
Lutheran Synod Quarterly



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LUTHERAN SYNOD QUARTERLY

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Foreword

The seventeenth century is a black hole in Lutheran church history. Often the student of Lutheranism leaps from the time of Martin Luther and the *Book of Concord* to Spener and the beginning of Pietism. The implication is that there is nothing of value in the intervening period. Yet when one reads Pieper's or Hoenecke's dogmatics and Walther's *Pastoral Theology* or *Church and Ministry* he finds a voluminous number of quotes from men who lived in the seventeenth century. Our Synodical Conference fathers certainly found value in the theology of the seventeenth century and the articles in this *Quarterly* are encouraging the same in our present age.

The sermon by Dr. Thomas Kuster of Bethany Lutheran College and Seminary encourages us to trace our Christian roots from St. Paul's missionary journeys through the Reformation to the settlement of the Midwest. This sermon is based on 2 Timothy 1: 5-10.

The most important theologian of the seventeenth century was Johann Gerhard (1582-1637). After Luther and Chemnitz he is the foremost theologian of the Lutheran church. The essay *Gerhard—Theologian and Pastor* is an introduction to the life and work of this great seventeenth century dogmatician. This paper was presented September 2003 in Leipzig, Germany, at the fiftieth anniversary of the *Lutherisches Theologisches Seminar*.

It has been said that Gerhard was third in the series of Lutheran theologians and after him there was no fourth. If one were to speak of a fourth, the position would be assigned either to Abraham Calov (1612-1686) or Johann Quenstedt (1617-1688). The essayist, Timothy Schmeling, defends the viewpoint that Abraham Calov deserves the position of fourth. This he explains in his essay *Strenuus Christi Athleta Abraham Calov*.

In the seventeenth century and throughout Lutheran history Gospel preaching has been the emphasis of the Lutheran church. Rev. Edward Bryant reminds us of the importance of Gospel preaching in his essay entitled *The Meaning of "Preach the Gospel in all its Fullness"* — *Addressing the Theology and the Craft of*

the Sermon. This was presented to the 2002 ELS General Pastoral Conference. Rev. Bryant is the pastor of St. Timothy Lutheran Church in Lombard, Illinois.

This issue of the *Quarterly* includes a review of the book, *Speaking the Truth in Love to Muslims* by Roland Cap Ehlke. This book is an excellent guide for understanding the Muslim religion. Also, this *Quarterly* contains a report of the Theological Commission of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference and the index to Volume 44.

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Sermon on 2 Timothy 1:5-10

Thomas Kuster

Theme: In whom did your sincere faith first live?

God's Word is our great heritage,
and shall be ours forever.
To spread its light *from age to age*
shall be our chief endeavor....
Lord grant while worlds endure
we keep its teachings pure
Throughout all generations.

The flashing red and blue lights startled me as the squad car pulled up just ahead of where I had parked on a busy Chicago street. The officer, a woman whose authority far exceeded her height, got out and walked toward me. As I stood with my camera in my hand, I spoke first. "Am I illegally parked?" She answered with a more basic question. "Why are you here?" I explained that I was taking pictures of the school building across the street. In that civil but authoritative tone of a seasoned law officer, she told me that on this street, in this part of the city, within two minutes someone like me would be lying on the ground and my camera would be stolen and gone. "Go ahead and take your pictures," she said, "but I'm going to stay here until you're done." And there she stood, looking up and down the street, with her hand on the revolver strapped to her side. Well, startled and embarrassed, I pointed my camera at nothing to take one more picture, hustled to my car where Judy, my father and his wife waited, wondering what was going on, and we drove off.

Why WAS I there? In an odd way, it was the same reason you are here.

Why are you here? Does it have anything to do with...

- A bell ringing on the door of Sorenson's dye shop in Oslo, Norway, 161 years ago?
- An exchange between Gorm the Old and Harold Bluetooth?
- An idea that came into an English schoolboy's mind more than 1300 years ago?

- A ship setting sail from Troas across the Aegean Sea to Neapolis in 53 AD?
- Does your being here have anything to do with Jesus Christ dying on the cross? – that should be an easy one.

All these events may at first seem unrelated, but they are all part of a pattern that St. Paul celebrates in this letter to young pastor Timothy.

2 Tim. 1:5-10 I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also. For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, who has saved us and called us to a holy life — not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

We're talking this morning about spiritual roots. In whom did your sincere faith first live?

Paul says to Timothy, "I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also." For Timothy it went back two generations, his grandmother and his mother – what an honor for them to be mentioned by name in the Bible! Eunice – the Greek name is Εὐνίκη which means good victory. And Lois – that's the Greek name itself – means Preferable. It will be fun to talk with those two great ladies in heaven some day.

Unlike Timothy, we have to look back through many more generations. We're like the boy complaining about his school history homework. He had to memorize all the presidents of the U.S. His

dad said, "Quit complaining, I had to do the same thing;" and the boy replied, "Yes but back then there were only three or four."

I want to remind you this morning that God went to a lot of trouble, and God directed many people to go to a lot of trouble, to make sure that you and I could be here this morning, enjoying the immense treasure that is Lutheran Christian theology, rejoicing in the comfort of the simple and pure Gospel, receiving into ourselves the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, given and shed for us for the forgiveness of our sins.

It started, of course, with God's plan which he made before the world began. Paul says it in our reading: "This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus." Way back in eternity God knew you and me, and determined that we would be with him forever.

But to do that, He had to sacrifice His own Son. That's because we had strayed. By our sins, we had made ourselves unfit to be anywhere near a holy God. Any honest self-evaluation will tell us that we fall far short of perfection, the standard God must use to judge us. And so, to accomplish His loving plan for us, God the Father had to sacrifice His only Son. What love of a Father willing to do that! What love of a Son willing to do that! Christ Jesus, God the Son, did appear in history, as Paul said, to accomplish our rescue. By completing a morally spotless life in our place, and by paying on the cross the penalty we owed for our many sins, Jesus removed from us the stain and guilt of our sin. Wearing His righteousness, we now do appear before God as sinless, meeting His standard of perfection.

Listen again. Nobody could say it more clearly and beautifully than the Apostle in our reading: "God has saved us and called us to a holy life — not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

That's the trouble God went to, to prepare us to enjoy his friendship and company now and forever.

But all that was many centuries ago. We still needed the miraculous work of God the Holy Spirit to assure that God's saving word and sacrament would reach us. The Spirit too went to a lot of trouble, so that you and I could hear God's Word, believe in our Lord Jesus and be saved.

Remember all those odd stories from a moment ago? Each of them was a piece of the Holy Spirit's work of bringing us here this morning.

- Remember the ship sailing from Troas to Neapolis in 53 AD? It carried the Apostle Paul from Palestine to Greece. The church, which till then had been confined to Asia, was now in Europe, a step closer to us. Our faith first lived in the people on that ship.
- Remember that idea in an English schoolboy's mind some 1300 years ago? In 718 that young man named Boniface decided his calling was to leave his native Devonshire and preach the gospel in Germany. Through his work the Word spread into central Europe, where much later the Reformation would begin. Our faith first lived in Boniface.
- Remember King Gorm the Old leaving his throne to Harold Bluetooth? Gorm's wife, Harold's mother, Thyra, had taught her son about Jesus, and many years later Harold, the first Christian Danish king, sent missionaries into Norway. Now the gospel had reached the home of our spiritual ancestors. Our faith first lived in Harold Bluetooth.
- The bell ringing on the door of Sorenson's dye shop in Oslo 161 years ago signaled the entrance of a man named J.W.C. Dietrichson. Their conversation turned to missions, and Sorenson swayed Dietrichson's interest from African to American missions, and offered to pay the fare for his first trip. Because of that offer, you and I are here in this church today. Dietrichson's first services in America were held outdoors under two oak trees near Koshkonong in Wisconsin. It was the beginning of our Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Our faith first lived in Pastor Dietrichson.

In whom did your own sincere faith first live? Tracing

from the front (from Jesus till now, as we have been) provides an interesting but somewhat generic answer. Equally interesting can be tracing backwards, from you back to your parents, grandparents, and so on. Paul said to Timothy in this reading, be grateful to your mom and your grandma. You and I can do the same. Search it out. Thank God for it.

It can be risky, to learn about your ancestry. A few weeks ago in Oregon Judy met a cousin she'd never met before. He told of how one of his relatives had started a family history, did quite a bit of work on it, then discovered an ancestor who was a horse thief, and was so shocked she threw all her work into the fire. Well, anyone who looks far enough back into ancestry is quite likely to find a horse thief or something like it. That shouldn't shock or embarrass us – we know we are all sinners, in need of God's grace and forgiveness. That's why we're looking – so we know exactly what we are thanking God for when we thank him for bringing the treasure of His Word to us.

Judy and I have made some marvelous discoveries, and have stood in awe at places of my spiritual ancestry. We stood in the church in Feudinggen, Germany, where in 1555 the priest, an ancestor on my mother's side, brought his parish into the Lutheran reformation. On my father's side, we stood in the archives of the cathedral in Limburg, Germany, and viewed the very page on which was written by hand in 1828 the baptism record of my great great grandfather, Henry Joseph Kuster. They were catholic Christians then, so it was an equally awesome privilege later to stand at the grave of my great grandmother Langosch in the Lutheran cemetery in Chicago – it was a site we found on our trip there, remember, with the police officer? We were there with my father to search out our spiritual roots, and great grandma Langosch, whom I never knew, was one who assured that my father's family would enjoy the immense treasure that is Lutheran theology, with its pure and clear presentation of salvation that is ours freely by the grace of God, through faith in Jesus Christ. Great grandma Langosch knew the difference between churches, and she is why I'm here. My faith first lived in her, and all those others we've found.

What about you? In whom did your sincere faith first live? I

hope the question prompts some fascinating meal-time conversation at your house, and maybe even some investigation and travel.

And here's an even more intriguing question. What about you and me in the stories of the future? If the Lord permits the world to continue for more generations, who will look back and thank God for you? It's hard, I know, when children and grandchildren seem less interested in church than you'd like them to be. But we do our best to pray, and teach, and gently show them the richest inheritance we can possibly pass on to them, the immense treasure of the saving gospel of the love of God for us in Christ Jesus.

And that reminds me: When thanking God for spiritual ancestors, don't forget the ones who prayed, who implored God "Thy kingdom come." They don't show up in the history books. We may not even know who they were. But God does, because he heard them and answered.

In all this, we can be encouraged again by Paul's message to Timothy. Hear still again his words, and this time listen as if he is writing to you. "I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother and in your mother and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also. For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you. God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, who has saved us and called us to a holy life — not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

Those people in the past, the ones in whom your sincere faith first lived, were heroes. Now it's our turn to be a hero for those who follow.

Today for our further encouragement we go back to how it started. At the table this morning we cross all those generations, all those years and all those centuries. We go back to the cross, where Jesus' body was broken, and his blood was shed for us, for the

forgiveness of our sins. Thanks to that – and to all the trouble God went to, and to all the trouble God moved people to go to through the years to bring that good news to us – thanks to all that, today, in this sacramental meal, Jesus is here – and that’s why we are here.

Thanks be to God.

Soli Deo Gloria.

Johann Gerhard - Theologian and Pastor



D^r Johann Gerhard.

Gerhard—Theologian and Pastor

Gaylin Schmeling

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Gerhard—Theologian and Pastor

I. The Life of Gerhard

A. Gerhard the Early Years

Johann Gerhard (1582-1637) was one of the important seventeenth century dogmaticians. In fact he was the greatest of the dogmaticians. It is said that Gerhard was third (Luther, Chemnitz, and Gerhard) in the series of Lutheran theologians and after him there was no fourth. If one were to speak of a fourth, the position would be assigned either to the Prussian theologian Abraham Calov or to Gerhard's nephew, Johann Quenstedt. Even in his lifetime he was considered to be one of the three greats of Lutheranism. Michael Walther wrote in a letter dated 1635 to Gerhard's successor, Salomon Glassius:

That heavenly David, Christ Jesus, has from the beginning of the time of a very necessary Reformation seen and nourished more theologians of this sort in the orthodox Church, truly courageous and very learned. Three of them, however, have without any doubt taken first place ahead of all the rest. There is no one who can reach easily their singular gifts and activities, namely, our countrymen [*Megaländer*] Luther, Chemnitz and Gerhard. (E.R. Fischer, *The Life of John Gerhard*, pp. 98-99)

Gerhard was born October 17, 1582, in Quedlinburg, Germany. Four days after he was born, on October 21, he was baptized into the Christian faith, becoming a child and heir of eternal life through faith in the Savior. By birth he was of noble rank. His father, Bartholomew Gerhard, was the city treasurer and his grandfather Andreas Gerhard had been the court counselor (*Hofrath*) of the abbess of Quedlinburg who controlled both the civil and ecclesiastical affairs of the city. His mother was Margareta Bernd who also came from an important Quedlinburg family and was known for her work among the poor and needy. Gerhard was one of seven children. One of his sisters, Dorothea, married Ludolph

Quenstedt and their son Johann was a great dogmatican in the generation after Gerhard.

At the age of fifteen Gerhard became very sick and vowed to enter the public ministry if he recovered. During this time Gerhard, as Luther before him, experienced deep pangs of conscience and desired the assurance of the forgiveness of sins and fellowship with God in Christ. In this affliction he found comfort and counsel in his pastor Johann Arndt, the author of the widely read devotional writing *True Christianity (Von wahren Christentum)*. Arndt exerted a deep and lasting influence on him and the two remained life-long friends. This is seen in Gerhard's excellent devotional material, much of which has again been made available in English. These writings touch the heart and are filled with pastoral concern. His most important devotional work is *Sacred Meditations (Meditationes Sacrae)*. His *Postille* written between 1613 and 1616 is a treasury of sermons which show a true pastor's heart. (Carl Meusel, *Kirchliches Handlexikon*, Vol. II, pp. 740-742)

B. Gerhard the Student

In 1599 he entered the University of Wittenberg, where he attended the lectures of Leonhard Hutter on sacrifice and repentance. In spite of his original intention of entering the pastoral ministry he spent two years studying medicine as Arndt had done. As a result of this, even when he was superintendent in Heldburg he dispensed both pastoral and medical advice to many of his people. In addition he was fond of the use of medical pictures in the presentation of the Gospel. An example of this is found in *Sacred Meditations*: "Great indeed were thy wounds of sin, which could be healed only by the wounds of the living and life-giving flesh of the Son of God; desperate indeed was that disease which could be cured only by the death of the Physician Himself." (Johann Gerhard, *Sacred Meditations*, 2:17)

He resumed his study of theology at Jena in 1603. Here he spent a considerable amount of time in the private study of the Holy Scriptures and the church fathers. In December of 1603 he became extremely ill and he believed that he had come to his end. He

prepared his final testament which included a detailed confession of faith much as Luther had done in his *Confession Concerning Christ's Supper* of 1528. This testament in many ways anticipated both his *Loci* and his devotional writings. (Johann Steiger, "Das Testament and das Glaubensbekenntnis des todkranken 21 jährigen Johann Gerhard (1603): Kritische Edition und Kommentar," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, Vol. 87, pp. 201-254; see also Johann Steiger, *Johann Gerhard*, pp. 160-227)

After he received his master's degree he moved to Marburg in 1604. Here he attended the lectures of Balthasar Mentzer (1565-1627) on the person of Christ and justification and was influenced by him. Gerhard chose him as his principal guide in theology at the time. Mentzer is remembered as the patriarch of true Lutheranism in Hesse. (F. Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. II, p. 126) One of his popular productions was his *Handbüchlein*, a handbook of Lutheran theology.

When Landgrave Maurice of Hesse-Cassel accepted the Reformed faith in the Second Reformation of the province, Gerhard left Marburg and went back to Jena. During this time Arndt wanted him to be called as deacon at Halberstadt and Mentzer desired him to become a professor at the new university which he helped organize in Giessen as a result of the Calvinizing of Marburg. Gerhard however remained at Jena and continued to study theology and homiletics. Also at this time he accompanied Mentzer on an educational tour of southwest Germany (Stuttgart, Tübingen, Strassburg, and Speyer) a portion of the country that had been virtually unknown to him before this.

On December 13, 1605, the second Sunday in Advent, he delivered his first sermon in the small village of Kunitz not far from Jena. His sermon was based on II Peter 3:10 encouraging the congregation to be prepared for the Lord's coming on the last day. He probably wouldn't have preached his first sermon even at this time had it not been for the encouragement of his teacher and friend, Johann Major. Gerhard believed that one must be thoroughly trained in theology in order to produce a good sermon. He lectured at Jena and received his doctorate in sacred theology in 1606. This was also the year that *Sacred Meditations* was published.

C. Gerhard the Superintendent

He spent a number of years in administrative ecclesiastical work. Beginning in 1607 he was superintendent in Heldburg and did a certain amount of teaching at the *Gymnasium Casimirianum* in Coburg. Here he presented a four-year-long series of monthly lectures in which he covered the entire spectrum of theology as he would later do in his *Loci Theologici*. Also his work as superintendent was not neglected. He oversaw a visitation of the parishes for which he was responsible. He was a true Seelsorger and physician of the souls in his care. In 1615 his prince, Duke Johann Casimir of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha (a grandson of John Frederick), over his objections, promoted him to general superintendent of the entire duchy. In this capacity he wrote a new church order for Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. This order which outlined faith and life for his church was printed in 1616.

D. Gerhard the Professor at Jena

He continued to receive numerous calls to teach. Jena offered him a full professorship in 1610 but he did not feel qualified to take the position. In addition to this, his prince, Duke Johann Casimir, did not want to release him from Heldburg. During this time he often accompanied his prince on diplomatic trips. For example, he was present for the election and coronation of Emperor Matthias at Frankfurt am Main on May 24, 1612. (E.R. Fischer, *The Life of John Gerhard*, p. 59)

Finally in 1616 at the urging of Elector Johann Georg I of Saxony he became a professor at the University of Jena, where he continued as professor until his death. Here, together with Johann Major (1564-1644) and Johann Himmel (1581-1642), he became part of the so-called Johannine Triad of Lutheran orthodoxy at Jena. Concerning this Fischer wrote, "At that time, there were three outstanding men who were teaching theology at the academy of Jena, and all three were named John: John Mayor, John Gerhard and John Himmel. And they were men worthy of that name, for sincere harmony always flourished among this trio of Johns, and as long as

Gerhard was alive, no quarrels ever interrupted that.” (E.R. Fischer, *The Life of John Gerhard*, p. 131)

Gerhard lectured on a wide variety of subjects during his years at Jena, but there were two major points that he desired to instill in his students. The first was a deep desire to study the Holy Scriptures. To engender this love for the Word he taught classes on nearly every book of the Bible. He was a true exegete at heart. He had a great love for the Word and was especially fond of the Book of the Psalms. The Psalter became the model for his devotional writings.

The second major point he desired to instill in his students was the importance of organizing the truths of the inspired inerrant Scripture in systematic form. It is very difficult to teach the wonderful truths of the Bible and pass them on to the next generation unless they are organized in a teachable form. For this reason dogmatic or systematic theology was of vital importance to Gerhard.

The library of Gerhard was one of the finest of the time in Europe. This library was a great benefit to Gerhard as a professor and to his students. He owned many of the writings of the church fathers and his massive research in the fathers is evident throughout his works. After his death his library was brought to Gotha.

During his years as a professor it was necessary for Gerhard to defend the faith from attacks that came from a number of directions. A powerful adversary was found in an older contemporary of Gerhard, the influential Jesuit theologian Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621). He was the main systematizer of Roman arguments against Protestant claims and is seen as one of the best exponents of post-Tridentine doctrine. Bellarmine and the Jesuits were a major force in the counter or Catholic reformation that threatened Protestantism in Germany. Note how often he is referred to in *Pieper's Dogmatics*. In his dogmatic writings Gerhard exerted a considerable amount of energy to expose the errors of Bellarmine and the Jesuits.

The Roman danger was not the only force facing the embattled Lutheran Church in Germany. This was the period of Calvinization or the Second Reformation when Reformed theology was infiltrating Lutheran Germany. Calvinism was not a legal religion under imperial law until 1648. The only way it could be

legally spread was under the guise of “reformed” Lutheranism. On Christmas Day 1613 Johann Sigismund had the Supper celebrated in the Reformed manner in the Berlin Dom, thus marking the beginning of the Second Reformation in Brandenburg-Prussia which has had major ramifications for Lutheranism. With such events occurring, Gerhard battled also the Reformed error in his writings. The Palatinate had already succumbed to the Second Reformation and there had been a failed attempt in Electoral Saxony (1586-1592).

At a relatively young age Gerhard came to be regarded as the greatest living theologian in Protestant Germany. He was the chief representative of the period of high orthodoxy (1610-1648) in contradistinction to the golden age of Lutheran orthodoxy (1580-1610) and to the silver age of Lutheran orthodoxy. ([1648-1675] see Addendum I). He was called by virtually every university in Germany but he remained at Jena. Gerhard was a prolific writer. With the theological faculty at Jena, he issued countless theological *Gutachten* on diverse matters. His voluminous exegetical, polemical, dogmatic, and practical writings deal with virtually every theological topic. His writings are a true heritage for our generation.

