

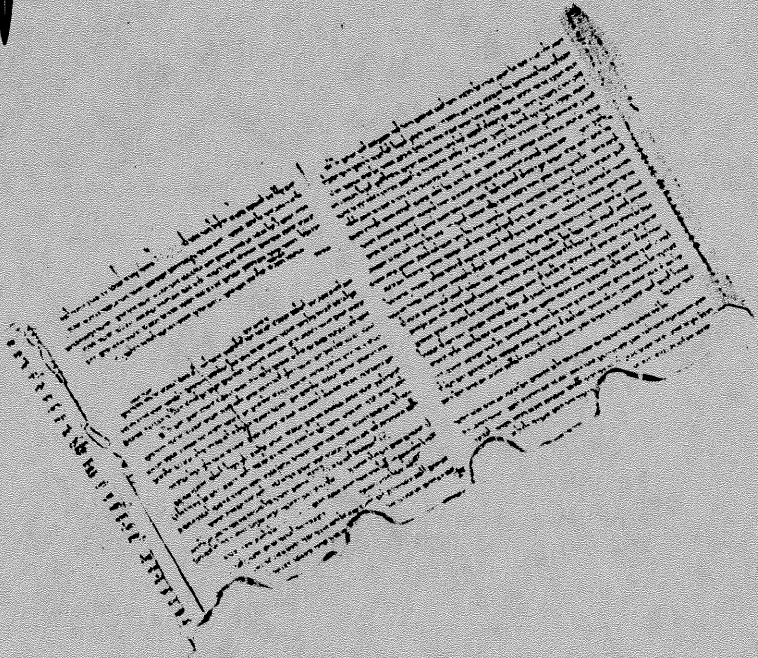
JUNE

1986

Volume XXVI

No. 2

ISSN 0360-9685



The
Lutheran
Synod
Quarterly

LUTHERAN SYNOD QUARTERLY

Theological Journal of the
Evangelical Lutheran Synod

Edited by the Faculty of
Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary
Mankato, Minnesota

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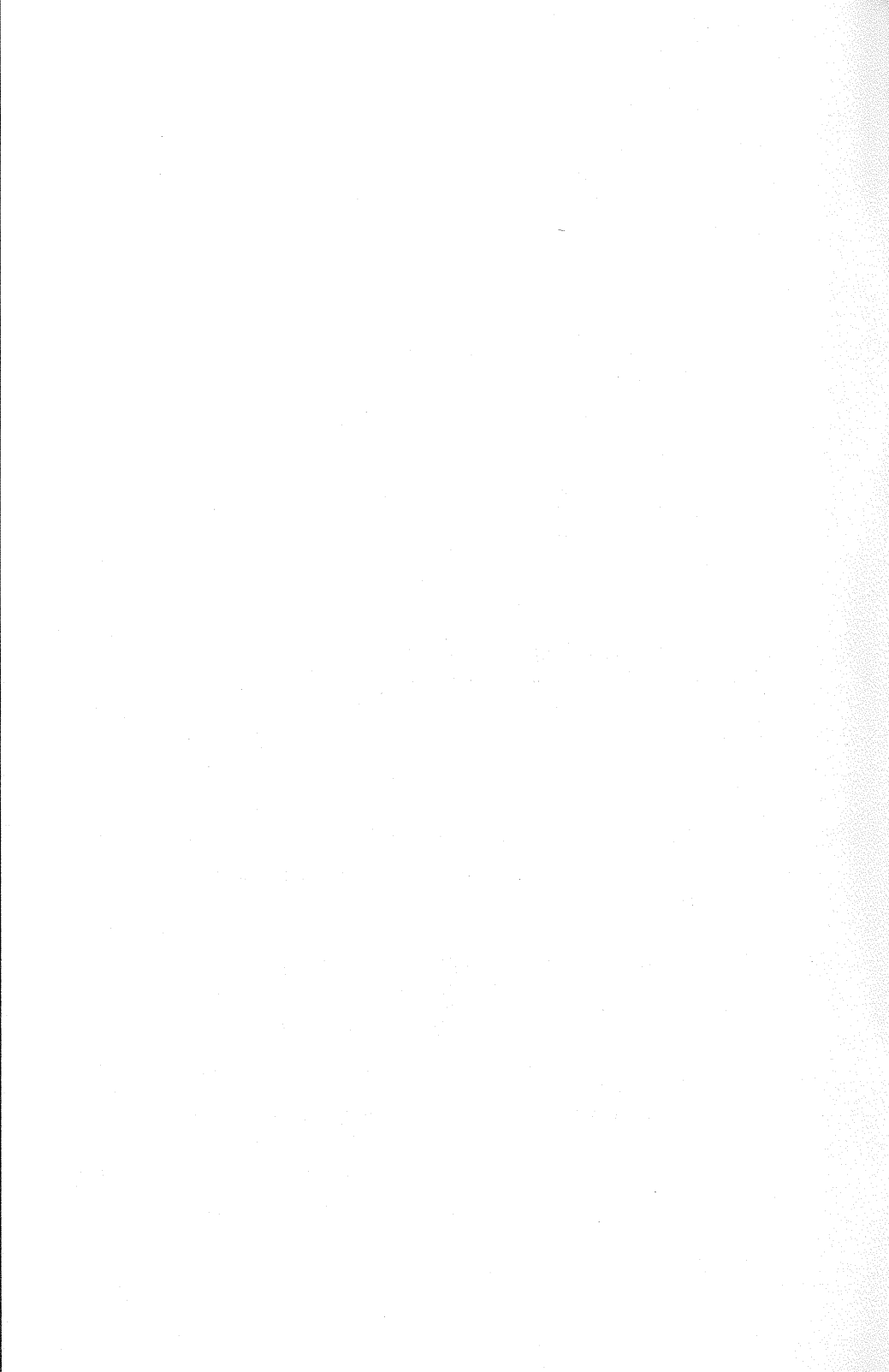
Subscription Price: \$6.00 per year

Address all subscriptions and all correspondence to:

LUTHERAN SYNOD QUARTERLY
Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary
447 North Division Street
Mankato, MN 56001

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Confessional sermon delivered to the Central-Southwest Circuits Pastoral Conference
May 19, 1986 -- Sioux Falls, South Dakota
Prof. Erling T. Teigen

I Timothy 4:11-16 (NIV)

Command and teach these things. Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity. Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching, and to teaching. Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you. Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

Dear Brothers in the Ministry, in Christ Jesus,
grace be unto you:

For most of us there are but two or three times a year when we come together and sit in the pew to be ministered to in confession, in preaching and in the Sacrament. And those of us who do not serve in parishes--even when we do sit in the pew, it is difficult for us to separate ourselves from the ministry to which we have been ordained. We are, most of us, in one way or another, the ones who do the ministering.

When we do sit in the pew as you do today, do we regard that as a step down from our usual position? Surely we do not. But we need to be

reminded. When a king invites guests to dine with him, he treats them as royalty. He serves the meal to them and becomes their servant. But he does not serve them with his own hands. He serves them through his douloi, his own slaves and servants. So this morning, as you sit in the pew for a change, at the couch before his banquet table--the pulpit--and as you kneel at his table from which he offers you his body and blood, remember that you are now the royal guests at this great feast, served hand and foot, in the person of others, but in reality by the hand of your Lord.

And what makes that picture the more remarkable is that in your ordinary daily lives you are not fellow royalty with the king, called from far away kingdoms to be his guests; you are the douloi, the servants of his own household who are elevated for a brief time to the great honor of being served hand and foot by others of his slaves. May the preaching of His word and His precious Body and Blood in the Holy Supper give you strength to return joyfully to the work of waiting on the master's royal tables, serving his honored and blessed guests.

The words of St. Paul to Timothy offer us an opportunity to renew ourselves to the work of serving his people, waiting on the tables of the master, serving in his place. They are very familiar words from our ordinations and installations. How do we hear these words?

Surely we must hear those words of exhortation to faithfulness in the sense of the absolute demand for goodness which lies always at the core of God's Word, for those words are not simply words of advice or fatherly common sense from Paul, an older pastor. They are rather the very words of Christ himself, the Good Shepherd, the chief pastor

and Bishop, who has commanded and instituted the office of preaching.

HE is the one who has said, "He who hears you hears me" (Luke 10:16). And HE is the one who has said, "Whosoever shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck..." (Matthew 18:6).

And in that sense, and with that sobriety, we must reflect on this charge from our Chief Shepherd --"Set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity...Do not neglect your gift...Be diligent, etc." Can anything other than thoughts of inadequacy, of failure and of remorse strike our hearts when we are thus reminded of that divine charge?

Our speech? We do not speak of others with the lofty and loving dignity that is demanded by God. It has often enough been said that preachers are the worst gossips of all. In our debates and in our defense of the doctrines of His Word, we find it most difficult to separate substance from personality, and we both give offense and we take offense where we ought not.

Our lives? Do we reflect in our daily lives the noble calling of servants who stand in the place of Christ serving his elect? It may be true that our ranks have been mostly spared the gross outward scandals of the kind that the world loves to see. But each of us can and must point to myriad things in our lives, our private and our public lives, which are less than pure--our bad habits, our greed, our desire for good things, our flight from the real suffering of the cross, our personal pride, our hunger for power and our love of praise from men. Can any of us ever hear those

other words from the Apostle with a clear conscience? "The overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to preach, not given to much wine, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his own children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap" (I Timothy 3:2-7).

Do we love according to the measure of the chief shepherd? We know full well that we do not. We do not always treat each other with the love and understanding and respect that we preach about to others. Nor are we as loving of those we serve as our Lord would have us be. In our congregations and in our classrooms we tend to gravitate toward those who compliment us and build us up, and we do not seek closer ties with the oppressed, with the poor, with those we do not like so much personally, with those we feel threatened by, or with those who do not strike a responsive chord of friendliness in us.

Do we believe, do we set examples for the believers of faith? It has been suggested more than once that the Office of the Ministry is one of the most spiritually hazardous occupations on earth. Can the preacher be saved? Why should that question even be asked? Partly because we begin with a certain kind of confidence, don't we--confidence in ourselves. Certainly one needs confidence if he is to stand up and speak. But that confidence also becomes the enemy very quickly, so that we

become careless about our own souls. Peter was the epitome of confidence, but on more than one occasion, that confidence turned out to be the confidence of something other than faith in Christ Jesus. It was the confidence of self. Do we have so much confidence in ourselves that faith cannot show through and become a shining example to our hearers? It may very well be that we even have so much confidence in our faith that our faith cannot be an example to others--for where there is no humility, there can be no faith. If we cannot cry with a sincere heart, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief," can our "faith" be an example?

All of these qualities which St. Paul holds up are, of course, qualities which must belong to each Christian--the one in the pulpit and the one in the pew. But Paul has another one which can only be applied to the one who serves as a pastor, as a bishop: "Do not neglect your gift." What does that mean?

That is the gift which he bestows when he commits to us His ministry of reconciliation. On the one hand, it is especially a charge to be faithful to the heart of the Gospel ministry. It is as much as to say, "Do not neglect the gospel." And is it not obvious that we become so tied up in our administrative duties--parish as well as institutional, with our "counseling," our endless chasing around, our desire to mend people's lives, that the Gospel ministry itself, the core and center of it, gets lost in the process? We desire, sometimes, so much to help people live right and pure lives that we go directly to the Law. But as Dr. Walther warns us, that is not the way it is to be. It is the ministry of the Spirit which gives life. It is God's ministry of reconciliation, the Gospel

itself which can only be at the heart of our preaching. I am reminded of the words of Dr. Ylvisaker which I quoted in the Ylvisaker centennial volume (p. 86): "You say that I held up before you the Gospel when I was at Bethany. I am thankful for the reminder, for I was afraid that I had neglected that part of my ministry so sorely. Buszin reminded me of my neglect one time, and from then on I tried to make amends. Can you imagine a preacher of the Gospel neglecting that one big essential?"

