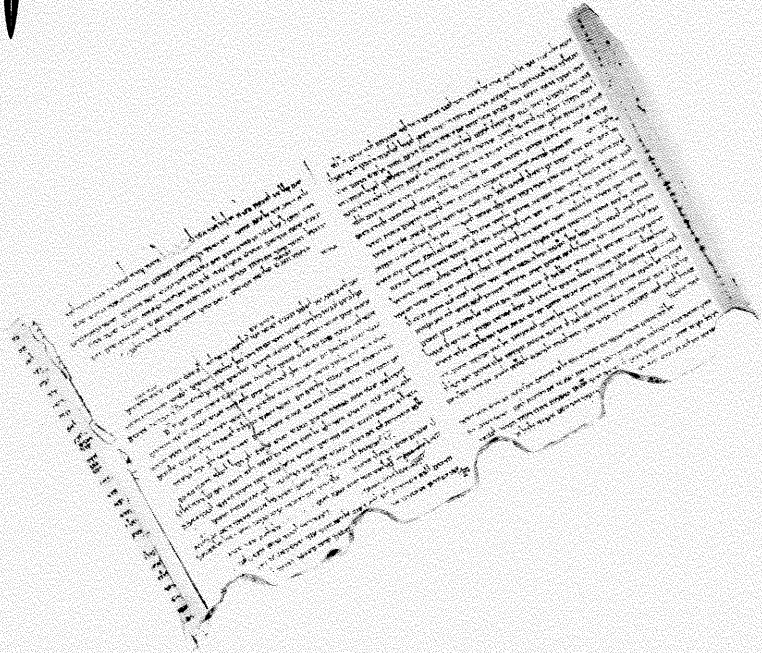


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Dr. Oesch

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THE PRESENT STATE OF CONFSSIONAL LUTHERANISM

IN AMERICA AND THE WORLD

by W.M. Oesch*

FIRST LECTURE: BACKGROUND OF THE PRESENT SITUATION

Dear and honored fellow-Lutherans:

To be honored to deliver one of the traditional Reformation Lectures at your institution -- as did also Pastor Marquart and Dr. Sasse -- is indeed a privilege, and right now I'm feeling the impact of the obligation to speak in the face of a crisis development in American Lutheranism. May God guide us everywhere and here.

We all are humbly aware of God's first chapter on humility spelled out in Mary's Magnificat: "Holy is his name. And his mercy is on those who fear him ...He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts." The outward course of church history is a constant repetition of Israel's history, which ever was defecting and then subjected to enemy rule. When individual or corporative pride raises its ugly head too high, God is wont to react in that He Himself takes the pure doctrine of the Gospel away. The cry "Ichabod" pursues and quickly overtakes also

*Author's Note: The Reformation Lectures delivered on October 30th and 31st at Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, Minn., are here presented in the form in which they were prepared for publication. The oral presentation differed, especially in Parts II and III, in substituting for sections of the written, detailed material certain ex tempore approaches to the audience.

confessional security. "The glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has been captured." Because of the eradicable craving in man everywhere for being the person himself, Babylon is for free Zion ever just around the corner, and the hidden, incalculable God (Luther's "Deus absconditus") lets the enemy ascend in a twinkling. God most surely wants the congregations of the thrice blessed New Testament Zion to remain loyal, to 'hold fast what thou hast till I come', to be 'faithful unto death'. But His judgments shatter security.

In view of that, what we need in approaching such days as ours is also a special type of wisdom. I choose to call it 'intercontinental and interhistorical humility'. I mean a humbleness which listens to all of God's acts in church history up to this time and extends its awareness not just to one nook of the world but as far as it can and notes what is going on in all continents. God wants us in our days to watch what's globally working together. Such are the auspices for me, as a German Lutheran Free Church man, to address you as Lutheran church men and church people of America. I add to say that we of the German minority that still is Lutheran are ever thankful for what you as faithful brethren register more easily from the outside when observing how we work.

The theme assigned covers a vast field indeed, "The State of Confessional Lutheranism in America and in the World". Since the Reformation started from Germany as Europe's center and since, to this day, fatal deviations in Lutheranism are wont also to take their origin from Germany (or, perhaps, from close-by Scandinavia), you will expect me to start out with Europe and then to proceed to America.

This morning's task is the background lecture leading up to things, and the afternoon's ampler space is to wrestle with the chief concern, the present situation in your America.

If we take this morning's subtheme, namely, "background of the present situation", seriously we cannot limit it to an historical approach, but must first have a doctrinal part. If evaluations are demanded -- and they are -- neither your nor my spirituality, as far as present, can be normative. We all must apply God's yardstick. That, of course, does not preclude that the assessments of questions of history which I make are personal ones, of one member of the Christian community, and not simply be equated with God saying so.

Part A: Doctrinal Background of the present situation of Confessional Lutheranism

The dogmatical *points of departure* are two, but closely joined, namely *the Word of God and the Church of God*.

The Word

In the first place, dear friends, both your and my faith and your and my congregation of God are impossibilities, they are 100% non-entities, unless there is revelation for lost, sinful man absolutely from the outside, from high heavens, and at that not a sort of riddle, hovering over us at some border line and not coming down, but rather a visit of God that came into history, that reached mankind in the flesh and that is so close-by that my faith can rest on its very spelled-out divine word and that my and your whole congregation can judge of what the pastor is preaching and what we all are to proclaim to the outside world. This revelation came through Jesus Christ, THE WORD (John 1), and became vocal in advance before the incarnation through the prophets and after our Lord's resurrection was passed on to us by His chosen apostles (associates included), ending with St. John. Don't let proud academicians deceive you when they substitute mysterious, mystifying talk for Scripture and straight doctrine, as did Liberalism for a century, as does Neo-Orthodoxy right now even at the Wittenbergs of America's Lutherland. The whole Bible resounds with "The Lord hath said"; Jesus says "It is

written" to the tempter; Hebrews ends, "He hath said" (13: 5). The adamant demand is that all that is thus revealed to us be taught (Matt. 28: 19, Acts 20: 26, 27) and that no foreign matters, not revealed from high, be added thereto by pain of excommunication (Gal. 1: 8,9; 2 John 9-11; Rev. 22: 18,19).

Tied up with this definite and propositional form of the Word is the content of all true message in the Church. If this is not Law and Gospel, then we're all lost, all along the line. If in the Word there is not Law divinely given, demanding the whole heart and insisting on conforming acts, if we rather meet an ever-changing, humanly determined make-believe-law, then as a matter of course we continue to deceive ourselves concerning our condition. The rock bottom level of our consciences is not reached. But we now come to the supreme thing. If the Gospel is not the entirely different, higher and final Word of God, we remain in our unbelief, in our misbelief, in our damning and ruling sins, and are never granted by God the faith in Jesus Christ and in the Triune God. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth" (Rom. 10: 4). The Holy Spirit comes in, to give to us the "Yea and Amen;" the faith He creates answers only to free Good News which does not demand, but gives away heaven to the guilty and thus enables us to conquer sin, to rebuff Satan, to avoid hell and go to heaven. "This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith...that Jesus is the Son of God" (1 John 5: 4,5).

The Church

If this revelation from above takes you and me to God and therefore to heaven (even though weakness remains in this present life, as we mournfully confess in the 5th petition), then this message from the outside is also the only thing that ties us together in the One Holy Christian Church of believers. If it wouldn't be for this, if we wouldn't have hea-

ven's colony already here on earth, then we would not jointly already be members of Christ the Head, whom we all adore unseen till we see Him yonder. To clinch the argument: It is only the non-law, radical, total Good News which is good news at all. It is only the sermon: "It is finished by the sacrifice and victory in our stead of Jesus Christ, God's eternal Son Who, while remaining divine, became human", which creates the Church and which is the one tie linking up the Church, person by person, to Christ *and* to one another.

This takes up to the last, more difficult doctrinal step on which in particular everything in these Reformation Lectures is based. Let's make sure of the "givens" so far. We talked of Law and Gospel (the Law also teaching clearly how to live, if we are God's but still have the flesh), and we made this message out to be propositional revelation. It is God the Holy Spirit who through this message implants faith in countless hearts in all times and climes.

Here's the *first roadblock* against proceeding in dead earnest with the Church. Faith is never seen by men in spite of its ever so palpable fruits; no one can stake his salvation on the other person's faith. However note: totally out of the unknown and perceivably into the light has emerged the message, Truth's doctrine. The vehicle which conveys Christ to us and creates the Church as the Holy Spirit's domain does step out into the open where it can be perceived, where it can be proved from Holy Writ, where it even can, in the sacraments, become something touchable. That offers help against the first "but" and yields to us decisive edifying doctrine. Thus it is that the One Holy Christian Church while totally hid from view as far as faith in the hearts goes yet has most definite creative agents, and these are the *legible signs or marks* (Latin NOTAE) so that he may run who reads them. They are correctly called notes by which the eternal community which the Holy Spirit calls into being on earth can be registered

at fixed places. So I as a Christian can know exactly *where* heaven's colony is to which I belong through Jesus Christ, where I must be brother to brethren and, joining hands with them, do Christ's own work among men.

The import requires one word more. It is evident that the token, the veritable identification card of God's assembly is divine preaching according to the Scripture, supported by the Gospel's holy sacraments. "Faith cometh by preaching, and preaching by the Word of Christ" [by His sending the apostles -- adaption of Luther's translation], Rom. 10: 17. Gospel is Gospel. But let us be careful not to associate the One Holy Christian Church at once with a beggarly diminutive residue of Gospel, even though the Holy Chost may still use it. There is, in the first place, no Gospel whatever except in a divinely given relation to the Law. It is itself by definition non-law, absolution from the Law, yet this precisely by the Son of God's substitutionary work and passion under the Law. And such justification by faith's non-meritorious acceptance moreover vindicates the divine prescriptions by creating a heart which will gladly do God's will as set forth in His holy demands. Again, the Gospel, while it operates as God's shot fired straight at the heart, acquitting man of sin and granting him the childhood of the Eternal Father, is in its essence not an arbitrary unconnected bolt from heaven. As we have seen it is tied both to what the Triune God and Christ, the Son Who became man, is and also to what He did, does, and will do. It is fastened to a vast expanse of historical revelation, beginning with God's speaking in Paradise. To give it a turn strictly parallel -- the Good News is inevitably part and parcel of a doctrinal whole, to a body whose parts (the Church says, articles), interact. Accordingly, where this preaching and instructing is, ever itself the upshot of God's integration, also where baptizing and communing connected therewith go on, there only is the UNA SANCTA. Only there is Christ's Holy Bride with sins forgiven, with Christ's Spirit ruling in

believing hearts.

If men permit only a flash of the total light to come through, there's nevertheless the whole Sun behind it, and if the Holy Spirit thereby enlightens, it is the Sun's work.

This calls for a protective note in between. We have started out by emphasizing that the *Holy Scripture* and the *Law and Gospel issues* are really all *one grand total*; in consequence there can be no type of church issues central or peripheral outside of its pale. It is only with such as accept this premise that we can go on. Not a word of our further presentation is to be wasted on confused disputers or on enemies. Whoever isolates a Bible passage may carry on his wrangling with philosophers. According to Rom. 15: 4 and 2 Tim. 3: 16,17, the Bible is Christ's unit; and outside of the "givenness" of the Law and the Gospel in the prophetic and apostolic Word which now reaches us directly only in the Bible, Christ is not preached at all. The Sun is the Sun. In particular German post-Lutheran theology under Lutheran name has to this day been a shock to the whole world of believers, a warning to make it plain that the Church cannot stand, as it were, on one foot only, incessantly talking Law and Gospel and justification by faith alone in a loose way, yet depriving Christ's Bible of His authority. There just is no Christ left before you ever turn your head around. Precisely this is what is recurring tragically now in top places of your large American synods. Intellectuals are throwing off ballast to please the whims of man who doesn't want to believe too much, as did Europe's Enlightenment savants 250 years ago, and like them tempting God to own up to it as a minimum God how little, disconnected, and garbled a "Good News" He can use. Therefore we dare not let go the rule of "sound doctrine". We must continue to make it all out to be one unit issue and let no one mislead us into irrelevant cartroads, off the grand highway of preaching the Whole Christ Only. Luther says: Simply stop arguing about any divine truth,

also about the Church, if people will not let the prophetic-apostolic Word, given to mankind from the outside, have the last say. Where people object that "God has no vocal chords", be divinely certain with Ps. 115 that He who created speech and organs of speech can speak, He who gave ears can hear, and dismiss such scoffing professors. If wisecracks have discovered 250 years ago that history, as a self-contained and totally interdependent unit, is all on one level and that neither God nor Satan can get in and upset the cart (this is the Axiom No. 1 behind the so-called historico-critical method of vivisectioning Scriptures), tell them it's a lie because the greatest miracle did happen, "the Word became flesh" (John 1: 14). Explain Bible difficulties as diligently as William Arndt for love's sake, but not for wisdom's sake. Stop short to remember that, because our type of scientific or philosophical technical language is never used in the Bible, which rather simply aims at speaking to consciences and hearts, most inerrancy arguments with their avalanches of quibbling miss the whole point in advance. Just in this plain unsophisticated language nothing but true story is told and is to be accepted as God having so permitted things to happen or done things either as Judge or Redeemer. (Rom. 15: 4)

Two Ecclesiastical Perversions Coalescing

Confronting today's main church dream that all who in any sense are called Christian constitute jointly the one visible and inseparable Church of Christ, I assume that you will agree that the sad failure of current ecumenism is not to take doctrine or truth or even Christ seriously at all. Furthermore, also those in this world-wide movement who give evidence of basic Christian knowledge and attitude are yet totally unable to see that *two* inseparable New Testament and Reformation decisions are involved. Kindly mark the emphasis: *two*.¹⁾

The *first point* of divine instruction and direction is *directed against the heresy of personal visi-*

bility of the One Church. This coarsest heresy is undone by the central truth of justification by faith. Since only faith in Christ's merits saves for time and eternity, the Savior's Kingdom is not of this world, it cannot be comprised in part of unbelievers, and its unity cannot consist in outward organization.

