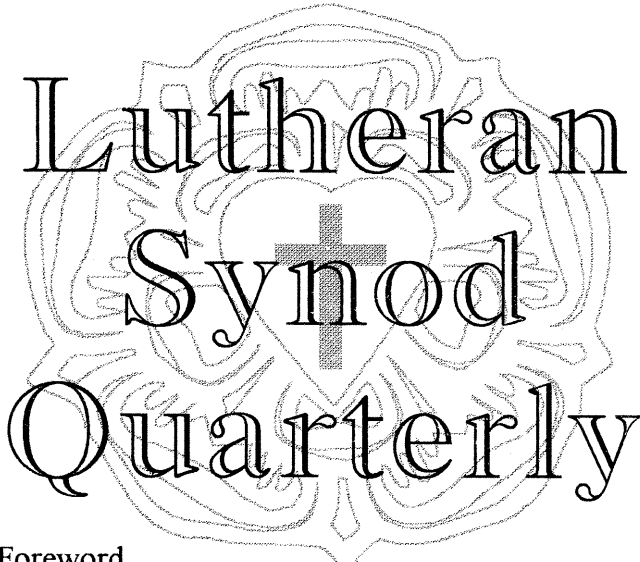


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## Foreword

By: Pres. Wilhelm Petersen

This issue begins with a continuation of an exegetical study by Jon Bruss of the use of λόγος among the early Eastern Church Fathers. The first part of this study appeared in the December 1993 issue of the *Lutheran Synod Quarterly*. According to the exegete the purpose of this study is "to explore the doctrine of the preexistence of the Son of God in pursuit of defining His eternal generation as well as what λόγος implies about the character of the Son." This issue emphasizes the comfort that this λόγος, eternally generated from the Father is the same λόγος who took on Himself our flesh and blood for our salvation which was planned in eternity and carried out in time.

The article by Pastor Donald Moldstad points out the significance of the University of Leipzig for confessional Lutherans. Of special interest to us in the ELS is that Carl Caspari and Gisle Johnson, students at Leipzig, who later taught at the University of Christiana (Oslo) in Norway where they trained our synodical leaders — men like H. A. Preus, J. Otteson, and U. V. Koren — who brought confessional Lutheranism to the Norwegian immigrants in America.

Our readers will also appreciate the theses on Law and Gospel preaching by Dr. S. C. Ylvisaker which were originally delivered to an ELS pastoral conference. Dr. Ylvisaker was president of Bethany Lutheran College from 1930-1950 and also taught at Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary until his retirement in 1952.

The two sermons included in this issue, one by Pastor Gaylin Schmeling delivered to the 1994 seminary graduates and the other by Pastor Steve Scheiderer delivered to his congregation in Bishop, California, reflect good Law and Gospel preaching.

We also take this opportunity to announce our annual Reformation Lectures which will be held October 27-28 at the Ylvisaker Fine Arts Center on the campus of Bethany Lutheran College. The lecturer will be Dr. Heiko Oberman, author of *Luther - Man between God and the Devil*.

## The Name, Λόγος, in the Article on Christ

### *The Function of the Name, Λόγος, in the Article on the Person and Word of Christ*

The preceding overview of some of the major figures from Greek Patrology and the examination of their comments on the term, λόγος, was not designed to be comprehensive. Rather, it was designed to highlight the fact that for the Fathers, the Second Person's Biblical name, λόγος, is an *articulus doctrinae* which plays an important role in the article "On the Person and Work of Christ" — even when the term must be interpreted with severe limitations.

Nevertheless, despite the importance of the term, λόγος, in the Fathers' discussion of the Second Person, and despite the relatively large role played by the term during the Arian controversy (since it served to sharpen the focus on the main *status controversiae*), in the past five hundred years, standard Lutheran dogmatics has devoted relatively little attention to discussion of the Second Person as λόγος and what that name implies about the Person and Work of Christ.

However, inasmuch as the term, λόγος, is a part of the Biblical record, and inasmuch as Scripture itself applies this term to our Savior, the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, it is fitting that we tie together the thoughts from the Fathers in a constructive way to enrich our preaching and teaching of the Evangel.

- In the first place, the term, λόγος, teaches and illustrates the Second Person's eternal generation from the Father. The Second Person is generated from the Father as νοῦς generates λόγος. In fact, the term, λόγος, applied to the Second Person, naturally implies that the source of His hypostasis is νοῦς. Νοῦς cannot be without λόγος, since the former is naturally λογικός. Moreover, since the particular νοῦς under discussion is the Eternal νοῦς, which is eternally λογικός, then the λόγος must be eternally generated from that νοῦς. He eternally emanates and comes out from the gracious mind of the Heavenly Father. The comfort of this article lies in the fact that this λόγος, eternally generated from the Father, is the same λόγος Who took on Himself our flesh and



blood. As the eternal Second Person of the Trinity, Who is no less God than the Father Himself; He is the Lamb of God Who was slain before the foundation of the world. Since He is eternally generated from the Father, He is no creature. Therefore, our salvation does not rest in the hands of a creature, but in the hands of the very God Whose mind has eternally planned and accomplished our salvation through His hypostatic Word. One of the focal points of the Arian attack against catholic Christianity was the implication of the term λόγος in the discussion of the Son's generation from the Father. This fact must also be a warning to us, that inasmuch as the term λόγος touches on the generation of the Second Person, it must be handled sensitively. Even today, it is easy to take the wrong path at the wrong time, ultimately to espouse the Arian position. The pitfalls that must be avoided are those which exclude certain connotations of λόγος in favor of others. In the term, λόγος, as applied to the eternal generation of the Son of God, one must be careful to subordinate the function denoted by λόγος from the antecedent generation, not temporally, but necessarily. For in this article, if function is allowed to be necessarily antecedent to generation, then the source and cause of the hypostatic Word is no longer the pure, simple, and eternal λογικὴ οὐσία of the Father, Who simply and eternally has the λόγος with Himself, but becomes conditioned on the necessity of an annunciatory being. Here it is better to subordinate the function to the Person, than to subordinate the Person to the function.

- In the second place, the eternal generation of the λόγος shows that the λόγος is hypostatic, deriving its essence from the Father and subsisting on its own. Since the Father is αἰδίως λογικός, the λόγος which He has is also αἰδίως. Since the essence of this eternal Word is derived from Eternal Essence, such an eternal Word eternally subsists of its own. Unlike human words which have no subsistence of their own, but fall to ground as they are spoken, the hypostatic Word of the Father eternally comes forth from the Father and eternally returns to Him (Joh 3:13).

- In the third place, the term λόγος demonstrates the mutual interpenetration of the Divine οὐσία in the First and Second Persons of the Trinity. Since the λόγος is God, He shares the same Divine Essence with the Father, being no less and no more Divine than His Father (Joh 1:1). The interpenetration of the essence is derived from and substantiated by the fact that λόγος is simply νοῦς προπηδῶν, and νοῦς is simply λόγος ἐγκείμενος.
- In the fourth place, the λόγος of God knows the very mind of His Father. Through this Divine and hypostatic λόγος, the mind of the Father holds conversation with itself, since λόγος is that which, as derived from the mind of God itself, knows the mind of the Father. It is this λόγος Who from eternity participated in the Divine deliberations concerning creation and redemption, acting in complete harmony with that from which He is derived.
- In the fifth place, the comfort for us in the Word's knowledge of the very mind of the Father is that the λόγος both defines and lays open the very mind of God to us, and is the interpreter and messenger of His Father's mind, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 2:16: "Who has known the mind of the Lord that he has taken counsel with Him? — And we do have His mind, Christ!" (read νοῦν Χριστοῦ as an exegetical genitive). The eternal generation of the Word, the περιχώρησις of the Divine Essence in Him, His eternal hypostasis, and His knowledge of the Father's mind are ultimately oriented to this goal. No one had known God apart from His revelation of Himself in His hypostatic Word. But God, in His mercy, laid bare His gracious mind to us in the Incarnation of His eternal Son. In terms of Trinitarian logic, subordination of the function of the Person to the Person Himself is utterly necessary. However, in terms of soteriology, it is the gracious preaching of God embodied in the incarnate Word which takes the front seat. Eternal generation, hypostasis, knowledge of the Father's mind, serve to certify and strengthen the force of the universal absolution pronounced by the Father through the slaughter of His eternal Word incarnate. To define the mind and intentions of God, one need look no further than God's gracious rev-

elation of Himself in His Word. This Word has eternally known the mind of His Father. This Word acts in complete accord with that from which He is derived. And this Word has announced in His incarnation the truthful and gracious mind of His Father (Joh 1:14). The incarnate Word has become the book, as it were, communicating the Author's intention. Doubt concerning the mind and intentions of God must flee before the face of the eternal Word of God, for in the hypostatic Word, the Father has laid open His mind to the world. He has pronounced through His hypostatic Word that He is quintessentially merciful, gracious, and forgiving. Apart from His revelation of His mind in the Divine Word, the Father remains wrapped in mystery and secrecy, appears to desire damnation, and seems to act capriciously. Yet, from this hidden God we must flee to the eternal Word of God before Whose face all doubt must flee. "I know the thoughts that I think of You," says the Lord, "Thoughts of peace and not of evil."

- In the sixth place, the name of the Second Person, λόγος, teaches the forensic character of justification. The written Word of God bears the record of God's gracious revelation of Himself in the hypostatic Word and pronounces the world forgiven before Himself. Nevertheless, this written Word bears as its very heart and core the hypostatic Word, whose announcement of God's gracious intentions in His incarnation is the pronouncement of the universal forgiveness of sins. From this institution of the Father through His hypostatic Word, the preachment of the forgiveness of sins continues to emanate from the hypostatic Word through the written, preached, and taught Word and in the Sacraments. All of these derived means of bringing forgiveness are inextricably and inexorably tied to the primary pronouncement of forgiveness in the hypostatic and eternal Word of God.
- In the seventh place, the same λόγος Who is the Author's Agent and Preserver of the creation, is the Agent of the Author of redemption (Joh 1:3; Heb 1:3; 11:3; Gen 1). From beginning to end, the world exists through the hypostatic λόγος. The eternal counsel of God, the dialogue of God within Himself, in time called the world and humanity into being. In His goodness, God placed

in the Garden of Eden the Tree of Life, which Adam and Eve spurned. In His mercy, the hypostatic Word of God came forth from the Father in time, once again bearing life to humans in laying bare the gracious mind of His Father. And in the new creation of faith announced in the incarnation of the hypostatic Word, He Himself becomes a new Tree of Life in the resurrection. The certification and guarantee of this for us is found in the hypostatic Word's Divine Essence and eternal communion with the mind of His Father. The kerygma of the Church is derived from the communion of the Trinity revealed in the hypostatic Word and ultimately aims to effect the salvific communion of humanity with the Trinity through the hypostatic Word, in faith in the gracious intentions of the Father announced immediately through the Son and mediately through the Holy Spirit in the Means of Grace (1Jo 1:1-3). The hypostatic λόγος of God, more than merely demonstrating how salvation is effected, actually effects salvation.

What has been presented above is not merely a theoretical model. Rather, what is presented above touches on the very essence of the faith. It is from beginning to end talk about the very center and core of creation, salvation, and knowledge of the Trinity. The eternal, hypostatic λόγος is God's gracious intentions brought to humanity, first in creation and then in salvation. He is the Guarantor of our salvation. And His generation from the Father and His return thither are the doorway into Trinitarian logic and communion with the Holy Trinity.

*Er kam aus dem Kammer sein,  
Dem kön'glichen Saal so rein  
Fuhr hinunter zu der Höll',  
Und wieder zu Gottes Stuhl.*

(M. Luther, *Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland*)

### **Conclusion**

This study, as it was initially conceived, was projected to make a thorough study of how the Church throughout time has understood the Second Person as λόγος. Obviously, the proposed plan betrays not a small amount of naivety and ignorance on my part, since such a

proposal far exceeds the bounds of this thesis.

At the same time, the physical limitations of the paper afforded me the opportunity to focus my attention on the Ecumenical Creeds and a few of the great Eastern theologians from the second through the seventh centuries. In this study, several identifiable streams of thought and theological procedures came to the fore.

