles do not allow the ordination of women, because they are addressing questions of the family and not of the ministry. But if there is a failure to apply principles in different cases, this is not theirs alone; as we have shown, this failure also exists among Lutherans.

Failure to see these necessary connections exists where arguments against the ordination of women do not take into account the Holy Trinity (Father-Son), the creation of Adam and Eve, the incarnation of the Son as Jesus, and the choosing of men as disciples and the first pastors and missionaries. Yes, this is a doctrinal matter because God requires one thing and forbids another; but behind each doctrine, including the ordination of pastors and the relationship of men and women, is a reality from which these doctrines derive their authority. Without this prior reality, Christianity can become no more than another gnosticism, of the kind that Karl Barth and neo-orthodoxy gave us in the "Word" theology.

It is not simply a matter of getting this or that passage straight, but seeing what is behind the passage. Thus many otherwise conservative Evangelicals and their churches, who have full commitment to biblical inspiration and inerrancy, already have women ministers or have nothing to discipline those who do. One reason for this lapse is that they put themselves at the mercy of those who interpret the text and fail to see that the prohibition against women pastors draws on the reality of Christ's relationship to the church, the same one from which men and women relate to one another and the one that Promise Keepers has put at the base of their program.

Since I was not one of those who predicted or even imagined the rise of evangelicalism as a response to the decadent theology of the God-is-dead theologians, I will not dare to forecast what lies in store for feminism. Up to now it seemed liked an indomitable force in nature. The downfall of Communism and Marxism destroyed that myth. It might be strange if Promise Keepers was the first stumbling block for feminism. God has done stranger things before—like the Reformation. At least for the time being, the feminists, like a giant Goliath, are sufficiently troubled to go out to meet this little David. With apologies, if this analogy doesn't perfectly fit.

Scaer: A View from the Pew

Note: Clergy without a parish assignment should not regard themselves as authorities in administering pastoral care and in liturgical conduct. Observers, however, sometimes have an advantage in looking at an overall picture that those who are on the playing field cannot see. Baseball is played with coaches standing on the sidelines, because they have an advantage in seeing the play of the game that is denied the batter and the runners, who have other things on their mind, like watching the ball and the shortstop.

Not long ago Gilbert Meilaender used the pages of the *Concordia Journal* to provide a picture of LCMS pastors and congregations that many of us may not have seen, or chose not to see. His responsibilities at Oberlin College often freed him to serve as vacancy pastor and observe in the LCMS calling process things even veteran pastors might have missed. Pastors with calls to other congregations were leading their current flocks in prayer in asking for divine guidance, long after they had decided to accept the call. They may have even maneuvered the call for themselves, which may suggest that a prayer of thanks was more appropriate than one for divine guidance.

Also noted was that only infrequently did a pastor consult other pastors or members of the congregation as to what was best for him and the church. Meilaender also put forth the revolutionary idea that after the voting had singled out the two top candidates, a final selection should be made by a blind draw. This would take the process of selecting a pastor partially out of the political arena. Considering biblical precedence, few objections could be raised. The following observations may not be as profound as Meilaender's, but they invite observations of a similar kind and provide opportunity to examine ourselves and reevaluate our practice.

Liturgical awareness is a welcome response to the Church Growth Movement with its variant worship forms deviating from *The Lutheran Hymnal* and *Lutheran Worship* and their agendas. They are in nearly every case completely out of line with known Christian tradition, unless one includes those of the Baptists and Assemblies of God. Like the confessional movement, the growing liturgical awareness has repristination features. It wants to get back "to things the way they were" or the way they should have been, because practices are judged not only according to historical norms but doctrinal ones as well.

Applying an autonomous doctrinal standard to the liturgy is flawed because it separates liturgy from doctrine precisely as it is criticized by those who divide evangelical form from Lutheran substance. It has produced some of the most unusual mutations, which may suggest that Darwin was right, at least if his principles of evolution were applied to the liturgy. Separat-

ing form and substance might be a modern form of Aristotelian philosophy separating accidence and essence. It is attractively logical, but may not in each case be useful.

Disagreements among the liturgically concerned in locating "the golden historical moment" in order to provide the perfect liturgical form, minor as they might be, are inevitable. The quest may be so elusive that we can only satisfy a general outline without precise definition at each point. I would like to address the question of whether a baptism within the church service allows a change by subtraction in the ordinary liturgy, in other words, something shorter. We immediately have to give up our repristination ideas and any hope of finding "the golden historical moment," since baptisms have not always been prelude to the Sunday morning eucharist.