And on the other hand, "Do not neglect your gift"--that means also that we are to give all of our abilities to that ministry. To any extent to which we are lazy and lethargic, not executing the fullest potential of that ministry of reconciliation, we are guilty of such neglect. We neglect the great gift of God which he imparts to the ministers he sends to feed his flock. A layman once remarked to me that he found it so odd that a pastor could be easily dismissed for gross immorality and scandalous life, but hardly for incompetence or laziness, for not sticking to business. Whatever we might think of that expression, we ought to take it to heart. Sincerity seems to be given a higher value than ability, diligence, and competence. And daily each of us must confess that we have not lived up to the high calling and the high trust which has been committed to us.

And finally, the Apostle directs us, with Timothy, to watch not only our lives but also our doctrine, our teaching. Our teaching and our practice--it is not our own. He reminds us of that elsewhere, that we are "Stewards of the mysteries of God" (I Corinthians 4:1). That doctrine is not ours to play with, to sacrifice on the altar of pragmatism and practicality. He calls upon us neither to add to it nor subtract from it. Of course, we will never admit to doing that -- but

aren't our daily lives, our daily administration of his church, filled with weak judgments, with flights from the cross of suffering for proclaiming his truth in all of its fullness? How often don't we take the "easy" way out? We fear "legalism"; we fear the loss of parishioners or students; we fear disdain. And daily, we soften the load of the cross by not sounding the trumpet of His Word with a clear sound. We daily bring our own weakness and fear to the confession of faith to which we are called as his ministers and as Lutheran pastors living under Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions.

Now, my brothers, how do we respond to all of these reminders of the high expectations of our office? These words are surely instructive as to how His ministry is to be carried out. But at the same time they must perform another task in us. Our hearts are stones if the best that we can do is let our mind now wander through the clergy roster or cast our eyes about this sanctuary today to see who is guilty of which sin. But it is the task of the preacher to remind both himself and his hearers that all of us alike stand before God, even in the daily exercise of the office of the ministry, as weak sinful beings who have no strength of our own. Much like the great lesson that Jesus gave Philip and the others at the miraculous feeding of the 5000, the lesson finally boils down to a very simple statement--that we have absolutely nothing at all in our own hands to offer to anyone. We are no different from those to whom we preach. Neither does the preacher, not even in the exercise of the office, measure up to the high calling of God. If we see ourselves as we really are, the words of Paul, the "foolishness of preaching," get a new meaning.

But the application of Paul, whenever he talks to the members of the congregations to which he

writes, or to young pastors, Timothy and Titus--they are all alike sent to the doctrine, to the Gospel itself: "Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do you will save both yourself and your hearers." What does that mean? We know full well that we are not saved simply by performing the office. Both preacher and hearer are saved alone through the preached Gospel and the administered sacraments. Paul wants to remind Timothy and us to listen to our own preaching and to find comfort and forgiveness in that Gospel. If we preach the Law but do not apply it to our own lives and find ourselves utterly devoid of merit, beggars with empty hands and nothing to offer, then we are worse than the hypocritical Pharisees. Then the one who preaches the Savior does not need the Savior he preaches. If we preach the Law, with the sins of our people and our students in mind, but forget about our own sin and weakness, we might possibly do our hearers some good, but not ourselves. Our own hearts then remain rocky, thorny, hard ground, unplowed and untilled, and thus, unseeded with the Gospel. Our preaching of God's Law has not done its plowing work unless we too are brought to our knees in that cry, "Lord have mercy on me, a poor sinful being."

But the Gospel we preach--when we come to it with sorrow in our own hearts, with despair and utter despondence, then that Gospel is there to comfort the preacher as well. When we preach that message, let us preach to our own selves, each one of us, as though we were the worst sinner in the congregation--"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief." When you preach that message, that Christ died for the ungodly, then you, ungodly by nature and a believer with an ungodly nature, then you know that Christ died especially for you. When you preach that Christ's

suffering and death covers all unrighteousness, then you can believe that you are one of those unrighteous ones. When you offer Christ's forgiveness to the adulterer, to the one who has hated, or lied, or murdered, or stolen, then offer it to yourself as well, for all of those sins are in your heart and nature as well. As you stand in the pulpit and at the altar, remember that you too are the recipient of his rich, full, and unbounded grace.

And now, my dear brothers in Christ, as you come to His altar to receive His Body and Blood from the hand of our servant today, receive it as His forgiveness for your unfaithfulness, for your impurity, for your lovelessness, for your weakness. Stand before Him and hear His word of forgiving love and grace and receive the Body and Blood whereby He has made full satisfaction for all of your sins. Believe with joy and with all your heart that what He gives you at His table fully is for you. Amen.

THE PASTOR - CALL, COMPETENCY, AND GOOD ORDER

Introduction

1 A few years ago a congregation in a little town in southwestern Minnesota (not of our fellowship) was seeking to call a new pastor to their church. One Sunday morning the "pulpit committee" was sent to a little town in central South Dakota to listen to a pastor that had been recommended to the congregation by officials of the parent body. When they arrived at the church that summer's morning, they discovered that the pastor they had come to listen to was on vacation. However, they were so impressed by the sermon preached by the visiting pastor that they went home and persuaded their congregation to call him. One well-delivered sermon, however, does not tell the whole story of a man's ministry. The man had not been in his new parish very long before a rift arose between him and the congregation. The congregation spent the next four years trying to get rid of him. They finally got the job done when he resigned and accepted another call.

2 Some years ago a multiple rural parish in northern Minnesota called a pastor to serve them. The parish (also not of our fellowship) had been vacant for quite some time and had extended numerous calls. Finally, a man whom they had called exhibited some interest in the parish, but he wasn't quite satisfied with the salary (which according to our scale would have been quite high). He wrote to the congregation and said he was willing to come if they would add \$2000 to the salary. The parish was desperate, and the man was called at the higher salary. A lot of ill will on the part of many members greeted the beginning of that

man's ministry in that parish. Some of the ill will was never overcome.

3 These are a couple of examples to show how congregations and pastors can err in the calling process. One also hears of some strange attitudes and procedures regarding pastoral calls in our own fellowship from time to time. It is well, then, that we look at the matter of the "call" again, and be reminded of the Scriptural and Lutheran doctrine and practice concerning it. We shall follow the simple outline of the assigned topic, and give consideration first of all to the call, then to the competency of the one who is called, and finally to the good order that ought to be followed by both the calling body and the one who is called, especially when the matter of competency is called into question.

I. The Call

4 The office of the ministry is a divine institution. The New Testament ministry was first instituted by Christ when He called the apostles to be His special workmen in preaching and teaching the way of salvation to men.

These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.
Matthew 10:5-7

When Paul and Barnabas went forth on their missionary journey, we are told that the Holy Spirit "called them" through the church at Antioch, which then "sent them away." Acts 13:2-4 Later on when the little congregation which had been started by

the apostles called men to serve them, they were looked upon as fellow ministers of the Gospel.

All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellowservant in the Lord.
Colossians 4:7

The Bible tells us that all who have been rightfully called by groups of believers to be ministers of the Gospel have been called to that office by the Holy Ghost.

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. Acts 20:28

And he gave some, apostles; and some prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.
Ephesians 4:11-12

5 While every Christian has the call from God to be a witness for Christ in this world, a specific call to the public ministry is needed before one can function as a pastor of an assembly of Christians. The Bible says: "And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent." Romans 10:14b-15a The Lutheran Confessions say on this subject that "our churches teach that nobody should preach publicly in the church or administer the sacraments unless he is regularly called." (Augsburg Confession, Article XVI) And Luther says:

I dare not preach without a call. I must

not go to Leipzig or to Magdeburg for the purpose of preaching there, for I have neither call nor office to take me to those places. . . Even though a person possesses God's Word, he must still keep silence and not encroach upon the office and preach. Unless he is called, it is not sufficient to have the Word. Such a person must hold his peace and not preach until he has a call. (Luther's Works, XXIII, pp 227-228)

6 Knowing that it is God who has established the office of the ministry and that the call into the ministry is a divine calling gives comfort and reassurance both to the called and to those who do the calling in the Lord's name.

7 When is a call a valid call? A call is a valid call when it has been extended by those whom God has given the right to call. Only Christians have been given that right. The Lord calls His public servants thru the medium of His church, the assembly of believers. There was a time when God called workers into His kingdom work directly. This was the case with the Patriarchs, the Prophets, and the Apostles. But since the Apostolic Age God does His calling thru means, and the means, or medium, is groups of believers. Martin Chemnitz, in his MINISTRY, WORD & SACRAMENTS, describes a "mediate call" to the ministry in this way: "[A mediate call is] When any minister is called and appointed to the ministry of the church, indeed by God and divinely, but not without means, as the prophets and apostles [were], but through regular means, in a legitimate way. For a mediate call is as much from God as an immediate one, but they differ in the manner of the call. For God called the prophets and apostles immediately, through Himself. But God called and sent Titus, Timothy, Sosthenes, Silvanus, and other likewise, but not

immediately, rather through means instituted and ordained by Himself for this purpose. . . Thus the ministry of the church was entrusted to Timothy by the laying on of hands of the presbytery, I Timothy 4:14. But lest this call [the mediate call] appear to rest only on examples, without divine command, Paul commands Timothy and Titus to appoint ministers in every city and at the same time prescribes a form for them, how they should do that. Titus 1:5, II Timothy 2:2, I Timothy 3:2ff." (MINISTRY, WORD & SACRAMENTS, pp 31-32)

8 A servant of the Lord today, called by a group of believers to work in the kingdom, should look upon his call to the ministry as being as much from God as were the immediate calls of God to the prophets and apostles. Paul said to the elders of the church at Ephesus, "The Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Acts 20:28 Paul, speaking for himself (who was called immediately) and for Timothy (who was called mediately), says in the second letter to the Corinthians, "God . . . hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. . . and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us." II Corinthians 5:19-20 When a congregation calls a pastor to minister to their spiritual needs, it is God, working through that congregation, who is really extending the call. And such a call is no less divine than the calls that were extended to Moses and Paul and to all those who were called immediately.

9 But even though the call into the ministry of the Word is a sacred and blessed calling, and something that every possessor of a divine call should treasure most highly, yet it does not place the one who is called in a superior position over

his fellow Christians. It is true that Luther sometimes referred to public servants of the church as being the "spiritual order, the "divines," and "priests." And some have thereby accused the Reformer of placing the called pastors and teachers in the church in a special class above the common, ordinary Christians. But Luther did not. He himself says that when he used the terms "divines," "spiritual order," "priests," he was merely following the custom of the day, in which public servants of the church were designated as such. Luther held firmly to this that all Christians, those in whom the Holy Spirit works through faith, are the "spiritual order." All Christians are "spiritual," Paul says in Galatians 6. All Christians are "a holy priesthood," Peter says in I Peter 2.

10 Luther says on this very point: "In the New Testament the Holy Spirit scrupulously avoids giving the name sacerdos, priest, to any of the Apostles, or any other office, but restricts this name to the baptized or Christians as their birth-right and hereditary name from baptism; for none of us is born in baptism an apostle, preacher, teacher, pastor, but solely priests are all of us born; therefore we take some from among these born priests and call and elect them for these offices that they may perform the functions of such office in the name of us all." (St. L. XIX, as found in PIEPER'S DOGMATICS, III, 456)

11 It is well for pastors, especially, to bear in mind the two titles that are most commonly given to their office -- pastor and minister. A pastor is a shepherd, not a lord; one who has been given the responsibility of guiding and protecting and nourishing the members of the flock that have been entrusted to his care. He is not called to lord it over the people, but to shepherd

them. As a minister he is sent to serve his fellow Christians. These Christians are on a par with him, not below him. How often the Apostle Paul speaks of being a servant for the Lord, and as one who was sent to serve the Gospel. There was no thought with him of setting up his office as some sort of caste or special order or rank above those to whom he ministered. In this regard Walther reminds us that "public ministry is not a special order, distinct from the holier than the common order of Christians, as the priesthood of the Levites was, but is an office of service."
(Walther & the Church, p 73)

II. Competency

- 12 It is God who has established the qualifications for the public ministry.