In the first place, the Ecumenical Creeds, while speaking to the issue of the Son's generation from the Father, do not even touch on the issue of the Son as λόγος. Surprisingly, however, the formal Catechetical Lectures of St. Cyril of Jerusalem as well as the *Expositio Fidei* of St. Athanasius, do contain references to the Son as λόγος. And while Athanasius' discussion of λόγος in the *Expositio* more narrowly defines the term than acts constructively to deduce from it meaning, St. Cyril very constructively uses the term λόγος to point to several salient features of the Second Person of the Trinity, most notably as the term speaks to His generation from the Father, His hypostatic divine nature, and His annunciatory character — albeit in a slightly forced, yet biblically-tempered manner.

Each of the theologians discussed have a unique way of approaching exactly how best to use the term. In some cases (particularly Athanasius), the term is best used with severe limitations. However, in most cases the theologians, while to some extent inhibited by the strictures of Nicene dogma, are both exacting and creative in their pursuit of the implications of the term as applied to the Second Person. Nevertheless, their reader is, in many cases, left to draw more systematic conclusions on his own on the basis of their discussion.

Discussion of the concept of the Second Person as λόγος is not limited merely to the Eastern Church from First through Seventh Centuries. Rather, discussions of this nature are found from early on in Latin theology. Already Tertullian in *adversus Praxean* 6-8 discusses the implications of λόγος = *ratio* and λόγος = *sermo* concerning its ramifications in considering the nature of the Second Person's generation from the Father.<sup>1</sup> Later, notable use of the Second Person

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<sup>1</sup> Tertullian is criticised (unfairly, I think) by Jean Daniélou, *A History of Early Christian Doctrine*, Vol. 3, "The Origins of Latin Christianity," Trans.

as *verbum* comes through Sts. Augustine and Hilary.<sup>2</sup> The Trinitarian theology of the former of these is oriented around the idea of the inter-Trinitarian *communio*, and his use of *verbum* in following this particular orientation develops a sophisticated and complex divine psychology in which *verbum*, *amor*, and *voluntas* are focally centred upon and derived from the one divine Essence (CCSL, 50, 303ff).<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile, Hilary develops a more simplified scheme for *verbum* as derived from and announcing the will and thought (*cogitatio*) of God (CCSL, 62, 51ff).<sup>4</sup> In another passage, Hilary speaks of the *verbum* as God's *sensus ipsius*, an idea originating on Latin turf with Tertullian (CCSL, 62a, 597f; 7, 1163).<sup>5, 6</sup>

When we arrive at last at the Lutheran theologians beginning with the Sixteenth Century, several interesting questions are answered about the value of both the Eastern and Western early Christian discussions about the term, λόγος, as applied to the Second Person. One would

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David Smith and J.A. Baker (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1977), pp. 364-365, for subordinating the Word to the economy of creation/salvation. It is rather clear in *adversus Praxean* 5 that *ratio*, what we might call λόγος ἐνδιάθετος, exists substantially in and with God from the very beginning. That *sermo* represents a substantial change in *ratio*, as Daniélou would like to see it, is completely ridiculous, since for Tertullian *ratio* is at one and the same time both *rationalis* and *sermonalis*, and *sermo*, likewise, both *sermonalis* and *rationalis*.

<sup>2</sup> The later Latin theologians do not remain with Tertullian's translation of λόγος as *sermo*, but prefer *verbum*.

<sup>3</sup> *De Trinitate* 9, 14 [CCSL, 50, 303ff.]. Augustine's theology is much more complex than I can possibly credit it for here, and the terse statement above is a drastic over-simplification. A less complicated discussion on the implications of *verbum* for Augustine is found in *Tractatus in Johannem* 1, 7-13 (CCSL, 34, 4-7). Another way in which Augustine pictures *verbum* as an intergral member of the Trinity is in relation to *cogitatio*, an idea which finds expression in Hilary (*de Trinitate*), Melancthon (*Loci Communes*), and an early Lutheran doctoral disputation ("Die Disputation de divinitate et humanitate Christi") composed by Luther in early 1540 (*WA*, 39, 2, 92-121).

<sup>4</sup> *De Trinitate*, 2, 15f [CCSL, 62, 51ff]

<sup>5</sup> *De Trinitate*, 7, 24 [CCSL, 62a, 597f]

<sup>6</sup> *Adversus Praxean*, 5, 2 [CCSL, 7, 1163]: "Ceterum ne tunc quidem solus; habebat enim secum quam habebat in semetipso, rationem suam scilicet. Rationalis enim Deus et ratio in ipsum prius et ita ab ipso omnia. Quae ratio sensus ipsius est."

assume, for example, that early Lutheran theology would to a large extent reflect its Western and Augustinian roots. In this instance, the assumption is proved correct. In fact, Melanchthon develops his *locus De Filio* around the idea of the generation of the Son as λόγος from the Father as *cogitatio* (*Loci Communes*). We find an early Lutheran doctoral disputation composed by Luther in early 1540 containing a thesis on the Son as a derivation from the Father's *cogitatio* (*WA*, 39, 2, 92-121). And Matthias Flacius Illyricus has a lengthy discussion on the Biblical, patristic and contemporary use of *verbum* in his monumental *Clavis Scripturae Sacrae*, in which he censures Melanchthon for saying the Son is generated from the Father by *cogitatio* (*Clavis Scripturae Sacrae* [1695 edition], 1278ff).

This censure from Flacius actually represents the beginning of the downfall of any serious pursuit of the implications of the term λόγος in the standard Lutheran systematic works. Martin Chemnitz gives the term passing attention in his commentary on Philipp's *Loci*. J. Gerhard, in his posthumous *Loci Theologici* (1610), addresses the Melanchthon/ Flacius dispute (*Loci Theologici*, 4, §76). But while in principle falling on the side of Philipp, stating that "*tota antiquitas utitur hac comparatione*," for all practical purposes he permits the Flacian view to reign, since he ambiguously concludes that the Melanchthonian view is not **necessarily** wrong. Nevertheless, despite the fact that Gerhard gives voice to Sts. Hilary and Athanasius, he grants the issue a relatively modest hearing in this huge, dogmatic work. Gerhard was the last of the great Lutheran theologians to deal with the Second Person as λόγος by any sort of serious appeal to the stance of the Church Fathers.

The last theologian of any note even to venture a comment on the Second Person as λόγος is Johannes-Andreas Quenstedt in his *Theologia didactico-polemica* of 1685, who lists three reasons why λόγος is an appellation befitting of the Son:

- in view of His eternal generation;
- because He is the interpreter of His Father's counsel to humanity; and

- because is our Advocate before God (*Theologia didactico-polemica*, caput 9, sectio 1, thesis 38, t 1, 333).

However, Quenstedt (and with him all subsequent standard Lutheran dogmaticians) limits his discussion on λόγος to the Biblical-positive sphere alone, ignoring the Patristic testimony, and with that, the blessed tradition of the Church. The value of the present work, therefore, lies in the fact that its more comprehensive historical study presents in an organized fashion the Eastern Patristic evidence on the implications of the term λόγος, giving flesh to Gerhard's statement that "*tota antiquitas utitur hac comparatione.*"

I have made this cursory review of what was not accomplished in this paper in order to set out what still needs to be done to complete the study on what the Church has understood of the Son's name λόγος. Future projects will certainly take into consideration the great amount of divergence found not only between the Lutheran theologians and their earlier Greek and Latin forebears, but will also want to take into consideration the similarities and divergences between the various roughly contemporary theologians.

The value of the present study — and any subsequent studies on this topic — lies in the clearer and better understanding that our catholic, orthodox, and confessional Fathers have imparted to us through their insights into the Biblical conception of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, *i.e.* the eternal, hypostatic Word of God Who announces to mankind the Father's gracious will and intentions.

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## **The University of Leipzig:**

### **Its Historical Significance for Confessional Lutheranism**

By: Pastor Donald Moldstad

A study of the history of the University of Leipzig (UL) is a study of Lutheranism. Many of the most significant builders and destroyers of Confessional Lutheranism have passed through the doors of this institution. It is difficult to imagine a school over the last four hundred years which has played a more significant role for us today. As you page through the records of the greatest names in our church history you will find that a majority came in contact with UL in one way or another.

Social and political events have played a major role in the history of UL. Throughout its 585 years of existence the University has at times been a fountain of truth as well as a river of error. One of the vivid lessons to be learned from its story is how delicate the truth is as it is passed from one generation to the next. When our institutions of higher learning take on a new focus there are lasting effects on the story of our confession and impacting the spiritual lives of generations to come. During our journey through the UL's past, you will notice how one or two significant individuals changed the course of the history of Lutheranism for a great number of years. This study has impressed upon me that there truly is nothing new in the history of the Church. Many of the concerns of the past are still before us today, only in different packages. Ideas have consequences. We study the story of our confession to recognize roads which we should go down, and ones we should stay with; to appreciate the path by which God, in his providence, has directed his truth to us today and to be made even bolder in our own faith and convictions by studying the steadfastness of our forefathers. "Remember your leaders who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith" (Heb 13:7).

### *The Early History*

The University of Leipzig (UL) is Germany's second oldest university. Its history begins with John Hus (1371-1415), leader of the reform movement in Bohemia. Under his influence, the University of Prague was converted to his cause and this sparked a reaction by many German nationalists who wished to stay faithful to Rome. In 1409 a faction of 369 students and some faculty members moved to Leipzig under the newly appointed rector, John Muenstenberg, who had been deposed in Prague. Pope Alexander issued the Bull establishing UL as an institution dedicated to the preservation of the Mother Church. In the years before the Reformation, many from the Augustinian Order, such as Johannes von Staupitz, came to UL for their theological training.

By 1500, Scholasticism had embedded itself in the new school. The theological faculty was heavily influenced by the French reaction against nominalism. The faculty shared a kindred spirit with the French University at Cologne which was thoroughly Roman. The instructors "stressed the importance of reason and a knowledge of nature for the understanding of theology" (Grimm, 50). This emphasis continued for over one hundred years. Twenty-five miles north, at the young University of Wittenberg (est. 1502), the newer humanistic approach was attracting many of the young students of Saxony. By the time of the Reformation, Wittenberg appears to be the natural archrival to UL. As Martin Luther's early writings gathered an audience, the faculty at UL was firmly opposed to this new "heresy" and appears jealous of his popularity. Its own Prof. Herman Rab made a special trip to Rome to speak against Luther. His colleague, Prof. Dungersheim, had taken up a debate through the mail with the Wittenberg "heretic," challenging him on the primacy of the Pope (Dau, 47ff). Only one UL theological faculty member, Prof. Peter Mosellanus, (a humanist) seems to have an open mind about giving Luther a fair hearing. Though little is known of Mosellanus after the Reformation, Luther reportedly was aware of his leanings (Schwiebert, 393).

## *Host to the Great Debate*

Charged by his stubborn refusal to recant his views before the Heidelberg Disputation, the young Luther engaged himself in a war of the pen with the highly acclaimed Bavarian professor, Dr. Johann von Eck. Known for his great skills at oral debate, Eck sought for a public arena in which to humiliate the “Hussite” from Wittenberg. He appealed to Duke George of Saxony to have it held at UL, since George was known for his intense hatred of the Hussites.<sup>1</sup> Eck knew what he was doing when he suggested UL as the host. The offer of debate on their campus drove a wedge into the faculty. Those who were not theologians agreed with the Duke that this would serve as a nice feather in their cap as an institution. The theological members, however, were unanimously opposed to the idea. They feared being used by the young upstarts from Wittenberg and thereby receiving a black eye before Rome. They sent a special emissary to George to plead with him, but he over-ruled their opposition and the challenge was scheduled. In a last ditch effort to separate themselves from the battle they refused to act as judges for the debate, a role that ultimately no one filled (Dau, 53).

At that time, Luther still saw himself as a defender of the Mother Church. In his naive opinion, he saw the UL as a place where he might receive a fair hearing. By the time of the Debate, he had not yet fully realized just how far he had wandered from Rome, nor how volatile his ideas were (Schwiebert, 361).

We might fail to sense the immensity of the Debate at Leipzig. A trip to the Rose Bowl for a Big Ten school today might be comparable.<sup>2</sup> To have your school develop the reputation of giving national and international attention to the young reformer was not desirable to the Leipzig theologians since the majority of them despised Wittenberg to begin with. The student body also carried this rivalry against the University of Wittenberg. As the new Wittenberg faculty and 200 plus

<sup>1</sup> Duke George had supported Luther's *95 Theses* and wanted to see some changes in the church, but rejected the doctrine of Justification by Faith. Yet he “died relying solely on the merits of Christ.” (*Lutheran Cyclopedia*).