Special baptistries were common up through the Renaissance, as they are today in Roman Catholic and orthodox churches. Lutherans even in our country brought their children to the church for baptism shortly after birth. They did not wait for Sunday. *Lutheran Worship* not only assumes that baptism is part of the regular Sunday service, but by giving a liturgical part to the congregation expects it to participate. Everyone in the church, believer and unbeliever, should hear and see what is going on as a reminder to the baptized of their baptism and as an instigation to the unbaptized that maybe they should also be baptized.

Non-Christians were never present for baptism or the eucharist in the early church, so a perfectly repristinated rite is for still another reason no longer possible. The readers will have to determine whether the rite of baptism has an evangelistic effectiveness, which is akin to recognizing it as an audio-visual aid for conversion. A sense of mystery is lost to make baptism user-friendly. *Lutheran Worship*'s baptismal rite is as long as it is pedantic in providing a dissertation on original sin and admonitions to the sponsors that are so excessive as to suggest that they and not the child are the center of attention. Reintroduction of Luther's 1526 baptismal rite is welcome for its brevity and for focusing on the candidate for baptism, not the sponsors.

Administering baptism within the regular Sunday worship raises the question of whether any adjustment is in order for the rest of the service, the one leading up to the eucharist. Placing the baptismal service as part of the regular Sunday service diminishes hope for finding "the golden historical moment." Since our current practice may not even have been known at the Reformation, by placing baptism within the eucharistic rite we are already engaged in a reconstruction. Further liturgical reconstruction requires the application of theological principles, even though we do this with hesitation. At issue is the practical problem of making the service unnecessarily long by redundancy, especially with the rite in *Lutheran Worship*, which can easily add fifteen minutes or more to the Sunday service. A 10:30 service is only at the Introit at 11:00. We however are motivated by theological and liturgical concerns and not an efficiency of time, though this is not inconsequential to even the most faithful parishioners who because of age and motherhood might find an hour and forty minute service unattractive.

If the divine service easily divides itself into one part for the Word and another for the eucharist, then the first part, the Service of the Word, is a recapitulation of our baptism. What happens in the first part of the service together with the Confession and Absolution has already taken place in our baptism and in every service of baptism preceding the regular service. In baptism the gospel is preached, sins confessed and forgiven, and the faith confessed. All this is repeated each time the baptized assemble as church. Baptism is as much the present reality as it is a past historic event. (Remember, Rome sees baptism as removing past and not present sins.)

For Lutherans there is no Word which does not lead to baptism or take us back to that baptism. In the Service of the Word the baptized and the confirmed again become catechumens. Any idea that the Word exists without the intention of leading the unconverted to baptism and bringing the converted back to baptism is Reformed, for whom the word without the sacraments is everything. The Service of the Word is the commemoration of baptism. With this understanding, we are now in a position to see if any changes are permissible and perhaps even necessary within the ordinary Sunday rite.

Renouncing Satan is tantamount to a confession of sins and may even be a more profound form of it. This is especially so in Luther's rite with references to baptism's removing original and actual sin. Baptism is its own absolution not only for the candidate, but for the entire congregation who hears the words of the rite as applying as much to them as to the candidate for baptism. After the Creed is confessed by answering the pastor's questions of whether the candidate believes, baptism is administered in the name of the Triune God. Our Apostles' Creed had its origin in the answers required of the candidate for baptism. In each recitation of the Creed, we stand again at the font to answer the administrant's questions.

All this may suggest that after the rite of baptism, the service should go immediately to the Salutation, the Collect, and the assigned Scriptures. Confession, Absolution, and Creed are already part of the baptismal rite. Even the Trinitarian invocation might be eliminated, because it has been introduced in the baptism where it belongs. The Trinitarian invocation in the regular service has a baptismal function announcing to the congregation they are assembled because they have been baptized. The God who baptized the faithful continues to assemble them.

Where the service begins with the rite of baptism, God's presence has already been invoked and sins have already been confessed and absolved. Repetition may have a pedagogical value and may be even an apologetic one in reinforcing the chief elements of the faith, but it may foster what I suspect is a common belief that what happens on Sunday morning is separate and independent of baptism. It raises the fundamental question of whether baptism should be remembered when it has just been celebrated as a reality.

I think the answer can only be no. American Protestants, including Lutherans, cannot but help to think in modified non-sacramental terms that see the sacraments as divine ordinances without real connection to what happens in the Sunday service. When one creed is confessed at baptism and the same creed or similar one before or after the sermon, no other conclusion seems possible. Outsiders are quick to catch the redun-

dancy, and may with good reason be annoyed by the repetition, as are the church members.

