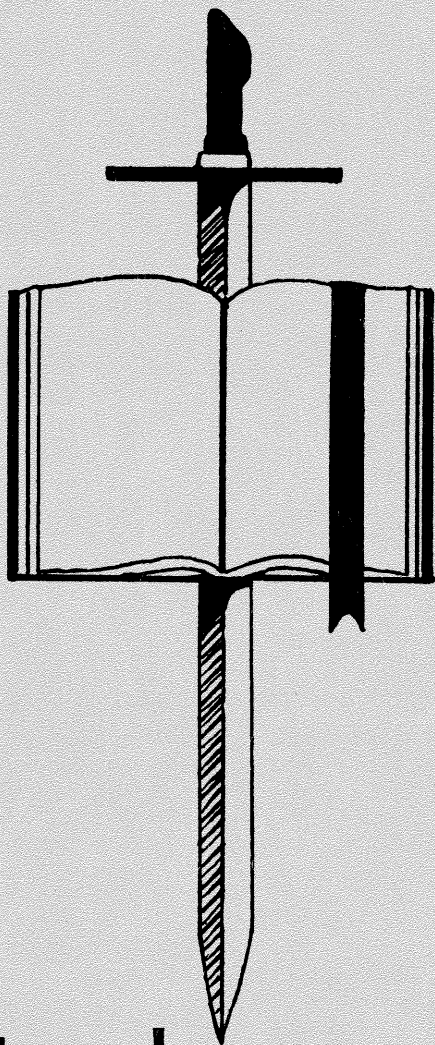


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FOREWORD

This issue of the Quarterly begins with a comforting sermon on baptism by Pastor John A. Moldstad, Jr., delivered to the GREAT LAKES ELS PASTORAL CONFERENCE at Holton, Michigan, April 16-17, 1991. Pastor Moldstad serves Faith Lutheran Church, Oregon, Wisconsin.

Our readers will appreciate the timely essay by Reverend Michael Smith, pastor of Family of God Lutheran Church, Riviera, Arizona. The author examines the millennialism of the nineteenth century, points out the warnings sounded by confessional Lutheran leaders, and applies those principles to the present day.

We continue a series of chapters from ORTHODOX LUTHERAN DISTINCTIVES, a doctrinal dissertation by Pastor Ernest Bartels. This issue contains chapters two and three, entitled FROM THE DEATH OF LUTHER TO THE BOOK OF CONCORD and THE AGE OF LUTHERAN ORTHODOXY AND ITS WIDER SETTING.

The issue concludes with a review of Professor Kurt Marquart's fine book The Church and Her Fellowship, Ministry, and Governance, by Pastor Gaylin Schmeling.

WWP

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TEXT: Romans 6:3-4

"Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

Dear Fellow Pastors and Wives:

What would you think if you were sitting in a church service where a baptism was to be performed, and the minister said: "We now gather at the baptismal font in order to carry out an execution"? One pastor suggested that would be a fitting introduction to every baptism administered in his church. What he was referring to, of course, was this famous passage of the Apostle Paul, where Paul describes our being baptized as being buried with Christ into His death. But Paul doesn't stop with Christ's death, he also emphasizes that our baptism connects us to His resurrection from the dead, as well. ... So, we might ask this morning, Do we realize that our baptism is the wonderful link between what happened on Good Friday and on Easter?

We pastors and wives have had the privilege in our lives of being trained in the real meaning of baptism. We know that there are so many people in the world around us who do not think of baptism as having real spiritual power, but only as some kind of symbolical washing--and, for this reason, many do not see the real need to have their children baptized. Besides, many are not convinced that children are born in sin, in the first place. But--by God's grace--we in our Lutheran instruction

have been led to see that baptism is a powerful means of grace, through which God the Holy Spirit actually brings to our hearts--whether as infants or adults--the gracious forgiveness of sins won by our Lord Jesus Christ at the cross of Calvary. Refresh ourselves for a moment on a few of the passages which stress this fact: "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven." "He saves us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit..." "Baptism does also now save us." "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." You and I have learned that this sacrament carries with it such power, not because of the water having some magical power, but because of Christ's word when He instituted baptism and now commands that these words be used today: "baptizing in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Yes, our baptism connects us to Christ, just as Paul reminded the Galatians: "You are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

Wretched as we were by nature, full of sin and malice against God, even described in the Bible as His "enemies," corrupted to the point of deserving eternal death in the agonizing depths of hell--we were executed to that former life of unbelief and sin right at the baptismal font. Probably everyone of us here today was a very small infant at the time. Very likely we were not even aware of any incidentals about that special day. But we can trust that God was carrying out a necessary execution that day: Putting to death our old sinful nature with its condemnation, and instead giving us the new life in Jesus

Christ. God had declared the world "forgiven" of all sin when Christ on the cross said, "It is finished," but it was through our baptism that that forgiveness by our Lord was brought to our individual souls for safekeeping. And now, by reminding ourselves of our baptism, by hearing the Gospel preached, and by partaking of the Lord's Supper, the Holy Spirit keeps us in the one true faith until life everlasting.

But in our brief devotion this morning I would especially like to stress the connection of our baptism with Christ's rising from the dead. Do we think of our baptism in relation to Easter? Do we realize that not only was an execution performed on our old sinful nature with its condemning power, but that a tremendous miracle of revitalization was performed at our baptism? Do we look to our baptism each day as a real source of strength in fighting off temptations from the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh?

"If only I could start all over again!" "If only I had another chance!" Have you heard people say that? Haven't we possibly thought or said that, too, at times? God's Word has made us attentive to the differences between right and wrong. Though we are in the faith, we also know that our old sinful nature hangs on. As Luther said, he's a pesky fellow who likes to keep popping his head out of the water and have us swim against the tide of God's gracious life-giving stream of baptism. When we begin to scrutinize our past behavior, we can only shake our heads and mutter, "If only I could do it over again!" If we think Judas' betrayal of the Lord was abominable--and it was, why should you and I think that our betrayals of the Lord have been any less disturbing to Him? We who have had the greatest privileges in terms of Bible study, have

often fallen down in showing genuine love and concern for others (maybe even our own family members) and also have failed to spend as much time as we ought with our Lord in delving into the Word and in prayer, and in doing the work of evangelizing lost souls.

Well, God gives us that opportunity to "start over again." Not only has God told us in his Word that Christ, the Son of God, has lived the holy life for us and suffered and died the accursed death for us, God even has sealed that blessed Gospel fact for us personally in our baptism. There is--as we know--nothing that we can do to earn God's forgiveness or eternal life. It has been accomplished all by the grace of Christ. We hold on to this by the faith worked in us at baptism. But our baptism also gives us motivation to live the new life in Christ and to continue the daily struggle against sin, out of love and thanks for His mercy. This is what Paul especially stresses here in Romans 6: "We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."

The ancient church called upon its adult candidates for baptism to go through a period of severe discipline of praying and fasting. Then came Easter Eve, when they would be baptized and first commune with their risen Savior in the Sacrament of His body and blood. Such participation in Christ's life and resurrection was permitted only to those who had given up their old lives. We present-day Christians hear today the same section from Scripture which those candidates for baptism once heard in the midst of their serious preparations for Easter. We, too, must constantly renew

our baptismal vows. We, too, are called upon to take our Christianity more seriously, to leave the world behind, and to draw near to the mysteries of God and to His heavenly food.

Are we discouraged? Are we in need of a real spiritual boost? Remember what Martin Luther said to a superintendent named Weller who had become so despondent that all the pastors of the city could give him no comfort. They sent for Luther. Luther went to the superintendent and tried to comfort him with one verse after another, but the poor man lay there so despairingly that like a worm in the dust he could get no consolation. At last Dr. Luther said to him: "Weller, I want you to stop this nonsense. Are you not baptized?" And in that moment, like a flash of lightning, Weller received light. Of course he was baptized into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and into Christ's death and resurrection; why should he be unhappy, why melancholy? Yes, cheer up, there is wonderful power in our baptism! Using the words of Ephesians 2, this is how "God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms..."

You've heard the story, I'm sure, about the famous atheist Robert Ingersoll. It is told that one time he was trying to show how the miracle of Lazarus' being raised from the dead by Jesus was just a trick to build up His waning fortunes. To clinch his point, Ingersoll said to the audience, "Can anyone tell me now why Jesus said: 'Lazarus, come forth'?" An old Christian in the back got up and said: "Yes! Because if He had not said 'Lazarus,' He would have had the whole graveyard of Bethany coming out to Him."

That story describes very well the power inherent in God's Sacrament of Baptism. We

spiritual corpses cannot come to Christ of ourselves. We were from birth dead in trespasses and sin. But Christ's all-powerful word--the same word that called forth Lazarus--has been attached to the water that was used in our baptism. We are now alive, connected to the risen Lord who alone has the ability to call us out of our spiritual tombs! That is what gives us incentive to carry on our daily lives as fellow Christians, and also as ones who have been called to proclaim this baptismal Easter grace to others!

I believe it was Louis the Pious of France who said, "I regard three handfuls of water to be worth far more than all my kingdom"--referring to baptism. "For," he said, "my kingdom is only France, but when I was baptized with three handfuls of water, I received the kingdom of heaven."

Above all, being baptized into Christ's resurrection means that we, too, will one day be--body and soul--with our Lord Jesus Christ whom we have trusted for our complete salvation. Yes, our baptism should also remind us how we not only rise up each day spiritually, but at the last trumpet will even do so physically.

We can join that minister in speaking of our baptism as an "execution"--execution of the old sinful nature; but let us, moreover, be quick to add that our baptism is also a "resurrection." "...Just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life." Our baptism is that new life! With Luther in his Large Catechism may we retort to our consciences which oppress us: "But I am baptized! And if I am baptized, I have the promise that I shall be saved and have eternal life, both in soul and body." Amen.

-- John A. Moldstad, Jr.

Flourishing Millennialism During the
Late Nineteenth Century:
Issues and Events Which Will Apply
To the Present Decade

1991. On the verge of the year 2000. Even though a new century will not begin officially until 2001, many are looking toward the year 2000 as holding special significance for the future of mankind. But will it? Especially for those in leadership positions in the Church, such as pastors, will the year 2000 (and the decade that separates that year from the present) bring significant problems or concerns?

It has been contended by some that the end of this century will see the outbreak of additional "end time" thinkers, especially those within the camp of millennialism. (Note Edgar Whisenant's 88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will be in 1988 [printed in 1987] as an example.) Indeed, among those in the Church, millennialists tend to concentrate more on eschatology than those in the mainstream of theology. Will this increased emphasis on the end times indeed happen, or is it happening now?

This paper will approach this topic in three parts. First, millennialism will be examined in the late nineteenth century, as demonstrated by the Seventh-day Adventists and the Jehovah's Witnesses. Second, words of warning and admonition concerning millennialism from Lutheran theologians during that same time frame will be sampled. Finally, applications of those principles of the Lutheran "fathers" will be made to the present day.

I. Millennialism During the Late Nineteenth Century

Early in nineteenth century America, revivalism led a change toward holding on to "biblical" Christianity. The outbreak of revivalism allowed members of various religious bodies and even entire denominations to stress particular teachings. One of these teachings which received increased emphasis was millennialism. This emphasis continued to increase throughout the 1800s and found expression through various groups, all the while causing more and more believers to wait anxiously for the return to their Lord.¹

In addition, the dramatic changes taking place in the United States -- the great influx of immigrants and the Civil War -- seemed to ripen the time for a religious view of the "American dream." Borrowing impetus from notables such as Abraham Lincoln, who claimed that America was "the last, best hope of earth," those in the religious realm began gearing up for the establishment of God's kingdom on earth.²

Two groups which exemplify the emphasis on millennial teachings during the later years of the nineteenth century are the Seventy-day Adventists and the Jehovah's Witnesses. While it is undeniably true that these two churches cannot be singled out as the *only* groups emphasizing millennialism in their teachings, their development and growth typify the movement toward widespread acceptance and popularity of "end times" thought. Thus, a brief examination of each of these groups will help put in perspective the millennial mindset of the late nineteenth century.

The Seventh-day Adventists

In terms of nineteenth century Adventist movements in the United States, William Miller is viewed as the earliest prominent Adventist leader. His prophecies influenced the Seventy-day Adventists (SDA) from the beginning.³ Miller, who had been a farmer in New York, became a Baptist preacher and engrossed himself in apocalyptic prophecies of the Bible.⁴ Even during his early studies he became convinced that "'in about twenty-five years from that time [1818] all the affairs of our present state would be wound up.'"⁵

During the years following his early conclusions about the second coming of Christ, Miller more accurately computed the date for this event to be between March 21, 1843 and March 21, 1844. Abandoning his previous reluctance to share his views with the general public, he began in 1834 to preach full-time concerning prophecy and Christ's return. He quickly developed a sizeable following,⁶ gaining adherents from different Protestant denominations. Because Miller was not interested in creating a new denomination, no efforts were undertaken at this point to organize his movement.⁷

When Christ did not return as Miller had predicted, a recalculation was made, and the "true" date of Christ's return was set for October 22, 1844. Excitement surrounding this prediction was greater than the first. But many followers of the Adventist movement returned to their churches after the awaited event failed to occur on the re-calculated date. However, some of the other Adventist leaders, such as Hiran Edson and O.R.L. Cozier, believed Miller had not failed completely. They believed that Miller had computed the date correctly, but did not describe the exact event

that took place. Christ had indeed "entered the sanctuary," but this sanctuary was in heaven instead of earth. This view aided the cause of the Adventists for a brief time, but because divisions among the ranks began to grow concerning various beliefs, the Adventist movement became factioned.⁸

Three segments arose within Adventism which eventually overcame their differences to form the SDA. One group was led by Edson in western New York state. This group

proclaimed the doctrine of the sanctuary 'as embracing a special or final ministry of Christ in the Holy of Holies in the heavenly sanctuary,' thus giving new meaning to the message. 'The Hour of God's Judgment has come.'⁹

A second group was headed by Joseph Bates in Washington, New Hampshire. Bates was the first of the Adventists to conclude that it was necessary to uphold the seventh day as the Sabbath day. Bates' tract entitled The Seventh-day Sabbath, a Perpetual Sign, was penned in early 1846.¹⁰

The final group which eventually fused with the previous two to form the SDA was centered in Portland, Maine, and led by James and Ellen G. White. This group emphasized the "spirit of prophecy" from I Cor. 12¹¹ as demonstrated by Mrs. White. Mrs. White was viewed as a "true prophetess," and her "visions and words were to be followed by the Adventists."¹²

Not until 1855 did these three segments of Adventism band together to form one denomination, based in Battle Creek, Michigan. The name "Seventh-day Adventist" was not taken by the new

church until 1860.¹³ The main theological emphases of each group, the Sabbath, the sanctuary and the spirit of prophecy, remained as the basis of the denomination's theological system.¹⁴ The name of the church itself demonstrates these primary emphases: a strict adherence to the seventh-day Sabbath and the imminent return to Christ.