<sup>2</sup> Eck was welcomed into town by all the dignitaries and was even presented with a special horse.

students poured into town for the debate, they were challenged by fist and sword. The Leipzig authorities were called upon to settle the scuffle.<sup>3</sup>

The event opened with a two hour address given by the UL professor of poetry, Mosellanus, which reportedly was quite sympathetic to Luther's new theology. He established the ground rules by stating that all sound arguments would have to be based on Scripture. The debate extended over a period of two weeks. The UL faculty and their pupils listened (and slept) through all of the speeches.

As the final statements ended, each side was claiming victory. The majority of teachers from UL, especially Emser, Dungersheim, Wimpina, and Alveld, joined fellow Scholastics in praising Eck as the great champion of the faith. However, others were quite impressed by the "new approach" of Luther who had taken over for Carlstadt in the final days of the Debate. In particular, Prof. Mosellanus was not at all persuaded by Eck and later spoke highly of Luther's skills in the debate (Dau, 116). He praises Luther for following the very things he set forth in his opening address. Another UL instructor, Strommer von Auerbach writes of the debate, "It is extraordinary how much holy theological learning was modestly displayed by Martin. ... He uttered nothing but what was sound and wholesome" (Dau, 196). Unchanged in his views, Duke George, present at the entire event, was further angered with Luther when the Reformer made some favorable comments about John Hus.

One year later (1520) the mood of UL had changed. The faculty refused to publish and post the Papal Bull against Luther for fear of the reaction. Duke George eventually had to intervene by decree to see that it was done. When it finally went up, it was defaced and smeared with mud as was the case in other Saxon cities. Dr. Martin was, by this time, a rising local hero, riding a wave of national sentiment against Rome. The student body at UL appears to have been lured toward Luther, but the faculty, as a whole, stood with the Church.

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<sup>3</sup> The city of Leipzig — including its university — had a reputation of abounding in immorality and brawls. It was known for the production of many good beers and the consumption of the same. At this time the student's quarters were even supplied with duty-free beer (Dau, 111).

### *The Lutherization of UL*

In the early days of the Reformation, the portion of Saxony ruled by Duke George had remained true to the Mother Church due to his staunch determination. In keeping with his design, the faculty at Leipzig continued to hold the line against the increasingly popular writings from Wittenberg. George was considered by Rome to be the most sincere Catholic prince of his time in the war against the Reformation. He was engaged in the battle himself, writing treatises against Luther. His theologians were well aware of his views.

Since his only son had already died, Duke George the Bearded promised to concede the throne to his only blood relative, his brother, Henry (a Lutheran), on the condition that Henry return to the Catholic faith.<sup>4</sup> Henry refused to convert. To the end of his life George could not prevent the succession and upon the Duke's death in 1539, Henry assumed the throne. Henry had been introduced to Lutheranism by his wife, Katharina of Mecklenberg and had become a member of the Smalkaldic League by 1536. Henry immediately decreed his newly acquired territory to be evangelical. The University's scholastic faculty was dismantled and positions were filled with new men favorably disposed to Luther. Rome had suffered a major blow in retaining Germany from the coming reforms.

The teaching methods and new textbooks of Philipp Melanchthon became the main focus of the theological curriculum. Joined by a fellow Wittenberg professor, Caspar Cruciger, Melanchthon was called upon to reorganize UL. His approach to instruction, along with Luther's doctrine, tore down the old Scholastic methods and reshaped the entire University system in the preparation of pastors and teachers. Leipzig immediately became a major force in the spread of the Reformation, along with Wittenberg and Tübingen. Within three years the University of Rostock fell to Lutheranism in 1542.

Joachim Camerarius studied at the University during its early Lutheran years and went on to develop a close relationship with Melanchthon, even assisting with the preparation of the Apology to

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<sup>4</sup> Duke George had intended to enter the priesthood, but was called to the throne in 1500. His only son died prior to his own death.

the Augsburg Confession. In 1541 Henry had him return for the appointment as Professor of Classical Greek at UL. That same year Henry was succeeded by his son, Maurice, who continued to stack the faculty with evangelicals. Maurice was less of a theologian but had great concern for reorganizing the schools in his domain. During the ensuing dissension among the Lutherans he sought compromise for the sake of peace in his Ducal Saxony. Johann Pfeffinger was added to the faculty as well as the Philippist, Viktorin Strigel — who later jumped to the Reformed camp. In the years following Luther's death these men, along with the faculty at Wittenberg, began to include synergistic leanings in their instruction and molded the University of Leipzig into a bastion of Melanchthonianism. Due to Melanchthon's many close ties to the faculty and their methods, they leaned in the direction of a unionistic Lutheranism and joined forces in opposition to the Gnesio-Lutherans at the Universities of Magdeburg and Jena (Bente, 185). The University at Jena had been established as a product of the Reformation. In its early days it was Philippistic, but under the influence of Nicholas von Amsdorf, it became a defender of Lutheran orthodoxy. Accusations and charges flew through the mail between these centers of learning.

Rome had attempted to put Lutherans back under their rule through the Augsburg Interim which was opposed by the Lutherans. In 1548 Maurice commissioned his theologians to come up with a substitute document to the Augsburg plan. Hoping to moderate the issues, Melanchthon devised an agreement known as the Leipzig Interim which was worked out on the Leipzig campus. Gnesio-Lutherans saw this more as a "sell out" of the doctrines of the Reformation. The UL faculty signed it, at the time under fear, but later defended it even when the heat was off (Bente, 99). Leipzig along with Wittenberg — was despised by the Gnesio-Lutherans as a breeding ground for unionism.

By 1568, Elector August of Saxony appointed his former court chaplain, Nikolaus Selnecker, to a professorship at UL. He was to fill a position vacated by Strigel (Jungkuntz, 96). While at Wittenberg in his early years, Selnecker had lived at Melanchthon's home and he

now lectured on Melanchthon's *Loci* at the UL.<sup>5</sup> But he began to see that fellow Lutherans were compromising many of things he had once learned. By 1574 he began reacting strongly to Philippistic documents. In so doing he gained the support of August, who desired a union between the genuine Lutherans in the midst of all this conflict. In the following years, along with Jakob Andreae and Martin Chemnitz, Selnecker labored on the *Formula of Concord*, going back to Luther's writings, especially his *Bondage of the Will*. Due to Selnecker's influence, all but two of the faculty members signed the *Formula* in 1581, though some signed with reservations. The two who refused outright were dismissed from office (Richard, 527).<sup>6</sup>

However, Selnecker's position at Leipzig was about to change. Elector August died and was succeeded by his son, Christian I, a Crypto-Calvinist. By the late 1580's, Selnecker's attacks on the Calvinistic tendencies of others brought a confrontation with the new ruler. The great confessor was dismissed from his teaching duties and ended up fleeing the city to avoid imprisonment. Upon Christian's death in 1591, Selnecker was reinstated, but died soon after his arrival (Jungkuntz, 103f). Nevertheless, the battle to retain true Lutheranism at the school was successful and ultimately his influence on the faculty won out.

### ***The Period of Lutheran Orthodoxy***

During the Thirty Year's War (1618-1648) attempts were made to unite the Reformed and Lutheran churches against the enemy. A colloquy was held at UL in 1631 but the Lutheran refused to give ground especially on the doctrines of the Holy Supper, Christology and Election.

Throughout the Seventeenth Century, Leipzig provided a steady base for Lutheran doctrine. It was considered to be one of the great centers for orthodoxy and was known for publishing the leading scholarly journal of its day. (To this day it continues to be home to many of the great publishing houses for theology.) With over 1,000 students it was the largest German university and was considered the richest

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<sup>5</sup> Selnecker's father was a close friend to Melanchthon.

<sup>6</sup> Other reports indicate only one refused to sign.



during the Seventeenth Century. A number of its professors rose to prominence in preserving the truth. Prof. Hieronymus Kroymayer (1610-1670) defended Lutheranism from the inroads of both Calvinism and the resurgent Romanism. His contemporary, Johann Huelsemann (1602-1661), also stands as one of the faithful confessors of that day, joining the UL faculty in 1646. He went on to develop a reputation as one of the main leaders of German Lutheranism. At UL, Huelsemann was the point man in the struggle to hold off the influence of Calvinism. He engaged in an ongoing confrontation with the syncretistic views expressed by the popular George Calixtus a professor at Helmstedt. Calixtus' followers, known as the "Helmstedt School," provided a continuing challenge to the faithful Lutherans in the latter part of the Seventeenth Century. Along with the theological faculty at the University of Wittenberg, lead by Abraham Calov (1612-1686) and Johannes Quenstedt (1617-1688), the UL faculty headed up the charge against the return of Melanchthonianism in any shape or form.

At this time, philosophy functioned in the defense of the Confessional faith, but (as used by the great dogmatians) only under the authority of Scripture. The Reformed camp, which continually made inroads into the views of some Lutherans, attempted to harmonize the truths of revelation with the arguments of reason. This significant difference provided the battle zone for much of the polemics between the two camps. Those in the syncretistic camp were not only weak on issues of fellowship, but much of this flowed from an improper approach to Scripture. The problem which the Lutheran dogmatians saw in their opponents was the magisterial use of reason. This same disease has disguised itself with many a new face throughout history. So much of our defense of the truth (in particular against Reformed influence) goes back to Luther's *Bondage of the Will* and the *Formula of Concord*.

During this same time, some perceived the sterile use of philosophy in theology as a way of separating doctrine from faith in the heart of a Christian. The ground for the approaching movement of Pietism was very fertile especially in the minds of many laypeople.

Other names from this period are notable: Johannes Olearius (III), grandson of Johannes Olearius who battled for the *Formula*, was Professor of Ancient Languages beginning in 1664 and later was head of the theological faculty. He leaned toward A. H. Franke as Pietism began sprouting at UL. around the turn of the century.

By the end of the 1600's Prof. August Pfeiffer was renown for his work in Eastern studies, producing many writings in the areas of exegesis and hermeneutics. During this period the school began to develop a reputation as a center for ancient languages, which it still enjoys to this day. Many Augustinian monasteries were closing at that time and large number of ancient manuscripts found their way into the Leipzig library.

This century also saw the legacy of an orthodox Lutheran family from Saxony named Carpzov which was represented on the UL faculty for over 60 years. Starting at UL in 1645, Benedikt Carpzov was a professor of criminal law and also produced work in the area of church polity. His brother, Johann Benediktat, worked by his side in the theological faculty in the fields of symbolics and homiletics. His son, Johann Renedikt II, began his professorship at UL in 1665 and later worked in staunch opposition to the incoming seeds of Pietism by Franke and Spener. Other sons and grandsons carried on the fight for orthodoxy into the Eighteenth Century.

This period brought great change to the physical campus. Many of the central buildings of UL were burned, damaged, or destroyed in the wars that ensued in Saxony. Over the years this part of Germany has been a battle zone. Wars have completely destroyed all UL buildings built before the 1800's.

### ***The Rise of Pietism and Rationalism***

Since, in many places, the church had developed into a cold institution, and its teaching at times appeared to be a sterile, philosophical exercise, a new theological atmosphere moved in through the work of Philipp Jakob Spener. In his early years he was trained in a Calvinistic Lutheranism which dealt extensively with the fruits of faith. This was soon reflected in his preaching and writings. Spener placed heavy emphasis on personal devotion and the experience of the Christian as

grounds for certainty in matters of religion. His ideas were structured around a high importance on sanctification as a way of determining true Christianity. He became popular among the laity who perceived much of the old, dogmatic approach as a heartless study of theories. Hand in hand with this came a diminishing of the Means of Grace as well as the Symbols of the church. The Confessions were diminished to a role of human, historical testimonies. The structure of the church and its traditions were minimized. By 1686 Spener had developed quite a following through his lectures and writings. Due to his influence on the Elector of Saxony, the UL was to now emphasize exegetical studies with the aim of making them pointed against sin. Theology's new thrust became the improvement of Christian living.