Beginning in 1618 the Thirty Years’ War raged in Europe, bringing terrible devastation to much of Germany. During most of the period that Gerhard was a professor in Jena the war was being fought around him. Still he remained at his post and calmly produced some of the greatest religious literature of the Lutheran Church. Gerhard was frequently asked to advise the dukes in matters concerning the Thirty Years’ War. With his associate, Johann Major, he met Tilly at the city gate of Jena in 1631 and so impressed the general who was about to plunder the city that the general left the city with only a token plunder. Thus he was credited with saving the city. (Robert Scharlemann, *Thomas Aquinas and John Gerhard*, p. 42) The imperial forces were not the only danger in the war. At the beginning of 1636 Gerhard was captured by the Swedes but was released through the intercession of General Johann Baner. In November of the same year the Swedes attacked and plundered Gerhard’s estate, leaving it in ashes. The livestock was stolen and buildings destroyed. In his diary he wrote that during those very hours he was “busy with a revision of the entire Bible (probably

the Weimar edition) and, in fact, with the last chapter of Job which lists the very rich blessing of God upon Job after he had endured his cross.” (E.R. Fischer, *The Life of John Gerhard*, pp. 146-147)

Gerhard, together with Aegidius Hunnius, is remembered for using the terminology “in view of faith” (*intuitu fidei*) in the doctrine of election. This was the terminology that caused such havoc for the Norwegian Synod in the Election Controversy of the nineteenth century. However, it should be noted, as Professor Aaberg indicates, that Gerhard did not by this terminology teach that faith was the cause of one’s election, nor did he ascribe to natural man any responsibility for coming to faith, thus steering clear of synergism. (*Loci Theologici*, Locus 7, Para. 161; Theodore Aaberg, *A City Set on a Hill*, p.17) Gerhard used this terminology in contradistinction to the bare decrees of election found in Calvinism. One is not to look to a bare decree; rather, the comfort of election is found in the fact that God chose us from all eternity as His own. He sent His Son to redeem all people with His blood. He sent His Spirit to work faith in that redemption in our hearts and preserves us in the faith unto our end. Thus our salvation, which is completely the work of God, is entirely certain.

At the time of Gerhard there was a renewed interest in Aristotelian philosophy as a result of the Neo-Aristotelian movement. Gerhard is remembered for bringing Aristotelian terminology and distinctions to the aid of Lutheran dogmatics. He makes use of Aristotelian causation (*causa efficiens, causa formalis, causa materialis, and causa finalis*) in his systematic theology. (See Addendum II)

E. Gerhard’s Family and Final Years

In Genesis the Lord said, “It is not good that man should be alone.” (Genesis 2:18) Gerhard certainly found this to be true. A God given helper was provided for him in Barbara Neumeyer. As they were about to be married, Gerhard wrote this prayer, “Lord Jesus you who instituted marriage in paradise, who were present at the wedding at Cana and who through the bond of chaste love still binds the hearts of spouses today, bless this my intention and give

me a peaceful, blessed, and stable marriage.” (C.J. Böttcher, *Das Leben Dr. Johann Gerhards*, p. 65) On September 19, 1608, they were married, but Barbara died on May 30, 1611, some time after the death of their only child Johann Georg.

After a period of mourning he married Maria Mattenberg on July 13, 1614. Her father was a physician and consul in Gotha. She was to be his wife for the next twenty-three years, living until March 30, 1660. Ten children were born to this union, six of whom outlived their father. His son Johann Ernst Gerhard (1621-1668), following in his father’s footsteps, became a professor at Jena. He collected and edited many of his father’s works and was known for his own works in theology and oriental studies.

In May of 1637 Gerhard fell victim to a high fever. At this time he was lecturing on the book of Hebrews. Here he reminded his students of the wonderful comfort that we have in the heavenly fatherland above from such passages as Hebrews 4:9: “There remains therefore a rest for the people of God,” and Hebrew 12:22: “But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels.” (C.J. Böttcher, *Das Leben Dr. Johann Gerhards*, p. 142) Although he recovered at the time, in August the fever returned. As his end drew near, Gerhard’s piety was as evident as it had been throughout his life.

He then bade his colleagues farewell, and on the same day he confessed his sins before God and his pastor, Master Adrian Beyer, archdeacon of Jena. He also took care to equip himself with his final very sacred viaticum. In the burning godliness of his heart he feasted upon the body and blood of His Savior, and with a loud voice immediately began to sing the eucharistic hymn which our blessed Luther composed (or rather corrected) for the use of communicants: “Let us praise and bless Thee, God, etc.” (E.R. Fischer, *The Life of John Gerhard*, p. 289)

He fell asleep on August 17, 1637, two months before his fifty-fifth birthday, trusting in the Savior in whose blood he had been washed through Holy Baptism and assured of the resurrection.

Gerhard's funeral service took place on August 20 at St. Michael's Church in Jena, where Johann Major delivered the funeral sermon based on St. Paul's words in II Corinthians 12:9, "'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." (See Cotta's Vita of Gerhard in the Preuss Edition of Gerhard's *Loci*.) The full text of this sermon may be found included in Johann Gerhard, *Sämtliche Leichenpredigten*, pp. 251-315.

II. The Writings of Gerhard

A. The Dogmatic and Exegetical Writings of Gerhard

The Jena Divine, the light of Thüringen, is best known in church history as a dogmatician, in fact he was the greatest of the dogmaticians. His most significant dogmatic work was his *Loci Theologici* (1610-1625), whose vast nine volumes—a later edition published in twenty-three volumes (Cotta Edition)—became the great systematic theology of Lutheran orthodoxy. Here he made use of the synthetic method in his material, proceeding from cause to effect or from principles to conclusions. The articles of faith are dealt with according to this order: God, man, sin, redemption, etc. His *Loci* are a comprehensive treatment of the evangelical doctrinal position based on a particularly wide range of material.

He completed the *Loci* divided into nine volumes, and they came out, first, in Jena in quarto in this way:

Volume 1, in 1610, containing chapters [or *loci*] on Holy Scripture, on the legitimate interpretation of Holy Writ, on the nature of God, on the mystery of the Holy Trinity, on God the Father and His eternal Son, on the Holy Spirit, and on the person and office of Christ. He added to this volume the inaugural speech which he delivered on that question as to whether all, or some, or any of the divine attributes were communicated to the human nature of Christ.

Volume 2, in 1611, containing the *loci* on creation

and the angels, on providence, on election and rejection, on the image of God in man before the fall, on original sin, on actual sins, and on free will.

Volume 3, in 1613, containing the *loci* on the moral law, on ceremonial and forensic laws, on the Gospel, on repentance, and on justification by faith.

Volume 4, in 1614, containing the *loci* on good works, on the Sacraments, on circumcision, on the Passover lamb, and on Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Volume 5, containing the *loci* on the Lord's Supper and the Church.

Volume 6, in 1619, containing the *loci* on the ministry of the Church and on the political magistracy.

Volume 7, in 1620, containing the *locus* on marriage, celibacy and related matters.

Volume 8, in 1621, containing the *loci* on death and on the resurrection of the dead.

Volume 9, in 1622, containing the *loci* on the final judgment, on the end of the age, on hell and on eternal life. (E.R. Fischer, *The Life of John Gerhard*, pp. 319-320)

Gerhard's four-volume *Confessio Catholica* appeared in 1633-1637. In it he sought to refute the objections of contemporary Roman Catholic theology with quotations taken from the Church of Rome's own traditions. The work is similar to the *Catalogus Testium Veritatis* of Flacius and appears to be based on it. The *Confessio Catholica* inspired a number of similar writings by other authors such as Johann Georg Dorsch. Dorsch wrote a book in which he tried to show that Thomas Aquinas could be made to support Lutheran doctrine more than that of Rome. (See also Bengt Hägglund, "Polemics and Dialogue in John Gerhard's *Confessio Catholica*," *Lutheran Quarterly*, Vol. XIV, No. 2, pp. 159-172)

All the Lutheran fathers were deeply engaged in patristic studies. Gerhard was probably the first Lutheran to write a book on the subject in which he coined the word "patrology" as a synonym for patristics. Here he points out that the doctrine of the confessional Lutheran Church is in agreement with true fathers of the church. His *Patrologia* was published posthumously in 1653 by his son Johann Ernst.

The *Harmony of the Gospels* (*Harmoniae evangelicae Chemnitio-Lyserianae continuatio* [1626-1627]) was the Jena Theologian's major exegetical production. Here he completed a commentary on the Gospels begun by Martin Chemnitz (1522-1586) and continued by Polycarp Leyser (1552-1610), who edited a number of the writings of Chemnitz. The *Harmony of the Gospels* was so popular that the Missouri Synod translated portions of it in the nineteenth century. This work, entitled *Perikopen*, was published in seven volumes including the historic Gospels of the church year, the festival Gospels, and the Passion history. At the request of Ernst the Pious, Gerhard edited and contributed to the *Weimar Bibel*. It became the Lutheran study Bible of the time. The commentary in this Bible is saturated with Gerhard's devotional spirit. (E.R. Fischer, *The Life of John Gerhard*, pp. 358-360)

B. The Devotional (Erbauungsliteratur) and Homiletical Writings of Gerhard

Gerhard is viewed by many today as a hairsplitting, bone-dry seventeenth century dogmatican. This is the case especially among those who do not appreciate the intricacies of the theological thought in his *Loci*. His dogmatic orthodoxy is said to have taken all the life out of the Lutheran Reformation. However, in this evaluation Gerhard the practical theologian is forgotten. His activity as a pastor and author of devotional literature is overlooked. (See also Johann Anselm Steiger, "Pastoral Care according to John Gerhard," *Lutheran Quarterly*, Vol. X, No. 3, pp. 319-339) Even in his dogmatic works one always finds a pastoral or practical use. The devotional writings (*Erbauungsliteratur*) of Gerhard touch the heart of the reader with the saving Gospel of Christ. The Christian needs an intimate relation with the Savior through the means of grace. Here Gerhard offers spiritual nourishment for the faith-life of the believer that warms the heart with the Gospel of Christ's forgiveness. This literature was intended to strengthen and edify believers, encouraging repentance and spiritual renewal. One of his predominate themes is **union and communion with God through the life-giving Word and the blessed Sacraments**, as can be seen in his writings.

Into His assumed human nature, Christ at the same time placed the fullness of divine grace and truth. If it is to benefit us, then we must partake of the self-same fullness; that takes place through faith (Joh. 1:16). The Lord Christ became man in order that we men might become partakers of the divine nature; if that is to occur, then we must believe, as it is once more stated in Joh. 1:12: **He did give power to become God's children to such as who believe on His Name.** . . . And, the human nature of Christ thus becomes for us a door to deity, just as faith is a door for us to Christ's humanity. (Johann Gerhard, *Seven Christmas Sermons*, pp. 24-25)

To me You were given—shall not all things be given to me? My nature is glorified greater in You than it was disgraced in Adam through sin. Because You assumed into the unity of Your person (Christ has two natures, human and divine, in one person) that which was only accidentally weakened by Satan, You truly are flesh of my flesh and bone of my bone (Eph 5:30). You are my brother. What can You deny to me, to whom You are most intimately joined by the same essence of the flesh and by feelings of fraternal love? You are the bridegroom [Mt. 22:2], who according to the good pleasure of the Heavenly Father, bound the human nature to Yourself as a bride by means of a personal covenant. With a thankful soul I proclaim and acknowledge that I too am invited to the celebration of this marriage. (Gerhard, *The Daily Exercise of Piety*, [2:4] pp. 41-42)

Some would see the devotional writings of Martin Moller, Philipp Nicolai, Arndt, and Gerhard as the beginnings of pietism. This can hardly be the case when Gerhard's *Loci* was the standard of Lutheran orthodoxy for generations. Rather in these writings Gerhard strives to touch the hearts and lives of believers with the objective truths of orthodoxy. As Luther and Arndt before him, he combines theological orthodoxy with what is good in Christian mysticism. In this literature Gerhard makes considerable use of the Lutheran doctrine of the mystical union of the believer with Christ.

Gerhard's most popular devotional work is *Sacred*

Meditations (*Meditationes Sacrae*), which he wrote as a student and published in 1606. It is designed to arouse true piety and promote inner spiritual growth. In style and content *Sacred Meditations* is similar to *True Christianity*. In the preface to the first edition Gerhard criticizes those who do not relate doctrine to the Christian life. Also he acknowledges that after Holy Scripture he is influenced by the writings of Augustine, Bernard, Anselm, Tauler and other fathers that Arndt had encouraged him to read during his student days. It consists of fifty-one devotional meditations and has passed through innumerable editions in many languages. It is an excellent volume for personal devotions.

Sacred Meditations presents the teaching of Scripture in a devotional and edifying manner. For example Gerhard speaks of the Holy Spirit as the bond of love between the persons of the Trinity as Augustine did and at the same time reminds us that the Spirit is the bond that unites our hearts to God.

The Holy Spirit, moreover, descended upon the apostles while they were continuing with one accord in prayer (Acts 1:14); for the Spirit of prayer is prevailed upon by prayer, and He it is who leads us to pray. And wherefore? Because He is the bond that unites our hearts to God, just as He unites the Son with the Father, and the Father with the Son; for He is the mutual essential love between the Father and the Son. This spiritual union between God and our souls follows upon faith; but faith, the gift of the Spirit, is obtained by prayer, and true prayer is prompted by the Holy Spirit. (Johann Gerhard, *Sacred Meditations*, 22:119-120; see also *Postille* I, 485)

The Manual of Comfort (*Enchiridion consolatorium morti ac tentationibus in agone mortis opponendum; Tröstliches Handbüchlein Johann Gerhards wider den Tod und die Anfechtungen beim Todeskampfe*) was written by Gerhard in 1611. This was a very difficult year for him because he lost his wife, his infant child and finally his own health. He suffered the burdens of Job. In the *Manual* he provides comfort for himself and for everyone that faces sickness, death, and the other burdens of life. The devotions begin

with the fears or concerns of the afflicted person, and then comfort is provided.

The afflicted person says: Faith is necessary to receive the blessings of the Word and the Sacraments. To receive any gift, there must be not only a giving hand but also a receiving hand. But my faith is very weak. My heart is tossed back and forth by various temptations. It is often shaken, and I am deprived of the firmness of confidence.

The comforter says: Weak faith is still faith. Faith grasps Christ and in Christ the grace of God, the forgiveness of sins, and everlasting life, not because it is strong but because it is faith. A strong faith grasps Christ more firmly, but a weak faith still grasps Christ for salvation. Your Savior, Jesus Christ, will not break a bruised reed nor quench a smoking flax (Is. 42:3). He graciously accepts the one weak in faith (Rom. 14:3). . . God wants to comfort us as a mother comforts her child (Is. 66:13). But a mother deals much more tenderly with a little child that cannot speak, and takes greater care with him than with a grown child. God does not cast away the one who is weak in faith but takes great pains to heal and strengthen him, as we do for one who is physically weak. (Johann Gerhard, *Manual of Comfort*, 18:34)

Another of Gerhard's devotional writings is *The Daily Exercise of Piety* (*Exercitium Pietatis; Tägliche Uebung der Gottseligkeit*) written in 1612. It is divided into the four parts of daily meditation: 1. Confession of sins; 2. Thanksgiving for the benefits of the Lord; 3. Meditation on our personal needs; 4. Meditation on the needs of our neighbor. Here he connects Song of Solomon 2: 14 with the wounded side of the Lord, as did much of the Ancient Church. The dove in the cleft of the rock is the believer who finds refuge in the bloody wounds of the Savior. This connection is quite appropriate when one realizes that the Song of Solomon speaks of the relationship between Christ and His bride the church.

A refuge has been prepared for me in the satisfaction
You (Christ) made for my sins. I have a refuge in Your

intercession for me at the right hand of the Father. Take flight, O my soul, to the morning light, and as a dove, hide in the clefts of the rock (Sg. Sol. 2:14), that is, take refuge in the wounds of Christ your Savior! Hide in this rock until the wrath of the Lord passes by. And you will find rest in this refuge. You will find protection. You will find acquittal, Amen. (Johann Gerhard, *The Daily Exercise of Piety*, [1:7] p. 31)

Gerhard's longer and later devotional book *Schola Pietatis* (1622-1623) was published as an alternative to Arndt's *True Christianity*. Arndt had been criticized for employing material from individuals such as Paracelsus and Weigel who made use of improper non-Christian elements in their mysticism. Arndt did not fall into this error, but his use of material from these individuals made his work suspect for some. In the *Schola Pietatis* Gerhard used the Bible as his main source of examples and concentrated on the means of grace as the source of the mystical union. He showed why Christians should seek piety and what constitutes new obedience. The first book is an admonition to holiness and contains incentives for piety. The second book teaches the procedure and methods of fostering holiness. The third book describes the procedure for fostering holiness on the basis of the first table of the Law. The fourth book discusses the Christian virtues of the fourth, fifth, and sixth commandments. The fifth book is an appendix to the explanation of the sixth commandment and the virtues of the remaining commandments. *Schola Pietatis* was reprinted several times during the seventeenth century but never became as popular as *Sacred Meditations* or *True Christianity*.

III. Themes in the Theology of Gerhard

Gerhard maintained the preeminence of the **formal and material principles** of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as do all confessional Lutherans. Our formal principle is the inspired, inerrant Holy Scriptures, the only source of faith, doctrine, and life. There had been no need for a complete statement on inspiration in the Confessions. There was agreement concerning this important

truth at the time of the Reformation. But by his time Gerhard found a need for treating the subject systematically. This he did in his *Locus de Scriptura*, 1610. (*Loci Theologici*, Locus 1, Para. 305, 367; *Tractatus de Legitima Scripturae Sacrae Interpretatione*, p. 25) This inspired Word of God was for Gerhard not only the source and norm of doctrine but also the power of God unto salvation. (Romans 1:16) The Word of God in all its forms, written, oral, and visible, is a powerful means of grace. Christ is the heart and center of this divine Word. “The swaddling clothes of Christ are the Holy Scriptures which are the paper swaddling clothes in which He has wrapped Himself. For the entire Scripture advances Christ. He is the kernel of the Scripture.” ([*Denn die ganze Schrift gehet auf Christum, derselbige ist der Kern der Schrift.*] Johann Gerhard, *Postille* I:67)

The material principle of the Evangelical Lutheran Church is justification by faith alone without the deeds of the law. A person is justified or declared righteous not by anything he does or accomplishes but alone through the imputed righteousness of Christ that is ours by faith. On the basis of Christ’s sacrifice and His perfect keeping of the law in our place (Galatians 3:13; Romans 5: 18-19) God does not impute (count or reckon) sin but declares the whole world righteous or innocent. “God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them.” (II Corinthians 5:19; Romans 4:5; Romans 5:18; Romans 3:23-24) This verdict of not guilty the Holy Ghost brings to the individual through the means of grace and is obtained by faith. (Romans 10:17; I Corinthians 12:3) The doctrine of justification, the central article of the faith, is the clear teaching of Gerhard in his *Loci Theologici*. (*Loci Theologici*, Locus 16, Para. 199, 202, 203) This is merely a short summary of these important doctrines. However, the purpose of this presentation is not to expound these doctrines but rather to address a number of less familiar themes in Gerhard.

A. Gerhard and the Care of Souls

For Gerhard dogmatics and all theology had as its primary purpose the care of souls. Every doctrine has a practical application

for salvation. (*Theologia est Habitus Practicus*) In the *Loci Theologici* each locus ends with a discussion of the pastoral or practical use (*Usus Practicus*) of the particular doctrine presented. The basis for the care of souls is the incarnation and the redemptive work of Christ for our salvation. All pastoral care finds its source in the **joyful exchange** (*der fröhliche Wechsel*) as Gerhard indicates:

Christ could have assumed a human nature in a different manner, or at the very least could have been born with greater glory; however, it pleased Him so to humble Himself that He could exalt us, for by His poverty we became rich. ([2 Corinthians 8:9] Johann Gerhard, *Postille*, I, p. 57; see also *Postille*, I, pp. 101,111) Wonderful, indeed, is the exchange Thou dost make; our sins Thou takest upon Thyself, and Thy righteousness Thou dost impute to us; the death due us for our transgressions Thou dost Thyself suffer, and in turn dost bestow eternal life upon us. [*Mirabilis omnino commutatio: transfers in te peccata nostra, et donas tuam justitiam; mortem nobis debitam tibi irrogas, et donas nobis vitam.*] (Johann Gerhard, *Sacred Meditations*, 10:55; see also *Sacred Meditations*, 8:47)

In the holy incarnation the divine Logos assumed human nature which never subsisted alone into His divine person so that the two natures are so intimately united as to form one undivided and indivisible person. He is both God and man in one person. He became poor and lowly assuming our flesh to raise us to His divine glory and eternal life in heaven. He took upon Himself our sin, our suffering, and death so that we might be as He is, sharing in His righteousness, divine life, and salvation. Gerhard writes, “The Son of God came down from heaven, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (Galatians 4:5) God became man, that man might become a partaker of divine grace and of the divine nature.” ([II Peter 1: 4] Johann Gerhard, *Sacred Meditations*, 14:76) This wonderful treasure accomplished for all on the cross and announced to all by His glorious resurrection is brought to us personally through the means of grace and is received by faith or trust alone in the Savior which is worked, strengthened, and preserved through those same

This salvific work that is the heart of pastoral care, as Gerhard notes in his *Testament* of 1603, is always to be seen in a Trinitarian context. God the Father who created us when we were not and still preserves us, in love sent His Son as our Redeemer. The second person, Jesus Christ, redeemed us from sin, death, and destruction through His rose-colored blood. The Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, brought the benefits of the cross to us in the means of grace and works faith and new life in us to receive that benefit. (C.J. Böttcher, *Das Leben Dr. Johann Gerhards*, p. 23)

Gerhard and the Mystical Union

When faith in the Savior is worked in the heart by the Spirit, an individual is totally forgiven on the basis of Christ's atoning sacrifice and he stands justified before God. At the same time new spiritual life is worked, our new man, and the entire Trinity makes its dwelling in us. (John 14:22-24) This indwelling of the Holy Trinity is referred to as the mystical union (*unio mystica*). The mystical union is the union between God and justified man wherein the Holy Trinity dwells in the believer substantially and operates in the same by His gracious presence. Thus the believer has union and communion with God, partaking in the divine. (II Peter 1:4) This union is effected by God Himself through the means of grace, Word and Sacrament.