A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. Timothy 3:1-7

For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of

good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. Titus 1:7-9

And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. II Timothy 2:2

13 Although no pastor will possess all of these qualifications perfectly, nevertheless they are the qualities that the Lord would find in those who serve Him in the public ministry, and we have no right to revise or water down His listing of qualifications. It is especially important, of course, that a pastor have a sound confessional stand, "holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught," (Titus 1:9) and that he be able to communicate through his preaching and teaching, "able to teach others." II Timothy 2:2

14 A pastor is to be blameless. This does not mean that he must be without sin, for then no man would ever qualify for this office. What it does mean is that his life should be of such a nature that no charge of grave moral offense can be leveled against him. "He must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." I Timothy 3:7

15 Vigilant means that he should be watchful, especially over his own life. He should be on his guard against any sin in any form. Sober means that he should be well balanced in his judgments, and in his emotions and impulses. He must not be a fanatic, who goes off on tangents, and acts before thinking. Of good behavior means that he should be mannerly, gentlemanly. He should not

be slovenly in his appearance, or rough and boorish in his manners. He should be an example and pattern for Christian living both for those of his parish and also for those outside his pastoral care. Given to hospitality means that he shall be kindly and friendly. His home and his office shall have the "open door" through which friend and stranger can pass and feel welcome and at ease in his presence. He should be a good leader of his own family, leading both by example and directive. The position that a pastor occupies in the church has a strong resemblance to the position that a father has in the family. If he is to be a good leader in the larger body of the church it is incumbent on him that he be such a leader also in that smaller body of the family. These are all the positive qualifications that the Lord lists for the pastoral office.

16 On the negative side, a pastor shall not be one who is addicted to strong drink, nor argumentative and ready to pick a fight. He shall not be desirous of large salaries and material gain. A pastor has the right to expect adequate support for himself and his family, for the "labourer is worthy of his hire." (Luke 10:7) But there are few things that do more harm to one's ministry than when it is known to his people that he is a lover of money. "Church history is not devoid of examples of pastors who have succumbed to the extent of becoming guilty of shady business dealings, embezzlement, fraud, and other gross sins to obtain what had become indeed filthy lucre. Another danger that must be avoided in this area is financial irresponsibility, running up bills and being unable or unwilling to pay them." (SHEPHERD UNDER CHRIST, p 6)

17 Most congregational constitutions will contain a paragraph or two regarding the calling of a pastor, and the dismissal of the same. A typical

example is the following:

OFFICE OF THE PASTOR. This congregation shall bestow the office of the pastor only upon such candidates for the office as are unreservedly in accord with the confessional standard of the congregation, have been prepared for their work and are well qualified for it, and have been properly and rightfully called.

REMOVAL FROM OFFICE. A pastor may be removed from office in a Christian and rightful manner only. Valid and urgent reasons for removal are persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, wilful neglect of official duty, or evident and protracted inability to perform the functions of the office.

18 The last mentioned has to do with competency.

It is the most difficult to ascertain of the things that make a pastor fit to serve in the office - "evident and protracted inability to perform the functions of the office." It isn't so difficult to determine when a pastor is teaching false doctrine; that can be documented quite easily. Nor is it so difficult to discover his unfitness for the office when he is living a scandalous life; the truth will always out. But to determine his being incompetent to fulfill his calling as a pastor is not so easy.

19 What makes a pastor competent? None of us are competent of ourselves to carry out the work of ministering to the lambs and sheep of Christ's flock. Have not many of us, if not all, had those moments in our ministry where we felt that we were not qualified to handle the task of the ministry? I recall that while visiting with a fellow pastor

a few years ago, he asked me if I had ever thought of leaving the ministry because of a feeling of inadequacy, to which I lyingly replied, "No, have you?" And he lyingly replied, "Not really." And that was the end of conversation on that subject. Several months later when we were together again, I said to him, "You know, I have an apology to make to you. Do you remember our visit a few months ago when you asked whether or not I had ever had thoughts to leaving the ministry because of a feeling of inadequacy? Well, I lied to you, because I have had such feelings." And he said, "Don't feel bad, because I lied to you also." Maybe some of you can relate to that experience.

20 Perhaps the Apostle Paul had those feelings also. And he knew that all future pastors of the Lord Jesus would have them too. So he penned the words that are found in II Corinthians 3: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of our selves; but our sufficiency is of God." The Greek word translated "sufficient" is hikanos. And it really means to be "competent." Of ourselves we are all incompetent for the work of ministry, totally unqualified to serve in the office of the pastorate. Only because God is present in our lives, through His Holy Spirit, are our shortcomings and inabilities overcome, so that we may become and remain competent to carry out the work of our calling.

21 An undershepherd for Christ need not apologize for feeling inadequate for the office. In fact, to be effective in the work, just such a feeling is needed. We are then in good company with the likes of Moses, Elijah, and Jeremiah. And where would John the Baptist have ranked on God's all-time list of faithful servants had he not been of the spirit: "He must increase, but I must decrease; I am not worthy to untie His shoe laces"?

22 No one person is going to possess all of the qualities to the highest degree that are mentioned in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1. They will be there in varying degrees. One pastor may be more hospitable than another, one may be more patient than another, one may rule his family better than another, one may have a greater aptitude to teach than another. The thing is that a pastor ought not to be completely devoid of any one of the qualities that are mentioned in those Scriptural passages.

23 While it is true, as mentioned earlier, that the most important qualifications of a pastor are that he be faithful to the teachings of God's Word and that he be able effectively to communicate those truths to the people, they are not the only qualifications needed to carry on a competent ministry. During our years in the seminary we heard these words quoted often by one of our professors, and many of you have heard them too: "There are preachers who in the pulpit preach so well, it is a pity they ever get out, but who out of the pulpit live so ill, it is a pity they ever get in." Now that may be applied not only to those who live ungodly lives as pastors, but it can also be applied to those who have very poor inter-personal relationships with people. The ministry is dealing with people, and a competent ministry is a ministry in which the pastor has the ability to get along with people. A pastor may have all the factual knowledge of theological matters, may be able to produce sound Biblical sermons, and may even deliver them acceptably; but if he does not get along with people, he will not be able to carry on an effective ministry.

24 Back in 1981 the Commission on Higher Education in our sister synod, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, conducted a self-study,

part of which was a questionnaire sent to district presidents seeking information about the qualifications of the workers entering the Synod's preaching and teaching ministry. While the overall response was positive, some of the negative responses are worth noting, because they touch on this whole matter of what makes one competent for the pastoral office. We quote at length from a condensation of this part of the self-study:

There is a broad area of concern which for lack of a better heading could be called "interpersonal relations." A young pastor may give the impression that he has his head full of factual knowledge, but he doesn't care about people. Young men who are not sociable by nature have to force themselves to be so in the ministry. People look for this quality in a pastor, that he make some attempt to initiate a conversation, rather than waiting for others to come to him. Being friendly, observing the common civilities of life, being decently dressed, saying "good morning" on the street, even chewing with ones mouth closed are not merely desirable qualities of a polished professional; they rather show a humble regard for the feelings, expectations, and wishes of others. It was no dramatic discovery but the restatement of an old truth when in response to the question, "What kind of experiences lead to lack of sociability?" a committee member said, "Caring for people starts with faith."

Observing the new pastors in his district, one president said that in a couple of instances the ability to deal with people in their weaknesses seemed to be lacking. They find it easier, he said, to apply the

law rather than to correct deficiencies in an evangelical way. They know their doctrine, but don't always take into account that the average layman is not as well grounded as are they. He didn't know whether sensitivity toward the needs and weaknesses of others is something that can be taught in a seminary class, but he felt that it is a quality that must somehow be inculcated. One president asked, "Can you really train students to deal with people?" and another answered "Skill at working with people comes from experience."

25 Sometimes congregations who have a pastor they feel is not competent to serve their needs-- and it is not that he is teaching false doctrine or leading an ungodly life--will fault the Synod or the Seminary where their pastor was trained, and will say, "Why were not these deficiencies discovered before he went out into the ministry?" That is a legitimate question, but one that does not bring an easy answer. How a person is going to interact with people will not always reveal itself in a classroom setting, or even in the year of vicarage, though that part of one's training can reveal strengths and weaknesses of the candidate. Oftentimes the competency or incompetency of a ministerial candidate does not become known until he is actually in the ministry.

26 Now it can happen that a called pastor is so lacking in the needed abilities and graces for the ministry that he cannot profitably serve in that office in any setting. And then it is best that one seek another vocation. But there are also cases where one may lack the competence to serve in one part of the Lord's vineyard, but could serve in another. I am thinking, for example, of qualified

men who maybe would not be able to serve a large parish because of the many demands of such a parish, but would work out well in a much smaller parish. Or there may be qualified men who would be competent to serve a rural parish, but who just would not work out in a metropolitan setting. Again, it has nothing to do with doctrine and life, but simply that one is better suited to serve in a certain setting.

27 A man's competency may be impaired by illness and old age. Perhaps his memory, hearing, sight, and strength are failing. He has been a good and faithful pastor, and he is determined to carry on, but simply does not have the ability any longer to do the things that need to be done in a parish. The work is suffering, and most everyone is agreed that something needs to be done. It is in such instances that lack of competency is hardest to deal with in a Christian congregation. And surely because of the circumstances much patience and compassion are called for.

III. Good Order

28 When the competency of a called worker is being questioned, it is very important that good order be followed in seeking a solution to the problem. There are two pitfalls to be avoided. On the one hand, the congregation ought not to look upon the situation as a "hire-fire" sort of thing, as is carried out in the business world. And sometimes members of a congregation can be of that mind-set. When we are dealing with the matter of the divine call of a pastor it is not a "hire-fire" situation. It is God who directed that call originally, and God's will must be carefully sought out, and His way followed, in dealing with the situation.

29 On the other hand, the called worker must not

hide behind his divine call, as though his call gives him some sort of immunity to any concerns a congregation might have or to action that they might be contemplating. A congregation can be in shambles because of incompetent leadership on the part of the pastor, and the pastor sort of insulates himself against all the discontent and turmoil over his ministry and says in effect: "I've got a divine call to this place, and I don't care what the people think or how they feel, I'm staying." That attitude is not right either.

30 In the case where competency has been impaired by illness or old age, as was noted above, there a congregation will in a loving way try to lead the pastor to see that by resigning his call he will be protecting his own good reputation and will be serving the overall good of the church. It may well be that his services can still be used on a limited basis, even though he relinquish his call as the pastor. Good order on the part of the pastor would be to follow the advice of his congregation. It is good in such instances that a congregation seek the advice of circuit or synodical officials since so much is at stake for the congregation and the pastor. Consideration for the man is of high importance, but even that must not outweigh consideration for the welfare of the church.

31 In cases of competency deficiency where illness and age are not involved, good order calls for a congregation to first of all be patient and understanding in the matter. If the deficiency is of such a nature that it may possibly be corrected through further education, training or counseling of the pastor, that should be encouraged. And the pastor ought to take the advice given in the matter, and seek through further education or training to correct the deficiency.

32 If competency is lacking in a person for the carrying out of the work in a particular call, but the person would possibly be competent to carry on the work of the ministry in another parish, it would be in good order for the congregation to suggest to the circuit or synodical officials that their pastor be put on a call list. But it should be the elected leaders of the congregation, and particularly the elders or deacons, who take such action on behalf of the congregation. It is not in good order, when the competency of a pastor is being questioned in a congregation, for individual members to take it upon themselves to circulate petitions in the congregation seeking signatures of members who are dissatisfied with the pastor's ministry.

33 When the competency of the pastor is being questioned, one must be sure that it is the consensus of the majority of the congregation, and not just one or two who feel that way. There will always be those who, because of personality clashes with the pastor, or for other reasons, may want to see the pastor "go," and consequently will raise all sorts of charges against him. Such members might have found it difficult to accept the ministry of the Apostles too, and maybe even of Christ Himself.

34 In those cases where competency is lacking to such an extent that further training would not likely rectify the problem, nor would it be in the best interest of the church at large to move the individual to another parish, it would be in good order for the congregation to ask for the pastor's outright resignation. Such procedure, of course, will be followed only after careful deliberation and prayer over the matter, and only after all other avenues have been pursued.

35 In the event that a pastor would not be willing to follow the advice of his congregation, and resign his office, which circumstance is hard to imagine, then the congregation would have the right to terminate his call. This would, of course, be the last resort and such action would be taken only after much patience and charity have been exercised. Through all the difficulties of such a procedure it must be remembered that it is not only the welfare of a man and family that become the concern, and that is a high concern, but it is the welfare of the church, of souls that have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ.