At the UL A. H. Franke, a graduate of 1685, had returned in 1689 to teach his specialty, languages. In the meantime he had been heavily influenced by Spener. Franke espoused the new thinking and caused quite a stir on campus. Many devout followers among the students and some faculty were won to the cause. His lectures were highly attended. With Spener's prompting, he and faculty member Paul Anton founded the Collegium Philobiblicum for students. Small, cell Bible study groups became the avenue for much of Pietism's influence on the theological students as well as the townspeople of Leipzig. The majority of the theological faculty began to object to the experience-centered approach to Christianity and finally put an end to the little groups. Rejected by the faculty, Franke accepted a call to a congregation at Erfurt and from there, by the guiding hand of Spener, was called to a position at the newly founded University of Halle, twelve miles west of UL.

As Pietism advanced, dogmatic study was reduced to insignificance (Hagglund, 330). The efforts to fight Pietism at UL by the orthodox Benedikt Carpzov seemed to fade with his death in 1699. Into the early 1700's the new movement flowered and finally captured the faculty at UL which went on to gain a reputation as a center for Pietism second only to Halle. Homiletical training stressed how the Christian could become a better person. Justification was not treated as an objective, forensic act, but rather as the subjective inner-working which brings about a change in man. By mingling Law

and Gospel, Pietism attached itself as a cancer to the teaching of the Cross.

Theology's goal was to find the real Church within the church. Valentin E. Loescher (1673-1749), a professor at Wittenberg and later a pastor at Dresden, carried on the fight for orthodoxy but had little influence on the UL faculty. One of the top graduates of this period, John George Walch (1693-1775), went on to be a gifted spokesman for Pietism through professorship at the University of Jena. Walch is described by Karl Muesel as a "theologian who ... declared that true piety is the supreme end of all theology and the greatest ornament of the theologian" (Richard, 555). But, where is the Cross?

The historian, J. W. Richard describes the mood of the day:

Pietism has gained the victory. The six thousand and more theologians who have gone out from the University of Halle in the first twenty-nine years of its existence ... have revolutionized theological sentiment. The old orthodoxy is not taught in a single lecture-room in Germany, and we hear of great religious awakenings among the students of Leipzig, Jena and Tübingen (Richard, 558).

Coinciding with the influence of Pietism, rationalism was beginning its rise in the field of philosophy. The strength of orthodoxy from the previous century delayed the coming of rationalism into Saxony. When it did arrive, it first came in a mild form mixed with Lutheranism. At the UL Prof. Christian Thomasius (1655-1728) developed his fundamental principle that "what agrees with reason is true, and what does not is false." His theories caused him to be banished from the UL faculty by 1690. He was then called to join the newly established faculty at Halle. However, soon after the turn of the century, similar ideas were given free reign on the UL campus through the work of Prof. Christian Wolff (1679-1754). He sought to prove God's existence by reason and held that man's intellect ultimately sits in judgment on revelation. Wolffianism triumphed quickly in the German universities and all the sciences were taught in accord with his theories. The early opposition of the theologians was ultimately overcome, and theology soon fell to Wolff's system.<sup>7</sup> His philosophy strongly influenced study for decades and set the course

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<sup>7</sup> The Halle Pietists had worked to have Wolff banished in 1723, but he later returned to both Halle and Leipzig with great acceptance.

for a new approach to theological education in Germany. Since Pietism and Wolffianism both placed a high importance on man's intellect and experience they fit well together like folded hands.

By the mid 1700's the weak form of Lutheranism prevalent in Germany was being transplanted to the colonies of the east coast on the "new continent." The influences of Halle and Leipzig were seen in the missionaries who arrived on American shores. Justus Falkner (1672-1723) had followed Prof. Thomasius from UL to Halle as a student, and soon after graduating came to the new land to assist in mission work. Commissioned by Franke's son, Gotthilf, in 1742, Henry M. Muhlenberg (1711-1787) came to the united congregations in Pennsylvania. His theology was lacking the solid orthodoxy of the previous generation and was soft toward the Reformed. He was joined in 1770 by John C. Kunze. Kunze had received his pietistic training at Leipzig where he excelled in the study of ancient languages. Halle sent over two dozen pastors to our shores from 1742-1800 (Nelson, 44).

The early American Lutheran leaders often intermingled with the Reformed. Their stand against false doctrine and consequently their positions on fellowship were never solid. We might say that Melancthon reached North America before Luther did. This period has enormous significance for our roots, for much of the Lutheranism that would later arrive in the European migrations of the mid-1800s was based on reactions against the various streams of Pietism. There was always a defined distinction between these two camps in regards to how they went about their theology and how they viewed the Confessions. Ironically the offspring of this period in UL's history will run into direct opposition with the institution's later offspring of the 1800's, especially as they collide in America. This continues to be the source of our differences with much of liberal, U. S. Lutheranism to this day.

In the midst of the 1700's, when sound doctrine was being trampled, there stands a truly Lutheran theologian who to this day continues to exert a lasting influence on our worship: Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). Bach's years at the University church

in Leipzig, St. Thomas (1723-8), are considered to be his most productive in quality music. He was well-versed in Luther, possessing two sets of the Reformer's works in his library. Writing music in a time of such doctrinal weakness often put him at odds with pastors and professors. His resignation from the congregation at Muelhausen demonstrates his disdain for the prevalent Pietism. At the same time his work avoids the danger of a scholastic approach, often criticized in "dead orthodoxy." He presents the crucified Lamb of God, front and center in his works. In his later years he continued to stand for the truth by his opposition to the rationalism of his contemporary, UL Prof. Johann Ernesti (1707-1781), who made attempts to blend rationalism with orthodoxy (Engel).

### *The Confessional Awakening*

By the entrance of the Nineteenth Century, the free-flowing stream of rationalism had developed into a major river in most theological institutions. The powerful influence of Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) was on the rise in German Universities. He taught that the religious consciousness of man along with his dependence on a higher being is the base of all religion, Christianity being the highest expression of his consciousness. Therefore, theology can change to fit man's needs or experience. The Enlightenment had delivered a general distrust for tradition, a disdain for custom, and a despising of established church authority among the major institutions of the day. "We know better than our forefathers." could identify this phase.

Rationalism was rampant in the pulpits of Germany. The few conservative pastors and congregations hoped for reform. Finally political and social events sparked a change inside of Lutheranism. Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm III chose the 300th anniversary of the Reformation as a time to unite the Reformed and Lutheran camps (At first the union was to be voluntary, but in a few years it became mandatory.) In 1817 the decree, known as "The Prussian Union" ignited the embers of true Lutheranism which had been buried for a century. Politically the tensions were boiling among the Saxons who felt that social changes were all too slow in coming under the monarchy as the territory progressed toward a constitutional state. By the

summer and fall of 1830 some UL students even staged a campus revolt which finally abolished some of the medieval practices (Forster, 7).

In the same year of the decree for the Union (1817), Klaus Harms (1778-1855), a pastor in Kiel, began an assault on the rationalism he saw destroying historic Christianity. He published a new set of 95 theses attacking the heresies of the day. His actions, coupled with the political push to unite Reformed with Lutherans, drove many to a renewed study of the Confessions and writings of Luther. In the years 1826 - 1847, more than six new publications of the Symbolical books appeared in Germany as well as new editions of Luther's writings (Richard, 578). The few isolated orthodox pastors and churches suddenly rallied behind the cause. Some laypeople even crossed state boundaries to find a truly Confessional Lutheran pastor for reception of the Lord's Supper (Forster, 18). Lutherans were forced to look into the mirror and study their identity. More and more churches began returning to the older form of liturgy and hymns. Young Lutheran writers started to boldly attack the Pietism and Rationalism of the previous generation as they leaned back into history for the strength of orthodoxy. Old textbooks returned as the foundation for theological study.

St. Paul wrote to young Timothy, "Command and teach these things. Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young." By age 25, Ernst W. Hengstenberg (1802-1869) began editing a Lutheran periodical which influenced many of the young students of theology in the mid 1830's. As the son of a Reformed pastor, he at first favored the Union, but the more he attacked rationalism in every corner the more Confessional he became. By age 28 he was thoroughly Lutheran and was advocating that pastors should be pledged to the Confessions because they contain the doctrines of Scripture. His works were the first to be translated into English and many of his ideas planted seeds amidst the surge of Confessionalism in America under Charles P. Krauth, in the 1850's. Coinciding with Hengstenberg's rise, the University of Erlangen was staffed with a faculty which added to the cause. Young Adolf G. Harless (1806-

1879) began lecturing on Lutheran dogmatics at age 23 including visits to the Leipzig campus. By the early 1830's his Confessional views were beginning to dominate in the Saxon schools, though elements of rationalism remained (Mundinger, 24). Harless began his teaching career at Erlangen in 1830 but finished as a member of the UL faculty.

In his early 30's a scholarly Hebrew exegete at UL, August Hahn (1792-1863) was firmly condemning the rise of reason in matters of theology. His students were molded with an intense hatred for rationalism. He made demands that every rationalist should be deposed from the church and her institutions. Some of the early fathers of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod studied under him. For instance, Ernst M. Buerger (1809-1890), writes of Hahn: “[He] used the language of the orthodox theologians. He taught the simple doctrines of Luther’s Catechism” (Mundinger, 28 fn). You cannot overemphasize the significance of returning to the early writings, liturgies and forms of Lutheranism for those who lead this movement. Many have made the comparison between these actions and Luther’s work at the time of the Reformation, who went back to the works of Augustine and the early fathers.

### *A Garden for the Young Missourians*

Though Pietism had been partially responsible for the entrance of Rationalism three generations earlier, many Bible-believing Christians returned to Pietistic ways in hopes of retaining the faith against the gross rationalism now in control. In the early 1820's, a small, Pietistic Lutheran group was operating among the UL student body. One of the theological instructors, Prof. Lindner, had reorganized the small, cell meetings made popular in the previous century by Franke. The informal organization was soon lead by a candidate of theology named Kuhn. Kuhn held to Verbal Inspiration, but used Scripture in a highly legalistic way. He was considered a fanatic by the majority on campus, yet held a firm grip on his followers through theological discussions and prayer meetings. Many of the Saxons who came to the U.S. in Perry County, Missouri, were under his leadership in their college days; men such as C. F. W. Walther, his older



brother, Otto, Ernst M. Buerger, Theodore Brohm, Johann Buenger, and Ottomar Fuerbringer. Upon Kuhn's death in 1832, the group was quickly brought under the similar leadership of the powerful Bohemian preacher, Martin Stephan whose presence was also well-known on campus.

In the crucial years when many of the future Missourians were being trained at UL (1827-1836), a mild rationalism was still present in theological classes. However, the Confessional mood was coming to the forefront. This blend of Bible-based teaching under Stephan and an incoming interest in the Lutheran Symbols became the strength of Missouri as it faced major battles in America. Walther managed to shake off the pietistic leanings of Stephan (due to much of his own personal turmoil and experience) while benefiting from Stephan's strong views of inspiration and inerrancy. At the University the professors gave him a deep devotion to the Confessions, though their view of Scripture was typically not as solid. In Walther and the early Missourians, these two elements combined into a rich Lutheran theology entirely different from the Lutherans they would encounter in the new land. As they sought to establish their own institutions in the U. S. they closely modeled them after the system they had known in Saxony, including the strong emphasis on homiletics. When Wilhelm Löhe (1808-72) directed young German men to study theology in the U. S., he sent them to the seminaries of Fort Wayne and St. Louis, which many regarded as the only truly Lutheran theological schools in America (Neve, 271). As controversies arose, the LC-MS theologians dug back to Scripture, Luther and the Confessions for ammunition as they had been trained in Leipzig. The Symbols were not trophies of the past, but rather their lungs for the present and future.

A friend of the Stephanites, Franz Delitzsch (1813-90), chose not to emigrate to the States, but remained in close contact with Walther and others in the years to come. Delitzsch, a converted Jew, was later called to teach at the UL in his hometown at age 31. He immediately made a mark as a distinguished exegete at UL. In his early years on the campus he demonstrated an excellent grasp of the Scriptures and Confessions, but in later years began to slip into the

historical-critical camp. Missouri's George Stoeckhardt (1842-1913) studied under Delitzsch at UL in his strong Confessional years, receiving the finest possible training in ancient languages which would benefit Missouri for decades to come. Dr. Stoeckhardt came to America in 1878 and with Walther led the fight for the Confessional view of Election as well as the battle of Verbal Inspiration.