What seems more important yet for our days is the second decision of God's Word. This is directed against the more crafty heresy of mystic Enthusiasm, of self-willed *Schwaermerei*, extending inevitably also to all types of modern Liberalism and Existentialism. Error, on the *second count*, attempts to *tear the Church away from the audible and tangible means of grace* which have the given Word of God in the Bible behind them. The Church is then undone no less. The "broad church" approach just wants unity. But the Church's oneness then either evaporates into just an escape dream up in the sky, or, if ardently pursued, appears as the product of men, of pious and very often even liberal, humanistic men. It takes the shape of something to be brought about by sentimental togetherness, by asking no questions about doctrine and being oblivious of God's adamant injunction not to teach otherwise, pretending to escape from the war between Christ and Satan.

Both aberrations negate the mystery of the Church in its spirituality and yet recognizable, demonstrable oneness, as point out such texts as John 10, Gal. 4: 26, 1 Tim. 3: 15, and Ephesians, which is St. Paul's church encyclical. The two verses from Galatians, proving Christ's Church a truly spiritual entity, bear quoting: "But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." Follows verse 28: "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise". And it's equally important to bear in mind the grand verse that makes this one truly spiritual church not a whit less a tangible truth entity, 1 Tim. 3: 15: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and

ground of the truth". There can be no dispute about the compass of this truth if we remember John 8: 31. 32, Matt. 28: 19, and 2 Tim. 1: 13.14.

To get back to the most prevalent untoward notion of the church, Satan in an "ecumenial" age wants to achieve the *ONE MIXTURE* that shoves aside the *UNA SANCTA*, Christ's own beloved companion. To this end he applies a frequent strategy: the two heresies which we described separately he gets to work together, by an unholy alliance he blends the seeming opposites. The combined course agrees, for count one, in the exaltation of visible church organization and of the prime importance of outward union with its bid for world power. And, for count two, there follows the denial of all the real hard-core tangibles: that saving faith has a given content, that believers hail from and live by the concrete means of grace, and that the latter owe their efficacy to the Holy Ghost who does not work through the Enemy's corruptions, but through His saving truth as given in Holy Scriptures. The two hostile armies thus joined rather easily encircle God's people in a one-world age and set them in march toward anti-Christian goals.

Who can deny that today the uncanny double spell just depicted is closing in on outward Christianity and also on us? After so many centuries of church history, often sad and bad, what can you and I sanguinely wait for? With hypocrites always intruding into the outward churches -- who of us, being reborn, can probe other men's hearts? With the flesh, the Old Adam, still striving and warring all the time against every regenerated heart, yes, with cunning and powerful Satan -- though under God -- still permitted to prowl around and to have in his train all the unbelievers: these are the factors also behind today's church history and if now in a global world the pseudo-ecumenical attack is hitting all Christendom full blast, again tell me, what can you and I expect? Bright prospects for the Church? Rather we must look for what the Lord and His apostles predic-

ted as cropping up soon and as even increasing toward the End: deceivers and deceived arising in the congregations, anti-Christ and the Antichrist building up among Christians a pseudo-Christian, a holy-looking countersystem. What must we very concretely figure with today? Major portions, if not practically all of outward Christianity, being engulfed by tremendous currents and billows of false doctrine and these interconnected to form one ocean as never before. What have we then? God be praised forever: God is still in the high heavens and reigning in earth. Ps. 2 holds good. Zion, anchored above, is still planted here below because Word and Sacraments have not been totally supplanted. The Holy Spirit thus still is gaining and holding Christ-converts. Nevertheless: apostasy is in control of the chief positions for teaching and administrating in Christendom. Wherever the World Council of Churches gets a strangle hold things bad become things worse. In congregations that can hardly be counted, many dwindling down rapidly, and almost inevitably in the power centers of the larger church bodies, Zion is under duress. It has been deported into Babylonian Captivity either by force or guile as cruelly and perhaps with even more success than in the Middle Ages. Is it Christ's will for his own to follow the lure and even to walk into captivity? Is it Christ's will to have his beloved practice fellowship with those who represent the fiendish aggressor, Babylon? We must face the practical question whether, having taken to heart divine doctrine on the Word and on the Church, we know how to handle the master-key for our late-in-the-season-and-worse-than-ever troubles affecting the churches, and whether we are acting our part.

The Confessional Principle

Here the message of this pre-Reformation Day, October 30th, is that 450 years ago we were prepared for the last battle, that we then were furnished with the unheard-of Lutheran or Reformation deposit valid for the rest of the Church's history. It was a liberation of dimensions next to the apostolic to sweep

with that objective message of the true Confessional Church of Christ half of outward Christendom. The non-Roman Western Churches all live by it, as far as they live, as does in what counts even as the Roman Church. The drive of this deposit: Law and Gospel, its chart: the Scriptures. Its boon for society: the demarkation between the two realms, namely the spiritual, where souls are saved, and the secular, where outward life is protected by force of law instead of the two being cast into one mould. Its lesson for the believers exposed to the confusing visible church situations: Christ-centered faith is charged to distinguish according to Scripture -- this means not by casting a legalistic, but by casting a truly evangelical eye -- between ONE orthodox outward church fellowship, to the right, to be lived up to by all Christians, and all types of heterodox churches, to the left, which are to be avoided by every Christian. It was the enormous grasp which the Reformation had of the so-called formal and material principles as one, as the whole Christ Only, as "Christus Christum purissime docet" (Luther expounding Ps. 2: 7 in this sense: "It is Christ only who teaches truly Christ, most purely indeed"), which enabled, yea which forced, this one-time break-through. They came to realize that the scriptural one doctrine injunctions and the scriptural prohibition of alignments with heterodox leadership and followers all proceed from the center, not from the periphery. Loyal to the center these worshipers of Christ obeyed with the grand ardor of love these unequivocal texts, equally unequivocal today. Not mentioned so far as to "one faith" and teaching (Eph. 4: 5) were the Pauline verses: "that ye all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1: 10); "of wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness" (1 Tim. 6: 3). Not mentioned so far as to separation were the prohibitions: "Beware of false prophets" (Matt. 7: 15); "to mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine

which ye have learned, and avoid them" (Rom. 16: 17); "from such withdraw thyself" (1 Tim. 6: 5), not to cite the bald principle taking in the godless world as such: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Cor. 6: 14-18).

With reference to the related question of the two realms it must be admitted that on the practice side the Reformation churches did not start out to chart their course very clearly. The Constantine Settlement was in the way. But, praise God, preaching and teaching gained and maintained the highest level against all obstacles. The Book of Concord was finished 1577 and, for a goodly 100 years, it ruled and produced on the whole staunch theology in what can be termed loyal orthodox congregations. We, however, are face to face with a different situation, with the tremendous deterioration since the Reformation. Through several centuries it cruelly made havoc of the great, once liberated churches of Germany and of all Northern Europe. The same chilly draft of apostate gloom has long crossed the Atlantic and is now beclouding and shrouding also your American Lutherland. We must cry out fervently to God for the Spirit's light still to be conscious of and ever properly to use the master key for the purpose of dispelling dense darkness.

What, under these circumstances, does the prominent adjective "CONFESSIONAL" of this Reformation-lectures assignment entail? Does it meet this need? I can put it this way: Luther's Reformation was the great "Yes" and the great "No" granted to the Church in history to find the victorious way out over against all successive church dilemmas. Confessional Lutheranism just signifies the unmistakable "Yes" to Zion and the unequivocal "No" to Babylon. At Luther's time tyrannous power was most patently in evidence in Rome's hierarchy subjugating Scripture and mixing Law and Gospel. Gradually non-Rome Babylon became just as powerful. To repeat, "Confessional" is a watchword derived simply from confessing Christ in the open, to which He everywhere exhorts us. Its

translation into church action is: Yes to Christ *Only*, to *all* of the divine revelation coming down to us to undo our fetters and to lead us heavenward. It's the "Yes" of CHRIST's Bride, of the Church, but it is of necessity her simultaneous "No" to Satan's tricks, to his great historic master performances, the perversions of doctrine and of church setups. Isn't it all really plain not only to pastors but also to straight-forward believing members? If the One Church is heaven's colony, then it is not philosophy's, or Caesar's, or secular society's, or Freemasonry's, or Liberalism, or Sociology's, or Socialism's close associate and satellite. To meet objection head-on: It is true that Christ's Church, though consisting only of genuine children of God, has in its down-to-earth congregations always about it a certain outer layer of darkness of heart among so-called members, i.e. multitudes walking along wherever Christendom enters, but not deceiving God, "many hypocrites and evil persons admixed" (Augsburg Confession VIII). In addition, there is the Old Adam in the true believers themselves. But all this, be it ever so similar to a ring fence around the Church with shafts shot into the very citadel, is not of the Church. To win souls for the Church from the surrounding dark area, whether flying the church flag or openly brandishing the sword against Christ, the congregations must be wholly loyal to Christ's One Church and to Him, the Head. The church title of the visible congregations, attached to geographic and ethnic locations, is only then unimpeached, they only then with full justice bear with the total Church the same name: "gathering (ecclesia) of God (1 Cor. 1: 1, with parallels everywhere), of the saints" (1 Cor. 14: 33), if they ever go by their charter which reads, "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph. 4: 3-6).

CONFSSIONAL, then, is a self-evident church superscription. This is to be taken seriously and

and means that, by definition and by rights, Christian congregations by divine prescription *cannot have competing distinguishing marks, mutually exclusive notes.* They are not furnished with the license which this-worldly bodies must have to rescue some outward order by compromise. They cannot go in for political deals, "splitting it", acting the go-between, accepting -- to get back to what matters -- some identity marks from above and some from below. If congregations, if synods, if grand consolidations of church bodies do not in public doctrine stick to one line, if they are not, in spite of the flesh interfering, fundamentally honest, if they do not confess in word and deed Christ Only, they they are not churches at all in line with God's definition, but become hermaphrodite anomalies, living self-contradictions. They are churches in so far as the Gospel is at work, but they are Satan's satellites in so far as his denial of the Gospel is being publicly recognized. Such half-castes result, the moment pure doctrine is cast to the winds. Luther was not a fanatic or a subjectivist, he was not legalistic nor self-righteous, but being evangelical, he was sober when in his answer to the Papists in the Smalcald Article 3, XII he says, "they are not the church" -- though there's Zion hid in this Babylon. At MARBURG dealing with Zwingli, though in 14 out of 15 articles agreement had been reached on paper, Luther upheld the sovereignty of Christ's Word. He refused the hand of the Swiss leader because he was perverting the Reformation by repudiating the means of grace in favor of inner light. Loyal, free Zion is battling Zion. Christ Himself is thus active in His Word to free the countless unwitting souls that in their heart of hearts believe in His blood and righteousness, though yet they are, most unfortunately, here below not confessing Him properly. (For otherwise they would fight their way out of the impossible situation of their congregations or larger church bodies which try to have it both ways.) It follows that "riding the fence" is not a way of loving Christ and the brethren, but a great continuous sin, which betrays them both. It gravely endangers the salvation of all who do not,

but ought to know better, and it simply ruins the faith of those who do know better. God's protective care says, as in Isaiah (repeated in 2 Cor. 6): "*Go ye forth of Babylon*"; in the case of one who does not bring Christ's doctrine but his own, "receive him not into your house" (2 John 9-11). Many of these solemn imperatives, which appear as the "NO" joined to the "YES" in the Lutheran Confessions, *were cited* by faithful confessors in memorandum after memorandum addressed to the Denver Convention.

In handing us this master key (so clearly held aloft again by Luther for matters between churches) the New Testament teaching warns us never to presume judging the hearts (though God judges by what's in these inmost precincts), but commands us objectively and impartially to go by public loyalty toward doctrine. Truth lovers realize: God's Word, in all this, is not devisive and its application dare not be downgraded, but rather is to be acclaimed as superlatively ecumenical. Moreover, there is no such thing as a specific Lutheran way involved in any of this, but it is only one proper way for God's children of all times and climes, the way which fights for them all, including the weakest and most entangled, even in secret unison with their believing souls, though in their weakness they do not detect Babylon infringing on them. The Lutheran Confessional Writings, bringing both the one-centered content and the sweeping unchallenged authority of Scripture to bear, only make manifest what all Christendom was taught by God in the Reformation, namely, to get back to Scripture, and Law and Gospel, and Christ Alone against whatever bulwark was built up against God in the interest of making man great. They, by way of a tremendous confession granted by divine mercy in a special hour, succeeded in instructing future time as to how to remain loyal to revelation from on high against the never-ending competition of tricky would-be-revelations.