What was the condition of the SDA during the period under consideration? During the years 1880-1901, the SDA experienced rapid growth, increasing their numbers from 15,570 to 75,000. This growth may be credited to an emphasis on worldwide mission expansion, encouraged by Ellen White's counsel for the members to become less confrontation-oriented. Thus, even though the SDA concerned themselves with Christ's imminent return, they also worked stringently for a "kingdom" on earth.¹⁵

Because of the importance of Ellen White's influence on the SDA, especially around the turn of the century, it is expedient to consider the manner in which her writings were viewed by her followers. Even though time and again various SDA authors denied placing Ellen White's writings on a place equal with Scripture, the following statement bears out the "official" position of the SDA:

While Adventists hold the writings of Ellen G. White in highest esteem, yet these are not the source of our expositions. We base our teachings on the Scriptures, the only foundation of all true Christian doctrine. However, it is our belief that the Holy Spirit opened to her mind important events and called her to give certain instructions for these

last days. And inasmuch as these instructions in our understanding, are in harmony with the Word of God, which Word alone is able to make us wise unto salvation, we as a denomination accept them as inspired counsels from the Lord.¹⁶

Thus, when the veneer of denial is removed, the SDA considers Ellen White's writings equal with Scripture.

Throughout her life Ellen White produced volumes of "theological" work, especially around the turn of the century, helping greatly to fuel the growth of the SDA. One of her important books was The Great Controversy, published in 1888. In this work she attempts to explain the controversy between "darkness and light, sin and righteousness, wrong and right, death and life."¹⁷ In the latter portion of this work Mrs. White expounds concerning the end times. After stating that the first warning to the people of earth was given in the Summer of 1844, and that the announcement of the fall of Babylon will be given twice, she states that the final "great test of loyalty" will be the Sabbath. Those who do not observe the true Sabbath receive the mark of the beast and have no hope of being saved; those who do receive the seal of God because they chose "the token of allegiance to divine authority."¹⁸

The aforementioned work of Ellen White is but one of the many which helped to bolster the work and expansion of the SDA. Although modern-day critics, even some from within the SDA camp, now realize that Mrs. White was not as "infallible" as she purported,¹⁹ her "inspired counsels from the Lord" (see above) increased millennial fervor among one of the faster-growing late nineteenth century religious bodies. In addition, the SDA

enjoyed popularity in part because of its legalistic bent. Sinful human nature is inherently synergistic (Prov. 14:12), and legalism provides an excellent avenue through which works-righteousness may be attempted.

The Jehovah's Witnesses

Even though the Jehovah's Witnesses (JW) did not reach their zenith (of sorts) until 1914, their development during the late nineteenth century illustrates further the emphasis on and popularity of millennial beliefs. Charles T. Russell began the JW movement around 1872, after experiencing a major transition in his thinking about the Bible.²⁰ Previous to this time Russell doubted, perhaps even discarded, the veracity of the Bible and became an avowed skeptic. But through the teachings of the Adventists, his faith in Scripture was restored. He began a small Bible study group in 1870, co-published a magazine and book with a "disaffected Adventist" named N. H. Barbour in 1876-77, and then produced his own periodical called Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence in 1879. By 1884 "Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society" was incorporated. Subsequently Russell began producing a series of doctrinal books, the first of which was The Divine Plan of the Ages.¹⁹ He also gave lecture series such as "Millions Now Living Shall Never Die."²⁰ The movement had thus started in earnest.

Russell's teachings, primarily because of their emphasis on eschatological themes, quickly gained wide circulation throughout the world. The JW cause was aided by an extensive publishing effort stressed in their charter itself, which stated that the main purpose of the group was

"the dissemination of Bible truths in various languages by means of the publication of tracts, pamphlets, papers, and other religious documents...."²⁹ The Divine Plan of the Ages alone reached a circulation of five million.²⁴

What exactly did Russell teach that made him so popular? Part of his appeal may have been due to his belief that man could merit favor in God's eyes during certain periods (dispensations) which God himself would provide. The first of these periods, or "worlds," endured from creation until the flood; the second world lasted from the flood until 1914; and the third world would be established after that time. It was during this third dispensation that man would have the greatest opportunity to "acquire the right for continued life and happiness."²⁵

Russell also emphasized the "return" of Christ. Unlike his Adventist mentors, Russell did not believe Christ's return was to be visible. Rather, his return consisted in this: that in 1914 Christ, who from the time of his ascension (after which he no longer had a physical body) until 1914 was seated at the right hand of the Father, would ascend the "throne of his kingdom" from which he would begin to reign over the earth. Thus Christ's return was not actually a "return" but merely a transition.²⁶

The primary appeal of Russell's teachings appears ultimately not to be the hope of an established kingdom of God on earth, because the "anointed ones," the true believers, will reign over the kingdom from heaven. What was seductive about the JW's teachings was the belief that those in the "anointed class," the 144,000, will undergo or have undergone a deification of sorts. Obviously the members of this group will not become equal to

Jehovah God, but they will become "virtually equal to Christ -- who is also 'divine,' but not equal to Jehovah." Hoekema states:

Note the following parallels between what happens to the members of the anointed class and what happened to Christ:

(1) like Christ, they are "raised" with spirit bodies for life in heaven;
(2) like Christ, they have sacrificed their rights to life on earth in order to earn the right of life in heaven; (3) like Christ, they attain immortality -- an immortality which is shared by no other creatures, not even the angels; (4) like Christ, they have been begotten by God's spirit to become spiritual sons of God; (5) like Christ, they reign after death from a heavenly throne. Thus...the difference between Christ and the 144,000... is not one of kind but only of degree.²⁷

This is not to say, of course, that the JW did not believe in a "millennium."²⁸ As seen above, though, such a millennium will not take place in exactly the same manner proclaimed by, e.g., the SDA. The millennium of Russell and the JW was to begin when Christ destroyed the evil in the world in 1914. Again, Christ's *reign* over the millennial kingdom would take place from heaven, but in the meantime he reigns over the "kingdom of the new world." Until the time when the millennium begins, the JW are to bring into their fold the "other sheep."²⁹ In this "new earth" (once the millennium begins) the unjust will be given a second chance at gaining eternal life by living according to God's laws.³⁰

Thus, even though Russell popularized a brand of millennialism not entirely akin to that of the

SDA and other "mainstream" millennialists, the following he gained during the late nineteenth century was attracted to his "God's kingdom on earth" emphasis. Even if one was not among the "anointed class," and thus not spiritually equal to Christ, one could still have the opportunity to gain eternal life by adhering legalistically to God's law.

II. Lutheran Reaction to the Millennial Surge of the Late 1800s

The late 1800s found the Lutherans in America quite involved in Lutheran-Lutheran discussions and confrontations. Beginning in 1877 and continuing into the early 1900s the election controversy engaged the conservative Lutheran bodies, especially the Missouri Synod, the Joint Synod of Ohio, and the Norwegian Synod, in a struggle for biblical truth.¹ Various bodies carried on discussions of merger while new groups were formed by splits from existing bodies. Given the somewhat fluid and/or turbulent state of orthodox Lutheranism during this period, did the pastors and teachers of the Lutheran Church make appropriate warnings concerning the upswing in millennialism's popularity?

They certainly did. Not only did orthodox Lutheran leaders wish to correct aberrant millennialistic teachings of other church bodies, there also existed a need to perform "internal house-keeping" periodically. In fact, Lutheran reaction to non-Lutheran millennialism may best be seen by the internal discussions carried on among the Lutherans themselves. In talks between the Missouri Synod and the Iowa Synod in 1857, Iowa insisted that the matter of the millennium be

considered an open question, non-binding in regards to church fellowship. Again in 1867 talks between these two groups disintegrated over beliefs about the millennium.² At the meeting of the General Council in 1868 at Pittsburgh (attended by the Wisconsin Synod, which afterward withdrew), it was necessary to rebut millennialistic teachings because the chairman of the delegation of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, Dr. J. A. Seiss, was regarded as a chiliast. As a final example, in discussions between the Iowa and Ohio Synods in 1893, a set of theses was adopted concerning the millennium and the Antichrist.⁴

A more substantial look at some of these and other incidents of internal debate regarding millennialism is in order. In February of 1857 a colloquy of the Missouri and Iowa Synods was held in St. Louis. Pastors Wynecken, Walther, Schaller, and Biewend represented the Missouri Synod. The following theses about Revelation 20 (and the millennium) were agreed upon.

1. That we believe and accept the text of Rev. 20 as God's Word, as it stands.
2. That we recognize therein a godly mystery, which no one can interpret [the] actual content with a [more] thorough certainty and assurance.
3. That no one can assert irrefutably, neither that this text is already fulfilled, nor that it above all still must be fulfilled.
4. That, whenever someone hopes for yet a better time for the Church on this ground or [on the ground of] other prophetic positions, this [fact] does not nevertheless allow any false belief which stands in contradiction of the teaching of the cross of Christ, [and] of the continual

waiting of the universal Last Judgment
and universal resurrection of the dead.⁵

At the colloquy between these same two synods in 1867 at Milwaukee, thesis three (above) was reaffirmed. Dr. Sihler, one of the Missouri representatives, clarified this thesis by stating:

It is a compromise with the chiliasm, when someone explains, 'No one wishes to deny Lutheran orthodoxy and make him suspicious on this account, that he seeks still in the future the fulfillment of Rev. 20.'⁶

That is, if one believes that Revelation 20 has yet to be fulfilled, one's orthodoxy must be suspect. To say otherwise is a compromise with the millennial train of thought.

Following that same meeting the position of the Missouri Synod was clarified further by a Pastor Ferner. He stated that the synod found it "by all means unjustified" to consider making Revelation 19 and 20 a *sedes doctrinae*, words for the teaching, upon which it should be grounded." But because these chapters are considered "dark" passages, they must be understood in the light of clear ones.⁷

It has been mentioned that at the meeting of the General Council in 1868 dissension evolved over the millennialistic positions of Dr. J. A. Seiss. In an article by C.F.W. Walther in *Lehre und Wehre* from 1872, "*Lehren die, Kirchenväter wirklich einen sogenannten biblischen Chiliasmus?*" ("Do the 'Church-fathers' Actually Teach a So-called Biblical Chiliasm?"), Walther discussed certain concerns of Dr. Seiss:

Here Dr. Seiss explained, [that] either the Missouri Synod must assert that the Church in its most important teachings and confessions from the time of the Apostles has not become a Church, with which someone could cultivate fellowship, or allow that its position of the chiliasm is opposite to an innovation, being somewhat sectarian[?].⁹

In other words, Dr. Seiss wanted the Missourians to allow millennialism because not only did the early Church teach the same, but also not believing in millennialism was sectarian.

Dr. Seiss continued by asking for a toleration of millennialism, because he had learned that the known church fathers were chiliasts. As examples he mentions Papias, Justin, Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Cyprian, Clement of Alexandria, and others. Walther proceeded to discuss whether or not each of the fathers mentioned by Seiss were indeed Chiliasts. In his closing comments Walther argues against toleration of heresy.

So we have then before us in the preceding the essential [material] about the.... opinions of the patristics concerning the 1000-year reign, to whom Dr. Seiss referred. We think, having the proof by the fact supplied with [this article], that no Lutheran, who subscribes to the 17th Article of the Augsburg Confession without a *Reservatio mentalis*, [who has] a toleration of the chiliasm of the Church Fathers, indeed, can claim a qualification in our church.⁹

Thus Walther and other orthodox Lutheran leaders were making ample warning against millennialistic leanings within Lutheranism, a warning

that would naturally spill over into the realm of other denominations. That is, what would not be tolerated among Lutherans would certainly be *verboten* in other denominations as well.

Even among less "conservative" Lutheran groups, discussions of the late 1800s focused frequently on millennialism (as has already been shown above by the dealings with the General Council). The Iowa and Ohio Synods had sought friendly relations during this period, especially after the Ohio Synod withdrew from the Synodical Conference in 1881 as a result of the election controversy. A colloquy between the two synods was proposed in 1887, but this meeting did not materialize until 1893.¹⁰ At this colloquy a set of theses (which were similar to theses proposed at an unofficial colloquy ten years earlier) concerning "the church, the ministry, the confessions, 'open questions,' chiliasm and Antichrist, and predestination, all subjects which had troubled Iowa-Missouri relations previously,¹¹ were adopted, even though both synods did not greet them with approval.¹²

Thesis V of this 1893 colloquy dealt with the "Chiliasm and Antichrist." The first two portions of this thesis state:

- a) Every Chiliasm, which makes the kingdom of Jesus Christ into an outward, earthly and worldly glorious kingdom, teaches a visible return of Christ before the last days for the destruction of the Antichrist and the establishment of this kingdom as well as a resurrection of all believers before the last days, is as one which stands in sharp opposition to the analogy of faith [and is] to [be] rejected.