### *The Norway Connection*

Many of the same conditions in Germany in the early 1800's existed in Norway as well. Hans Nielsen Hauge (1771-1824), the revivalist lay preacher was capturing the hearts of many Christians who opposed the cold, scholastic views of Rationalism so prevalent in the State Church. In 1811 a new University was established in Oslo (Christiania). Prior to this time, Norwegian pastors had been trained in Denmark. The first two theological faculty members were Svend B. Hersleb (1784-1836) and Stener J. Stenersen (1789-1835). Hersleb was a close friend to the theologian, Nicolai Grundtvig, during the Dane's early days when he held a more Biblical view. Though not thoroughly Confessional, Hersleb and Stenersen sought to establish a more Biblical approach for their students, yet were also sympathetic to some of the findings of higher criticism. They stayed inside the machinery of the State church and trained Lutheran pastors who were somewhat tolerant of false teachings, despite their dislike of Hauge's pietism.

The dangers of the popular Grundtvigianism, the Haugean pietism, and the remaining Rationalism would all meet their match in the 1850's in Norway. Due to a national ordinance called "The Directory of Worship," candidates of theology in Christiania were expected to spend one year of study in a foreign institution. Most of the young men chose Germany, and a good number attended UL. Candidate Gisle Johnson (1822-94) had received a thorough, Lutheran training as a child under his pastor, Christian Thistedahl. Upon graduating from the University of Christiania in 1845 he ventured off to the universities of Erlangen and Leipzig for a period of four years. He became deeply entrenched in the Confessional training of the faculties. While on the UL campus he studied under the renowned He-

brew scholar, Carl P. Caspari (1814-92). Caspari was a converted Jew who had taken steps to show his disapproval of the Prussian Union. Impressed with Caspari's linguistic abilities as well as his Confessional nature, Johnson through Hengstenberg, arranged for Caspari to come to Christiania to teach at the University in 1847. Johnson himself was appointed two years later as teacher of systematics, at age 25.

Johnson and Caspari, made a lasting imprint on the theological students which flowed from Norway into the Midwest forming the Norwegian Synod. The young pastors under their influence were thoroughly Confessional, evangelical, and were opposed to any sort of unionism. Johnson inbred in his students a deep love for Luther's writings and a knack for quoting him. His pupils included: Herman A. Preus, G. F. Dietrichsen, J. A. Ottesen; Nils Brandt and Ulrich V. Koren. It is this "Leipzig Connection" that brought such a close union in confession between the Norwegian Synod with the Missourians. The following generations recognized this tie. Johannes Ylvisaker (1845-1910) traveled back to the feet of Caspari and Johnson, as well as the Leipzig theologians.

By the end of the Nineteenth Century the UL faculty drifted toward more liberal theology. Our own Sigurd Ylvisaker (1884-1959), son of Johannes, took up residence in Leipzig for three years of study from 1907 to 1910, taking advanced studies in Semitic languages. He remarks favorably of his education in languages. The instructors included Rudolph Kittel, Ludwig Ihmels, and Caspar Gregory. However, in matters of doctrine he sadly noted their general denial of the Verbal Inspiration of Scripture (Harstad, 9ff). Ironically, Leipzig's strength of Confessional Lutheran doctrine in the 1850's had come to influence him years later through Luther College, Luther Seminary, and his father, so that he could now see the weakness of the present theological faculty at UL.

### *Conclusion*

If you are ever in Fort Myers, Florida, take time to visit the Thomas Edison Home and Museum. This property is home to the largest banyan tree on this continent, and the second largest in the world. It

is an impressive sight. The banyan tree grows from an enormous trunk. As the limbs grow up and out, each branch sends down its own root into the ground. These roots, over time, develop into additional trunks to support the growth of the tree. It appears that the tree is “walking” as it spreads.

The further we get from the original trunk in our Confessional family tree, the thinner and weaker our own purpose and confession can become. Each generation must not only rely on the main trunk, but must send down its own root into the soil. In *City Set on a Hill*, Theodore Aaberg likens our early men to the oak trees of Koshkonong. Those trees are gone. Their memory is wonderful, but meaningless, unless we — like the banyan tree — send down our own roots into the same soil. May God preserve us in his grace.

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## Our Preaching: With Special Reference to Law and Gospel

By: Sigurd Christian Ylvisaker

This paper was read at the Northwest Pastoral Conference of the Norwegian Synod (ELS) April 4 and 5, 1945 in Mankato, Minnesota, and printed in the *Clergy Bulletin*, April 16, 1945. The material printed served as a guideline for an informal and more extensive presentation. S. C. Ylvisaker (1884-1959) was the president of Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, Minnesota, from 1930 - 1950. It has been edited for this reappearance.

### Theses

1. It is our great commission, privilege, and opportunity to preach the Gospel.
2. If our private visits were as they should be — frequent, searching, consoling, and admonishing — they, too, would stand side by side with public preaching, as in the case of Christ.
3. Since they are not, we should improve the private, and lay more stress on the public.
4. What is public preaching? Why is it so important? It is instruction, convincing and convicting, comforting, saving, exhorting, explaining, elevating and edifying, confessing, and praising.
5. There is no better preacher than the pastor himself, because he knows his sheep.
6. Each sermon is a holy responsibility.
7. Each time and occasion presents new opportunities and needs.
8. In private preaching it is possible to consider individual needs.
9. In public, the needs of the whole congregation are to be considered, but as these

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10. become apparent through the individual. Insofar each public preaching must at the same time be addressed as to the individual, be governed by individual needs.
11. No preaching is effective that is addressed to a nation, a church, a congregation, a mass — for the mass cannot hear, consider, repent, believe, nor do the works of faith.
12. Considering the individual, then, what is his need? According to the commission of Christ it is the Gospel — in every case, at all times, above all else.
13. The preacher must know and realize the need of the Gospel from his own case and from that of his members. This can and dare not be superficial knowledge, but rather vital, deep, and sincere knowledge.
14. This can be brought only through the Holy Spirit in the Law. Therefore the study of and the preaching of the Law is self-evident and necessary.
15. How much Law is needed can be determined only by the study of individual cases.
16. Law can predominate only where members are in real danger of hypocrisy and rejection of Christ.
17. But when Christ himself says, preach the Gospel, we have a right to suppose that this is the supreme need and the supreme concern of our preaching.
18. What is Gospel preaching? We need to study this continually, examine and reexamine ourselves and our preaching, and strive toward ever higher accomplishments in this divine art.
  - By contrast, the preaching of the Law is a terrible thing, for the Law terrifies, drives us away from God, destroys hope, kills without mercy, demands its cruel pound of flesh, leads us to the brink of Hell and thrusts us down into eternal despair. The Law puts before men an impossible perfection; it reveals the holiness and justice of God, and robs us of every merit and worthiness. It reveals God in His glorious majesty, but leaves us in that dark night out from which we see as

from a deep pit of misery and defeat. The Law does not bring God close, but intensifies the infinite distance and eternal abyss which separates man from God. Read again the account of the rich man in Hell and know what the Law effects. To man in his fallen estate, the Law breathes damnation and a curse. So far as fallen man is concerned the Law is as the lightning and thunder which played on Mt. Sinai: wreaking vengeance, striking terror, causing fear. There is no pity there, no love as from God to men, no hope that man can reach, no gladness to cheer. The Law is in itself a bright light, but it only reveals the darkness which is man's and does not rescue him from it.

- We do not forget when we say this that there is a Law spoken by a loving God to his loving children — *cf.* even Mt. Sinai: “Thou wilt not kill.” And Luther was not wrong when he explained, we should “fear, love, and trust in God,” revealing the relationship of loving trust which should exist as the very basis or foundation for a proper keeping of the Law. But the situation is still the same: the Law demands this loving trust, does not produce it; it curses and condemns if it is not there; and can only show the bitter fruits of disobedience.
- Then consider what the Gospel is and does: the Gospel makes glad, cheers, gives hope, saves, forgives, shows mercy, extends pity. The Gospel binds up what is broken, heals what is sick, washes what is unclean, raises up what is faith, brings new life where death reigns. The Gospel is the voice of the Good Shepherd to bring back what was lost; it is the power of God to erect that temple in the heavens where the weary and heavy laden, the hungering and thirsting, the despised and despairing, may find rest and safe refuge. The Gospel brings God very near, draws us to Him, reveals Him in ever new and startling beauty, loving compassion, tender grace, holding out to the most unworthy the rich mercy which only He knows to give. The Gospel opens wide the glory of heaven, clothes the lowliest sinner with the righteousness which Christ has wrought as a heavenly garment — unsullied, seamless,

pure, bright, fit for heaven. The Gospel breathes hope as a life-giving breath, and causes the water of life to spring forth among men to refresh and renew to eternal life.

- To **preach** the Law and the Gospel means more than to speak of them, describe them, point to them. Then any half-hearted mentioning of Law and Gospel would be **preaching** the same. It is **not**, and we say that to the great discomfiture of many, even ourselves. It means disciplining, teaching, preaching, and evangelizing. It means witnessing, entreating, etc., words and expressions by which God describes, and so fills the office of Gospel preaching with meaning and responsibility that the preacher is tempted to cry, "woe is me, for I cannot." We do not blame Moses and other prophets for hesitating when called to this serious work, and yet, when we consider the contrast between this and the preaching of the Law, who would not greatly desire and long for it?

To preach the Gospel, then, is more than talking about it. It is more than an objective statement of the doctrines involved, no matter how carefully exact, orthodox, and Biblical such statements may be. The Gospel **is** that green pasture of which the Bible speaks; it **is** that banquet table of Christ, that living water with which Christ identifies himself. In other words, to preach the Gospel is to preach Christ.

In this preaching we are to be the very mouthpiece of God—to convince, to invite, to confess, to urge. We are the servants to place the heavenly food of the Gospel before our hearers, the ambassadors sent by Christ to bring the greatest news of all. We come as physicians to the dying, on an urgent errand of mercy; we come as undershepherds to save the lost. We cannot imagine Jesus saying listlessly those life-giving words to the malefactor, to Zacchaeus, to Peter. Nor can we imagine a Sermon on the Mount delivered as a dry doctrinal discourse. There is an earnest intensity about the sermon of Peter on Pentecost, of Paul in his discourse before Festus. We may say as much as we please that it is not a man's voice,



effort, demeanor, or style that lends effectiveness to the preaching, but it must be said that the preacher, by his person, speech, lack of serious effort, etc., can lay many a stumbling block in the way of preaching to reduce its effectiveness and even render it fruitless. Let us emphasize this only more and more that the preaching must be preaching indeed in the sense of the expressions used in Scripture itself.

The question of the right proportion between Law and Gospel will be decided by many considerations.

- As for the pastor, if he is a Gospel preacher — and that is the only, true pastor — the preaching of the Law will be as a foreign and a dread work even as it was to Christ. He knows it is necessary, but he will show in every sermon that his anxious concern is to reach his main goal, to preach Christ, to evangelize, to comfort.
- As for the congregation, the preacher has a right to consider that the great need there, too, is the comfort and saving grace of the Gospel. The Law kills; the Gospel alone saves. A Christian congregation, so long as it may be looked upon as Christian, *i.e.* made up of Christians, presents the picture of those who hunger and thirst after the Gospel, who are weary and heavy laden with the burden of sin, whose cry goes up to high heaven: “How long?” And we dare not, for the sake of Christ who redeemed them, hold back from them the riches of God’s grace. Why invite them to church as to a banquet table, if we come to serve only sparingly? It is God who has provided for all the abundance of his blessing. Should we not give as freely and richly as God has provided?
- It is disturbing to note that some preach the Law as if they loved that Law preaching, as if they found it easier to preach, as if they made it a greater concern. Before they know it, they have so filled their sermon with Law that there is barely time and space for a perfunctory mention of the Gospel — they must not forget to slip that in, so that it may be

said that they preached Law **and** Gospel. This is but the first step toward modernism which has made of Christ a forgotten man.

- No matter how important it may be to include in every sermon the threat of the Law as the directive of the Law — even to the extent that it may be necessary that the bulk of the sermon, counting words, lines, minutes, be an expounding of the Law — a sermon is not truly Biblical which fails to preach Christ. The hearer should in every case, without exception, be forced to admit and rejoice to exclaim: “Today I have seen Christ.”

