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Foreword

We introduce our readers to the new president of the seminary and editor of the *Quarterly*, the Reverend Gaylin Schmeling, by sharing a sermon which he preached on Pentecost 1997. Using as the theme “The Holy Who?” he points out from Scripture Who He is and how we receive Him in all His fullness with all His many gifts.

Professor Emeritus Juul Madson traces the history of “The Term Analogy of Faith—Its Origin, Use and Misuse.” He shows that the term is a hapax legomenon, found in Romans 12, verse 6, and after tracing its use and misuse he concludes by saying, “If the analogy of faith is to remain as a principle of hermeneutics, it should not be as an illegitimate and ill-advised intruder that overrides all the time-honored principles from the Reformation down, but as a fellow servant that finds itself responsive to the task of truly honoring and rightly dividing the Word of Truth.”

1935-1950 “marked a period of transition” in the history of the ELS. The article by Pastor Theodore Gullixson provides interesting information during this period of time. He shows that the ELS was a mission-minded and a doctrine-minded synod, working with both the trowel and the sword.

Our readers will appreciate the article on “Sanctification in the Lutheran Confessions” by Professor Lyle Lange, instructor of doctrine and Old Testament at Martin Luther College. In a day when sanctification is over emphasized by some and under emphasized by others, this balanced article is most appreciated. He correctly states “there is only one way to find out what the Confessions teach on sanctification and that is to read them.” His essay shows that he has indeed done just that.

Vicar Jesse Jacobsen’s well-written review of Chemnitz’ “The Two Natures in Christ” will heighten our appreciation of this masterpiece of Lutheran theology and hopefully spur us on to continued study of this gem of the Reformation.

In conclusion, as I turn over the leadership of the *Quarterly* to my successor I wish to thank all who have submitted articles over the years and who have expressed words of encouragement. It is much appreciated. God bless you all.

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Pentecost Sermon

by Gaylin Schmeling

Prayer: Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord! Be all thy graces now outpoured on each believer's mind and heart; Thy fervent love to them impart. Lord, by the brightness of Thy light, Thou in the faith dost men unite of ev'ry land and ev'ry tongue; this to Thy praise, O Lord, our God, be sung. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Text: Acts 2:37-39

Now when they heard *this*, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

(Einleitung) "The Holy Who?" asked a man in one of my adult information classes. Ghosts are something out of science fiction and material for TV cartoons. To talk to him about a ghost, and a holy one at that, certainly took some doing. But he learned and understood as the Holy Spirit, through the Word, worked in his heart. Later he became a prominent member of the congregation I was serving. Pentecost season is a good time to review and restudy the importance of the Holy Ghost's work. **The Holy Who?** we ask ourselves.

I. He is the Third Person of the Holy and Blessed Trinity. The Holy Ghost or the Holy Spirit is not a mere force emanating from God, nor is He a created Spirit as the angels. Rather, He is true God with the Father and the Son. The one true God is the Triune God. The Father is unbegotten, or born of none, and is the fount and source of the Godhead. The Son is not created, but begotten. He is always born of the Father before all ages. (Psalm 2:7) The Holy Spirit is neither created nor begotten, but is spirated or breathed out from the Father. He proceeds from the Father and the Son. (John

- 15:26) In the biblical account of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5,
- St. Peter specifically refers to the Holy Spirit as true God. (Acts 5:4)

God the Father, who is divine love, reveals His love by the Son of His love, Jesus Christ, (Colossians 1:3) the Word made flesh for our salvation through the Spirit in the means of grace. (Romans 5:5)

The creation was originally holy and perfect in every detail. Remember, the Holy Spirit hovered over the face of the waters, breathing life-giving creative power. (Genesis 1:2) But in the Fall into sin all was lost and man became wicked and sinful. This body created to live forever was doomed to the grave and the soul condemned to hell.

Again and again the Prophets mourned the fact that the Old Testament people went awhoring after other gods, that they played the harlot, and that the stench of their brothels wreaked to high heaven. This is the theme of much of the book of Hosea. (Hosea 2:2-3) Is it any different today? People go awhoring after wealth and pleasure. They bed themselves down with the gods of this world. So enslaved are they to passion, lust, drugs, alcohol, materialism, hate, and greed that they cannot stop doing these things, even though they know this is what is causing them and those around them such agony and desperation. Humanity by nature is a prostitute on a string completely controlled and used by the evil one, Satan.

In love with fallen humanity, that adulterous harlot, as a passionate young lover, Jesus Christ pursued her and sought her as His own. He even became what she was—sinful, cursed, and dead (II Corinthians 5:21) in order to win her by His love and take her home to the Father's house, purified and cleansed, and made splendid in the beauty of His own divinity. (Ephesians 5:26-27, II Peter 1:4) He took upon Himself our sin, our death, and hell and gave us in exchange His forgiveness, life and heaven, divine life with Him. He adorned his harlot bride with the majestic glory of His own perfection, filling her with all the fullness of God by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. For being Himself hungry, thirsty, naked, estranged, wounded, and imprisoned, He has become for all who are in these conditions—the bread of life, the living water, the garment of sal-

vation, the house of the Father, the healing of infirmities, and liberator from all bondage. Christ is all for all. Now through the Holy Spirit He offers this treasure to each of us so that we can walk in His ways, follow in His truth, and live in His life, the divine life from above. (John 14:6) This is the Holy Spirit, the Comforter who has been given to us! Come, Holy Spirit, come! Receive our drooping faith, our doubts and fears remove, and kindle in our breasts the flame of never-dying love.

II. Now We Want to Consider the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

How do we receive the Holy Spirit in all His fullness with all His many gifts? When that first Pentecost day occurred, the sound of a great wind was heard and what seemed to be cloven tongues of fire rested on the disciples' heads. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Holy Spirit enabled them. (Acts 2:1-4) From this, Pentecostals and Charismatics assume that after they have had a born-again experience they will have another faith event, called the baptism with the Holy Spirit and fire. They assume that they will experience the same thing as the apostles did on Pentecost day. They will speak in tongues, have extraordinary faith, heal and do other miraculous deeds, showing they have the Spirit in all His fullness.

Belief in this Spirit baptism is a dangerous and deluding thing. Rather than looking for the Spirit where He promises to be found, in Word and Sacraments, this teaching causes one to look for the Spirit in ecstatic experiences within one's self. No longer are the means of grace sufficient, but one is to look to new revelations or special experiences for the power to live victorious lives. It bases the certainty of salvation and the possession of the Spirit on personal experiences rather than on God's Word. Rightly our Confessions declare, "Whatever is attributed to the Spirit apart from such Word and Sacraments is of the devil." (SA III VIII 10, p. 313)

Charismatics frequently emphasize that a person must be properly disposed to receive the baptism of the Spirit. Only those who have an attitude of expectancy, openness, and searching will actively receive it. All this cultivates the notion that human effort is in some way essential for the reception of the Spirit's free gifts. This certainly implies that we can do something to help in our own sal-

- vation, contrary to the clear Word of Scripture. (Ephesians 2:8-9;
- Galatians 5:4)

The miraculous gifts of the Spirit are nowhere promised to all Christians. These gifts were authentic signs of the Spirit's presence. They appear only in the New Testament where there was a special need for this authentication. As the church grew there ceased to be a need for them, and after the apostolic era they appear to have ceased.

How then do we receive the Spirit in all His fullness with all His many gifts? After the miraculous Pentecost event and Peter's sermons, through Peter's preaching, the Holy Spirit caused the crowd in Jerusalem to desire forgiveness in Jesus. They asked Peter and the other Apostles, "Brothers what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37)

Peter did not say, "Speak in tongues, or do miraculous signs to show you have the Spirit," no indeed. Rather he said, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:38-39) In Holy Baptism our sins are forgiven and we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. At the baptismal font the Holy Ghost hovered over the water as He did in the first creation, making us a new creation in Christ. (II Corinthians 5:17) The Spirit worked faith in the Savior in our hearts and we became His dwelling place, possessing the Spirit in all His fullness with all His many gifts.

The gifts of the Spirit are renewed in us as we daily return to our Baptism in true repentance and faith. Each day we will take our sins of pride, lust, covetousness, and greed and drown them again in the baptismal water through confession and absolution, and then our new life in the Spirit will arise strengthened and renewed.

The gift of the Spirit is strengthened in us through the Word of God which is spirit and life. (John 6:63) Through the Word the Holy Spirit permeates our life. Here the Heavenly Dove descends and fills our hearts with heavenly dew so that we can bear abundant fruits of love, compassion, joy, and peace.

Also, in the Holy Supper we receive a renewal of the Holy Ghost. St. Paul says, "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jew or Greek, whether slave or free—and have all been made to drink one Spirit." (I Corinthians 12:13) As we drink Christ's

life-giving blood in the Supper, we are also partakers in the Spirit of Christ. (C.M. Zorn, *Korintherbriefe*, p. 106:1) It is indeed a Spirit-filled cup which unites us with Christ's spiritual body, the church.

This mystical Supper of the Lord is the Spirit-filled and deified flesh and blood of Christ. It is the beginning of the wedding feast of the Lamb in the kingdom of God (Revelation 19:9) Therefore it is for us the bread of life, the living water, the healing of infirmities, and the liberation from all bondage, a truly Spirit-filled food and drink. Here is the strengthening and nourishment for our faith-life and the power to live a more God pleasing life. Here we are filled with the Spirit, and Christ's divine life will pulsate through us making us more and more Christ-like.

The Holy Who? He is not the stuff from which TV cartoons are made. He is the Divine Spirit, true God with the Father and the Son. As He once hovered over the waters in the beginning, so He hovers over the Word, Baptism, and the Supper imparting to them life-giving power. Through these means of grace we are indeed Spirit-filled. The Scripture nowhere promises the Holy Spirit and His gifts outside the Word and Sacraments. Here He is present in all His fullness with all His many gifts. Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord, be all Thy graces now out-poured! Revive our drooping faith, our doubts and fears remove, and kindle in our breasts the flame of never dying love through Holy Word and Blessed Sacraments.

The Term *Analogy of Faith*— Its Origin, Use and Misuse

J. B. Madson

The Title of this assigned essay as it appears in the printed program for this conference is somewhat different from the title above. The former reads: *The proper use of the hermeneutical principle: Analogia Fidei (origin, use and abuse)*. Since one of the questions in regard to this term is whether it really is to be used as a hermeneutical principle at all, we choose at this point—in the manner of many former essayist in our midst—to alter and thus slightly redirect the title. The somewhat disputed phrase which is the focus of our consideration here, analogy of faith, often appears in its Latin form *analogia fidei*, as in the program for this conference, though the phrase originates elsewhere than in the Latin language.

The origin of this term in the Christian church is quite readily traced to Paul's letter to the Romans, chapter 12, verse 6, where the expression ἀναλογία τῆς πίστεως is a New Testament *hapax legomenon*¹ in the longer phrase κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως. The entire verse reads as follows: ἔχοντες δὲ χαρίσματα κατὰ τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθείσαν ἡμῖν διάφορα, εἴτε προφητείαν κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως.

The exegesis of this passage over the years has resulted in several interpretations, most of them hinging especially on the interpretation of the word πίστις, whether it is to be understood as the *fides qua* or the *fides quae*, and, if the former, whether it is the faith of the prophet or of those who hear him. The same word πίστις has appeared earlier, in verse three, where in its genitive form it is joined with μέτρον to produce the phrase *measure of faith*.

In the middle of his exhortation to humility of service in this twelfth chapter, the Apostle Paul effectively harnesses the Greek word φρονεῖν (to think or be of a mindset) in simplex and complex form (μὴ...ὑπερφρονεῖν...φρονεῖν... ἀλλὰ φρονεῖν... σωφρονεῖν) to direct these Roman Christians to a proper mindset for reception and

use of the *χαρίσματα*³ that God has parceled out to them: “Do not *think* of yourself more highly than you ought [*to think*], but rather *think* of yourself *with sober judgment*, in accordance with the measure of faith (μέτρον πίστεως) God has given you.” (v. 3)

Romans 12, 1-6

It may be well to go back to the beginning of chapter twelve to note the context for the phrase on which we focus. In writing of the wonderful salvation that is at hand for the Christians at Rome, especially the great doctrine of how a sinner is justified before God, Paul now exhorts or urges the Romans to a life befitting the designation of “God’s beloved” and “called saints.” While commentators and translators range from “beseech” to “command” as their understanding of the word *παρακαλέω*, Bengel may have settled the argument with his succinct: “Moses commands: the apostle exhorts.”⁴ He makes the appeal to “brothers” on the basis of, or through, the mercies (ὀκτιρμῶν) of God. This word in four of its five occurrences in the NT is plural, possibly expressing the manifold nature of God’s mercy, or as Ernst Käsemann suggests, reflecting assimilation to the Hebrew *רַחֲמִים*.⁵ Nevertheless, some English translations, such as the NIV, translate with the singular *mercy*.

Verse 1

Διὰ with the genitive ordinarily denotes means or instrument or agency, a meaning that suffices here. The exhortation that Paul is engaged in simply lets the many acts of mercy or the boundless mercy of our God be the means of bringing forth this response in the “bodies” (*σώματα*) of these Roman Christians, their bodies representing their “human persons in the concrete manifestation of their life.”⁶ In 6, 13 Paul calls the members (*τὰ μέλη*) of our bodies “implements [or instruments—*ὄπλα*] of righteousness.” In I Cor. 6, 15 he calls the Christians’ bodies “members of Christ,” and four verses later he calls the Christians’ body (*τὸ σῶμα ὑμῶν*) a temple of the Holy Spirit in them.

This body the Christian is to offer as a “*living* [as well as a] holy sacrifice,” in distinction from the many animals that were offered to the Lord in OT times only after they had been slaughtered.⁷ In Chapter six Paul has spoken of the believers as dying to sin (v. 2) but then emphasizes the glorious life they now live with Christ (v. 8), in which they are “alive from the dead.” (v. 13) It is this newly created spiritual life that they are to present to God as that which is living, holy and well-pleasing to Him.

This offering on the part of the regenerated and renewed children of God here in Rome is termed by the Apostle ἡ λογικὴ λατρεία, a term that has received much attention by the exegetes. Does λογικὴ here mean “rational” or “spiritual”—or “true”?⁸ The “reasonable worship” of the AV at this point would seem to be an adequate translation that distinguishes between *rational* and *reasonable* somewhat in the manner of Cranfield when he says: “For Paul true worship is rational not in the sense of being consistent with the natural rationality of man... but in the sense of being consistent with a proper understanding of the truth of God revealed in Jesus Christ.”⁹

Verse 2

Verse two then introduces two verbs which with their modifiers present contrasting life-styles, one of which is to be shunned, the other endorsed and engaged in. Here the words συσχηματίζεσθε and μεταμορφοῦσθε receive much attention because of their often somewhat synonymous use.¹⁰ C. E. B. Cranfield finds serious difficulties with the many interpreters who claim a significant distinction between the two verbs (the former supposedly referring “to outward form only and so [indicating] something external and superficial... the latter [referring] to inward being and so [indicating] a profound transformation”) and then proceeds to list four reasons for his disclaimer.¹¹

Nevertheless he concludes by saying that the AV rendering of the two words by “conform” and “transform” respectively is acceptable. The form of the prohibition in the first instance (μὴ with the pres. inv.) indicates that the Christians at Rome are not to go on doing what they have been doing, i.e., they are to stop being so conformed. Cranfield writes: “If they understand what God has done

for them in Christ, they know that they belong, by virtue of God's merciful decision, to His new order, and therefore cannot be content to go on allowing themselves to be continually stamped afresh with the stamp of this age that is passing away. On the basis of the gospel, in the light of 'the mercies of God,' there is only one possibility that is properly open to them, and that is to resist this process of being continually moulded and fashioned according to the pattern of this present age with its convention and its standards of values... In the situation in which he is placed by the gospel the Christian may and must, and—by the enabling of the Holy Spirit—can, resist the pressures to conformity with this age."¹²

Instead of conforming oneself¹³ to the natural sinful world (τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ)¹⁴ about him, the Christian is to let himself be transformed by the renewing (ἀνακαίνωσις)¹⁵ of his mind. The two activities are complementary to each other and both are to be ongoing simultaneously as long as the Christian finds himself in this world. In the light of Romans seven and eight the Apostle surely does not entertain the thought that the renewal of the mind is something which the Christians at Rome—or anywhere else—can accomplish for themselves. For this they are totally dependent on the Spirit, as this excerpt from Ch. 8 highlights: "The rule of the Spirit, who gives life, has in Christ Jesus freed you from the rule of sin that kills... If by the Spirit you kill the activities of the body, you will live. All who are moved by God's Spirit are God's children." (8, 2. 13. 14 AAT)

The purpose (or the intended result) of the transformation is expressed by the following prepositional phrase in v. 2 introduced by εἰς and leading to the articulated infinitive of action (τὸ δοκιμάζειν) and its clausal object (τί τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ εὐάρεστον καὶ τέλειον): namely, the approving of what the will of God is, the good and pleasing [to God]¹⁶ and perfect [will].¹⁷ Regarding the last term Cranfield expands: "On τέλειον the best commentary is Mk 12.30f... 'thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength... Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' God's will, that which God requires of us, is perfect, complete, absolute; for He claims us wholly for Himself and for our neighbours. Thus

- the last of the three terms interprets the other two; for it makes it clear that this ἀγαθόν καὶ εὐάρεστον is not something manageable and achievable, as the rich young ruler foolishly imagined... but the absolute demand of God, which Christ alone has fulfilled. It is this absolute demand of God by which He claims us wholly for Himself and for our neighbours, which those who are being transformed by the renewing of their minds recognize and gladly embrace as it meets them in all the concrete circumstances of their lives, and to which they know themselves altogether committed, although in this life they can never perfectly fulfill it.”¹⁸

Verse 3

The Christians who here are being addressed and exhorted to a life of sanctification have been the recipients of various *χαρίσματα* or charisms. In possession of such freely bestowed gifts there is nonetheless often temptation for the individual to think more highly of himself than he ought to think. That is why Paul emphasizes the need for sober thinking. (Refer to page one concerning the establishment of a proper mindset.) Note that Paul addresses individuals (EACH¹⁹ and every ONE), yet omits no one (EVERY one) in his desires to aid these children of God in their life of renewal.