- b) The hypothesis, that the prophesied reign of Christ and his saints in Rev. 20 still is to be waited upon in the future, and under the same (for the same reason) mentioned a first resurrection to be understood [as] a bodily resurrection to eternal life as an isolated belief, indeed stands not in opposition with the analogy of faith, but also can be proven even so little as the strict spiritual meaning of the text.¹³

These parts of Thesis V help to demonstrate why the Iowa and Ohio Synods did not enter into fellowship following the colloquy. The Iowans had always leaned toward being more "liberal," especially concerning church fellowship, and the Ohio Synod still contained much pro-Missouri sentiment.¹⁴ In this thesis at hand, non-orthodox leanings of both groups can be seen in part (b), wherein allowances are made for those with millennialistic tendencies. Essentially stated is that if one believes Christ's thousand-year reign is yet to come, this is allowable because the "spiritual" meaning of the text (the true meaning?) cannot be proven either beyond reasonable doubt. Thus, this thesis is an example of what orthodox Lutherans were striving against just before the turn of the century.

Another warning against millennialism appears in a section of *Lehre und Wehre* from 1900. It is stated therein that a P. Keferstein showed in a lecture at a conference that "Christ must be the center of all eschatology.... On this same principle must one (he) go against the current of the time, which still awaits a development of the salvation story in the future."¹⁵ A principal danger of the beliefs of the chiliasts, said

Keferstein, is the paralleling belief of perfectionism. The saints left on earth to reign with Christ for a thousand years after Christ's first coming will no longer have any sin, thereby being perfect.

The same way, that of perfectionism, follows also to millennialism, and it is therefore not accidental, that all of those [with] a methodistical tendency also indulge in an inclination [toward] an extensive chiliasm. Both are, how they are related with one another, foreign to the spirit of the Lutheran Confessions. One believes to have found a completely new, infallible way to salvation.¹⁶

Keferstein thus warns against the seemingly innocuous belief in the millennium because of the ramification such a belief carries in regards to the central message of the Bible: Jesus Christ and him crucified. Even though the mainstream belief of the time was to hold to still waiting for the primary message of the Bible to unfold, Lutherans were encouraged to stand firm on Scripture and the Confessions.

Finally, Günther in his *Populäre Symbolik* refuted various false teachings of his day concerning the end times. (The second edition of his work was published in 1881; the third in 1898.) He cites the SDA and the Christadelphians as falsely believing that "before the judgment seat of Christ not everything will become evident (public)," contradicting Matthew 25:31-33,46, and Romans 14:10.¹⁷ The SDA are also refuted for their belief that the time of Christ's return can be most certainly known (as evidenced by Miller's predictions).¹⁸ Gunther concludes this particular

section with the following thesis/antithesis:

Clear teaching of the evangelical Lutheran church:

The Kingdom of mercy of Jesus Christ and the reign of his believers on earth remains of a spiritual nature until the end of the world.

False teaching of the Congregationalists, Irvingites, Mormons, Adventists, [Christadelphians]:

Before the end of the world is still a thousand-year reign of Christ awaited, distinct from the kingdom of mercy of Christ.¹⁹

He refutes the false teaching with I Thessalonians 4:16, John 14:3, and Matthew 25:31-46.²⁰

Thus in light of groups such as the SDA and the JW (and many other groups) gaining popularity and momentum in propounding false eschatological doctrine, and in light of the periodic intra-Lutheran dialogues concerning millennialism, both during the late 1800s, it was important for the Lutheran leaders of the day to expose such error and promote sound teaching. As has been seen, Walther and other orthodox Lutherans relinquished no ground to the onslaught of millennialistic heresies, but rather gave clear witness that the Christian's true and final hope lay in heaven, not on earth. When the Christian's dreams of a better world become too "worldly," the very heart of the gospel is replaced by fanciful dreams.

III. Lutheran Strategies Against Present-Day Millennialism

Is Millennialism running rampant in the Church

of the present day, especially as we approach the beginning of a new millennium (according to the calendar, that is)? The answer to that question bears directly on whether or not orthodox Lutherans need to be concerned greatly about such a heresy. Accordingly, if concern is warranted, they also need to know how to counter this false teaching with biblical truth.

Part of the purpose of this paper has been to parallel the rising millennialism of the late 1800s with the late 1900s, especially the present decade. Such parallels do, by many estimations, exist. One need only peruse the daily newspaper to read various "end time" predictions or warnings. Such warnings come not only from the ecclesiastical realm, but from the secular realm as well. Saddled with many of these "doom and gloom" prognostications is the familiar face of the kingdom of God on earth: millennialism.

As has been shown, millennialism is not a new breed of false doctrine. Heretofore it has been examined during the late 1800s, but its roots precede even the Christian era. The Jews are viewed as the first chiliasts, perhaps dating back to the Babylonian captivity. Many of the elements that appear in their apocalyptic writings may sound to the present-day theological ear as being quite current:

1. A final period of tribulation and confusion;
2. The appearance of Elijah as the fore-runner of the Messiah;
3. The appearance of the Messiah for the overthrow of his opponents;
4. A final attack on the Messiah and his followers by his enemies;

5. The destruction of the Messiah's adversaries through divine intervention;
6. The restoration of Jerusalem;
7. The return of the dispersed Israelites;
8. A worldwide kingdom of glory with Jerusalem at its center;
9. The resurrection of the former generations of Israelites to participate in this kingdom;
10. The renewal of the world;
11. The general resurrection;
12. The final judgment.¹

Throughout the history of the Christian Church millennialism has always been received by itching ears. Some of the Apostolic Fathers were guilty of promoting this aberration. Even though Millennialism died down during the Middle ages, the Anabaptists repopularized it during the Reformation. The Lutherans of the nineteenth century (see above) were not exempt from falling prey to the lures of believing in the reign of Christ on earth.²

Before proceeding to an examination of the millennialistic expressions of the present decade, a capsulized summary of the main tenets of modern chiliasm would be helpful. Charles Schofield, through his Schofield Reference Bible, has probably exerted greater influence than anyone else on "mainstream" millennialism. Gawrisch summarizes Schofield's views on Christ's return:

After a great tribulation lasting three and a half years, the day of the Lord will begin with Christ's descent in glory. At that time the Gentile world will be besieging Jerusalem. Christ will deliver the Jewish remnant, and the Gentile armies will fall back to Armageddon (Megiddo), where they

will be destroyed. The sleeping saints will then be raised on earth for a thousand years. At Christ's coming the prophecies concerning Israel's regathering, conversion and establishment under the Davidic covenant will also be fulfilled. For the Gentiles the return of Christ will mean the destruction of the present political system, the judgment of Matthew 25, followed by a worldwide Gentile conversion and participation in the blessings of the kingdom. The kingdom age constitutes the seventh dispensation. At the end of the thousand years Satan will be loosed for a time, the second resurrection (that of the wicked) will take place and the final judgment involving Satan, the fallen angels and wicked men will be held.... The final judgment will be followed by a "day of God," on which the earth will be purged by fire.³

Thus, what are some of the ways in which millennialism is being thrust onto the communion of saints in the 1990s? The recent invasion of Kuwait by Saddam Hessein has sent millennial teachers scurrying to warn of the upcoming cataclysm. "The fuse has been lit for Armageddon! Are you ready???" screamed a headline from a recent Jerry Falwell newsletter.⁴ "Noah Listened and Was Prepared -- How About You?" read a Catholic ad detailing other catastrophies such as earthquakes, famines and the Mid-east crisis leading up to a "nuclear war and fiery comet to cleanse the earth."⁵ Even secular millennialists are plugging their own agenda: at the United Nations on October 9, 1990, a moment of silence was observed in memory of John Lesson, followed by the playing of one of the honoree's best known songs, "Imagine," which starkly promotes a unified world with no religion.⁶

Various books are also recently being published pandering to millennial ears. Paul Yonggi Cho, pastor of the largest congregation in the world in Seoul, South Korea, has recently written Daniel, a commentary on the Old Testament book of the same name. Therein Cho remains true to his strong remillennial beliefs, and states that "the 1992 alignment of the European Economic Community will trigger the rapture and the rise of the Anti-christ."⁷

But perhaps the latest millennial book published with the broadest base of potential readership is Pat Robertson's The New Millennium. When this work was just coming off the presses Robertson began "giving it away" to those who would donate \$100 to his ministry. Just recently the book arrived on the stands and is moving up the best-seller charts at a rapid pace.

The appeal of The New Millennium is obvious and given expression by its subtitle: "Ten Trends That Will Impact You and Your Family by the Year 2000." Doesn't *everyone* want to know what the future (especially the next ten years) holds for his/her beloved family? Robertson has appealed to the very heart of every person, especially to Christians who tend to place great emphasis on family values.

Of course the title of his work appeals most of all to the chiliast, even though the "millennium" of the title is not the "millennium" of the chiliast. However, the thrust of the book is quite millennialistic, because Robertson weaves his "kingdom of Christ on earth" beliefs throughout most chapters.

Two chapters in particular warrant further

attention, primarily because the ideas promulgated therein are not uncommon to present-day millennialism as a whole. In a chapter entitled "The Rise of Anti-Semitism" Robertson argues strongly from a Christian Zionist viewpoint, i.e., that the Jews remain God's chosen people even though they have rejected the Messiah. He states:

The Holy land is called the navel of the earth in the Bible. It is the spiritual hub of the world. The ancient city of Jerusalem is considered to be the most holy place for both Jews and Christians and, to a lesser degree, for Muslims as well.⁸

Robertson goes even further when he says, "Jerusalem is...the center of the true worship of God."⁹ How can this be? Very simply put, because the Jews are still God's people!

The obstinate denial of the Messiah by the vast majority of Jews has always concerned Christians. To anyone whose eyes are not closed, it seems so obvious that Christ fulfilled every single prophecy of the Scriptures! But the frustration and sorrow for these Jews does not, in any way, mean that Christians do not recognize the Jews as chosen of God and a special people. By and large Protestants and Catholics alike have upheld the Jewish nation throughout history.¹⁰

Robertson's Zionism is admittedly not unique. Millennialists of various breeds have long contended for the special status of the Jews of God's eyes. The establishment of modern Israel in 1948 was therefore a watershed in the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy in passages such as

Dt. 30:1-6, Is. 11:11-12, Jer. 23:3-8, Ezek. 37:21, Amos 9:14-15, and Zech. 10:10, passages which all speak of "the coming Savior and his reign of grace."¹¹ But millennialists interpret these and other passages to mean that Israel was to be given back homeland, an event which has now taken place in history.

A millennial belief corresponding to the restoration of Israel is the conversion of the Jews. Robertson does not specifically mention this false teaching in his book, but alludes to it at the close of his "Rise of Anti-Semitism" chapter. Saying that eventually the time will come when the forces of the world will turn against Israel, and that the United Nations will vote to attack the Jew's homeland, Robertson states that then "according to the Bible, the Jews will cry out to the one they have so long rejected, and He will come in heavenly power to give them deliverance from the earthly power of all the nations of the earth."¹² Because the conversion of the Jews is a prerequisite for the advent of the millennium, "Then we will have a reign of peace on earth known as 'The Millennium.'¹³

Orthodox Lutherans have, throughout their history, always maintained that believing in a universal conversion of the Jews is untenable, let alone unbiblical. But millennialists base this belief on one particular passage of Scripture -- Rom. 11:25-27:

The minds of a part of the Jews were closed until the full number of the Gentiles comes in. And in this way *all Israel will be saved*, as it is written: "The Savior will come from Zion; He will get rid of ungodliness in Jacob. And this will be

my 'last will and testament' with them when I take away their sins" (NET; emphasis added).

But note that Paul says "*And in this way* (καὶ οὕτως) all Israel will be saved." Gawrisch makes the following observations.

"The hardening of Israel, the blood descendants of Jacob...is only 'in part.' It does not include the whole nation. Through the years some will come to faith. But also the elect from the Gentiles will come into Christ's church. By adding the full number (τὸ πλήρωμα) of these Gentiles to the remnant of Jewish believers all of God's true Israel, the full number of his elect, consisting of both Jewish and Gentile stock, will be saved."¹⁴

Thus there is no solid basis for either millennial tenet of restoring Israel or the conversion of the Jews. Both heresies have their origins in the sinful reasonings of man, not in God's clear Word.

A second focus on Robertson's book will also be helpful in demonstrating present-day millennial thought. As has been stated, his work deals with ten major trends which will greatly impact the world as it is known. In discussing these trends, Robertson subtly alludes to his premillennialism, making occasional vague mention of Christ's return to and reign over earth. But in his final chapter Robertson's millennialism is undeniably presented. Entitled "Looking Ahead," he reviews the ten trends already discussed and warns that the United States must beware of a collapse of society. In the final portion of the chapter he broaches the topic of "Biblical Certainties." Therein he lays out some of the events prophesied in Scripture whose fulfillment will

impact the world in the near future. He begins by stating that the Six Day War of Israel in 1967 fulfilled Jesus' words in Luke 21, "'And Jerusalem shall be trodden under foot of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled.'" Robertson continues concerning the Six Day War:

When that event took place a clock began to tick that signalled the downfall of the great Gentile powers, the last and greatest of which is the United States of America. It also began the rise of Israel. What we would like to learn now is, very simply, how long will the clock be ticking?¹⁵

Robertson then carries out a "calculation" of sorts: if 1967 marked the beginning of the "generation" of the downfall of the Gentiles, and a generation according to Scripture lasts forty years, therefore the year 2007 should be quite noteworthy in the history of the world, perhaps even the year of Christ's return for his millennial reign. This calculation is supported further by taking into account that "in God's eyes," the United States was born on April 29, 1607, when the "first permanent English settlers" planted a seven-foot oak cross in the sand at Cape Henry, Virginia, and "claimed this new nation for the glory of God and His Son Jesus Christ." Thus, because four hundred years separate 1607 from 2007, comprising ten (the biblical number of completeness) biblical generations, the year 2007 as the time of Christ's return seems more plausible.¹⁶

Robertson concludes his book by detailing a few events relating to Christ's thousand-year reign on earth. The final two remarks he makes sound his millennialistic trumpet for all to hear.

Fortunately for us all the Utopian schemes of men, despite the damage they can do, must fall. The glorious kingdom of Jesus Christ is certain. It may appear in our lifetime with the return of Jesus Christ on earth. When it comes, the earth will know a thousand years of peace and joy.