## Sermon:

# How Should We Regard Preachers of the Gospel?

By: Pastor Gaylin Schmeling

### *Prayer*

Dear Father in Heaven, we thank You that You have instituted the ministry of Word and Sacrament, and that You have prepared these young men for that important work of proclaiming the Gospel. Cause these men and all your ministers to diligently study the Scripture, so that they never say more or less than Your Word. Cause all Your people, O Lord, to accept that Word for what it truly is, Your Word, O Father. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

### *Text: 1 Corinthians 4:1-2*

Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.

### *Introduction*

In Christ Jesus, the Great Shepherd of the Flock, dear fellow redeemed, and especially you, my three friends, on this your special day,

This is an important day for you. It is a major milestone in your lives. You have properly been prepared for the greatest calling there is, the Office of the Public Ministry.

Soon people are going to be asking, "What do you think of the new preacher?" There is going to be a whole variety of attitudes and opinions. After one ordination service, the boys of the confirmation class were out behind the church discussing the new minister. "Do you think he is going to be harder in confirmation class than the last one?" asked one boy. "At least he's younger," said another. Then the ringleader of the group said, "Oh, don't worry about it. My dad is the president of the church council. He will tell the new preacher what to do, just like he did to the last one. He will tell him where to get off."

Then, the other extreme was a pastor's son. The principal of the Christian Day School was disciplining the class. He explained that as principal he was responsible for discipline and administration in the school, so it was about time for this class to start shaping up. It was then that the pastor's son popped us and said, "Well you may be the principal, but my dad is the preacher, and he runs the church and the school!" Obviously these are two improper views of the preacher; two extremes that are more common than we care to admit. This afternoon then, as we honor these young men who are prepared for the public office we ask, "what should be our attitudes toward the new preachers?" **How should we regard preachers of the Gospel?**

*We will consider them servants of Christ.*

This is what St. Paul tells us to do in this text. We shouldn't think that this was St. Paul's private interpretation. He says in this same epistle, "These things we also speak, not in the word which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches" (1Co 2:13). By verbal inspiration, St. Paul says that those in the Public Ministry are the "servants of Christ." What a glorious calling! The Public Ministry is a divine institution of God (Eph 4:11; Tit 1:5-7). It is Christ who makes these men His servants, who function in His place (2Co 5:20). When the pastor or the teacher proclaim the Word, it is the very voice of Christ in our midst (Luk 10:16). When the pastor baptizes and celebrates the Holy Supper, it is the hand of Christ which pours the life-giving water and offers Christ's body and blood. At the same time, because the authority of the Keys rests with the Body of Christ, the church, and because God calls His servants through the church, the called servants perform all the function of the Public Ministry in the name of the church (2Co 4:5).

Therefore, it is not the pastor who runs the congregation, nor is it the laymen that run the church. Rather, it is the gracious Savior, the Good Shepherd, who gently guides and leads His flock, the church, through the Word. When the pastor is preaching the Word in its truth and purity, it is the very Word of Christ and should be accepted as such. Through Christian preaching God Himself is speaking (1Th 2:13). But, when the pastor speaks words other than Christ's words, then there is no directive to hear him. Those in the Public Ministry

we regard as servants of Christ, functioning in Christ's place for the good of His flock, the church.

The Christian congregation won't think of trying to run or bully the pastor the Lord has given them as their shepherd. Through him they are to hear the voice of the Good Shepherd. The Christian pastor won't think of being a dictator in the congregation. He is the servant of the One who said that He did not come to be served, "but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many" (Mat 20:28). When He functions as the shepherd under the Good Shepherd, he will not drive the flock with an iron rod, but he will shepherd with all the love and compassion of the Savior. He lovingly feeds the lambs and sheep on the green pastures of Word and Sacrament. He has to use the strong medicine of the Law for he must point out sin and error, but he does this in love. Then, with the Gospel, He binds up the wounded, those broken in sin and all the problems and troubles of life. He searches for the lost and gathers the flock. He shepherds the sheep until the Lord calls them home and then he comforts those who remain.

### *We Are to Consider Them Stewards of the Mysteries of God Himself*

What then are these mysteries of God? Beyond a doubt, the greatest divine mystery which encompasses all the other mysteries, is the mystery of godliness, that God became flesh for our salvation (1Ti 3:16). While we were yet sinners who broke every commandment in the Book and were going headlong into destruction, Christ died for us (Rom 5:8). So terrible was that bondage of sin that we continued to do those things which we knew were going to hurt ourselves and those around us, and still we craved to do them. That bondage can still be seen in our old, sinful flesh, for many of the good things we desire to do, we don't do, but the evil that we don't want to do, that we do (Rom 7:19).

Yet Jesus came for our deliverance. He became poor and lowly to raise us to His divine glory, eternal life in heaven (2Co 8:9). In the incarnation Christ took upon Himself our dying flesh so that, through unity with His divinity, He might conquer sin, death, and all our foes in that flesh, and make us partakers in His divine nature as the sons

of God with an eternal existence (Gal 4:5; 2Pe 1:4). He took upon Himself our sin, our death, and our hell, so that we could have His righteousness, life, and heaven. This is a great and wonderful exchange.

This great treasure is brought to us in God's mysteries, the Means of Grace, the Word and the Sacraments, and is received by faith alone in Him as the Savior. This faith is worked, strengthened, and preserved through these same Means of Grace which are the mysteries of God. Here Jesus united us with Him and He with us ever undivided, so that we can say as the bride of the Song of Solomon, "My beloved is mine and I am His" (Sol 2:16). Of these divine mysteries you, as preachers of the Gospel, are stewards. What a blessed vocation you have chosen! Here you can be a constant witness of God's forgiving love to those placed in your care.

At every baptism, the miracle of rebirth occurs. Here we are born again as the children of the Father through faith in Jesus Christ, we are united with Christ's death and resurrection rising to newness of life, and we received the Holy Spirit in all His fullness with all His many gifts (Gal 3:26; Rom 6; Act 2:38). At every Absolution, the forgiving voice of Jesus is heard empowering us to return to Baptism, daily allowing the new life to again come forth and arise (Joh 20:22-23). At every sermon, Christ is present in His Word with His comfort, counsel and aid (Psa 19:8-10; 119:92). At every Lord's Supper celebration, we receive the very body and blood born of the Virgin Mary which won our redemption, to forgive our sins, and to give us the strength to do all things through Him, the power to overcome and obtain the victory (Mat 26:28; Phi 4:13). These mysteries are priceless. They are worth more than all the gold and silver in the world. With gold and silver, they could not be obtained. It took the precious blood of God's Son. These are the great and awesome mysteries of God which He places in our weak human hands.

You, my friends, as preachers of the Gospel are servants and representatives of the Almighty God. You are stewards of His awesome mysteries. Seeing the great responsibilities of this office and our own unworthiness, you could easily start second-guessing your decision to enter this calling. You could easily be paralyzed with fear and de-

sire to flee the altar as Luther at his first Lord's Supper celebration. How can anyone measure up to the responsibilities of the divine office? St. Paul allays your fears. He says, "Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful." The Lord doesn't demand superhuman strength from you. You are not required to be an academic genius, an entertainer like Jay Leno, the counselor who has all the answers, and the Jack of all trades who can fix everything in the church and parsonage. Rather, the Lord expects that His servants be found faithful. They will faithfully dispense the mysteries of God, the life-giving Word and blessed Sacrament, and will live a life emulating the life of Christ in the midst of His body, the Church.

In a sermon on this text, Luther speaks of the importance of such faithfulness: "What is the benefit ... if a bishop were so great that he possessed every dioceses ... or who is helped if he were so holy that he could raise the dead with his shadow? Who does it help if he were as wise as all the Apostles and Prophets? None of these things are required. But that he is faithful, giving the servants the Word of God, preaching the Gospel and distributing the mysteries of God; that! that is what is required, that helps everyone and is a benefit to all" (*SL*, 12, 63). Again Luther says, "If anyone teaches the Word purely and faithfully and considers nothing except the glory of God and the salvation of souls, then his work is faithful and well grounded" (*SL*, 9, 741) [These quotes are paraphrases and not translations].

Having considered the responsibilities of the holy office, you and every other person in the Public Ministry has to say, "It scares me to death." We must each confess our own unworthiness and lack of ability. But, thanks be to God, the strength we need is present in Holy Word and blessed Sacrament. Here He gives us the power to do all things through Him. What a magnificent vocation this high calling is. You are the servants of Christ, dispensing the great mysteries of God, the Means of Grace. Here is the bread of life for the lambs and sheep. Here is comfort and strengthening in this present vale of tears. Here is blessed hope, even in the face of death. Amen.

**Sermon:****Nothing Fails Like Success!**

By: the Rev. Steve O. Scheiderer, STM  
Our Savior Lutheran Church, Bishop, CA

*Texts: Ezekiel 2:1-5; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; Mark 6:1-6*

In Jesus' Name, dear friends,

As we define true, godly "success" this morning, we will examine all of today's appointed readings.

"Nothing fails like success!" I'm sure we've all heard this saying before. Yet, there probably isn't a person here today who isn't trying to "succeed" in some aspect of life. Interesting that one of the most sought after concepts in our culture and society today is so greatly misunderstood.

We are shocked when "success fails" or a successful person fails. We've all heard of successful people who "can't buy happiness." Occasionally this unhappiness ends in suicide or in some other great tragedy. We can read of such unfortunate stories almost everyday in our nation's newspapers. If this isn't enough, recently people were able to watch almost 24-hour coverage of the O. J. Simpson trial.

Certainly Jesus recognized this universal confusion of the mixture of success and failure when he asked: "What will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mat 16:26). Jesus does not forbid earthly success as long as our drives and ambition do not stop with the things that rust and corrode (Mat 6:19a). We are to store up for ourselves "treasures in heaven" (Mat 6:20a).

But despite these clear words of Jesus, even in the Church, it can be fashionable to strive for "success" above all else — where the drive for "success" dictates the life of the Church.

In some quarters of the visible Church we are told to be totally "positive" and to use "positive thinking" or some other psychological gimmick. Yes, we Christians have a lot to be "positive" about. But preaching the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth cannot



and will not always be defined as “positive” by our sinful human flesh, much less the world!

Granted, at times the Lord grants great numerical “success” to the Church. On the Day of Pentecost, 3,000 people were saved. The Book of Acts further reports great increases — even numbers multiplying. But it is not unheard of — even in Lutheran circles — for numerical increases to represent “ear tickling” or “telling ’em what they want to hear” — a strategy clearly forbidden in Scripture (2Ti 4:3ff).

What is most abominable about this so-called “positive thinking,” “church growth style” concept, is that it leads to the belief that “the end justifies the means.” Simply put, if you’ve wondered about the shake up in TV ministries in recent years, it is because Christians have fooled themselves into thinking that “the end justifies the means.”

Faithfulness to the pure Word and Sacraments is vital to the definition of “successful,” because God has never promised (or anywhere shown) that following a few computerized and sociologically tested principles would bring instant results. In the *Augsburg Confession*, the Confessors — who had their lives on the line — affirm the Biblical truth that God gives faith and numerical growth “when and where **He** chooses” (AC, Art. 5). Also, God gives “qualitative growth” — one hot topic today — again, “when and where **He** chooses” (AC, Art. 5). “Success” is **not** defined by God in terms of man choosing man’s means to achieve God’s goals. No, “success” can and should only be determined by a man’s faithful use of God’s means — God’s Means of Grace, the pure Word and Sacraments. It’s God’s means alone that achieve God’s goal. It is God’s pure Word and Sacraments which work the growth and salvation of souls we Christians so desperately desire.

Let two of the most obvious examples suffice to prove our point. Jonah was the most “successful” evangelist in the history of God’s people. God used him to convert an entire city. But the Book of Jonah leaves us with a picture of **unfaithfulness**. Jonah was angry that God indeed saved those who were his enemies. On the other hand, Noah was the most “unsuccessful” evangelist in history. He

could only save his family. But Genesis records one of the greatest examples of faith and faithfulness to God in all history.

In both cases God was in control. God determined how many would be saved! God determined who would be saved! God used **His** Means of Grace in both cases. “Success” is equal to “faithfulness” — not impressive statistics. The mystery of it all is left to the One whose thoughts are not our thoughts.