Augsburg Confession VII, interpreted correctly
or twisted in alien interest

There is no choice, in spite of some overlapping, but to go into the Symbolical side of the issue separately and thoroughly, because only if the patent enemy action is undone can the full counteraction proceed. Circumstances force Augsburg Confession VII into the limelight as hang-up or wind-up. After that, attention is briefly requested for several recent documents which do justice to the Confessions' stance.

All such as have a pseudo-ecumenical, in reality a man-centered concept of the church and its fellowship, are forced to deal in a singularly highhanded way with Augsburg Confession VII/VIII. If they prize the Lutheran name they will inevitably twist the contents of that article, seeing they dare not openly discard Augsburg Confession Art. V and VII. This tactic was employed by the Syncretists in the 17th, by the Pietists in the 18th, by the Prussian unionists and by Germany's great historically-minded Liberals in the 19th century, and it is -- if you permit a pejorative of recent coinage -- the major "ecumaniac sport" in Germany and America today, including parts of the Missouri Synod.

To broach the matter let us seek clarity on the relationship of Articles V and VII/VIII. When, in our Confession, three detailed doctrinal articles, replete with condemnations of errors (damnant, verwerfen, is only weakly rendered with "reject"), have already preceded the decisive fourth article on justification, then it is, of course, with reference to V preposterous to assume what the perverters of VII make their first plank. It is nonsensical to claim that at the beginning of Article V undogmatical loose concepts are employed in the following well-known text: "To obtain such faith God instituted the office of the ministry, that is, provided the Gospel and the sacraments". It is true that "Gospel" here

naturally means the saving Word of God as contradistinguished from the Law. But for the Reformers this Gospel in the narrow sense is majestically integrated, as we established and will continue to establish. Heading all articles, both Melancthon's original and Bruck's final prefaces point out that all statements that follow rest on the "divine Scriptures", enjoy the "basis of the Holy Scriptures" over against all human inventions and ordinances. Bruck, in the name of the Evangelical estates, reestablished the position of the protestors at Speyer the year before who had used the Scriptures and God's doctrine as the last argument. And our Art. V, too, winds up with polemics: "Condemned are the Anabaptists and others who teach that the Holy Spirit comes to us through our own preparations, thoughts, and works without the external word of the Gospel." So the prelude music sounds rather bad for the throng of modern inventors and twisters of "Gospel" accustomed to play fast and loose with Scriptures.

But let us now take Augsburg VII/VIII itself -- in reality only one two-pronged article on the Church, at that the first one ever penned by a representative segment of visible Christendom. By the way, heading the relative clause at the end of the first paragraph the Tappert edition ought to have let the German and Latin comma keep its place. Adding it to Tappert we fix on the crisp Latin text with the record-breaking statement in the second sentence: "Our churches also teach that one holy church is to continue forever. The church is the assembly of saints, in which the Gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are administered rightly." The relative sentence does not limit the persons, not only believers found in orthodox visible bodies are meant in this definition of the *Una Sancta*, as the free-lance first line of Augsburg VIII shows, so good reason for the comma. The true meaning is 100% clear from Apology VII/VIII written shortly after. There # 4 and its sequence, # 5 (which is several times restated thereafter), bring out an *additional concept*, that

of the NOTAE or MARKS of that one church which before God consists only of the true believers in Christ. Please observe that as a matter of course italics and capitals for emphasis are ours if we now quote the weighty sentences of the Apology which starts off with a reference to Augsburg VIII: "We concede that in this life hypocrites and evil men are mingled with the Church according to the *outward association of the Church's MARKS*, that is, the Word, confession [public witness], and the sacraments, especially if they have not been excommunicated. The sacraments do not lose their efficacy when they are administered by evil men... The church is not merely an association of outward ties and rites like other civic governments, however, but is mainly an association of faith and of the Holy Spirit in men's hearts. *To make it recognizable, this association has outward MARKS, the pure teaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments in harmony with the Gospel of Christ.*" All here suddenly hinges on the idea of MARKS. They are indispensable for a body so pronouncedly spiritual as to be made up solely of the people with believing hearts, who thus constitute an eschatological intrusion into mundane history. The statement "The Church is the assembly of saints "VIII has true believers", in which the Gospel is taught PURELY and the sacraments are administered RIGHTLY", as also the Apology's # 8 shows, has the full Una Sancta breadth, in no wise excluding outwardly misplaced true believers from being heirs of heaven, and yet attaches the divine faultless MARKS to the whole believing body. If marks at all, then surely these can be not other than the genuine ones which the Head gives to the body in the very acts of tearing hearts loose from the kingdom of darkness and keeping them with the light. In one basic respect, as C.F.W. Walther insists in the last thesis of Part I of his monograph on Church and Office (namely as to at all genuine believers belonging to Christ, not to Satan), it is not decisive whether the local outward association truly mirrors or sadly and sinfully obscures the God-given relation between their faith and God's own faith-treating and faith-preserving means.

Nevertheless against the latter only too frequent development toward heterodoxy, action is divinely imperative. This is brought out in # 2 of Augsburg VII "we still go by the Latin text, italics ours": "For the *true* unity of the church it is enough to *agree concerning* the teaching "doctrine" of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments." In guarded language the battle is yet resolutely taken on in the interest of true orthodox teaching as the distinguishing mark of all congregations and all groups of congregations entitled straight-forward to be called *church* bodies. This requires the following close thought: If locally through Christ's own means of maintaining heavenly life the one Church is a given, an ongoing, miracle, in the midst of an assembly which harbors also hypocrites, and if this heavenly colony is not in part denied through counteraction of said visible assembly, that is, by public proclamation tampering with the heavenly Word, but if rather the blessings from above are fully confessed, then the relative clause with "purely" and "rightly" which we read in # 1 holds sway unequivocally also locally. The MARKS from on high are, in this case, attached without public countermarks disputing them. In a sense between such normal congregations # 2 as an addition is superfluous. All will take care of itself. But how often and how long?

This takes us to the other side of the matter. There are other groups of congregations such as the Papists or the Zwinglians, who do not exhibit the one church's marks unimpeached and unchanged. In such cases the condition which must be met if church fellowship, in particular pulpit and altar fellowship, is to be established has been stipulated by the Lord of the Church Himself. Orthodoxy must first reign. If it were otherwise, unity of visible association would not be TRUE UNITY as He wants it, but rather its misrepresentation deceitfully working against unity from above. The Augsburg Confession's further directive phrase or watch-word in # 2 is "AGREEING CONCERNING THE TEACHING OR DOCTRINE OF THE GOSPEL" etc. Mutual consent must be established between such

parties as to the contents of the Gospel, what preaching it truly entails, and also as regards the scriptural understanding and honest handling of the holy sacraments, before a loyal church body can embrace one that deviates. It is self-evident that agreeing concerning the "teaching" of the Gospel is an English phrasing too weak. That's why it's better to add "or doctrine" in order to do justice to the Latin "consentire de DOCTRINA evangelii." It is also self-evident that the German text does not lessen the demand, but expresses the very same thing; it also distinguishes true unity from false -- by just depicting what has to go on, namely, "that the Gospel be preached in unanimity according to the pure understanding of it and that the sacraments be administered in accordance with the divine Word" (let us safeguard the weight of every word). The Augsburg phrasing of #2 includes as self-evident from the PURELY and RIGHTLY in # 1 what the Apology states in its # 48, namely that "impious teachers" are to be shied away from and not associated with -- Tappert merely translating "wicked teachers" in spite of Matt. 7: 15 and Gal. 1: 9 following. So this momentous turn in Augsburg VII, beyond these negatives, sets forth the unity demand in reference to the relation not merely to individual teachers, but between smaller and larger visible churches. What already the Schwabach decision amounted to, that the nature of the truly ecumenical or Lutheran church unity is not tied to places, but world-wide (Elert, Morphologie² I p. 239 says "uberterritorial"), is here codified, but this without decrease of the doctrinal demand. The year before, both in the Schwabach Articles of that summer and in what happened at Marburg on Oct. 1st and 2nd, the Lutheran Reformers (together with their estates) had by deed erected a significant barrier. They had verified the Confessional Principle over against Zwingli and all enthusiastic Protestants. Now here at Augsburg this sober ecumenical inter-church rule is given final form, chiefly in facing those still governed by Papist theology and policy, and it achieves its status of a Confession for all times and climes.

What's meant is magnificently brought out by the *sole contrast* that enters the picture. The Lutherans habitually set off strictness in doctrine, in which there must be agreement, from what must be scot-free at all times. They are dead earnest in protecting freedom and reject it as apostasy to bow to that uniformity in ceremonies which Rome's false unity notion had continually prescribed since the rise of Popery. According to God's Word these mere church customs and their like can vary freely as deemed necessary to meet the endless diversities of local conditions and of successive times. Against equating Faith and Order -- to allude to a World Council of Church division -- the free play given legal standing within the Order category emphasizes the strictness demanded within the Faith category. The WCC of course moves the other way. When # 3 adds: "It is not necessary that human traditions or rites and ceremonies, instituted by men, should be alike everywhere", what is here the Biblical warrant? This, by all means, that Scriptures nowhere demand ceremonial uniformity, for the ceremonial Law was abrogated, Col. 2: 16.17 (Augsburg XXVII, see especially # 59).

Finally, the scripture quoted to repeat and prove all reads: "It is as Paul says, 'One faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all' etc." (Eph. 4: 5.6 counted as # 4). The text affirms the unity which through the genuine means of grace operates in believing hearts and depicts this faith as divinely "one", both as to the contents given by the Holy Ghost through the Word and the acceptance worked by that same Holy Ghost. The Confessors as it were rejoice that this pithy quote characterizes the Church from above and gives the lie to history's confusion in evidence in the visible church. This author gratefully acknowledges that the essay on the Doctrine of the Church in the Lutheran Confessions, adopted by the Commissioners of The American Lutheran Church and The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (I take it of April 19 and 20, 1965), sets forth on pp. 12-14, and proves from a great wealth of pertinent passages of the 1530,

1531 Confessions, what we said with reference to the flinching doctrinal range and reach of CA VII.

What could be Satan's historical activity with respect to such majestic truth, at that confessed before the whole world, if not to dim it and smuggle in the very opposite, even under the Confession's name, among its subscribers? Which article would inevitably have to become the butt of attack if not this Article VII, which dares to delineate Confessionalism as God both donates it and expects it to be lived up to?

This takes us to the heart of the present controversy between "ecumaniacs" and true Lutherans all over the world, also to Denver 3-15. This was already intimated by the last head: "Augsburg Confession VII, interpreted correctly or twisted in alien interest." To return to the job of translating, is it not a rather strange thing that the Tappert, Pelikan, Piepkorn Book of Concord gives a definitely false rendering of that one reading in # 2? The Tappert edition makes the German text say: "For it is sufficient for the true unity of the Christian church *that the Gospel be preached in conformity with a pure understanding of it*" (p. 32). This eliminates a vocable, the German word for doctrinal agreement mutually arrived at and henceforth acknowledged; for the German reading is: "*dass da eintrachtiglich nach reinem Verstand das Evaneglium gepredigt werde.*" Charles Porterfield Krauth a hundred years before knew well what was in the air since Enlightenment. He makes sure of the whole sense of Augsburg VII's paragraph 2 by juxtaposition, by placing the Latin phrase ("consentire de doctrina evangelii") at the head and then letting the complete German clause follow as well. His classic "The Conservative Reformation and its Theology" (p. 162) has one all-comprising sentence. It reads in part one (Latin): "To the true unity of the Church it is sufficient that there be *agreement* touching the *doctrine* of the Gospel, then, keeping the word "Gospel" in mind, it reads in part two (German) that it be preached *in*

one accord [eintrachtiglich], in its pure sense, and that the Sacraments be administered conformably to God's Word," Krauth is intent on living up to the distinction between the truly orthodox church on earth, on the one hand, and all possible types of heterodox church bodies on the other.

One could also say that, reverting to the title of his book, Krauth is all for the truly *catholic* church, this exclusively in the sense in which the Lutheran Reformation and Church laid claim to this title. On this Werner Elert's chapter 21: "Catholicity" in "Structures of Lutheranism", presents the details.

A final item. Primarily involved in this matter is the term "Gospel". If this is a miniature Gospel, one taken out of its total context and thus made abstract -- even if its core as absolution for Jesus' sake is for the time being still acknowledged --, then the agreement concerning it really has only the effect to distinguish between, say Christianity and Buddhism, perhaps also a sect like the Mormons, but of course has no bearing as everybody will immediately say on bodies in the World Council of Churches. As we have shown, the direct opposite is the case. The relative clause at the end of # 1 of Augsburg VII already brings out the idea that Christ's Church has only pure notes, God's own means of grace without any error whatsoever attached, and # 2 draws the only possible conclusion as to "true unity" among bodies.