May the new millennium be the Millennium of the rule and reign of Jesus Christ.¹⁷

Therefore, the answer to the question posed at the beginning of this section (Is millennialism running rampant in the Church of the present day, especially as we approach the beginning of a new millennium?) is a regretful "yes." Not only are Robertson, Cho, and Falwell propounding this aberrant teaching, so also Hal Lindsey (perhaps the one who has popularized millennialism most in recent years), Jimmy Swaggart, and a host of other "fundamentalist" leaders. In addition, the New Age Movement promotes millennialism, albeit a variant form. Even within Lutheranism, millennialists may be found.

So yes, orthodox Lutherans need to demonstrate much concern about this heresy by countering it with the truth. *How* is it to be countered? Because the Lutheran Church has as one of its great foundations *Sola Scriptura*, the method of correcting millennial beliefs lies within the powerful pages of God's Word. Simply by adhering to sound hermeneutical principles may one discover whatever "ammunition" is necessary in fighting this important battle.

Recall how the orthodox Lutheran leaders of the late nineteenth century reacted to the millennialism of their time. Did they demonstrate reluctance to show conclusively that belief in millennialism was tolerable? Did they use anything

other than sound principles of biblical interpretation to warn against any false notions of a kingdom of God on earth? Absolutely not. Walther and his contemporaries repeatedly emphasized the need to look forward to the *true* heavenly kingdom, not one on earth, but in heaven itself. Entertaining one's mind with thoughts of God's kingdom on earth was viewed as an attack on the heart of Scripture itself: Jesus Christ and him crucified. Present-day Lutherans are well-advised to follow the example of their orthodox fathers in the late 1800s in striving against this particular erroneous belief.

A few concrete examples may be in order of using Scripture to counter millennialism. Perhaps the greatest weakness of millennialism, similar to many other false teachings, is that the preponderance of its tenets arise from reading into Scripture rather than attempting to discern Scriptural truths (*eisegesis* as opposed to *exegesis*). Many passages of Scripture are interpreted in light of (assumed) millennial belief, instead of interpreting in light of other Scripture passages (*scriptura scripturam interpretatur*). Thus when the millennialist approaches Is. 2:4 ("He will judge between the nations, and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nations will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore" [NIV]), he sees an obvious prophecy of the time when Christ's reign on earth during the millennium will bring final and complete physical peace. After all, at what time in the future will such peace occur other than during the thousand-year reign? However, when this prophecy is viewed not with millennial-colored glasses but with the perspicuous eyes of Scripture, it is clear that Isaiah speaks of the *spiritual* peace

the Messiah is to bring, a peace between man the sinner and the holy and just God of the universe.

Yet another area in which millennial belief falls short of truth is how the visionary literature of Scripture is to be interpreted. Lutherans are often accused of not interpreting prophetic portions of Daniel, Ezekiel, and Revelation literally because they believe that not everything in such sections will occur *exactly* as stated. For example, in Rev. 13 John sees a beast rising up from the sea who makes war with the saints. Will this occur visibly, i.e., will a physical beast at some time in the future be seen rising out of a sea? Lutheran say no; millennialists, yes. For that reason millennialists accuse Lutherans of not interpreting visionary portions of Scripture literally, when in fact the millennialists themselves are guilty of *literalistic* interpretation.

Of course, the most prominent example of literalistic interpretation on the part of the millennialists is the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth (thus the name "millennialism") from Rev. 20. Therein is seen the only Scriptural reference to the thousand-year reign, which millennialists believe will be an actual physical reign of Christ with his saints. The true literal interpretation of Rev. 20 is seeing in the "thousand years" the entire New Testament era, when believers (both of the church triumphant and the church militant) reign with their Lord.

Other examples of present-day millennial falsehoods could continue to be cited *ad nauseum*; likewise, orthodox Lutheran reaction to same. Time and space restrictions preclude such continuation. Perhaps a concise summary of the orthodox Lutheran view regarding millennialism is seen in Article 17

of the Augsburg Confession: "Our churches...condemn those who are now spreading Jewish opinions to the effect that before the resurrection of the dead the godly will take possession of the kingdom of the world, the ungodly suppressed everywhere."¹⁸ While this article does not treat in detail the millennialism it rejects, it provides sufficient example for present-day Lutherans as to the toleration level which should be afforded millennialism.

It has been said by some that the belief in millennialism is not extremely dangerous, because at least the preponderance of millennialists "believe in Jesus as Savior." While this is true to an extent, as the Lutheran theologians of the late nineteenth century warned, millennialism endangers one's very faith because it shifts emphasis *away* from the centrality of Christ in Scripture *to* physical, worldly hopes. This has been seen in the teachings of the millennial groups of the late 1800s, such as the SDA and JW, as they centered their teachings around Jesus' second coming and his subsequent earthly reign, not on his atoning sacrifice as the true son of God. The same emphasis is easily seen in today's church, as believers and unbelievers alike are bombarded by millennial heresy from the secular and ecclesiastical realms.

Thus orthodox Lutherans of the 1990s will continue to be challenged with confronting the heresy of millennialism. By relying on the firm foundation of Scripture such confrontation will be profitable, for the Word of God accomplishes what he desires (Is. 55:11).

Notes

I. Millennialism During the Late Nineteenth Century

¹ Sydney E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), pp. 475-476. Underlying the intensity of adherence to beliefs such as millennialism was "the willingness of converts to regard anyone who opposed or doubted them as perdition-bound, or to believe that the entire Church was now apostate and lost or, indeed, that it had been for centuries" (p. 476).

² Edwin S. Gaustad, ed., The Rise of Adventism (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1974), pp. 174-175.

³ Anthony A. Hoekema, The Four Major Cults (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1963), p. 89.

⁴ F. E. Mayer, The Religious Bodies of America (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1961), p. 439.

⁵ Hoekema, p. 89.

⁶ Hoekema, p. 90.

⁷ Mayer, p. 440. The movement which began gaining followers of Miller in America paralleled a similar movement in Great Britain. In fact, some suggest Miller was influenced by British scholars because of similarities between predictions of Christ's second coming (cf. Gaustad, pp. 110-111).

⁸ Mayer, p. 440.

⁹ Walter R. Martin, The Truth About Seventh-Day Adventism (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1960), p. 30

- 10 Hoekema, p. 95.
- 11 Martin, pp. 30, 35.
- 12 Hoekema, p. 98.
- 13 Mayer, p. 441.
- 14 Hoekema, p. 98.
- 15 Gaustad, pp. 191-192. Gaustad characterized the SDA as "'expecting a kingdom of God from the heavens, [while] they worked diligently for one on earth'" (p. 191).
- 16 Seventh-Day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine (Washington: Review and Herald, 1957), p. 93, quoted in Hoekema, pp. 102-103.
- 17 Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing, 1950), p. iii.
- 18 White, pp. 603-605.
- 19 "Seventh Day Adventists Exposed as False Prophets," Christian News, Dec. 3, 1990, pp 1, 13. It appears as though Mrs. White plagiarized writings of other "divines" for much of her own work; fifty percent of The Great Controversy is said to be copied.
- 20 Mayer, p. 464.
- 21 Hoekema, pp. 223-225.
- 22 Mayer, p. 464.
- 23 Hoekema, p. 225.
- 24 Mayer, p. 464. "His popularity was so great that even his divorce could not diminish or impede growth of his cult."
- 25 Mayer, pp. 464-465.
- 26 Hoekema, pp. 297-298.
- 27 Hoekema, pp. 304-305.

28 M. James Penton (Apocalypse Delayed [Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1985], p. 7) states: "In an important way...Jehovah's Witnesses are unique; they have preached millenarianism longer and more consistently than any major sectarian movement in the modern world.... [T]he ordinary pattern has been for millenarian movements to surrender, ignore, or modify significantly their millenarian teachings...or to become rather isolated within society.... Surprisingly, this has not happened to the Jehovah's Witnesses who, in spite of many prophetic failures and vicissitudes for more than a century, have gone on preaching the nearness of the millenium..."

29 Mayer, p. 473, even though these "other sheep" will not enjoy the same privileges and life as the 144,000.

30 Mayer, p. 476. During this millennium "the earth will become a new paradise, replacing the paradise lost at the dawn of history." There will be no more sickness, pain, sorrow, war, crime, etc. (Hoekema, pp. 313-314)

II. Lutheran Reaction to The Millennial Surge of the Late 1800s

¹ E. Clifford Nelson, The Lutherans in North America (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), pp. 315-316.

² Nelson, pp. 202-203, 279-280.

³ J. L. Neve, History of the Lutheran Church in America (Burlington, IA: The Lutheran Literacy Board, 1934), pp. 161-162.

⁴ Nelson, p. 280.

⁵ "Die Stellung unserer Vater zu Offenb. Joh. 20," Lehre und Wehre, vol. 47, pp. 260-261.

⁶ Ibid., p. 266. This clarification had appeared in an earlier Lehre und Wehre and was objected to by the Iowans.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 266-267.

⁸ p. 97.

⁹ p. 111. See Wilbert R. Gawrisch, Eschatological Prophecies and Current Misinterpretations (Mequon, WI: Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, 1989), pp. 9-12 for a concise discussion of the church fathers regarding millennialism.

¹⁰ Neve, pp. 279-280, 258-259.

¹¹ Nelson, p. 347.

¹² Neve, p. 280.

¹³ "Das Colloquium der Synoden von Ohio und Iowa," Lehre und Wehre, vol. 39, p. 259.

¹⁴ Nelson, p. 348. The Iowa Synod was also less regimented in its approach toward doctrine, relying more on a historical rather than a dogmatical approach.

¹⁵ "Vermischtes," Lehre und Wehre, vol. 39, p. 259.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 113.

¹⁷ Martin Günther, Populäre Symbolik (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1898), p. 432.

¹⁸ Günther, p. 434.

¹⁹ Günther, pp. 434-435.

²⁰ Günther, p. 436.

III. Lutheran Strategies Against Present-Day Millennialism

¹ Gawrisch, pp. 6-7

2 Gawrisch, pp. 9-13. 3 p. 15.

4 Christian News, Dec. 10, 1990, p. 10.

5 Arizona Republic, Dec. 4, 1990, p. 18.

6 Joel Gerlach, "Imagine That!" The North western Lutheran, Dec. 1990, p. 411.

7 Christian News, Dec. 10, 1990, p. 10. The article cited is a reprint of an article by Lee Grady in Charisma and Christian Life, Dec. 1990, which gives Cho's book a very favorable review, stating that it is "warm, easy to read, and practical."

8 Pat Robertson, The New Millennium (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1990), p. 269.

9 Robertson, p. 264. 10 Robertson, p. 289.

11 Gawrisch, pp. 75-76, 79.

12 Robertson, p. 294. 13 Robertson, p. 294.

14 p. 80. Also cited is Rom. 9:6, "Not all who are descended from Israel are Israel."

15 p. 312.

16 pp. 312-313. It should be added that Robertson does not state definitively that the year 2007 will bring Christ's return; he says (p. 313): "None of us knows the times and seasons which God has reserved for Himself, but this scenario is fascinating to contemplate. If correct, it reinforces some of the other conclusions of this book that indicate the long cycle of Western European ascendancy has come to an end."

17 p. 318.

18 Theodore G. Tappert, ed., The Book of Concord (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), pp. 38-39.

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ready???" Christian News, 10 Dec. 1990, p. 10.

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wirklich einen sogenannten biblischen
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CA: Pacific Press Publishing, 1950.

-- Michael K. Smith
Riviera, Arizona

CHAPTER II

FROM THE DEATH OF LUTHER TO THE BOOK OF CONCORD

To properly understand and appreciate Lutheran orthodoxy, past and present, it is important to devote a chapter to a summary historical review of the period from the time of Luther through the adoption of the Book of Concord. On these pages not only the religious setting, but also the political and social environments in which this development occurred, will be discussed. All of these factors are interwoven and interrelated.

Luther died on February 18, 1546.¹ As soon as he died, the external unity that had existed in the Lutheran Church disappeared. Discord broke out on every hand.² G. Friedrich Bente says, "His death was everywhere the signal for action against true Lutheranism on the part of its avowed enemies and false brethren."³ The years that followed saw reaction and internal weakness, external pressure and oppression.⁴ Political and theological war broke out in the wake of his death.⁵

Luther had foreseen these approaching troubles. He said that he had asked God to thwart the plan of the Catholics and "suffer no war to come upon Germany during my life."⁶ Regarding problems in the area of doctrine he said in a sermon in 1531, fifteen years before his death, "the Gospel will abide among you for a short time only, after the heads of those who preach it now have been laid in the dust. After our death it will not remain... Tell me again twenty years from now how the matter will stand. Others will come and preach to please the devil."⁷ In a sermon preached in Wittenberg

shortly before he declared, "The devil will kindle the light of reason and lead you away from the faith."⁸ On another occasion he made the remark, "After my death, none of these theologians will remain firm."⁹

It was not without cause that Luther went to his death deeply concerned. Among various other signs of disintegration and discord, he was troubled about serious problems being generated by his co-worker, Philip Melanchthon. In 1540, six years before Luther died, Melanchthon on his own accord issued a revised version of the Augsburg Confession. The original edition of the Augsburg Confession rejects synergism and teaches the Real Presence in the Lord's Supper. In the revised version, known as the Variata of 1540, Melanchthon made essential changes in order to compromise with Catholic and Reformed views. These alterations caused many doctrinal controversies in the sixteenth century and since. Luther rebuked Melanchthon for tinkering with the confession.¹⁰ He was deeply involved in negotiations with the opponents of Lutheranism. In these he made enormous concessions.¹¹

On June 26, 1546, four months after Luther's death, the Pope entered into a secret agreement with Emperor Charles V to exterminate Protestantism in Germany.¹² The intention was to force the Protestants "to return to the bosom of the Roman Church."¹³ The Pope bound himself to help defray the expenses of resorting to arms against the Evangelical states which made up the Smalcald League. He declared the war a crusade. All those who took part were offered indulgences.¹⁴ The Emperor also entered into a secret treaty with Duke Maurice of Saxony. In this treaty, in order to become Elector of Saxony, Maurice agreed to

submit to the forthcoming decree of the Council of Trent, and joined his forces with those of the Emperor.¹⁵