Here, for the first time in this section, we meet πίστις, joined in the genitive form (πίστεως) with μέτρον, *measure of faith*. This phrase occurs only here in all of Paul’s epistles in the NT. The meaning of faith also in this verse is crucial to one’s understanding of it. That faith here is not the *fides quae* is quite evident from the context, for the object of our faith is nowhere else spoken of as being measured out in different amounts to His children. But what is here spoken of is measured out to each individual according to a measure that God himself devises. It is evident that God is here understood by the Apostle as meting out different measures to different Christians. Therefore the faith spoken of here is, as Stoeckhardt concludes, “not the faith which makes a Christian a Christian, but something which is meted out by God to believing Christians after they have become Christians.”²⁰ Surely Christians may differ from each other in the relative strength of their individual saving faith, but this is obviously not the diversity that is meant in this context, where the dif-

fering gifts of the various members of the body of Christ are clearly referred to. Two points are emphasized here: The words ἐκάστω...μέτρον emphasize the diversity, and the phrase ὁ θεὸς ἐμέρισεν (God parceled or divided) emphasizes that this diversity is God's doing.²¹ This advice or exhortation Paul delivers to the Roman Christians on the strength of the grace (χάρις) that was given to him, namely, his apostleship.²²

Verses 4 & 5

Verses four and five expand on what it means that God has parceled out faith's measure. Using the example of our human bodies, which have many parts or members (μέλη)—members which do not all have the same gift or function (πράξις)—the Apostle asserts that we (note the inclusive *we* at this point) as members of the body of Christ nevertheless are all necessary to each other and equally under obligation to serve one another, because we all belong together in a single whole, with our unity established ἐν Χριστῷ.²³

Verse 6

Now we have reached verse six and its somewhat puzzling phrase for our consideration, the *analogy of faith*. In itself the verse is an incomplete sentence (as also verses seven and eight) and therefore in need of further explication for most of us who ordinarily look for things to be tied together in more traditional ways. Some have chosen to read a comma after μέλη at the end of verse five, thus making the following verses an extension of the apodosis²⁴ found in verse five, of which the protasis is formed by the καθάπερ γὰρ...δὲ clauses of verse four. This scenario leaves the participle ἔχοντες dependent on the preceding finite verb ἔσμεν, so that the translation might read: "...so we, the many, are one body in Christ...having gifts that differ according to the grace given us."

A second scenario has a new sentence beginning with the participle, but making it agree with, and dependent on, a series of verbs to be supplied from the varying contexts, reflected in most of the translations as imperative verb forms.²⁵ Adolph von Schlatter is credited with drawing attention to the indicative sense of the participle

- in the following observation: “The weight of the sentence rests not on an imperative, but on an indicative: ‘we have these gifts.’ Paul speaks not just of what ought to happen, but of what is happening. Out of the received gift arises the function, and therefore also out of the statement which indicates the gift arises the imperative which says how the function is rightly fulfilled.”²⁶

In these three verses (6-8) there obviously follows the application of the preceding comparison, controlled by the *καθάπερ* and *οὕτως* clauses, to the special series of objects the Apostle has in view, the first of which now calls for our special attention because of the *hapax legomenon* in it. The first special gift or charism—and the only extraordinary one—here cited by the Apostle is that of prophecy. Concerning the meaning of the gift of prophecy as Paul here introduces it, there is no little diversity of opinion. One of the fundamental meanings of the OT term (נָבִיא) rendered *prophet* in English and *προφήτης* in Greek is *interpreter*, one who explains or delivers the will of another. This designation derived not so much from the capacity of predicting what was to come to pass as from being the interpreters of God, men who spoke in His name. It was a name applied to Abraham in Gen. 20, 7, to Moses in many places, to the writers of the OT books, even to Aaron.²⁷ In the NT it is generally applied to anyone employed to deliver a divine message.²⁸ G. Stoeckhardt points out that the apostles of the NT are often coordinated with the prophets of the OT, as in I Peter 1, 10, 11, and are themselves called prophets in Eph. 3, 5.²⁹ The apostles in great part proclaimed as fulfilled what the OT prophets had foretold concerning God’s plan of salvation through Christ.

In the NT, especially in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles of Paul, it appears that another kind of prophet is introduced, one that did not have the qualification of those we primarily denote as prophets and apostles. Yet Paul appears to distinguish these prophets from the other appointed workers in the church when he writes in Eph. 4, 11: “It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people...” (NIV)

These NT prophets, along with the other members of the church endowed with the gifts listed in I Corinthians 12 and here in Ro-

mans 12, appear to be dealt with not as those who held an office, but as those who had been granted a gift to be used in the service of the Lord and His church. Those who were endowed with this extraordinary charism were enabled to edify the Christian congregation with their insights imparted to them by God's Holy Spirit. Stoeckhardt sees them not as the actual regular teachers of the congregation, but as those who from time to time provided elucidating particulars in the sphere of apostolic doctrine, thus furthering the people's understanding of the Scriptures.³⁰

On the other hand, because prophets are mentioned immediately after apostles in I Cor. 12, and because the gift of prophecy is assigned a high place in I Cor 14, 1 & 39, C.B.C. Cranfield sees some of them as being so frequently inspired they were regarded as "*being* prophets and forming a distinct group of persons." He sees the prophet distinguished from the teacher by what he calls "the immediacy of his inspiration," his utterance being the result of a particular revelation.³¹

Whatever this specific χάρισμα³² of prophecy, it is to be exercised in a specific way delineated by the phrase κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως, where ἀναλογία is defined as *proportion, correspondence, correspondence of a right relationship*.³³ Paul recognized that there was need for the prophets themselves to exercise care in their prophesying even as the congregational members are in I Cor. 14, 29 directed to provide a discerning ear (καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι διακρινέτωσαν), and in I Cor. 12, 10 the gift of the discerning of spirits (διακρίσεις πνευμάτων) follows closely on the gift of prophecy.

The key word here remains πίστεως, whether in this context it means subjective or objective faith (*fides qua or fides quae*) and, if the former, whether the faith is that of the prophet or of his hearers. To narrow the options at the latter point seems the easiest course; the word πίστεως has the definite article, which would in this context point more readily to those who are exercising this prophetic gift than to those who hear the prophets.

In response to the larger and more difficult question, the question of whether the word *faith* is ever used in the Scripture in a purely objective sense for *that which is believed* is answered by

- many in the negative or, at least, with an “unlikely so.”³⁴ They assert that the emphasis in this word is always on the believing, not on the object of that believing. At the same time they recognize that faith does not occur in a vacuum; faith by its very definition lays hold of or puts its trust in something and is often therefore further defined by its object: for example, Christian faith is faith that lays hold of Christ, saving faith is faith that lays hold of salvation—which is always and only ἐν Χριστῷ.

When Stoeckhardt says, “Prophecy should stand in relation to faith... Also to him who prophesies God has given along with his gift a corresponding measure of faith, trust and confidence. And so he who prophesies should prophesy in relation to this his faith. In his prophecies he should exercise his confidence of faith,”³⁵ he is echoed by Louw and Nida: “[The statement that] we must do it according to the faith that we have may be rendered as ‘we must do it with as much faith as we have... we must do it in proportion to how much we believe.’”³⁶

J. P. Koehler, who joins the foregoing exegetes in his contention for the subjective use of the noun πίστις here, nevertheless approaches this phrase at a different slant when he views the participle ἔχοντες as more directly connected with the previous verse, thus ruling out the necessity of importing some such verb form as προφητεύωμεν or ἔστω.³⁷ He therefore offers this translation of verse 6: “But the charisms which we have differ according to the grace given us. If it is a prophecy, we have it corresponding to faith.” In doing so he understands verse 6 as at best an implied admonition in light of the thorough admonition in verse three with its multiple employment of φρονέω. He readily admits that with his interpretation the constructions in the following verses pose a difficulty, but he asserts that the same difficulty has to be negotiated by those who introduce the phantom verbs to bail them out.³⁸

A Hermeneutical Principle?

Of considerable importance to our concern about the use of this passage to establish the phrase ἡ ἀναλογία τῆς πίστεως as a principle of interpretation is a later passage from the above cited writing in

which the author quite boldly disclaims the alleged connection: "If we, then, take the passage Romans 12, 6 as it has been explained, it furnishes no rule of interpretation and also offers no parallel for one. *The expression was taken into the textbooks of hermeneutics because of an erroneous interpretation.*"³⁹

A further look at the historical development of the use of this and related terms seems to indicate that Koehler's frank assessment is not so farfetched, nor is he alone in supporting it. Walter Kaiser, Jr., after stating that Origen first employed the term [in a hermeneutical sense] in his *De principiis*, went on to say that he in doing so "*innocently borrowed [emphasis added] the words of Romans 12, 6 ('according to the analogy of faith')*" and that this phrase then later became one of the watchwords of the Reformation "which in practical usage often became confused with the hermeneutical rule that 'Scripture interprets Scripture'"⁴⁰ He further asserts that the analogy of faith was never intended by the Reformers to be an exegetical tool, "otherwise they would have exchanged Rome's *Glossa ordinaria* and *regula fidei* ('rule of faith') for a new one of their own!"⁴¹

What must we now say about an expression such as *the analogy of faith* as a hermeneutical principle even if its only occurrence in the New Testament does not support such use? It has certainly happened apart from the instance before us that words and phrases have down through the years taken on new freight or become almost synonymous with other words and expressions. If what is understood by this phrase is in accord with sound hermeneutical principles and is otherwise supported by Scripture in its self-interpreting mode, then its use in such circumstances can well be tolerated or even adopted.

We may well agree with Henri Blocher that the analogy of faith as it is commonly now understood and used among us rests on the ground of *biblical coherence*,⁴² for the words of that book are the words of God, who cannot deny Himself. But sooner or later it will become evident that in any conflict both parties must understand the terms alike for true agreement to result. J. P. Koehler in the article referred to above cites the historical situation of the early years in this century when the Iowa and Ohio Synods on the one

- hand, and the Synodical Conference on the other, could not fully
- agree on their understanding of the term *analogy of faith*. The two theses formulated individually by the two opposing parties at an intersynodical conference at Detroit in 1904⁴³ really reveal the disharmony.

The thesis of the Iowa and Ohio delegation reads: "The Iowa and Ohio Synods maintain that the Christian doctrines form a harmonious whole or system recognizable by the believer, especially by the theologian. This system is taken from, and composed of, the wholly clear passages of Holy Writ. *This organic whole as the highest norm for the interpretation of Scripture carried (sic) even greater weight than the parallelism or the comparison of the passages which treat of the same doctrine*; in other words, it forms the analogy of faith."

The thesis of the Synodical Conference group responds: "The Synodical Conference and the Norwegian Synod⁴⁴ understand under the analogy or rule of faith the clear Scriptures themselves, i.e., the sum of the doctrines which result from, and are composed of, the passages which treat of the individual doctrines. *Moreover, these church bodies maintain that only so much is to be stated concerning the connection of individual doctrines with one another as Scripture itself reveals.*"⁴⁵

The portions of the statements above which are emphasized indicate quite clearly where the difference lay between the two groups' understanding of the analogy of faith as a hermeneutical principle. On the one hand, the position generally espoused by the members of the Ev. Luth. Synodical Conference of North America—and espoused by us today—is that the clear wording of a doctrinal passage is determined by the clear passages which speak of and to that doctrine.

On the other hand the opponents in reality denied this understanding by insisting on the addition of a theoretical consideration, namely, whether there is then a fully recognizable agreement between this meaning and *other* doctrines. If there is not, then there must be a corresponding modification or change in the doctrine under consideration. The meaning resulting from this manner of dealing with it provides the clear wording. They asserted that the principle

of *the whole of Scripture* (die Schriftganze) takes precedence over parallel passages in finally determining a doctrine. This understanding of the analogy of faith tends to lead one away from concern about what the clear passages say about a specific doctrine.

Fred Meuser in his analysis of what resulted in these meetings in the early 1900s referred to above recognizes that the parties to this debate were wrestling with age-old questions like that of “*Cur alii prae aliis?*” and whether a man’s response to God’s grace has anything to do with his conversion. He rightly reports that, when faced with the seeming discrepancies arising between the doctrines of universal grace and limited election, the Synodical Conference people said that both doctrines must be affirmed without attempting any harmonization, while Joint Ohio and Iowa said that “the passages whose meaning is difficult must not be allowed in any way to becloud the clear central teachings of Scripture.”⁴⁶

If the analogy of faith is to remain as a principle in hermeneutics, it should not be as an illegitimate and ill advised intruder that overrides all the time-honored principles from the Reformation down, but as a fellow servant that finds itself responsive to the task of truly honoring and rightly dividing the Word of Truth.

End Notes

- ¹ A one-time occurring expression. A cognate, ἀναλογίζομαι, to think over, ponder, consider, occurs in Hebrews 12, 3 with the accusative of person: “Consider (ἀναλογίσασθε) him who endured such contradiction from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.”
- ² The faith by which [one believes] or the faith which [is believed].
- ³ Of the seventeen occurrences of this word in the New Testament, sixteen are found in the writings of the Apostle Paul.
- ⁴ Quoted in Morris, p. 432.
- ⁵ Page 326. He also notes Sandy and Headlam’s reference to Hellenistic usage of the plural for abstract nouns.
- ⁶ Leenhardt, quoted in Morris, p. 433. Geo. Stoeckhardt refers to the body as “the organ of all life’s moral activity.” He then goes on to say that in referring only to the body at this point, the apostle, having already given sufficient instruction regarding “the inner side of Christian life,” wants to discuss how the Christian as a renewed being applies his inner change to his outward conduct and life.

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- 7 Newman and Nida note here that “the phrase living sacrifice involves a contradiction in terms, since a sacrifice is something which is put to death,” but such a paradox is readily understood in the Christian context. M. Franzmann states it somewhat differently: “With the hallowed term ‘sacrifice’ Paul marks the *continuity* of the new worship with the old worship under the Law; with another modifier ‘living’ he marks the *discontinuity*, the newness of the new worship. The worshiper no longer gives to God the life of another creature; he gives God his living self... Since bodies are visible, all worship becomes a witness and a proclamation, a lived doxology to God.” p. 217 (Emphasis added)
- 8 Suggested by Newman and Nida, page 234.
- 9 Other translations: “the worship offered by mind and heart” (NEB), “your rational worship” (Goodspeed), “your spiritual worship” (NAB), “your spiritual act of worship” (NIV), “and so worship Him as thinking beings” (AAT).
- 10 The synonymity is greater when also σχηματίζω is compounded with the preposition μετά to form μετασχηματίζω. H. A. W. Meyer adds that “the two verbs [here in this verse] stand in contrast only through the prepositions.” p. 468.
- 11 See pages 606-607, where the fourth disclaimer reads: “In Greek outside the NT. while it is certainly possible to discern differences of meaning between μορφή and its cognates and compounds on the one hand and σχῆμα and its cognates and compounds on the other, there are too many examples of their being apparently treated as simply synonymous for it to be justifiable to assume that a distinction is intended *unless the context gives support to the assumption* [emphasis added].” It would seem that the context here sufficiently argues for the significant distinction.
- 12 Page 608.
- 13 The verb form is middle/passive, with the former appearing to be the choice here, and the following dative then controlled by the prefix σύν.
- 14 Concerning this phrase Parry comments: “The phrase always implies contrast to ὁ αἰῶν ὁ μέλλον, even when the latter is not expressed.” Quoted in Morris, p. 435.
- 15 The noun, as well as the verb ἀνακαινός, is found only in Paul’s writings; ἀνακαινίζω occurs in Hebrews 6, 6 [Pauline?] πάλιν ἀνακαινίσειν εἰς ματάνοιαν.
- 16 In the N.T. use of the adjective εὐάρεστον and its related words the reference is always to God or Christ, with the likely exception of its appearance in Titus 2, 9. The single article with the three modifiers indicates their unified meaning.
- 17 Stoeckhardt, G.: “What God desires of us, He has revealed to us in His Word, in His law. But the application of the law to concrete relations

demands conscientious examination, sharpened and ready minds, a mind that is accustomed to God and divine things. The result of the constant renewing and testing is then that a Christian does what he recognizes to be good and pleasing to God...the will of God.” (Translation in mimeographed form II, 168)

¹⁸ Pages 610-11.