The doctrine of the mystical union as employed by Gerhard, the devotional writers, and the dogmaticians is seen by some as a perversion of Lutheran doctrine and the advent of pietism but nothing could be further from the truth. Our Lutheran Confessions speak of gracious indwelling of the Trinity by faith in the elect who have been justified through the imputation of Christ's righteousness. (FC SD III, 54, *Triglotta*, p. 933-935; see also Luther, WA 28:25-32,39-41) Philipp Nicolai (1556-1608), the great Lutheran hymn writer and preacher, made considerable use of this doctrine in providing comfort for Christians:

Above all this, the fact that God out of great love dwells and rests in His elect and again that they rest tenderly

and sweetly in Him and eternally rejoice, this indwelling of God in His elect produces great benefits and much heavenly fruit as Christ says: He who remains in me and I in him the same brings forth much fruit. [*Ueber dies alles, dass Gott aus grosser Liebe in seinen Auserwählten wohnt and ruht, und sie hinwiederum sanft und lieblich in ihm ruhen und sich ewiglich erfreuen, schafft diese Einwohnung Gottes in seinen Heiligen auch grossen Nutzen and viel himmlische Früchte, wie Christus sagt: Wer in mir bleibt, und ich in ihm, der bringt viel Früchte.*] (Philipp Nicolai, *Freudenspiegel des ewigen Lebens*, p. 67)

Therefore we see that the mystical union was not an innovation of Arndt though definitely taught by him (*True Christianity* II, 6), but rather it is a scriptural doctrine embraced by all the Lutheran fathers.

The biblical doctrine of the mystical union as taught by Gerhard is not to be confused with the false mysticism of the enthusiasts and the pagan world. In the mystical union the distinction between the divine and human is not confused. The soul of man is not absorbed into the divine. Rather Gerhard explicates the mystical union using the analogy of the personal union in Christ. As the human and the divine in Christ are united into one person and yet the natures remain distinct, so in the mystical union the Trinity makes its dwelling in man but God and man remain distinct. There is no essential or substantial union.

As the personal communication of attributes arises out of the personal union of the divine nature and the human nature in Christ so out of the spiritual union of Christ and the church, of God the Lord and a believing soul, arises a spiritual communion not only in the kingdom of glory and in eternal life but also in the kingdom of grace and in this life. Therefore Saint Peter says concerning the true believers that they have become partakers in the divine nature. [*Wie aus der persönlichen Vereinigung der göttlichen und menschlichen Natur in Christo entstehet die persönliche Mittheilung der Eigenschafften / also*

*entstehet aus der geistlichen Vereinigung Christi und der Kirchen / Gottes des Herrn und einer gläubigen Seele / eine geistliche Gemeinschaft / nicht allein im Reich der Herrlichkeit und im ewigen Leben / sondern auch im Reich der Gnaden und in diesem Leben / Dannenhero S. Petrus 2. Epistel 1. v. 4. von den wahren Gläubigen spricht / dass sie der Göttlichen Natur sind theilhaftig worden.] (Johann Gerhard, *Postilla Salomonaea*; Johann Steiger, *Johann Gerhard*, p. 97)*

This gracious union with God is conveyed and preserved through the means of grace. Many of the medieval mystics and Reformed enthusiasts believed that outward means were unimportant in the union with the divine. In other words the Spirit conveys and maintains this union without external means. Contrary to this Gerhard continually preserves the connection between the mystical union and the means of grace. Finally in the mysticism of Gerhard man does not climb to God through contemplation but God Himself descends to us in the manger and the cross. Christ unites us with Himself in the Word, He clothes us with Himself in Baptism, and He feeds us with Himself in the Holy Supper so that we have union and communion with the divine.

Motifs of the Mystical Union

The mystical union is often expressed by the devotional writers and the dogmaticans with the **nuptial motif**. This is based on the second chapter of Hosea, where the Lord speaks to His Old Testament church, "I will betroth you to Me forever; yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in lovingkindness and mercy; I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know the Lord." (Hosea 2:21-22) As husband and wife become one flesh, so Christ unites Himself to His bride the church and to each believing soul, giving her all His divine gifts and taking upon Himself her burden of sin. The bride by nature was naked and bare but He clothed her with the garments of salvation and covered her with a robe of righteousness. (Isaiah 61:10) He washed her stains away in Baptism, the holy laver of regeneration (Ephesians 5:

26) and He continues to feed her with His own body and blood unto eternal life. (Johann Gerhard, *Sacred Meditations*, 13:71-75) “The Holy Spirit is called the pledge which God has given us (II Corinthians 1:22) or as it actually says: a dowry. As a bridegroom unites himself with his dear bride in marriage through a wedding ring, so God the Lord when He becomes engaged to us through faith (Hosea 2:20) gives us this pledge, the dowry of the Holy Spirit.” (Johann Gerhard, *Postille* I:486)

In his pastoral care Gerhard makes considerable use of the picture of the **wounded side of the Lord**. This picture was used already by Augustine and it was used throughout church history. (Augustine, *Tractate on John* 120,2; P. Schaff, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. VII, pp. 434-435) On that first Good Friday when the Roman soldiers came to break the legs of those crucified to hasten their death, they found that Jesus was already dead. Therefore they did not break his bones. “Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus’ side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water.” (John 19:34) Gerhard sees this occurrence at the cross fulfilling the words of Zechariah, the Prophet, “And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son (Zechariah 12:10) . . . On that day a fountain will be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and impurity.” (Zechariah 13:1) The God-man, Jesus Christ, the Almighty Himself, was pierced on the cross for our salvation. The blood and water from His wounded side has provided that wonderful cleansing fountain for sin and uncleanness of which Zechariah speaks. It can wash away each stain and mark, each spot and wrinkle. His holy precious blood is the source of redemption for the whole world. (1 John 1:7; 2:2)

That fountain of salvation, opened just moments after His death, where full redemption was accomplished, continues to flow for us today in the blood and the water: in the water of Baptism, the blood of the Lord’s Supper, and in His Word which is spirit and life. Here the Lord comes to us with all His blessings as St. John

indicates, “This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.” (I John 5:6) The blood and water flowing from the Savior’s side point to the two Sacraments and indicate that the blessings of the Sacraments have their source in the cross. Baptism and the other means of grace indeed flow from the cross of Christ and make present for us all the benefits of Christ’s redemptive sacrifice. (Johann Gerhard, *Taufe und Abendmahl*, p. 6,10)

The means of grace indeed flow from the wounded side of the Lord and are the true medicine for the cure of souls. At the same time Gerhard views the wounded side as the hiding place where the burdened sinner can find shelter and be united with the loving Savior. As St. Paul does, he connects the rock smitten in the wilderness with Christ. (I Corinthians 10:4) Jesus is the Rock of Ages from whose side flows the double cure. Gerhard then adds to this picture the cleft in the rock of Song of Solomon 2:14 where one is to fly as a dove for shelter. Here our soul can fly as a dove and hide in the cleft of the rock, that is, take refuge in His wounded side until all the stormy blasts of life are over. (Johann Gerhard, *The Daily Exercise of Piety*, [1:7] p. 31; see pages 302-303 above) Gerhard writes, “I hear a voice in Canticles (2:14), which bids me, hide in the clefts of the rock. Thou art the immovable rock (I Corinthians 10: 4), and Thy wounds its clefts; in them I will hide me against the accusations of the whole world.” (Johann Gerhard, *Sacred Meditations*, 1:15)

Finally Gerhard draws together the wounded side of the Lord and the nuptial motif. “You have a type of how the Lord Christ was to have His side opened up by a spear in Adam, who had his side opened by God, and from the rib which was taken from him was crafted a woman. Thus, as Christ fell into death’s sleep on the cross, from His opened side flowed blood and water—the two Holy Sacraments—from which the Church, Christ’s Bride, was built up.” (Johann Gerhard, *An Explanation of the History of the Suffering and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ*, p. 30) As Adam’s bride was taken out of his side while he slept (Genesis 2:21), so the second Adam’s bride, the bride of Christ, is cleansed and formed through the waters of Baptism, the blood of the Lord’s Supper, and His Word which is

spirit and life. This corresponds to what issued from the Savior's wounded side during His three day's sleep in death. (John 19:34) Therefore, Jesus can say of His bride, the church, as Adam said of Eve the mother of our race: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." (Genesis 2:23) The church is so intimately united with Christ through the means of grace that she is one flesh with Him. (Ephesians 5:32)

The Benefits of the Mystical Union

The mystical union of Christ with the believer is an important component in Gerhard's pastoral care. At times Gerhard uses the mystical union as a warning in connection with his application of the Law. The believer should not banish the Holy Spirit from his heart and destroy the blessed union with God by unholy living:

But as the Holy Spirit united the divine and human natures in Christ by His own overshadowing power (Luke 1:35), so also by the outpouring of His gracious gifts upon us He unites us to God and God to us. As long as the Holy Spirit abides in a man, filling him with His gracious gifts, so long does that man abide in a holy union with God. And just as soon as a man through sin falls away from faith and love, and banishes the Holy Spirit from his heart, he is alienated from God, and the blessed union between God and his soul is destroyed. (Johann Gerhard, *Sacred Meditations*, 22:121)

Gerhard reminds the Christian that every soul is either a bride of Christ or the devil's whore. There is no middle ground. Either the soul clings to Christ the heavenly bridegroom in Christian service and obedience or it lives in adultery. Using the same picture language in a slightly different manner he admonishes that the one who loves sin and willingly sins against the conscience is married to the daughter of the devil and receives the devil as his father. (Johann Gerhard, *Schola Pietatis*, 1:129) This is a powerful warning not to turn our backs on Christ the heavenly bridegroom with whom we are united by faith.

While Gerhard at times uses the mystical union as a warning he also employs it to incite Christians to do good works. Out of thanks for all that Christ has done for us, saving us from hell's destruction, and making us the dwelling place of the blessed Trinity, we will strive to live as those who are the divine children of God. We are the temple of the living God, therefore we will desire to live as those in whom the Spirit of God resides. (Johann Gerhard, *An Explanation of the History of the Suffering and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ*, pp. 132-133)

Therefore God's Son became man so that we might partake in the divine nature through Him (II Peter 1:4) and become the children of God. (John 1:12) We were received as the sons of God, so it is only proper that we should live in divine childlike obedience. We have partaken of the divine nature so we also must lead divine lives according to the example of Enoch. (Genesis 5:22) Therefore the divine nature was personally united with the assumed human nature of Christ, so that our souls would be again united with God spiritually. But where there is such a spiritual marriage and union there is found true holiness. For where sin separates us from God and one another there such spiritual union cannot take place. ([Isaiah 59:2] Johann Gerhard, *Schola Pietatis*, 1:42)

Many seek rest for the soul in earthly riches, many seek rest for the soul in pleasure, and many seek rest in worldly honors. But each of these things is found wanting. Without Jesus, life has no meaning and purpose and our end is destruction. Without Him there will always be something missing in our life. There will be a craving within that will not be satisfied with wealth, power, and prestige. Only Jesus can the heartfelt longing still, as St. Augustine wrote, "Our hearts are never at rest until they are at rest in You." (*Et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te*. [Augustine, *Confessions*, 1:10]) Through union and communion with Him as our Savior we have peace and purpose in this life and the blessed hope of the life to come.

The end of a human soul is God Himself, since it is created indeed in His image. It can never then be at rest

and peace, except as it attains the end of its being, that is God. As the life of the body is the soul, so the life of the soul is God; as therefore that soul truly lives in which God graciously dwells, so that soul is spiritually dead in which God dwells not. But how can there be rest to a dead soul? This first death in sin necessarily involves that second death unto eternal damnation (Rev. 20:6). (Johann Gerhard, *Sacred Meditations*, 32:183)

The primary purpose of the mystical union in all of Gerhard's writings is to comfort Christians in the burdens of this life and to assure them of the blessed hope of everlasting life. The Christian faces many conflicts and struggles in life but because Christ dwells in him he knows that God is for him, therefore nothing can be against him.

To me You were given—shall not also all things be given to me? My nature is glorified greater in You than it was disgraced in Adam through sin. Because You assumed into the unity of Your person [Christ has two natures, divine and human, in one person] that which was only accidentally weakened by Satan, You truly are flesh of my flesh and bone of my bone [Eph. 5:30]. You are my brother. What can You deny to me, to whom You are most intimately joined by the same essence of flesh and by the feeling of fraternal love? You are the Bridegroom [Mt. 22:2], who according to the good pleasure of the Heavenly Father, bound the human nature to Yourself as a bride by means of a personal covenant. With a thankful soul I proclaim and acknowledge that I too am invited to the celebration of this marriage. (Johann Gerhard, *The Daily Exercise of Piety*, [2:4] pp. 41-42)

Devotional Themes

In his devotional literature Gerhard is influenced by the Book of Psalms in Holy Scripture. Many of the psalms are written in the form of a conversation with the soul. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my

soul, and forget not all His benefits who forgives all your iniquities. . .” (Psalm 103:1-2; see also Psalm 42:6; Psalm 116:7) Gerhard often writes his devotions as a conversation between Christ and the believer or between the believer and his soul. In this literature Christ or the believer speaks to the believer’s soul concerning the comforting truths of Scripture. Here in a dialog with his soul he proclaims evangelical comfort to his wounded heart.

Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou still doubting the mercy of God? Remember thy Creator. Who hath created thee without any concurrence of thine own will? . . . Will not He who cared for thee before thou hadst any being care for thee now, after He hath formed thee in His own image? I am a creature of God; to my Creator then do I betake myself. What if my nature is corrupted by the devil; and pierced and wounded by my sins, as by murderous robbers (Luke 10:30), yet my Creator still lives. He who could create me at first can now restore me. He who created me without sin, can now remove from me all the sin which has entered into me and has permeated my whole being, either through the temptation of the devil, through Adam’s fault, or through my own actual transgressions. (Johann Gerhard, *Sacred Meditations*, 8:45)

An interesting aspect of Gerhard’s devotional literature is his gathering of Scripture passages. At times he collects many sections of Scripture into a compact form as a special comfort for the Christian. The Scripture, to be sure, is filled with comfort but at times it is difficult for the burdened Christian to cull out the pertinent passages. Therefore, Gerhard combines consoling passages as a balm to soothe the burdened heart. In a funeral sermon he brings the mourners this special consolation:

If I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for You Lord are with me. (Psalm 23:4) The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom should I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, whom should I fear? (Psalm 27:1) On God I will hope and I will not fear what

flesh can do to me. (Psalm 56:4) Who sits under the protection of the Most High and remains under the shadow of the Almighty, he speaks to the Lord, "My confidence and my fortress, my God in whom I hope." (Psalm 91:1) Here also belongs another beautiful passage. Fear not, I have redeemed you, I have called you by name, you are mine. Then when you go through the water I will be by you, so that the streams should not drown you. And when you go through the fire you should not be burned and the flames should not set you afire. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. (Isaiah 43:1-3) All this St. Paul summarizes when he says, "Is God for us, who may be against us?" ([Romans 8:28] Johann Gerhard, *Sämtliche Leichenpredigten*, p. 97)

The Christian is to diligently read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the life-giving Word as the ancient collect directs. He will meditate on and contemplate upon the Word; that does not mean one quick reading and then off to other things. No, he will contemplate the Word and inwardly digest it. Gerhard, in the *Schola Pietatis*, says that the Christian will ruminant on the Word or roll it over in his mind as a cow chews on its cud. You have seen a cow resting in the pasture quietly chewing away. Thus the Christian will take time to mediate and ruminant or chew on the Word. Gerhard reminds us that Isaac went into the fields in the evening of the day to pray and mediate on the truths of the Lord. (Genesis 24:63) David said that when he lay on his bed he thought about the Lord and when he arose he spoke of Him. (Psalm 63:6) All these examples are to remind a Christian that he is to study and meditate upon the Word. Gerhard maintained the truth of *Oratio, Meditatio, et Tentatio*, just as Luther did. (Johann Gerhard, *Schola Pietatis*, 2:291-292)

To assist one in the practice of Christian piety and sanctification Gerhard reminds the Christian that there are five means of help or support. These five are: 1) Hearing or reading the Word of God (*Verbi divine auditus sive lectio, die Anhörung oder Lesung dess Göttlichen Worts*) 2) Receiving the holy Lord's Supper (*Eucharistiae usurpatio, die Niessung dess Heiligen Abendmals*) 3) Holy meditation (*Sancta meditatio, die heilige Betrachtung*) 4) Zealous, diligent, prayer, and godly appeal (*Seria oratio, eiveriges*

fleissiges Gebet und Göttliche Anruffung) 5) The subjugation and mastery of the body (*Corporis castigatio, dess Leibes Beteubung und Zehmung*). (Johann Gerhard, *Schola Pietatis*, 2:272)

Gerhard describes eight kinds of meditations in the *Schola Pietatis* that a Christian may use in his daily life. In each type of meditation he uses different organizational principles for the material. In the **first** type of meditation one is to consider the Creator and His creation. He created all things and still preserves them. He has created us, redeemed us, and sanctified us making us His dwelling place. Out of thanks for all that our Creator has done for us we will strive to practice true godliness. In the **second** type of meditation one is to center his attention on the Lord, himself, and on his neighbor. When he thinks of God he remembers all the blessings that he has received from His fatherly hand. When he thinks of himself he remembers his many sins and great need. When he thinks of his neighbor he remembers his neighbor's many needs and the prayers that he should direct to the Lord for his neighbor's good. Gerhard's **third** type of meditation centers in the two books from which we learn the knowledge of God, nature and the Scripture. The book of nature shows us that God is great and powerful who has provided a wonderful creation. However this knowledge can never save us. Only the Bible points us to our only Savior from sin, Jesus Christ. The **fourth** type of meditation considers the days of creation and what God did on each day. For example, on the fourth day God created the heavenly bodies, the sun, the moon, and the stars. This reminds us that Christ is the true light of the world who has enlightened our hearts with the rays of His Gospel. He is the Sun of righteousness with healing in His wings. (Malachi 4:2) In the **fifth** type Gerhard refers to a statement of one of the church fathers. He said that each day he read a book that had three pages, one red, one white, and one black. The red page points to the blood of Christ that covers our sin. The white page points to the eternal joy of the elect in heaven. The black page points to the sorrow of the damned in hell. In connection with this devotion Gerhard has one mediate on the passion and death of our Lord for our salvation. The **sixth** type of meditation may be entitled the three-things devotion. In meditation one should contemplate three things: the past, the present, and the

future, and in each one of these the Christian should contemplate on three things. For example in the present one should think about the brevity of his life, the difficulty of salvation facing the constant attacks of the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh (Philippians 2: 12), and the small number of those that are saved. (Matthew 7:13-14) A meditation of this kind is also found in *Sacred Meditations* 28: 158. The **seventh** type of meditation reminds us to consider these things above us: the eye that sees all, the ear that hears all, and the book in which all is written. Then the Christian is to remember what is in us, what is around us, and what is below us. (Johann Gerhard, *Schola Pietatis*, 2:294-313)

The **eighth** type of meditation is Gerhard's spiritual clockwork. Here he recommends the association of some spiritual idea with each hour of the day so that the life-giving Word will always be in our minds and on our lips. At one o'clock, the Christian should think about the one mediator between God and man. At two, he should meditate on the Son and the Holy Ghost given by the Father, the chief doctrines of the Bible, the Law and the Gospel, the two commandments which summarize the Law (Matthew 22: 37-38), and on the two Sacraments. Three o'clock should call to mind the three persons of the Trinity and four o'clock the four kinds of sin. When the clock strikes five one should consider the five wounds of Christ, the five senses, and the five enemies of the Christian—the devil, sin, the world, death, and hell. At six o'clock one will consider the six days of creation, the six periods of life, and the six types of sacrifices in the Old Testament. At the seventh hour the seventh day comes to mind. This is the day of rest which reminds of our true rest in Jesus Christ. The eighth hour points one to the eighth day on which Christ was circumcised and named Jesus, which means Savior, so that we may obtain spiritual circumcision and eternal salvation. At nine o'clock we remember that Christ died for our salvation at the ninth hour. When the clock strikes ten the Christian is pointed to the Ten Commandments which show him his sin and which he strives to follow out of thanks for salvation. At eleven o'clock the Christian remembers the eleven disciples to whom the Office of the Keys was given in John 20:23. Finally at twelve o'clock we call to mind the twelve-year-old Jesus in the

Temple who showed forth His divine wisdom among the teachers, the twelve Apostles, the twelve sons of Jacob, and the Tree of Life bearing twelve kinds of fruit. ([Revelation 22:2], Johann Gerhard, *Schola Pietatis*, 2:314-321)

In each of these eight types of meditation earthly things are to lead the reader to spiritual truths. Earthly everyday occurrences should be continually pointing the Christian to the Scripture, the source of life and truth. Here earthly concrete realities are reminders that direct us to heavenly wisdom. In this manner these earthly things receive spiritual significance that assist in the upbuilding and nourishing of the inner man. As a wooden cross receives spiritual meaning through its association with Christ's passion that strengthens the believer, so in Gerhard's spiritual clockwork the hours of the day receive spiritual significance that strengthens us in our faith in the Savior. This is the purpose of each of these types of meditation.