36 May the Lord of the Church, who rules all things well for the good of His Church, keep the doctrine of the call sacred among us. May He continue to supply His Church with faithful, dedicated, and competent pastors who recognize their high calling of serving the spiritual needs of their fellowmen as both a privilege and a tremendous responsibility.

O blessed ministry
Of reconciliation,
That shows the way to God
And brings to man salvation!
By Thine evangel pure,
Lord, Thou preserv'st Thy fold,
Dost call, enlighten, keep,
Dost comfort and uphold.

The servants Thou hast called
And to Thy Church are giving
Preserve in doctrine pure
And holiness of living.
Thy Spirit fill their hearts,
Endue their tongues with power;
What they should boldly speak,
Oh, give them in that hour!

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-- The preceding article, "The Pastor - Call,
Competency, and Good Order," was delivered at the
Evangelical Lutheran Synod General Pastoral Confer-
ence at Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, Minne-
sota, September 24-26, 1985 by

Rev. Norman Madson
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THE DOCTRINE OF THE ETERNAL GENERATION OF THE SON:

A STUDY OF ITS HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

THE BIBLICAL BASIS

The orthodox doctrine of the Eternal Generation of the Son is based on several Scripture passages and a portion of these deserve specific mention here:

John 1:14: The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the Only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Though the incarnation is clearly spoken of here ("and the Word became flesh"), Christianity has traditionally seen a dual generation of the Son in this passage. The incarnation, of course, denotes the generation of the Son in time, but the term "only begotten (*monogenes*¹) from the Father" indicates another, a prior generation of eternity. As Lenski (*ad loc.*) comments:

All but a few of the interpreters of the last generation have taken "Only-begotten" in the metaphysical sense and have understood it as referring to the relation of the Logos to the Father apart from the incarnation.²

This position is partly founded on the phrase, "glory of the Only begotten," for the glory mentioned is that of deity. The glory of Christ, however, was not received at the incarnation, so a prior Sonship carrying glory of deity must be referred to here. Another reason for this stand

is that given by the context of the passage, especially verse 18 of the chapter.

John 1:18: No man has seen God at any time; the Only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

The preferred reading ("God" instead of "Son") stresses the concept of Christ's being "Only begotten" as God--and hence eternally. Even if the word "Son" is preferred, the fact of His being eternally *monogenes* is emphasized. The participial phrase "Who is in the bosom of the Father" (*ho ōn eis ton kolpon tou patros*) further denotes a timeless relation between the Father and the Son, hence extending prior to the incarnation.

John 3:16: For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...."

These familiar words lead us to acknowledge that Christ was the "only begotten Son" prior to His being given by the Father out of love for the world. It was God's Son who was sent into the world, and therefore a previous generation is the logical deduction derived from the words of the passage. Many other passages speak in this same way, e.g. John 3:18, Romans 8:3, 8:32.

Colossians 1:15: He (Christ) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

The term "image (*eikon*) of the invisible God" involves the relationship between the Father and the Son, and the term "first-born (*prototokos*) of all creation" likewise points us to a unique generation before the creation of the world, spoken of in verse 16. Both terms can best be conceived as eternal relationships, outside of and prior to time.

Hebrews 1:2-3: (God) in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power....

The terms that define Christ as the "radiance (*apaugasma*) of His glory" and the "exact representation (*charakter*) of His nature (*hypostasis*)" clearly speak of relationship between the Father and Son within the eternal Godhead. And all of this is said of the "Son" prior to the generation in time. Also, we are told that the Father made the world through the Son, thus pointing us to the truth that Christ was the Son already at the time of creation.

Hebrews 1.8: But of the Son He says, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever."

It was the "Son" to whom the Father spoke in Old Testament time (Psalm 45), reminding us both of the preexistent Sonship and of the true deity of the Son.

On the basis of the preceding passages, the doctrine of the Son's eternal generation has been drawn from every passage in which the term "Son of God" is applied to Christ. Even when the context might permit the title to be applied exclusively to the incarnate Christ following the generation in time, historic Christianity has consistently sought to apply it to the generation in eternity. To a large degree this tendency stems from necessary deductions made concerning the unchangeable nature of the Godhead. As Novatian and Athanasius later contended, the "Father" must eternally be "Father" and the "Son" eternally "Son" or a type of change in the Godhead

must be conceived. Furthermore, the very language of Scripture leads us to such conclusions. As Schaller states:

The Biblical argument (for the eternal generation) rests upon the fact that the Logos would not be called Son, much less the only-begotten Son of God, if these terms were not to suggest that the Son derives essence from the Father in a mode which may be designed a generation by analogy.³

A logical deduction drawn from the Biblical statements concerning the Person of Christ also leads us to emphasize the eternal generation. Again, in the words of Schaller.

The fact that two distinct natures are united in the person of Jesus Christ points to a *two-fold generation*, one *from eternity*, pertaining to His divine nature, and the other *in time*, pertaining to His human nature.⁴

FROM THE APOSTLES TO ORIGEN

As the Christian Church received the foregoing revelation concerning the Person of Jesus Christ, it was given the task of stating and defending the Christological and Theological truths. The profound mystery of the intra-Trinitarian relationships were to be preserved and pronounced to the world. Whenever the Biblical truths were contradicted or neglected, the Church was called upon to defend and clarify the teachings. The general development of Christology, to most Church historians, began with Justin, culminated with Origen, and then split into Arianism or Athanasianism. The latter Christology, of course,

triumphed in 325 at Nicea and had the victory confirmed in 381 at Constantinople. The earliest stages of this development is our subject now.

The earliest writers after the apostles did not speculate much on the relation of the three Persons in the baptismal formula. The question of Christ's deity was not particularly controversial or troublesome to most in the Post-apostolic years. Some say that the earliest Church Fathers held Ebionistic views or other adoptionistic concepts, but this cannot be established. We do know that crude theological terms were often used and that philosophical speculation was found in the Christian community. The Apologists employed the term *Logos* from John and often subordinated the Son either by confusing John's Logos with the Logos of Philo or by failing to stress the Logos before the creation of the world. As is well known, the Apologists were quite rationalistic at times and were often carried away by their desire to make Christian truths more "palatable" to the Greek world.

At any rate Ignatius (c. 35-107) employed orthodox terms of Scripture by saying, "Christ truly was born...both of God and of the Virgin, but not in the same way."⁵ In fact he used the title "our God, Jesus Christ." The earliest Church considered Christ to be God, as the younger Pliny's famous letter to Trajan (c. 112) related. The letter speaks of Asian Christians habitually singing "hymns to Christ as their God."⁶ In short, we observe that these early writers spoke of Christ's deity, humanity, and worthiness to be worshiped--though nothing distinct needed to be said other than that.

The more definitive statements of Christ's nature and the creedal statements of any eternal genera-

tion of the Son were lacking mostly because there was a lack of heresy to be refuted. But the time soon came when definitive statements would be necessary. It appears that Justin Martyr (c.100-c.165) did not consider the generation of Christ to be an eternal act, made necessary by the full Christological revelation (as it was deemed to be by Athanasius). In fact Justin's thoughts often show marks of subordinationism.⁷ As an Apologist, however, it must be recognized that he leaned heavily on philosophical statements. Also, in stressing the transcendence of God to the pagan world he could easily slip into a form of subordinationism, even though his intentions were good. Yet he did say that the Logos was a Divine Being of second rank. With respect to the Father, the Logos was defined as "something else" (*heteron ti*) and "another" (*allos ti*).⁸

Tatian (c.160) called the Logos "the first production of the Father," and "the first work of the Father," thus giving some evidence of subordinationism.⁹

Irenaeus (c.130-c.200) stuck closer to Bible terms without much speculation, and repudiated speculative, *a priori*, attempts to explain the derivation of the Son from the Father. He held it to be an incomprehensible mystery. He discriminated strongly between the ideas of creation and generation and said the Son is fully eternal, though begotten. In short, he was much closer to the later Nicene formula even though he did apply subordinationistic terms as Justin and Origen did. Such occasional lapses were probably due to the lack of accurate terminology or precision in expression. As Jerome states: "From inexact speech springs heresy." It remains noteworthy that Irenaeus taught a three-fold participation in the divine substance and that he did reach the position that

Christ was one with the Father, though personally distinct from Him.¹⁰ Chemnitz quotes Iranaeus to show how true he was to Bible terms: "The Only begotten came into manhood for the sake of man."¹¹

As time passed, the issue of Christ's person began to become controversial and demanded more definitive statements to safeguard Bible truths. The Roman bishops Zephyrinus (d.217) and his successor Callistus (d.c.223) favored Patripassianism, and were strongly opposed by Hippolytus (c.170-C236). Hippolytus himself, however, fell into a form of subordinationism by furthering the speculations of Justin Martyr. These speculations led to a type of Ditheism. He also said that the term "Son" was to be applied to Christ only after the incarnation.¹²

Tertullian (c.160-c.220), also fighting against Patripassianism, contributed much to the development of Christology. He used the word *trinitas* and was a champion of hypostasianism as he sought to defend the individual personalities within the Godhead. That he used terms similar to those used by Calvin: "There is in God a certain arrangement or economy which makes no change on the unity of essence."¹³ Yet Tertullian, even with his many orthodox statements, still spoke occasional subordinationism. He called the Father the "whole divine substance" and the Son merely "a part" of it.¹⁴

So the problem of the Church remained: how could it escape the spectre of Subordinationism, viewing Christ as a "second God" (*heteros theos*, a term found in many writings of the age), and how could it maintain a Trinity of special Persons (hypostasianism) without sacrificing the Christian monotheism. The intra-Trinitarian relation was

being attacked and needed defense by careful terminology true to all of Scripture. A big step in solving the problem came in Origen (c.185-c.254) and his concept of the "perpetual begetting" of the Son from eternity.

ORIGEN

First, it must be stated that Origen, according to many of his writings, was also a subordinationist as had been many of his predecessors in Christian history. He distinguished between the essence of the Father and that of the Son, speaks of a different "substance" for each, and makes Christ inferior to the Father, calling Him God in a relative or secondary sense (*Deus de Deo* and *deuteros Theos*). The Father he defined as God in the absolute sense (*Deus per se* or *autotheos*) and the fountain or root of divinity. According to Heick, "What Origen taught was a subordination, not of essence or nature, but of existence or origin."¹⁵ But in saying that Christ does not have life in Himself apart from the Father, Origen became a father of later Arianism in an indirect way. His subordinationism was at least a stepping stone to Arianism, which some of his students (especially Dionysius of Alexandria) approached.

But like others before him, Origen also spoke of the Son's equality with the Father. While he taught that the Son should not directly be addressed in prayer, he elsewhere recognized it as valid and does so himself in various homilies. In at least one passage he applies the orthodox term *homoousios* to the Son, making Him coequal with the Father.¹⁶ He also writes, "We sing praises to the Most High alone, and His Only Begotten, who is the Word and God; and we praise God and His Only Begotten."¹⁷ The truth is that

Origen wavered between the *homoousian*, orthodox theory and the *homoiousian*, subordinationist theory.

The greatest contribution of the philosopher-theologian was the term he introduced to the Church and which was later employed by orthodoxy. He was among the first, if not the first, to use the term "the God-man," which leads to a true view of Christ. More importantly, he employed the term "eternal generation" or "perpetual generation" of the Son, teaching that differed from all previous conceptions of the Logos. Said he,

Because the life of God is not bound by time, His life in the Son must also lie outside of time. It is not, therefore, an act of God accomplished once and forever, but a continuing exercise of His eternal, living power.¹⁸

This was the first advance of stating the Son's coeternity with the Father as expressed in the Nicene Creed. It opened the way for the equally important term, *homoousios*, to be used consistently within a framework of the Son's generation. For here the generation is defined as a continual process, namely, that God always (*aei*) begets the Son, and never was without the Son any more than the Son was ever without the Father.