If it were not for the fact that, as pointed out, the third essay of the Commissioners of the American Lutheran Church and of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod fully presents the doctrinal demands of Augsburg VII we would feel forced to go into the proof which the Schwabach Articles offer for the same. As it is, it is enough to cite the pertinent Schwabach article (used by Melancthon, who like Luther had a hand in penning it, as a direct prototype for his own draft in 1530). Now the sentence

speaking of Christ's one everlasting church in Article XII of the Schwabach series² runs as follows: "This Church is nothing else than the believers in Christ, *which observe the articles or pieces* ["Stuck" = Stucke, namely of the connected body of doctrine] *mentioned above*, believe them and teach them and are being persecuted and tormented on account of them." Fully eleven Smalcald articles, the equivalents of Augsburg I-VI, IX to XI and XIII, had preceded, to which reference is made; so the concrete doctrinal setting couldn't be more rigid.²

Luther was decisive at Schwabach, at Marburg, and at Augsburg. Melanchthon used as prototype, together with said Schwabach Articles, Luther's valedictory Symbol which two years before Augsburg, in 1528, he had attached to his Great Confession concerning Christ's Last Supper. This dispells every last doubt and it agrees in fact with each and every succinct definition of the Church ever penned by Luther (see texts in footnote³). The champion of the Reformation maintains that misled believers continuing to trust in Christ's merits are caught in false churches only outwardly, by the weird accidents in history. In their heart of hearts they yet move with Christ's one doctrine, all its "Stuck", its pieces or articles. (Compare in addition footnote⁴, offering an exposition given by Luther of the text which appears at the end of Augsburg Art. VII.) Be it said to make assurance doubly sure: Luther, then, ever maintained by word and deed only one doctrine of church fellowship, namely, that it is based on creedal unison given from above, that viewed from heaven its confessional harmony is already on earth present in an effect achieved by God's Spirit through the Christ faith in hearts, yet that the outward condition divinely enjoined for its exercise before men is the adherence to UNA SANCTA doctrine and UNA SANCTA administration of sacraments. So then, in Augsburg VII, the insufficient clarity of millions of believers, as enmeshed in all sorts of self-contradictory or compromising church structures, does not anywise detract from the PURE and RECTE that goes with the One

Church.

The *Formula of Concord* offers the final symbolical evidence. Three fourths of its articles are directed against deviations in the very camp which had so long been brandished Luther's name. All of these "inner-Lutheran" decisions are meant to be implemented by doctrinal discipline in the loyal churches (Tappert, pp. 14. 632. 636). In Art. X(# 31) of the Thorough Declaration we read: "Churches will not condemn one another because of dissimilarity of ceremonies (of which some may, in keeping with the principle of Christian liberty, observe less, others more) if only they be one *in doctrine and all its parts* as well as in the *legitimate* use of the Sacraments." As a child can see, this is restating almost with a vengeance the principle established in Augsburg Confession VII as to relations between church bodies, be they local congregations or synodical groupings of sorts.

The promised reference to *several recent witnesses* to the Lutheran Confessions' stance, as condensed into a minimum of words in Augsburg VII/VIII, is now in place. Though this survey is added to Part A: Doctrinal Background of the present situation of Confessional Lutheranism solely because of doctrinal content, it automatically does bring into view present-day conditions. Thus both with reference to Europe and with reference to America anticipatory, or precursory, statements cannot be totally avoided.

The German Lutheran Free Churches immediately after World War II, in trying to overcome a number of doctrinal divisions inherited from the past, resorted to the scriptural and symbolical method as outlined above. This is reflected also in Chapter IIA of their "Einigungssatze zwischen der Ev.-Luth. (altlutherischen) Kirche im fruheren Altpreussen und der Ev.-Luth. Freikirche in Sa. u.a.St." (1947/1948), which treats of the Church. The concluding third thesis here is of interest. We reproduce it in this addendum, with helps interspersed as follows:

"The Word of God and the holy Sacraments -- since they are the seed "or source", the fountain and the only mandate of the Church "sole directive for its specific activity", are the marks of the One Holy Christian Church "making it certain that it is present in persons hearing, believing and spreading the Word". And they "the Word of God and the holy Sacraments" when in use in purity and without alloy, also "at the same time" constitute the distinctive marks of the true or orthodox visible church."

Comment:

Since the second half of the thesis brings to the fore the one visible church (*una communio ecclesiastica vel una communicatio in sacris*) which represents the One Church without scripturally unbearable self-contradiction, this Free Church Lutheran interpretation of the double function of the notes properly connects ## 1 and 2 of Augsburg VII and gets at the full ecclesiastical import of the article.

In April 1960 and 1961 Overseas Delegates from various Continents were sent by churches in fellowship with the then Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference (organized in 1872). They came in answer to a request from the four allied American Synods purporting that men from abroad, if possible, should help in dissipating the tensions between the former. In April 1961 they presented 15 theses on "Fellowship in its Necessary Context of the Doctrine of the Church". These, on May 19th, were approved of by the Recessed Convention of the Synodical Conference as correctly criticizing the Americans that not due attention had been given to the NOTES of the One Church, and in this direction were recommended for a new start. Since they were printed out with all their references in the Proceedings of that recessed convention they are accessible to everybody.

Already in Oakland the questions troubling American Lutherans had been diagnosed by Dr. Hans Kirsten

as "Quid est et valet in ecclesia" (What is the Church and what's valid in the Church?). In April 1961 the European Overseas Delegates handed over to the four American delegations a booklet entitled "European Collection". It investigated the pertinent details on church and fellowship in view of the potent Ecumenical Movement. Part III was not bound together with the first two parts since it consisted of individual critiques. These were handed to each of the American delegations separately, because only each one's particular previous presentation was involved in a given paper. The most incisive criticism was rendered concerning the Missouri Synod's "Theology of Fellowship", then in the incipient stage. Taking up what was then Missouri's Part II, the Europeans unmistakably sensed that the whole confessional principle as set forth in Augsburg VII and Solid Declaration X, 31 was under attack.

Last year the former Overseas Delegates in Continental Europe felt they ought to address A LAST WORD to the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod before Denver. To this WORD were attached also before Denver COROLLARIES. One corollary analyzed the details of the "Theology of Fellowship" as they appeared in the final form ratified in New York. This piece of official doctrine, tied together with some self-contradiction, constitutes a breaking away from Augsburg Confession VII/VIII, in fact from every tittle of the Lutheran Confessions' truly ecumenical stance (some sentences of the COROLLARY are quoted later). When some time after Denver we in Europe received the wording of resolution 3-15 and found out how that whole ALC fellowship resolution had been based on "Augsburg VII twisted in alien interest" we were in addition struck by an ominous coincidence. The German confederation of nominally Lutheran territorial churches (abbreviated VELKD) had simultaneously gone to some length using the same vicious interpretation of Augsburg Confession VII. They purposed thereby to justify the possibility of full, legally sanctioned, pulpit and altar fellowship with the Reformed (see "*Der Lutheraner*" of Bremen, Oct. 1969, p. 154-156).

Pointedly I ask: Has 3-15 not opened the door to church fellowship with the Reformed, too, proceeding from this same presupposition of turning Augsburg VII upside down? In the "Report" at the end of the book MARBURG REVISITED (printed on p. 191 of that book) a reckless stride forward toward super-syncretism was taken without the two Missouri Commissioners who sat in as much as risking protest in a press release? It seems this, in the doctrinal area, is being duplicated at present also over against the Roman Church, again with Missourians helping, since Augsburg VII made to say the opposite of what it says naturally provides justification for any unionist approach.

Most fortunate indeed it is that one more present day witness can here be acclaimed, which is taking on its last shape to be signed by loyal congregations. It is the *Ecumenical Declaration of Faith* which was sent out under the names of West Coast men and one Springfield professor. The great thing about it is that with the doctrinal strictness imperative and also a definition of a temporary state of protest (status confessionis for immediate use till Milwaukee 1971) it joins the true ecumenical concern, true catholicity, and thus the delicate mindfulness of souls which was Luther's⁵).

The Doctrinal Background we established went into the nature of Revelation and the corresponding nature of the Church, which beats upon legitimate church fellowship. On the basis of Scripture it was lived out and defined in the great Lutheran Reformation and its Confessions or Symbols. This is the take-off for congregations who want to remain true to the One Holy Christian Church in the turmoils of outer church history.

From our study of doctrine we now turn aside to view what went on since the Reformation century, first of all in Europe, and to how the stage is set now, chiefly in America. After we have absolved the historical task of lining up the perils through which Confessional Lutheranism (that is proper public ecu-

menism) has up to this moment taken its way we shall not be minded to leave it at that. Rather we must face the future without illusions and with the insight and courage the Word supplies.

Part B: Historical Background -- restricted to Germany and Scandinavia, but with a few words of world survey added

Satan would most naturally aim to destroy Confessional Lutheranism and sweep it off the earth, in order to undo the resources and defenses of Una Sancta Ecclesia in concrete history. The first and chief object of attack would, of necessity, be the church in the mother country of the Reformation. A dangerous lever was in the Enemy's hands. It was the still operating Constantine Settlement, which only too quickly succeeded in making also Confessional Lutheranism too much a matter of a whole country or of countries. If we grant that we had, in the previous section, descried and acclaimed the apex of doctrinal witness reached in the Lutheran Confessions, the Formula of Concord as finalising Symbol having been signed 1577, we now look in the face of a transit in the opposite direction. The going is downwards not upwards, tending slowly at first but after some time rapidly to an abysmal doctrinal low, as this is in evidence today. Luther says the gracious cloudburst of the pure Gospel hardly sojourns at a place for more than a hundred years. Ungratefulness drives it away to other climes.

This at once supplies us with a fitting division into epochs. We can operate *after 1577* with 4 times 100 years, the post-Reformation centuries, restricted to Germany and Scandinavia, with a world annex. To be plain as plain can be, I tabulate the points. There are four for Germany, some short-cut, some split, and one for Scandinavia. Most instructive are the ups and downs at the time following Paul Gerhard and those close to today. Not general church history, but Confessional Lutheranism is the sole concern.

Point 1, the first post-Reformation Century 1577-1677.
The far-reaching Reformatory movement embracing almost all people in certain geographical units could not score lasting victories. "For all men have not faith" (2 Th. 3: 2). This-worldly outward progress, even though the Reformation greatly furthered it, was in its socio-religious effect bound to be more in line with Rome's mixing of Law and Gospel and with Rome's latitudinarian aim at this-world perfection than with preaching Law and Gospel according to the Scripture. What came up as progressive thought might eschew Rome, and vice versa, yet this-worldly emphasis was similar. To emphasize that Revelation from above rescues unruly fallen man from Satan's clutches and then rules him evangelically, thus making the special work of the Church work only Christ-centered, even heading the believers for Christ their Lord's return, is a far remove from men's natural dream. Accordingly, in the centuries after the Reformation, the great civilization thrust, even in Protestant territories, gradually fell in with heathen literary offshoots, Renaissance and Humanism. It moved toward a man-centered ideal world of the future, as it does today in Western Liberalism and even in the latter's naughty child, Communism. The fact that Lutheran congregations were not organized alongside of, but rather as part and parcel of, the local civic borough, submitting in consequence to a sort of supervision of the powers that be, whether local or territorial, tended to offset if not to nullify the effect of the continuing great Lutheran theology coupled with full clergy loyalty to the One Church. It served to counteract also the genuine faith of uncounted throngs of the parishioners still everywhere filling the church pews, rather many of these parishioners also leading fine Christian lives. Yet better things can be said. In spite of the Thirty Years' War there was an unheard-of outpouring of Christian singing, lovely, personal, yet probing the last depths as at Luther's time. The songs of Paul Gerhard fill a book, and there were scores of singers in many respects like him. Gerhard also stood the test of near-martyrdom when in 1666 the Great Elector of Prussia, a Calvinist, deposed him from

St. Nicolai in Berlin because he refused to give the slightest promise of not attacking in the pulpit heterodox or unionist protagonists. Here the whole Brandenburg clergy should have joined him. Yet the reformatory virility and scope still dominant at most places is attested by the full Confessional Principle keeping the upper hand in the Syncretist Controversy. This achievement against Georg Calixt's unionism has been set forth in Heinrich Schmid's "Geschichte der synkretistischen Streitigkeiten", 1846. The book is important today. The attacks on the Lutheran orthodox dogmatists which fill the pages of all later theology are due to the strength of true catholicism which they still display, a quality towering above what followed and justly endearing them to original Missouri.