¹⁹ The dative ἐκάστῳ is by attraction to the previous παντὶ τῷ ὄντι.

²⁰ Page 170.

²¹ Compare Sanday and Headlam, p. 355.

²² Cf. Romans 1, 5; 15, 15 (λειτουργός), Gal. 1, 1; Col. 1, 1; I Thess. 2, 4 *et. al.* (ἀπόστολος).

²³ That diversity of χαρίσματα does not of itself militate against the unity the Apostle Paul makes clear in other contexts such as that of I Cor. 7, 7, where he speaks of his gift of bachelorhood.

²⁴ Apodosis understood here in the sense of an independent clause that completes a dependent clause or protasis.

²⁵ Cf. I Peter 4, 11: εἴ τις λαλεῖ, ὡς λόγια θεοῦ (Sc. λαλείτω, 3 s. pres. imv.)

²⁶ ICC, Vol. 11, Cranfield, p. 618.

²⁷ Exodus 7, 1: “And the Lord said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh; and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.”

²⁸ Cf. Matt. 10, 14; 13, 57; Luke 4, 24; 7, 26-29; John 4, 19. Paul used the term προφήτης even for a Cretan poet when he quoted Menander in Titus 1, 12.

²⁹ The single article with both designations points to their being one class: τοῖς ἀγίοις ἀποστόλοις αὐτοῦ καὶ προφήταις.

³⁰ Stoeckhardt, G., p. 172. He adds concerning this charism: “Prophecy is the only extraordinary charism which is mentioned in this letter. The Roman congregation evidently was not as richly endowed with extraordinary gifts as was the Corinthian congregation, for example. These extraordinary gifts seem to have been discontinued in later apostolic times, since the Christian congregations became more and more accustomed to the regular preaching of the Word by called pastors and teachers as the principal means of edification.” p. 173

³¹ p. 620.

³² F. Godet opines that “the term χάρισμα, *gift*, denotes in the language of Paul a spiritual aptitude communicated to the believer with faith, and by which he can aid in the development of spiritual life in the church. Most frequently it is a natural talent which God’s Spirit appropriates, increasing its power and sanctifying its exercise.” p. 430.

³³ Louw and Nida in Greek-English Lexicon, Vol. I, 89.10, list the word in

- the domain of *Relations*, subdomain E, Relations Involving Correspondences, where they assign to the word the meaning “a relation of proportion” and understandably cite Romans 12, 6 for which they offer the translation: “if prophecy, then in accordance with the proportion of faith.” They also allow the meaning of “in agreement with,” then add: “but this meaning likewise involves a higher degree of isomorphic relationship.” [Not insignificantly, perhaps, the first word listed in the above noted domain is κατά, the very preposition here employed with ἀναλογία.]
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- ³⁴ Among Synodical Conference Lutherans see especially J. P. Koehler and George Stoeckhardt.
- ³⁵ Page 173.
- ³⁶ Page 237
- ³⁷ First person plural hortatory subjunctive of προφετεύω and third person singular imperative of εἰμί, respectively.
- ³⁸ See article on *Analogy of Faith* by J. P. Koehler originally appearing in the 1904 *Quartalschrift* and later in translation in *Faith-Life*, Vol. LXII, No. 6. Quotation above from page 24 of the latter.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 25.
- ⁴⁰ “Evangelical Hermeneutics...,” CTQ Vo. 46, Nos. 2-3, Apr-Jul 1982, p. 172.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp 172-173.
- ⁴² “The ‘Analogy of Faith’ in the Study of Scripture,” *The Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology*, Vol. 5, 1987, p. 17.
- ⁴³ Cf. Nelson, *The Lutherans in North America*, p. 378.
- ⁴⁴ To explain the separate mention of the synodical forebear of the ELS in this context: The Norwegian Synod had withdrawn its membership from the Synodical Conference during the Election Controversy of the 1890s and did not officially rejoin this conference until after the reorganization of said synod by the minority in 1918; nevertheless, even during this hiatus, fellowship was acknowledged and practiced.
- ⁴⁵ Koehler, *op. cit.*, p. 25.
- ⁴⁶ Cf. Nelson, *op. cit.*, *ibid.* In a footnote Meuser adds: “Ohio’s and Iowa’s view was called ‘analogy of faith,’ Missouri’s was called ‘analogy of Scripture.’”

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A History of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod 1935 to 1950

Theodore Gullixson

The years 1935 to 1950 marked a period of transition for the Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church (presently the Evangelical Lutheran Synod). The Synod dealt with many transitions both in the religious and the political arenas. There was the major transition from the Norwegian language to English. Other transitions involved the managing and growing of Bethany, integrating the second generation of synod pastors, dealing with changes in the Synodical Conference, developing opportunities in mission work, moving into a new world after a depression and war, and beginning a new seminary program.

Transition in Demographics

In 1935, the Norwegian Synod had 7,917 baptized members and 29 pastors. By 1950, there were 9,783 members and 38 pastors. During this period the following served as Synod Presidents: N. A. Madson, 1934; C. A. Moldstad, 1935; H. Ingebritson, 1936-1941; N. A. Madson, 1942-1945; A. M. Harstad, 1946-1949; C. M. Gullerud, 1950-. Twenty-nine pastors and thirty-seven lay delegates attended the 1937 synod convention. By 1950 thirty-eight pastors and fifty-three delegates attended the convention.

Transition at Bethany

Bethany Lutheran College received many blessings from God during these years. In 1935 Bethany had 22 college students and 36 in the high school. Twenty-five years later there were 126 in college, 133 in high school, and 9 in the seminary. Much of this increase was due to the reputation and hard work of Professor S. C. Ylvisaker, to the talented teachers he was able to draw to the school, and to the

- willingness of Synodical Conference parents to support the school
- even during the depression and the war.

In the early years since acquiring the Bethany campus, the College President resided in the dorms. In 1935 the Synod resolved to build a house for the President for about \$6,000. In 1938 Bethany Lutheran College was accredited by the University of Minnesota. This step was not taken lightly due to fears that accreditation would interfere with and influence Biblical teaching at Bethany.

In 1942 C. A. Moldstad was appointed custodian of the Synod Memorial Library and the Board of Publications asked Bethany Lutheran College to operate the Lutheran Synod Book Company. Mrs. Hazel Grandeland of Calmar, Iowa donated a copy of Thorwaldsen's statue of Christ to the College in 1943. Prof. B. W. Teigen was elected in 1950 to be President of Bethany for one year in order to seek further names for nomination. S. C. Ylvisaker stayed on at Bethany two more years as an instructor in the seminary.

Transition in Pastors

The Synod also saw a transition of pastors during the period under review. By 1935, most of the original 17 pastors who formed the synod had died or were retired. Their Biblical reasons for forming a new synod were also personal, for they confessed the truth and bore persecution for it. The next generation of pastors needed to have the same doctrinal concerns which motivated those making the original stand in 1917. In his 1935 President's Report, Henry Ingebritson stated:

Our young people must be given the history of our Synod so that they will understand and appreciate God's purpose with us. The temptations to worldliness, indifference to doctrine, and church unionism are greater than ever.

Transition in Language

The transition to using the English language was a gradual one. In the early years, Norwegian was the dominant language in the Synod Reports. From 1935 to 1938, only one of the Convention essays each year was delivered in Norwegian. The 1937 Synod Report

stated, "Each session was opened with devotional exercises, either in English or Norwegian, although English is now becoming *the* language of our conventions." During 1935, 734 services were conducted in Norwegian, while there were 1,747 English services. But by 1950 the number of Norwegian services had dwindled to 50.

Transition in Periodicals

All during the period under review, the synod published both the "Luthersk Tidende" and the "Lutheran Sentinel" as bimonthly magazines. The "Folke-kalendar" was published annually and was generally sold out each year. By 1950, the synod resolved to publish the "Tidende" as a monthly magazine of eight pages. The year before it was reported that only 83 orders for the "Folke-kalendar" were received and the Publications Committee decided to discontinue publishing it.

Rev. J. E. Thoen became editor of both the "Tidende" and the "Sentinel" in 1930, with Rev. Sophus Lee serving as the Business Manager. Rev. John Hendricks edited the "Folke-kalendar" for many years. When Rev. Thoen resigned as editor in 1939, Rev. Christian Moldstad became editor of the "Sentinel" and Rev. Adolph Harstad worked as editor of the "Tidende." In 1949, Rev. Erling Ylvisaker was elected as editor of the "Sentinel" and Rev. George Lillegard worked on the "Tidende" until it ceased publication in 1953.

In 1950 the Publication Board reported that the John Anderson Publishing Company, which had printed the "Sentinel" and "Tidende" for thirty years, had been sold. The delegates resolved to use Graphic Publishing Company in Lake Mills, Iowa as the new publisher.

Transition in Mission Efforts

The synod experienced a transition in its mission efforts between 1935 and 1950. In the synod's early years, the available graduates were used to keep congregations supplied with pastors. Mission work was done by adding members to existing small congregations. According to Pres. Theodore Aaberg, this work was "in some respects, the most glorious chapter in the fifty-year history of Home

- Mission work in the ELS.” (Aaberg, 87) But even in 1935 the Mission
- Committee reported that nine pastors were serving fifteen mission stations having 1,200 souls.

After World War Two, a greater supply of pastoral candidates enabled the synod to begin missions in Pinehurst Lutheran in Eau Claire, WI (1939); Redeemer in New Hampton, IA, (1940); Bethel in Sioux Falls, SD (1941); Eagle Lake (1943); Calvary in Eau Claire, WI (1945); Lakewood in Tacoma, WA (1946); and Hiawatha in Minneapolis, MN (1949). H. A. Theiste was elected as field secretary for home missions in 1945 after the office was established at the 1944 convention. By 1948, the synod had ten home missionaries serving nineteen congregations.

Foreign mission work made progress through 1935-1950. Many Old Norwegian Synod individuals who worked with Missouri-Synod missions had returned home by 1935: George Lillegard served in China from 1921-1927; Prof. C. Faye returned from Zuzuland in 1922; and Henry Tjernagel had served the Eskimos from 1918-1923. Miss Anena Christensen was commissioned at Fairview in Minneapolis in 1926 to work in Ambur, India until she retired in Mankato in 1939.

Interest in foreign mission work remained high in the Synod even if they were not able to begin work of their own. When the Nigerian mission field was established early in 1936 under Dr. Nau, the Synod received reports about the progress made there. L. A. Wisler, Executive Secretary for the Synodical Conference Mission Board, stated:

Your Board is following the principle to make the African Church a self-propagating church, that is, we support the missionaries we send out, while the church in Africa supports the native workers whom we train and is also responsible for buildings (church and school) as heretofore.

God blessed the efforts in Nigeria so that by 1949 there were 140 churches; 19,576 baptized members; 6,304 communicants; 109 schools, with 8,851 pupils.

The Norwegian Synod was able to send out its own missionaries through the Synodical Conference in the late 1940's. Rev. Paul

Anderson went to Nigeria in 1946 and Rev. Gerhart Becker in 1953. In 1950, the synod began its own mission in Cornwall, England and called Pastor Joseph Petersen to serve there.

From the beginning, regular lengthy reports on the work of "Colored Missions" in America were heard at the Synod Conventions. Missionary Nils Bakke of the old Norwegian Synod had begun work among the blacks in New Orleans in 1880 until he died in 1927 as a member of the Synodical Conference. The year 1937 marked the sixtieth year of mission work to the colored. The Convention delegates heard that 98 had enrolled at Immanuel College, Greensboro, NC and 27 were attending Alabama Academy at Selma, AL. In 1938, there were 70 congregations; seven preaching stations; 10,000 souls and 5,107 communicants. By 1946 the number had increased to 12, 070 baptized members and 7,097 communicants; 82 congregations; 43 schools; 5,056 Christian Day School students; and 2,640 Sunday School pupils.

In 1949, the Norwegian Synod supported St. Philips, a colored mission congregation in Minneapolis under Rev. Julian Anderson.

Transition in the Synodical Conference

The Chinese "Term Question" became a burning issue which took up much time at Synod Conventions and Pastoral Conference during these years. The Missouri Board for Foreign Missions supported the use of "Shang-di" for 'God' in their Chinese translations. Some Missouri Synod missionaries, Missionary Lillegard, Dr. S.C. Ylvisaker declared it was wrong to "use the proper name of a heathen idol to designate the true God..." They insisted on the word "Shen." "The 'Term Question' was the first serious disagreement to intrude upon the Jonathan-David-like friendship of the Missouri-Norwegian fellowship" (Aaberg, 84).

Winds of change affected the relationship between the Norwegian Synod and Missouri Synod on another front. Indeed, the whole religious history of this period is dominated by the issue of unionism. One might have expected that the Norwegian church leaders would have peace after bearing the heat of leaving the old synod and building up the new. But by their earlier experiences, these pas-

- tors and lay people were well qualified to deal with the doctrinal and practical issues of unionism that arose.

In 1932 the Missouri Synod had adopted "The Brief Statement" which still stands as an important and truthful confession of Biblical doctrine, a document which all the Synodical Conference members embraced as their own.

In January, 1935, letters from the United Lutheran Church in America (ULCA) [formed in 1918] and the American Lutheran Church (ALC) [formed in 1930] were sent to the Synodical Conference members inviting them to meet in committee to discuss unity of doctrine. Unfortunately, the Missouri Synod accepted the invitation on the basis of 1 Peter 3:15—"be ready to give an answer to the hope that is in you." The leadership of Missouri thought that committee negotiations could achieve true unity of doctrine.

Based on the experience of the union committees of the old Norwegian Synod, the ELS officials, together with those in the Wisconsin Synod, declined the invitations. As the Sentinel editor, Rev. Jacob Thoen, pointed out in January, 1935: "They know already what the reason for our hope is. We have told them long ago and recently, and they have not regarded it as a good reason nor sufficient. They insist we must add something, like they do."

The essay at the 1936 Convention was entitled "Unity, Union, and Unionism," edited by H. M. Tjernagel. This essay was later reprinted and sent to every Missouri Synod pastor and professor. During other years the Convention essays dealt with the unionism issues: "The Clearness of Scripture" by S. C. Ylvisaker (1938), "The Question of Non-fundamentals in the Light of Scripture" by S. C. Ylvisaker (1940), "What does Scripture teach concerning a Right Attitude toward Erring Churches?" by J. E. Thoen (1941), "Christian Prayer" by N. S. Tjernagel (1942), "The Sacredness of the Ancient Landmarks" by G. Lillegard (1954), "What Stands Between?" by J. A. O. Preus (1948), "Cooperation in Externals" by G. Lillegard (1949), and "The Church in the World" by D. Pfeiffer (1950).

Missouri Synod's Committee on Lutheran Church Union met with the ALC Commission six times during the years 1935 to 1938. The ALC published a "Declaration" which, in effect, changed the

wording of Missouri's "Brief Statement" on the subjects of Scripture, Salvation, the Church, the Public Ministry, Sunday, and on Last Things. At both 1938 conventions, the Missouri Synod approved of the efforts of its union committee and the ALC delegates at Sandusky endorsed the Brief Statement "viewed in the light of our Declaration." However the ALC was not willing to give up membership in the American Lutheran Conference, formed in 1930 by the ALC, ELC, Augustana Synod, the UELC (Danish), and the Lutheran Free Church.

1938 was also the centennial of the Saxon immigration to America. Rev. Justin A. Petersen delivered an essay on "Our Debt, Under God, to Our Brethren of the Missouri Synod" at the ELS Convention that year. While he praised God for the help Missouri had given, he opposed what was in error.

The General Pastoral Conference in July, 1938, advised the synod President to appoint a committee to study the union movement. The Committee reported that the documents could not be regarded "as a correct and adequate basis 'for future church fellowship'" (Aaberg, 145). Letters and meetings of various kinds with Missouri leadership produced few encouraging results. At its Fort Wayne 1941 Convention the Missouri Synod resolved to continue negotiations with the ALC with specific instructions to deal with doctrinal unity first. The Norwegian synod printed a special edition of the "Sentinel" entitled "In the Interest of the Truth" (August 27, 1943) to show why it still opposed the union efforts in spite of the good resolutions that came from the 1941 Missouri Convention.

In 1942 the ALC called for entering into full fellowship with the Missouri Synod. At its 1944 Convention the Missouri Synod resolved to continue negotiations and also shifted its stand on prayer-fellowship to include joint prayer at intersynodical conferences.

In a 1945 "Sentinel" article entitled "The Great Divide" George Lillegard stated:

...the principle drawn from the Bible that it is wrong to give recognition to any teaching contrary to God's Word or to fraternize in church work and worship with those who uphold such teachings. Historically, only those churches

- which have maintained this principle have remained truly
- Lutheran. [Aaberg, 150]

Then in 1945 a group of forty-four Missourians signed "A Statement" which showed that they had been won over to the false position of the ALC on prayer fellowship. Instead of disciplining the signers, they were allowed to withdraw their statement without retracting it. This incident marked the end of doctrinal unity in the Missouri Synod.

In 1946 the Missouri Synod produced the "Doctrinal Affirmation" as a basis for unity with the ALC. Both the other Synodical Conference members and the ALC criticized it, but for opposite reasons. The Norwegian synod rejoiced at the 1947 Missouri resolutions reaffirming the Brief Statement, but noted that the failure to exercise doctrinal discipline remained an issue that must be dealt with for further unity in the Synodical Conference.