Some might argue that the Apostles' Creed as the baptismal creed can be followed by the Nicene Creed as the eucharistic creed without being formally repetitious, but this argument is artificial. The latter is only an elaboration of the former from which it derives its substance. To be historically exact, the Nicene Creed is an expansion of the baptismal creed of Jerusalem. Through custom going back to Charlemagne around A.D. 800, the Nicene Creed has earned its place in the liturgy of the eucharist, but this is not a hard and fast rule and nothing is lost where the Apostles' Creed and not the Nicene Creed is used. The creed confessed at baptism is as Trinitarian as its Nicene offspring. In any event, for a few centuries the Nicene Creed was dropped altogether without the church falling into the lap of Arius. Errors of ancient and modern Arians are better addressed from the pulpit in sermons where the preacher can be intelligibly explicit. Since these suggestions have to do with redundancy, they are only made for Sundays where baptism is part of the service.

One of the marks of eastern rite liturgies is their constant repetition. Western rites are more efficient, and their brevity has its own appeal. Arguments offered do not have to deal with brevity for the sake of brevity, but to make certain that the first part of the service is understood as much as a service of baptism as it is a service of the Word. The Word leads us to baptism and back to it. I am not sure this is clear by repeating in the Service of the Word what was already done in a service of baptism.

Scaer: Categorically Speaking

Here are the age categories for LCMS parish pastors: 1,195 are in their 30s; 1,895 are in their 40s; 1,592 are in their 50s. 563 are between 60 and 64, and only 125 are 65 and over. If the 125 are under 70, this means that 688 are in their 60s. Statistics can be twisted, but let's scan the figures. There are 700 more pastors who are in their 40s than in their 30s. A good explanation is that the average age of seminary graduates is already around 35. Also striking is the comparatively low number of pastors still active in parishes in their 60s. The highest possible figure for that age group is 688. At 65 and over only 125 active pastors are left. Here are some possible explanations for these figures.

Some pastors with emeritus status are still active and are supporting themselves on their pensions, so they are not counted. Since they are receiving only minimum reimbursement to complement their pensions, they are in effect supporting their congregations. They are not "worker-priests," but "retired-priest priests." (Someone might explain why if a pastor holds down a secular job, he can be called a "worker-priest," but if a full time pastor, he may not call himself a "priest.") Another explanation for early and on-time retirements is that to many parsons caught between the pressure of their congregations and the expectations for more members from outside sources, retirement at 65 looks pretty good. This is only a guess.

In previous eras, 40 years could be anticipated for God's field hands. That's what the late Dr. J. A. O. Preus often mentioned. It was not unusual for some to be picking grapes in the vineyard for over 50 years. With ordination at 35 and retirement at 65, it looks like the 40 years will be lowered to 30 years of bringing the sheaves. Since the American male has a life expectancy of 75 years, we could easily have over 1,000 healthy retired LCMS pastors at one time. This should make it easier for active pastors to have an extra Sunday here and there off. We are waiting for ages of the non-parish pastors, those at schools, seminaries, and district and synod offices. Our guess is that here a good portion is over 60. Get your scratch pads ready. With only 12 percent of all parish pastors 60 or older, what is the percentage of ordained ministers without congregations over 60 years old still working? These earlier retirement numbers among parish pastors may show that some ministers have begun to see themselves as some congregations see them: their employees.

Scaer: The Computer as Liturgical Meat Grinder

The recent case of contaminated beef at a Nebraska packing company was an inspiration for an editorial in the October 1997 issue of *The Lutheran Layman*, published by the Lutheran Laymen's League (LLL). Its regular editor, Gerald Perschbacher, relinquished his space to Mark Eischer, a coordinator for the LLL's radio programs, including "The Lutheran Hour." Eischer begins his editorial with an unsavory reference to a landfill where twenty-five million pounds of hamburger lie rotting because of possible contamination by meat grinders.

"Some say the church needs to follow the example of the fast-food industry and 'market' the church to a wide world of 'consumers.' In fact, some churches have grown to almost obese proportions by slickly adapting themselves to the tastes and prejudices of busy, bored Baby Boomers.

"Every week, many pastors create their own orders of service by running the liturgy through meat grinders known as word processors. Who would order a recall should false doctrine find its way into these homemade liturgies? Unfortunately, in our efforts to make the church more 'appealing,' we may lose those very things that nourish the Christian — the forgiveness of sin, the focus upon Christ, his cross, and the sacrament — all that bloody business."

To spare the forests and save the environment, it might be time to put a moratorium on computer-generated liturgies.