The Smalcald War was easily won by the Emperor. The decisive battle was fought at Muehlberg on April 24, 1547.¹⁶ Elector John Frederick of Saxony and Landgrave Philip of Hesse, the chief political leaders of the Lutheran Church were captured and imprisoned. Virtually all of Germany, except a few Protestant cities in the southern part of the country, was conquered by the Emperor.¹⁷ Bente states that, "Everywhere the Lutherans were at the tender mercy of the Emperor."¹⁸

On May 15, 1548, the Emperor proclaimed a law called the Augsburg Interim. The intention was to force the Lutherans to obey the Pope.¹⁹ According to the Interim the Lutheran doctrine of justification was to be given up, seven sacraments were to be recognized, the doctrine of transubstantiation was to be maintained, the mass was to be interpreted as a thankoffering, and all Catholic ceremonies were to be kept.²⁰ The Protestant princes were maneuvered into accepting the Interim, because they were given the impression that it would apply to Catholics as well as Protestants until the entire religious problem would be solved by a national church council.²¹ Most of the faithful pastors refused to accept the Interim. These pastors were deposed, banished and imprisoned by the hundreds. Some were even executed.²²

In 1548 Melanchthon attacked the Interim in writing. Later he became fearful of threats of the anger of the Emperor.²³ Sensing that neither Protestants nor Catholics were really satisfied with the Augsburg Interim, Melanchthon, assisted

by Wittenberg and Leipzig Theologians, prepared a compromise document known as the Leipzig Interium.²⁴ The new Interium was issued on December 22, 1548.²⁵ This was the most unfortunate act and greatest mistake of his life.²⁶ In the Leipzig Interium, he yielded many of the most important points of difference between the Lutherans and the Catholics. The roots of all the controversies that followed are to be found in the Leipzig Interium.²⁷ Theodore E. Schmauk writes that in the Interium justification by faith is changed to mean, "that man is renewed by the Holy Spirit, and can fulfil righteousness with his works, and that God will for His Son's sake, accept in believers the weak beginning of obedience in this miserable frail nature."²⁸ Bente states that the entire matter of justification by faith "is presented in terms which the Romanists were able to interpret in the sense of their doctrine of infused grace."²⁹ The Leipzig Interium also says that, "the merciful God does not work with man as with a block, but draws him, so that his will also co-operates."³⁰ Besides yielding on justification, he also proposed a return to Catholic ceremonies and restoration of the jurisdiction of bishops. This led to a bitter controversy. The main controversial question was whether it is proper to yield in unessential matters such as ceremonies and government provided the pure doctrine by maintained.³¹ Through the Leipzig Interium, Melanchthon became the author of a movement which gave rise to the adiaphoristic and other controversies which were ultimately settled by the Formula of Concord.³² Bente said it "was bound to become a fertile source of numerous and violent controversies."³³ When the strict Lutherans denounced the Leipzig Interium, Melanchthon lost his position as the recognized leader of Lutheranism.³⁴ In 1556 Melanchthon admitted in a qualified way

that he had sinned in this matter, and that he should have kept aloof from the insidious counsel of the politicians.³⁵

Immediately upon the adoption of the Leipzig Interium, the Adiaphoristic controversy began. A few months later the Osiandrian controversy arose. Several years later, in 1551, the Majoristic and Eucharistic controversies developed.³⁶

As noted above the Adiaphoristic controversy was occasioned by Melanchthon's attitude toward Catholic ceremonies in the Leipzig Interium.

The Osiandrian controversy had to do with a theory of justification proposed by Andrew Osiander of Nuremberg. Lutherans hold that justification is a single, forensic act of God. It is distinguished from sanctification which follows as a gradual process. In Catholic theology justification and sanctification are merged as a gradual process, conditioned by faith and good works. Osiander's views were somewhat midway between the Lutheran and Catholic positions.³⁷

The Majoristic controversy began when George Major, a disciple of Melanchthon, defended the phrase in the Leipzig Interium, "Good works are necessary unto salvation."³⁸ He held that forgiveness of sins was obtained by faith alone, but no one would be saved without good works.³⁹ The seeds of Major's ideas are to be found in statements of the Interium, e.g., "it is true that eternal life is given for the sake of the Lord Christ out of grace... Nevertheless, the new virtues and good works are so highly necessary that if they were not quickened in the heart there would be no reception of divine grace."⁴⁰

True Lutherans saw Major's position as a return to the Catholic doctrine of salvation by faith and good works.⁴¹

Another controversy, the Antinomistic, rose out of the Majoristic controversy.⁴² The Antinomistic controversy concerned the place of the Ten Commandments in the plan of salvation.⁴³ In this some of the teachings of John Agricola, an opponent of Luther, reappeared.⁴⁴ Luther held that both the Law and the Gospel should be preached because "through the law comes the knowledge of sin."⁴⁵ Agricola taught that the Law belonged in the hall of justice, but not in the pulpit. He believed that only the Gospel should be preached because it alone could produce a real change in heart and life.⁴⁶

The Synergistic controversy centered around whether or not the human will or effort cooperated with divine grace in conversion and salvation, and whether human nature is totally depraved before conversion.⁴⁷ A follower of Melanchthon, named Pfeffinger, said that man is not purely passive in his conversion. This teaching threatened the fundamental doctrine of salvation by grace through faith alone.⁴⁸

The Flacian controversy developed when Matthias Flacius, in refuting synergism, claimed that human nature had become sin, utterly sinful. He also held that the substance of man is sin, that human nature exists only in the corrupted form. Both the followers of Melanchthon and the ultra-conservatives opposed him on this.⁴⁹

The Christological controversy developed in connection with the Lord's Supper. This was perhaps the most important of all the doctrinal

disputes during these troubled years.⁵⁰ The question was whether or not Christ could actually give His body and blood in the Sacrament.⁵¹ Between the death of Luther and 1552, the Calvinistic doctrine of the Lord's Supper was being quietly promulgated in Germany. After he changed Article X of the Augsburg Confession, Melanchthon taught a doctrine similar to Calvin's. The effect of the difference was not noted for a number of years, and the approach of Lutheranism, as found in the pupils of Melanchthon, became nearer and nearer to Calvinism. In 1552 Joachim Westphal, a pastor in Hamburg, pointed out that the Calvinistic teaching was different from that of Luther. His observation caused great excitement in some parts of the Lutheran Church. In 1559 the Church of Württemberg issued a pronouncement in favor of the true Lutheran doctrine.⁵²

All the controversies broke the Lutheran Church into fragmentary groups. Schmauk wrote, "Already in 1556, things had come to such a pass that the old Evangelical doctrine was taught openly only in a few places, particularly in north Germany."⁵³ Two distinct parties developed within Lutheranism. One was the Gensio (genuine) Lutherans, the rigid ultra-Lutheran opponents of Melanchthon. All who embraced Melanchthon's synergism were included among the Philippists. Among the Philippists was a smaller group called Crypto-Calvinists. These secretly held the Calvinistic doctrine of the Lord's Supper.⁵⁴

Between these extreme parties there was a group of milder men. Schmauk says that many of them were, "pupils of Melanchthon, imbibing the sweetness of his spirit, and the excellence of his method, but avoiding his error and clinging to the doctrine of Luther."⁵⁵ Four of these, namely

Jacob Andreae, Martin Chemnitz, Nicholas Selnecker and David Chytraeus, became framers of the Formula of Concord, and brought peace to the church.⁵⁶

While all these things were occurring within Lutheranism, there was also considerable activity in the Catholic Church and in the political realm. Pope Julius III assembled the Council of Trent in 1551 and 1552. The Emperor wanted a reformed Catholic Church. He had a definite program for this, but before long he realized that neither the Pope nor the Council would co-operate with him because of the dominant influence of the Jesuits. His efforts were frustrated by both Catholics and Protestants. When the German princes discovered that the Emperor and his brother, Ferdinand of Austria, were planning to secure the imperial crown as the permanent possession of the Hapsburgs, more opposition developed. At the time the Emperor was involved on two fronts, with the Turks and with France. Then Duke Maurice of Saxony suddenly turned against him. He became the leader of a conspiracy of German princes. Maurice headed a military campaign which forced the Emperor to conclude the Passau peace agreement in 1552. The peace treaty provided that the religious situation should be returned to its status in 1545.⁵⁷ In this agreement all the adherents to the Augsburg Confession were assured religious liberty. This included not only Lutherans, but also Calvinists who had accepted the Variata version of the Confession.⁵⁸ All the gains made by the Catholics in the Smalcald wars were taken away. Also in 1552 the Council of Trent was dissolved. It did not reassemble again for ten years.⁵⁹

The Lutheran Reformation finally received legal recognition at the Diet of Augsburg in

1555. According to the agreed upon principles, two religions were permitted to exist in the empire. These were Catholicism and Lutheranism. Zwinglianism, Calvinism, and Radicalism were excluded from toleration. Each prince had the right to decide which of the two religions he and his state should have (cuius regio eius religio).⁶⁰ A Catholic government would not be required to tolerate Lutherans. Likewise, a Lutheran government would not be required to tolerate Catholics. Dissenting minorities would have the right to emigrate.⁶¹ Provision was made for the event that a Catholic spiritual ruler of an ecclesiastical territory would become Protestant. In such a case he was to give up his lands.⁶² Lewis W. Spitz says, "When the peace was announced, the bells rang throughout the Lutheran lands, for the right of peaceful co-existence had been won at last."⁶³

In 1562 the Catholic Church again went on the offensive with the convening of the third session of the Council of Trent. The Council had met first in 1545-1547 at Trent. The second meeting was at Bologna from 1551-1552. The final session was held at Trent from 1562-1563. The purpose of the Council was to define and codify Catholic doctrine, to reform the life of the Catholic Church, and to suppress heresy.⁶⁴ The Council rejected any compromise or modification of medieval Catholic doctrine.⁶⁵ The participants also refrained from discussing points that were controverted within Catholicism. They limited themselves to the rejection of Protestant teaching.⁶⁶ In the area of doctrine Spitz states, "In developing their dogmatic definitions the fathers simply followed the statements in the Lutheran Augsburg Confession of 1530, opposing them with orthodox definitions and adding anathemas. The most

acrimonious debates developed around the central problems of original sin and justification."⁶⁷

In his four-volume work "Examination of the Council of Trent" (Examen Councilii Tridentini), Martin Chemnitz wrote the following summary of the position of the Council on justification. He says that the question is "how a man is justified before God to eternal life." He states of the Council, "They deny that the justification of a sinner is solely the remission of sins. And they pronounce many anathemas if anyone says that men are righteous before God through the righteousness of Christ, or solely through the remission of sins, or that they are justified by grace, that is, alone through the favor of God or the mercy of God, who forgives sins for Christ's sake."⁶⁸ In the Examen Chemnitz analyzed in their entirety the canons and decrees of the Council. He showed by exhaustive evidence from the Bible and from the teachers of the church that the Council had departed from the teaching of Scripture. The Examen very quickly became famous. To this day it is recognized not only as a masterful polemic against the canons and decrees of the Council, but also as a thorough exposition of the beliefs and teachings of the adherents of the Augsburg Confession.⁶⁹

The Council also declared that the traditions of the church had as much authority as the Bible. They said that only the Catholic Church had the right of interpretation. An "Index of Prohibited Books" was approved. The writings of Luther, Calvin, and other Protestant leaders were on the Index. In this way the spread of Protestantism was practically brought to a standstill.⁷⁰ The Council provided for stricter church discipline, better clergy education, and more pastoral care

of the laity. Celibacy of the clergy was made binding. The liturgy and breviary were revised. Arrangements were made for a new Latin Bible.⁷¹

The Council played an important part in the revival of Catholicism and mobilized the Counter-Reformation.⁷² Lars P. Qualben said, "The main characteristic of the revived Catholicism was its effort to regain by force the territory lost to the Protestants."⁷³ This armed struggle began with the attack on the Calvinistic regions of Western Europe from 1562 to 1598. Next followed the attack on the Lutheran areas of Central Europe from 1618 to 1648.⁷⁴

Melanchthon died in 1560. After he died, there were those who wanted to exalt his writings to symbolic authority.⁷⁵ Already in 1560 the attempt was made to force the "Corpus Philippicum" or "Corpus Doctrinae" of Melanchthon upon the churches in Saxony. This aroused deep feelings.⁷⁶ Eventually Saxony, along with Hesse, Pomerania, and a number of other territorial churches adopted a Corpus Doctrinae of Melanchthon.⁷⁷

Regarding the period from the death of Luther (1546) through Melanchthon's death (1560) Schmauk made this statement: "The true Lutherans who remained steadfast through these years of darkness ...came to the conclusion...that the only way to bring the Church back to the whole Faith...was to reaffirm all the earlier Confessions of the Catholic Christian Faith, with the Augsburg Confession, and to unfold the full Faith of the Confessions more fully under the guidance of God's Word at any points which had become obscured and contorted during this period."⁷⁸

Conditions were changing within Lutheranism.