In 1950 the "Common Confession" was produced by Missouri and the ALC Commissions. Both synods, at their conventions, adopted the document as a doctrinal agreement that settled the disputes between them. After studying it at a special General Pastoral Conference, the Norwegian Synod declared that the "Common Confession" did nothing to clarify any of the disputed issues. A 1951 resolution to the Missouri Synod stated in part: "Be it resolved that we cannot give our consent to the Common Confession as a settlement of doctrinal differences between the Synodical Conference and the American Lutheran Church... [because] the Common Confession does not reject the errors of the American Lutheran Church. We therefore earnestly entreat our sister synod, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, to reconsider its adoption of the Common Confession... [and] ...to discontinue negotiations with the American Lutheran Church except on the basis of a full acceptance of the 'Brief Statement.' (Titus 3:10.)" The Wisconsin Synod and many Missouri Synod pastors also protested the adoption of the "Common Confession," but no change in policy was made.

Even though formal unionistic fellowship between a new ALC and the Missouri Synod did not occur until 1969, the union efforts poisoned the clear doctrinal position of the synodical Conference and led to its demise in the 1960's.

By 1950 the constituent synods had to deal with a whole series of issues on which they were divided: the Chinese Term Question, the Boy Scouts Question, Church and Ministry, the Chaplaincy Question, Unionism, and Prayer Fellowship. They also tried to resolve questions with unionistic practices in the area of "Cooperation in Externals," which was the title of an essay at the 1949 Synod Convention. Humanly speaking, if any church body had historical reasons to remain orthodox and confessional, it was the synod of Walther and Pieper. Yet the new learning from Germany, the momentum for union of churches and of the nation in the war effort, and the failure to discipline those who taught error brought a sickening heterodoxy upon this once confessional church body.

The Norwegian Synod pastors had many human reasons to maintain close ties with the Missouri Synod. They used Missouri's seminaries, received the Lutheran Witness, listened to the Lutheran Hour, read the Portals of Prayer, sang from a common hymnal, memorized its catechism, and taught its instructional materials in their congregations. Yet, when the truth had been compromised, they did not fail to testify and warn against it, and, in the end, separate themselves from those whom they had regarded as brothers for many years.

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod did not become a heterodox church body because so many in it denied the inspiration of Scripture (as many in Missouri do today), but because they changed their clear Scripture teaching on church fellowship. The problems that the Missouri Synod is dealing with today are a direct result of that first departure from Scripture and due to allowing the ALC definition of fellowship and Scripture to gain a foothold in its midst through the union committee discussions. For some, union became more important than doctrine.

Think of how many church bodies and once faithful pastors have succumbed to the winds of unionism, and have continued down the path toward apostasy. It behooves those of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference to keep unionism and the fellowship issue in front of its members lest Satan creep in by the back door

- through ignorance and indifference when they have shut the front
- door by severing ties with erring church bodies.

Transition in the Nation

During all these controversies and doctrinal battles, the United States and its citizens were recovering from a depression and dealing with enemies, death, and rationing during World War Two. These two events uprooted whole communities and families from their physical and spiritual moorings. During the war, the Norwegian Synod established an Army-Navy Commission to keep track of the synod men and to forward their names and addresses to the Missouri Synod Commission.

In 1941, 66 “boys” were mailed a Sentinel and a devotion book. The next year the number climbed to 225 and the Synod sent Missouri \$400 to cover mailing costs. July 5, 1943 was designated as Service Man’s Sunday and offerings were collected synod-wide for the work of sending material to the troops. By 1943 there were 591 men on file, and 1,140 names in 1946. At the end of the war a total of 36 men had died. The synod publications got a boost from the many subscriptions that were sent to the troops.

The war was mentioned in several addresses by Synod Presidents. N. A. Madson said in 1942:

We shall have more vexing problems to contend with in years to come. We are not, first of all, concerned about victory over earthly enemies. Our concern is, above all, about victory over the prowling enemies of our immortal souls. Indifference to God’s holy word and its twin brother unionism made deep inroads into the Lutheran Church of our country during the first World War. The Lord only knows what this present war will bring.

And in 1945 President Madson said:

Ours is still a war-torn world. And while we thank our heavenly Father for the victory which has been vouchsafed us on the continent of Europe, let us not be lulled into a false security. ... Let us not indulge in any millennialistic dreams.

The Church of Christ will remain a kingdom of the cross
until time ceases to exist...

Transition to a Seminary

The war also impacted plans to begin a seminary. The Norwegian Synod had talked about plans for beginning its own seminary training, especially as the unionism issue with the Missouri Synod grew. (In 1945 the synod directed its theological students to attend the seminary in Thiensville, Wisconsin.) It was felt that the Norwegian language, culture, and understanding about the people being served required the Norwegian Synod to start their own seminary.

The 1942 Convention resolved to begin the last year of seminary in the fall. And in 1944 a tentative curriculum was worked out and a special fund was established for seminary operating expenses. The war prevented those plans from being carried out. The Selective Service Board declared that no exemptions from military service would be given to those seminaries started after Sept. 16, 1939. The impasse was settled by the ending of World War Two.

Since several years had been spent making plans for a seminary, when the 1946 Convention authorized the starting of a seminary, it was able to begin in the fall. The Convention delegates directed the Board of Regents to call Pastor Norman A. Madson as Dean of the Seminary. The Seminary students were to be charged no tuition, but they would pay for room and board. \$250.00 was budgeted for building up a theological library.

On September 24, 1946 the seminary opened with an impressive installation service. Along with Dean Madson, S. C. Ylvisaker, Alfred Fremder, Martin Galstad, B. W. Teigen, and Paul Zimmerman were installed as teachers. The student body consisted of LeVine Hagen, Iver Johnson, Leigh Jordahl, Reuben Stock, and Robert Preus (who came at the semester break).

Transition in Synod Matters

The Norwegian Synod also dealt with administrative changes as it grew in numbers. In 1938 the fiscal year was changed from June,

- 31st to January 31st. The Board for Charities and Support was formed
- in 1939 uniting two separate boards. The synod delegates resolved in 1949 to elect the circuit Visitor and Alternate Visitor for four year terms. At the same convention a Planning Board was established. Rates were set for Board meeting expense reimbursements, such as \$.25 for breakfast, \$.40 for lunch, and \$.60 for dinner. The rate for travel by automobile was set at \$.02 per mile.

Before the Norwegian Synod had purchased Bethany Lutheran College, Synod Conventions were held in various congregations of the Synod. During 1935 to 1950 all but four conventions met at Bethany College. The 1937 convention met at Our Savior Lutheran Church in Madison, Wisconsin with A. M. Harstad as pastor to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the reorganization of the Norwegian Synod. Fairview Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota under Rev. Hans A. Theiste hosted the 1940 Convention. The twenty-fifth convention in 1944 met at First Shell Rock Ev. Lutheran Church, Northwood, Iowa where Rev. Martin Galstad was pastor. To celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of the founding of the old Norwegian Synod, the convention assembled at Western Koshkonong Church with Rev. George Gullixson as host pastor.

The synod adopted rules of procedure where cases are appealed to the Synod in 1936. The rules were necessitated by cases at Parkland and Mayville. The Synod demonstrated their evangelical nature with these rules "...since there is, perhaps, nothing more difficult than to render an entirely unprejudiced opinion in such matters.”:

“Time and expense should not be spared where it is a question of saving a congregation from dissension and ruin or a pastor for the blessed work of preaching the Gospel.”

“In matters of doctrine and principle, in which the Word of God alone can be our authority, neither the acts of the Synod nor those of its officers and Committees have any binding power upon the conscience of man, except as they agree with that authority.” (SR 1936, page 61).

The first Synod-wide youth convention met in October, 1939 at the Bethany Lutheran College campus. The Synod resolved to elect a standing board for youth work in 1948. This resulted in starting and annual youth camp for eighth grade youth and older starting in 1951.

Nor were the elderly neglected by the synod. The Synod made many plans to establish an old people's home. In 1945 the synod purchased a house in Northwood, IA, but nothing came of this. The next year land in Mankato was purchased for a future site and architect drawings were made, but it seems that construction costs were too high. Then in 1948 a house was bought in Mankato. However it was too small and it was sold soon afterwards. In 1952 the synod purchased a house in Kasota Valley which it operated for many years.

During this part of Synod history, in 1943 the Norwegian Synod celebrated its 25th anniversary since reorganizing and the 90th anniversary of the old Norwegian Synod. Plans for this event got under way in 1938 when a Jubilee Committee of five was elected and it was resolved to raise a "memorial fund to retire the debt of the Synod." In 1940 the synod resolved to publish a commemorative, popular history of the Norwegian Synod ("Grace for Grace"), and it elected Dr. S. C. Ylvisaker as editor-in-chief of this book with Rev. Christian Anderson as editor of the historical section and Rev. George Lillegard as editor of the section on doctrinal differences.

Two morning services were conducted on Jubilee Synod-Sunday, May 30th, 1943. Rev. J. A. Moldstad preached at the Norwegian service at Bethany and Rev. Erling Ylvisaker gave the address in the English service. President Norman A. Madson delivered the Festival address at the afternoon service. A total of \$2,240.00 was given at these services, the largest offering to that date. The Jubilee Thankoffering total grew to \$45,000 by the end of the Convention. The synod debt was approximately \$80,000 in 1942, so this offering was an important step in meeting the obligations of the synod.

• **Conclusion**

• The Twentieth Century saw a world filled with dramatic changes in its political, cultural, economic, philosophical, and religious life. The world view of many became increasingly centered on man, on denying the Scriptures as truthful, and on doing what was right in their own eyes. Though communistic and totalitarian governments have arisen and disappeared in this century, yet there remains the totalitarianism of the liberal theologians and preachers who demand that all bow before the 'superior learning' of the scholar and unite under the consensus of world morality. Many people left their confessional understanding of the Scripture for a lentil soup of ideas that accommodated a world of evolution (Darwin), relativism (Einstein), secular humanism (Thomas Dewey), and religious unionism through the preaching of the "fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man." Though they may seek after spiritual food, they will find only a famine of the Word of God and no sure hope for the future.

In the face of such radical changes, it is significant that faithful pastors and laymen in the Norwegian Synod, the Wisconsin Synod, and a remnant in the Missouri Synod could make many transitions which adapted to new conditions and still hold fast to the truth. This was only due to the grace of God working through His holy Word. To God alone be the glory.

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• **Sanctification in the Lutheran Confessions**

Lyle W. Lange

(All quotations from the Confessions are indicated by script. Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations are from the Tappert edition of the **Book of Concord**.)

How does one go about writing an essay on sanctification in the Lutheran Confessions? The first thought may be to grab a concordance to the Confessions and look up all the references that deal with sanctification. Then proceed to write the essay. There are two major problems, however, with that approach. One is, a person may tend to read passages in an atomistic way, apart from their context and the continuity of the Confessions. The other is, one may tend to deal with sanctification as an entity unto itself, something the Confessions do not do.

There is only one way to find out what the Confessions teach on sanctification, and that is to read them. A reading of the Confessions reveals they treat sanctification in a very close connection with justification. In fact, you will not find such a treatment in any other Christian denomination. Not only do the Confessions treat justification in a way that is unique among Christian denominations, their treatment of sanctification is unique as well. All other Christian denominations treat sanctification as an entity approached apart from justification, making the law the driving force in their teaching on sanctification. The Lutheran Confessions treat sanctification in the context of the life-giving power of justification by grace alone through faith in Jesus Christ.

We owe a great deal to the writers of our Confessions. They have bequeathed to us an heritage concerning sanctification which is biblical, pastoral, and practical, an heritage based on the proper use of Law and gospel, an heritage of sanctification flowing from justification by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. It is an heritage we pray God preserves among us, for the purveyors of Reformed

theology are vigorously hawking their brand of sanctification to us through print and media. We need to recognize their wares for what they are: spiritual junk food, at best, and poison for the soul, at worst. We may be tempted to listen to their siren call because we are disappointed by the lack of sanctification we see in our churches or our own lives. However, let us get our bearings again by a careful study of the heritage which has come down to us through the Lutheran Reformation. May our study of sanctification, as revealed in Scripture and reflected in the Lutheran Confessions, encourage us to go about our ministry with the confidence that God will produce a harvest of the fruits of faith, as he works through Word and Sacrament.

Sanctification in The Lutheran Confessions

To begin with, we need to define terms. Sanctification is used in both a wide sense and a narrow sense in Scripture. Sanctification in the wide sense refers to everything God does for the sinner's salvation, including conversion, justification by grace through faith, and preservation in the faith (2 Th. 2:13, Ac 26:18, Eph. 5:26). Luther also speaks of sanctification in the wide sense when he writes, "*Just as the Son obtains dominion by purchasing us through his birth, death, and resurrection, etc., so the Holy Spirit effects our sanctification through the following: the communion of saints or Christian church, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting... Therefore to sanctify is nothing else than to bring us to the Lord Christ to receive this blessing, which we could not obtain by ourselves*" (LC II, 37-39).

Sanctification in the narrow sense refers to the new life the believer lives through faith in Jesus Christ (Ro. 12:1-2; 1 Th. 4:7). This is the most common usage in Scripture, and this is the sense in which we will be using the term for the rest of this essay. The Lutheran Confessions also have much to say about sanctification in the narrow sense.

Sanctification In The Lutheran Confessions

Before proceeding further, we need to define the role of the Lutheran Confessions in our approach to this paper. Scripture is the *norma*

- **normans**; the Lutheran Confessions are the **norma normata**. As
- the moon reflects the light of the sun, so the Confessions reflect the teaching of Scripture. The approach we take was stated well by Harold Wicke as he commented on a statement of Adolph Hoenecke: “We take the position that Scripture alone establishes what we are to teach. And that is true! Though we are Lutherans, Luther does not establish what we are or are not to teach. Nor do our Confessions establish doctrines or teachings where Scripture does not. Dr. Hoenecke in the first volume of the *Quartalschrift* states with reference to the Confessions: ‘When we bind ourselves to the Confessions of our church, we bind ourselves to all articles of faith contained therein, but not to all historical, archaeological, or literary remarks, not even to every exegesis, and just as little to a certain exegetical method employed, nor always to consider every passage as proof in the very way in which this is carried out in the Confessions’” (Vol. I, p. 113) (What is Doctrine According to Scripture And the Lutheran Confessions: **OGH** I, 73). The Confessions themselves state: “*The Word of God shall establish articles of faith and no one else, not even an angel*” (SA II, II, 15).

God is the Author of Sanctification

By nature, people are not disposed to obey God. We come into this world spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1) and the enemies of God (Ro. 8:7). The Confessions state, “*It is also taught among us that since the fall of Adam all men who are born according to the course of nature are conceived and born in sin. That is, all men are full of evil lust and inclinations from their mothers’ wombs and are unable by nature to have true fear of God and true faith in God*” (AC II, 1).

It is the work of God alone that we believe in Jesus as our Savior (Php. 1:29; Jn. 6:44). It is also the work of God alone that we lead sanctified lives. He gives us the will and the ability to carry out his will (Php. 2:12-13). He gets the credit for the good works which we do (Eph. 2:10). The Confessions state, “*When through faith the Holy Spirit is given, the heart is moved to do good works. Before that, when it is without the Holy Spirit, the heart is too weak. Moreover, it is in the power of the devil, who drives poor human beings in to*

many sins. We see this in the philosophers who undertook to lead honorable and blameless lives; they failed to accomplish this, and instead fell into many great and open sins. This is what happens when a man is without true faith and the Holy Spirit and governs himself by his own human strength alone” (AC XX, 29-34)

We cannot cooperate with God before or during conversion. We can, however, cooperate with him after our conversion. God gives us the will and the ability to follow his will. Paul urged the Corinthians, “As God’s fellow workers, we urge you not to receive God’s grace in vain” (2 Co 6:1). We certainly do not cooperate with God on an equal basis. We cooperate with God because he has enabled us to cooperate with him.

The Formula of Concord states, “*It follows that as soon as the Holy Spirit has initiated his work of regeneration and renewal in us through the Word and the holy sacraments, it is certain that we can and must cooperate by the power of the Holy Spirit, even though we still do so in great weakness. Such cooperation does not proceed from our carnal and natural powers, but from the new powers and gifts which the Holy Spirit has begun in us in conversion... This is to be understood in no other way than that the converted man does good, as much and as long as God rules him through his Holy Spirit, guides and leads him, but if God should withdraw his gracious hand man could not remain in obedience to God for one moment. But if this were to be understood as though the converted man cooperates alongside the Holy Spirit, the way two horses draw a wagon together, such a view could by no means be conceded without detriment to the divine truth” (SD II, 65-66).*

The Contrasts Between Justification And Sanctification

Before we consider the close connection between justification and sanctification, it will be useful to consider the contrasts Scripture and the Confessions draw between justification and sanctification.

1. Whereas justification involves a change in the sinner’s status before God, sanctification involves a change in the sinner’s heart and life in relation to God and his neighbor.