Admittedly, Origen's doctrine of the eternal generation was heavily steeped in philosophical speculation. Schaff comments that this idea of an eternal generation "has a peculiar form with him from its close connection with his doctrine of an eternal creation.... Thus he describes this generation not as a single, instantaneous act, but, like creation, ever going on."¹⁹

Likewise Heick states, "He taught the generation of the Son from the will of God because he saw in Him the objectified divine will."²⁰

Also to be noted is that some of Origen's comments place hints at subordinationism alongside even the concept of the eternal generation. The eternal generation, for example, was described as "the communication of a divine, but secondary substance."²¹ On the basis of such loose terminology the later Arians could conceive of no intermediate Being between God and creature. For our purposes in tracing the development of the eternal generation doctrine, however, we can see that Origen arrived at terminology similar to that of the earlier Irenaeus. Irenaeus had reached the position by following Scripture and Apostolic tradition, Origen by engaging in philosophical speculation.

FROM ORIGEN TO NICEA

Following Origen, the Arian controversy began to form in very concrete ways. We find Dionysius of Rome (d.268) maintaining the *homoousian* position and the eternal generation of the Son over against the subordinationist views of Dionysius of Alexandria (d.c.264). The latter Dionysius, a pupil of Origen, was originally accused of a type of tritheism, but his defense was later accepted by the Roman Dionysius. (To show the fluid state of affairs in the early centuries, we might note how Athanasius later defended the teachings of Dionysius of Alexandria, but Basil condemned them later still). At any rate, the orthodox concept of hypostasianism was being defended more and more from this point on, but also questioned more and more.

Also during this period Novatian (c.250), doing battle against Monarchianism, declared that the

Son was "always in the Father, else the Father would not always be the Father."²² Still, in other writings, he said that the Son had a beginning and the Father alone was eternal in the absolute sense.

The Arian controversy itself, so well-known in Church history, was coming to a head. Lucian of Antioch (d.312, and probably a pupil of the earlier Paul of Samosata) taught Arius (c.250-c.336) and Eusebius of Nicomedia (d.c.342), and this school constituted the center of subordinatist thought. Arianism came from these men and also from the careless remarks of Origen that had defined the Logos as sort of an intermediate Being between the nature of the uncreated and that of all created things. To the Arians Christ was a created being (*ktisma*, a term also applied to Christ by Clement of Alexandria and Origen). Also part of their teachings, of course, was the proposition: "There was a time when the Son was not."

On the orthodox side were principally the Alexandrians, Alexander (d.328) and his successor Athanasius (c.296-353). These repudiated the previous Logos speculations of the Apologists and opposed the Arians. Alexander said at Nicea that the Sonship of Christ, being eternal, is different in kind from that of human beings. Athanasius emphasized that the Son was both "same-natured" (*homoousios*) with the Father, and yet also differing from the Father in His Person. Concerning the Son's generation, he said:

If the Father has always been the father-- which is obviously necessary since there can be no change in the Godhead--then the Son must have been generated from all eternity. In other words, the Son must have eternally been the Son.²³

To Athanasius and the Nicene fathers there is no subordination of essence (*ousia*) but a subordination of *hypostasis*, of order and dignity. Thus, as has been restated by dogmaticians since then, the Son's generation properly has no reference at all to the essence, but only to the hypostatical distinction between the Persons of the Trinity. The Son is begotten, not as God but only as Son, not as to nature but as to His *idiotēs*, His peculiar relation to the Father. The divine essence neither begets nor is begotten, hence the generation is an immanent, necessary, and perpetual process in the essence of God Himself. As we term it today, it is an *opus ad intra* of the Trinity. Pleading ignorance of such mysteries, Athanasius said, "Man can perceive only the hem of the garment of the triune God; the cherubim cover the rest with their wings."²⁴

Another aspect of Athanasius' statements at Nicea is worth mentioning here: he tied the Christological issue to the work of redemption. As had been properly stressed since that time, the Person and Work of Christ are intimately bound together. Athanasius reasoned that Christ has redeemed us from the curse and power of sin and has reconciled us with God and made us to share eternal, divine life. Therefore He must be God or (if only a creature) He could not redeem other creatures from sin and death. He assumed that redemption was as much and as strictly a divine work as creation.

Another, a third, group caught in the Nicean struggle is noteworthy, since its counterparts have resurfaced all through Church history: the mass of souls favoring compromise between the Athanasian and Arian concepts. Eusebius of Caesarea, for example, submitted the "Palestinian Confession" which was vague and avoided the issue.

The strong leaders of orthodoxy were suspicious of it and rejected it, but the Arians would probably have agreed to it.

Finally, the anathema at the close of the original Nicene Creed (but omitted in the *Constantinopolitan* of 381, which replaced the earlier Nicene symbol after Chalcedon in 451) shows how strongly the orthodox case had presented its case. Anathematized were "those who say: there was a time when he was not; and: he was not before he was made; and: he was made out of nothing or out of another substance or thing; or: the Son of God is created, or changeable, or alterable." As much as possible, the Fathers tried to unmask the deceptive terminology used by any type of subordinationism.

FROM NICEA TO AUGUSTINE

Though the Nicean statements were clearly and victoriously pronounced in 325, the question of the eternal generation of the Son was still controversial in the later years. But orthodoxy now had terms that could be used profitably to safeguard the Christological truths. And, in rebuttal to later Arianism outbursts, orthodox theologians continued the use of such terms.

For example, Hilary of Poitiers (c.315-367) wrote:

There is one unbegotten God the Father, and one Only-begotten Son of God, perfect Offspring of perfect Parent; that the Son was begotten by no lessening of the Father or subtraction from His substance, but that He who possessed all things begat an all-possessing Son; a Son not emanating nor proceeding from the Father, but compact of and inherent in, the whole Divinity of

Him who wherever He is present is present eternally...."25

As a champion of the Nicene doctrine in the West, Hilary also amplified the use of comparisons which Tertullian and Origen had also used (e.g. the fountain and stream, the sun and light) to stress the idea of Christ as "God of God, Light of Light, etc." and yet coeternal with the Father.

Gregory of Nazianus (329-389) also repeated the truths that the Son and the Holy Spirit originate from the Father, yet are coeternal with Him. It should be mentioned, though, that Nestorius (d.c.451) used a quote of Gregory to further his own Christological aberration: "He who begins and gradually advances and is brought to fulness is not God, although on account of the manifestations which (took place) gradually, he is so called."²⁶ The statement of Gregory, however, had been made with reference to Christ's human nature.

Ambrose (c.339-397) takes the Nicean terms and wisely bows to the unsearchableness of their truths:

It is impossible to know the mystery of this eternal generation.... The mind is too weak. Language, not only mind but also that of the angels, is hushed. If the peace of Christ passes all understanding, how much more this high generation.... You may know that He was born; but you dare not search as to how He was born."²⁷

Other Church Fathers who defended the orthodox position were: Leo I (c.400-461) who said,

"The temporal birth detracts nothing from and adds nothing to the divine and eternal nativity;"²⁸ Theodoret (c.393-c.458) who maintained that what is predicated of the divine nature is common to all three Persons of the Godhead; Cyril of Alexandria (d.444) who spoke of Christ's "ineffable generation as God" and, in answer to the question whether the Son existed before the generation, stated, "The generation of the Son did not precede His existence, but He existed eternally, and eternally existed by generation."²⁹

A final important name that must be mentioned from this time period is that of Augustine (354-430), who all but eliminated the chances of subordinationism to gain a sizeable foothold in Christendom of the future. The fact that the Creed we know as the Athanasian (the *Symbolum Quicumque*) has often been largely attributed to his work and school of thought will remind us of his contributions to this matter.

Augustine first of all stressed "forms of existence" or "modes of existence" to describe the differences within the unity of the Godhead. Concerning the names of the three Persons, he said: "By those names which denote distinction is meant the relation which they mutually bear to each other, not the very substance by which they are one."³⁰ And he knew that such terms were still inadequate: "When it was asked, 'What are the three?' human speech at once toils with great insufficiency. Yet we say three Persons not in order to express it, but in order not to be silent."³¹ Still, Augustine employed the terminology to stress the essential deity of the Son: "The Son, because He is begotten of the Father, has the divine nature in being begotten (*gennētos*), that is, through the mode of existence."³²

FROM AUGUSTINE TO THE REFORMERS

From the time of Augustine to the time of the Protestant Reformation the subject of the eternal generation of the Son was not the center of much controversy. One name worth mentioning might be that of John of Damacus (c.675-c.749) who had traces of subordinationism and even called Christ a *ktisma* in fine Arian tradition. But we should recognize that the "Fountain of Wisdom" was more philosopher than theologian and spent much time defining terms of Aristotelian philosophy that had been used previously. Also, he had trouble with the words "One God" of the Nicene Creed-- words which are easily misunderstood anyway.

Otherwise it seems that little else controversial on the subject was brought as a challenge to the orthodox position. True, there was Johannes Eckhart with his mystical tenets concerning the eternal generation of the Son being in the human soul, but this was scarcely a major threat to Nicean thought.

The Reformers took the position of the Fathers without much controversy, for they agreed with the conclusions drawn at Nicea and Chalcedon. The following quotes from Luther show how he voiced agreement with orthodoxy:

The Son is born as a Person distinct from the Father, and yet His being remains identical with the Father's. As to persons they are distinct, but as to essence they retain absolute unity.³³

Christ has two generations, or two natures, in one inseparable person. According to the first generation, which did not take place in time but from eternity, He received this eternal power or deity from

God the eternal Father. According to the second, temporal, and human, generation, the eternal power of God is bestowed upon Him, but in time and not in eternity.³⁴

Of these Persons [of the Trinity] each one is the *entire* God, outside which (Person) there is no other God.³⁵

The more speculative Melanchthon, however, wrote: "The Son of God is born of the Father by reflection, or cognition, because, when the Father studies and considers His own being, He brings forth an image which has real and permanent existence...."³⁶ This assertion is close to the philosophical framework of Origen and was later repudiated by Quenstedt.

Calvin made no changes in the previously pronounced teaching and wrote, "We conclude that the Word was eternally begotten by God, and dwelt with Him everlastingly. In this way his true essence, his eternity, and divinity are established."³⁷

The Lutheran Confessions do not re-fight the war, but join the historic position from Nicea. Article I of the *Apology* asserts the coeternal nature of the Trinitarian Persons and states, "We constantly affirm that those thinking otherwise are outside the Church of Christ, and are idolaters, and insult God." The *Smalcald Articles* (Part I, Art. II) states that "the Father is begotten of no one; the Son of the Father...." and leaves it at that. No need to review the Biblical foundations is deemed necessary. The familiar explanation to the second article of the Apostles' Creed in Luther's *Small Catechism*, of course, just states that Christ is "true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and true

man, born of the Virgin Mary...." And the *Formula of Concord* (Epitome, VIII, Negativa 3) rejects and condemns the teaching "that Christ is not true, natural, and eternal God as Arius held (blasphemed)."