The Gnesio-Lutherans had largely lost their influence. They finally died out. This was true of the old Melancthonians. When the controversy of the Lord's Supper became a question not between Luther and Melancthon, but between Luther and Calvin, quite a few followers of Melancthon remembered their Lutheranism. Among these were Martin Chemnitz, Nicholas Selnecker and David Chytraeus.⁷⁹

In 1561 after the diet of Naumberg, the Lutherans realized that the Augsburg Confession did not offer a sufficient confessional basis. Elector Augustus of Saxony wrote, "Unity among us who claim to receive the Augsburg Confession is impossible, while every land has a separate Corpus Doctrinae."⁸⁰ He suggested a conference of theologians where they could, "take counsel together how out of the whole, to make one Corpus, which shall be the common confession of us all."⁸¹ A convention at Lüneberg asked for a Corpus Doctrinae that should include the Augsburg Confession, the apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, Luther's Catechism, and his remaining writings. In addition they said that the Osiandrists, the Majorists, the Sacramentarians, the Adiaphorists, and the Synergists should be condemned.⁸² Schmauk wrote, "In lower Saxony, especially, great stress was laid upon Luther's orthodoxy and upon the right doctrine of the Lord's Supper."⁸³

In 1567 Jacob Andreae wrote "Confession and Brief Explanation of Several Controverted Articles." This document dealt with five subjects: justification, good works, free will, adiaphora, and the Lord's Supper.⁸⁴ He sent this writing to theologians in other parts of Germany inviting their reactions as to whether his statements would be suitable as a confession, to clearly present true

Lutheran doctrine, and to bring peace to the troubled church. Many were ready to accept these, but some felt they were not sufficiently distinctive and complete.⁸⁵

In his travels around Germany, Andreae met Martin Chemnitz. As a result Chemnitz prepared and circulated a form of confession of those articles in the Augsburg Confession that had been falsified.⁸⁶

In 1573 Andreae sent Chemnitz six sermons concerning the divisions that had arisen in the church between 1548 and 1573.⁸⁷ When Chemnitz showed Andreae that the sermonic form was hardly adaptable to confessional purposes, he prepared a new draft. This is known as the "Swabian Concordia." It contains articles on original sin, free will, justification by faith, good works, the Law and the Gospel, the third use of the Law, adiaphora, the Lord's Supper, the person of Christ, eternal providence and election of God, and other groups that never accepted the Augsburg Confession.⁸⁸ Chemnitz and Chytraeus, along with other theologians of Lower Germany, made repeated revisions to this document. From this they developed a more compendious and more theological "Swabian-Saxon Concordia." This writing was published in 1575.⁸⁹

There was a new and significant turn of events in Saxony. Elector Augustus became convinced that his theologians were Crypto-Calvinists. He proceeded very sharply against the Philippists. He was won for the securing of orthodoxy on a soundly Lutheran basis.⁹⁰

Upon the call of Elector Augustus, a conference of twelve theologians assembled at Lichtenberg. This conference decided that bad feelings arising

in past controversies should be forgiven and forgotten, that no one was bound any longer to the Corpus Doctrinae of Melanchthon, that a commission of truth loving and peaceful men like Chemnitz, Andreae, Chytraeus and Johannes Marbach should prepare an explanation of all the doctrines that had arisen which were contrary to the Augsburg Confession.⁹² This commission essentially recast the Swabian-Saxon Concordia. Some of the revisions were made in light of another confessional document known as the "Maulbronn Formula." Their efforts resulted in the production of the "Torgau Book."⁹³

The word spread throughout Germany that, after so long, the confusion and division had given way to unity. As a result of this news, Elector Augustus received many letters of protest from Calvinistic princes and Crypto-Calvinists. Even Queen Elizabeth of England sent a deputation in the interests of Calvinism not to allow the book to be promulgated. Many Reformed proposed that a common Reformed Confession should be set up over against the Formula of Concord, and that the Reformed should withdraw from their acceptance of the Augsburg Confession.⁹⁴

The Elector of Saxony had copies of the Torgau Book sent to most of the Evangelical orders in Germany, requesting that the theologians in the various areas evaluate the document and that the results be returned to Dresden.⁹⁵ Twenty-five responses were received. Krauth says, "the great mass of the...responses testified to a general approval of the Formula and showed that the pure faith still lived."⁹⁶ An Epitome was composed by Andreae to meet objectives regarding the bulkiness of the Torgau Book. This brief extract contained merely thetical and antithetical declarations.⁹⁷ The commission completed their work in May of 1577. On May 28, 1577, the "Bergen Book" was laid before

he Elector. The Bergen Book became known as the "Formula of Concord."⁹⁸

The confession was sent to Lutheran princes and city councils in all parts of Germany.⁹⁹ It was discussed and examined by pastors and teachers in the conferences, or synods, called for the purpose of testing it.¹⁰⁰ After considering criticisms received and further refining details, the commission members signed the confession on May 29, 1577.¹⁰¹ The Formula was at once subscribed to by three electors, twenty dukes and princes, twenty-four counts, four barons, five imperial cities, and about eight thousand pastors and teachers.¹⁰²

In some areas the Catholics prevented pastors and school teachers from signing the Formula.¹⁰³ Protestant critics, including the Queen of England, tried in various ways to hinder acceptance of the confession by the Lutherans. They charged that it was unjust for six theologians to write a confession for the whole church, and that a general Protestant synod should be held before Lutherans signed a separate confession. When Lutherans all over Germany were subscribing, charges were made that persons were forced to sign against their will.¹⁰⁴ At a convention at Herzberg in 1578, Andreae stated, "I am able to declare most truly, that no man was compelled to give his signature, nor subjected to any undue influence. If this is not true, the Son of God has not redeemed me with His blood."¹⁰⁵ As the confession was being accepted throughout Germany, and in Hungary and Sweden, and other places, there was widespread opposition from Philippists and Crypto-Calvinists within Lutheranism, and from Calvinists and Reformed outside the Lutheran Church. This was the case not only in Germany, but throughout northern

Europe. In Denmark the penalty for bringing a copy into the country was execution and confiscation of property. Ministers and teachers found with a copy were to be deposed from office.¹⁰⁶ Mention should be made of the fact that later the Formula came to be regarded highly in Denmark and that it, in fact, if not in form became a Symbol of the Danish Church.¹⁰⁷

Schmauk said of the Formula of Concord, "The effect of the introduction of the Formula is important. It separated out the non-Lutheran elements from the Lutheran Church...It precluded the misunderstandings and bitter controversies of the past within the Church. It thus solidified the Church, and prevented its disintegration."¹⁰⁸ Krauth stated, "A Church threatened with destruction, from the insidious working of error, had risen out of the chaos created by heresy which pretended to be orthodox."¹⁰⁹

The subscription of the Formula of Concord occurred shortly before the fiftieth anniversary of the Augsburg Confession. Therefore, it was agreed among the Lutheran princes that an authentic edition of all the Symbolical Books of Lutheranism should be published on June 25, 1580. This was done. The first edition was printed at Dresden.¹¹⁰ The Book of Concord was signed by fifty-one princes, thirty-five cities, and about nine thousand theologians.¹¹¹ E. H. Klotsche says, "The Formula marks the completion of doctrinal construction in the Lutheran Church of the sixteenth century. It became the basis for the development of Lutheran theology."¹¹² The various Lutheran rulers required their professors, pastors, and others in public office to declare themselves in regard to the new book of confessions. Those who refused to subscribe were

suspended, and finally deposed from office as persons who could no longer serve in the Lutheran Church.¹¹³ Robert G. Clause states, "This book became binding on two-thirds of German Protestantism, making for a clear doctrinal difference between Lutheran and Catholic teaching as well as Lutheran and Reformed teaching. Systematization of doctrine could now take place within Lutheranism."¹¹⁴

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CHAPTER III

THE AGE OF LUTHERAN ORTHODOXY AND ITS WIDER SETTING

Before discussing the systematization of Lutheran doctrine during the age of orthodoxy, it will be well to briefly turn aside from Lutheranism and to consider the wider setting in which development within the Lutheran Church and in other communions of Christendom occurred. This is important because church history does not take place in a vacuum, but is only part of the larger whole.

We cannot underestimate the impact of the great discoveries which were made, already before the Reformation, and continuing into the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. John Philipp Koehler says that these discoveries "became conducive to the growth of unbelief."¹ He mentions that just before the Reformation the water route from Europe to India was opened. In 1492 Columbus discovered the western hemisphere. The effect was a complete revolution in the field of geography. Until then the world had popularly been assumed to be flat. Through continuing discoveries it was established that instead the earth was a sphere. Until then the sun was thought to revolve around the earth. Now Nicolaus Copernicus and Galileo Galilei proposed that this was not the case. Many people, who thought about such matters, had at least a vague feeling that the new ideas were contrary to the Bible. Though the Bible neither teaches that the earth is flat or round, theologians of the ancient and medieval church had explained Scripture according to the geographical and astronomical ideas of their day. Most people of the time simply were not equipped to distinguish between divine

revelation and theological doctrine. In 1633 the Pope compelled Galilei to repudiate his stand that the earth moves. Many Protestants applauded the Pope's action.² Regarding the findings of Copernicus, Luther is reported to have said, "... even though astrology has been thrown into confusion, I, for my part, believe the sacred Scripture; for Joshua commanded the sun to stand still, not the earth."³ Those who accepted the new thought in these scientific fields assumed that the Bible was wrong in this respect. Many people found themselves in a state of doubt and uncertainty.⁴

The geographical discoveries were only the beginning. There were also new findings in the natural sciences, chemistry, physics and mechanics. In many cases these also suggested possible conflict between science and the Bible. In the process the faith of many was being undermined. It followed that the historical accuracy of the Bible was attacked. Science and the Bible were beginning to be seen as separate sources of truth.⁵

There were also other effects brought on by the geographical and other discoveries. Social and political life in the various countries were also affected. Commerce and seafaring received a mighty impulse with the discovering and explanation of new continents. Increases in wealth and general prosperity in many parts of Europe led to the promotion of the arts and literature.⁶ A secularization process was occurring in almost all parts and areas of European society.

For awhile much of what took place in the secular realm in such countries as England, Spain, and France had little direct effect in Germany. The Germans maintained their short-sighted business policies, tried to keep the guild system,

and clung to what remained of a barter company.⁷ J. P. Koehler says, "Germany, without a seaboard, remained poor."⁸ Without protection from such a government, German merchants could not compete with their neighbors. Harold J. Grimm writes that the rulers of, "small Christian welfare states of sixteenth-century Germany...showed little concern for the outside world, either for territorial expansion or economic aggrandizement."⁹ On the religious scene matters were relatively quiet. The Peace of Augsburg of 1555 had legalized an insecure balance between the Lutherans and the Catholics. Neither was able to suppress the other. This provided the Germans with a semblance of peace that lasted, at least outwardly, for more than sixty years.¹⁰

The Book of Concord appeared 25 years after the Peace of Augsburg. The period that followed the adoption of the Book of Concord was one of relative peace and unity, and of important systematization of doctrine within the Lutheran Church. This unparalleled period of Lutheranism lasted for about 150 years.

This was a time of great interest in doctrine, not only among the Lutherans, but throughout Protestantism. Qualben states, "The need was felt to have the Protestant doctrines formulated in a more systematic form to match the systems of Roman and Greek Catholicism, and differentiate them from all divergent Protestant views."¹¹ Theologians, mostly professors at the universities, set themselves to organizing and systematizing doctrine in good teaching form. Dogmatics flourished in the various Protestant churches throughout the seventeenth century. By this activity within Protestantism both the Roman and Greek Catholic Churches were stimulated to modify and re-define their doctrines.¹²

As noted above, this era is called the age of orthodoxy. In his treatise, "The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism," Robert D. Preus asks, "What do we mean by orthodoxy?" Answering from a Lutheran perspective he says, "We refer to the concrete historical development that we see persisting in Lutheranism from the time of the Formula of Concord, and even before, to the first quarter of the 18th century."¹³

This 150-year period was a time of remarkable unity. This unity was achieved by very conscious and deliberate Biblical and confessional faithfulness.¹⁴ Grimm states, "Although great emphasis was placed upon the importance of the Lutheran confessions, the theologians of the first half of the seventeenth century did not lose sight of the prior importance of the Bible as the Word of God."¹⁵

Schmauk says of the approach of the theologians of this era, "This dogmatic development is extra-confessional. It is the infusion of the substance of the Book of Concord and the appropriation of so much of the old Roman material of the scholastic doctors as could flow through evangelical channels."¹⁶ These conservative men saw themselves not only as Biblical and confessional, but also very catholic. They put forth much effort in presenting the contributions of the church fathers on every theological point, claiming the fathers as their own.¹⁷

The Lutheran theologians of this era were thoroughly familiar with Luther's writings and were firmly loyal to his theology. It would probably be a fruitless search if one were to try to find any criticism of Luther's teachings among the orthodox Lutherans.¹⁸ His zeal for purity of doctrine is reflected in all the orthodox theologians.¹⁹ Preus states, "Lutheran orthodoxy made every effort to

retain at all costs Luther's Gospel and his theology."²⁰ He also said, "There is no theological cleavage between the period of the Reformation and the period of Lutheran orthodoxy."²¹

The spirit of unity among these theologians was remarkable. Even the controversies that led to the preparation of the Formula of Concord did not contribute much to division among the Lutherans after 1580, except in situations where political considerations were involved. When controversies did occur during the seventeenth century, these seemed to rally and unify Lutherans, rather than to divide them.²² Reflecting on the prevailing climate among confessional Lutherans during this time, Preus writes, "Contrary to the opinion of some historians, Lutheran theology did not become more controversial as the 17th century wore on."²³

Following are several observations by Lutheran scholars regarding the age of orthodoxy. Clause makes an important observation, saying, "Lutheran orthodoxy was not dead orthodoxy."²⁴ Bergt Haegglund writes, "Lutheran orthodoxy marks the high point in the entire history of theology."²⁶ Schmauk states, "The orthodox Dogmatik of the Seventeenth Century is a majestic resultant of Faith--the most painstaking and accurate intellectual work in the history of ecclesiastical Christianity."²⁷

Preus divides the age of orthodoxy into three periods: the golden age of orthodoxy, high orthodoxy, and the silver age of orthodoxy.²⁸

He dates the golden age as extending from the writing of the Formula of Concord to the second decade of the seventeenth century. This was a time of theological formation.²⁹ This dogmatic

development was in the form and pattern of Melanchthon's Loci.³⁰ Many of the scholars during this period were either authors or signers of the Formula of Concord. At this time dogmatics was still considered part of exegesis. Its primary purpose was to gather and summarize the Biblical basis for Christian doctrine.³¹

He says that the period of high orthodoxy extended through the Thirty Years' War. This was a less vigorous and productive period than was the golden age. During this time the Lutheran doctrinal position in relation to other denominational groups was clarified. This era is noted for unity of doctrine. This is when philosophy began to influence the presentation of theology. The practical application of doctrine was stressed.³²