- Justification is forensic or declarative in nature. The sinner's native status before God is that he is an "object of wrath" (Eph. 2:3). Spiritually blind, dead, and an enemy of God, he stands before a holy and just God, accused, guilty and condemned. He justly deserves God's punishment. Amazingly, however, God loves sinners. He sent his Son to atone for sin. On the basis of Christ's redemptive work, God acquitted the world because he condemned his Son in our place (Ro. 3:9-26; 4:5; 5:6). The righteousness which he credited to our account is a *iustitia aliena*, a righteousness which comes to us from outside ourselves, from Christ (Ro. 3:28).

Concerning this the Formula of Concord states, "*Accordingly, the word 'justify' here means to declare righteous and free from sin and from the eternal punishment of these sins on account of the righteousness of Christ which God reckons to faith (Php. 3:9). And this is the usual usage and meaning of the word in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments*" (SD III, 17). The Apology to the Augsburg Confession also makes the same point, "*'To be justified' here does not mean that a wicked man is made righteous but that he is pronounced righteous in a forensic way*" (Ap IV, 252). Here the Confessions uphold the forensic nature of justification against the Roman (Ap IV) and Osiandrian (FC III) teachings that justification is an ethical process involving the inner transformation of the believer.

Sanctification, however, does involve a change in the sinner's nature. God transforms us so we desire to do his will. He gives us the ability to live for Christ. As Paul wrote, "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Co. 5:17). Quoting from Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, the Formula states, "*Faith is a divine work in us that transforms us and begets us anew from God, kills the Old Adam, makes us entirely different people in heart, spirit, mind, and all our powers, and brings the Holy Spirit with it*" (SD IV, 10).

2. Whereas justification excludes all human works, sanctification consists in the good works God enables the Christian to do.

St. Paul wrote, "We maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law" (Ro. 3:28). "Clearly no one is justified

before God by the Law, because ‘The righteous will live by faith’” (Ga. 3:12). “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast” (Eph. 2:10). “And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace” (Ro. 11:6). The message from Genesis to Revelation, from Habakkuk to Paul, is that grace and works are mutually exclusive. When we speak of God’s justification of the sinner, good works are excluded; only Christ’s redemptive work is included.

When Osiander attempted to introduce the “Christ in us” into justification, the Formula of Concord responded, *“Here, too, if the article of justification is to remain pure, we must give especially diligent heed that we do not mingle or insert that which precedes faith or follows faith into the article of justification, as if it were a necessary or component part of this article, since we cannot talk in one and the same way about conversion and about justification... The only essential and necessary elements of justification are the grace of God, the merit of Christ, and faith which accepts these in the promise of the gospel... The point is that good works are excluded from the article of justification so that in the treatment of the justification of poor sinners before God they should not be drawn, woven, or mingled in”* (SD III, 24-25, 36). *“Although renewal and sanctification are a blessing of Christ, the mediator, and a work of the Holy Spirit, it does not belong in the article or matter of justification before God; it rather follows justification”* (SD III, 28). *“That thereby there are excluded completely from this article of justification all our own works, merit”* (SD III, 37) *“...love and every other virtue or work”* (38) ... *“That neither renewal, sanctification, virtues, nor other good works are our righteousness before God, nor are they to be made and posited to be a part or cause of our justification”* (39).

George Major parroted statements of Melanchthon from his *Loci* from 1535, and claimed, *“Good works are necessary to salvation”* (SD IV, 1). The writers of the Formula in Article IV were careful to note that while it may be said that good works are necessary because God wills them (4ff), that they are natural fruits of faith (10-

- 12), good works do not preserve faith (30ff), and they certainly do
- not belong in the article of justification (22ff.).

Sanctification, however, does consist in the good works the believer does by faith. As the Augsburg Confession states, "*Such faith should produce good fruits and good works, and that we must do all such good works as God has commanded*" (AC VI, 1). Luther's explanation of the Ten Commandments in the Small and Large Catechisms, coupled with the Table of Duties, indicate the sanctified life consists in good works commanded by God.

3. Whereas justification is complete and perfect in Christ, the Christian's sanctified life in this world remains imperfect and incomplete.

Justification is objective in nature. It is complete in Christ. God forgave the world, whether anyone believes it or not (Ro. 3:3-4). Faith receives the benefit of justification. Faith does not complete justification. Over against the ongoing concept of justification taught by Osiander, the Formula states, "*(Christ's) obedience consists not only in this suffering and dying, but also in his spontaneous subjection to the law in our stead and his keeping of the law in so perfect a fashion that, reckoning it to us as righteousness, God forgave us our sins, accounts us as holy and righteous, and saves us forever on account of this entire obedience which, by doing and suffering, in life and in death, Christ rendered for us to his heavenly Father*" (SD III, 15).

On the other hand, sanctification remains incomplete in this life. Paul made that very clear in his treatment of the dual nature of the Christian in Romans 7. The Formula of Concord also states, "*When we teach that through the Holy Spirit's work we are reborn and justified, we do not mean that after regeneration no unrighteousness in essence and life adheres to those who have been justified and regenerated, but we hold that Christ with his perfect obedience covers all our sins which throughout this life still inhere in our nature*" (SD III, 22).

4. Whereas justification is universal, sanctification takes place only in believers

Christ died for the sins of all people (Jn. 1:29; 3:16; 2 Co. 5:19-21; 1 Jn 2:2). God justified the world for Christ's sake (Ro. 5:12-19). Even unbelievers had their sins forgiven (2 Pe. 2:1). As the Apology states, *"Therefore men cannot keep the law by their own strength, and they are all under sin and subject to eternal wrath and death. On this account the law cannot free us from sin or justify us, but the promise of the forgiveness of sins and justification was given because of Christ. He was given for us to make satisfaction for the sins of the world and has been appointed as the mediator and the propitiator"* (Ap IV, 40). It was this universal aspect of justification that Calvin denied. Though he accepted the objective nature of justification, he rejected its universal nature.

Sanctification, however, takes place only in the believer. The unbeliever cannot live a sanctified life (Heb. 11:6). The Apology again states, *"Since faith brings the Holy Spirit and produces a new life in our hearts, it must also produce spiritual impulses in our hearts... After we have been justified and regenerated by faith, therefore, we begin to fear and love God, to pray and expect help from him... This cannot happen until, being justified and regenerated, we receive the Holy Spirit"* (Ap IV, 125-126).

5. Whereas justification assures us of salvation, the sanctified life produces evidence of faith but can never assure us of salvation.

Justification assures us of salvation. Christ did it all. He did it for all the world. He did it for me. Paul speaks of, *"...a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised from the beginning of time"* (Tit. 1:2). Paul was able to declare with confidence, *"Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing"* (2 Tm. 4:8).

Good works are an evidence of faith. They indicate that we are God's children (1 Jn. 3:14). They will indicate on judgment day that we have faith in Christ (Mt. 25:34-36). They cannot, however, assure us of salvation. Only Christ can assure us of that. As the Apology observes, *"The law always accuses us, even in good works..."*

- *If a conscience believes that it ought to be pleasing to God because of its own work and not because of Christ, how will it have peace without faith? What work will it find that it will count worthy of eternal life, if indeed hope ought to be sustained by merits? Against these doubts Paul says (Ro. 5:1), 'Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God;' we ought to be utterly sure that righteousness and eternal life are given us freely for Christ's sake" (Ap IV, 319-320).*

The Relationship Between Justification and Sanctification

Faith Justifies

When Scripture says faith justifies, it means faith is the instrument through which we receive the righteousness and forgiveness which Christ won for all by his substitutionary life and death. As Paul wrote, "But now a righteousness from God, apart from the law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe" (Ro. 3:21-22).

Apart from faith, the sinner loses the benefit of Christ's redemptive work (Mk. 16:16; 2 Pe. 2:1). The unbeliever essentially tells God, "I don't need what Jesus did for me. I don't want what Jesus did for me. I want what I have coming to me." Those who presume to stand before God on judgement day hoping that their works will save them, will hear the Savior say, "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Mt. 25:41).

Faith receives the benefit of what Christ has done. It is, as our dogmaticians say, the *organon leptikon*, the God-given hand which receives the gift God gives through the gospel and sacraments (*organon dotikon*). Faith is not a work of man but the work of God in man. It is not an active decision of our own free will or a condition we must fulfill before the package of salvation is complete. As the Formula states, "*For faith does not justify because it is so good a work and God-pleasing a virtue, but because it lays hold on and*

accepts the merit of Christ in the promise of the holy gospel. This merit has to be applied to us and to be made our own through faith if we are to be justified thereby” (SD III, 13).

Faith Sanctifies

Faith is the work of God in us. Through faith we receive the benefit of the forgiveness Jesus won for all. At the same time, faith is a power through which God produces sanctified lives. As Paul wrote, “We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Th. 1:3). The Formula of Concord quotes Luther to this effect, “*Faith is a divine work in us that transforms us and begets us anew from God, kills the Old Adam, makes us entirely different people in heart, spirit, mind, and all our powers, and brings the Holy Spirit with it.*” (SD IV, 100.

Justification Precedes Sanctification Ordine Causarum Et Effectuum

There is a relationship of cause and effect between justification by grace through faith and the sanctified Christian life. Justification is the cause of sanctification; sanctification is not the cause of, nor does it contribute to, justification. The Formula of Concord states, “*Good works do not precede faith, nor is sanctification prior to justification. First the Holy Spirit kindles faith in us in conversion through the hearing of the gospel. Faith apprehends the grace of God in Christ whereby the person is justified. After the person is justified, the Holy Spirit next renews and sanctifies him, and from this renewal and sanctification the fruits of good works will follow*” (SD III, 41). This order of cause and effect had to be maintained to refute the errors of Osiander and Major, who attempted to bring sanctification into the justification of the sinner.

There Is An Inseparable Connection (Nexus Indivulsus) Between Justification and Sanctification

There is an inseparable connection between justification and sanctification in that, in every case, where there is justification by

- grace through faith, there is also sanctification. As James wrote,
- “As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead” (Jas. 2:26). Even in the thief on the cross, there were works produced in faith (Lk. 23:40-41). We continue the quote from Luther in Article IV of the Formula cited above: *“Oh, faith is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, so that it is impossible for it not to be constantly doing what is good. Likewise, faith does not ask if good works are to be done, but before one can ask, faith has already done them and is constantly active. Whoever does not perform such good works is a faithless man, blindly tapping around in search of faith and good works without knowing what either faith or good works are, and in the meantime he chatters and jabbars a great deal about faith and good works. Faith is a vital, deliberate trust in God’s grace, so certain that it would die a thousand times for it. And such confidence and knowledge of divine grace makes us joyous, mettlesome, and merry toward God and all creatures. This the Holy Spirit works by faith, and therefore without any coercion a man is willing and desirous to do good to everyone, to serve everyone, to suffer everything for the love of God and to his glory, who has been so gracious to him. It is therefore impossible to separate works from faith as it is to separate heat and light from fire”* (SD IV, 10-12).

The aforementioned truth had to be maintained in light of the so-called Second Antinomian Controversy, where it was maintained new obedience is not necessary in the regenerated (SD IV, 5).

Article IV condemned *“...a complacent Epicurean delusion, since many people dream up for themselves a dead faith or superstition, without repentance and without good works, as if there could simultaneously be in a single heart both a right faith and a wicked intention to continue and abide in sin, which is impossible”* (SD IV, 15). We could say that good works are the pulse, respiration, and blood pressure of faith. If these vital signs are weak, the patient is in trouble. If these signs are absent, the patient is dead. So faith without works is dead (Jas. 2:26). The absence of works indicates a lack of faith. Obviously, we cannot look into a person’s heart to see if faith exists. However, we certainly need to warn those whose lives do not reflect the fruits of faith that faith and works are inseparable as, *“heat and light from fire.”*

There is also an inseparable connection between justification and sanctification with regard to the power for sanctified living. Franz Pieper calls this the “psychological connection” between justification and sanctification. He writes, “God loves man with a wondrously great love... Convince a man of this wondrously great love of God for him, and he cannot help loving God in return and avoiding sin for the sake of his love to God. And God knows how to convince and assure man of his great love. He does not appeal to the natural powers of man, for the natural man will not believe in this love, but regards it as foolishness (1 Co. 2:14). Nor does he try to demonstrate his love by the persuasive words of man’s wisdom (1 Co. 2:4). But he simply presents this great love as a fact, and by this preaching of the gospel the Holy Ghost creates faith in the love of God. And when this faith in the gospel, faith in the love of God in Christ, has been kindled in man’s heart, he will, as a matter of course, love God and hate sin. Thus there is a ‘psychological’ connection between justification and sanctification. They no longer form ‘two heterogeneous strata of dogmatic construction’” (*Christian Dogmatics* III, 9-10).

Justification is the heart doctrine of the Bible. It is the heart for sanctification. Without the heart of justification pumping power into Christian lives, sanctification will not take place. A root draws its life and power from the soil. The root then produces the trunk, and from the trunk come the branches and the fruit. Now let us apply this to Christ, faith, love and good works. The soil for faith is Christ—delivered over to death for our sins and raised to life for our justification (Ro. 4:25). The root is faith, planted in Christ and created by God. The trunk is the love which flows from our faith. When God gives us faith in his love for us, faith then produces love for God which leads us to love our neighbor. As Paul wrote, “Love is the fulfillment of the law” (Ro. 13:10). Flowing from love comes the fruit: good works. Luther’s *Treatise on Good Works*, as well as his development of the Ten Commandments in both the Small and Large Catechisms, reflects this.

In his conclusion to the commandments, Luther states, “*Thus you see how the First Commandment is the chief source and foun-*

- *tainhead from which all the others proceed; again, to it they all return and upon it they depend, so that end and beginning are all linked and bound together*" (LC, Conclusion, 329). View the commandments apart from God's love in Christ and you have demands which condemn and crush us. View the commandments through God's love for us in Christ and you will find faith eager and ready to obey. When faith lays hold of God's love, it produces in us love for God (the first commandment) which in turn leads to love for our neighbor.

It is God's love for us and not our love for God which supplies the power and the motivation for sanctified living. Our love for God is fueled and powered by his love for us. Appeals to Christians to grow in sanctification because of their own love for God will end in frustration and failure. In his treatment of justification in the Apology, Melancthon demonstrated why the Christian's love for God cannot be included in his justification. He was reacting to Rome's teaching concerning *meritum de condigno* and *de congruo* and also the teaching concerning *fides caritate formata*. At the same time, he shows how futile it is to point Christians to their own love for God as the power for sanctified living.

He writes, "*It is clear why we ascribe justification to faith rather than to love, though love follows faith since love is the keeping of the law. Paul teaches that we are justified not by the law but by the promise, which is received by faith only. We cannot come to God without Christ, the mediator; nor do we receive forgiveness of sin because of our love but because of Christ. We cannot even love an angry God. Therefore we must first take hold of the promise by faith, that for Christ's sake the Father is reconciled and forgiving. Later we begin to keep the law. Far away from human reason, far away from Moses, we must turn our eyes to Christ, and believe that he was given for us to be justified on his account. In the flesh we never satisfy the law. Thus we are not accounted righteous because of the law but because of Christ, whose merits are conferred on us if we believe in him*" (Ap IV, 294-296).

As soon as we are directed to our love for God, we are confronted by God's law which condemns us for our imperfect love.

We cannot love God when we see him angry with us. Only when we are assured God has forgiven us, only when we believe God loves us, will we respond in love to God and also love our neighbor. Yes, there is an inseparable connection between justification and sanctification. Apart from the grace of justification there will be no fuel for faith to produce good works.

This vital connection between justification and sanctification, found in Scripture, noted by our Confessions, must be maintained against those who would reject the need for works in the Christian's life as well as against those who make the law the driving force in sanctification. Where there is justification, there will be sanctification. Where there is sanctification, it has been fueled by God's justification of the sinner.

The Object of Sanctification: The Believer *Simil Justus Et Peccator*

God created Adam and Eve in his image (Ge. 1:26-27). This image of God consisted in a blissful knowledge of God and his will, holiness and righteousness (Eph. 4:22-23, Col. 3:9-10). When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they lost the image of God. No longer did they view God as their loving Creator. No longer did they fully know his will. No longer did they desire to do his will. No longer were they able to carry out his will. So thoroughly was humankind corrupted that, left to ourselves, we never would come to God. Though thoroughly corrupted, however, people still can be converted and sanctified. Article I of the Formula of Concord steers the course between Pelagianism, on the one hand, and the Flacian and Manichaean errors on the other. It describes original sin as an **accident** (SD I, 54), that is, "*the deep corruption of our nature*" (SD I, 52).

The Formula, in refuting the Flacian error that original sin is the essence of man, states, "*In the article of sanctification we have the testimony of Scripture that God cleanses man from sin, purifies him, and sanctifies him and that Christ has saved his people from their sins*" (SD I, 45). Though we are born in the image of Adam, God can and does renew the believer. What, then, is the state of the believer after conversion?

• **The Christian Is A New Man**

• Though we are by nature dead in sin, God makes us alive in Christ (Eph. 2:1). Corrupted by sin through our physical birth, God gives us a new birth through baptism (Jn. 3:5-6). Though we cannot believe the gospel on our own (1 Co. 2:14), God enlightens us by his Spirit so we believe the gospel message (Eph. 5:8). Born in rebellion against God, he changes our hearts and lives so we follow his ways (Luke 15:7—repentance; Mt. 18:3—conversion). The result: “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come” (2 Co. 5:17). Christians view God as their dear Father (Gal. 4:6). They delight in God’s will and eagerly carry it out (Ro. 7:22). Christian abhor sin and desire to avoid it. (1 Jn. 3:9). Empowered by the Spirit, grafted into Christ, the Christian abounds in good works (Jn. 15:5, Gal. 5:22-23). Christ’s love for sinners is the motivating power in the Christian’s life (2 Co. 5:14-15). The self-serving become self-effacing (Gal. 2:20).