THE LUTHERAN DOGMATICIANS

The later Lutheran dogmaticians repeat the orthodox doctrine and employ the same general terms established in the earlier centuries of Church history. The Nicene and Augustinian term "mode of existence" and newly coined terms like "order of natural enumeration" and "order in mode of existence" were employed more frequently to avoid any thought of essential subordination of the Son to the Father. The giant Chemnitz, for example, speaks in this way:

We understand essential communication to be when the Father by begetting or through eternal generation communicates to the Son His entire essence and all the essential attributes of His deity, which are His very essence, which the Father does not give up by this communication, but rather that through this communication all the things that the Father possesses essentially the Son also possesses essentially or in essence (John 16:15). For although the Son does not possess them of Himself but from the Father, yet He does possess them through, in, and according to Himself in essential communion with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Hence He is of the same substance with (*homoousios*) and equal to the Father. [This quote deals with the *human* nature of Christ in connection with the divine nature, but surely emphasizes the true deity of the relation of the Son to the Father.]³⁸

To be sure, the essential attributes of the Deity in themselves, in an absolute sense, are common to the entire Trinity; but they are also limited and confined to one particular person, since there is the added distinction of the persons. Thus in the Father there is unbegotten power, in the Son begotten wisdom, in the Holy Spirit proceeding life; and yet it is the same power, wisdom, life.³⁹

He (the Father) has generated His coeternal Son from eternity.⁴⁰

Johann Gerhard stated, "Therefore and therefrom the Son is true God, because the Father through the eternal generation imparts His divine essence to the Son."⁴¹

Quenstedt had much to say concerning the eternal generation of the Son:

We distinguish between an earlier and a later birth of Christ.
The earlier is without beginning, the later without parallel.
The earlier is without a mother, the later without a father.
The earlier inconceivable, the later unspeakable.⁴²

The generation of the Son does not happen by derivation or transfusion, nor by action which begins or ceases, but takes place by unceasing emanation, to which there is nothing similar in the nature of things. For God the Father begot His Son from eternity, and ever begets Him, nor does He ever cease to beget Him. For if the generation of the Son should have an end, then it would also have had a beginning,

and this would not be eternal. Nevertheless, on this account, this generation cannot be called incomplete or progressive, for the act of generation in the Father and the Son is considered perfect in work, perpetual in operation.⁴³

Baier stresses that the mystery of the Trinitarian Persons' "mode of existence" is forever a mystery: "It is certain that there is a distinction between the Son's generation and the Spirit's procession, but it is impossible to define more fully the manner in which they differ."⁴⁴

Hollaz likewise uses the present tense in describing the eternal generation to stress its perpetual nature and speaks of the Father "from eternity begetting the Son."⁴⁵

THE CONTROVERSY CONTINUES

As we know well, the periods of modern Church history remain full of the subordinationistic and anti-Trinitarian concepts. The task of repeating and restudying the truths is ours also. As Luther spoke, Servetus was formulating Unitarian concepts. In the next century Samuel Clarke employed Trinitarian terms to mask his modern Arianism. Again in the following century William Ellery Channing was busy advancing his "Unitarian Christianity." All of these could not reconcile Nicene faith with their reason and thus departed from the tenets established by the Fathers from Scripture.

Pieper took note of the Arminian subordinationism and quoted Limborch to expose him: "It is evident that with respect to these three persons a certain

subordination obtains.... There is a certain superiority of the Father over the Son, of the Father and the Son over the Holy Spirit. It is more exalted to beget than be begotten, to send than to proceed."⁴⁶ In the same way Pieper quoted Zoekler's compromising statement, "We cannot classify as heretical that form of subordinating the Son and the Spirit to the Father and which is taught by many ante-Nicene Fathers..."⁴⁷ And, finally, Pieper denounces Kahn's words, "The Son is God only in a secondary sense of the word."⁴⁸ While we might say that these heresies are more logical than the Nicene formula, and that they are found in all ages of the Church, we cannot reconcile them to all statements of Scripture on the subject.

And in our own day we are forced to hear Barth's muddled Christology saying, "If I call myself 'God's Son,' I mean the same thing as when I call Christ 'God's Son.' 'God's Son' is 'Christ in men.'"⁴⁹ The many false kenosis theorizers⁵⁰ lined up with the Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Christian Scientists, and others who would deny the equality of the Son with the Father all remind us that there is nothing new under the sun concerning adoptionistic and subordinationistic ideas. The war concerning Christ's Person has reached us and we are being called to fight.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

As one studies the historical development of the doctrine of the Eternal Generation of the Son and the related Christology, it is troublesome to note the intricate, strange, and often paradoxical terms that have been sought, formulated, and utilized by the theologians and dogmatists in Church history. It is rather offensive to us,

as it was to many in the ancient church, that the Christian Church does not employ the simpler, more concrete terms of the Bible when speaking of Trinitarian matters. It is shocking to learn how philosophical speculators and even heathen have first used terms now used for Christological instruction. Our first reaction could well be to label orthodox terminology "artificial, meaningless, unnecessary, human speculation," and the like. Yet in view of heretical poisons, often mixed with Biblical terms, such ultra-defining terms are received more charitably. Because false teachers in the early Church used ambiguous terms and language to cloak their doctrines, the Church had to seek words that would expose heresies, end the deception, and define the Christian faith more exactly. Systematic theologians have long lamented the need for such intricate terminology, but have found themselves indebted to the same terminology when striving to state the truths of God's Word.⁵¹

Also quickly learned is the total insufficiency of human reason to grasp the intra-Trinitarian relationships, and with Luther we observe how our beloved "Madam Wiseacre" becomes ten times wiser than God Himself and takes offense at such illogical and contradictory revelations. We certainly observe the hoard of false teachers who have endeavored to reconcile Bible statements to the satisfaction of their own logic and wisdom. We see the prophecy only in part, and "we must never think that we in this life can comprehend or investigate the depth of the mystery of this doctrine."⁵²

Finally, we must remind ourselves that the doctrine of Redemption, as Athanasius has declared, is involved here. Christ is the Redeemer and His person cannot be divorced from His work.

In view of the *mission* of Christ we find His relation to the Father most vital for discussion. For this reason also we dare not merely content ourselves to view the eternal generation of the Son--or any other article of faith concerning Christ--without viewing it in connection with our personal redemption. Luther asks, "What does it avail you to confess that He is God and man if you do not also believe that whatever He became and whatever He did was done for you?"⁵³ Though there remain countless questions without answers in the study of the internal Trinitarian relationship, here is one question we can and should answer.

ENDNOTES

1. Though it is not at all certain, *monogenēs* is considered by many to be derived from *mono* plus *genos* rather than *gennao*. By Scriptural usage the word seems to denote both derivation and uniqueness, so either derivation must be considered possible. It is always used with reference to children of parents, but specifically of unique or only children. Isaac is called *monogenēs* even though he shared sonship with Ishmael (cf. Hebrews 11: 17) because he was the only son of promise and of the legitimate wife Sarah.
2. Among those who apply the term "Son" only to the incarnate Christ in our day are Thayer (see his *Lexicon* under *monogenēs*) and Heick, who states: "The real foundation for speaking of Jesus as the Son of God is in His incarnation as taught in the prologue to John's Gospel." (*A History of Christian Thought*, p. 34).

3. John Schaller, *Biblical Christology*, p. 27.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
5. Quoted by Chemnitz, *The Two Natures in Christ*, p. 181.
6. Quoted by Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, II, 12, 144.
7. *Ibid.*, II, 12, 145.
8. Quoted by Heick, *op. cit.*, p. 61.
9. *Ibid.*
10. Schaff, *op. cit.*, II, 12, 145.
11. Chemnitz, *op. cit.*, p. 122.
12. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, under Hippolytus.
13. Quoted by John Calvin, *Institutes*, 1, 13, 6.
14. Schaff, *op. cit.*, II, 12, 145, footnote 72.
15. Heick, *op. cit.*, p. 118.
16. Schaff, *op. cit.*, II, 12, 145, footnote 61.
17. *Ibid.*, II, 12, 144.
18. Heick, *op. cit.*, p. 118.
19. Schaff, *op. cit.*, II, 12, 144.
20. Heick, *op. cit.*, p. 117.
21. Schaff, *op. cit.*, III, p, 119.
22. Heick, *op. cit.*, p. 152.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 158.
24. Schaff, *op. cit.*, III, p, 130.
25. *Masterpieces of Christian Literature*, p. 107.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 164.

27. Quoted by Louis Roehm, *The Abiding Word*, Vol. I, p. 22.
28. Chemnitz, *op. cit.*, p. 245.
29. Schaff, *op. cit.*, III, p. 127.
30. Calvin, *op. cit.*, i, 13, 19.
31. Heick, *op. cit.*, p. 166.
32. Chemnitz, *op. cit.*, p. 31.
33. Quoted by Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. I, p. 412.
34. Chemnitz, *op. cit.*, p. 385.
35. Pieper, *op. cit.*, I, p. 390.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 399.
37. Calvin, *op. cit.*, 1, 13, 8.
38. Chemnitz, *op. cit.*, p. 269.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 305.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
41. Roehm, *op. cit.*, I, p. 21.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
43. Quoted by Adolph Hoenecke, *Ev. Luth. Dogmatik*, II, p. 179. Also reproduced in the "Mimeographed Dogmatics Notes," p. 52. Dr. Hoenecke fully agrees with such a concept of the perpetual generation of the Son, for in connection with the doctrine he writes, *dasz es ein ewiger Akt ist, ein Akt, dem nichts Zeitliches anhaengt* (p. 178).
44. Pieper, *op. cit.*, I, p. 418.
45. Also taken from Hoenecke, *op. cit.*, and reproduced in the "Mimeographed Dogmatics Notes," p. 54.

46. Pieper, *op. cit.*, I, 384, footnote 16.
47. *Ibid.*, I, p. 390.
48. *Ibid.*
49. Quoted by George Orvick, *Jesus Christ--
Fact or Fiction?*, p. 47.
50. Orvick, *op. cit.*, gives many quotations of
the modern false kenosis theorists and
properly reveals how the subordinationism
of Church history remains in modern Church
history. For valuable information, the
author should be read, pp. 45ff.
51. Chemnitz, among others, makes many fine
statements to this effect, and deserves to
be read. Pages 18ff. and 69ff. in his
previously listed work, for example, give
us good direction when considering the use
of dogmatic terminology.
52. Quoted by F. Bente, "Historical Introduc-
tions to the Symbolical Books," *Concordia
Triglotta*, p. 14.

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BOOK REVIEW

Kurt Marquardt, John F. Stephenson, and Bjarne W. Teigen, editors, A Lively Legacy. (Fort Wayne, IN: Concordia Theological Seminary, 1985), 212 pp., hard cover, \$12,95; soft cover, \$10.95.

Dr. Robert Preus, president of Concordia Theological Seminary, celebrated his 60th birthday in 1984. Friends determined to honor that milestone in his life with a Festschrift for his years of service and leadership in the cause of conservative Lutheranism in the United States. Well they should!

Dr. Preus has had a full career of service in the church and hopefully will continue to be a positive factor in American Lutheranism. Readers know that his formal theological training was at Luther Seminary, at that time the seminary of the former ELC. He left that body for confessional reasons and joined the ELS, to become the first graduate of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, Mankato. He served parishes of the ELS in Boston, Massachusetts; Mayville, North Dakota; and Trail, Minnesota. Then he moved on to the LCMS and to Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, where he taught dogmatics. He was one of the "Faithful Four" who refused to join the Seminex group of liberals who walked out in 1973. He helped maintain the skeleton seminary until it was once again fleshed out with faculty and students.

From St. Louis he went to Fort Wayne to become president of Concordia Theological Seminary. There he has continued through the years to serve as president, using his position to maintain the cause

of conservative Lutheranism. While he has had his detractors over the years, the results of the graduates of his school are being felt in the LCMS. The mediating and more liberal theologians still operating within the LCMS plus those who think of a Lutheran synod more as a political organization have little affection for him, for his theological position, and for his accurate and unnerving scholarship.

He has consistently refused to consider Lutheran theology as some kind of intellectual "football" which the scholars can kick around to display their own personal interests, presuppositions, inclinations, and philosophical bents. The Word of God, the Holy Scriptures, has always been for him the ultimate authority, and the purpose of theology is to save fallen mankind and to edify. Here he stands in the tradition of his ancestors, the Preuses who helped to found the old Norwegian Synod. The church is to preach Law and Gospel, the message of God, for the salvation of fallen men.

Because of his commitment to the Scriptures and the historic Lutheran theological position, he has been privileged to exert a tremendous influence for good as a seminary professor, seminary president, confessor of divine truths, writer, essayist, and controversialist. He has worn all of these "hats" with scholarship and dignity. This writer has taken graduate work under him and can personally testify to his scholarship and teaching ability. One can only hope that he will find more time to write to share his abilities and knowledge with Lutherans today and of the future.

It is to be regretted that he did leave the fellowship of the ELS. This must also be said

with sadness, but he has continued to be a warm personal friend to its members. And no one can deny that he has served the Lutheran Church well with his talents, abilities, and gift of insight. He certainly has earned the honor of this Festschrift.

The men who wrote the articles for the Festschrift for Dr. Preus reflect a broad spectrum of theological backgrounds. They include recognized theologians from various parts of the world to men from his own theological faculty. The essays also represent quality efforts, such as one would expect in a book of this kind. The essay topics also reflect a veritable smorgasbord of topics, from objective justification to Luther the missionary to Christian ethics to the problem of IVF technology. The reader can follow his own eclectic impulse of the moment and find some topic that will stimulate his theological thinking. Perhaps this spectrum of topics also reflects the interests of the editors.