He marks the close of the Thirty Years' War as the beginning of the silver age of orthodoxy. The silver age continues until the final decline of orthodoxy. There was much positive activity in all theological areas during this period. The analytic method of treating theology inductively was introduced during this era. This method viewed theology in light of its goal of man's blessedness and salvation, and attempted to present all theology as a unit. The theologians of the silver age of Lutheran orthodoxy were determined to keep the theology practical. Writers of this period sought to inculcate Christian life and piety.³³

Some of the leading Lutheran theologians of the age of orthodoxy were Martin Chemnitz, Leonard Hutter, John Gerhard, John Andrew Quenstadt, Abraham Calov, John William Baier, and David Hallaz.³⁴

Martin Chemnitz (1522-1586) was the leading

spirit in the writing of the Formula of Concord. His most important work was the Examen Councilii Tridentini. Next in importance was his Loci Communes. This work, published after his death, resembles a Biblical theology as much as a dogmatics. He wrote the greatest dogmatic work ever written on the person of Christ. This study is entitled De Duabus Naturis. After Luther he is the most important theologian of the Lutheran Church.³⁵ Eugene F. Klug says of Chemnitz, "More than any other, this gifted man...contributed to the well-being of the church in the latter half of the sixteenth century."³⁶ He also writes, "Chemnitz, as no other, built the causeway that links the Reformation period with the seventeenth century, both in theological content and also theological method."³⁷ The Catholics are reputed to have said of him, "If Chemnitz had not come, Luther had not stood."³⁸

Leonard Hutter (1563-1616) was mainly active in dogmatics and symbolics. He was very effective in establishing confessional Lutheran orthodoxy.³⁹ Hutter contributed significantly to the development of the orthodox Lutheran doctrine of inspiration, the church and the ministry.⁴⁰ He wrote an important dogmatic work entitled Compendium Locorum Theologicorum ex Scriptura Sacra et Libro Concordiae Collectum.⁴¹ This work was cast in the thought and the very words of the Lutheran Symbolical Books. He used Melanchthon as a source "as far as he held on to orthodoxy." This book was prepared at the direction of Elector Christian II of Saxony to replace the Loci Communes of Melanchthon.⁴² Hutter enlarged this compendium under the title Loci Communes Theologici. This larger work was an extensive commentary on Melanchthon's Loci. It consists of definitions from the Book of Concord, supplemented by passages from older dogmaticians.⁴³ This was used as a textbook in seminaries.⁴⁴

His contemporaries titled him "Luther given back" and "Hammer of the Calvinists."⁴⁵ In an encyclopedia edited by Johann J. Herzog, a Reformed theologian, it is said of him, "Among all orthodox Lutherans, Hutter is among the most orthodox; no one has remained more thoroughly within the bounds of the theology authorized and made normative by the Church than he--no one has adhered with more fidelity, not merely to the spirit, but to the very letters of the Symbols, especially of the Formula of Concord."⁴⁶

John Gerhard (1582-1637) is considered the third most important theologian after Luther and Chemnitz.⁴⁷ Arthur C. Piepkorn calls him the "archtheologian" of the Lutheran Church.⁴⁸ He wrote hundreds of books and brochures in every field of theology: exegesis, dogmatics, devotional, history and polemics.⁴⁹ His best known work is his 23 volume Loci Theologici.⁵⁰ This is the seventeenth century's most thorough exposition of classic Lutheran theology. His four-volume Confessio Catholica is a comprehensive apology for the catholicity of Lutheranism, and the most penetrating polemic attack upon Jesuit type Catholicism ever written.⁵¹ He is known for his evangelical piety, and a strong systematic and philosophical bent. He is the theologian who first used Aristotelian terminology and distinctions in Lutheran dogmatics.⁵²

John Andrew Quenstedt (1617-1688) was of the period of high orthodoxy.⁵³ Luther Poellet says that, after Chemnitz and Gerhard, Quenstedt was "probably the most influential Lutheran leader in the post-Reformation era, and that "he was the real leader of Lutheran orthodoxy."⁵⁴ He is especially known for his great work Theologica Didactico-Polemicasive Systema Theologiae. Except for the works of Chemnitz and Gerhard, this is

the greatest dogmatic book ever written by a Lutheran. It is so big and complete, concise and systematic, so excellent that no later Lutheran has ever equaled it. The book is a model of dogmatic systematization, and is highly informative.⁵⁵ Franz Lau called it "the compendium of the theology of Lutheran high orthodoxy."⁵⁶

Abraham Calov (1612-1686) was the most brilliant and influential individual of the silver age of Lutheran orthodoxy. He was a pillar of orthodox Lutheranism.⁵⁷ Preus states, "His orthodoxy is inflexible, and his zeal for the purity of the Gospel and the glory of God dominated his life and all his activity."⁵⁸ He wrote many volumes in every area of theology and in philosophy. His most important theological work was his Biblia Illustrata. This was a massive commentary on the entire Bible. The next important of Calov's works was his Systema Locorum Theologicorum.⁵⁹ This is the only dogmatics of the seventeenth century that really rivals Gerhard's Loci Theologici. Both C.F.W. Walther of the Missouri Synod and Adolf Hoenecke of the Wisconsin Synod read his works extensively, described him as a great theologian, and held him in highest respect.⁶⁰

John William Baier (1647-1695) was a moderate orthodox theologian. He is best known for his Compendium Theologiae Positivae.⁶¹ This work went through many editors. The latest edition was edited by C.F.W. Walther.⁶² Baier was active near the end of the age of orthodoxy, and at the beginning of the era of Pietism. While he did not always get along peaceably with the adherents of Pietism, he was somewhat affected by them. His writings are not entirely free from synergism. His work, while very scholastic, indicates a decline in the forcefulness of orthodox Lutheran

dogmatics.⁶³ Piepkorn makes the following favorable evaluation of his Compendium Theologiae Positivae, "Part of the virtue of Baier's Compendium is its warm-hearted accommodation of orthodox theology to the authentic ethical concerns of churchly Pietism."⁶⁴

David Hallaz (1648-1713) was the theologian with whom the development of Lutheran orthodoxy came to a close.⁶⁵ Preus says that Lutheran orthodoxy was already on the decline in his days, but that Hallaz was still able to exert a great influence. He wrote the last important orthodox Lutheran dogmatics entitled "Examen Theologicum Acroamaticum."⁶⁶ Hallaz was somewhat affected by Pietism, and had a tendency toward synergism. He was preoccupied with psychology in working out an order of salvation.⁶⁷

Before commenting further on the decline of orthodoxy, and elaborating on the rise of Pietism and Rationalism, we turn again to the wider context in which these developments within Lutheranism occurred. As we survey the broader scene we will see some of the reasons for the decline of orthodoxy, and the rise of Pietism and Rationalism.

The Peace of Augsburg of 1555 had settled the religious wars of the sixteenth century. Soon after the treaty was signed, both the Catholics and the Lutherans began to violate the terms of the agreement. The treaty stipulated that the ruler of each area had to choose between Lutheranism and Catholicism. It also required that if a Catholic spiritual ruler of an ecclesiastical territory became a Protestant he should resign his position, and his lands should remain the property of the Catholic Church.⁶⁸ However, there was no adequate legal provision to enforce this "ecclesiastical reservation." As a result, when

there was a dispute its outcome depended on the strength of the contending parties.⁶⁹ In the overall process, the Catholics were gradually regaining power in Germany.

An Imperial Diet which was held in Regensburg in 1608 reflected the sharp division between the Catholics and the Protestants. When the representative of the Emperor asked for a grant of money to help carry on the war against the Turks, the Protestants made such a grant conditional on confirmation of the Peace of Augsburg. The Catholics countered with a proposal that all ecclesiastical property that had changed hands since 1555 be returned to the Catholic Church. The debates ended in an impasse.⁷⁰ Consequently, Protestant-Catholic tensions were not removed, but increased.

In May of 1608 Elector Frederick IV of the Palatinate, who was a Calvinist, was prevailed upon to take strong steps against what apparently was a concerted Catholic attempt to take away the religious and political gains of the Protestants. Therefore, the Protestant Union, made up of most of the Lutheran and Reformed princes and cities, was formed. Saxony did not join.⁷¹ In 1609 Maxmillian I, Duke of Bavaria, took the leadership in forming the rival Catholic League. Preparations for war began. Negotiations were carried on for a number of years, but it became more and more difficult to resolve issues between Protestants and Catholics.⁷²

The Thirty Years' War started as a Protestant revolt in 1618 in Bohemia.⁷³ It continued until 1648. Eventually most of northern Europe became involved. There were five phases in the war: Bohemian (1618-1625), Palatinate (1521-1523, Lower Saxon-Danish (1625-1629), Swedish (1630-1645), and Franco-Swedish (1635-1648).⁷⁴ The major campaigns

of the war were fought on German soil.⁷⁵ The war began primarily as a religious conflict, but it was influenced to a great extent by political and economic interests. Even the Saxon Lutherans and the Lutheran King of Sweden, Gustavus Adolphus, were not entirely innocent of endeavoring to expound their power and possessions.⁷⁶ Gustavus Adolphus was killed in battle in 1632.⁷⁷ After this the religious motives went by the board. From then on the struggles revolved around money and power for the various princes. Catholics fought on the Protestant side for Sweden. Protestants fought for the Jesuits and the Catholic Emperor against Sweden. In the end French, English, Dutch, and Swedes fought on German territory seeking to annex as much German land as they could for their own security and profit. Germany was ruined spiritually, morally, and economically.⁷⁸ The nation was left so exhausted by the war that it took almost a century to recover. Most of the armies had lived off the land. The soldiers had no pity on the civilians. They sacked cities and pillaged the countryside. For amusement they raped, burned, and tortured. The population was reduced by disease and famine.⁷⁹

The war ended with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. This peace settled the major religious conflicts among the Germans once and for all.⁸⁰ The idea of centralized power under the Pope and the Emperor ended. The Peace of Augsburg was reaffirmed, with the Reformed also being recognized. Settlements were made regarding the ecclesiastical lands that had changed hands since 1555. Rights were given to people who lived in territories in which their religious position differed from that of their government.⁸¹

Grimm states, "The destruction and confusion during the many years of war...adversely affected

the religion and culture of Germany. Many churches and schools remained leaderless for decades, and the universities lost their previous significance. On the other hand, the Germans now took for granted that members of the Catholic, the Lutheran, and the Reformed faiths could live side by side. Religion became increasingly a matter of individual conscience.⁸² Clause says, "the religious wars in Europe had ended."⁸³ J. P. Koehler writes, "The Thirty Years' War and the Peace of Westphalia spelled an end to the attitude that the Word of God was the arbiter in peace and war."⁸⁴ He further comments, "The dethronement of God, conscious and determined, is the result of the further development from the Peace of Westphalia."⁸⁵

As orthodoxy declined it began to be supplanted by Pietism. Pietism is the name given to a widespread religious awakening in the Protestant Churches of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁸⁶ It started almost simultaneously in Holland, Germany, and Switzerland, and spread to the Scandinavian countries, to England,⁸⁷ and to America.⁸⁸

Pietism was a Bible centered moralism that resulted in a personal conviction of sin and repentance. This led to forgiveness in Christ, personal conversion, a life of holiness, concern for others, and emotional experiences in worship. Pietists insisted that believers give evidence of Christ in their daily lives.⁸⁹ They formulated a code of conduct that bordered on Pharisaism. They claimed that regeneration took place, not in Baptism, but in a specific conversion. Much attention was given by them to Christ's second coming and the millennium.⁹⁰ They held that the Bible was given for the cultivation of a devotional life, rather than as a textbook from which

to draw doctrines. Their desire to simplify religion led to a spirit of tolerance and religious freedom.⁹¹

Pietism was a reaction against orthodoxy's stress on pure doctrine and formalism.⁹² The Pietists asserted that after a good start, the Reformation had stranded in orthodoxism.⁹³

J. P. Koehler expressed the opinion that, "The Orthodoxists in the natural course of events suffered defeat because their peculiar psychology had already outlived itself, and because Pietism was in tune with the new age of sentimentality in its worldly environment."⁹⁴ One of the authors of "Lutheran Cyclopedia" says, "The main causes are undoubtedly to be found in the conditions following the Thirty Years' War, when a generation of people, who had been estranged from an orderly church life had to be trained in the faith and in the ordinances of the Church."⁹⁵

Martin Schmidt wrote, "It was not possible to salvage orthodoxism as the church entered into the era of the Enlightenment."⁹⁶

The two most prominent leaders of the Pietistic movement in Germany were Philip Jacob Spener (1635-1705), who has been called "The Father of Pietism,"⁹⁷ and August Herman Franke (1663-1727), who made Halle the international center of Pietism, and established charitable and welfare programs and institutions. Key leaders in Denmark were Hans Adolph Brorson (1694-1764), an outstanding hymn writer, and Erik Pontoppidan (1698-1775), author of a popular exposition of Luther's Catechism. In Norway the movement was represented by such men as Hans Egede (1686-1758), noted missionary to Greenland, and Hans Nielsen Hauge (1771-1824), great lay preacher and revivalist.⁹⁸

Qualben wrote that, "Lack of organization and certain inherent defects shortened the history of Pietism...Spener and Franke did not want their adherents to form a new church. They should form ecclesiole in ecclesia, or groups within the constituted church and serve as spiritual leaven for the larger groups by promoting a 'living Christianity'."99

Reference has already been made to the rapidly changing scene in all areas of human life during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The eighteenth century was a turning point in human thinking and progress. It culminated in a new world view and a new outlook in life. This new attitude was expressed by an undue emphasis on human reason. This new approach was critical of traditional religion. The discoveries that had been made in the preceding centuries, and which continued into the eighteenth, gave rise to spirit that was less conscious of God and more conscious of man and his powers and possibilities. The ancient Greek philosophy of man was revived in the new humanism. As man was more and more considered as the measure of everything, human reason came to be seen as the only religious authority. This produced the movement called "Rationalism." It was a system of natural religion which replaced the traditional religion. Virtually all denominations in the church, Catholic as well as Protestant, were adversely affected by it. Immanuel Kant's philosophy marked its climax and the termination of the age of Rationalism.¹⁰⁰