Yet, some would still opt for gimmicks and sociologically tested approaches to mission work. Some would set Scripture and our Christ-centered heritage aside for the smallness of human reason — the greatest deceiver of the modern world. Our readings for today give us a lesson in the true meaning of “success.”

Ezekiel is told by God: “I am sending you to them who are stubborn and obstinate children; and you shall say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord.’ This is a summary statement pointing to the authority of a true prophet. As for them, whether they listen or not ... they will know that a prophet has been among them. ... But you shall speak My words to them whether they listen or not” (Eze 2:4-7). Notice that twice God tells Ezekiel to simply preach “whether they listen or not” (Eze 2:5a;2:7a). God gives the correct diagnosis and cure. They were “stubborn and obstinate” — the diagnosis. They needed God’s Word in all its truth and purity — the cure. One might say that the more wicked the people, the more of the pure Word — not sociology or gimmickry — they need. While we affirm the usefulness of social science, we must reject the trend today to try to make the foolishness of the Cross palatable to the wisdom of men.

We might fool ourselves that today we are too smart for such a simple approach. But sinful man’s diagnosis and cure have not changed since the day Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit. Firm preaching of the Law is needed — and in all its sternness. Bold preaching of the Gospel is needed — and in all its wonderful sweetness. The Means of Grace have been entrusted to us, the results and the unanswered questions are in God’s hands.

Sometimes God’s goal is “limited” to people knowing “a prophet has been among them — and this only comes years later (Eze 2:5a). We certainly do not give a prophetic witness by watering down God’s

Word. Although God reassures Ezekiel that in His eyes faithfulness will triumph over the intimidation of men, God can make no such promise for the unfaithful prophet (Eze 2:6a). In fact, unfaithfulness to God's Word and will and ways and instructions and Means of Grace should cause us to hear both man and God — and God is the One who will judge us!

Paul, like all of us, suffered from his own weaknesses. But our second reading shows us that our weaknesses should not shame us. God knows our weaknesses and uses them — this is the good news. Perhaps it was the fear of failure that prompted Paul to pray three times that the thorn in his flesh would be removed (Eze 2:8). Had Paul failed his psychology courses? Had Paul failed to memorize all the so-called sure-fire, church growth principles? Had Paul failed to please all the people all the time; or was he only pleasing some of the people some of the time; or, tragedy of tragedies, was he pleasing none of the people none of the time (like Noah)?

If Paul was asking questions like this, then he received an answer that only could originate with God Himself. The following could only come from the revelation of God: “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness” (Eze 2:9a). Note Paul's response: “Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me” (Eze 2:9b).

We need to say: “I boast in the proper teaching of the Word and administration of the Sacraments.” All we could offer would be weakness; the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation and the power of Christ dwells in us as we are faithful to His pure Word and Sacraments (Rom 1:16).

If this is not enough evidence, then the Gospel lesson for today is for the gainsayer. Even though Jesus experiences poor results, we dare not call **Him** a failure. Did Jesus lack psychology? No, He created man's psyche. Did Jesus lack church growth principles? No, He knows what makes the Church grow. (Unless we say he didn't have all the current Twentieth Century textbooks which pool the ignorance of men.) Jesus was about His Father's business and He did it faithfully and perfectly — or we have no Savior. Did Jesus possess “success” in the world's eyes? No! Did Jesus possess “church growth

eyes”? No, not as commonly understood by those who mix worldly wisdom and theology! But He possessed “success” in the eyes that count: God’s eyes!

Jesus was a “success” in both His active and passive obedience — His life and death. In fact, Jesus could only “succeed” in his passive obedience by failing in the world’s eyes! Jesus had to fail, to be rejected, to die. Someone had to crucify Him. In a strange way, “Jesus succeeded through His failure.” No wonder the Cross is called foolishness — but only to those who are perishing (1Co 1:18ff; 2:14; 3:19). God crowned His foolishness in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In the light of this glorious resurrection, why would we want to co-mingle the pure doctrine with science or theological falsehoods? Why would we strive for “worldly success”? Why would we fail to support those who are faithful to the pure Word and Sacraments? Why would we look around to see who isn’t here, when in front of us is the altar and pulpit from which the pure Word and Sacraments flow!

If we look at only the measurable results — if we look at only the numbers — we will continue to strive for and achieve only “worldly success”! But if we focus on the pure Means of Grace — come what may — we will hear the words “Well done, good and faithful servant!”

Do you have a personal weakness? God’s powerful, all-sufficient grace is sufficient for you! Keep on in the pure Word and Sacraments! Does our congregation have a weakness? God’s powerful, all-sufficient grace is sufficient for us! Let us keep on in the pure Word and Sacraments! Does our synod have its weaknesses? God’s powerful, all-sufficient grace is sufficient for us! Let us keep on in the pure Word and Sacraments! This is God’s will for “growth” and “success”!

No Reformation planned by man has succeeded. Josiah’s time was one of Reformation, but it was started by accident. Martin Luther did not plan his Reformation either. Even C. F. W. Walther, the president of the Synodical Conference, could not have dreamt of the pros-

perity of pristine Lutheranism which had almost disappeared from the face of the earth. (Although he'd be distressed by some developments since his death.)

When the Reformation has been worked **by God**, it is because there were those concerned with being “a living sacrifice” (Rom 12:1) faithful to the Means of Grace — no matter how unsuccessful they may have appeared! “Nothing fails like success!” is not a description of a congregation or synod which is true to the pure Word and Sacraments. Success in the world's eyes is subservient to success in God's eyes! Yes, like the foolishness of the Cross, failure in the world's eyes might actually be success in God's eyes!

So, let us begin here at home. Let us begin with dedication to the pure Word and Sacraments and the self-sacrificing, Christ-like service which flows from them. Come what will, that's “success”! Amen.

## Book Review

By: Pastor Rodger Dale

### *Information*

Das, A. Andrew. *Baptized Into God's Family*. (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House).<sup>1</sup>

### *Review*

The author, a Lutheran Pastor, tells in the introduction that the book grew out of a friendship with a person who could not accept infant Baptism. Pastor Das said a **search** for material led him to the conclusion: "... it was time to look at infant Baptism afresh" (ix).

Das begins by showing the universal need for salvation in a fresh and thoughtful presentation of the doctrine of original sin. In the second chapter he shows that Baptism is a Means of Grace through which salvation is extended. In chapters three and four he presents the case for infant Baptism. Answering the objection that Baptism must be, in the words of Karl Barth, "a decision of faith," he argues that faith is the work of God and shows from Scripture that infants can believe and **receive** the blessings of Baptism (27).

Das devotes whole chapters to Paul's comparison of circumcision with Baptism, Jewish baptism practices, baptism of households, and the testimony of the early church.

While he states that: "Baptism is not the work of men, but of Christ," one might have expected this point to be emphasized more (16). Those who reject infant Baptism, see Baptism as a human work (sacrifice) giving outward testimony to a decision of the mind. The *Apology of the Augsburg Confession* answers this objection:

The theologians make a proper distinction between sacrament and sacrifice. The *genus* common to both could be "ceremony" or "sacred act." A sacrament is a ceremony or act in which God offers us the content of the promise joined to the ceremony: thus Baptism is not an act which we

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<sup>1</sup> *Baptized Into God's Family* is available for \$7.99 directly from

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offer to God but one in which God baptizes us through a minister functioning in his place (Tappert, 252).

In the *Large Catechism* Luther states: “to be baptized in God’s Name is to be baptized not by men, but by God himself . . . . Thus you see plainly that Baptism is not a work which we do but is a treasure which God gives us and faith grasps . . . (Tappert, 437; 441).

The book certainly accomplishes the aim of its author. It is a fresh look at many topics relating to Baptism. It’s twofold impact is to remove any doubt that Baptism, like its Old Covenant counterpart circumcision, was intended for infants and that infant Baptism has been the practice since apostolic times, and to produce in the reader an even deeper appreciation for Baptism as God’s grace at work.

Das answers the questions most often asked about infant Baptism and presents the answers thoroughly, yet with non-technical style which a lay person can understand without difficulty. This book is a must for a pastor’s library and **every church library**. A part of Northwestern Publishing House’s *Impact Series*, it comes highly recommended by Dr. Robert Preus, who wrote the foreword.

## Book Review

By: Dr. Thomas Kuster

### *Information*

Stephenson, John R. *Eschatology*. in *Confessional Lutheran Dogmatics*. Ed. Robert Preus. Vol. 13 (Ft. Wayne: Luther Academy, 1993).

### *Review*

This thirteenth volume in the Confessional Lutheran Dogmatics series realizes pairs of characteristics not often found in doctrinal treatises: it is brief yet thorough, and technical yet almost popularly readable. It reinforces in the reader two important insights: each detail of doctrine embodies the whole of doctrine, and good doctrinal studies can deeply enrich preaching.

In his introductory section of three chapters, Stephenson deals with needs and definitions. He presses the need for eschatological clarity by surveying the general apostasy of our time. His overview of vast networks of influences since the Enlightenment provides a useful road map to theological thought, though the details of the causal highways and byways, which he for want of space does not provide, might be explored with profit elsewhere by the scholar who does not want simply to hold “conservative” positions thoughtlessly. In his examination of how the word “eschatology” is currently used in various camps, Stephenson is persuasive that the subject is no small corner of theology nor a marginally relevant “someday-not-now” concern, but rather it of one piece with Christology, justification, sanctification, and all the other doctrines of Scripture — and a place where every heterodoxy somehow finds its expression. “While eschatology in the strict sense rounds off the subject matter of dogmatics,” he observes, “it also vitally presupposes its whole content” (25).

The book’s two major parts deal respectively with the end of the individual (temporal death, the immortality of the soul, and the intermediate state of souls), and with the end of the world (the signs, the coming of the Lord, Hell, and Heaven). The subject is made vitally



contemporary and relevant by Stephenson's discussion of "inaugurated" and "realized" eschatology, as he explains how the Christian, *simul justus et peccator*, spends all of everyday life in the tension between "already" and "not yet." Here he cogently traces the essential links between the Christian's life and Christ's person and work, as well as with the Means of Grace. Law – Gospel insights abound, as when he observes that temporal death viewed from the standpoint of the Law is a chastisement, a punishment for sin, "but from the vantage point of the Gospel, bodily death can be embraced with hope as a destruction of the old man, the consummation of baptism, and entrance into Paradise" (38).

Throughout the study, Stephenson deals with a surprisingly wide array of false teachings that impinge on his topic, and responds to them skillfully. In one place, for example, he effectively links the "last things" with the "first things," pointing out in discussing death that

Once special creation is abandoned and the historical fall turned into a timeless myth, theodicy moves into the center of theological reflection, with God, not man, occupying the dock. The now-unneeded atonement dissolves into mere metaphor, so that the death of Christ becomes the stuff of empty rhetoric (36).

His treatment of the immortality of the soul demonstrates the value of an "updated" dogmatics in which the old doctrines can be clearly stated over against newly popular forms of unbelief. Stephenson is able to establish Scripture's teaching not only against the long familiar denials of immortality, but also against the "extravagant use" of immortality by the New Age movement.

A highlight of interest occurs in the discussion of the seldom-preached-on "intermediate state" of souls between the time of temporal death and the general resurrection when souls and bodies will be rejoined. The exploration — while thoroughly Scriptural and Confessional — still exudes the difficulty of speaking of a "period," which may well be beyond time as we know it, in terms that time-bound creatures can comprehend. That is perhaps why it is seldom preached on.

In discussing the signs of the *Parousia*, Stephenson surveys the evils of the present age which are so mammoth and yet, sadly, so

familiar that they fail to stun us as they should. He dwells on those evils that especially alarm political conservatives, an approach which might unfortunately suggest that a particular political outlook is the proper Christian approach to the Last Day. Can one even sketchily review the massive evils of the century without mentioning Hitler, or more contemporaneously, the immense greed, selfishness, exploitation, and craving for power that have infected Western Culture? The reality is doubtless even worse than Stephenson can describe.

The treatment of New Age views of death is masterful; given their wide dissemination through the popular media, this section might well be considered required reading for pastor and layperson alike. The same could be said for the treatment of Dispensationalism, in view of the wide, media-generated popularity of those Evangelicals who embrace it. Stephenson's approach to these misbeliefs is captured well in his closing words of that chapter: "Faith lives not in speculation but in penitence" (97).