Prof. Kurt Marquardt has taught at Concordia Theological Seminary for many years. Dr. John R. Stephenson, a graduate of Cambridge University, is a Lutheran by conviction, having come to conservative Lutheranism from the Anglican Church. Dr. B. W. Teigen is the retired president of Bethany Lutheran College of the ELS, who has now devoted his years of retirement to study of Luther and Chemnitz.

The book begins with an extended appreciation of Dr. Preus by Marquardt. This is followed by fifteen essays by fifteen different authors. The editors state that all these writers accept the Scriptures as the Word of God and the authority of the Lutheran confessions. They also qualify this by asserting that they do not accept all of

the views necessarily which the writers have expressed:

Comments on the various essays are as follows:

Ulrich Asendorf, a pastor of the Lutheran Landeskirche in Hanover on Luther's advent preaching to illustrate how theological Luther was in his sermons. He also shows how Luther made use of forceful imagery to vivify his preaching. Dr. Eugene Bunkowske, missionary for many years in Africa and head of the new mission school at Concordia Theological Seminary, clearly shows in his essay that Luther both theoretically and practically supported the cause of Christian missions as a teacher and preacher. Seth Erlandson, who is well known in our circles as a pastor of the Lutheran Confessional Church in Scandinavia and as a director of Biblicum, maintains his reputation as a scholar by defending the unity of Isaiah.

Dr. Henry P. Hamann, a member of the Lutheran Church of Australia and Principal of Luther Seminary, Adelaide, has a most interesting and thought-provoking essay entitled "Apartheid and Status Confessionis." It is an essay which can be read profitably by both rabid liberals and rigid conservatives who seek to use the church to force social change to create a so-called ideal society. Hamann discusses his topic within the framework of Luther's doctrine of the two kingdoms and the historic Christian position toward the state. Incidentally, one must wonder whether or not Hamann has become more conservative to meet the requirements for inclusion among the authors of this book. In a fairly recent book of his published in 1980 and containing lectures which he delivered at Valparaiso University, The Bible Between Fundamentalism and Philosophy, he labeled

Dr. C. F. W. Walther as a Fundamentalist, faulted Dr. William Arndt for writing his two books defending the Bible against charges of errors, and asserted that if the account of the Fall had been written to eskimoes, "the tale would have looked different, with a polar bear and fish and a forbidden hole in the ice taking the place of the scene we know so well in Genesis. . . . It can be demonstrated that the text of Genesis 3 itself gives good cause and reason for taking it to be a fictitious tale." (pp. 13, 14, and 75)

Dr. Tom G. A. Hardt illustrates why his reputation as a scholar is secure. In his essay, "Justification and Easter: A Study in Subjective and Objective Justification in Lutheran Theology," Hardt shows that the theology of objective and subjective justification is not peculiar to the old Synodical Conference, but that it is based in Luther and in the historic Lutheran confessions. Special stress is placed on the importance of Easter for the Christian's justification. Pastors will find almost too many beautiful thoughts to brighten their Easter sermons. However, in one of his footnotes, #75, pp. 78-79, Hardt faults the sainted Dr. Siegbert Becker on certain terminology which Becker used in connection with objective justification. One of the editors, Kurt Marquardt, adds his own footnote in which he states that he feels that the difference is one of terminology. This writer must concur with Marquardt's evaluation, having read considerable material which Becker has written in this area and also having discussed this doctrine with him.

Dr. Gottfried Hoffmann, who has spoken at Bethany for the Reformation Lectures, has produced a quality essay for this book, such as one would expect of him: "Baptism and the Faith of Children." Dr. Richard Klann's essay, "Luther on the Teaching

of Christian Ethics," shows how Luther rejected the work-righteousness of the scholastics for a Gospel-motivated life for Christ.

Prof. Cameron MacKenzie, librarian at Concordia Theological Seminary, centered his essay on Matthew 5:18. In his essay, "The Enduring Witness of the Old Testament," he sees this verse as stressing the "person and work of Christ." It is the fate of MacKenzie that he must suffer for this reviewer also having written a paper on that same section of Matthew, but coming up with directly opposite conclusions. This reflects in part the old debate as to whether the Sermon on the Mount is Law or Gospel. To this reviewer it is very proper to point out that Christ has fulfilled the Law, but not on the basis of Matthew 5:18, or that Christ is the greater righteousness, Matthew 5:20. Matthew 5:17 establishes the authority of the Scriptures. Therefore everything in the Scriptures, the Law and the prophets stands, particularly the Law with its demands, Matthew 5:18-19. Those who live on the level of the Pharisees and teachers of the Law fall far short, Matthew 5:20. Each section of what follows, Matthew 5:21ff., illustrates this truth both in judgment and for life. Leon Morris, in his The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross, points out (pp. 248-249) that Jesus gave a new meaning to righteousness in this passage, not an accumulation of merit through dead works, but on a new life emphasizing the spirit rather than the works themselves in isolation. It is also odd -- though the author may have had reasons -- that he did not quote at length any of Luther's many sermons on this text or the LCMS's great exegete of the past, George Stoeckhardt, at least for the record.

Prof. Kurt Marquardt's "The Reformation Roots of 'Objective Justification,'" shows that objective

justification was not a new and novel doctrine, but one which reaches back to the Reformation. The Australian Dr. Daniel Overduin has written considerable material on the matter of sexual technology and its relationship to Christian morality. He is already known because of his book, Life in a Test-Tube, written in conjunction with John I. Fleming. The Australians must be facing problems which are only beginning to appear here in mid-America. Pastors would do well to read his essay -- and book -- to know what is coming in the near future or what is already happening, though they may not be aware of it.

Dr. Hans-Lutz Poetsch, director of the Lutheran Hour in Germany, writes on a very important topic, "What is Involved in 'The Infallibility of Christ'?" an issue among the free churches in Germany. Dr. John Raymond Stephenson's essay is explained in its title, "The Holy Eucharist: At the Center or Periphery of the Church's life in Luther's Thinking?" Stephenson, a Lutheran by conviction and not by historic circumstances or accident -- he came into the Lutheran Church through colloquy from the Anglican Church -- is a scholar who appreciates the rich vitality which the proper celebration of the Lord's Supper adds to a proper Lutheran worship service.

Dr. Bjarne W. Teigen, retired president of Bethany Lutheran College of the ELS, has been dedicating his years of retirement to studying Luther and Chemnitz. His interests have also centered in exploring the treasure God has given to His people in the Lord's Supper. He shares the results of his study in his essay, "Martin Chemnitz and SD VII, 126." As one would expect of a scholar guided by Luther, Teigen does stress the power of the words of consecration and the Lord's Supper as a means of grace for the forgiveness of sins. One of the

essayists at the recent Reformation convocation (1986) at Concordia Theological Seminary did disagree with the statement in Teigen's essay that, on the basis of Chemnitz's words, it is possible to fix the moment of the beginning of the real presence in the Lord's Supper, as Teigen does (pp. 167-168). The ELS also stated in its 1981 convention proceedings that "we cannot fix from Scripture the point within the sacramental usus when the real presence of Christ's body and blood begins..." (1981 Proceedings, p. 76)

Dr. Martin Warth, respected theologian from the Lutheran Church in Brazil, points out in his essay that theology is not taught and practiced in a vacuum. It is preached to people who need Law and Gospel, but who also live in a social and political setting. His essay, "The Future Possibilities of Theology in Brazil in View of the Present Predicament," shows how the Christian preacher must recognize the situation in which he lives, hold to the principles of Lutheran theology, and thereby really meet the needs of his hearers. Application of the principles of his essay in the United States or any other country, for that matter, would be very interesting and do much to clarify purpose and perspective in pastoral work. The final essay in the book is by Prof. Dean Wenthe, professor of Old Testament exegetical studies at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. Students of Old Testament history will appreciate his historic study of the rabbinate.

The essays are of high quality and reflect mature thinking. This is what one would expect of scholars working in their areas of expertise and special interests, who are seeking to honor a fellow scholar, colleague, and friend. A number of negative comments were made along the line to

remind readers that they should think as they read, not merely follow. Anyone reading the book might find additional points to disagree with possibly. Comments in this book are only very general, reflecting only the thoughts of this reviewer. Readers of this journal will certainly want to buy a copy of this book for their libraries for the stimulus it will offer them. It will introduce them to a number of scholars and also support the effort to honor Dr. Robert Preus for his many services to conservative Lutheranism.

-- Glenn E. Reichwald

BOOK REVIEW

Alister E. McGrath, LUTHER'S THEOLOGY OF THE CROSS.
(Oxford, New York, Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1985,
\$18.95)

This 175-page hardcover book tells of its author in these words: "McGrath lectures in Christian Doctrine and Ethics at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford. He is a specialist in the relationship between the Reformation and late medieval thought and lectures on this subject for the Oxford University Faculty of Theology." (Jacket)

McGrath reviews the theology that Luther learned as a student and that was taught at Wittenberg when Luther became a member of the faculty. He shows that Luther at first held to the theology then taught, describes his breakthrough and its timing, and then gives us an overview of Luther's resulting "Theology of the Cross."

McGrath describes himself as ". . . a liberal historian, with a distaste for dogma and theology, and who would much have preferred a reformation of the church along humanist lines," (p. 23) This reviewer must confess that for the most part the author seems to be very objective in what he sets forth. His many quotations are impressive, so that one would be hard put to disagree with most of his conclusions. He surely is correct when he says, "But if in fact Luther did bring the church back to its chief doctrine - his discovery must be taken seriously." (p. 23)

As a medieval historian he cites correspondence of the period which shows that others besides Luther

understood the Gospel. He also gives evidence that "the Christological concentration," so much a feature of Luther's exposition of the Scriptures, "must be regarded as standing within a late medieval hermeneutical tradition." (p. 81)

It is only in the last 25 pages of his book that McGrath actually discusses Luther's Theology of the Cross. However, in doing so he shows that he has clearly understood what Luther discovered and what Luther taught. His explanations of what Luther means when he speaks of "the hidden God" are clear and concise, as also his explanations of what Luther means when he speaks of the alien work of God, of the proper work of God, and of man's natural knowledge of God. McGrath makes a comment to which we perhaps need to give more thought: "Far from regarding suffering or evil as a nonsensical intrusion into the world (which Luther regards as the opinion of a theologian of glory) the 'theologian of the cross' regards such suffering as his most precious treasure, for revealed and yet hidden in precisely such suffering is none other than the living God, working out the salvation of those whom he loves." (p. 151)

The one instance this reviewer differs with McGrath's analysis of Luther's Theology of the Cross occurs in the discussion of Luther's thinking, in The Bondage of the Will, as to why some are saved and not others. McGrath says of Luther, "His dilemma is his own creation, and his failure to resolve it in 'de servo arbitrio' an indictment of his abandonment of his own principles: 'crux sola est nostra theologia!'" (pp. 166, 167 please note the exclamation point. This shows McGrath's strong conviction in this matter.) We can see what he is thinking by noting that on page 172 he says, "The notion of a hidden and inscrutable,

God, who predestines men to death without cause, looms large in the 1525 treatise 'de servo arbitrio'." This idea of double predestination mirrors the thinking of von Leowenich in his book Luther's Theology of the Cross, where we read, "This hidden God is the God of double predestination." (Luther's Theology of the Cross, by Walther von Loewenich, Augsburg Publishing House, 1976, p. 34)

Here we believe a serious error has been made. Actually Luther does keep his principle "Our Theology is the Cross" clearly in mind in The Bondage of the Will. Luther's point in The Bondage of the Will is that we must keep our eyes on God's revelation to us in Christ and Him crucified and risen. Yet we must also admit that there is a lot about God that He has obviously not revealed to us. So, for example, Luther says, "It is enough to know simply that there is a certain inscrutable will in God, and as to what, why, and how far it wills, that is something we have no right whatever to inquire into, hanker after, care about, or meddle with, but only to fear and adore." (LW 33, 140) Then in one of his last sections in The Bondage of the Will (LW 33, 289-292), in a section entitled "The Mercy and Justice of God in the Light of Nature, Grace, and Glory," Luther states that we must keep our eyes on Christ, arguing that the mysteries of our faith must be left alone and that God will give us the answers in heaven. So, for example, he writes, "By the light of nature it is an insoluble problem how it can be just that a good man should suffer and a bad man prosper: but this problem is solved by the light of grace. By the light of grace it is an insoluble problem how God can damn one who is unable by any power of his own to do anything but sin and be guilty. Here both the light of nature and the light of grace tell us that it is not the fault of the

unhappy man, but of an unjust God; for they cannot judge otherwise of a God who crowns one ungodly man freely and apart from merits, yet damns another who may well be less, or at least no more ungodly. But the light of glory tells us differently, and it will show us hereafter that the God whose judgment here is one of incomprehensible righteousness is a God of most perfect and manifest righteousness. In the meanwhile we can only believe this, being admonished and confirmed by the example of the light of grace, which performs a similar miracle in relation to the light of nature." (LW 33, 292. Emphasis mine)

That McGrath is thinking for himself, and not just following the lead of others, is shown by especially one conclusion he comes to from studying Luther's "Theology of the Cross." He says that Luther shows that "in order for the Christian to progress in his spiritual life, he must continually be forced back to the foot of the cross, to begin it all over again - and this takes place through the continued experience of *Anfechtung*" (suffering). McGrath then says that this insight of Luther's "cannot be regarded as having arisen through the influence of mysticism, but originates from reflections such as those which we have documented in the present study." (p. 171) This comment would be a criticism of von Loewenich, who seeks to explain Luther at this point as being influenced by Tauler and other mystics. See von Loewenich's book, pages 147-163.