B. Gerhard and Typology

The Lutheran Church maintains that only the literal sense of Scripture is valid for the establishment of doctrine. This statement is true and correct. One cannot base doctrine on a typological interpretation of Scripture. For example, the fact that nothing should remain of the Passover lamb (the Passover meal is a type of the Holy Supper [Exodus 12:10]) should not be used as a proof passage for the consumption of the *reliquiae* in the Holy Supper. At the same time, for Gerhard this does not preclude a homiletical or a devotional use of Scripture employing allegorical, tropological, and anagogical interpretations. These uses are different applications of the one Spirit intended meaning of Scripture. Concerning this he writes:

There is only one proper and legitimate sense to each Scripture passage, a sense intended by the Holy Spirit and derived from the natural meaning of the words; and only from this one literal sense can any valid argumentation be brought forth. Allegorical, tropological, anagogical interpretations are not different meanings but different

inferences drawn from the one meaning or different adaptations to the one meaning and sense that the writings express. ([Johann Gerhard, *Loci Theologici*, Locus 1, Para. 67] Preus, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, Vol. I, p. 326)

In his *Postille* Gerhard speaks of the mystical manner or method of teaching (*modum docendi mysticum*). Here the teacher is to compare the history of the Old Testament with the New Testament so that one sees Christ and His teaching in the Old Testament and is drawn to Him. Many pictures or foreshadowings of Christ and His work are found when one reads the Old Testament in the light of the New. This is the spiritual or mystical sense of Scripture that builds up and strengthens the inner man. (Johann Gerhard, *Postille, Vorrede*, p. ix)

The Meaning of Typology

Types are Old Testament pointers which direct one to the New Testament concrete realities. God preordained certain persons, events, and institutions in the Old Testament to prefigure corresponding persons, events, and institutions in the New. These types point to and anticipate their matching historical New Testament antitypes. The antitype is no mere repetition of the type, but is always greater than its prefigurement. This type-antitype relationship can be compared to an object reflected in a mirror. The type is the mirror image or picture of the New Testament reality. Typological exegesis then is based on the conviction that God the Father determined that certain persons and events in the history of Israel would prefigure what He would accomplish in the fullness of time in the person of His only begotten Son. On the other hand allegory gives new meaning to a particular thing in the Old or New Testament for the purpose of application and illustration. For example David's victory over Goliath typologically refers to Christ's victory over Satan while allegorically it may be understood as the victory of the spirit over the flesh within us. (Johann Gerhard, *Loci Theologici*, Locus 1, Para. 69; see also Johann Steiger, *Fünf Zentralthemen der Theologie Luthers und seiner Erben*, pp. 194ff.; Bengt Hägglund, *Die Heilige*

Typological Themes in Gerhard

The Exodus Theme: Gerhard compares Israel in Exodus with God's New Testament people as St. Paul does in I Corinthians 10:1-4. The people of Israel were enslaved by Pharaoh in Egypt. Like Israel in Egypt we, by nature, were hopelessly enslaved in sin. Satan, that cruel Pharaoh, so controlled us that we did his every bidding and even did it willingly. Yet Jesus, the Valiant One, came to our defense. In the battle of the ages on the cross, He suffered all that we deserved for sin so that He might crush the old evil foe, our cruel task master, and free us from his tyranny. Jesus is the true Passover Lamb who came to save all people from everlasting death with His blood. As Israel became God's people passing through the waters of the Red Sea, so we became a part of spiritual Israel, the Holy Christian Church, passing through the waters of Baptism. We are now in this present wilderness where we are tempted by the evil one as Israel of old. Yet, all the way through life's wandering, the Lord Jesus feeds us with the heavenly manna, the life-giving Word and the Holy Sacrament of His body and blood. Here He strengthens us to face all the difficulties of life until we cross the Jordan of death reaching the heavenly Canaan, the promised land with milk and honey blessed. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, pp. 9-10, 215-216)

The Adam/Second Adam Theme: The Adam/Christ Typology permeates the New Testament, but the most comprehensive summary of this typology is found in I Corinthians 15 and Romans 5. In Romans 5, St. Paul compares and contrasts Adam and Christ indicating that Christ is infinitely greater. The whole human race fell into sin in Adam's fall. But in the mystery of the incarnation, the second Adam came, who brought new life to man. He lived a perfect and harmonious life with God and man to restore us to the original righteousness and innocence of the creation. Then on the cross He gave His life as a ransom for all. All that the first Adam lost in the fall the Second Adam restored in Himself—and more,

eternal life in heaven. After Gerhard compares the fall of Adam and the resurrection of the Lord he continues: "Through this it is sufficiently shown that Christ's resurrection is a certain witness that everything we lost in and through Adam has been restored through Him." (Johann Gerhard, *Postille* I:341-342)

And as the first Adam was created from earth when the earth still had not been cursed, so Christ the heavenly Adam desired to assume a human nature out of such flesh and blood from which through the power of the Holy Ghost the poison of sin had been removed and which was subject no longer to the curse. (Johann Gerhard, *Postille* I:55) The first Adam had lost the treasure of heavenly goods through eating of the fruits of the forbidden tree. Therefore the second and heavenly Adam has desired to ordain the eating and drinking His body and blood through which He again obtained the lost heavenly goods. (Johann Gerhard, *Postille* I:326; see also Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, p. 373)

As he expounds the second Adam theme, Gerhard connects the creation, John 19:34, the Sacraments, and the bride of Christ, the church. As Adam's bride was taken out of his side while he slept (Genesis 2:21), so the second Adam's bride, the bride of Christ, was taken from His side as He slept in death. (See pages 310-311 above)

The Greater David Theme: When the lives of David and Jesus are compared, we see many amazing similarities. They were both born in Bethlehem and originated from the stem of Jesse. (Isaiah 11) As David shepherded the flocks of his father and fought for the defense of the sheep (I Samuel 17:34-36) so Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep...and I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand." (John 10) David defeated the giant Goliath, freeing Israel from the bondage of the Philistines, but Jesus defeated a much greater giant, the Devil, freeing all people from the bondage of sin and death. David endured many years of humiliation treated like a common criminal by Saul, but was finally raised to the throne of all Israel. So Jesus after His

Great Passion arose triumphant from the grave and was raised to the position of power and authority at the right hand of God. (Johann Gerhard, *Postille* II:32-33)

In II Samuel 15, it is recorded that David, as he was fleeing from his son Absalom, left Jerusalem, crossed over the brook of Kidron and went up the Mount of Olives with weeping and sadness. This sad departure by David was a type of the departure which the Son of David, Jesus Christ, with similar sadness and trembling, would one day take across the brook of Kidron [and] up the Mount of Olives as the time of His suffering finally arrived, His spoiled children running from Him for their lives. (Johann Gerhard, *An Explanation of the History of the Suffering and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ*, pp. 45-46)

Other Types and Pictures: In his passion sermons Gerhard, by his voluminous use of Old Testament prophecies and types, shows that the Old Testament is indeed the book of Christ.

Also appropriate to the historical contemplation of Christ's suffering is the diligent examination of the prophecies and types of the Old Testament which point, in general, to the history of the sufferings, or point especially to specific portions of it, and then compare them with the [passion] history. For since St. Paul testifies in 1 Cor. 15 that Christ died "according to the Scriptures," it undeniably follows that in the Scriptures of the Old Testament there had to have been a prior proclamation of the suffering and death of Christ. St. Peter even more clearly verifies this in the first chapter of his first epistle: the Spirit of Christ, which was in the prophets, had previously testified to the sufferings which Christ went through. Thus, in the first Gospel promise about the woman's Seed in Gen. 3, it is announced that the hellish snake would sting Him in the heel. This heel-prick is none other than the sufferings of Christ. Psalm 16 says of the Messiah: I must suffer on behalf of you. This Psalm is applied to Christ. In Acts 2 and 13 [and] in Psa. 22 are described the abusive words which the Jews poured out against Christ. Judas'

betrayal is prophesied in Psa. 41 and 55, and in Psa. 69 it is announced how Christ was given to drink of gall and vinegar in His great thirst. In Isa. 50 are prophesied the beating and insulting of Christ with which He was blasphemed. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah looks at the whole passion of Christ. In Zec. 11 are mentioned the 30 pieces of silver for which Christ was sold; in Zec. 12, the opening [piercing] of His side. There are similar glorious types of the suffering of Christ in the Old Testament, as, for example, in Joseph, who was sold by his own brothers (Gen. 37); in the fetters of Samson (Jdg. 16); in the offering up of Isaac, who himself carried the wood (Gen. 22); in the previous lifting up of the serpent (Num. 21); in the Levitical sacrifices; in Jonah, who was in the belly of the whale-fish for three days and three nights (Jonah 2); in the opening of Adam's side as he slept (Gen. 2); in the Passover lamb (Exo. 12)—even as the Scriptures of the New Testament refer to certain of these same prophecies and types with clear words, [cf.] Mat. 12, John 3 and 19, Heb. 9. (Johann Gerhard, *An Explanation of the History of the Suffering and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ*, pp. 7-8)

C. The Sermons of Gerhard

Many of the writers in the Reformation era and the Post-Reformation era produced sermon books or postils. (The word *postil* is from the Latin phrase *post illa verba textus*, “after the words of the text,” a reference to the exposition of a text of Scripture just read, either the Gospel or Epistle lesson for the day.) These books were intended as a guide and an example for pastors in their preaching. They were also read publicly by pastors who did not have the proper education and ability to write an adequate sermon. Gerhard's *Postille* is a rich treasury of evangelical preaching filled with illustrations, pictures, and types.

The *Postille* is divided into three parts with an appendix. The first part includes sermons on the historic Gospels for the Sundays of Advent through Pentecost, the second part has sermons for the Trinity season, and the third part for the minor festivals of the

church year. The appendix contains twenty-nine sermons on free texts. A translation of one of these sermons from the appendix based on Psalm 42:2-3 is found in the *Lutheran Synod Quarterly*, Vol. 42, No. 4, pp. 240-251.

In the preface of the Gerhard's *Postille* he give a review of homiletics for the reader. He lists eleven methods of teaching or preaching that the pastor may use in his presentation of the text.

The **first** method he names is the grammatical method of teaching, which involves especially plucking out the explanation of the words and the emphasis of the statements. The **second** is the logical method of teaching which concerns itself very much with the divisions and subdivisions of the text. The **third** is the rhetorical method of teaching, which is interested in the magnificent style and rhetorical figures. The **fourth** is the histrionic method of teaching, which is most interested in the action; that is, in the dialog and gestures. The **fifth** is the historical way of teaching, and this gathers histories [or episodes] of every kind. The **sixth** is the ecclesiastical method of teaching, and it provides explanations and statements of the fathers. The **seventh** is the catechetical method of teaching, and it instills, after a clear explanation of the text, useful and suitable doctrines into the audience. The **eighth** is the scholastic method of teaching, and it treats thoroughly and in detail a single doctrine according to the rules of the method. **Ninth** is the refutatory method of teaching, and it frees the text from the corruptions of the adversaries. The **tenth** method of teaching is the mystical method, which looks to the edification of the inner person and takes special pleasure in appropriate allegories. The **eleventh** is the heroic method of teaching, which mixes doctrines into the explanation; and after a long digression, as it were, from the text, it returns appropriately to it in the custom of the blessed Luther in his Church and home *postilla*. After passing judgment on each of these modes of teaching, he shows that he has united the catechetical and mystical methods in these *postilla* as most suitable for edification. (E.R.Fischer, *The Life of John Gerhard*, pp. 380-381; see also Johann Gerhard, *Postille Vorrede*, pp. v-x)

The Christmas Sermons of Gerhard

These sermons are valuable resources for any pastor preaching in the Christmas season. They cut through the fluff and nostalgia of the holiday season and present the real reason for the season, the incarnate God who came for our salvation. An example of this is found in the following quote in which Gerhard explains why Jesus was born at night.

Relevant here also is [the point] that Christ was born in the winter time in the darkness of night. [The choice of time] indicates that the entire world was in total darkness and that the people were at the same time in darkness and in the shadow of death; but by this birth a light arose for them from the Lord, as Isaiah testifies in ch. 9, v. 2: **The people who were wandering in darkness, see a great Light, and upon those who live in a dark land shines daylight.** Joh. 1:5 – **The Light shines in the darkness.** Before Christ becomes born within us in a spiritual manner, there is nothing but complete darkness in our reason and heart. Also, love is actually grown cold in the same [i.e., in us, our reason and heart]; but when Christ is born therein in a spiritual manner, a light goes on within [us], which simultaneously enlightens [us] to confess God and inflames [us] to love God—as is written in Eph. 5:14 – **Wake up, you who sleep; thus Christ will enlighten you.** (Johann Gerhard, *Seven Christmas Sermons*, p. 7)

In his Christmas sermons Gerhard explicates the wonders of the incarnation for our salvation which is the main theme of the Christmas season. In addition he connects the Christmas event to our lives as he does below in speaking of a three-fold birth of Christ. The Christian desires that Christ be born in his heart through faith so that the blessings of Christ's incarnation can be received.

To begin with, it needs to be made known that the holy Scriptures hold before us a **three-fold birth of Christ**. The first is His eternal **divine birth** from the heavenly Father. The second is the **physical birth** by which He,

in the fullness of time, was born of Mary as a true Man. The third is the **spiritual birth** by which He becomes born in the hearts of the believers. The first takes place from everlasting to everlasting, it has no beginning or ending. The second occurred in the fullness of time. The third happens daily. (Johann Gerhard, *Seven Christmas Sermons*, p. 85)

The Passion Sermons of Gerhard

The Passion sermons of Gerhard point the Christian to the cross of Christ. When we look to the cross we first see the magnitude of our sin. Our sinful thoughts caused Him to wear the crown of thorns. Our sinful words caused the mockery and the spit in His face. Our sinful actions nailed Him to the accursed tree. We look to the cross and see the terribleness of our sins, but then we look again and see His great love that would not let us die. There He paid for all our sins in full, washing them into the depths of the sea. In Him there is full forgiveness for all. In his Passion sermons Gerhard helps the believer ponder anew and meditate on all that Christ did for our salvation. (Johann Gerhard, *An Explanation of the History of the Suffering and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ*, pp. 65-66) In the quotation below, the Jena Theologian touches on the motif of which he is quite fond, union with Christ and participation in the divine.

Christ is here condemned by a unanimous decision of the ecclesiastical court for confessing that He is the Son of God. Our first parents wanted to be like God. If this wrong was to be atoned for, if we were once again made to share in the true divine nature, 2 Pet. 1, and if we were again to be given the power to become the children of God, John 1, then, for that reason, the true only-begotten Son of God had to allow Himself here to be publicly condemned for confessing to be God's Son. So also the Lord publicly confesses that He thus suffers as the Christ, that is, as the truly anointed King and High Priest, and that He takes His kingdom upon His shoulder, Isa. 9. And, as the true High Priest, He intended to offer Himself up to God as a sweet fragrance. For that reason—since Christ is God's Son

[and] our King and eternal High Priest—His suffering and death has such a power that it serves as payment for our sin. Thus, to that end God disposes [so directs things] that in the midst of His passion Christ publicly confesses to be God's Son and our only King. (Johann Gerhard, *An Explanation of the History of the Suffering and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ*, pp. 133-134)

The Easter Sermons of Gerhard

The resurrection of our Lord is the high point of the Christian calendar and the church year. It declares to us that the Father has accepted His Son's sacrifice for sin and now there is complete forgiveness for the entire world. In the introduction to one of his Easter sermons Gerhard shows that the history of Jonah foreshadowed the death and resurrection of Christ.

Just as Jonah advised that one should toss him overboard into the sea in the midst of such violent tumult [so that] the sea would become calm. . .so also Christ Himself suggested in the counsel of the Holy Trinity that He wanted to assume human nature to stand in place of the human race and become a curse and cleansing sacrifice on its behalf. He Himself wanted to slash death's throat so that the huge thunderstorm and huge swells of God's wrath might be stilled, which then actually did occur. For the divine wrath which washed over all of us was stilled by the death of Christ. And thus, one Man died for all the people so that the entire world did not perish, John 11: 50. Furthermore, as Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights, so also Christ was stuck for three days and three nights in the mouth of death. . .But, just as Jonah did not remain in the belly of the fish, so also Christ did not remain in the grave. Rather, He ripped Himself loose from the power of death on the third day, after it became impossible that He could be held captive by him (death), as Peter says in Acts 2:24. Just as Jonah preached repentance to the people of Nineveh after he had been rescued from the belly of the fish, so also Christ let repentance and forgiveness of sins be preached by His

Apostles to the entire world after His resurrection, as He Himself testifies in Lk. 24:46. (Johann Gerhard, *Eleven Easter and Pentecost Sermons*, pp. 8-9)

D. Baptism in the Writings of Gerhard

In all of Gerhard's works one finds a high regard for the means of grace, the Word and the Sacraments. The means of grace bring the treasure of the cross to the individual living in the here and now and work and strengthen the faith to receive it and make it our own. The Jena Divine functions with the common definition of a Sacrament used by Lutherans. It is a sacred act instituted by God Himself in which certain visible elements are connected to the Word and through which He offers and bestows the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. With this definition there are only two Sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Gerhard speaks of Baptism as the Sacrament of Initiation and the Lord's Supper as the Sacrament of Confirmation. (*[Derselben Sacrament sind im neuen Testament zwei von Christi unserm Heilande eingesetzt: Das erste ist das Sacrament der heiligen Tauffe / dasselbe ist Sacramentum initiationis. Das ander ist das Sacrament des heiligen Abendmals / dasselbige ist Sacramentum confirmationis.]* Johann Gerhard, *Schola Pietatis*, 1:60) Gerhard's book *A Comprehensive Explanation of Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper* (1610) is an excellent overview of the scriptural and confessional doctrine of the Sacraments.

Types and Pictures of Baptism

Gerhard refers to many types and allusions to Baptism throughout the Scripture, such as: the creation, the flood, circumcision, and the pool of Bethesda. (Johann Gerhard, *Sacred Meditations*, 17:93-97) In a number of places he makes use of the Exodus theme as a type of Baptism. II Corinthians 10 is the source of this biblical type.

For just as the Israelites were led out of the land of Egypt through the Red Sea, so also we were rescued from

spiritual enslavement to the hellish “Pharaoh” through the salvation-giving water of Baptism. Conversely, just as Pharaoh and his whole horde were drowned in the Red Sea, so also the Old Adam with all his lusting and doings is drowned in holy Baptism. Subsequently, this leading out of the Red Sea is called a Baptism because the Israelites became bound to faith and obedience through this wondrous action by God and by His servant Moses. So also, in similar fashion, we became obligated to a life of service and obedience to Christ our Savior through holy Baptism. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord’s Supper*, pp. 9-10)

The Baptismal Command

The Sacraments are not human ideas or a development of the church, rather they are commanded by God. Gerhard maintains the divine institution of Baptism. This truth he teaches on the basis of Matthew 28 and other sections of Scripture.

As with all Sacraments, this Sacrament of Baptism was instituted by God Himself. For since God’s grace and heavenly goods are offered and imparted through the Sacraments, no one but God the Lord can institute Sacraments, since He alone can give power and divine accomplishments. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord’s Supper*, p. 21)

In a number of places the Jena Divine makes the connection between Christ’s Baptism and our Baptism.

Christ, with the touching of his most holy body in the water of holy Baptism, sanctified water for this Sacrament. He also came to Baptism as the Lamb of God on whom was laid the sins of the entire world. As our stand-in, He let Himself be washed from sin and placed into the water of holy Baptism all of His merits and righteousness so that we might thereby become clothed as with a garment of salvation. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord’s Supper*, p. 43)

The Nature of Baptism

The external element or the matter of Baptism is natural water. This truth is confirmed by St. Paul when he speaks of Baptism as the “the washing of water by the word.” (Ephesians 5:26) Gerhard assumes that God used water in Baptism because water was used in the Old Testament Levitical cleansings and because it is one of the most common elements in the world. The water of Baptism portrays the inner cleansing of the Spirit which He performs in, with and through Baptism. As water washes the dirt from our body, so in Baptism our sins are washed away. ([Acts 22:16] Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, p. 52-53) According to Gerhard water and only water is to be used in the Sacrament. Some have assumed that since any Christian may baptize in the case of an emergency one may also use a different element in the case of an emergency. Here Gerhard disagrees.