The closing chapters are like reading reversed autobiography — reviewing not what has happened in our lives so far, but what will surely transpire in the future. Stephenson's approach properly centers on Christ:

That the destiny of mankind in general and of each man in particular is determined through immediate confrontation with the exalted Lord indicates why confession of the parousia is an especially intense acknowledgment that all true theology is Christocentric from first to last (101).

The book's closing chapters are where homiletical enrichment is most likely to occur. The chapter on Hell, as might be expected, contains much material to enhance expression of the Law. But Gospel-preaching is harder than Law-preaching, and the pastor will be particularly pleased to find numerous sermons, full of Gospel insights and Gospel expression throughout the book, especially in the sections on Christ's coming and the entire closing chapter on Heaven, in which Stephenson, drawing on Augustine, describes with eloquence the final satisfaction of the believer in a Christ-centered fulfillment of endless rest, vision, love, and praise (101ff).

## Book Review

By: Seminarian Michael J. Langlais

### *Information*

Gustafson, David A. *Lutherans in Crisis: The Question of Identity in the American Republic*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993).

### *Review*

*Lutherans in Crisis* by ELCA Pastor David Gustafson is a book that has had a wide reading within Lutheran circles. The book has been well received by conservative Lutheran reviewers and is generally considered to be a positive contribution in the contemporary struggle for a truly confessional Lutheranism. The author, who is a contributing editor to *Logia*, and the pastor to an ELCA congregation in Poplar, Wisconsin, is understood to be a conservative voice from within his liberal and non-confessional church body. His views are thought to be consonant with the confessional position however, and his work has been recommended as informative and helpful in defining, “what is at stake for confessional Lutherans,” as one conservative Lutheran reviewer put it.

What is offered in this review is a dissenting opinion to the positive and uncritical consensus regarding the merits of this book. The purpose of this criticism is not to discredit Pastor Gustafson personally or to question his scholarly integrity. The sincerity of his views and his passion for the tasks of historical and theological reflection are unquestioned. We laud his courage in representing conservative tendencies within a radically liberal church body that is largely intolerant and elitist in its attitudes toward Biblical and confessional viewpoints — neither do we desire to be contentious, for as Luther said somewhere, “*non docendo, sed disputando, veritas amittitur* — it is not by teaching, but by wrangling, that the truth is lost.” We feel compelled, however, to challenge the generally facile acceptance of the author’s theological views and question their validity and value for the confessing church. This is attempted for two comprehensive and extremely important reasons:

- **The historical and theological views of the book are not grounded in the formal principle of the Reformation (“*sola Scriptura*”), and therefore lack Scriptural validity.**
- **The position of the book is not truly confessional in relation to Holy Scripture and in its understanding of the church. These essential and foundational concerns are briefly treated under three headings:**
  - historical concerns
  - theological concerns
  - implications for the modern church

### *Historical Concerns*

The author offers a brief, historical sketch of the “American Lutheran Controversy” which occupied the church in the Nineteenth Century. He focuses on the period 1849-1867. The author characterizes this as a struggle between non-confessional and confessional elements primarily within the General Synod (1820) that eventually gave rise to the formation of the confessional General Council (1867) and its separation from the parent body. The loss of “Lutheran distinctions” due to accommodation and acculturation was characteristic of the General Synod, and this process of “Americanization” culminated in Samuel S. Schmucker’s “Definite Synodical Platform” (1855). Resistance to these forces of acculturation and the struggle to maintain “Lutheran identity” became the program for Charles P. Krauth and others who represented the new General Council. It was around these issues that the theological debate within Nineteenth Century Lutheranism took form.

However, the author completely leaves out of consideration the crucial and defining role played by the truly conservative and confessional Synodical Conference (1872) and its chief representatives. Historically, this is inexcusable, because the Conference played such a key role in the development of the Lutheran church in Nineteenth Century America, and its representatives were a primary influence in the alignments and realignments between the eastern General church

bodies. Although the Synodical Conference itself was not officially formed until 1872 — and therefore was somewhat outside of the time-frame employed by the author — the men whose synods formed the Conference were actively engaged in the course of the Lutheran church from early on. How can a discussion of Nineteenth Century American Lutheranism leave out of consideration the views of such men as C. F. W. Walther and W. Sihler (Missouri Synod), H. A. Preus and J. A. Ottesen (Norwegian Synod), J. Bading and A. F. W. Ernst (Wisconsin Synod) and M. Loy of Ohio? this is unthinkable, because these men were important shapers of the church whose influence reached far beyond the confines of their own synods. To leave out this crucial element is to misunderstand the historical dynamic which gave birth to the Lutheran church on American soil. The author's characterization of a "crisis" arising in the theological exchanges within the General Synod that were primarily definitive for American Lutheranism is falsely drawn. These exchanges were, in fact, no more than a family squabble. The external union of the General Synod, the General Council, and the United Synod of the South in 1918, forming the United Lutheran Church in America is eloquent proof that these General bodies were very much alike in the most important way possible: none of them were in possession of a Biblical doctrine of church fellowship. It was this issue, in fact that defined the formation of the American Lutheran church, and yet the author has missed its significance. It was this very issue of churchly practice that was the true distinctive between Lutheran church bodies and that defined those groups as confessional or non-confessional. It was the recognition by representatives of the soon-to-be-formed Synodical Conference that the eastern General bodies were deficient in their positions regarding church fellowship, that caused them to form a church conference upon true Biblical and confessional principles. The lines of battle as drawn by the author lie away from the real conflict.

### *Theological Concerns*

The author has mistakenly identified the views that would later surface in the General Council as representing confessional Lutheranism, and has falsely drawn a picture of them in "crisis" with

forces of acculturation and with the non-confessional theological views represented within the General Synod.

What does the author mean by “confessional,” and what does it mean to the confessing church? Within his understanding of these terms, what is the nature and purpose of the Lutheran Symbolical writings, and what role do they play for the church subscribing and confessing them?

To use the author’s own language, “confessing” is an act of religious self-identification made by like-minded members of religious groups who are banded together on the basis of their “confession.” The end result is Lutheran “identity” which is based upon a “particular theological stance, as expressed in the Lutheran Confessions, as contained in the Book of Concord” (19). Lutheranism is defined by “what Lutheranism believes and confesses to be true regarding the Gospel of Jesus Christ” (19). Although the author would not state it thus, “confessing” is a self-willed act centered in the religious self-consciousness. The written “confessions” resulting from this autogenous act of the theologizing subject are then by nature propositional statements, to which their “confessors” assent to one degree or another. The value of these “confessions” is that they invest their adherents with “identity,” “meaning,” and “significance.” “What adherents believe, say, and do is who they are” (6). For the author, confessing the faith is assent to subjective, propositional statements. These statements (“confessions”) are constitutive of religious groups (“church”), are “distinguishing marks” (“*notae*”) of those groups and endue them with “identity” and “integrity.”

Over against this rationalist understanding of confession, Holy Scripture informs us that confessing is confessing **Christ**, and that this is the result of God’s grace and power alone (Mat 16:17; Mar 9:23f; Gal 4:6; Joh 15:26f). Confessing the faith is possible only by the work of the Holy Spirit in us through God’s Word. It is the Spirit-wrought response to the revelation of the Father in Jesus Christ, His only Son. Furthermore, confession is never confined to the isolated, individual believer, standing alone, but finds its true ground in the response of a fellowship, of a faith-consensus. Confessing the faith is the work of the Holy Ghost in the church and her fellowship, created

through the Means of Grace, and expressly confessing Christ and His doctrines divinely transmitted to men in sacred Scripture.

The Scriptural concept of fellowship is always church fellowship. It is the unity of believers in Christ within the one church created by the life-giving Word. This all-embracing unity exists, because there is one Lord (Joh 10:16; Eph 4:4-6). The unity of faith and practice achieved through church fellowship has its divine source in the very Godhead (Joh 17:11; 21ff). This invisible unity of faith in Christ is visible according to the apostolic norm of church fellowship, which is complete agreement in all the doctrines of sacred Scripture and the common participation in the Means of Grace. These very Means of Grace, *i.e.* God's Holy Word and the blessed Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, create the church and bring into being true church fellowship. The Means of Grace are the true and pure marks of the church ("*notae*") and spring from the faith-creating, life-creating Word of God. Their true ground is the love of the Father for us in Christ Jesus and they fill up the rich treasure stores of the church faithful to her Lord.

The concept of fellowship that grows out of the author's understanding of confession is in stark contrast to the clear teachings of Holy Scripture. This fellowship is simply a self-willed banding together of like-minded individuals, the marks of which are a particular theological "identity" and religious "integrity" based upon assent to theological propositions. Out of these religious acts of men the "church" is created. In an obvious turning-on-its-head of Scripture, the individual comes first and then the church is created. The fellowship of this "church" becomes simply the exercise of interpersonal relations as men attend to their "felt-needs" in support groups and social organizations which target emotional and spiritual "health" and well-being. This extreme individualism is in actuality destructive of its own conception of church and fellowship. Repair of the rupture is attempted through external association which in its purest form is called "reconciled diversity." The author must be taken to task for providing the presuppositions that give birth and life to the very thing against which he rails (171ff).

The author abandons doctrinal and sacramental consensus as the true basis of church fellowship. As a result, the Lutheran Symbolical Books are pushed aside and are no longer allowed to govern church fellowship through the concrete application and implementation of the divine, evangelical truth of Holy Scripture confessed by them. The Lutheran Symbols become relics of the past — heirlooms preserved alone for their appeal to the sensibility for history and heritage, but they are no longer the church's living confessions of the pure Gospel and Sacraments of Christ. Neither are they bearers of the pure and public marks of the church, defining the nature and limits of church fellowship. Through this process the Symbols are denatured, depotentiated, and we are left to define them, as does the author of this book, as mere “identifying characteristics” or “distinguishing marks,” differentiating religious groups. The Confessions possess value in as much as they invest religious groups with “significance” and “meaning” and “provide cohesiveness” (6). We value them in whole or in part, because they provide “a distinctly Lutheran witness” (179).

### ***Implications for the Modern Church***

Brief historical and theological investigations undertaken from the standpoint of “*sola Scriptura*” have shown us the foundational inadequacy of the author's positions in the book under review. This is true simply because at the outset of this work he surrenders the Reformation Scripture principle, and resorts to rationalist arguments to prop up cardboard pictures of “church” and “confessions.” But without the life-creating and sustaining Word of God these pictures totter and fall. Without God's Word, they are nothing.

The divine, evangelical truth revealed in Holy Scripture clearly defines the nature and limits of the true church and her confessional fellowship. It is the inestimable importance of the Biblical doctrine of church fellowship that has escaped the author along with much of modern neo-Lutheranism. Modern ecumenism, pietistic activism, and the church growth movement all thrive in the soil of doctrinal indifference and confessional relativism. While the author is critical of these manifestations of the secular “church spirit,” he is nonetheless



proximate to that spirit, even in opposition to his stated intentions. The use of “conservative” and “confessional” language that is devoid of Scriptural content will not redeem the underlying neological necrosis. As Prof. Kurt Marquart has warned,

... But the quicksand of a false conservatism is even more deadly than the honest abyss of modernist denial. I refer to that attitude which thinks it can safely compromise Biblical authority and inerrancy, and then use the Confessions as antidote to keep the corrosive poison within bounds. But this is like rescuing the sun by means of the moon, or building the foundation on the house, rather than the other way round. The Confessions presuppose the Scriptures as unshakable foundations. Remove these, and the superstructure must collapse as well (*LSQ*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 10f).

Glorious things of Thee are spoken  
Zion, City of our God;  
He whose Word cannot be broken,  
Formed Thee for His own abode,  
On the Rock of Ages founded,  
What can shake Thy sure repose!  
With salvation's walls surrounded,  
Thou may'st smile at all Thy foes.  
(*The Lutheran Hymnary*, 88, verse 1).



*Note:* Unfortunately, the print quality in this issue of the LSQ was not as good as it has been in the past. We apologize for this inconvenience, and we do not anticipate that this problem will occur again. Thank you for your patience. We are trying to find an acceptable, inexpensive method of printing and binding the LSQ so that we may cut the Synod's subsidization costs. If you have experience in this sort of printing and would like to suggest an idea, please send your correspondence to:

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