In speaking of good works that are in accord with the immutable will of God, the Formula states, *“When a person is born anew by the Spirit of God and is liberated from the law (that is, when he is free from this driver and is driven by the Spirit of Christ), he lives according to the immutable will of God as it is comprehended in the law, and, in so far as he is born anew, he does everything from a free and merry spirit. These works are, strictly speaking, not works of the law but works and fruits of the Spirit”* (SD VI, 17).

The Christian Has the Old Adam

At the same time we assert that Christians are new people in Christ, we must also acknowledge that the Old Adam still clings to us as long as we live in this world. In the flesh there is nothing good (Ro. 7:18). The flesh opposes God (Ro. 8:7). The Christian is both new man and the old man in one and the same person. On the one hand, the Christian has put off the Old Adam. On the other, the Old Adam is still with him. In Romans 7, Paul graphically details the power of the old man and its effect on our sanctified lives. This war between the new man and the old man will continue until the day we die

(Gal. 5:17). In many places the Confessions speak of this dichotomy, as does Luther throughout his writing. As the Formula states, “*Since, however, believers are not fully renewed in this life but the Old Adam clings to them down to the grave, the conflict between spirit and flesh continues in them. According to the inmost self they delight in the law of God; but the law in their members is at war against the law of their mind*” (SD VI, 18).

It is thus clear that sanctification in the Christian’s life is a process of becoming, rather than a state of being. The Christian’s sanctified life remains imperfect as long as he remains in this world. Over against the possibility of perfectionism, taught by Rome (works of supererogation), the Confessions teach that sanctification remains imperfect in this life. We still need to maintain this against Methodism, the Holiness Bodies, and others who teach that Christians can reach a state of perfection in this life.

Because of the Christian’s dual nature, God speaks to him in paradoxical statements. Because the Christian has a sinful nature, he needs the constant warning, “So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall!” (1 Co. 10:12). To the new man, however, Christ says, “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand” (Jn 10:27-28). More of this later in the next section where we address the need of the Christian for the law and the gospel in this life.

Because the Christian is old and new man in one person, we must be careful how we describe him. A faulty description of the Christian ignores one of his natures. Statements like “The Christian is always happy,” or, “The Christian is not afraid of death,” may cause a person to doubt he is a Christian when he finds he isn’t happy or is afraid of death. The object of sanctification is the Christian who is *simil justus et peccator*. Both natures are wrapped up in one person.

Recognizing the Old Adam is still operative in Christians will keep us from becoming judgmental about the church and its people when we see failures in the area of sanctified living. It will also help us to rejoice over the fruits of sanctified living God works in us and

- in other believers, even though these fruits of faith may not be as great in quantity as we would like to see. We need to remember what God has to work with. We will want to thank him for the fruits of faith he enables us and other believers to produce.

The Means God Uses to Effect Sanctification: The Gospel in the Word and the Sacraments.

God Effects Faith and Sanctification Through Means

God preserves physical life through means: food, drink, clothing, shelter, all we need for body and life. He also preserves faith and effects sanctification through means: the gospel in Word and sacraments (Ro. 1:16; 10:14; Tit. 3:5; Ro. 6:3-4). As it states in the Smalcald Articles: *“In these matters which concern the external, spoken Word, we must hold firmly to the conviction that God gives no one his Spirit or grace except through or with the external Word which comes before... Accordingly, we should and must constantly maintain that God will not deal with us except through his external Word and sacrament. Whatever is attributed to the Spirit apart from such Word and sacrament is of the devil.”* (SA III, VIII, 3, 10).

The Relationship of the Law to the Christian

The Nature And the Purpose of the Law

The law is that divine doctrine of Scripture by which God tells us how we are to be (holy), what we are to do and are not to do (commandments), how we measure up to his demands (all have come short of the glory of God), and what we deserve because of our sin (damnation). The Formula of Concord, in Article V on the law and gospel, defines the law in this way: *“Strictly speaking, the law is a divine doctrine which reveals the righteousness and immutable will of God, shows how man ought to be disposed in his nature, thoughts, words, and deeds, in order to be pleasing and acceptable to God, and threatens the transgressors of the law with God’s wrath and temporal and eternal punishment”* (SD V, 17).

The original intent of the law was to give life (Ro. 7:10). Because of sin, however, the law does not and cannot give life. It is not

that God's law changed. Humans changed. The law now condemns us for disobedience. It brings death, not life (Ro. 7:10). Since the fall into sin, the law now serves as a mirror, revealing the depth of sin's corruption (Ro. 3:20). It exposes as sin, those thoughts of the heart which deviate from God's will (Mt. 5:27-28, Ro. 7:7). It reveals the depths of human depravity (Ro. 7:18). It elicits from the flesh, anger toward God (Ro. 7:5) Just as putting a stick into a nest of hornets will stir up an angry reaction, so the law stirs up rebellion and anger toward God. The problem is not with the law. The problem is with human nature.

The law also acts as a curb in a sinful world, checking the outbreak of sin. With its threats of punishment and judgment, it arouses consciences and curbs people from acting on their sinful impulse. The law acts like a chain on a vicious dog. The chain does not make the dog good. It does, however, protect society from the dog. In a similar way, the law does not make people good. It does, however, help to maintain order in a society corrupted by sin.

The Christian Is Free from the Law

Christians are free from the law! In what way are Christians free from the law? They are free from the condemnation they deserve because they have broken God's law. Christ bore that condemnation for us (Gal. 3:13, 2 Co. 5:19-21). Christians are free to serve God without fear. Their motivation for keeping God's commandments is not, "I better do this or God will punish me." Nor does the Christian need to fear God will punish him because of the imperfection of his sanctification (1 Pe. 2:5, Ro. 8:1-2). Further, the Christian is free from the law of Moses. Christ fulfilled that Old Covenant. Its commandments, given to Israel of old, are not binding on us (Ga. 3:15-25; Acts 15; Col. 2:16-17). Finally, the Christian is free from human traditions and rules (Mt. 12:1-14; 15:8-9). No person can make rules to bind our consciences, as did the rabbis of Jesus' day.

This freedom of the Christian is addressed by Article VI of the Formula of Concord. There we read: "*Truly believing Christians, having been genuinely converted to God and justified, have been freed and liberated from the curse of the law... It is true that the law is not laid down for the just, as St. Paul says, (1 Tm. 1:9), but for the*

- ungodly... *It is St. Paul's intention that the law cannot impose its curse upon those who through Christ have been reconciled with God, nor may it torture the regenerated with its coercion, for according to the inner man they delight in the law of God*" (SD VI, 4, 5).

The Christian Still Needs the Law

Yet, this does not mean that Christians do not need the law. Since Christians still have the Old Adam, they still need the law in their lives. As the Formula stated in connection with the previous quotation, "*But this dare not be understood without qualification, as though the righteous should live without the law*" (SD VI, 5).

In 1527 Melanchthon drew up articles to be used in Saxony for visitation of the Lutheran churches. In these "visitation" articles he stated that pastors should preach the law to produce repentance. This statement was criticized by John Agricola. He maintained that the gospel, not the law, leads to repentance. This idea was effectively opposed by Luther, but in 1556 this antinomianism was revived by some pastors in Erfurt and Nordhausen. There were two kinds of antinomians. The most extreme rejected the law completely, even as a means to bring about contrition in unbelievers. Their contention was that only the gospel is to be preached, even to the impenitent. The less extreme antinomians recognized the need for the law to bring about repentance in unbelievers. They did not, however, believe the law should be preached to Christians.

This antinomian controversy resulted in articles V and VI of the Formula of Concord. Article V, "Of the Law and the Gospel," reacted particularly against the extreme form of antinomianism, which failed to recognize the law's function in bringing people to repentance. Article VI, "Of the Third Use of the Law," addressed the less extreme form of antinomianism, concerning itself with the use of the law for the Christian. Concerning Article VI, Prof. Armin Schuetze wrote, "Although [Article VI] is entitled, 'The Third Use of the Law,' which we usually limit to the law serving as a guide to the Christian, it is more correct to say that it concerns itself with what we call the Christian and the law... It concerns itself with the purpose which the law serves for the Christian as he now is, in his still imperfect state" (A Christian and the Law: *OGH* III, 137).

Concerning the Christian's continued need for the law, Article VI states, "*If believers and the elect children of God were perfectly renewed in this life through the indwelling Spirit in such a way that in their nature and all its powers they would be totally free from sins, they would require no law, no driver. Of themselves and altogether spontaneously, without any instruction, admonition, exhortation, or driving by the law they would do what they are obligated to do according to the will of God... But in this life Christians are not renewed perfectly and completely. For although their sins are covered up through the perfect obedience of Christ, so that they are not reckoned to believers for damnation, and although the Holy Spirit has begun the mortification of the Old Adam and their renewal in the spirit of their minds, nevertheless the Old Adam still clings to their nature and to all its internal and external powers... Hence, because of the desires of the flesh, the truly believing elect... require in this life not only the daily teaching and admonition, warning and threatening of the law, but frequently the punishment of the law as well, to egg them on so that they follow the Spirit of God*" (SD VI, 6, 7, 9).

The Christian still needs the law as a curb for his sinful flesh. The Formula calls the Old Adam "*an intractable, refractory ass*" (SD VI, 24—Triglotta). Concerning this stubborn mule, the Formula states, "*As far as the Old Adam who still adheres to them is concerned, he must be coerced not only with the law but also with miseries, for he does everything against his will and by coercion, just as the unconverted are driven and coerced into obedience by the threats of the law (1 Co. 9:27; Ro. 7:18-19)*" (SD VI, 19).

The Christian still needs the law as a mirror to reveal his sin and desperate need for the Savior. Article VI states, "*Believers, furthermore, require the teaching of the law in connection with their good works, because otherwise they can easily imagine that their works and life are perfectly pure and holy. But the law of God prescribes good works for faith in such a way that, as in a mirror, it shows and indicates to them that in this life our good works are imperfect and impure*" (SD VI, 21).

Finally, the Christian also needs the law as a guide. As Prof. Schuetze stated in his essay, "In so far as he is a new man, he knows

- God's will and needs no instruction, but because of the flesh that
- still is present, his knowledge is still very imperfect, is often beclouded and becomes perverted and is misled. It is because of his flesh that he often does not fully know what God really wants of him" (*OGH* III, 140). He then quotes Article VI: "*Believers, furthermore, require the teaching of the law so that they will not be thrown back on their own holiness and piety and under the pretext of the Holy Spirit's guidance set up a self-elected service of God without his Word and command*" (SD VI, 20). These words of the Confessions were aimed at the self-chosen piety of the Roman Church. More of this when we reach the section on good works.

We can logically divide these various functions of the law and recognize how each addresses itself to the Christian. Yet, because the Christian cannot be divided between flesh and spirit but constitutes one person, we cannot in practice continually divide between the various functions of the law. While we may teach a commandment to guide people, the commandment at the same time will be revealing how we have fallen far short of what God demands, as well as how the Old Adam still needs to be curbed because it hinders us in our sanctified lives. As the Formula states, "*When Paul admonishes those who have been born anew to do good works, he holds up before them precisely the Ten Commandments (Ro. 13:9), and he himself learns from the law that his works are still imperfect and impure*" (SD VI, 21)

What, then, is the relationship of the law to the Christian? We will let Prof. Schuetze's summary conclude this section: "In so far as the Christian is a new man, reborn, he is completely free from the law. The law has nothing to say to him. Its coercion and threats cannot reach him. Its instruction is not needed, for the new man has the mind of Christ. But since the Christian still has flesh, an Old Adam, and so is not as yet perfectly renewed, does not know the will of God perfectly, he needs to be instructed from the law what kind of works will be pleasing to God as a fruit of his faith; his flesh will need the law as a curb to keep it in check; above all, he will ever need to have the law continue to reveal to him that all his righteousnesses are still filthy rags because of his flesh, that he needs

in daily contrition and repentance to cast himself completely upon the mercy and grace of his God in Jesus Christ” (OGH III, 147).

While the Law Is Useful in Sanctification, It Cannot Produce Sanctification. Only the Gospel in the Word and the Sacraments Can Produce Sanctification.

The Law is useful in sanctification. Revealing sin, curbing the Old Adam, it also shows us the life God would have us lead. Though the law guides us, however, it does not have the ability to take us where it points us. The law is like a road map. The map shows me how to get from New Ulm to Mankato. The way is clearly marked out. However, unless there is gasoline in my car I will not go anywhere. The law, like the road map, shows me the way to go. The gospel, like the gasoline, gets me there. As Article VI states, *“It is also necessary to set forth distinctly what the gospel does, creates, and works in connection with the new obedience of believers and what function the law performs in this matter, as far as the good works of believers are concerned. The law indeed tells us that it is God’s will and command that we should walk in the new life, but it does not give the power and ability to begin it or to do it. It is the Holy Spirit, who is not given and received through the law but through the preaching of the gospel (Gal. 3:2, 14), who renews the heart. Then he employs the law to instruct the regenerate out of it and to show and indicate to them in the Ten Commandments what the acceptable will of God is (Ro. 12:2) and in what good works, which God has prepared beforehand, they should walk (Eph. 2:10)”* (SD VI, 10-12).

The law demands, but gives no power to obey. The command does not imply the ability to comply. Luther criticized Erasmus, who was recognized as the most distinguished linguist of his day, because he did not see that there is a real difference between the indicative and the imperative mood. Erasmus had argued that from a command of God (Be holy, because I am holy!), it was possible to conclude man’s ability to fulfill that command. Luther responded, “My dear Erasmus, as often as you quote the words of the law against me, I shall quote Paul’s statement against you, that through the law

- comes the knowledge of sin, not virtue in the will. Heap up, therefore, all the imperative verbs... into one chaotic mass, and provided they are not words of promise, but of demand and the law, I shall say at once that what is signified by them is always what men ought to do and not what they do or can do. This is something that even grammarians and street urchins know, that by verbs of the imperative mood nothing else is signified but what ought to be done. What is done, or can be done, must be expressed by indicative verbs” (Bondage of the Will: *Luther’s Works*, AE 33:127).

Luther identifies another distinction we ought to note: the difference between a law imperative and a gospel imperative. Law imperatives reveal God’s will, demand that people comply, but give no ability to comply; gospel imperatives reveal God’s saving will and, at the same time, give the ability to do what God encourages. The commands to believe, to preach the gospel to all creation, to baptize, to celebrate the Lord’s Supper (in the O.T., to circumcise), are not moral law. They are directives by which God sets in motion faith, preaching and the use of the sacraments.

Through the gospel God empowers sanctification. God’s love, Christ’s life, death, and resurrection, what God has done for the sinner’s salvation—this is the message through which the Holy Spirit produces sanctification and causes good works to flourish. The law may point the way, but only the gospel will enable us to live sanctified lives. The law may produce the result of civic righteousness (which often seems so impressive when we are waiting for the fruits of faith to be produced), but this is not sanctification. The Mormons may be able to pay for their buildings before they build them, because they have assessed a tithe of all their members. Better, however, is the widow’s mite given freely from faith than millions squeezed out of people by the law.

Not only has God given us his spoken and written gospel for our sanctification, he has also given us the “visible Word” (Ap XIII, 5), the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. It is in this area that I raise the question, “How often do we make use of the sacraments in the area of sanctification?” Our flesh is often attracted by the law-driven seven steps to here or the five steps to there, drawn

up by the Reformed. The Confessions, however, direct us to make use of the gospel and sacraments as the means whereby God empowers sanctified living. Let us hear again what they have to say concerning the value of the sacraments in sanctification.

Scripture speaks of the sanctifying power of Baptism (Tit. 3:5, Ro. 6). In his Small Catechism (Part IV of Baptism) Luther indicates that Baptism empowers sanctified living. In his Large Catechism, he writes, *“Thus a Christian life is nothing else than a daily Baptism, once begun and ever continued... If you live in repentance, therefore you are walking in Baptism, which not only announces this new life but also produces, begins, and promotes it. In Baptism we are given the grace, Spirit, and power to suppress the old man so that the new may come forth and grow strong”* (LC, Baptism, 66, 76).

Here Luther highlights a major difference between Lutheran theology, on the one hand, and Roman and Reformed theology, on the other. In Roman theology the sacraments are the means by which the church dispenses the “divine assistance” (*gratia infusa*) to work out your own salvation. Justification, then, becomes a process of sanctified living. In much of Reformed theology (particularly from the Arminian tradition) the gospel becomes information to be acted upon by an individual’s personal decision. The sacraments are considered commands we must keep, and sanctification becomes a matter of commands and compliance. In Lutheran theology, the gospel and the sacraments give salvation and are the means through which God gives the ability to lead a sanctified life.

Concerning the Lord’s Supper, Luther writes, *“Therefore it is appropriately called the food of the soul since it nourishes and strengthens the new man. While it is true that through Baptism we are first born anew, our human flesh and blood have not lost their old skin. There are so many hindrances and temptations of the devil and the world that we often grow weary and faint, at times even stumble. The Lord’s Supper is given as a daily food and sustenance so that our faith may refresh and strengthen itself and not weaken in the struggle but grow continually stronger”* (LC, Lord’s Supper, 23-24).