There is a vast difference between these two cases. For a servant who baptizes is not a vital part of Baptism; the efficient cause, especially the ministerial efficient cause, never enters the essence of that subject [*causa efficiens, præsertim ministerialis nunquam ingreditur rei essentiam*], but the water is matter and an essential part of holy Baptism. Therefore, someone other than an ordained servant of the Church may baptize in case of an emergency. However, there should not and may not be brought to Baptism a different external element than water, for one of the essential parts of Baptism would be altered in such a case. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, p. 55)

The Lutheran Church has always maintained that one particular mode or manner of Baptism is not commanded in the Scripture in contradistinction to another. In Mark 7:4 the verb *baptizein* is used to speak of “the washing of cups, pitchers, copper vessels, and couches” showing that this verb simply means “to wash in any manner.” Immersion is not the only proper way to baptize. Pouring and sprinkling may also be used. Gerhard makes this observation concerning John's Baptism.

John the Baptizer without a doubt also baptized that way, i.e., by pouring water over the heads of those he wanted to baptize. For since John openly baptized in the Jordan, it is not credible that he completely immersed his baptismal candidates into the water. Further, that they would be immersed in the Jordan with their clothes on seems unlikely. That the same huge horde of men and women, who without distinction came to John's Baptism, would strip down naked to be totally immersed in the Jordan is even more preposterous. It is most highly plausible, then, that they stood on the shore of the Jordan, or stepped in at the edge, and [that] John thus poured water over their heads. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, pp. 67-68)

The water in itself does not make Baptism. St. Paul calls Baptism "the washing of water by the *word*." (Ephesians 5:26) Baptism is not merely lowly water because it is formulated in God's Word and combined with the Word. According to Matthew 28:19, the Word which is connected to water, the baptismal formula is: "I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." Gerhard explains the meaning of the baptismal formula in this way: "I testify herewith that through this Sacrament you [the person being baptized] are being received into God's covenant of grace; that God the Father takes you as His child; that the Son washes you from sins with His blood and clothes you with His righteousness; that the Holy Spirit regenerates and renews you to everlasting life. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, pp. 57) This indicates the close relationship between Baptism and the Holy Trinity.

Infant Baptism

Gerhard faced a rejection of infant Baptism by the Anabaptists and a rejection of regenerative Baptism by all the Reformed. Remember the Reformed had made inroads in many Lutheran lands, striving for a Second Reformation as had occurred in the Palatinate. One of the signs of the Second Reformation was the removal of the exorcism in Baptism which was understood as a

rejection of baptismal regeneration. Therefore the Jena Theologian is quite adamant in his defense of infant and generational Baptism. He promotes infant Baptism on the basis of the “all nations” of the baptismal command in Matthew 28. “Christ even adds the word ‘all’ to indicate that no distinction as to nationality, gender, or age is to be observed in the offering of Baptism. Rather, children may and should also be baptized if the parents believe. The apostles demonstrate this in that they baptized believers along with their entire household.” (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord’s Supper*, p.127) He sees that children are included in the baptismal promise of the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit found in Acts 2:38-39 and he concludes that, as children were circumcised in the Old Testament, so children should be baptized in the New Testament. (Genesis 17:7; Colossians 2:11-12)

Children are desperately in need of Baptism. Gerhard teaches that children by nature are dead in sin (Ephesians 2:1) and, conceived in original sin, damned to destruction. (Psalm 51:5) Then in connection with John 3:5-6 he explicates: The children are flesh born from flesh; if they are to enter eternal life they must be born again. But there is no other means for rebirth than holy Baptism. The Word of God is also a means for rebirth, but God deals through it only with the adults, with the informed. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord’s Supper*, p. 128)

Finally Gerhard points out that infants and little children can believe (Psalm 8:2-3; Matthew 18:6) and that Baptism is a means that the Holy Ghost uses to work faith in the Savior in the heart.

Among other apparent grounds for denying Baptism to little children, not the least of them is that holy Baptism does not benefit little children because they do not believe. We have already given answer to this above in chapter 19, point of contention 8—that, indeed, little children by nature do not have faith and do not bring faith to Baptism. Yet God the Lord wants to awaken the same in their hearts through the Sacrament of holy Baptism, since, along with other effects, God ignites faith in and through Baptism, as demonstrated in chapter 13, #1. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord’s Supper*, p. 159; see also pp. 3,137)

The Blessings of Baptism

In Baptism God offers and gives full forgiveness of sins. The baptismal waters wash away all sin and iniquity. (Acts 22:16) Baptism is a means or channel through which the forgiveness of sins is brought from its source, the cross, to us living today. As all the Levitical cleansings were used for purification and the muddy bath of Naaman washed away his leprosy, so Baptism washes away the leprosy of sin. It is a wonderful cleansing that can wash away each stain and mark each spot and wrinkle. ([Ephesians 5:26-27] Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, p. 76) In Baptism we are indeed washed in the blood of the Lamb.

For just as common, natural water usually washes the body from all uncleanness, so also the water in holy Baptism—since it is encompassed in the Word of God and the entire holy Trinity wants to work through the same—is thus a powerful means through which we are washed of all uncleanness of sins and become snow-white. Pertinent here also is that Christ's blood not be locked out [excluded] from holy Baptism. Rather, Christ is present [in Baptism] as God and Man. He actually and certainly sprinkles and washes us with His blood as we are sprinkled with the water. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, p. 95)

Baptism delivers from death and the devil and gives us new life as the sons of God. We were ransomed from the dominion of Satan through the blood of Christ and now we are the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus, partakers in the divine with an eternal destiny. Our Baptism assures us of eternal life in heaven. (Johann Gerhard, *Schola Pietatis*, 1:65-71) "Those who are baptized into Christ put on Christ (Galatians 3:27), and thus the saints are said to have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. (Revelation 7:14) The perfect righteousness of Christ is the glorious robe of the saints; let not him therefore who is clothed in this robe fear the least spot of sin." (Johann Gerhard, *Sacred Meditations*, 17:94) Dressed in this glorious wedding garment we are prepared

to stand forever in the wedding feast of the Lamb. (Isaiah 61:10; Matthew 22:11)

As was stated above, Gerhard valiantly defended the truth that Baptism is regenerational in opposition to the Reformed. Baptism is regenerative or it gives rebirth because it works in our hearts trust in Jesus as the Savior. Discussing Titus 3:5, where Baptism is called the washing of regeneration, he makes this comment:

For since Baptism is (as previously stated) a bath of regeneration and is (as will follow later) an effectual means for the forgiveness of sin, [that is] for sonship with God and for eternal life, so also must faith be ignited and awakened through holy Baptism (understand that this refers to the hearts of those who do not stubbornly resist the working of the Holy Spirit), since the entire Scripture testifies that no one can be regenerated or receive forgiveness of sins or become a child of God or inherit eternal salvation without faith. On account of that, Baptism is not ordinary water, but the Word of God is also there, making it the means through which people are regenerated. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, p. 76)

Gerhard sees an interesting correlation between the creation and our regeneration. "As it was at the creation, so is it at our regeneration. For as at the creation of the world, the Spirit of the Lord moved upon the face of the waters (Genesis 1:2), and imparted to them a vital energy, so in the water of baptism the same Holy Spirit is present to render it efficacious for our regeneration." (Johann Gerhard, *Sacred Meditations*, 17:93-94)

The most common picture of Baptism among Lutherans is that of rebirth or regeneration. From this the Jena Divine does not deviate. However Gerhard does not neglect other major biblical picture of Baptism, which is dying and rising with Christ. (Romans 6:3-11) In Baptism we were united with Christ's great passion. Our sinful flesh was buried with Christ in the grave and we died to sin. Then as Christ arose the third day so we arose to new life in Baptism by the power of Christ's resurrection. (Colossians 2:12) This dying and rising continues throughout the believer's life as he daily returns

to his Baptism in true repentance and faith, drowning the old man and allowing the new man to come forth and arise. This daily dying and rising of Baptism will culminate in the resurrection of the body on the last day. (Johann Gerhard, *Schola Pietatis*, 1:71-73)

E. The Lord's Supper in the Writings of Gerhard

In Holy Baptism we were born again as the children of God through faith in Jesus as the Savior. Now through the Holy Supper we are nurtured and strengthened for eternal life in heaven. As we were taken into God's covenant of grace through Baptism so through the Supper we are preserved in that covenant of grace unto our end. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, p. 209)

Types and Pictures of the Lord's Supper

Gerhard enumerates many Old Testament pictures of the Lord's Supper. Melchizedek's offering of bread and wine to Abraham, the father of believers, points to the meal of salvation of our great high priest Jesus Christ. Pictures of the Supper are seen in the tree of life in the Garden of Eden, the Passover lamb, the manna in the wilderness, in David's invitation to Mephibosheth to eat at his table (II Samuel 9:13), in Elijah's food (I Kings 19:6-8), in Ahasuerus's feast (Esther 1:3), and in Isaiah's burning coal. (Isaiah 6) Allusions to the Supper are found in the poor that eat and are satisfied (Psalm 22:26), in the Good Shepherd who prepares His table in the wilderness (Psalm 23; John 10), and in Psalm 111 where the Lord's wonderful works are remembered, His covenant of redemption stands forever, and He gives food to those who fear Him. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, pp. 212-218; *Loci Theologici*, Locus 21, Para. 11-12, Preuss ed. 5:6-7)

The Command and Institution of the Lord's Supper

The institution of the Lord's Supper is recorded in Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:15-20, and in I Corinthians 11:23-25. Our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and Man, the night before His great passion prepared this meal as His last will and testament

for His followers of all times. In this Sacrament He gives us His true body and blood in, with, and under the bread and wine wherein He bequeaths to His church in every age all the blessings of His redemptive sacrifice on the cross. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, p. 219; see also *Schola Pietatis*, 1:73-74)

As do all Lutherans, Gerhard confesses the real presence of Christ's body and blood in contradistinction to Rome and the Reformed. He does not teach the transubstantiation of Rome or the representation of the Reformed. Notice what Jesus said concerning the bread which He was offering His disciples: "This is my body." Jesus did not say, "This is a picture of my body," nor did He say, "This only represents my body." Rather he said, "*This is my body.*" It is the very body that was born of the Virgin and died on the cross and the very same blood that flowed from His wounded side.

Even though we indeed receive bread and wine in the holy Lord's Supper, yet it is not ordinary bread and wine. Rather, the bread that we bless (received and eaten) is the fellowship of the body of Christ; the chalice which we consecrate in the holy Lord's Supper (received and drunk) is the fellowship of the blood of Christ, I Corinthians 10: 16. Therefore, no less than the bread and wine, the body and blood of Christ are present in the holy Lord's Supper... (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, p. 258)

In this quote Gerhard uses the interesting terminology that the blessed bread "is the fellowship of the body of Christ or a partaking in the body of Christ" (*ist die Gemeinschaft des Leibes Christi*) that he draws from I Corinthians 10:16. The use of this terminology is not intended to weaken the real essential presence of Christ's body and blood but it is used as a clear rejection of Rome's instantaneous change of one substance into another with only the accidents remaining. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, pp. 308-309)

Gerhard assumes that the earthly elements in the Supper will be bread and wine. The chalice is to contain the "fruit of the vine" (Matthew 26:29) which is the normal biblical term for wine made from grapes. The bread in the Supper may be any bread made

from grain whether leavened or unleavened. The earthly elements are bread and wine and no substitute. He argues, for example, that one is not at liberty to use dried fish in Norway for the Sacrament because bread was not available. This is contrary to God's command and institution of the Supper. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, p. 229)

According to Gerhard the Words of Institution should not be omitted in the Lord's Supper celebration. It is through these words that the presence of Christ's body and blood is effected in the Supper.

Yet it is necessary in the administration of the holy Supper that the Words of Institution be repeated. . . Accordingly, when the preacher [pastor] who administers the holy Supper speaks the Words of Institution over the bread and wine in public assembly, it is not a mere historical recitation of what Christ did. Rather, he shows thereby. . . that. . . he therewith sets aside the bread and wine that is present for this holy Sacrament, so that it no longer shall be simple [plain] bread and wine, but the means through which Christ's body and blood are distributed. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, pp. 224-225; see also pp. 258, 301, 450)

Here Gerhard is in complete agreement with the Lutheran Confessions which declare that the Words of Institution, by virtue of Christ's original institution, cause the presence of Christ's body and blood. "For where His institution is observed and His words are spoken over the bread and cup (wine), and the consecrated bread and cup (wine) are distributed, Christ Himself through the spoken words, is still efficacious by virtue of the first institution, through His Word, which He wishes to be there repeated." (FC SD VII, 75 [*Triglotta*, p. 999])

In Gerhard's presentation of the Supper both the Augustinian Rule and the Nihil Rule are upheld. According to the Augustinian Rule the Word comes to the element and it becomes a Sacrament (*Accedat verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum*). It is the Word that makes Baptism a gracious water of life and it is the Word that

causes Christ's body and blood to be present in the Supper. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, p. 305) At the same time Gerhard agrees with the Nihil Rule our Confessions: Nothing has the character of a Sacrament apart from the divinely instituted use or action. If there is no distribution and reception there is no Sacrament. If the consecrated elements are not distributed and received there is no Sacrament, that is, no real presence. The entire sacramental action (consecration, distribution, reception) must be carried out in order to have a valid Sacrament. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, p. 357) Because sacramental union exists only in the sacramental action, the remaining species (*reliquiae*) at the completion of the Lord's Supper celebration are outside the use and are simply bread and wine.

Gerhard has been understood as teaching that Christ's body and blood are present only at the eating not before. However, he writes, "If it is asked regarding the order of nature, we have confirmed that the presence is prior to the eating, for unless the body of Christ is present in the bread it is not able to be eaten sacramentally by us." (*[Si de ordine naturae quaeritur, praesentiam priorem statuimus manducatione, quia nisi corpus Christi in pane praesens adesset, non posset a nobis sacramentaliter manducari]* *Loci Theologici*, Locus 21, Para. 195, Preuss ed. 5:187; see also Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, p. 348) In accord with our Lutheran Confessions Gerhard does not teach that one must believe that the presence begins immediately after the Words of Institution are said or that one must believe that Christ's body and blood are present only for the reception. Rather he maintains that Christ's body and blood are present, distributed, and received in the Holy Supper.

The Lord's Supper and John 6

John 6 has been understood by some as speaking directly to the institution of the Lord's Supper. John 6 is to be St. John's institution narrative of the Sacrament. However the eating and drinking in John 6 refer to the eating and drinking which a believer does by faith through the means of grace, receiving all the blessings

of Christ's body and blood offered up for salvation. Therefore Gerhard teaches that John 6 does not specifically apply to the Lord's Supper because here the eating and drinking are figurative, while in the Words of Institution the eating and drinking are literal. The second reason that John 6 does not refer directly to the Supper is that the sermon recorded in John 6 occurred a year before the institution of the Supper. Therefore, the sermon in John 6 cannot apply to the dogma of the Sacrament. The third and most important reason Gerhard rejects this viewpoint is that the eating in John 6 always results in salvation (John 6:51), while in the Lord's Supper many eat judgment to themselves. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, pp. 340ff., 454)

At the same time, Gerhard maintains that there is a definite connection between the Words of Institution and John 6. John 6 speaks of the spiritual eating that is necessary for worthy participation in the Holy Supper. All communicants, both the worthy and unworthy, eat sacramentally with the mouth the very body and blood of Christ born of the Virgin, but only those who eat spiritually through true repentance and faith receive all the wonderful blessings offered through that body and blood. Thus, John 6 applies to worthy participation in the Sacrament, and in this sense speaks to the Holy Supper as our Confessions state. (FC SD VII, 61)

There is a great difference between natural food and this heavenly food. The other, namely, the natural food is in itself dead and receives life in men. But this food is alive and is the essence of life. Therefore it makes us alive, that is, partakers of the spiritual life that is from God: "I am the bread of life which comes from heaven; whoever eats of this bread will live forever." ([John 6:51] Johann Gerhard, *Postille* I:326) The Israelites were fed with manna in the wilderness as with bread from heaven (Ex. 16:15); in this Holy Supper we have the true manna which came down from heaven to give life unto the world; here is that bread of heaven, that angels' food, of which if any man eat he shall never hunger (John 6:35, 51). (Johann Gerhard, *Sacred Meditations*, 19:104)

The Proper Preparation for the Lord's Supper

In order to receive the benefits of the Holy Supper, we are to be worthy and well prepared, as Paul tells us in I Corinthians 11: 27-29. To be worthy and well prepared means that we have a sincere sorrow over our sins. We will confess them, striving to do better, and earnestly long for the forgiveness of sins. At the same time this worthiness includes a confident faith in Jesus the Savior. He paid for the sins of the whole world on the cross with His body and blood, and He gives us that very body and blood in the Supper for the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation.

Certainly then a worthy preparation is needful, that we may not, unworthily eating of it, find death instead of life, and receive judgment instead of mercy. . .When Uzziah rashly and inconsiderately drew near to the Ark of the Covenant, the Lord immediately smote him with leprosy (II Chronicles 26:16); what wonder that he who eateth of this bread and drinketh of this wine unworthily, should eat and drink to his condemnation? For here is the true ark of the covenant, of which the old was only a type. The apostle tells us in one word what constitutes true preparation; "Let a man examine himself," he says, "and so let him eat of that bread." (I Corinthians 11:28) But as every holy examination must be made according to the rule of Holy Scripture, so it is in the case of this which Paul requires. Let us consider then, first of all, our human weakness and imperfection. . .Let us consider, in the second place, our unworthiness. . .man is unworthy in very many and more grievous ways, for by his sins he has offended his Creator. . .And in our preparation for this Holy Supper, let us not simply examine ourselves, but let us also consider this blessed bread, which is the communion of the body of Christ, and then will it appear to us as a true fountain of God's grace, and an inexhaustible spring of divine mercy. . .Thus this Holy Supper will transform our souls; this most divine sacrament will make us divine men, until finally we shall enter upon the fullness of the blessedness that is to come, filled with all the fullness of God, and wholly like Him. (Johann Gerhard, *Sacred Meditations*, 20:108-111)

The Blessings of the Lord's Supper

Gerhard never tires of pointing out the great blessings of the Holy Supper. This makes his study of the Supper truly devotional and a benefit for all who read it. The Lord gave His Church this Holy Supper not as a point of controversy but as a wonderful comfort for His people of all times. As Luther before him, Gerhard emphasizes that the chief blessing of the Supper is the **forgiveness of sins**. He points this out in his explanation of the Words of Institution.

Accordingly, we say that by virtue of the institution, the holy Supper was established by Christ and was used by the believers chiefly to this end: that the promise of the gracious forgiveness of sins should be sealed and our faith should thus be strengthened. Then, too, we are incorporated in Christ and are thus sustained to eternal life; in addition, subsequently, other end results and benefits of the holy Supper come to pass. Yet, both of the fruits indicated above always remain the foremost. First of all we say: Christ instituted His holy Supper (also it is used by believers for this purpose) because the promise of the gracious forgiveness of sins is sealed to the believers and thereby their faith is strengthened. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and the Lord's Supper*, p. 369)

Together with the forgiveness of sins in the Sacrament, we receive life and salvation. Our Lord's body and blood are **true spiritual nourishment** for our faith-life. As our physical life needs food, so our spiritual life born in Baptism needs the spiritual nourishment and strengthening of the blessed Supper.

Christ's flesh is a life-producing flesh, which He has assumed into the unity of His Person through the personal union and [which He] has filled with the treasure of eternal heavenly blessings without measure. So that we, who are by nature dead in sins (Col. 2:13, Eph. 2:1), might now dip from this flowing Fountain of Life the legitimate spiritual life and be nurtured for eternal life, Christ desired to ordain His life-producing flesh to be

eaten and His blood to be drunk for this very purpose in the holy Supper. (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and the Lord's Supper*, p. 374)

We tend to forget that **we receive the Holy Ghost in the Supper** together with the body and blood of Christ even though we know that the Spirit comes to us in all the means of grace. He comes in all His fullness with all His many gifts. Commenting on I Corinthians 12:13 where St. Paul speaks of being given one Spirit to drink, Gerhard writes, “We drink one and the same Sacrament so that we also receive one and the same Spirit; just as we receive one and the same Baptism, so that we be one body.” (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and Lord's Supper*, p. 375; see also Johann Gerhard, *Schola Pietatas*, I:74) I Corinthians 12 has been understood in this manner by a number of other confessional Lutheran theologians. (See M. Chemnitz, *The Lord's Supper*, p. 193; C.M. Zorn, *Die Korintherbriefe*, p. 106)

Throughout his devotional literature Gerhard is encouraging Christians to live the Christ-like life. The Lord's Supper is a source and motivation for the **sanctified life**. Since the flesh and blood of Christ are life-giving they provide the strengthening that a believer needs to live a more sanctified life. Out of thanks for all that Christ has done for us we will desire to follow His example of love and kindness. Yet as we view our lives we see failures on every side. Therefore we come to this blessed meal to be strengthened through this life-giving food. (Johann Gerhard, *Schola Pietatas*, I:79)

The Holy Supper was instituted by Christ our Lord to this end that not only should the evangelical promise of the gracious forgiveness of sins be sealed in us and our faith strengthened, but also that through it we are incorporated into Christ and are fed unto eternal life as He Himself speaks in John 6:56: “He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.” This fruitful reception of His body and blood serves this purpose that He remains in us and we in Him and that we are made fruitful in all good works, as He says in John 15:5: “He who abides in Me and I in him bears much fruit. (Johann Gerhard, *Schola Pietatis*, II:284)

It should be noted that as the other Lutheran fathers the Jena Divine makes considerable use of the vine and branches picture of John 15 in connection with the Supper. By receiving His body and blood we are ingrafted into Him, drawing life from Him as branches from the vine bearing abundant fruit. This picture language illustrates the union with Christ that is ours through the Sacrament and it points out that the Supper and the other means of grace are the power source of the sanctified life.