If one wishes to obtain one of the most objective overviews of "Luther's Theology of the Cross," read this book. However, really to understand "The Theology of the Cross" one does well to read and study the Heidelberg Disputation, LW 31, and Luther's The Bondage of the Will, LW 33.

-- William F. McMurdie

BOOK REVIEW

The Lord's Supper in the Theology of Martin Chemnitz, by Dr. Bjarne W. Teigen. Published by Trinity Lutheran Press, Box Z, Brewster, MA 02361, and distributed by Confessional Lutheran Research Book Center, 409 S.E. Wilmers, Des Moines, Iowa 50315. Price \$16.95.

Nineteen hundred eighty-six marks the 400th anniversary of the death of Martin Chemnitz, one of the renowned Lutheran theologians in the second half of the 16th century. It has been said, "If the second Martin (Chemnitz) had not come, the first Martin (Luther) would scarcely have endured." Dr. Teigen's book, then, is especially appropriate at this time. This book is not only of historical value but also must be considered in any Confessional Lutheran study of the Lord's Supper, since Martin Chemnitz was one of the chief formulators of the Formula of Concord.

Dr. Teigen begins his study by clearly defining the terms "use" and "action," which often have been misunderstood in the history of Lutheranism. The "use" or "action" of the Supper includes more than the mere eating and drinking. From the writings of Chemnitz, Dr. Teigen concludes, "Chemnitz and his fellow formulators insisted that 'use' and 'action' are synonymous (SD VII, 96) and that the command of Christ, 'Do this,' includes three constituents: consecration of the elements, the distribution of the consecrated elements, and the oral manducation of the consecrated elements (SD VII, 75, 76

83-87." (B. Teigen, The Lord's Supper in the Theology of Martin Chemnitz, p. 14) In the writings of Chemnitz, the "use" or "action" includes consecration, distribution, and reception.

Chemnitz and the other Lutheran fathers often are accused of basing the theology of the Lord's Supper more on their Christology than the Words of Institution as they are recorded in Scripture. Dr. Teigen shows this to be completely false. For Chemnitz the Verba constitute Christ's last will and testament which should not be changed or modified by the wisdom and philosophy of men. In his book, The Lord's Supper, Chemnitz gives a massive exegesis of the Words of Institution. Here he shows that the real presence of Christ's body and blood is based alone on the Word of Christ.

Chemnitz and Luther studied Biblical Christology in connection with the Sacramentarian controversy, because the Reformed taught that Christ's body was located in one place in heaven and therefore could not be present in many places in the Sacrament. Chemnitz, in his writings, shows this to be incorrect. Because of the communication of attributes, specifically the genus maiestaticum, the human nature of Christ is present wherever the divine nature is found. Christ's human nature is omnipresent with His divine nature. Then the Words of Institution do not in any way conflict with Biblical Christology as the Reformed assume, for Christ's body can be present in many places at the same time. In this connection, Dr. Teigen aptly points out that Chemnitz and the Lutheran fathers speak of different modes of Christ's presence. Christ's presence in the Supper, called the definitive mode, in which he is present wherever He wills,

must be clearly distinguished from the repletive mode in which He is simultaneously present in all places and fills all things. If this distinction is not carefully observed, one can end up as Vilmos Vajta, who wrote, "Christ is in the elements long before they are placed on the altar. The eyes of sinful man cannot see Him there. But faith accepts the Word which reveals His presence for the forgiveness of sins." (V.Vajta, Luther on Worship, p. 95)

Beginning with Chapter V, "The Consecration and its Effects," Dr. Teigen comes to the heart of his subject matter. He properly emphasizes that for Chemnitz and the Lutheran Fathers the Words of Institution effect the presence of Christ's body and blood in the sacrament.

The Verba are the powerful, creative words of Christ which achieve the presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament. In a legitimate observance of this sacrament they are more than a mere report of what Christ did in the Upper Room, "The Words of Institution are spoken in our Lord's Supper, not merely for the sake of history, but to show to the Church that Christ Himself, through His Word, according to His command and promise is present in the action of the Supper and by the power of this Word offers the body and blood to those who eat. For it is He who distributes, though it be through the minister; it is He who says, 'This is my body.' It is He who is efficacious through His Word, so that the bread is His body and the wine His blood" (Ex. 2, 229).
(B. Teigen, The Lord's Supper in the Theology of Martin Chemnitz, p. 76)

Dr. Teigen is to be commended for the fact that he so clearly sets forth the doctrine of Luther and Chemnitz concerning the consecration. This is a valuable contribution to the study of the Lord's Supper in our time, when the doctrine of the consecration has at times been blurred by statements of the 17th century dogmaticians. For Luther and Chemnitz the Words of Institution achieve the presence of Christ's body and blood in the Sacrament. They are efficacious by virtue of the original institution of Christ. Obviously this truth must be seen in the light of the entire action of the Supper (consecration, distribution, and reception). The Lutheran fathers also confess that if there is no distribution and reception, there is no Sacrament.

While Confessional Lutherans must wholeheartedly agree with the statement that Verba effect the presence, one will have a very hard time accepting all the conclusions of Dr. Teigen concerning the effects of the consecration. Because Luther and Chemnitz teach that the Verba effect the presence, Dr. Teigen assumes that the body and blood are present the moment the Verba have been spoken. (B. Teigen, The Lord's Supper in the Theology of Martin Chemnitz, p. 98 ff.) The Lutheran fathers, however, do not concern themselves about the moment of the presence. (H. Sasse, This is My Body, p. 137-138; LSQ, Vol. XXVI, No. 1, pp. 72-76) Also, Dr. Teigen holds that the Reliquiae, the remaining elements, must be completely consumed within the Communion Service. (B. Teigen, The Lord's Supper in the Theology of Martin Chemnitz, p. 125 ff.) Yet the Lutheran fathers teach that nothing has the character of a sacrament apart from the divinely instituted action. Since the remaining elements are not distributed and received, they are outside the sacramental action and are thus only

bread and wine. (H. Sasse, We Confess the Sacraments, p. 132; LSQ, Vol. XXVI, No. 1, pp. 76-82) Finally, Dr. Teigen concludes that since the Adoration of the Sacrament was allowed by the Reformation fathers, Christ's body and blood must be present from the moment of the consecration. (B. Teigen, The Lord's Supper in the Theology of Martin Chemnitz, pp. 119-120) The Lutheran fathers indeed permitted the Adoration of the Sacrament as a public confession of the real presence but this says nothing about the moment or time of the presence. (LSQ, Vol. XXVI, No. 1, pp. 82-46)

In Chapter VI, "The Effects of the Sacramental Eating and Drinking," Dr. Teigen explains proper preparation for the Supper and its wonderful blessings. The benefits of the Supper here set forth cannot but fill the Christian with hunger for the Sacrament. He writes:

Of course, all the benefits given in the Supper have their source in the vicarious atonement of Christ on the cross. Chemnitz makes note of the fact that 'the Fathers preached much about the use and the benefit of communing at the Lord's Supper, because there the sacrifice which is the satisfaction for our sins and the price of our redemption is dispensed to those who take it' (Ex. 2, 513). And he gives innumerable examples of this kind of presentation from the Ancients. In summary form, he says that the 'body and blood of the Lord which are in the Supper ... [are] our ransom, the purchase price of our redemption, the ransom for the sins of the world, a propitiatory sacrifice and a propitiation' (Ex. 2, 491). It is for this reason that

"Cyprian says of the Lord's Supper:
'This life-giving bread and the cup of blessing, hallowed by the solemn benediction, benefits the life of the total man, being at the same time a medicine and offering, to heal our infirmities and to purge our iniquities'" (Ex. 2, 491). (B. Teigen, The Lord's Supper in the Theology of Martin Chemnitz, pp. 158-159)

Dr. Teigen's work, The Lord's Supper in the Theology of Martin Chemnitz, is important in the present-day study of the Lord's Supper. This book must be considered in any serious discussion of the Sacrament. The main emphasis of the book is that for Chemnitz and Luther the Words of Institution effect the presence of Christ's body and blood in the Supper. This is a fundamental part of the Lutheran doctrine of the Sacrament which should not be denied. While one cannot accept all his conclusions, Dr. Teigen is to be commended for his witness to the creative power of the Word.

-- Gaylen Schmeling

A Tribute to Norma Ylvisaker

Some of our readers remember Norma Ylvisaker, wife of Dr. Sigurd Ylvisaker, who served as president of Bethany Lutheran College from 1930-1950. Norma Ylvisaker, who recently celebrated her 90th birthday, lives in Bryan, Texas. Professor Juul Madson sent her the following greeting. The editor prevailed upon him to submit it to the Quarterly. We are pleased to share it with our readers.

--WWP

TO NORMA Y

A captain's daughter chanced one day
the local manse to visit.
Although the reason for her call
was never made explicit,
She there met Sigurd Christian Y,
who kept another parish,
And soon discovered him to be the man
whom she would cherish.

With wedding bells still echoing,
they settled in Decorah,
A place both distant and distinct
from Sodom and Gomorrah.
Here in the world of academe
they built a nest securely,
For it was anchored in the Word,
which teaches men most surely.

That nest was moved in later years
to ever new locations,
Now to St. Paul, then Madison,
and finally, Mankato.
Each move produced some fledglings new:
Liz, Jon, Paul, Barb, and Davy,
All blessed with looks and voice and charm,
along with loads of savvy.

These five plus Doc were now the care
of Captain Norem's daughter,
And to this task of love she turned
with faith and quiet laughter.
Life's not all easy; thorns are found
among the fragrant roses,
And she learned well the Scripture truth
that God tries those He chooses.

But faith with patience well combined
to lead her through all crises,
And those who watched her from afar
declared her free from vices.
While Doc toiled on at Bethany
with faithful vim and vigor,
This charming mother kept the fires
and watched her brood grow bigger.

Yet life moves on! The fledglings left
their cozy nest and bower,
While Sig and Norma stayed behind
to mind the lonely tower.
Their work now done, they moved away,
with Bryan, Texas, calling
Them to relax and slow their pace,
the memories recalling.

When S C Y at last was called
to his true home in heaven,
He left behind his life-long love,
the captain's daughter, grieving;
Yet she would persevere in faith
as one who had been strengthened
To live her life to God's great praise,
for which her days were lengthened.

We greet her now this festive day
with ninety years behind her
And offer as a hearty toast
our love and the reminder
That in her life, we, too,
were blessed and evermore will savor
The grace of God that granted us
this most delightful favor.

-- Juul Madson