In his exhortations concerning the Lord's Supper, Luther demonstrates the law/gospel approach. He states, "*It is to be feared that anyone who does not desire to receive the sacrament at least three or four times a year despises the sacrament and is not a Christian, just as he is not a Christian who does not hear and believe the gospel. Christ did not say, 'Omit this,' or 'Despise this,' but he said 'Do this, as often as you drink it,' etc. Surely he wishes that this be done and not that it be omitted and despised. 'Do this,' he said... Accordingly, you are not to make a law of this, as the pope has done. All you need to do is clearly to set forth the advantage and disadvantage, the benefit and loss, the blessing and danger connected with this sacrament. Then the people will come of their own accord and without compulsion on your part*" (Preface to the Small Catechism, 22, 24).

In connection with the sacraments, we should also mention absolution. Though Melanchthon lists it in the number of the sacraments in the Apology (XIII, 3), he does not include the earthly element used in connection with the word of God in his definition of a sacrament. Luther, in the Large Catechism (LC, Baptism, 1) speaks of two sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Nevertheless, we should not forget about absolution. The Augsburg Confession states, "*It is taught among us that private absolution should be retained and not allowed to fall into disuse*" (AC XI, 1).

Why should private absolution be retained? J. Meyer speaks of the evangelical reason. He writes, "As the appointed messenger of God (he) can present the comforting message of the gospel in such a way that it exactly fits our case, and he can in the name of God give us the assurance that we are the very ones for whom Christ died and washed away our troublesome sin in his blood. He can remind us of our Baptism in which God received us as his dear children. He can encourage us to take Communion as God's pledge and seal of our pardon for a strengthening of our faith" (*Studies in the Augsburg Confession*, 60). He also speaks of a pedagogical purpose, as an occasion to examine ourselves lest some pet sin gain a stronghold in our heart.

Concerning absolution the Apology states, "*The power of the keys administers and offers the gospel through absolution since 'faith*

comes from what is heard' (Ro. 10:17). Hearing the gospel and hearing absolution strengthens and consoles the conscience. Because God truly quickens through the Word, the keys truly forgive sins before him, according to the statement (Luke 10:16), 'He who hears you, hears me'" (Ap XII, 38). The Confessions speak frequently of absolution giving the forgiveness of sins. Where there is the forgiveness of sins, the Holy Spirit is also at work sanctifying lives.

Throughout this section, the Confessions' concern for the proper application of law and gospel is apparent. It is this proper distinction between law and gospel, and particularly the gospel approach to sanctification, that is a distinctive feature of our Confessions. As J.A.O. Preus observed, "We probably are correct in asserting that the doctrine of the proper distinction between law and gospel is a doctrine which developed almost entirely and only on Lutheran soil, as was the case also with the concept of *sola scriptura*, *sola fide*, the universal priesthood of all believers, the peculiarly Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper, and several other points. As a person traces the development of the doctrine in early Lutheran history, he will quickly note that the concept of law and gospel developed along with several other doctrinal points, in which we can observe that Luther made several advances and improvements in his theology, that he and Melanchthon in the early years worked closely together and supplemented one another, and that in certain points not often noted by Lutherans who have always had trouble with Melanchthon the fact is that Melanchthon often influenced Luther in very salutary directions, and ideas which at first were most firmly asserted by Melanchthon came in time to be even more strongly promoted by Luther. Such is the case also with what we today, with Luther, hold to be one of the cornerstones of Lutheran theology: namely, the doctrine of the proper distinction between law and gospel. The Lutherans were at odds with the enthusiasts over this question from the outset, and Calvin has no locus on the subject in his *Institutes*, and the doctrine has been largely unknown or ignored in Reformed circles to this day" (Chemnitz On Law and Gospel: *Concordia Journal*, October 1989, 409).

- It might also be added that the Lutheran Confessions remind us
- of the proper use of the law. They do not teach the law as an avenue of salvation. They do not preach the law as a means to self-induced contrition (active contrition vs. passive contrition—SA III, III, 12). They do not preach the law as a mere condemnation of the evils of the world while ignoring the evil that lurks within each heart. They use the law in sanctification but not as the means for producing justification.

Christian teaching in the area of sanctification, then, involves the proper distinction between law and gospel. It is a matter of steering a course between the Scylla of antinomianism and the Charybdis of legalism. Antinomianism can turn the gospel into a new law. Legalism turns the law into a new gospel. Legalism presents the will of God and says you must do this because God says so, not because God's love constrains you. Legalism and its first cousin, moralizing, are what we generally find the Reformed offering us in the area of sanctification.

The results of legalism are not trivial. As Article V of the Formula states, "*The mere preaching of the law without Christ either produces presumptuous people, who believe that they can fulfill the law by external works, or drives man utterly to despair*" (SD V, 10). Phariseeism or despair—this is where the law by itself leads, and neither is a good place to be. This is why the gospel must predominate in our schools, our churches, our pastoral counseling, etc. Legalism will either puff people up with false pride or leave them burned out, turned off, and in despair. As Melancthon observed in the Apology, only the sweet gospel of free grace can console the sinner and enable him to love God. Where only the law is applied, consciences are tortured and souls are harmed (Ap XII, 31-43).

One more point before we close this section: prayer is not a means of grace. Through prayer we extend our hands to God. Through the means of grace, God gives his grace to us. Certainly, prayer is a vital part of the Christian's life. But we cannot pray ourselves into a more sanctified life. God will answer our prayer for new vitality in sanctification through the gospel in Word and sacraments. If we look to prayer by itself to accomplish sanctification,

we are missing the real means through which God forgives sins and energizes Christian lives.

Good Works Constitute the Sanctified Life

Good works are the concrete deeds which make up the sanctified life. Only believers can do them (Heb. 11:6). While the unbeliever may do what is beneficial in a horizontal relationship with his fellowman, he cannot do good in his vertical relationship with God (Isa. 64:6). Good works are fruits of faith (Gal. 5:22) which flow from love (Ro. 13:10). Good works are not deeds of a self-determined piety (Mic. 6:6-8; 1 Sa. 15:22), nor can they be determined by the church (Mt. 15:9). They are those works commanded by God (Ro. 13:10; Ps 119:9) and done for his glory (Mt. 6:1-5). Good works are not perfectly good, in an of themselves. All good works of the believer are contaminated by sin. Nevertheless, they are acceptable to God for Christ's sake (1 Pe. 2:5).

The church in Luther's day invented all kinds of works they regarded as superior to those performed in normal vocations. Concerning such "traditions" the Augsburg Confession states, "*These traditions were exalted far above God's commands. This also was regarded as Christian life: whoever observed festivals in this way, prayed in this way, fasted in this way, and dressed in this way was said to live a spiritual and Christian life. On the other hand, other necessary good works were considered secular and unspiritual: the works which everybody is obliged to do according to his calling—for example, that a husband should labor to support his wife and children and bring them up in the fear of God, that a wife should bear children and care for them, that a prince and magistrates should govern land and people, etc. Such works, commanded by God, were to be regarded as secular and imperfect, while traditions were to be given the glamorous title of alone being holy and perfect works*" (AC XXVI, 8-11). Men went off on crusades and pilgrimages, or entered monasteries, leaving their wives and children behind to fend for themselves. The Confessors told them they should stay home and do what God commands rather than think they are serving God by a service they invented for themselves.

When we think of this, we are reminded of the rules of self-determined piety found in Catholicism, Pietism, Methodism, etc. But we need to be aware that our Old Adam is quite capable of doing exactly what the Confessions condemn. Do we feel that our people will live holier lives if they are busy with something at the church every night than if they stay home and spend some time with their families? Those of us involved in the ministry also face the temptation to justify a neglect of responsibilities toward wife and children by saying we are doing something more important at church. Is it nobler for us to take a pilgrimage into our studies than it is to give our wife a hand by changing the baby's diaper? Yes, even changing a baby's diaper is a good work when done in faith. Is it God-pleasing to spend an inordinate amount of time listening to the hypochondriac who glories in her misery when our wife may be in misery because we don't spend any time with her? We have responsibilities as ministers of the gospel, as husbands, and as father. Though we will give the Lord the first place in our lives, we do not glorify him by shirking our responsibilities as husbands and fathers.

The Christian's Life Is a Life Under The Cross

There have been those throughout the ages who tell us, if we simply follow the steps God gives us in his Word, our lives will be successful and God will shower his temporal blessings upon us. Someone would have told Job of this theology of success. The Christian's life is not, as one newspaper columnist said, a matter of overstuffed church people sitting on overstuffed chairs. The Christian's life is, first of all, a life of daily repentance.

As the Apology states, *"Beside this mortification brought on by the cross, a voluntary kind of exercise is also necessary. Of this Christ says (Luke 21:34), 'Take heed to yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation,' and Paul says (1 Co. 9:27), 'I pommel my body and subdue it.' We should undertake these exercises not as services that justify but as restraints on our flesh, lest we be overcome by satiety and become complacent and idle with the result that we indulge and pamper the desires of our flesh. In this we must be diligent at all times because God commands it at all times"* (Ap XV, 46-48. Cf. also Fourthly of Baptism)

The Christian life is also a matter of suffering for the sake of the gospel. The devil and the world leave the Christian no rest. They hated Christ; they also hate those who are Christ's. As Luther observes in his explanation of the Third Petition, "*(The devil) cannot bear to have anyone teach or believe rightly. It pains him beyond measure when his lies and abominations... are disclosed and exposed... Therefore, like a furious foe, he raves and rages with all his power and might, marshaling all his subjects and even enlisting the world and our flesh as his allies... Therefore we who would be Christians must surely count on having the devil with all his angels and the world as our enemies and must count on their inflicting every possible misfortune and grief upon us. For where God's Word is preached, accepted or believed, and bears fruit, there the blessed holy cross will not be far away. Let nobody think that he will have peace*" (LC, Third Petition, 63, 65).

The Christian is a sinner living in a sin corrupted world. He must daily fight against the unholy trinity of the devil, the world, and his own flesh. As a sinner, he is heir to the ravages sin has brought into the world. As a child of God he lives under the loving discipline God sends into our lives to keep us close to himself. Yet, though the Christian life is a life under the cross, it is still a life of hope. As the Formula states, "*This doctrine (of election) will also give us the glorious comfort, in times of trial and affliction, that in his counsel before the foundation of the world God has determined and decreed that he will assist us in all other necessities, grant us patience, give us comfort, create hope, and bring everything to such an issue that we shall be saved. Again, Paul presents this in a most comforting manner when he points out that before the world began God ordained in his counsel through which specific cross and affliction he would conform each of his elect to 'the image of his Son,' and that in each case the afflictions should and must 'work together for good' since they are 'called according to his purpose'*" (SD XI, 48-49).

• **Contend For The Faith That Was Once For All**
 • **Entrusted To The Saints (Jude 3)**

We have reviewed the basics of what the Lutheran Confessions say concerning sanctification. These matters are not new to us. In fact, they are of daily use to us, in our own lives, and in our ministry to the flock God has entrusted to our care. However, there is a danger that familiarity can breed contempt. When confronted by this danger, Luther's exhortation in the Preface to his Large Catechism is useful. Luther writes, *"I once again implore all Christians, especially pastors and preachers, not to try to be doctors prematurely and to imagine that they know everything... Let all Christians exercise themselves in the Catechism daily, and constantly put it into practice, guarding themselves with the greatest care and diligence against the poisonous infection of such security or vanity. Let them continue to read and teach, to learn and meditate and ponder. Let them never stop until they have proved by experience that they have taught the devil to death and have become wiser than God himself and all his saints. If they show such diligence, then I promise them—and their experience will bear me out—that they will gain much fruit and God will make excellent men of them. Then in due time they themselves will make the noble confession that the longer they work with the Catechism, the less they know of it and the more they have to learn. Only then, hungry and thirsty, will they truly relish what now they cannot bear to smell because they are so bloated and surfeited. To this end may God grant his grace!"* (LC, Preface, 19-20).

There is also a danger that we may be tempted to try shortcuts to produce sanctification in our churches when we do not see the results we would like to see. When I served in the parish ministry, it seemed as if it was always a struggle to receive enough through offerings to meet the bills. When one of my elders told me that the charismatic church just outside of town was bringing in over \$20,000 every Sunday night, I wondered if there was something they knew that I didn't. When we see Promise Keepers filling football stadiums with high-fiveing men, or the "evangelical" churches busting out of their existing facilities, we are tempted to think they have

something we don't. After all, what they are doing seems to be working.

We look at our own churches and lament: attendance is sagging, contributions are lagging, the council's feet are dragging, the membership is aging, and the ladies aid is raging, etc. Should we abandon our heritage of law and gospel in favor of the tools the Reformed, in general, the "evangelicals" of today, in specific, offer us? God forbid we should be sucked in by Schuller, swindled by Swindoll, duped by Dobson, or misled by McCartney. Before we buy into the mess of pottage they offer, *caveat emptor!* As the prophets of Jericho said to Elisha, "O man of God, there is death in the pot" (2 Kgs. 4:40). The gospel they proclaim is not the gospel of free grace but of free will. Their justification is not the forensic and objective justification of Scripture, but a justification based on an inner transformation in the Christian. They turn the sacraments into symbols or sacrifices. Their treatment of sanctification is either *sans* law or driven by the law. The end result of sanctification-based justification, antinomianism or legalism, is Phariseeism or despair.

We are not saying the aforementioned are not Christians. Only God can judge the heart. By a happy inconsistency, the gospel may still be found in their midst. Yet, their way for sanctification is not God's way. They have a different spirit. The Lutheran Confessions have given us a heritage which will serve us and our people well in our ministry today. The Confessions' bottom line is not purity of doctrine for purity's sake (orthodoxism), but purity of doctrine with correct application of law and gospel in the interest of souls. As shepherds of God's flock, we will use the tools God has given us for ministry. Law-driven sanctification may produce outward results, but law-driven sanctification is not God's way. It is the way of the Old Adam, a reflection of the *opinio legis* which still lurks in each of us. We will use the tools God has entrusted to us to carry out our ministry.

The results are up to God. Not everyone will welcome the message we bring. The prophets proclaimed law and gospel, and they were stoned and killed (Mt. 23:37). Some will listen but lapse. The same Israelites who had to be told to stop bringing offerings for the

- tabernacle because they brought too much (Ex. 35:5-7), grumbled
- and complained their way through the wilderness. Some will hear and bear abundant fruit (Mt. 13:23, Ac. 2:42-47). The Christian ministry is similar to farming. We plant, water, fertilize, weed, prune, and nurture. God must give the increase. May God keep us faithful in the proper use of law, gospel and sacraments, as we patiently wait for him to produce the harvest of salvation and sanctification, which is his alone to give.

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Book Review: **The Two Natures in Christ**

Jesse Jacobsen

Chemnitz, Martin. The Two Natures in Christ. trans. J. A. O. Preus, St. Louis: Concordia, 1971; Orig. published in Leipzig, 1578.

Martin Chemnitz, known universally as “the second Martin,” was a faithful pastor, called to be the superintendent over several Churches in the city of Braunschweig. His work kept the Lutheran Reformation from disintegrating, and by God’s grace, he passed on his faithfulness, zeal, and orthodoxy to his son-in-law and others, who came to be labeled for that orthodoxy. There are three very great works that come to us from Chemnitz, two of which he penned himself. The third, his *Loci Theologici*, was compiled afterward by his students. His largest is the *Examen*, or the *Examination of the Council of Trent*, and the remaining one is the work in our spotlight: *The Two Natures in Christ*, originally *De Duabus Naturis in Christo* before Dr. Preus’ edition. In length, *The Two Natures* is no slouch, the translation being nearly 500 pages in 9 point type, and requiring at least one 40 hour work week for a careful reading.

One can easily see why the writings of Chemnitz are ill appreciated in the 90’s, even by many conservative or confessional Lutheran theologians. Reading *The Two Natures* is a very humbling experience for anyone who aspires to theology. It has been correctly said that the ten best theologians of this century could not collaborate to produce something equal to this one volume. The result would be inferior in preciseness, insight, thoroughness, unity, complexity, candor, depth, practicality, and perhaps most of all, humility. It has also been said of *The Two Natures* that the author sets out to treat his subject exhaustively, succeeds, and exhausts his readers in the process. Chemnitz calls out a challenge to his readers to stay with him (no mean task) through his entire treatment. The difficulty in doing so quickly makes the reader wonder if modern Lutherans are

- fit for such theology; if collectively we have lost something that
- would have enabled us to call Martin Chemnitz our *fellow* servant of God. Those who press on, however, are richly rewarded many times over for their effort.

In his dedicatory epistle, Chemnitz encourages us to participate with him in his study of the two natures in Christ, and also gives us his motivation for writing the book.