Point 2. Then followed Pietism and Subjectivism from 1677-1777 -- Pietism, in part pious, justly reacted against increasing worldliness in those unwieldy, defectively organized congregations (rather would-be congregations) of Lutheran countries. At the same time it pushed pious man too much to the fore. In consequence its more radical representatives moved away from God-given Revelation and from orthodox theological balance toward revelation from within, drawing near to forms of mysticism. The majority soon stressed God's second saving move, sanctification, more than God's first and fundamental move, justification, although it is precisely the latter, not preceding or cooperating pious effort, which alone brings in the new man as God's simultaneous gift. In this way pious Lutherans became more and more similar to pious Reformed, even to pious Romanists. Luther's Confessional ruggedness: "Doctrine is heaven and must be pure, life is the earth and is never yet pure" (hear him out on Gal. 5: 9), was superseded by the much easier, more understandable approach of putting it all on one level, even as Ecumenists in America's major Synods insist today. The turn toward absolute subjectivism, coming to a head under the next count, we better discuss later.

Point 3a. This third post-Reformation century -- 1777 to 1877 -- we will split up.

The connecting *half-century* 1777-1827 ushered in throughout Lutheran lands the change which came from the West, from Holland, Englan, finally France, where the thirty years' war had not delayed certain fastidious turns in arts and letters. What resulted was the almost total take over of Enlightenment, joined to rank Rationalism by virtue of principle. The triumph of unrepentant Titanesque Optimism was enacted pretty much in the form in which it emigrated also to your America (Thomas Payne). Our first date is 1777, one year after the American colonies' Declaration of Independence. There is a difference between that statement of man's rights, with something at least of Calvinist conviction still lingering in it, and the French Revolution's parallel statement soon after, devoid of all this. In France, and on the Continent of Europe which followed suit, the appeal was: "Simply believe in man's progress and cast aside God, both in His Law and in His Gospel, yes, ridicule Bible faith and withal put off those past Church Confessions as old-fogyish" -- not dissimilar to what is in the air now. Society-paid Lutheran theologians, already made pliable by Pietism, in increasing numbers joined the progressive, cocksure city populations, in the major cases first piecemeal, but finally out and out. The undermining of orthodox theological faculties, say at Leipzig, or Tuingen, or Altdorf (Nuremberg), on inspection proves to have been extremely similar to what you have observed as the fate of most American Lutheran faculties during the last decades, when Reformation-centered men were one after the other supplanted by men vaunting science in this or that form. Scholars indulged in practically the same critical arguments over against taking seriously the Bible's claim to be God's inerrant Word as are advanced now. Most of the hermeneutical slights-of-hand impressing today's novices had been developed fairly accurately already from 1690 on. The Halle-trained man Hermann von der Hardt is a very early example of the devolution from too much man-centered,

emotional Christianity to completely man-centered Rationalism, before ever Semler, Michaelis, Eichhorn and others followed him.

Almost inevitably Lutheran theologians who after the change in climate wanted to be well-received got under the spell of the key philosophy of the times as articulated by Immanuel KANT. We must analyze his train of thought a little, even if in the printed lecture this ought to be offered in smaller print so that who cares can study it.

The Konigsberg giant in his critical and rather cautious way combined Descartes' reasoning from the ego and the British Empiricists' going only by so-called observed data. The result was a temperate Rationalism, which made the best of man being left all by himself and which arrived at important certainties in spite of it all. Since the senses alone convey knowledge which is in addition ego-controlled, we are, as it were toward the left hand, the architects of the world about us, for this would be chaos but for our observing and ordering minds. In back of this intellectual activity is a sort of august collective super-ego. It gets pretty close to being inerrant, though individuals do err. But as these senses do not reach to the beyond at all, there is absolutely no knowledge worth that name either of God or of first or of last things. No metaphysical revelation can ever reach us men. Not only gross superstitions, but also the contents of Christian faith must be put off as haphazard gropings. But these weird efforts are, nevertheless, legitimate and of the deeper man. Only there must be appropriate criticism. The fact that we are not only this-worldly rational, but even strictly moral or value beings posits "postulates", to wit, such about virtue, immortality, and God, says the Critique of Practical Reason. Naturally, all this is only revelation from within. So Kantianism finally means that even as we men really are the architects of the world about us, at least by intellectual associations, so we (now moving as it were from the outward left toward the

inner right areas, to intelligible domains) are in addition the architects of whatever moral system and religion there is. In consequence *religious convictions*, lacking revelation from the outside, rest all the way *on subjective experience*, and at that all tenets are and remain formal, not specific. But in all this, how great is man!

At this place two inevitable effects of Enlightenment must be registered, one as to the laity and one at once affecting the ministry with far-reaching results for theology up to our days. When Rationalism embraced the territorial churches, Gospel preaching and cure of souls practically ceased. Semi-heathendom and social improvements were preached in the pulpit and taught to children. Naturally the common man drew his own conclusions. He did not necessarily have to rely on the particular type of reason the preacher had, perhaps his own was just as good, and at any rate not serving the state. If he could not leave a state-church he could at least stop going to services regularly, especially since the hymns were being changed, too. The upper-classes had discontinued worshipping long ago. So church attendance dwindled down to a fraction and almost nobody anymore attended the rite of Holy Communion. Fortunately on the whole the family was still a great power, and in pious families who knew what they wanted Christianity, even Lutheranism, could survive to quite an extent.

There was no hope for pastoral training, since the theological faculties were in the hands of the rulers. These soon were on the side of the intellectual insurgence. Frederic the Great of Prussia had called Voltaire to live at his court. Supra-naturalists holding out in Tubingen as compromisers couldn't change the picture. In this connection the logic of partial nihilism must be seen. The moment the Bible is just a human book on which historico-critical assumptions or even man's natural cocksureness can operate as they please, then Christ Himself is cut in pieces. He is also the *Logos*, the one Prophet, who used the prophets and apostles as His voice, who uses

the Bible today to preach Him as Savior through a given Word. Cut Christ down to size, and He's dead -- as He soon was in official theology. Lutheranism, of course, was already mouldering in the grave. It's catholicity, how ridiculous; how impossible what Augsburg's articles VII/VIII make the test! The very opposite of Confessional Lutheranism was rational. It was in the interest of worldly power, above all that of the composite State of Prussia, to unite as much as possible of religious factions -- something like the present American COCU enthusiasm in which Social Gospel interests are the chief drive. Because of the pan-Protestant ecumenism of Rationalists and subsequent of the Liberals, all the arguments on Augsburg Confession VII as favoring just a minimal version of free or justification religion, as thus being the all-sufficing condition for inter-church alignments and even fusions, became general stock-in-trade. This issued into an irresistible current when, some 150 years ago, the first-born child of modern ecumenical structuring arrived on the scene, the great Prussian Union. King Frederick William III shrewdly suggested it in 1817; he had almost fully legalized it by 1827; he commanded it in 1830.

In the meantime, over against the earlier more crude onslaught to reduce God's Word and Christ Only to thin air, the general fashion had changed. Even to live by critique was no longer popular. The new efforts of Top Enlightenment undertook to outdo Kant's right-hand architecture, to philosophize not just out of the depths of man, but as it were straight out of some sort of heavens and, in line therewith, to theologize straight out of the heavens. The reigning assumption was that whatever there was to God or heaven was close to man's (naturally religious) MIND and HEART anyway, and that these outstanding faculties were best joined. Through men like Herder, History had become an important witness alongside of pure reason and the inner man. Theologians soon felt that the "inside heaven" reached its highest state if it incorporated as much as possible of the past Church's piety, even of its various cultic and social forms.

Of course, all this speculation, not far from pantheist Spinoze, went on in opposition to real Law and Gospel insights, without God's holy norm and God's total grace operating. We must here mention Schelling, Jacobi, Fichte, and especially Hegel. It is impossible to probe into these philosophical systems of German Top Enlightenment. They are all related to Kant, to what we called the latter's almost inerant Super-Ego, yet they all aim more radically at One Principle, at "identity", arriving -- without Creator -- at some unity of nature and man and history. This they conceive of as prior to all differentiation and beyond it all. Thus all had some Romantic certainty or faith, not merely of a mathematical, but rather of an Enthusiast kind (residing in what the Germans call "Gemut" or similar) which by inspiration was their guide, making them demi-gods, even gods constructing GOD, the dependent God-in-process. Idealism resulted. If the effort of coarser Rationalism was simply to knock Christian revelation out, Romantic Idealism took it all in, but by way of a total reinterpretation. God and man were basically related, the whole universe, with God inside, was a Pan, one All, and revelation was thus an emanation as it were, of the Pan and natural to man the interpreter of the Pan: and the historic movements in Christian revelation came in as evolutionary stages of the Pan.

It was Friedrich *Schleiermacher* who during our half-century ran his semi-Hernhutian, highly sophisticated course, ending it with 1827. He established himself firmly as the elegant church father for times to come. His secret was a rather idealistic progress with reference to theology's form, and as much deep-felt preaching to the public as possible. In the wider sense he, too, was a Kantian and a determinist, lacking the Creator. But in utilizing what Kant had left open as man's inward or freedom or decisive sphere he made his own significant change. Instead of further relying on Kant's moral "categorical imperative", given a priori or beforehand, he started out with a sort or natural "sense of awe", addressed

to the universe "or God", calling it "absolute feeling of dependence". This to him is an intuitive grasp, envisioning a power all-embracing and inevitably leading everything back to equilibrium. The scheme is idealistic. In Schleiermacher's view history's vivaciousness entails that to balance the cause-governed or materialistic side of man's nature the spiritual side must ever be strengthened. In history so far no better influence appeared in this direction, Schleiermacher avers, than that of Jesus called the Christ. It is for the purpose of receiving men into Christ's superior type of a God-consciousness that the Christian church, its fellowship and preaching exist. The Berlin theologian in his "Der Christliche Glaube" connected that with all the traditional, even with the Lutheran church tenets, that is to say, as far as he could make them fit willy-nilly.

Is it surprising that in the rest of the nineteenth century we meet with a veritable flood of pseudo-Lutheran "experience" and "life" religions, "regeneration" dogmatics, "Christian-ego" dogmatics, and what not?⁶

In the Old Country a certain miracle had happened alongside. Before our first semi-centenary saw its end in 1827, the strongly emotional, unclear, yet also hopeful general revival movement after the Napoleonic Wars had begun to concentrate and deepen and to pour its waters also into Lutheran channels. For Scandinavia take Schartau (Sweden). The German Lutheran reawakening was in part inaugurated by the first Lutheran Free Church Movement, indeed a notable fact. The first courageous steps into freedom's air were taken in Prussia's Silesia in opposition to King Frederick William III. This happened when men of Breslau in 1817 rejected joint communion with the Reformed as proposed by the King, who was trying to inaugurate his Union Church.

Point 3b. The following half-century, 1827-1877, brings our total third Reformation Century, from 1777 on, to its close.

The struggle in Silesia continued its blessed course. Amidst heavy persecutions, after the Union Church had become a matter of royal fiat in 1830, there resulted independent congregations around Breslau, but also elsewhere in Prussia. They were fighting for the inherited faith and clinging to the Lutheran Confessions. These free congregations succeeded in securing a royal patent from a new King and then banded together in the first free synod in 1845. What got into their way and prevented their reaching greater sections of the population was not only government resistance, but also, as usual, a rival middle-of-the-road movement soon utilizing the Breslau initiative. The so-called "Vereinslutheraner" claimed that true Lutherans could stay in the Union State Church if only they continued in a protesting state and for this purpose joined together in special societies and also issued conscientious literature. In spite of a considerable effort, blessed, we have no doubt, in many respects, the end was the lost cause.

This half-century could have witnessed a tremendous Lutheran Free Church in a compact territory, in Northern Bavaria, if worldly wisdom had not triumphed once more; to put it concretely, if it had not been for Dr. Adolf von Harless, who was one of the most able of the Erlangen type of Lutheran scholars and a whole lot better than the colleagues of his who mixed much of Schleiermacher with their newly awakened confessional Lutheran consciousness. The Neuendettelsau Loehe movement might have become free from being somehow harnessed to the devious policies of the State if Dr. von Harless, of early Erlangen fame, had not now been called from Saxony to Munich to head the consistory of the new post-Napoleonic Bavarian state church and to keep everything in it docilely lumped together. Thus the fact we meet ever anew is that more or less dedicated conservative leaders, by putting up with Liberals, became the great obstacle to Confessional or truly ecumenical Lutheranism and spelled outwardly its doom. This sounds a major warning to America's present Lutherland.