As a Christian travels in this life, he faces problems and troubles all the way. There are often difficulties in our work place, bitterness in our homes, loss of friends, sickness, and even the death of loved ones. Yet in every difficulty of life the Lord says, "Come to My table and I will give you rest." (Johann Gerhard, *Baptism and the Lord's Supper*, p. 471) Here He gives us **strength to face all the problems and troubles of life** and to do all things through Him.

What is so intimately joined to Him as His own body and blood? With this truly heavenly food He refreshes our souls, who are as miserable worms of the dust before Him, and makes us partakers of His own nature; why then shall we not enjoy His gracious favor? Who ever yet hated his own flesh (Eph. v. 29)? How then can the Lord hate us, to whom He giveth His body to eat and His blood to drink? How can He possibly forget those to whom He hath given the pledge of His own body? How can Satan gain the victory over us when we are strengthened and made meet for our spiritual conflicts with this bread of heaven? (Johann Gerhard, *Sacred Meditations*, 19:105)

The Early Church fathers often spoke of the Supper as the *viaticum*, the medicine of immortality, the food preparing us for eternal life. This designation for the Holy Meal goes all the way back to Ignatius of Antioch (Ephesians 20) as Chemnitz shows.

Beautiful is that statement of Ignatius, which is found in his Epistle to the Ephesians, where he calls the Eucharist *pharmakon athanasias, antidoton tou mee apothanein, alla zeen en theoo dia Ieesou Christou, katharteerion alexikakon*, that is, "a medicine of immortality, an

antidote, that we may not die but live in God through Jesus Christ, a cleansing remedy through warding off and driving out evils.” (Martin Chemnitz, Ex. 2,234)

Gerhard is fond of medical pictures, as has already been stated. (See p. 290 above) In this fondness he follows in the tradition of Augustine. Therefore it is only natural that he would speak of the Sacrament as the medicine of immortality. “This is the only sovereign remedy for all the diseases of our souls: here is the only efficacious remedy for mortality; for what sin is so heinous but the sacred flesh of God may expiate it? What sin is so great but it may be healed by the life-giving flesh of the Christ?” (Johann Gerhard, *Sacred Meditations*, 19:105-106; also see p. 296 above)

Probably Gerhard’s most common way of expressing the blessings of the Lord’s Supper is **union and communion with Christ through His body and blood.**

From now on I cannot doubt concerning the indwelling of Christ, since it is sealed for me in the imparting of His body and blood. From now on I cannot doubt concerning the assistance of the Holy Spirit, since my weakness is strengthened by such a support. I do not fear the plots of Satan, since this angelic food strengthens me to do battle. I do not fear the allurements of the flesh, since this life-giving and spiritual food strengthens me by the power of the Spirit. I eat and drink this food so that Christ may dwell in me and I in Christ. That Good Shepherd will not allow the sheep, fed by His body and blood, to be devoured by the infernal wolf. He will not allow the strength of the Spirit to be overcome by the weakness of my flesh. Praise, honor, and thanksgiving to You, O kindest Savior, forever, Amen. (Johann Gerhard, *The Daily Exercise of Piety*, [2:13] p. 56)

Together with union with Christ, Gerhard’s other favorite way of expressing the blessings of the Supper is to speak of it as **partaking in the divine.** This salvific theme is based on a number of passages from Scripture (II Corinthians 3:18, 8:9; Galatians 3:26,4:7; John 17:23; I Corinthians 12:12-13; Romans 8:29; 1 John 3:

2; Psalms 82:1-6; Genesis 1:26), but first and foremost on II Peter 1:4, "By which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that by these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." This theme was common among the Early Church fathers and especially the Eastern fathers. Luther at times expresses the blessings of the Holy Supper in this way. "So, when we eat Christ's flesh physically and spiritually, the food is so powerful that it transforms us into itself and out of fleshly, sinful, mortal men makes spiritual, holy, living men. This we are already, though in a hidden manner in faith and hope; the fact is not yet manifest, but we shall experience it on the Last Day." (LW 37:101; also see 37:132, 134) Chemnitz likewise uses this theosis theme:

Therefore, in order that we might be able to lay hold on Christ more intimately and retain Him more firmly, not only did He Himself assume our nature but He also restored it again for us by distributing His body and blood to us in the Supper, so that by this connection with His humanity, which has been assumed from us and is again communicated back to us, He might draw us into communion and union with the deity itself. (Chemnitz, *The Lord's Supper*, 188)

For Gerhard there is no more blessed event filled with comfort and assurance than to partake in the divine nature having union and communion with God.

There is no natural thing, speaks Tauler in his sermon on the Lord's Supper, that comes so near and so inwardly to man as eating and drinking. For this reason He established this way that He unites Himself with us in the nearest and most inward manner. It is on account of us that (He) became man (so) that we through Him would become children of God (John 1:12) and partakers of the divine nature (II Peter 1:4). But His love was still not great enough. He also wanted to become our food. Nothing is more closely related to the Lord than His assumed human nature, His flesh and blood, which He personally united

to Himself; likewise nothing can be nearer to us men than what we eat and drink because this same thing penetrates us in the most inward manner (Johann Gerhard, *Postille* I:325). Thus this Holy Supper will transform our souls; this most divine sacrament will make us divine men, until finally we shall enter upon the fulness of the blessedness that is to come, filled with all the fulness of God, and wholly like Him. (Johann Gerhard, *Sacred Meditations*, 20:111)

The Jena Divine continually points to the great blessings of the Sacrament for the Christian's life. With His body and blood the Savior gives and seals to us the full forgiveness of sins accomplished on the cross. Here is the Manna for the way that nourishes and strengthens us on the way through this wilderness all the way to the heavenly Canaan above. Here is union and communion with Christ a participation in the divine, a foretaste of heaven.

IV. Conclusion

Johann Gerhard was the light of Thüringen in the shadow of the Thirty Years' War. He was the leading theologian of the age. What made him truly great was that he was not only the greatest dogmatician of the time but also one of the greatest devotional writers of the era. His *Loci* has never been surpassed in Lutheran dogmatics. In addition he wrote comforting devotional literature which nourished and strengthened his readers in the devastation and disaster of the Thirty Year's War. This literature is still relevant and edifying today as we pass through this *Jammertal* striving to reach the homeland above.

Addendum I

The Age of Lutheran Orthodoxy

I. Lutheran Theology During the Seventeenth Century

A. As the Thirty Years' War raged, Lutheranism, as well as the Reformed tradition and the Roman Catholic Church, went through a process of systematization and clarification of the doctrinal positions that each of these bodies had taken during the previous century. Therefore the seventeenth century is known as a period of confessional orthodoxy.

B. Lutheran orthodoxy did not intend to add anything to the doctrine of Luther and the Confessions. Its purpose was to put the teaching of the Reformation into a logical, concise form. In this systematization of doctrine it was indebted to the *Loci Communes* of Melancthon and the *Loci Theologici* of Martin Chemnitz. The format and organization of these documents became the model of the massive dogmatics of the seventeenth century dogmaticians. In their work they used Aristotelian philosophy, as did the scholastics of the Middle Ages, to bring order to their great doctrinal system.

C. **Aquinas and the Seventeenth Century Dogmaticians:** In 1656 John Dorsch, a Lutheran dogmatician, wrote a book in which he tried to show that Thomas Aquinas could be made to support Lutheran doctrine more than Roman Catholic doctrine. (Preus, *Post-Reformation*, Vol. I, p. 36) Aquinas' *Summa* was the model for all future dogmatics. For example, there is a close connection between the structure and form of his *Summa* and Gerhard's *Loci Theologici*.

II. The Period of Orthodoxy 1580-1675

A. The Golden Age of Orthodoxy 1580-1610 Martin Chemnitz, David Chytraeus, Nikolaus Selnecker

B. High Orthodoxy 1610-1648 Johann Gerhard, Leonhard Hutter, Aegidius Hunnius

C. The Silver Age of Orthodoxy 1648-1675 Abraham Calov, Johann Quenstedt, Johann Dannhauer

D. The Age of Lutheran Orthodoxy: It is common to refer to the ages of Orthodoxy as the golden, high, and silver ages. Another way to outline Orthodoxy is to use the following framework: The first period is **Early Orthodoxy** (*Frühorthodoxie*) which begins at the Peace of Augsburg 1555 and continues to the time of Gerhard. Some would include him but I would not. The second period is **High Orthodoxy** (*Hochorthodoxie*) which begins with Gerhard and continues until the death of Abraham Calov in 1686. The third period is the **Late Orthodoxy** (*Spätorthodoxie*) that begins in 1680 and continues at least until 1750. (Ernst Koch, *Ernst Salomon Cyprian*, p. 10)

E. The Pomeranian divine David Hollaz (1648-1713) was the leading theologian of Late Orthodoxy. However three other individuals are also important in this era. They are Ernst Salomon Cyprian (1673-1745), Erdmann Neumeister (1671-1756), and Valentin Ernst Löscher. (1673-1749)

Addendum II

The Theological Method of the Dogmaticians

by Timothy Schmeling

Dogmatics was not yet a discipline of its own but was considered a part of exegesis. Its purpose was to gather the scriptural teachings concerning the main topics of Christian doctrine. This first method for dogmatics was designated the **commonplace or loci method** (*ordo locorum*) which Melancthon popularized. This method dominated Lutheran works throughout the 16th century. This method was based on Aristotle's *Topics*.

A change took place at the turn of the century with the works of Francisco Suarez (1548-1617) and the Italian Jacopo Zabarella (1532-1589), who believed that there were two ways to present a given proposition. The first was the compositive order and the other was the resolutive order. These ideas were drawn from the works of Galen the Physician, an Aristotelian commentator.

The compositive order (*ordo compositivus*), or the **synthetic method**, proceeds from cause to effect or from principles to conclusions. This method could imply that theology was a theoretical science. However Lutheranism rejected the notion that theology was a theoretical science. Here the articles of faith are dealt with according to order: God, Man, Sin, Redemption, etc. **Gerhard** used a form of this method in the period of high orthodoxy. (Appold, *Abraham Calov's Doctrine of Vocatio*, p. 23)

The resolutive order (*ordo resolutivus*) or the **analytical method** begins with the goal in view and sets forth the ways to reach this goal. The analytical method seeks to treat theology inductively, proceeding from effect to cause, viewing theology in the light of its ultimate goal, man's blessedness and salvation. The analytic method was an attempt to present all theology as a unit and to show the practical application of every doctrine for salvation (*Theologia est Habitus Practicus*). In the study of every doctrine one had to answer the question, how does this doctrine effect my final salvation. Therefore it was considered to be practical in contradistinction to theoretical.

This analytical method suited Lutheran theology better than Reformed theology, since Lutheranism had a soteriological emphasis which became the *finis* or end goal of Lutheran dogmatics as opposed to the theocentric viewpoint of the Reformed (*Appold* 29). Balthazar Mentzer first used the analytical method among Lutherans but it did not come into vogue until Calov made use of it in his *Systema*. It was the predominate method in the silver age of orthodoxy.

In the synthetic method a doctrine was treated comprehensively. Justification included all of salvation. It became very wordy. In the analytical method the doctrines were divided more and repetition was cut down. However it could turn theology into an airtight system which was based more on logic than Scripture.

The *ordo salutis* or **order of salvation** was an attempt to lay out what occurred from the call to glorification. For example Abraham Calov's *ordo salutis* consists of call, illumination, regeneration, conversion, justification, penitence, mystical union, sanctification, and glorification. (Calov, *Systema*, X) While this particular order is not the only possible order, some parts of the order cannot precede others. For example regeneration must always precede justification. Justification must always be followed by sanctification. The *ordo salutis* first appears in the devotional works of Philipp Nicolai, Johann Arndt, and Nikolaus Hunnius' *Epitome Credendorum*. However it was popularized in Lutheran dogmatics by Abraham Calov using the analytical method.

C.F.W. Walther said he preferred the synthetic method. (A. Suelflow, *Servant of God*, 106) Walther said this because Johann Gerhard had used this method and because he felt the analytical method had caused more problems. However it appears that Johann Gerhard favored the analytical method after he had completed his *Loci Theologici*. In addition Adolph Hoenecke seems to be a proponent of the analytical method and Franz Pieper said either method could be legitimately used. (F. Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. II, p. 422)

The Aristotelian Causation and Baptism

The Four Aristotelian Causes

Causa Efficiens or Effecting Cause: The means by which it is brought—the Holy Trinity.

Causa Formalis or Formal Cause: Its essence or what it is—baptismal formula.

Causa Materialis or Material Cause: The material of which a thing is made—water.

Causa Finalis or Final Cause: Its end or that for the sake of which it exists (Τέλος)—rebirth, new life, and eternal salvation.

Full Causation of Baptism according to Johann Baier

Causa Efficiens Principalis or the principle effecting cause is Christ, one with the Father and the Holy Spirit, i.e., the Holy Trinity.

Causa Efficiens Minus Principalis or the minor principle effecting cause is ordinarily the ministry of the church, extraordinarily performed in the case of necessity by the laity—even a woman.

Causa Impulsive Interna or the internal impelling cause is the divine goodness.

Causa Impulsive Externa or the external impelling cause is the merits of Christ.

Causa Materialis or material cause is water.

Causa Formalis or formal cause is the words of institution.

Subjectum or subject of baptism is a human, whether male or female, adult or infant.

Causa Finalis or the final cause is a drawing near of the baptized ones to regeneration and rebirth. Ultimately the final cause is eternal salvation.

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Strenuus Christi Athleta Abraham Calov (1612-1686): Sainted Doctor and Defender of the Church

Timothy Schmeling

It has been said that Johann Gerhard (1582-1637) was third in the series of Lutheranism's most preeminent theologians and after him there was no fourth (Fischer. *The Life of Johann Gerhard*. 98-99). First and second place naturally belong to Martin Luther (1483-1546) and Martin Chemnitz (1522-1586) respectively. If one were to speak of a fourth in this distinguished list, the position would no doubt have been assigned to Abraham Calov.

Abraham Calov ranks not only as one of the greatest theologians in Lutheranism, but also as one of the greatest teachers in Christendom. He was a man of exceptional learning and scholastic tendencies. At the same time, he was a man of deep piety and practicality. Very few were impartial in their assessment of Abraham Calov. He was a very polarizing individual. His opponents feared him, but his adherents loved him.

The legacy of Abraham Calov has been tarnished over time. Prior to the recent renaissance, sparked by the rediscovery of missing portions of the *Codex Epistolarum theologiarum* (his collected letters), Calov research had depicted him as the prototype of a controversialist and a preacher of an unattainable doctrinal orthodoxy. This questionable caricature can be explained by a number of factors. First of all there has been a strong bias against Lutheran Orthodoxy even within Lutheranism. Gotthold Lessing (1729-1781) writes, "Many people want to be Christians, but certainly not Wittenberg Lutheran Christians; certainly not Christians of Calov's grace" (Lessing. *Gesammelte Werke*. 170). In his *History of Lutheranism*, Eric Gritsch questions the doctrines of verbal inspiration and fellowship as taught by Calov and finally writes him off as Ultraconservative (Gritsch. *A History of Lutheranism*. 135). Second, the chief nineteenth century biographer of Abraham Calov was a mediating theologian named August Tholuck (1799-

1877). This Prussian Union historian had more in common with Calov's syncretistic arch-nemesis than with Calov. Third, there is very little primary source material available on Calov and much of it may not have survived the war or is possibly buried somewhere in the *Bibliotheca Gdanska PAN* (formerly *Stadtsbibliothek Danzig*). Finally Calov's research is a difficult task due to the linguistic, cultural, and intellectual barriers that divide us from this critical juncture in Lutheran history. In spite of these facts, it is the purpose of this paper to help familiarize Lutheranism with one of its lost teachers.

I. The Life of Abraham Calov

The Early Years

Abraham Calov(ius) was born on April 16, 1612 in Mohrungen, East Prussia—present day Morąg, Poland. (Calovius is a latinization of his surname that was originally written Kalau). His father, Peter Calov, was the treasurer or steward of Electoral Brandenburg. His mother was Katharina nee Speiß, the daughter of the mayor of Mohrungen. Both Peter and Katharina were pious Lutherans who provided a Christian environment for their children. In his youth Abraham had a speech impediment that he overcame with great perseverance. Together with his older brother Fabian, he enrolled at the elementary school in Mohrungen and the Gymnasium in Thorn—modern day Toruń, Poland—and Königsberg—present day Kaliningrad, Russia. Before long, war and plague forced him to leave and continue his education in Mohrungen under his father (Preus. *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*. 1:59; *Hereafter TPR*). He felt particularly indebted to the Rector of the School in Mohrungen, Daniel Ulrich from Chemnitz; Rector Graser in Thorn; and the Rector Petrus Mauritius in Königsberg for his early education.

Master of the Arts

On February 10, 1626, at the age of fourteen, he matriculated at the University of Königsberg (*Theologische Realenzyklopedia*. 7:

563; hereafter TRE). Supported by a stipend, he would attend this university for six years. There he busied himself with philosophy, philology, mathematics, botany, and theology. His interest in mathematics is not surprising when one takes into consideration the fact that Copernicus along with a number of other great mathematicians came from Prussia. Abraham became very interested in oriental languages and grew very proficient in them. At the age of only seventeen he was permitted to deliver his first sermon. Two of his more notable professors during this period were Johannes Behm (1578-1648) and Cölestin Myslenta (1588-1653) who were both known for their orthodoxy. Myslenta, who is remembered for his polemics against the Reformed, helped stimulate Calov's interest in oriental languages and philology.

In 1632, at the age of twenty, Abraham received his Master of Arts. He then joined the philosophical faculty at the University of Königsberg and continued his studies in theology. At this time he devoted himself to the study of Johann Gerhard's *Loci Theologici* and organized a number of disputations on this pivotal work. A controversy regarding the nature of the real presence came to his attention. Johann Bergius (1587-1658), the court preacher of the Elector of Brandenburg, Georg William (1595-1640), had anonymously begun writing against the Lutheran view of the sacrament in 1624. Around the time Abraham Calov joined the faculty, Bergius publicly renewed the debate concerning the sacrament with Professor Johann Himmel of the University of Jena. This provoked Abraham Calov to author his first theological work titled *Daß die Worte Christi noch feststehen* defending the Lutheran doctrine of the real presence. It was so well received that it was quickly translated into Latin and published under the title *Stereoma testamenti Christi*. This treatise gained Calov friends among the nobility who disliked their Calvinist Elector Georg William. These same nobles ultimately provided him with funding so that he could complete his doctoral studies at the University of Rostock.

Doctor of Theology

In 1634 he began his studies at the University of Rostock and earned his doctorate in 1637. While attending the university, he had

stayed for three years at the house of Johann Quistorp, Sr. (1584-1648). The two became very close friends and allies throughout their lives. While teaching at the University of Königsberg, Abraham began to produce and publish some of his philosophical *corpus*. The majority of these materials were written and published in Rostock. Eventually these philosophical works were collected and published in two volumes known as the *Scripta philosophica* (Rostock 1650-1). These writings dealt primarily with methodology, metaphysics, and epistemology (Wundt. *Die deutsche Schulmetaphysik des 17. Jahrhunderts*. 133-136, 257-260; hereafter *Schulmetaphysik*). Some of his insights from these works would assure him a place in the annals of philosophy.

Professor of Theology at Königsberg

One of Abraham Calov's most earnest desires was to study at the University of Jena under the arch-theologian Johann Gerhard or even at the University of Wittenberg (Tholuck. *Der Geist der lutherischen Theologen*. 186; hereafter *Geist*). This was not possible because of the Thirty Years' War. Therefore, he supplemented his study at Greifswald and Copenhagen before joining the theological faculty at Königsberg in 1637. There he taught dogmatics and polemics. After two years he was promoted. In 1638 the University of Rostock extended him a call, but he declined it.

His influence as a professor should not be underestimated. Students from Scandinavia, Northern Germany, the Siebenbürgen (Transylvania), Kurland, and Latvia attended his lectures. The rise in enrollment was due in part to the Thirty Years' War and in part to his growing prestige. Eventually the Elector of Brandenburg, a Calvinist, began to prohibit young men of Brandenburg from attending the University of Königsberg because of its strong Lutheran stance. In 1641, Abraham Calov became Königsberg's superintendent of schools and churches. He was appointed visitor of the Samland that same year.