But there are some people who, as soon as they see that various and almost infinite controversies have arisen over this mystery with very tragic disturbance and distraction to the church, think it would be better and wiser to spend their time explaining and learning the other points of the heavenly doctrine, while they can without the loss of salvation, as they put it, ignore the explanation and understanding of this doctrine. Indeed, they absolutely want to stay away from this subject, which Paul calls a great mystery. But that they err and deceive in this opinion of theirs is clear from the fact that Scripture carefully treats of this doctrine and repeats it in many places.¹

This remark makes us wonder what Chemnitz would think of those today who insist on “practicality” rather than remote, “ivory tower” theology. Unfortunately, some say that Chemnitz was one of those remote, ivory tower theologians. He certainly does not undertake any “creative” theology, because he repeatedly recalls the need to remain only in what Scripture reveals. We contend, however, that even this very challenging and (to some) tiresome work of Martin Chemnitz addresses the heart of the most practical theology in the universe—the theology of the cross.

Since there is no possible way to supply a reflection of *all* of the content of such a book in as short a space as this, We will follow two themes, using various references that pertain to each, and perhaps leave the reader with a flavor of *The Two Natures*. We will leave Christological content for the reader to glean, except in the ways it specifically touches our two themes. The first theme is the organization of *The Two Natures*. In such a monumental writing as this, the author undoubtedly gave much thought to how he would teach, or argue his topic. We can learn much from his example. The

second theme is how Chemnitz connects Christology to the Lutheran theology of the cross. Though never a stated connection, the theology of the cross is however, plain to see throughout the book.

I. Organization

The most obvious peculiarity about the organization of *The Two Natures* is the order that Chemnitz uses for the three *genera* of the Communication of Attributes. In Francis Pieper's *Christian Dogmatics*, we learn the *genera* in the order 1. Idiomatic; 2. Majestic; 3. Apotelesmatic. Chemnitz, on the other hand, inverts the last two.² The reason for this seems puzzling, but Chemnitz does not do anything lightly. He would certainly not object on doctrinal grounds to Pieper's presentation of the three *genera*, but a description of his approach will reveal the reason for his organization.

He calls the first *genus* the "communication of attributes" according to the "practice of the schools"³ and of the scholastics.⁴ Every time Chemnitz is introducing a new thread of thought, he first gives the reader a very detailed account of what it is *not*. That is, he distinguishes between the point he is about to make and any misconception that any writer since the time of the Apostles has had on that point. By doing this, he introduces the topic, and sets the stage so well, that the reader can anticipate nearly every word when Chemnitz finally arrives at the point itself. This method follows Chemnitz' reason for writing his book in the first place: to address the errors that various people have held in the area of Christ's two natures. Thus in explaining the first *genus*, he first details what it is not, dealing with specific examples and objections from history.⁵ Once finished with that, he can very briefly state in the positive what the first *genus* actually is: the essential or natural properties of either nature are predicated of the person, as seen in various Scriptures.

Chemnitz does not launch into the second *genus* immediately, but instead applies the first, elaborating on its correct teaching, expression, and use in three different chapters. He is thorough. When he does reach the second *genus*, Chemnitz explains its necessity.

But certain men have tried to restrict this definition in such a way that they can argue that everything which is predicated of the person of Christ must apply only to one of His natures, either the divine or the human. And they add that antiquity acknowledged no other category or *genus* of communication (κοινωνία) between the natures and their attributes in the person of Christ than this one.⁶

It is always a bad idea to attempt to defend one's position against Chemnitz by appealing to the Church fathers of antiquity. Thus Chemnitz uses the words of Nazianzus to summarize the (his) second *genus* (the apotelesmatic), "Certain terms which are predicated of Christ are proper not only to one nature but to both." This is one of the many beautiful, eloquent sections of *The Two Natures*, where Chemnitz show that Christology is immensely practical. Several quotations will serve for example:

Since each nature in Christ performs in communion with the other that which is proper to it, this becomes pertinent to our discussion first when we deal with the ἀποτελέσματα, or the effects, the duties, the works, the merits, or the blessings which Christ bestows as Savior, namely, such things as redemption, propitiation, salvation, and mediation.⁷

The divine nature does not turn away from the suffering but permits the human nature to suffer and die, yet strengthens and sustains it so that it can endure the immeasurable burden of the sins of the world and the total wrath of God, thus making those sufferings precious before God and saving for the world.⁸

In this way we can see into what a high degree of dignity our human nature has been assumed by the Son of God and hence what great comfort we may draw from it. We can be sure that the work of Christ's kingdom and priesthood belongs to us in the church, since He exercises and accomplishes this work against the gates of hell, both in the presence of the Father and toward us, not absolutely and by His divine power alone, but in, with, and through the assumed nature which is similar to ours, akin to us, and thus of the same substance with us.⁹

Again, after treating this *genus*, Chemnitz does not proceed immediately to the next, but gives his readers a historical perspective on the second *genus*, explaining that this was the battleground of the monothelite controversy. He clearly shows that a human will is an essential attribute of a human nature, and because of this, Christ has both a divine will and a human will. Chemnitz explains, “The human will of Christ wills those things which the divine will wishes it to will, as Damascenus says.”¹⁰ Thus the two wills cooperate to effect our reconciliation with God.

When beginning his treatment of the third (majestic) *genus*, Chemnitz explains that “there has been much controversy and contention about this matter in our time.”¹¹ According to his custom, he explains what he is *not* doing, and what he is *not* saying first. Particularly, he says,

We are not doing this in order to grasp these things with our senses or twist and accommodate them to the norm and standard of our reason, but with God’s Spirit illuminating and guiding us we shall take our reason captive under the obedience of faith, and with the simple acquiescence of faith hold firmly to those things which have the express testimony of Scripture, even though we do not understand the how.¹²

This is as strong as Chemnitz gets in his polemic against the Reformed adherence to “*finitum not est capax infiniti*.” He does not honor the Reformed argument with a direct refutation as he does with the ancient heresies. Instead, he spends more time removing the foundations of their arguments. A Christologically Reformed theologian, by the time he is done reading *The Two Natures*, will either be a Lutheran or an apostate. Chemnitz leaves no room for inconsistency.¹³ We think that is one of the reasons he teaches the three *genera* in the order he does.

There are really two points that Chemnitz makes under the third *genus*. First, as a result of the hypostatic union,

the divine nature of Christ in itself has received nothing from the hypostatic union, but that His human nature has received and possesses innumerable supernatural (ὑπερφύσικα) gifts and qualities which are contrary to its nature (παραφύσικα)

- and which are above every name and also above, beyond,
- and exceeding its own essential properties, which still,
- however, remain unimpaired.¹⁴

But on the other hand these infused gifts are not actually the *essential* attributes of the divine nature.¹⁵

These gifts, like the substance of the human nature itself, to which they formally inhere, are in themselves created and finite.¹⁶

The second point in the third *genus* is that “these gifts are not only created, finite, or habitual gifts, but the very characteristics or attributes of the divine nature of the Logos himself.”¹⁷ We find a brief explanation in the words,

It is proper, therefore, for God to cleanse and destroy sin (Is. 43:25), but Scripture clearly attributes this action not only to the person of the incarnate Christ according to the deity, but also to His blood according to the humanity. And we must not understand this only as a matter of merit when His blood was poured out on the cross, but it is to be understood as a matter of efficacy and application; for Scripture attributes our very justification and the reconciliation of the sinner with God to this blood.¹⁸

Chemnitz takes special care to explain himself thoroughly here, noting especially that a great objection is raised against those who wish to hold to this clear teaching of Scripture. Some object that this first point of the third *genus* constitutes a commingling of the two natures. In other words, Chemnitz is addressing the Reformed charge of Eutychianism. However, he gives special attention to this kind of reasonable objection (over many pages), and insisting on remaining firmly rooted in the divine revelation, he says of his defense, “All this can be summed up by the statement that there is no communication of either the essences or the natures.”¹⁹

As he begins to explain the third *genus* positively, Chemnitz has another application for the Reformed opponents when he lists the reasons this doctrine is so important. He says, “because it is characteristic of heretics of all ages to refer to the divine nature of Christ

those things which Scripture predicates as being given to Him in time."²⁰ So he removes another plank from beneath Reformed feet. To demonstrate that it is the objectors who are being unreasonable, Chemnitz uses several examples, or models from daily life. The model that Chemnitz relies on more than any other is that of fire and iron. Heated iron has the properties of both iron and fire: It is hard, and retains its shape, but it emits light; and if one were to pick it up by hand, he would know immediately that the heated iron has the same properties as fire, by virtue of the union between the fire and the iron. Using this and other figures, Chemnitz shows that it is possible for us to accept the testimony of Scripture, and that it is foolish not to.

This is a very brief illustration of the way Chemnitz organized his presentation. As mentioned earlier, we think one of the reasons he chose to order the *genera* in the way he did was to make it impossible for Reformed to attack his argument until he had removed all support for their position. That was not the only reason, though. As one may have noticed in this review, the apotelesmatic *genus* is actually related to the idiomatic. In the first *genus*, we say that the essential attributes of each nature are predicated of the person, according to that nature. In the second *genus*, we apply the first to the work of Christ: the two natures cooperate together, each supplying its own attributes to the person to accomplish what neither could do alone.

But because this had to be done through death (Heb. 2:14), and because the Deity in His own nature could not die, therefore it was necessary that the Redeemer be a man. But because it was also necessary not only to die but also through death to destroy the power of death and to restore life (2 Tim. 1:10), which was the proper activity of Him in whom there was life in the beginning (John 1:4), therefore He who is the splendor of glory and the image of the substance of the Father had to become a participant in flesh and blood, in order that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death (Heb. 2:14).²¹

- Thus Chemnitz first gives the “communication of attributes,”
- the first *genus*; then the application of that communication to the work of Christ, the second *genus*; then the corollary: that Christ’s human nature has received innumerable gifts, the majesty of God, and the ability to vivify what was dead, because of the personal union, the third *genus*.

II. The Cross

Having used most of the available space in discussion of Chemnitz’ presentation, we must be very brief in discussing the theology of the cross as we find it in *The Two Natures*. It will be helpful to define what we mean by the theology of the cross. Luther gives us a suitable summary of the theology of the cross in his theses 19-22 of the *Heidelberg Disputation*.

19. That person does not deserve to be called a theologian who looks upon the invisible things of God as though they were clearly perceptible in those things which have actually happened.

20. He deserves to be called a theologian, however, who comprehends the visible and manifest things of God seen through suffering and the cross.

21. A theologian of glory calls evil good and good evil. A theologian of the cross calls the thing what it actually is.

22. That wisdom which sees the invisible things of God in works as perceived by man is completely puffed up, blinded, and hardened.²²

Chemnitz gives some insight also, quoting Justin, “It is a manifest sign of unbelief to seek the how of divine matters.”²³ Instead of seeking God where the world looks for Him, in what seems glorious, powerful, and awesome, He wants us to seek Him where He comes to us, namely, in His Word and Sacrament. We are not to seek the how of divine matters outside of what the Word reveals. Only with the illumination of the Spirit in the Word of God, can a theologian “call a thing what it actually is.” He “comprehends the visible and manifest things of God seen through suffering and the

cross.” “It is not proper for us to be disturbed about the hidden will of God or His absolute power. But He has determined how much is useful and necessary for us to know in this life concerning His will and power, and this He has revealed to us in His Word.”²⁴ Applied to *The Two Natures*, the theology of the cross is manifested in three ways, and we can easily see that each may be extended in its own way through Phillipians 1:21 to our own lives, as well.

First, it is manifested in the incarnation.

For the divine power of the Son of God, as Cyprian says, was a kind of fishhook which was covered with the appearance of human flesh, and when it was swallowed by the serpent Leviathan, through the infirmity of the suffering and death, it caught and overwhelmed this strong-armed creature.²⁵

But because some people sophistically pretend that the glory is greater if the dominion and power of His assumed nature extend more widely than His presence, we reply to them simply that we must judge concerning the glory of Christ’s human nature not from what seems glorious to us, but from the revealed Word.²⁶

Theodoret quotes Hippolytus as saying: “The dead body of the Lord poured forth blood and water, that we might know what great power (δύναμις) dwelt in that body, so that even the dead body could pour out upon us those things which cause life.”²⁷

The Son of God was made the Son of Man that man might also be made the son of God.²⁸

In the incarnation, we see the theology of the cross particularly clearly in His humiliation. Here, understand the humiliation through Phillipians 1:21:

Therefore, when believers know Christ, they have all the riches of knowledge and understanding. But because in this life we see in a mirror dimly and only in part (1 Cor. 13:12), and because to the world the wisdom of God seems to be foolishness (1 Cor. 1:18 and 2:14), therefore Paul adds that

- these treasures are hidden in Christ; not that they are hidden to Christ in glory or to His soul after He has laid aside His humiliation, but to the world, to which this wisdom appears as foolishness, and to us who know only in part these things are hidden, just as our life is also hidden.²⁹

Second, the theology of the cross is manifested in Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper, His Word, and Holy Baptism, though there is a difference between each of them.

He dwells in our hearts in a divine and incomprehensible manner which is believed alone by faith in the promise, not by our reason or by some perceptible or visible or local condition of this world which can be grasped by the senses or comprehended by our intellect and reason.³⁰

For the Father binds us to the Son in His flesh and blood as the One who reveals Himself to us through the spoken Word in order that we may know where and how to find Him and be able to apprehend Him.³¹

Only by faith does the church hold to Christ; it does not see Him with the eyes, though it has Christ in its presence through faith, through the Sacrament of Baptism, through the bread and cup of the altar, which are truly the body and blood of Christ. ... The absence of the Lord is not an absence.³²

"But we do not see all things put under Him," that is, we do not grasp it with our reason or senses, but by faith, by which we now walk, we learn from the Word, and we believe all things have been made subject to the humanity of Christ and that this will be made known and we will see it on the Last Day.³³

Third, the theology of the cross is manifested in Christ's presence with His Church through the Ministry that He established by the Apostles, the Ministry of His Word.

Christ promises to His church, moreover, not only a mere inactive presence, but rather a presence in which He is active and efficacious, which gives an increase, so that the work of

the apostles is not in vain; a presence which defends the ministry against its enemies, which converts the hearers, justifies, sanctifies, governs, and saves them, and the like...³⁴

Thus being present He worked with them wherever they preached. For the text of Mark 16:20 can also be correctly read in this way, "They preached, with the Lord everywhere cooperating." For if they preached everywhere, with the Lord working with them, then the Lord Jesus works with them everywhere, a fact the pious reader will carefully note.³⁵

From these brief examples, we see that the theology of the cross thoroughly penetrates the doctrine of the personal union. In fact, the personal union itself is the very nexus, the connection between all the various aspects of the theology of the cross. The Incarnation is just another way of referring to the personal union. The Means of Grace are the special manifestation of Christ for us, which would be impossible without the personal union. The Holy Office of the Ministry is itself a divinely-created model of the union, in that God chooses to work powerfully and to gather His elect through outward frailty and powerlessness.

If it is practically possible, we think it would be most beneficial for every confessional Lutheran who has the gifts necessary to read *The Two Natures*. Even if it takes a year to finish, it would be very beneficial, because the book is based solely on the Word of God, and it is not some abstract discourse about something unrelated to this life. On the contrary, the content of *The Two Natures* is vital for Christian life. At the very least, any pastor who would preach about Christ should study *The Two Natures* for its instruction on how to speak about the personal union.

End Notes

¹ p. 16.

² It may be more accurate to say that someone after Chemnitz inverted the last two.

³ p. 171.

⁴ Despite the negative aspects of the Scholastics' theology, Chemnitz often relies upon them heavily. This characteristic of thoroughly using what is best from the theology of antiquity

- and merely showing the error of what is wrong is exemplified in Chemnitz more than any other widely-translated Lutheran theologian.

5 One distinction that Chemnitz makes here follows through the whole book, and is worth mentioning. It is summarized in his words: "Thus the words which denote the united yet distinct natures we call abstract. And those which indicate the person are called concrete." (p. 175) It is a distinction he has carried over from the Scholastics. The practical application of this distinction we find in the rules for predication. "The rule of the Scholastics is that the substantial attributes of the one nature are not attributed to the other when we consider it in the abstract, but they are communicated to the person in the concrete, that is, by a term which indicates the hypostasis." (p. 175)

6 p. 215.

7 p. 216.

8 *ibid.*

9 p. 217.

10 p. 238. Damascenus, or John of Damascus (ca. 700's A.D.), is quoted very often by Chemnitz. At one point Chemnitz says that Damascenus is very good on Christology, but there are other areas where he is lacking.

11 p. 241.

12 *ibid.*

- ¹³ Interestingly, Chemnitz also refers to Reformed heresy in an extremely general way. If the reader were not familiar with the Reformed arguments, or if he were skimming too lightly, he could miss the references entirely.
- ¹⁴ p. 244.
- ¹⁵ p. 248.
- ¹⁶ *ibid.*
- ¹⁷ p. 259.
- ¹⁸ p. 261.
- ¹⁹ p. 271. It is interesting to note that Chemnitz does all of this in the context of the ancient Christological heresies, not in the context of Reformed heresies.
- ²⁰ p. 287.
- ²¹ p. 218-219.
- ²² LW 31:52-53.
- ²³ p. 144.
- ²⁴ p. 481.
- ²⁵ p. 222.
- ²⁶ p. 450.
- ²⁷ p. 298.
- ²⁸ p. 149.
- ²⁹ p. 331.
- ³⁰ p. 451.
- ³¹ p. 386.
- ³² p. 462.
- ³³ p. 320.
- ³⁴ p. 449.
- ³⁵ p. 450.