Though straight-forward return to a truly Lutheran church was prevented from becoming an issue for the larger circle of pious Germans, nevertheless smaller Lutheran Free Churches continued to spring up. First in order is Friedrich Brunn's venture at Steeden (Hesse Nassau), 1846. He rather soon became C.F.W. Walther's co-worker to gain pious students for the expanding Missouri Synod. A few years after Steeden there was the separation in Baden. Then at the beginning of the seventies it happened that in Saxony a Laymens' Luther League called pastors of their own. When they linked up with Hesse-Nassau in 1876, the Ev.-Lutheran Free Church in Saxony and other States resulted(thence Georg Stoeckhardt). We note in this connection: Even at places where the Prussian or Baden or Hesse-Nassau type of union was not introduced, that is to say where the territorial churches had retained the exclusive title Lutheran, as in Saxony or Thuringia, the Church's Confessions had become mere historical landmarks. A fictitious historical and legal claim was assiduously upheld. The fraud was perpetrated ever anew by still mentioning the Lutheran Confessions at ordination. It became customary to accept the ordination vow as being binding only in so far as the individual conscience and the so-called scientific outlook was willing to go along with the Confessions' tenets. Dr. John Tietjen's book "Which Way to Lutheran Unity?" (Concordia, 1966) suggests that it's enough for a united Lutheranism if all Synods officially recognize the Lutheran Confessions as norm, this to be featured in pastoral call and ordination. This plan and plea unfortunately is made to an order very old. It undid all European territorial Lutheran churches after Enlightenment and in particular when there had been an upsurge of faith alongside of the strong currents of denial. That such a hopeless endeavor can lay claim to be considered a serious production is only due to the abstraction of merely dealing with the surface of the American Lutheran bodies and their unification efforts and leaving out of consideration, either through sagacity or ignorance, the determining European patterns.

In Germany we must take into account that alongside of this destruction of Confessional Lutheranism by stealth -- which was undoing the grand Awakening and its truly surprising literature -- new union arrangements, coming in after the Prussian successes in 1866, caused also the Hermannsburg, Hannoverian and Lower and Upper Hessian Free Churches to spring up before the second half of our third count came to a close in 1877. A peculiar Romantic High Church influence, elevating the Church's pastor against the State's prince, in some instances played a part.

Meanwhile both "Vereinsluthertum" and some notable territorial Lutheran Unification Efforts, launched against Prussia by state church Lutherans in 1866, could not prevent the main current of subsequent theology from turning toward a sort of Social Kingdom Gospel, headed by Bonn's, later Goettingen's university professor Albrecht Ritschl, to whom we referred previously. Lutheran historicism took the place of the Scriptures and of the Lutheran Confessions. All territories and all universities were losing the last vestige of confessional control; and church attendance -- which had surprisingly revived in pious areas, especially also in the areas of The Lutheran Awakening -- was again going down soon to approach the sombre present official statistics of 1-4% of church members at all interested in church, and only a tiny fraction of these registering as communicants.

Point 4a. Our fourth count comprises the next full century from 1877 till today, with of course the additional 8 years up to 1977 taken into the bargain.

I shall once more split it up. We turn to the first half, 1877-1927. Ritschlian or sophisticatedly cultural, historically-minded Liberalism was by this time going all lengths. Closer by than Hegel were Kant and Schleiermacher. Then, through the shock of the lost World War I, the beginning of Europe's downfall, ascended a challenging changeling. Or, to put it differently, Janus-faced ego-philosophy turned to the left and presented its other face, known to few,

the hidden negative counterpart to the sanguine cultural religiousness that had smiled on Europe before. In this connection we usually speak of Existentialism because only "existence in this moment" is said to count. Here walked forward Karl Barth. He utilized the critical anti-bourgeois approach to the full, but added higher talk of revelation and of church and even of confession than had been heard in the Ritschl and Schleiermacher era, yet all this under the sway of the hour, the dictate of the moment, which precisely once more handed all over to religious man's decision. While Barth attributed every second move to man as God's partner, he reserved every primary move to God. This general pattern shoved aside the distinctions between Law and Gospel, also between church concerns and state concerns. In Swiss Reformed fashion he commanded the church to move into Simon-pure politics, always anti-bourgeois. Territorial church Lutherans placed some stock in the new fashion as offsetting secularism.

The unionizing effects of "Life and Word" (Stockholm, 1925), in fact of the total Westerly oriented Ecumenical Movement, were keenly felt in defeated Germany, and the Lutheran World Convent came into being both along with, and slightly against, the general Ecumenical Movement. In Russia, and through Russia, Bolshevism had destroyed much of Lutheran congregational life east of Germany, and the literary Luther Renaissance, which gradually got closer to Luther, but remained far from Scripture, was for the scholars. On the congregational level irremediable losses continued.

Point 5b. Here we enter on the second half of the fourth total count, after the Formula of Concord, which began with 1927 and, if God wills, goes on to 1977.

When Adolf Hitler from 1927 on ascended to power, seizing control in 1933, the first inklings of an ensuing totalitarian state were registered. The *Kirchen-kampf* followed in the thirties under the joint leadership of Martin Niemoeller and Karl Barth. Though there

was some truth in the Theses of Barmen (1934), the theological result was a weird amalgam. Reformed, even Modernist Enthusiasm was mixed with Pietism and also with the new approach to the Lutheran Confession which, issuing from the more technical Luther Renaissance, for some time already was moving the minds of a lot of the good men who now called themselves Confessionals, not only Confessors. Objecting clergy succeeded in getting considerable attendance at services and protest meetings. Thus they blocked Hitler's early church plans, until things again changed rapidly.

World War II at its end, in 1945, spelled out enormous casualties, the uprooting of some 14,000,000 Germans out of ancestral lands East of the present Germanies, including about one half of all the members of that largest Lutheran Free Church sur-named Breslau. Literally all members of the German-speaking Lutheran Free Church formerly in Poland, if they escaped death, were transplanted. About twelve million Germans who moved West settled in the Federal Republic of Germany, increasing suddenly by a rough fourth the population, where millions of family quarters had been destroyed by carpet bombing.

By way of explaining my own life-interest in all these happenings I may be permitted to explain that in August, 1939, just before the declaration of War, I was inadvertently cut off from England and placed back into Germany. I devoted a whole series of German articles in Concordia Theological Monthly (1939, 1934 and 1935) to German church developments in Hitler's days, and I also wrote a number of special articles on Karl Barth's neo-Liberal, semi-political theology, commencing a series in *lutherischer rundblick* 1967 and, after a break, now bringing the close. I need not in addition be explicit on the claims of German church-rebirth in the middle of this century. Suffice it, then, to underscore that the resistance movement was indeed heroic, but that it was on the whole much more Lutheran in Norway than in Germany. After the Second World War the seizure of power (*Machtubernahme*) in the churches by the gentlemen who had resisted the

Hitler government installed two German factions as victors, one Barthian, the other more Pietist or Liberal than Lutheran. The whole Restoration was far removed from serious Lutheran Confessionalism and, as to possibilities of reaching people, it was totally unrealistic. It impressed American Lutherans, even Missouri's headquarters, far more than was justified. In the prosperity period that followed, this Restoration rather soon succumbed both to the unchecked secularism of the population and, surprisingly, even to the radicalism of Bultmann, of God-is-dead theology, and of semi-Marxist sociology. The Ecumenical Movement gained universal control, as Bishop Schoeffel of Hamburg had predicted it to me before the end of the War. Germany got what it was destined to get since Prussia's efforts, it realized one all-comprising union church, called Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland, E.K.i.D. This succeeded in overcoming the last resistance against wiping out the active significance of the Lutheran Confessions. The tragedy reached the last stage these last years. The antics of church leaders dare not deceive us. While the responsible men of the allegedly Lutheran territorial churches have so played down all doctrinal differences, also with reference to the Lord's Supper, that they can just about unite with anybody any time and people do not know the least bit of doctrine, the Western bishops surnamed Lutheran had in-between discovered that it would be wise to hoist Luther's flag over the I.K.i.D. through an amended Augsburg Confession. But they are not themselves serious with the ruse. I just saw an excellent article appear on Hamburg written by an ALC American who had been leased, as it were, to work in that territorial church. Theodore R. Baudler significantly entitled his observation "The Dying Church" (in "Lutherans Alert", September 1969). By the way, Stockholm in Sweden is worse. As I get the manuscript ready for the printers, a very knowledgeable article written by the new editor of the "Springfielder", Dr. David P. Scaer, entitled "Reflections on a European Trip" (1969, No. III, pp. 15-23), crosses my desk, which greatly contributes to familiarity with the real situations over here. In recognizing all

this, a door may have been opened for you to appreciate both the Official Overture of the Lutheran Free Churches directed to Missouri at Denver (appearing under the signature of the Brazilian District in Supplement to the WORKBOOK), and the private Earnest Fraternal Appeal coming from Queensland, Australia, to which we Europeans added our signatures (published by BALANCE). Both treatises contained expositions of the state of the Lutheran World Federation as it is dominated by these mere relics or pretensions of churches, the main charter members.

The year 1969 at long last has rigidly separated Russian occupied East Germany totally from West Germany as far as church bodies are concerned. This is excepting, in a way, the Roman Catholic Church, which is rather small in Middle Germany (incorrectly called East Germany). Over there, in the German Democratic Republic, totalitarianism rules yet far more successfully than it did in German lands in Hitler's early days. The folk church no longer baptizes and buries the majority of citizens, and the frustrated church administrators are in the throes of deciding whether finally to give up the hope that the Soviet type of State might continue to provide education in theology for their clergy and even to pay the salary of pastors out of general society funds, as was customary before the Soviets came, and tit for tat to take into the bargain increasing Communist indoctrination and control of the clergy -- or to break with the Constantine Settlement and risk a free church in real battle as to integrity. Our Free Church brethren have their own small seminary in Leipzig and never received a penny from the worldly powers, and yet exist.

Before this devastating separation into two different societies, one officially Communist, the other in the Western sense Liberal, grew on them there had been Free Church action. The several historic Lutheran Free Churches with quite different antecedents -- some divisive indeed with reference to doctrine -- had succeeded, from 1945 to 1949, in establishing mutual altar and pulpit fellowship on the basis of

Scripture and the Confessions. They produced genuine these of agreement, "Einigungssatze", quite alive to today's issues -- one of which was previously quoted. In 1947/48 they set up a Seminary (Lutherisch Theologische Hochschule) at Oberursel, suburb of Frankfurt/Main (average 40 students), which was very soon recognized by the Hessian State as being conducted on the prescribed German (graduate) university level. The Lutheran Free Churches at once jointly absorbed and incorporated a mission which some of them had built up with German headquarters at Bleckmar. It counts some 20,000 baptized Bantus in South Africa. These churches have had for some years one of their men, Pastor Hans-Lutz Poetsch of Bremen, function as director of the German Lutheran Hour, in part at American expense. Alongside, on a totally independent basis, an internationally recognized theological quarterly of theirs is being published, *Lutherischer Rundblick*, which now offers 340 pages a year (Lutheraner-Verlag, Wiesbaden, \$2.50 annually via Concordia Publishing House, appearing since 1953). Of late, learned men from quarters still in the territorial churches seem keen on offering their literary assistance, primarily for reviews. The Lutheran Free Churches of Germany are at present in the process of being fashioned and fused into one body. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod helped the Ev.-Lutheran Free Church (of Saxony and other States) a lot in decades before the last War, and for a while following World War II all of these Free Churches were the recipients of special attention. This created a major possibility, namely to start the Oberursel Seminary on magnificent grounds scheduled to be wholly donated. For all this loyalty and love the Lutheran Free Churches will ever be thankful. But from 1945 on, through her own ever growing doctrinal deterioration, Missouri also began to develop into a major danger for the Lutheran orthodoxy of the Free Churches and thus for Lutheran or truly ecumenical cause in the Old World. A singular opportunity after the War was foreclosed by St. Louis strategy.⁷ Now the ALC fellowship is a deadly blow.

The resumption or rather the continuation of

meticulous Liberal learning at the universities, the sky-high income of the territorial churches secured through 8 or 10% of the total income tax state-levied on practically the whole population (as divided up between Roman Catholics and Protestants), the role which the Ecumenical world accorded to the German church leaders as representatives of "the better Germany" -- all this taken together has contributed nothing to make the post-Constantine corpse alive. As stated, the transient emphasis on fundamental doctrines after the miseries and humiliations of the War quickly subsided and reverted into the opposite. Neo-Orthodoxy, Barth-like, turned into what was related by origin, into Neo-Liberalism, Bultmann-like-Germany, after getting on its feet in the Federal Republic, again became a great exporter of thought. Its present theology is mostly anthropology -- doctrine not of and concerning God, but of and concerning man. This is the inevitable clarification and final logical upshot if history is all of one cloth and God cannot get in anyway. Also in America the this-worldly historico-critical method can only end in humanism unabashed. The great Unknown may, however, play a mystical role to compensate. That is, it can play on my self-understanding "in the existential moments", owing to some "universe totality", and thus cause "fully-developed self-understanding." This irrationally but sanguinely is supposed to understand the other person as well. This sketches the line taken by Bultmann, Braun, Fuchs, even Ebeling in spite of Luther pretenses. But right here jump in the new socio-theologians, who comprise the Now-Generation or thought vanguard. If there is no message in truth directly from God, if Christ's divine person and intercessory work, all facts of salvation history just amount to so many fairy tales, but if, in spite of all, "this moment counts", in some strange way "touching the real man and somehow his neighbor", then I better not dream about self-realization in the fashion of the great past cultural theology of Germany, but I rather ought to get busy changing the world by a social overturn, let's frankly say, by a neo-Marxian revolution. Not only is there no Lutheran theological faculty left, among the scores

that are still state-maintained in the two Germanies, but even rock-bottom Christianity and central saving truth is generally not seriously on the program any more, and students of theology are to quite a large extent just neo-atheistic idealists. Often they are the main agitators of the APO and similar revolts. This extreme radicalization of theological thought, with whole groups of professors and students getting all out of bounds, is moving downward and invading the countless church-goers as far as they still attend in old and new gorgeously built edifices. Now what is here to be interspersed regarding the Evangelical Church Rally or Fair (Evangelischer Kirchentag). It began after the War as a sort of pietist and unionist get-together and was institutionalized on a huge scale in order to interest the layman. It has today deteriorated into mainly a huge profane debating society, with grotesque and repelling features.