In some respects Pietism had helped to set the stage for Rationalism. The Pietists emphasized the "inner light" in man. This was definitely akin to the dependence of the Rationalists

on man's light of reason.¹⁰¹ The Pietists unwittingly prepared the way for Rationalism. Conrad Bergendoff said that, "by their criticism of dogma and the church, their concentration on the feelings of the individual, and their use of the Bible the Pietists made room for a subjective, psychological...view of Christianity."¹⁰²

A Jesuit Catholic by the name of Rene' Descartes, impressed by the exactness of mathematics, came to believe that it was the way to demonstrate truth. He proposed that all knowledge could be expressed in the kind of relationship used in algebra and geometry. He made several exceptions to this formula--the idea of God, thought itself, and the idea of extension (the property of bodies). He said that these were comprehended by intuition. He held that only that which was verifiable in terms of mathematics was truth. He made doubt a principle. The result of his philosophy was to make human mind determine the nature of God. The new philosophy created serious problems for theology. The doctrine of revelation was challenged. Reason was considered to be the source of knowledge.¹⁰³ J. P. Koehler wrote that, "Descartes' proposition placed man's subjective reason on the bench as the judge and fountainhead of all knowledge."¹⁰⁴

The philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz tried to reconcile theology and philosophy, holding that a theistic view was necessary for an absolute world view. Reason's function was seen to be that of proving that revelation is of God.¹⁰⁵ His principle religious work was entitled Theodice. In this he attempted to show the agreement of reason with faith.¹⁰⁶

Baron Christian von Wolff, convinced of the superiority of the mathematical and scientific

method, wanted to apply it to those articles of religion which were clearly known by reason.¹⁰⁷ The followers of Leibnitz and Wolff tried to establish a system of natural religion independent of, but not necessarily in opposition to, revelation.¹⁰⁸

Philip Schaff said that "toward the close of the eighteenth century, the radical reaction of Rationalism...broke down stone by stone, the venerable building of Lutheran orthodoxy, and the whole traditional system of Christian doctrine."¹⁰⁹ Francis Pieper observed that the "spirit" of the eighteenth century Rationalists "transformed the essence of Christianity into heathen morality."¹¹⁰

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BOOK REVIEW

The Church and Her Fellowship, Ministry, and Governance, Vol. IX in Confessional Lutheran Dogmatics, by Professor Kurt E. Marquart. Published and distributed by The International Foundation for Lutheran Confessional Research, R.R. 3, Waverly, Iowa, 50677-9517. Price \$14.50.

In the first half of this century, the church and ministry question arose in the Synodical Conference. The debate was for the most part a continuation of viewpoints espoused by confessional German theologians of the last century. For members of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod the "church discussions" became very real in the 1960s and 1970s. In the 1940s and 1950s questions concerning church fellowship arose which led to the demise of the Synodical Conference. These are the issues which Prof. Marquart meets head on in his book. This excellent dogmatics faces these issues in a proper confessional Lutheran manner.

The first part of the book is entitled "The Church." Here Prof. Marquart shows that biblical and confessional ecclesiology is an "ecclesiology of the cross." He begins with a discussion of the church and its relationship to Christology. The following quote is a masterful explanation of that relationship and it indicates Prof. Marquart's excellent grasp of biblical exegesis, church history, and dogmatics.

Given the reference to Genesis 2 in Eph. 5:31, one may at least draw attention to

the parallel between the creation of Eve and the "new creation" (II Cor. 5:17) of the church. As Adam's Bride was taken out of his side while he slept, so the Second Bride is brought into existence by means of the spirit, the water, and the blood (I John 5:8), which correspond verbatim to what issued from His sacred body when He began His three days' sleep of death (Jn. 19:30.34). John Gerhard, following illustrious ancient Fathers whom he cited, saw the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and of the Lord's Supper prefigured here. For Luther it was self-evident that the spirit, the water, and the blood of I John 5:8 refer to the evangelical preaching office (Predigtamt), Baptism, and the Holy Supper. (The Church and Her Fellowship, Ministry, and Governance, p. 6)

Prof. Marquart presents four paradigms or models of the church: 1) Eastern Orthodox, 2) Roman Catholic, 3) Lutheran, 4) Reformed. Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy externalize the church. To put this in Christological terms, they tend toward "Eutychianism" in that they confuse Christ's mystical body with the visible organization headed by the pope or the exumenical patriarch. The Reformed spiritualize the church. The Reformed ecclesiology is "Nestorian" in letting an invisible church and a visible church stand side by side without really relating the two. The Lutheran doctrine is incarnational; a truly "Chalcedonian" approach to ecclesiology which distinguishes without separating the church as an inward communion of faith and as an outward participation in the means of grace. (The Church and Her Fellowship, Ministry, and Governance, pp. 9-10)

The second major division of the book has to do with church fellowship. Prof. Marquart indicates that church fellowship is first of all a vertical (the relationship between God and the believer) but then also a horizontal relationship mediated by holy things. (The Church and Her Fellowship, Ministry, and Governance, p. 41) Church fellowship or confessional fellowship is a participation of holy things (communio in sacris), that is, the means of grace. This fellowship is created by these very means of grace which are the marks of the church (notae ecclesiae) indicating where the church exists.

In our time when many think in terms of some minimal doctrine agreement concerning Scripture's central teachings, Prof. Marquart rightly maintains there must be agreement in all the articles of doctrine found in Scripture in order to have church fellowship. (The Church and Her Fellowship, Ministry, and Governance, pp. 50-59) This is indeed the teaching of our Confessions.

We believe, teach, and confess that no church should condemn another because it has fewer or more external ceremonies not commanded by God, as long as there is mutual agreement in doctrine in all its articles as well as in the right use of the holy sacraments, "Disagreement in fasting does not destroy agreement in faith." (FC Ep X, 5, Tappert, pp. 493-494; see also FC SD X, 31, p. 616; FC Ep V, 5-6, p. 478)

Not only is the doctrine of Scripture an undivided whole, but also church fellowship is by its very nature indivisible. It is either granted whole or refused whole. It does not come in bits and

pieces. Two churches are either in communion or they are not in communion. (The Church and Her Fellowship, Ministry, and Governance, p. 61) There are not many different kinds of fellowship, some being more an expression of a common faith and others less. It is not that pulpit fellowship involves something different from altar fellowship. This shows that the levels of fellowship concept of church fellowship is neither scriptural nor confessional.

Chapter 8 of the book is a historical outline of the Ecumenical Movement. It traces the origins and development of both the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation. This chapter is extremely helpful to anyone who wants an overview of the Ecumenical Movement.

The third part of this volume considers the ministry of the church. Prof. Marquart explains the relationship between the universal priesthood and the public ministry. Those called to the ministry perform publicly the rights and privileges of the universal priesthood in the name of Christ and the church. (The Church and Her Fellowship, Ministry, and Governance, p. 109) The power of the keys comes to the ministry through the universal priesthood, but this office is divinely instituted and has an identity separate from that of the universal priesthood. God confers (übertragen) the office of the keys to the public ministry through the universal priesthood, through the church. Prof. Marquart has an interesting excursus on the German term übertragen. (The Church and Her Fellowship, Ministry, and Governance, p. 112-119)

The public ministry is presented not as a pragmatic human arrangement, but as a divine mandate,

institution, and appointment. The public ministry is a continuation of the apostolate and is contained in it. (The Church and Her Fellowship, Ministry, and Governance, pp. 123-130) Our Confessions state, "The office of the ministry proceeds from the general call of the apostles. (Treatise on the Power and Primary of the Pope, 10, Triglotta, p. 507) The biblical truth that the public ministry is a divine institution of God must be clearly confessed. This truth was called into question in the last century by Höfling, who so stressed the universal priesthood that it seemed to swallow up the public ministry and absorb the ministry in itself. Höfling virtually considered the priesthood and the ministry synonymous. At the same time one must beware of the other extreme. Here it is taught that the authority of the ministry comes not from or through the universal priesthood but through the call to the public ministry which the individual has from God alone. It is the clergy that possesses the office of the keys and confers it through ordination. This view completely separates the ministry from the priesthood and seems to minimize the importance of the priesthood. Both extremes must be rejected.

Concerning the divine call the writer proves from Scripture and the Confessions that the public ministry is to be exercised only by those who have been properly called by the church. Ordination is the public confirmation of the call in the church. The excursus concerning the ordination of women is beneficial and timely. (The Church and Her Fellowship, Ministry and Governance, pp. 166-171)

The final section of the book is entitled "Church Governance." Here Prof. Marquart aptly presents

the doctrine of the two kingdoms. Concerning this doctrine there is much confusion today as a result of the Reformed influence in our midst. Also in this section the relationship between the local church and the larger church is discussed.

On the whole, Prof. Marquart's dogmatics is excellent and worth reading and rereading. However, as this book is read, three questions come to mind. The first is a question concerning the church. Prof. Marquart's presentation seems to restrict what can be designated church to local congregations and larger organizations (composite churches). (The Church and Her Fellowship, Ministry, and Governance, pp. 201-213, 220-222) However, is such a restriction valid? Is it not the case that the church is found wherever the means of grace, the Word and the Sacraments are in use? (Ap VII 5, Tappert, p. 169).

The second question concerns church fellowship. In criticism of the unit concept of fellowship Prof. Marquart writes, "The weakness here, despite the best intentions, was twofold: (1) The starting point was the faith of individuals and their de facto agreement, rather than the church's objective marks. This introduced a certain subjectivism into the premises. (2) The definition, "every joint expression, etc.," was too sweeping." (The Church and Her Fellowship, Ministry, and Governance, pp. 46-47 note 10.

These objections to the unit concept of fellowship seem to be based on the assumption that because the church is created alone by the Word and Sacraments, church fellowship is limited only to the use of the means of grace, that is, altar and pulpit fellowship. It is true that joint prayer,

joint church work, etc., are not part of the marks of the church, the means of grace. But as a response to the means of grace they are an expression and fruit of faith which must be in harmony with and under the control of the marks of the church. To limit church fellowship to altar and pulpit fellowship cannot be supported by Scripture. St. Paul in Galatians speaks of offering the right hand of fellowship showing church fellowship includes all manifestations and demonstrations of a common faith. Likewise the New Testament directives to terminate fellowship are all-inclusive. (Romans 16:17; II Corinthians 6:14, 17; II John 10-11) The termination of fellowship is not limited to only certain expressions of fellowship. Any other viewpoint can only lead to a levels approach to fellowship. This does not mean that confessional Lutherans will never pray with or commune one of a different fellowship. These special situations will be handled individually as items of casuistry. Yet, these special situations or circumstances do not change the scriptural fellowship principles.

Church fellowship or confessional fellowship is a participation in sacred things (*communio in sacris*), the means of grace. This fellowship is created by those very means of grace and is evidenced in every expression and manifestation of a common faith. Christians practice church fellowship on the basis of the pure marks of the church. The marks of the church are to be pure, that is, there must be complete agreement in all the doctrines of Scripture in order to exercise fellowship. There are no degrees or levels in the practice of church fellowship and there are no expressions of a shared faith which are excluded from church fellowship. Church fellowship is a unit both in respect to the doctrine of Scripture

that is, there must be consensus in all the doctrines of the Word for fellowship and in respect to the various expressions of a shared faith that they all be considered a unit or an indivisible whole. There is either complete fellowship or none at all.

The third question has to do with the public ministry. Prof. Marquart states, "While an office of catechist could be imagined which would be well within the one Gospel-teaching office of the church (Gal. 6:6), it is otherwise with the school-teacher's office as such. Neither Holy Scripture (I Cor. 12:29; Eph. 4:11; I Tim. 2:2-7; Ja. 3:1) nor the Lutheran Confessions use the term "teacher" in the modern sense of "school-teacher." (The Church and Her Fellowship, Ministry, and Governance, pp. 141-142)

Here Prof. Marquart seems to restrict the public ministry to those theologically trained for the pastoral office. Christian teachers then who have seminary training are in the office while other Christian teachers are not. Such a restriction cannot be maintained on the basis of Scripture. Concerning Ephesians 4:11, Chemnitz writes:

In Eph. 4:11 the following ranks of ministers are listed: (1) apostles, who were not called to some certain church, and who had not been called through men, but immediately by Christ, and had the command to teach everywhere... (2) prophets, who either had revelations of future events or interpreted tongues and the Scriptures for the more advanced, for these things are ascribed to the prophets for the New Testament in I Cor. 14; (3) evangelists, who were not apostles and yet were not bound to some one certain church but were sent to different

churches to teach the Gospel there....
(4) pastors, who were placed over a certain flock, as Peter shows (I Peter 5:2-3), and who not only taught but administered the sacraments and had the oversight over their hearers, as Ezekiel (34:2ff.) describes the pastoral office;
(5) teachers, to whom the chief governance or oversight of the church was not entrusted but who only set the doctrine before the people in a simple manner, such as the catechists were later; thus Paul (Rom. 2:20) speaks of "a teacher of children," and the word "teach" is expressly used in this sense in Heb. 5:12). All these ranks the apostles include under the terms "presbytery" and "episcopacy." Sometimes they also call those to whom the ministry of Word and sacrament has been committed by the term "minister" ("servant"). (Col. 1:7, 23; I Thess. 3:2; 2 Cor. 3:6, 11:23; Eph. 3:7) (Ex 2, 684)

Christ has instituted one public office in His church, the office of the public ministry. This office is not limited to any divinely fixed form as such, although the pastoral office (Pfarramt) is obviously its most comprehensive form. The forms of the public ministry may vary as the need arises yet there is only one public ministry in the church. (I Corinthians 12:4-11, 27:31; Romans 12:6-8; Ephesians 4:11-12; I Timothy 3:1, 8)

Prof. Marquart's book is very important in the present day study of church and ministry. No scholar today can seriously consider the doctrines of church, church fellowship, ministry and the two

kingdoms without an in-depth study of this book. A brief review like this one can hardly do justice to Prof. Marquart's scholarship, breadth of knowledge, and clarity of expression. It deserves a place on the bookshelf of every confessional Lutheran not just to sit there and collect dust but to be read and reread. Prof. Marquart is to be commended for his excellent dogmatics book.

-- Gaylin R. Schmeling
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-- hopefully should read "hopelessly"