Pastorate in Danzig and Rector of the Gymnasium

Abraham Calov received a call in 1643 to become the

pastor at the *Trinitatiskirche* (Holy Trinity Church) and rector of the Gymnasium or *Academicum* in Danzig—modern day Gdansk, Poland. Since this Hanseatic city was bound to no confession, the task at hand would prove to be quite difficult. The Syncretists, Calvinists, Roman Catholics, and Socinians had overrun Danzig. The Gymnasium had a strong Reformed influence due to Bartholomaeus Keckermann (1571-1609), a very learned German Reformed theologian and philosopher. This was also the same Keckermann who supposedly taught double truth (reason can conflict with theology) and that the Holy Trinity can be discovered by reason alone. Abraham even had to share the *Trinitatiskirche* (the building, not divine services) with a Calvinist. It was a challenge, but one that he was ready to assume.

The Colloquy of Thorn

While serving as pastor in Danzig, he was invited to the *Colloquium charitativum*, i.e., Colloquy of Thorn (August 28 - November 21, 1645) as representative of Danzig and as member of the Lutheran delegation. Wittenberg Professor of Theology Johann Hülsemann (1602-1661) was the leader of the Lutheran delegation. This same Hülsemann later became superintendent and professor in Leipzig. He would remain a close associate of Abraham Calov throughout his life. The Colloquy in Thorn was called by King Wladislaus IV of Poland with the hope that a union between Catholics, Lutherans, and Reformed could be reached. Prussia and Brandenburg were also invited to take part in the colloquy. The elector sent his court preacher, Johann Bergius, whom Calov refuted in his *Stereoma testamenti Christi*. In addition the elector asked the Duke of Braunschweig to send the infamous Helmstedt theologian, Georg Calixtus (1586-1656), to the colloquy.

The meeting was doomed from the beginning when Calixtus, a supposed Lutheran representative, took the side of the Reformed. This infuriated Calov and Hülsemann. Instead of improving relations, the colloquy only intensified the divisions between the churches. The one positive outcome of this incident was that the unit concept of fellowship taught in Scripture was confirmed by the practice of Calov and Hülsemann. They refused to pray with

the other parties at the colloquy. This action demonstrates that the unit concept of fellowship is by no means a modern innovation (cf. *Der Lutheraner*. 1908 p. 111; Gaylin Schmeling. "The Theology of Church Fellowship". *Lutheran Synod Quarterly*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 2, p. 44).

Georg Calixtus and Syncretism

One needs to become more acquainted with Georg Calixtus to gain a better picture of Abraham Calov. Calixtus was a professor at the University of Helmstedt and the leader of the Syncretistic movement in Lutheranism (cf. Henke. *Georg Calixt und seine Zeit*. Vol. I-II). He sought to unite all Christians into one church by playing down or disregarding doctrinal divisions. The chief impetus of Syncretism, besides unionism, was the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648). This war, waged primarily because of religious divisions, so devastated Europe that many longed for the peace that a reunited church hopefully would restore. The end of the horrors of war, tolerance, and religious reunion were leitmotifs of Syncretism. In order to facilitate this agenda Georg Calixtus developed the concept of the *Consensus quinquesaecularis*. This was supposed to be the doctrinal consensus of Christendom based on the writings of the first five centuries. In other words only teachings evident in the first five centuries were to be doctrinally binding. This movement came to be known as Syncretism and was the original ecumenical movement.

Abraham Calov had no disdain for the theologians of the first five ecumenical councils. He cherished the writings of the early church fathers and was an accomplished patristic scholar himself. Calov opposed Syncretism because he knew it would sacrifice doctrinal agreement for the sake of a false harmony. Rather than pursuing a fabricated union, Calov taught that union could occur only where there was true doctrinal agreement. For this reason Calov was bound by Holy Scripture (Romans 16:17) to reject the unionism expressed at the Colloquy of Thorn and in the works of Georg Calixtus. As the modern church has been nearly consumed by the errors of unionism, so it was necessary for Abraham Calov to dedicate a great deal of time and energy to this critical issue in his day. It should not be a surprise that Syncretism would come

to dominate much of his polemics. Nevertheless Hermann Sasse observes an important distinction that Calov makes in his *Historia Syncretistica* (1682). On the basis of the condemnation found in the preface to the Book of Concord (*Bekennnisschriften der Evangelisch Lutherischen Kirche*. 11), Calov proves St. Paul condemned only false apostles, but not their misguided congregations (Sasse. *Here We Stand*. 177). In other words, anathemas are made against only heretics who consciously teach contrary to Scripture—not their misguided followers.

To better understand Syncretism one needs to understand the pivotal role of the University of Helmstedt in Lutheran history. Many years earlier Martin Chemnitz had admonished Duke Julius of Braunschweig for having three of his sons ordained as Catholic priests in order to acquire the bishopric of Halberstadt for Braunschweig. This caused the Duke to relinquish his support of the *Formula of Concord* (Koelpin. *No Other Gospel*. 52). The result of this was that the church of Braunschweig, which included the University of Helmstedt, never subscribed to the *Formula of Concord*. In fact when the Gnesio-Lutheran, Tilemann Heßhusius (1527-1588), needed a place to flee, Duke Julius had him called to the University of Helmstedt. In gratitude for this appointment, Heßhusius gave the duke some legitimacy by condemning the doctrine of ubiquity as taught by the *Formula of Concord*. Ironically Martin Chemnitz and David Chytraeus (1531-1600) were still permitted to appoint much of the faculty of the University of Helmstedt, particularly the philosophical faculty. Since the *Formula of Concord* was not binding upon the theologians of Braunschweig, Calixtus was able to accomplish much of his syncretistic agenda. His lack of regard for the *Formula of Concord* is evident in the following citation written against Jakob Weller (1602-1664), a professor at Wittenberg:

I was born and raised till my 16th year in a territory where the *Formula of Concord* was never accepted or loved... I willingly confess that from childhood on it was repugnant to me, and probably no one could have persuaded me to accept and approve it (cited in Koelpin *No Other Gospel*. 53).

Syncretism was not strictly a German movement. Hugo Grotius, the Dutch Covenant theologian whom Calov refuted in his *Biblia illustrata*, also tried to reunite the Arminians and Calvinists into one church. Grotius did not have as wide a vision as Calixtus. He was not willing to dialogue with the Roman Catholics. Georg Calixtus, on the other hand, worked with all European Christians. He even tried to draw the Greek Orthodox into this union during the time of Cyril Lucaris, via Metrophanes Critopoulos (Maloney. *A History of Orthodox Theology Since 1453* 138). Cyril Lucarius was the Greek Patriarch of Constantinople and a sympathizer of Calvinism.

The First Phase of the Syncretistic Controversy (1645-1656)

The Syncretistic Controversy officially began at the Colloquy of Thorn and can be divided into three phases: The first phase occurred 1645-1656. The second phase occurred 1661-1669. The third phase occurred 1675-1686. In addition to Georg Calixtus, Michael Behm (1612-1650), Christian Dreier (1610-1688), Johann Lautermann (1620-1682), and Friedrich Ulrich Calixtus (the son of Georg Calixtus) became advocates of Syncretism.

Immediately after the Colloquy of Thorn, Calov began to address this great calamity in the church. His industry is shown by his *Institutiones theologicae cum examine novae theologiae Calixtinae* (1649) that appeared the year after the Colloquy of Thorn. Calov would continue to write a number of tomes against Syncretism, but these were produced in Wittenberg. All the while Calov wrote, Calixtus never responded to him. He chose to deal with Jakob Weller, a more prestigious adversary from the University of Wittenberg. Friedrich Ulrich Calixtus, the son of Georg Calixtus, would raise his pen against Calov. This phase of the Syncretistic Controversy lasted until the death of Georg Calixtus in 1656. It was followed by a short-lived truce.

Syncretism was strongly supported by Fredrich William the Great Elector of Brandenburg (1620-1688). He sought a united Protestant religious front against Roman Catholicism. He also had an ulterior motive. After the conversion of Johann Sigismund

(1572-1619) to Calvinism a year after the birth of Abraham Calov, the Electors of Brandenburg had longed to spread the Reformed confession throughout their lands. But their subjects remained stubbornly Lutheran. In spite of the failure of the Thorn Colloquy, the Great Elector doubled his efforts to extend the Reformed confession in Prussia. In order to facilitate this agenda, he obtained the allegiance of the University of Helmstedt and called Johann Lauterman, a zealous student of Calixtus, to the Königsberg faculty. Calov was infuriated. His beloved home was being overrun by Calvinism. He felt it was his lifelong duty to protect Lutheran Prussia.

Abraham Calov did not spend all of his time brooding over the Syncretists. He dedicated himself to the service of his flock in Danzig and teaching at the Gymnasium. The pastoral works he authored in this period are an indication of his labor. One of the gems of his Danzig pastorate was the *Danziger Katechismus* printed under his direction in 1648. This catechism was a splendid manual of instruction and work of Christian piety. The following axiom printed on the catechism bears evidence of his concern for Christian education of all ages: *Was Prediger in der Kirche sind, das sollen Eltern und Hausväter bei ihren Hausgenossen und ihren Hauskirchen sein*, i.e., “As preachers are in the church so should parents and fathers be for the members of their household and their house churches.”

Professor and Superintendent in Wittenberg

In 1650 Elector Johann Georg I of Saxony, prompted by his court preacher Jakob Weller, called Abraham Calov to the University of Wittenberg as theological professor. Following the death of Paul Röber (1587-1651), he was named second theological professor. Not long after this a call was extended to him to serve as pastor of the *Stadtkirche* (City Church or St. Mary's Church). His reputation increased, he became a member of the consistorial court, and was appointed general superintendent by the elector in 1652. With the death of Johannes Scharf (1595-1660), he assumed Scharf's position as *professor primarius*. Due to the attraction of Calov's lectures, the

university grew extensively. While the University of Jena decreased in prestige under Johann Musäus, the University of Wittenberg increased in prestige under Abraham Calov. Up to 500 students at one time attended his lectures. He was so highly respected that it was said that he taught from Luther's chair (*cathedra Lutheri*). But the increase in students dropped off when the Reformed Great Elector of Brandenburg, Friedrich William, barred his subjects from attending Calov's lectures on philosophy or theology. *Principia Caloviana* were too hostile to the Reformed.

Abraham busied himself with many different activities in Wittenberg. He held public and private lectures. Several times a week he led disputations. Every week he held catechism classes. He produced many edifying funeral sermons, led the consistorial business, presided over senate meetings and deans meetings, and almost weekly prepared faculty and private *Gutachten* (Uhlhorn. *Geschichte der deutsch-lutherischen Kirche*. 214). What's more, he was a faithful servant to Johann Georg II (1613-1680), the successor of Johann Georg I (1585-1656), who diligently read Calov's *Biblischer Kalender* (Meusel. *Kirchliches Handlexicon*. 1:638).

In 1655 the one-hundredth anniversary of the Peace of Augsburg was celebrated in Saxony. For this occasion he ascended the pulpit of the *Pfarrkirche* on September 25th and preached on Psalm 125. The theme was: *Wie wir dieses Fest als ein Dank- und Bet-Fest, Gott zu lobe und uns zu Troste halten sollen*, i.e., "How we should regard this festival as a thanksgiving and prayer festival to praise God and to comfort us." It was printed in Wittenberg (1656) by Johann Borckardten (Meusel. *Kirchliches Handlexicon*. 1:638).

The Second Phase of the Syncretistic Controversy (1661-1669)

During his Wittenberg days, Calov had continued his critique of the Syncretists. The following tomes testify to his efforts: *Syncretismus Calxtinus* (1653) and *Harmonia Calixtino-haeretica* (1655). In 1656 Georg Calixtus, the archenemy of Abraham Calov, died. Syncretism did not expire with him. Theological facilities of Helmstedt and Wittenberg declared a peace that lasted for a couple of years. But the Conference of Kassel brought about the second

phase of the Syncretistic Controversy (1661-1669). The Conference of Kassel occurred on July 1-9, 1661. The conference was called by William IV of Hessen, the brother-in-law of the Great Elector Friedrich William of Brandenburg. It was a meeting between the Reformed faculty of the University of Marburg and the Lutheran faculty of the University of Rinteln. Sebastian Curtius and Johannes Reinius were the spokesman for the Reformed. Johannes Heinichen and Peter Musäus (1620-1674), the brother of Johann Musäus, represented the Lutherans (cf. Hermelink. *Die Universität Marburg von 1527-1645.*). Interestingly enough, Peter Musäus would join the faculty of Helmstedt two years later and was suspected of Syncretism. The topics under discussion were Baptism, the Lord's Supper, the person of Christ, and election. Both parties felt the meeting was productive. The Wittenberg Faculty sharply criticized this conference in a work titled *Epicrisis Theol. Fac. Witeberg. De colloquio Casselano Rintelino-Marpurgensium* (1662).

From September 8, 1662, to June 29, 1663, the Great Elector, Friedrich William of Brandenburg, called the Berlin Discussions of Religion in which Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676) of the *Nikolaikirche* took part. At the same time he banned his people from studying philosophy and theology at the University of Wittenberg because of its strict orthodoxy. Calov's response was a collection of various *Gutachten* or theological opinions from the orthodox faculty of Wittenberg dating as far back as Luther's time. These *Gutachten*, bound as the *Consilia theologica Witebergensia*, showed that the Wittenberg position was the biblical and historical viewpoint of Lutheranism. The *Consensus repetitus fidei verae Lutheranae* or Saxon Consensus was first published in this collection. In 1669 Friedrich William declared a refrain from religious polemics. Many Lutheran pastors disobeyed this truce and were dismissed from office. Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676), the famous hymn writer, was one of those dismissed. It is somewhat ironic that both Gerhardt and Calov shared the same Lutheran conviction and piety, but are remembered quite differently in history. The elector's peace lasted until the death of Duke Ernst the Pius when Abraham Calov initiated the third phase of the Syncretistic Controversy (1675-1686). This final phase lasted until his death in 1686.

The Consensus repetitus fidei verae Lutheranae

Consensus repetitus fidei verae Lutheranae in illis doctrinae capitibus, quae... scriptis publicis hodieque impugnant D. Georgius Calixtus... ejusdemque complices, i.e., the Saxon Consensus (1655; first printed in 1664 in the *Consilia theologica Witebergensia*, a Latin-German edition was printed in 1666) was an abortive attempt to add to the *Formula of Concord* (cf. Henke, Ernst. *Inest theologorum Saxoniorum consensus repetitus fidei vere lutheranae*). It was originally published anonymously and was intended to be a confession against the errors of Georg Calixtus. In spite of support from Wittenberg and Leipzig, Helmstedt as well as Jena rejected it.

German Lutheranism was divided into at least three major camps at this point in time. The orthodox camp included the University of Wittenberg and the University of Leipzig. It was led by Abraham Calov and Johann Hülsemann. The moderates occupied the University of Jena, which had previously been the citadel of orthodoxy under Johann Gerhard. They were led by Johann Musäus (1613-1681), the future father-in-law of Johann William Baier ([1647-1695] cf. Heussi. *Geschichte der theologischen Fakultät zu Jena*). The Syncretist-Lutherans were found at the University of Helmstedt and the University of Altdorf, both of which were not bound to the Formula of Concord (Baur, Jörg. *Die Vernunft zwischen Ontologie und Evangelium eine Untersuchung zur Theologie Johann Andreas Quenstedt*. 18). Georg Calixtus led this faction.

Helmstedt rejected the consensus because it was targeted against Georg Calixtus. The primary reason the moderates at Jena opposed the *Saxon Consensus* was to preserve the peace and keep German Lutheranism from splintering. The second reason was that they felt nothing should be added to the *Formula of Concord*. While certain Lutheran provinces had provincial confessions that were binding only in that particular province, there seemed to be an aversion to adding to the *Book of Concord*. Whether this aversion was merely to making an addendum to the *Formula of Concord* or to authoring a new universal Lutheran Confession is unclear. Still

many provinces attached provincial confessions to their editions of the *Book of Concord*. Two examples of this would be the *Confessio Virtembergica* (1551) of Johannes Brenz (1499-1570) attached to Tübingen editions of the *Book of Concord* and *Christliche Visitationsartikel* (1592) of Aegidius Hunnius (1550-1603) attached in the *Triglotta* published by the Saxons of the Missouri Synod. Even though Helmstedt and Jena opposed the *Saxon Consensus*, the theological faculties of Leipzig and Wittenberg subscribed to it (Schaff. *The Creeds of Christendom*. 1:352).

The content of the *Consensus* was interesting. It very sharply refuted the theology of Calixtus. In particular it rejected his teaching that knowledge of and belief in the teachings of the Apostolic Symbol are all that is necessary for a Christian. The *Saxon Consensus* condemned those who claimed the doctrine of the Trinity is not taught in the Old Testament. It further maintained that the Old Testament faithful had to believe in the Trinity to be saved. The *Consensus repetitus fidei verae Lutheranae* rejected the teaching that God was the indirect cause of the fall. It upheld the doctrine of verbal inspiration. It confirmed the biblical teachings of original sin, the image of God, the person of Christ, the church, the sacraments, repentance, government, and the last judgment. It corrected the abuses of the Roman Mass and the Roman cult of saints. Finally the *Saxon Consensus* condemned sixteen errors of Calixtus on the doctrine of justification and good works. A major objective of the *Saxon Consensus* was to make clear that a *quia* subscription to the Lutheran Confessions required acceptance of the doctrine of verbal inspiration (Pelikan. *The Christian Tradition: Reformation of the Church and Dogma* [1300-1700] 4:347).

The Third Phase of the Syncretistic Controversy (1675-1686)

The third phase of the Syncretistic Controversy was partially provoked by the capture of Ägidius Strauch, a Danzig preacher and faithful student of Calov, off the coast of Pommern as he was sailing towards Hamburg. Great Elector had orchestrated this crass expression of Caesaropapism and held Strauch captive for three years. Johannes Musäus, professor at the University

of Jena, and Johannes Meisner (1615-1684), a professor at the University of Wittenberg, were also responsible for this third phase of Syncretism. Following the rejection of the *Consensus repetitus fidei verae Lutheranae*, Johannes Musäus and Calov saw eye to eye on very little. Musäus had now claimed that God's work of redemption could be perceived in the creation and not exclusively by divine revelation in Sacred Scripture (Gritsch, Eric. *A History of Lutheranism*. 119). Along with this error in natural theology, Musäus had been accused of Syncretism. Even though Musäus had publicly disavowed any sympathy for Syncretism, Calov continued to consider him suspect.

Meisner, on the other hand, was Calov's colleague. He had been on the faculty of Wittenberg a year longer than Calov. Perhaps jealousy was part of the problem. Calov's career had advanced faster than that of Meisner. Moreover, he was not particularly fond of Calov's personality. In any case, Meisner became sympathetic to Calixtus' cause. Subsequently Meisner made an improper use of the distinction between fundamental and non-fundamental doctrine that created a rift in the faculty. While Johann Quenstedt (1617-1688) and Johann Deutschmann (1625-1706) continued to remain loyal to Calov, Calov and Meisner were no longer on speaking terms after 1675. Regrettably this conflict became very personal.

Abraham Calov continued his protest against Syncretism under pseudonyms and by republishing the works of the Gnesio-Lutherans such as the *De Amnestia* of Johann Wigand (1523-1587). With great difficulty he was even able to get his *Historia syncretistica* (1682) published in Frankfurt am Main. The elector soon confiscated it. Thus a second edition (1685) was printed in Ratzeburg. The final phase of Syncretism concluded with the death of Calov in 1686.

Additional Polemics

The Syncretists were not the only ones to taste his polemics. Calov produced polemical materials in reaction to the Roman Catholics, Reformed, Socinians, Jean de Labadie, Jakob Böhme, etc. From 1655-58 Abraham wrote his chief work against the

Reformed titled: *Discussio controversiarum hodierno tempore inter ecclesias orthodoxas et reformatos coetus agitatarum*. Following this, he wrote a critique of the Remonstrance in his *Consideratio Arminianismi*. Concerning the Papists, he wrote *Mataeologia papistica*. One of the goals of this work was to prove that Elector Johann the Constant had not passed away professing Roman doctrine. Even the Socinians felt Calov's polemical prowess with *Scripta antisociniana* (1684), a book filling two folio volumes. Still no other group received as much attention as Calixtus and the Syncretists. The purpose of all of his polemics was not to pick fights, but to protect the faithful and show the recipients of his critique the error of their ways so that they would be restored to the flock of God. His writings against the Syncretists and Socinians confirmed the fact that Abraham Calov was also the great champion of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity in Lutheran Orthodoxy. This is why he was dubbed the Lutheran Athanasius.

Major Works

From 1655 to 1682 Abraham produced a proliferation of material on various subjects. Due to the sheer magnitude of his writings, some 500 titles in all, only his major works will be given attention. His chief systematic work, the *Systema Locorum theologicorum*, was written in two phases (Tomes. I-IV, 1655-1661; V-XII, 1677) and was published in 12 volumes. The purpose of the *Systema Locorum theologicorum* was to put the Bible into systematic form. The first tomes I-IV were prepared very thoroughly; however, the latter part, V-XII appears to be rushed (Preus. TPRL. 61). This systematics was really the only one to rival Gerhard's *Loci Theologici* in all of Lutheranism. The *Theologia Didactico-Polemica sive Systema Theologiae* of Johann Quenstedt (1617-1688), the librarian of Wittenberg, was far more exhaustive. Nevertheless it did not reach the depth of Calov's *Systema Locorum theologicorum* (at least with respect to the first four tomes). Quenstedt's work appears to have been more popular, for many copies of it still exist. Copies of Calov's *Systema Locorum theologicorum* are extremely rare. He also authored two dogmatic compendia: *Theologia Positiva* (1682)

which was printed by Calov and *Apodixis articulorum fidei* (1684) which was printed by his students. Both of these works were highly regarded.