The total offence to those still cherishing saving faith is so great that two organizations have sprung up to counteract the havoc that is being wrought. One is called Bekenntnisbewegung: "Kein anderes Evangelium", the other is known to add provincial names to the general title of "Kirchliche Sammlung um Schrift und Bekenntnis". The first achieves meetings in West Germany of between 10,000 and 20,000 lay people. The latter in 1963 at Sittensen, south of Hamburg, staged a "happening", the Kuenneth and Fuchs Debate having invited also protesting Scandinavians. There assembled between 1,000 and 2,000 pastors and students, both pro and con. Spectacles of this pronounced type are occasionally possible. The greatest obstacle is the lack, yea, unthinkableness, of functioning congregations in late territorial churchdom. If the pastor takes a bold step he is the proverbial captain-without a company. The other tremendous roadblock is the ineradicable predilection for the customary university training of pastors, which extends into some Free Churches. Even in cases where students come from Christian homes they are only too often, if not almost with certainty, turned into atheistic or at least totally heterodox persons by the time they're through

with what you in America would call seminary training. We of the Lutheran Free Churches are in close touch with the new protesting groups and their aspirations, and the Kirchliche Sammlungen are trying to get the help of Oberursel in some singular way for students they know. But it takes more than a moon trip, it almost demands the transition from one solar system to another to draw Christian people, be they high or low, into freedom -- there to take their stand with a determined Lutheranism which dares no longer to be dependent on and subservient to the outdated state or territorial church pattern. We should have better hours for paid broadcasting from Luxembourg or elsewhere to address the situation more pointedly. More notable personages than ever before now demand of us that we speak out, especially since the great public debate about the State levying taxes for the "churches" in "churchless society". But this requires men and money, and though financially independent, we are as yet very few people when figured against a 70 million nation West and East. Total chances are not too great. Nationwide apostasy is usually not to be retrieved. Infection easily enters our own ranks especially through higher learning. Among the various pious groups a theology of high-strung feeling, but not one of the means of grace as operating under Bible control, is still the most popular factor. Nevertheless it is to be reported that thoughtful men all over the once Lutheran countries are bewailing the Enthusiasts' separation of Spirit and Word and telling us that there is hope for Pietist conventicles only in a return to the Lutheran Confessions and in attempting the seeming impossible, of establishing responsible congregations based on rock bottom. The great morning and noon of the Reformation time is fully spent. In the Saxon and Thuringian lands where Luther spent most of his life Communist totalitarianism rules. Since all continental education is state-ridden -- which, I am sorry to say, is now increasingly being duplicated also in your country once intent on a new start -- ideologies come down from high seats and are advertised unabashed as the only religion there is. As this turmoil goes on we are closer to currents than ever. May God give

us new faithfulness and join by grace courage to depth, and may our Lutheran Free Church brethren under Communist rule some day, with or without martyrdom, reach out toward the more remote Slav world and even the Far East.

Point 6. This item deals with Scandinavia and also casts a passing glance at the rest of the world.

In church affairs, Scandinavia has (especially since Reformation times until of late) been an annex to Germany. These countries even have this day direct state churches, the King in parliament (in Finland it is the President and his Cabinet) ruling also over the church. This atavism is more than just an outward anomaly. Couple this with the lack of Roman Catholicism opposition, and you can take for granted an even more virulent secularization in Sweden and Denmark than in Germany. There are, of course, some shades in theology which show independence, for instance men arising against Bultmann's form criticism at Upsala (Riesenfels, Gerhardsson). All over Europe comprehensive historical researches are being carried on, and some, of course, are truly useful along Reformation lines. All this offers little real help for souls. The state-church pattern, which beckons worldly society, even the public press, to rule in the church, and above all the deplorable state of the theological faculties of the state universities, preclude a turn to recovery.

For three reasons Norway may be termed as yet a partial exception. First through lay attachment to the *ecclesiolae*, to the powerful circles for home edification and foreign missions, evolved during a century. Secondly, already back in 1908, these same circles, no doubt encouraged by the remarkable Kuiper venture in Reformed Holland, built up against faith-destroying university theology their Free Theological Faculty, MENIGHEITFAKULTETEN. This school, which naturally did not readily turn to unabashed Rationalist late-comers or to the Neo-Orthodox or Marxist avant-couriers, is educating three-fourths or more of all

pastors. But it seems very dangerous that the Free Faculty is to move on the grounds of the State University. Let them, yes, let us all watch most carefully the historico-critical method. Thirdly Norway is in a unique position because during Nazi-occupation resistance against forcing the church in line was fortunately based directly on outspoken words of Luther and on his doctrine demanding separating the two kingdoms even at the peril of martyrdom. This Luther stance is still affectionately remembered. Here, then, there are some reserves, in part at least still screened from leveling world opinion by a local language. It is good that not too long ago Dr. Robert Preus spent some time in his ancestors' country.

We have left out of consideration the great *Roman* and *Reformed* communities as well as the whole Orthodox world. Currents there have always affected those men and groups who dared to espouse in dead earnest the Lutheran Confessions and cherished them as being the pure exponents of the One Church's doctrine of SOLA GRATIA, FIDE, SCRIPTURA, SOLUS CHRISTUS. As to real minority group Lutherans, there are some in such countries where the Reformed or where one of the two types of Catholicism rule and in fact across all continents and in most countries. These scattered Lutherans in some places have congregations that bear all burdens and stand up for the saving issues solely by themselves. If you compare their honest numbers with the inflation practiced by the state and territorial church statisticians, relative justice demands, so it would seem to this writer, that you either multiply the former figures by thirty to fifty or you diminish, in the same proportion, the freak numbers of the latter. Some of the lesser groups are in churches closely connected with the European Lutheran Free Church people, as in Australia, South America, South Africa, not to mention some foreign missions. Here, too, Missouri of late is undoing and unmaking, so that help has to be given⁸.

One thing seems plain to many. In the long run you cannot maintain a profound confessional position,

requiring a centrally oriented theology of ecumenical sweep, without adequate theological center. The institutions in outlying countries, supported by few, require the help of places more favorably located for Lutheran lore and having ampler means to support far-reaching programs. Dare they be betrayed by Confessional Lutheranism where for the last century it was strongest?

Oberursel is in a new strategic position owing to the cross-currents around, but is suffering internally as to confessional depth and missionary efficiency from a lack which ought not to be in view of the great sister churches, viz., ample man power in reserve for vital but exacting divisions of study. (Choice limited to some 200 pastors is not enough in a country of ancient learning.)

All told, the fullness of divine truth coupled with the loyalty of a great visible church living up to God's holy means and marks once upon a time ascended in Germany and surrounding countries like the sun arising in his splendor. The light long tarried, then hovered undecidedly, but it has now almost vanished behind clouds close to the horizon line. Nevertheless it is not yet total night, and there's work to do. Can realigned Confessional Lutheranism in America be a factor again even for Germany, even for Scandinavia, and for outflung posts, before it indeed is too late?

This, then, takes us to America.

FOOTNOTES

Owing to the "Hilfsbuch zum Lutherstudium" by Kurt Aland (1957) one can use various major editions for quotes, since all have been collated. St L means St. Louis German edition of Luther's works; WA equals Weimar edition; ff. means: "and sections following."

1) The wording of the two points that follow in the

lecture is to a large extent taken from this author's presentation in A LAST WORD OF OVERSEAS DELEGATES, an overture which had been addressed to the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod prior to Denver and mailed to all the chief men, but was not brought to the delegates' notice.

- 2) See WA 30^{III} pp. 86 ff. The German Gottingen edition of the Book of Concord prints the Schwabach Article XII alongside of Augsburg VII. The situation of Summer 1528 at Schwabach could also not have been more tense as to principles. Since Speyer II, first part of that year, the question was whether the Sacramentarians or deniers of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper and of the centrality of the Means of Grace could be admitted into the instrument of defense against Romanist violence, the Smalcald League. This Electoral Saxony and Georg of Brandenburg/Ansbach negated at Schwabach (suburb of Nuremberg). In this they followed Luther, who had been adamant against a league which would have burdened them with glossing over false enthusiast doctrine, for he had even put it this way: "He is no less unchristian who denies one article of faith than Arius", who denied all (St L XVI, 518-520).
- 3) Luther's "Vom Abendmahl Christi, Bekenntnis" 1528, in its concluding Symbolical part, had under the head of the Third Article also contained the following words on the Church (what follows is my translation, on the basis of St L XX, 1101 # 533): "...so that also under the Pope, the Persians, the Tartars, and all around, Christendom is scattered bodily, but brought together spiritually in one Gospel and faith, under one Head who is Jesus Christ". Precisely this Una Sancta take-off makes Luther unyielding with regard to the church in action, the visible church, requiring that the whole of divine doctrine, particularly also on the Lord's Supper, be honored there. Switching to the date 1529, everybody knows the words of the Third Article: "... and preserves it in union

with Jesus Christ in the one true faith" and the similar ## 51 and 53 of the Creed in the Large Catechism: "...pure saints. It is called together by the Holy Spirit in one faith, mind, and understanding...Through it he gathers us, using it to teach and preach the Word". It was during those Augsburg days that Luther from the Coburg in his "Vermahunug an die Geistlichen" used the terms of Schwabach. He lists "the pieces" (stuck), which must be treated in the true / rechten / Christian Church, which we deal with (WA 30⁺⁺ 345).

In back of the Martin Luther more or less contemporaneous with Augsburg 1530 is the Luther who broke through immeasurable spiritual obstacles to become the Reformer. It is this "total Luther hitherto" who was faithfully reflected by Melancthon when he penned the Confession, the Luther whom God had made divinely certain of absolute justification freely given by virtue of the Word promising unlimited grace in Christ Jesus. This in the early part of 1518 had involved his great, final step beyond St. Augustine. The now adequate understanding of Rom. 1: 17 was accompanied at the same time by consciously substituting "Scripture Only" for the Pope's or Roman Church's authority. From 1518 on the "troika of Christ Only," the SOLA three times over one and inseparable, was at once in motion together -- even though the Pope and Councils were still a sort of nightmare for the Monk Martin for more than a year, till he burned the Pope's anathema and the canon laws at the end of 1520. Luther's alternative was "vera et falsa ecclesia". The true church as it can be ascertained by the Means of Grace, he tells Ambrosius Catharinus in 1521, must "concordare", agree, not in outward customs, but in regard to these signs, namely the Means of Grace, the Gospel, the Bread / Lord's Supper /, and Baptism (WA 720, 32 ff.). The antichrist, seated in the outward church, had long come into full view. Just because free grace is absolutely central, therefore not an isolated teaching concerning justifi-

fication provides the yardstick to discern whether God or Satan is teaching, but the authoritative book of Christ. Even as in it everything is by God, as chief author, connected with the center Christ given in every Scripture, so the latter's plain wording seen in its genuine context -- remember Rom. 1: 17 -- is at once decisive. There is such a thing as divine fixed wording, ius divinum, namely, the Scriptures. Even Rom. 16: 17 is quickly cited. During the years after the 1519 Leipzig Debate and the Resolutions Lutheraniae Luther insisted on the total view of the One Church of all believers which, since the Word with its Sacraments alone creates, upholds, distinguishes and governs it, must never be slighted. As to visible, practiced church fellowship, it's given its due by pure doctrine unanimously confessed. If in the early twenties Luther's preaching on the Church reaches its peak in lucid, powerful presentation, he never dropped below that level later on. This is accurately reflected in what our footnotes 4 and 5 present.

If possible the reader should compare in "Festschrift fur Gunter Dehn", 1957, on pp. 145-166, the article "Zur Entstehung von Luther's Kirchenbegriff -- ein kritischer Beitrag zu dem gleichnamigen Aufstaz von Karl Holl" by Hans Joachim Iwand. -- Jaroslav Pelikan in "Luther for an Ecumenical Age" has recognized on p. 203: "That principle /of Luther/, however, was not simply the one which Harnack identified, 'that grace and faith are inseparably interrelated,' but the more subtle and complex one, that faith and the Word are inseparably interrelated, even and also in the means of grace 'faith builds and is founded on the Word of God rather than God's Word on faith'." Exactly. "Lutherischer Rundblick" 1957, pp. 102-115, reproduces the first part of a paper presented by the present writer to theologians at Arnoldshain on "Einheit der Kirche und Ienheit der Lehre". This presentation, after discussing Augsburg Confession VII/VIII, is supple-

mented by 5 pages of Luther definitions. A. Ayal Uppala of Finland in Vol. 65 No. 3 (July 1968) of "Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly" presented an article on "It Is Enough - Satis Est" with chief emphasis directed toward the use of "Gospel" in Augsburg VII. It abounds in irrefutable quotations showing that the Confessions being of one mind with detailed statements of Luther's have at Augsburg and throughout demanded full doctrinal unity, no less. Uppala finds it advantageous to draw on Werner Elert's chapters 20 and 21 of "Morphologie des Luthertums" (American edition by CPH: "Structures of Lutheranism"). -- Although Werner Elert himself neith relished nor totally comprehended the privotal function of the NOTAE of the UNA SANCTA governed by Scripture, he did a splendid job in establishing the unmitigated demand of pure doctrine involved in what Luther taught and what was at Augsburg summarized. His # 20 of Chapter IV offers additional help in going back also to the Ansbacher Anschlag of 1524, (s. German edition p. 232) where the transition from the hidden total church of Eph. 1 (die "allein in eynigkeit des glaubens versamlet ist") to the local church, charged to live up to Matt. 18: 18-20 ("eusserliche, leybliche und sunderliche individual i kirche und versammlung"), is of the same unlabored simplicity as the transition from # 1 to # 2 in Augsburg VII. Another aid given by Elert is his reference to Albrecht Ritschl's 1876 essay "Die Entstehung der Lutherischen Kirsche" (Ges. Augs. I, 1893, p. 191). Elert shows this out and out Liberal (who totally rejected the vicarious Satisfaction and substituted a Social Gospel Kingdom) to have imputed all conviction of pure doctrine having to rule in the outward church to Melanchthon, not Luther. But Melanchthon himself, Ritschl believes, relented in Augsburg VII -- all of which is trumpety pure and simple (see Elert German edition p. 235 ff.).

- 4) A fine exposition by Luther on Eph. 4: 1-6, the only scripture passage quoted in Augsburg VII,

is extant in a sermon for the 14th Sunday after Trinity offered by "Crucigers Sommerpostille", 1544 (WA 22, 299 27-38 and 300 1-8; St L XII 898 f., ## 22-24). Covering all main lines of Luther's church doctrines, salient statements are the following: "St. Paul shows and teaches which is the true rechte Christian Church and whereby it is to be recognized, viz., that there is no more than one Church or People of God on earth, which has one and the same German only, "einerley" faith, baptism, one and the same confession of God the Father, Christ, etc., and which jointly in one accord eintrechtiglich clings to the same and persists in it. In this church everyone must be found...who wants to be saved...Therefore this unity of the Church cannot be called or be this, viz., to have and to go by one and the same outward government, law, or ordinance, or church ceremonies...For this reason it is called one holy Catholic or Christian Church, which term catholic signifies one pure and unadulterated doctrine of the Gospel and one and the same outward confession of the same in all places of the world and at all times -- irrespective of whatever inequality and difference there may happen to be otherwise, as to outward bodily life and outward orders, customs, and ceremonies. -- Contrariwise those who do not live up to this unity of doctrine and faith in Christ, but cause divisions and offenses contrary to the same (as St. Paul says, Rom. 16) by their doctrines of men and self-chosen works, concerning which they hotly contend and want to force them on all Christians, are not the true rechte Church of Christ nor members thereof...For which cause every one is in duty bound, by God's command, to avoid them and shy away from them." our translation

- 5) In a letter to two pastors of 1528 Luther took radical anti-papism severely to task, castigating the claim of enthusiast groups that everything coming via the mediaeval papal church had to be

rejected. As he does so often, he points out even the means of grace and the Bible to have come that way to the Reformers' cleansed church. At the same time he demands regard for souls to be liberated, not to be deprived of what they still have. This, of course, would apply to the extrication of children of God also from the various types of congregational groups espousing Enthusiast teaching. What he drives at, he illustrates by means of a story of two students with rapiers, walking through the dark Thuringian Forest. A bear met and seized the one. The other stabbed at the bear wildly and by mistake killed his brother. Luther's comment is that "a careful, modest spirit is necessary" to come to the rescue of believers in Christ who outwardly got under Antichrist or Babylonian rule (Von der Wiedertaufe an zwei Pfarrherren, WA 26, 149; St L XVII 219f).

- 6) Against this type of Lutheranism mixed with mysticism hoping for progress by science, Francis Pieper justly directed his three tomes, although it may seem that at the outset he ought to have analysed Descartes, the Empiricists, and Kant. Outside of Missouri even a man like Michael Reu was not totally disabused of placing too much stock in great subjective German Lutherans. This in 1938 made him go along also with the Pittsburg Agreement. Your Eastern schools soon swung in to travel along Erlangen paths. Jaroslav Pelikan, in "From Luther to Kierkegaard", placed himself at the head of Middle West Lutheranism's tail-end feat in the procession moving back to Kantian "from man to man" and quite naturally lining up with contemporary culture. Members of the St. Louis faculty, lacking the combination of dogmatical and historical perceptivity, followed him far too readily.

In the "Register zu D.F. Piepers Dogmatik" (1928) there is almost a quarter of a page of entries on Schleiermacher, all of them important. But Adolf Hoenecke in his first volume goes to great pains to present the development of the 19th century schools of religious thought. However,

meritorious as it was that he treated detailed aspects of the development of the Prolegomena, he somehow was rarely bought and hardly ever digested by Missourians. Perhaps not even many Wisconsin men assimilated his historical points.

7) In 1947 a group of roughly 100,000 so-called German Russians represented by an Oberpfarrer Baumann and several colleagues negotiated with Vice-President Heinrich Stallmann, Dr. Kirsten, and me at the Kaiserstuhl of Heidelberg in the presence of a representative of Dr. John W. Behnken. They wanted to join the Ev.-Luth. Free Church on condition of having the salaries of a number of pastors paid. We arrived at full doctrinal agreement, including assent to our "Einigungssatze". A German-Hungarian group and other exiles were waiting. It would have been a movement of several hundred thousand actual churchgoers, although scattered across the Federal Republic, entailing no doubt great losses in the efforts to organize. Still multitudes of children would have been saved for the Christian faith, for which there was no hope in churchless atmosphere of territorialism. The money could not at once be raised by our struggling congregations, but would have been only a trifle compared with what Missouri at that time was pouring into the Bavarian church and other territorial churches. Still there was no action from St. Louis. Thus Oberpfarrer Baumann and friends, novices to the German situation, were themselves, together with their pious groups, though reared in the Catechism of Luther, pushed into injurious alignment.

8) Everybody knows that the 210 North Broadway Mission Board has been going along with conceptions, the opposite of the former Confessional principle, following C.T.C.T. in twisting Augsburg Confession VII and living by the Mission affirmations. As a result there is not only strange cooperative work going on, for instance in Mexico City, but the foreign mission centers are being delivered

into false ecumenism and will soon be irretrievably tied up. First the Japanese work was abandoned to a merger, next our Indian church was by Dr. Martin Luther Kretzmann and others directed into various ecumenical entanglements and has now formally applied for membership in the Lutheran World Federation, even President Dr. J. Preus taking no counteraction. At the same time the once potent Mother Synod cannot even send out missionaries for lack of funds. The German professor for Missions at the University of Tübingen, P. Beyerhaus, in "Humanisierung - einzige Hoffnung der Welt" (1969) has just pointed out that all these ecumenical structures are inimical to preaching Christ to lost mankind, increasingly substituting for Gospel work a syncretistic humanism. If this disintegration goes on one wonders who can salvage at least parts of what was built up on C.W. Walther's principles. Can Wisconsin do it or a realignment? Or is there any hope at all of repentance in Missouri headquarters?

(Ed. note: Lectures II and III will appear in next issue.)

"LUTHERANISM AND THE DEFENSE OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"

Dr. J. W. Montgomery's Volume I of Crisis in Lutheran Theology was published by Baker Book House Company of Grand Rapids in 1967. The undersigned reviewed this in The Lutheran Synod Quarterly, Fall, 1967, pages 11-23. The review eventually reached the desk of Dr. Montgomery, who was at that time a visiting professor in France. He kindly wrote me a letter, discussing my review and requesting that his remarks be published in our Quarterly. Unfortunately the letter was missent, and when it reached me I mislaid it, since at that time there was no room in the forthcoming Quarterly to publish it. After a regrettable long delay, I am pleased to publish it for study

by our readers.

I would urgently recommend all readers to purchase Dr. Montgomery's Crisis in Lutheran Theology, Volume I (or better yet, both volumes), and also to get the Fall, 1967, The Lutheran Synod Quarterly, copies of which are still available. This material would serve as excellent background, not only for understanding Dr. Montgomery's letter, but also for the Reformation Lectures he will deliver at Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, Minnesota, October 29 and 30, 1970. The general theme of these lectures will be, "Lutheranism and the Defense of the Christian Faith."

In my review I raised two points in particular to which Prof. Montgomery makes reference in his letter: I felt a little uneasy with some of the terminology used in his essay, "The Law's third use: Sanctification." Secondly, I expressed some misgivings regarding the use of analytical philosophy for the defense of orthodox Christianity.

Dr. Montgomery's remarks follow:

I hope that I do not imply in Essay V that the Law has the power to sanctify. I intended to make clear that without the Law sanctification is impossible (i.e., the Law is a necessary condition for the sanctification of sinners), but from this it does not follow that the Law is a sufficient condition for sanctification. Only the active power of the Holy Spirit produces the sanctified life. I think that a close reading of my Essay V will show that I do in fact set forth this confessional viewpoint clearly. Logically, of course, a condition for something is not the equivalent of the motivating agent in the achieving of it. Without a road-map I might never get to a city I am seeking, though the power to get there resides in my automobile. The map is the Law and the automobile is the H.S. working

through the Word; the city is the realm of sanctification.

Now as to the relevance of analytical philosophy for orthodox Christianity. You are quite right that most practicing analytical philosophers are non-Christian; but I maintain that this is not because of their verification technique -- it is in spite of it. They have simply not applied their philosophy to orthodox Christianity. They have assumed that in (validly) knocking down various shades of liberalism, they have destroyed meaningful Christian belief. We orthodox have aided and abetted this, as a matter of fact, by our neurotic fear of "philosophy" -- the fear that to reason in behalf of the faith is really to deny faith. Lutherans especially have been obscurantists in this regard; they have assumed that Luther opposed the unregenerate misuse of reason (see B. A. Gerish, Grace and Reason, Oxford University Press, which studies this issue in detail). Not only can the historical facts attesting our Lord's deity be verified, but the interpretations placed on these facts by Him and by His immediate followers can be shown to provide the only satisfactory explanations of these facts; i.e., both biblical fact and biblical interpretation are subject to positive verification tests. In several of my other writings I have shown concretely how such verification can be carried out. I would especially suggest that the following materials be consulted in this connection:

"History & Christianity" (His Magazine offprint, available from Reprints, 4605 Sherwood, Downers Grove, Illinois 60515).

The 'Is God Dead?' Controversy (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House), especially Chap. III.

"The Theologian's Craft: A Discussion of Theory Formation and Theory Testing in Theology", Concordia Theological Monthly, February, 1966.

"Toward a Christian Philosophy of History," in Carl F. H. Henry's Jesus of Nazareth: Saviour and Lord (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publishing Company).

"The Relevance of Scripture Today," in Merrill Tenney's The Living Word of Revelation (forthcoming from Zondervan Publishing House).

"Gordon Clark's Philosophy of History", in the forthcoming Festschrift for Clark published by Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Nutley, New Jersey.

"Tillic's Philosophy of History," in the latest issue of Lutheran Scholar.

I have no doubts that analytical philosophy is capable of misuse at the hands of orthodox Christians (as is any good thing in this sinful world); but I seriously question whether we Lutherans are going to make this mistake. Our more usual error is to shy away from any use of new ideas for fear that we will compromise the Gospel -- and maybe this is why our younger generations of theological students so frequently go to the other extreme and fall into heresies of one kind and another. I am in favor of using to the hilt and ad majorem gloriam Dei all truth -- and I try to give my students confidence in working with new ideas so that in contemporary "relevance" they stand second to none, and likewise in doctrinal solidity, for they become capable of maturely distinguishing the good from the bad in contemporary thought. The two bugaboos I continually fight are: the theological liberalism that allows the Word of God to be eaten up by unsound contemporary thinking; and the obscurantist orthodoxy that fears to incorporate the best of modern thought in the defence and proclamation of the faith.

Prof. B. W. Teigen

CORRECTIONS
for
Reformation Lecture I

- p. 1, add "1969" to the date in the second line of the Author's Note
- p. 6, line 7 from the bottom, insert "related" before "to a body"
- p. 21, line 5, "deviatedu" for "deviatesu"
- p. 23, line 2, "unflinching" for "flinching"
- p. 31, line 16, delete "work"
- p. 42, line 24, insert "(Konvent)" after "Convent"
- p. 48, line 9, delete "the"
- p. 50, line 10, insert "to" before "this day"
- p. 52, line 2, "centersu" for "center"

- p. 56, line 22, insert "Second Print," after "edition"
- p. 58, line 14 of f.n. #6, insert a comma after "procession"
- p. 59 line 4 from the bottom, capitalize the "A" in "affirmations"