His chief exegetical work and certainly his *magnum opus* was the *Biblia Illustrata*, a commentary on the entire Bible including the Apocrypha (1672-76). This work was printed in Frankfurt am Main in four large folio volumes to counter Hugo Grotius' *Biblia annotata*. It is a virtual gold mine of theology and attests to Calov's exegetical abilities. The *Biblia Illustrata* was so popular that it retained its prestige well into the nineteenth century, when most scholarly commentaries still made frequent reference to this classic work. The prominence of the doctrine of inerrancy saturates each page. Apart from the *Biblia Illustrata*, he compiled commentaries on Genesis, Romans, and Hebrews. It is worth noting that he had a particularly high regard for the book of Hebrews. His chief isagogics book, *Criticus sacer biblicus*, was written in 1673 and still proves to be fruitful reading.

Calov as Shepherd

The name Calov customarily conjures up images of an exegete or systematician. However, devotional literature was never far from his heart. His pastoral heart is evident in his own works and in his high regard for other Lutheran devotional material. Even more than his hymnals, catechisms, and *Biblischer Kalender*, his *Die deutsche Bibel* or Calov Bible (1682) merits recognition as a superb contribution to the devotional genera. This Bible along with the *Systema* and *Biblia Illustrata* are Calov's greatest legacy. *Die deutsche Bibel* should not be confused with the *Biblia Illustrata*. *Die deutsche Bibel* or Calov Bible is Luther's translation of the Holy Scriptures with a running commentary selected from the writings of Martin Luther. Where Luther offered no comment, Calov provides a gloss of his own (Leaver. *J.S. Bach and Scripture*. 23). It was anything but dry and academic. It breathes a warm devotional spirit (Leaver J.S. Bach and Scripture. 23). This Bible was highly treasured by the laity. Johann Sebastian Bach considered it one of his prized possessions. In fact J.S. Bach's own copy of the Calov Bible is well

worn, including extensive notes and underlining by Bach himself. Bach's copy of the Calov Bible now rests at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri.

Abraham Calov recognized his few works would by no means satisfy the spiritual needs of the people. For this reason he directed them to Johann Arndt's *Wahres Christentum* (*The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church*. 1:353; hereafter *ELC*). He also had a high respect for the early work of Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705) particularly his *Pia Desideria*, which he publicly recommended. The following letter to Spener dated October 11, 1674 express his own pious desires:

Eure desideria, für deren Mitteilung ich bestens danke, sind auch die meinigen. Und da Eure Kirche von den Übungen der Frömmigkeit eine solche Frucht hat, wie der Ruf berichtet, so nehme ich keinen Anstand, solche examina pietatis auch andern zu empfehlen; wie ich denn noch kürzlich mit Anführung des Beispiels und Erfolgs Eurer Kirche im öffentlichen Gottesdienst die Patrone der Kirche zu ihrer Nachahmung ermahnt habe, mit dem Wunsch, daß sie mit Nutzen fortgesetzt und die hier und da per accidens (zufälliger-, nicht notwendigerweise) sich anschließenden Mißbräuche abgestellt werden. (Your desires, for whose distribution I am most grateful, are also my desires. Since your church has [gleaned] such fruit from the exercises of piety as your communication reports, I do not hesitate to recommend such *examina pietatis* to others. I have rather recently advised the patrons of the church with quotations of the example and success of your church to imitate them in public worship with the desire that they will continue with their use and do away with the following misuses [that occur] here and there *per accidens* (accidentally, not necessarily). (Krauß. *Lebensbilder aus der Geschichte der christlichen Kirche*. 600)

Why would Calov have a high regard for Philipp Spener, the father of Pietism? Many of Spener's concerns had always been the concerns of Lutheranism (e.g., Luther, Gerhard, Dannhauer, etc.).

Spener longed to be a true servant to his flock, something Calov highly respected. Likewise Spener's early work was not as radical as his later writings. In the long run Spener appears to have lost control of his movement and to have begun to tolerate or accept the errors of his followers. Had Calov seen the result of pietism particularly under August Hermann Franke (1663-1727), he surely would have been more critical of the movement.

Personality, Family, and Death

Abraham Calov was a very healthy and industrious individual. He possessed all the qualities of the churchmen of his time: an encyclopedic memory, an indeflatable industry, linguistic skills, effective administration, and an inflexible zeal for pure doctrine (Gritsch, Eric. *A History of Lutheranism*. 120). He was loved by his adherents who considered him to be a new Athanasius. He was hated by his enemies who regarded him to be a new Torquemada. Calov's uncompromising character did overstep the rules of legitimate polemics at times. Yet he never placed his doctrine in opposition to his piety. Setting his positive attributes and foibles aside, one must concede that Calov's quest for pure doctrine and piety was firmly grounded in Holy Scripture and the prize that awaited him in heaven. He was indeed the *strenuus Christi athleta*, i.e., vigorous athlete of Christ, which he dubbed himself.

Calov was a very family oriented individual. He survived five wives and all thirteen of his children. At the age of seventy-two he took his sixth wife, Dorothea Quenstedt, the daughter of his younger colleague Johann Quenstedt. In addition to Quenstedt, Hülsemann and Heiland (the son-in-law of Polykarp Leyser) were some of his more famous fathers-in-law (Tholuck. *Geist*. 192-3). When his third wife, the daughter of Hülsemann, neared death he was comforted by the fact that she lived to receive the Eucharist on her deathbed (Tholuck. *Geist*. 192-193). When she received the viaticum, Calov rejoiced and sang loudly Philipp Nicolai's (1556-1608) chorale, *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*, particularly the last verse (Tholuck. *Geist*. 193).

Wie bin ich doch so herzlich froh,
 Daß mein Schatz ist das A und O
 Der Anfang und das Ende:
 Er wird mich noch zu seinem Preis
 Aufnehmen in das Paradeis
 Des klopf ich in die Hände:
 Amen, Amen,
 Komm du schöne Freudenkrone,
 Bleib nicht langen,
 Deiner wart'ich mit Verlangen

Oh, joy to know that Thou, my Friend
 Art Lord, Beginning without end,
 The First and Last, Eternal!
 And Thou at length – O glorious grace!
 Wilt take me to that holy place,
 The home of joys supernal.
 Amen. Amen!
 Come and meet me! Quickly greet me!
 With deep yearning,
 Lord, I look for Thy returning.

Not all of his children died young. Three of his daughters married, and his two sons, both named Abraham, died as young adults. The preface of his *Dreißig Leichenpredigten*, dedicated to his colleague Johann Deutschmann (1625-1706) and jurist Wilhelm Leyser, conveys his grief at this time of his life (Meusel. *Kirchliches Handlexicon*. 1:638). Moreover his final wife bore him no children. This was especially difficult for him because his children had been his major source of comfort (Meusel. *Kirchliches Handlexicon*. 1: 638).

On February 25, 1686, Abraham Calov was taken from this vale of tears to his eternal home. He died in complete control of all of his faculties. He was seventy-four. The funeral sermon was preached by Johann Fredrich Mayer (1615-1712). In this sermon he tried to soften the polemical caricature of Calov. In place of it, Mayer presents Calov as a theologian completely devoted to Holy Scripture.

He particular praised his intensive biblical studies. Abraham Calov was succeeded at the University of Wittenberg by Balthasar Bebel from Straßburg. There has been some debate regarding the date of Calov's death. February 21, 25, and 27 are all listed as possibilities. The confusion lies in the various dates recorded for Calov's death in the funeral sermon given by Johann Fredrich Mayer (1615-1712). February 25 is generally accepted.

II. The Theology and Philosophy of Abraham Calov

Catholicity

Dr. Abraham Calov was dedicated to the concept of catholicity. This means that Lutheranism is not some innovation of the sixteenth century. Rather Lutheran theology is the continuum of the one holy catholic and apostolic church confessed by the ecumenical creeds in opposition to Rome that has departed from the true path. Catholicity has always played a prominent role in Lutheranism. It is quite strong in the theology of Luther, Chemnitz, Gerhard, and Calov, etc. (cf. Hägglund. *History of Theology*. 303). Calov did not adhere to an uncritical catholicity, but a catholicity grounded in Sacred Scripture. This is clear from Martin Chemnitz' alteration of Vincent of Lerin's definition of catholicity, "Which has been received consistently from Scripture, always, everywhere, and by all believers" (cf. Chemnitz. *Examination of the Council of Trent*. 3:466; Elert. *Structure of Lutheranism*. 288).

In order to express this catholicity Abraham Calov frequently cited the early and even medieval church fathers to prove that Lutheranism was not practicing innovative exegesis. Rather it upheld the pure biblical theology of the church in every age. By doing this Calov made it clear that the fathers agreed far more with Lutheran doctrine than Roman or Reformed doctrine. Thus the fathers rightfully belonged to Lutheranism.

The catholicity of Abraham Calov's theology has often been overlooked. The main reason for this omission is attributed to Georg Calixtus. In ecumenical circles Calixtus is praised as the father of the modern ecumenical movement and the true advocate

of catholicity. Calov is characterized as an intolerant bully and founder of a sectarian form of Lutheranism known as Confessional Lutheranism. In truth the romantic notions of Calixtus are far from authentic catholicity. The church has always been evangelical and charitable, but it never sought catholicity through tolerance of error in doctrine or practice. The following example will illustrate the difference between these two men: Calixtus, as the present day ecumenical movement, saw the Holy Eucharist as a means to achieving some quasi unity rather than as the expression of unity achieved by obedience to Christ. Calov revealed his catholicity by adhering to the practice of the church partaking of the Eucharist only with those who are in full agreement with the teachings of Christ (cf. Elert, *Eucharist and Church Fellowship in the First Four Centuries*). In the theology of Calov the Eucharist is the expression of the unity or catholicity achieved by obedience to Christ, not an attempt to achieve tolerance by circumventing Christ.

Martin Luther

Throughout his life Abraham Calov considered himself a faithful disciple of Dr. Martin Luther. He ardently read his beloved teacher daily and meditated upon his writings. *Die Deutsche Bibel* is a clear witness to this fact. *Die Deutsche Bibel* was running commentary on each verse of Holy Scripture drawn from the writings of Martin Luther. Only where there were no remarks of Luther to be found would Calov submit his own gloss. Calov took no credit for this work. In fact he was very pleased to see that it was regarded as one of Luther's works and not his own.

Furthermore *Die Deutsche Bibel* should be recognized as one of the many attempts to systematize Martin Luther. Martin Luther was an existentialistic and practical theologian. He was certainly not an existentialist in the sense of Søren Kierkegaard or Martin Heidegger. Rather his theology was a living, vivid, and vibrant thing. It was concerned with soteriology, the issues at hand, and had little time for speculative questions. While the *opera* of Luther were for the most part unsystematic, they were not confused and flawed. On the contrary, the systemization of Luther was meant

to organize, summarize, and help one navigate his massive *corpus*. This systemization helped distinguish the mature Luther from the early Luther and limited the abuse of Luther's writings by non-Lutherans. Some of the most noteworthy systemizations of Luther are: *Loci Communes Lutheri* by Johannes Corvinus, *Thesaurus explicationem omnium articulorum* by Timotheus Kirchner, *Loci Communes Lutheri* by Theodosius Frabricius, and *Pastorale Lutheri* of Conrad Porta (Cf. Kolb. *Martin Luther as Prophet, Teacher, and Hero*). One edition of Luther's works even provided an index of his work based upon the *Loci Theologici* of Johann Gerhard.

Lutheran Confessions

Some scholars have assumed that there was a rapid decline in the use of the Lutheran Confessions in Lutheran Orthodoxy after the time of Leonhard Hutter (1563-1616) and then an incline during the life of Abraham Calov and Johann Dannhauer (1603-1666). A strong argument for this position is the general lack of citations from the Lutheran Confessions in the *Loci Theologici* of Johann Gerhard. This perceived decline is not entirely accurate. First of all, Lutheran universities always required a knowledge of and subscription to the Lutheran Confessions. Second, the Lutheran Confessions were typically cited in inter-Lutheran controversies and as a prerequisite for non-Lutherans seeking fellowship. Since internal Lutheran conflict at the time of Gerhard was less than that at the time of Calov, mass citations from the Confessions were not as necessary. Third, the great dogmatic works of Lutheranism were meant to prove the Scriptural teaching and catholicity of Lutheranism particularly to those outside of Lutheranism. In contrast to the *compendia* that were printed as manuals of instruction for future pastors, the *Loci Theologici* of Johann Gerhard was generally treated as a reference work or theological encyclopedia. Finally the many works of Gerhard's period, including the *Loci Theologici*, contain citations from the confessions, albeit not as many as can be found in Calov's day. In any case Abraham Calov's use and advocacy of the confessions is clear in the Syncretistic Controversy.

Theology

Abraham Calov defines theology with the following citation from the *Systema*:

Theologia est Habitus Practicus cognitionis e revelatione divina haustae, de vere Religione qua homo post lapsum per fidem ad salutem aeternam perducendus (Systema 1: 1) i.e. Theology is a practical habit of cognition drawn from divine revelation, concerning true religion, by which man after the fall is to be led, through faith, to eternal salvation) (Appold. *Abraham Calov's Doctrine of Vocatio in Its Systematic Context*. 46).

This citation is often abbreviated: *Theologia est habitus practicus* i.e. theology is practical aptitude. This famous axiom is the overarching theme of his theology. In contrast to certain scholastics, Calov taught that theology was practical rather than theoretical and an aptitude or disposition rather than a science. It was not a science because its first principles transcend rational explanation. Practically this meant that theology is driven by soteriology. The focus of Scripture is salvation and the beatific vision.

While he emphasized soteriology, this does not mean that he denigrated the doctrine of the Trinity or the person of Christ. In reality he spent an extensive amount of time on these subjects because they are intimately linked to our salvation. Regrettably this axiom has often been misunderstood to mean that only what one subjectively deems practical or what itching ears desire is authentic theology. It is chiefly in the *Systema locorum theologorum* under the section titled *usus practicus* (practical use), where the *habitus practicus* principle is demonstrated. In these edifying sections similar to the ones found in the *Loci Theologici* of Johann Gerhard, Calov reveals the practical application of each and every dogma of the Christian faith. Thus doctrine, faith, and piety were inseparable.

Holy Scripture

Abraham Calov is primarily known as a dogmatician and

philosopher. However, he was a far greater exegete and would be better envisioned as a biblical theologian. His entire theology was intended to be a summary of the Holy Scripture — nothing more, nothing less. His devotion to the Holy Scripture was unparalleled and few could challenge him on a point of exegesis. He is often remembered in history as the greatest advocate of verbal inspiration. He attempted to reiterate, clarify, and make binding the Lutheran Confession's existing position of verbal inspiration by appending the *Consensus repetitus fidei verae Lutheranae* to them.

In his *Systema locorum theologicorum* an entire chapter was devoted to the efficacy of Holy Scripture. This chapter was directed against Herrmann Rahtmann (1585-1628) who orchestrated the second major attack upon the Scriptures at the time of Lutheran Orthodoxy. Herrmann Rahtmann taught that Scripture was not a means of grace, but a dead letter. The Holy Spirit was not bound to the dead letter. In contradistinction Lutheranism taught that the Scriptures could not be separated from the Holy Spirit. For this reason they said that Holy Scriptures were efficacious even outside the use. Calov reiterates this point with one of his favorite expressions, namely, *verbum efficax*. This emphasis on the effect or power of the Word was belittled by Karl Heim (1874-1958) as nothing more than a "word fetish." At the same time, however, Heim's critique hints at the fact that Calov's concept of verbal inspiration was not some dead letter, but a living, vibrant, powerful, and active means of grace.

An oddity of this period, at least to the modern ear, was the controversy over the Hebrew vowel marks. Essentially certain Lutherans from the time of Flacius had fought for the authenticity of the vowel marks, going as far as claiming they could be found in the *Urtext*. Already by the time of Elijah Levita (1468-1549), a famous Hebrew scholar and friend of Johann Reuchlin (1455-1522), it had been proved convincingly that the vowels were not Mosaic or even from the time of Ezra, but from the post-Talmudic period (Preus. *TPRL*. 307-8). Even Martin Luther held to this position. In spite of this fact, men like Calov insisted on this point. It has often been suggested the Calov pressed this matter to support a radical concept of verbal inspiration. The reality is far different. The first reason he

held this view was the necessity of reacting to the Roman Catholics who were raising doubts about the reliability of the Masoretic text in order to exalt the Vulgate. The second reason was that the Jesuits' argument for a late introduction of vowel marks implied that Lutherans were every bit as dependent on tradition as Rome (Preus. *TPRL*. 308).

The hermeneutics of Abraham Calov exhibits his complete loyalty to Scripture alone. He was a strong advocate of the historical-grammatical method and the study of the original languages. Contextual exegesis was of paramount importance, but when necessary he would employ the *regula fidei*, i.e., analogy of faith. Even when hermeneutics developed into a virtual science among the dogmaticians, Calov stressed Luther's spiritual aids in the interpretation of Scripture: *oratio, meditatio, and tentatio* (cf. Calov. *Paedia Theologica*. Jung, Voelker. *Das Ganze der Heiligen Schrift. Hermeneutik und Schriftauslegung bei Abraham Calov*. 12-14). Abraham Calov and the dogmaticians stressed the *sensus literalis* throughout their study of Holy Scripture. The *sensus literalis* did not necessarily mean the literal-grammatical sense of the modern day, but the original meaning intended by the Holy Spirit (Hägglund. *History of Theology*. 307).

In contrast to a radical Antiochian interpretation of Scripture, Calov acknowledged a *sensus mysticus*, i.e., mystical sense. *Sensus mystica* was seen as an application of the text that did not destroy the one spirit-intended meaning of the text. In point of fact Johann Gerhard and his handpicked successor at Jena, Solomon Glassius, would speak of the *sensus duplexus* that is a literal and mystical sense (Glassius. *Philologia Sacra*. 2.1.1.1) This was in no way a denial of the one spirit-intended meaning (in contradistinction to the one literal sense), but a division of the one spirit-intended meaning into its applications or accommodations (*accommodationes*) and sub-applications (Gerhard. *Disputatum Theologicarum*. I, 68ff). For example Lutherans often divided the literal into the proper and the figurative or trope (metaphor). They divided the mystical sense into the allegorical, typological, and parabolic (Glassius. *Philologia Sacra*. 2.1.2.2; Hollaz. *Examen*. Proleg. 3:18). Conversely, Lutherans like the Pomeranian David Hollaz criticized the medieval

fathers for merely dividing the mystical sense into the allegorical, the tropological, and analogical, since these were really uses of the allegorical sense according to Lutheran hermeneutics (Hollaz. *Examen. Proleg.* 3:18).

Some have suggested that Abraham Calov and the dogmaticians were ignorant of exegesis and that they dogmatized Scripture. This unsubstantiated view has begun to decline due to modern research. It is certainly true that there have been advances in biblical archeology, biblical history, biblical anthropology, lower textual criticism, etc., since the days of the dogmaticians. This should be expected. Their high regard for the perspicuity of Scripture may help explain some exegetical omission. Still the pioneering work of Flacius, Gerhard, Calov, Glassius, Dannhauer, Schmidt, and Pfeiffer cannot be overlooked. Modern exegesis would not be where it is today without their contributions.

Mystical Union

The *unio mystica* or mystical union is one subject where the name Calov appears again and again. Johann Arndt (1555-1621) is accused of innovating the concept of the *unio mystica* in Lutheranism and Calov is charged with its introduction to dogmatics. In reality this biblical doctrine is found in Martin Luther, Johannes Brenz, Martin Chemnitz, Johann Gerhard, etc. Some have credited Calov, and to a certain degree Hülsemann, with being the first to assign the mystical union its own locus in dogmatics (Neve. *A History of Christian Thought.* 325). The locus *Von der Vereinigung mit Christo* is already present in *Epitome Credendorum* of Nicholaus Hunnius (1585-1643). The reason the mystical union was not given its own locus until this time was a shift from the synthetic to the analytical method in dogmatic methodology. Furthermore Calov has been accused of pantheism and taking the *unio mystica* to limits that Luther would not have dreamed. This is based on the use of the terms *conjunctio* and περιχώρησις, i.e., perichoresis in his description of the union.

The form (of the mystical union) is a joining together (*conjunctio*) with God, not relatively, but truly; not purely

extrinsic but intrinsic, not through a bare positioning but through an intimate emanation, not only the operation of grace but at the same time the approach of the divine substance to believers with the mystical περιχωρήσει; nevertheless short of a commixture or transforming of the essence of man (Calov. *Theologia Positiva*. Cap. VIII. Thes. III. 503).

Calov certainly stresses the intimate nature of the mystical union with these terms. He considered the union to be an *unio substantiarum*. His rejection of μεταουσία, i.e., a *transsubstantiatio*: a union of two substances which changes the one into the other or συνουσία, i.e., a *consubstantiation*, a union of two substances that results in a third new substance clearly absolves him of any charge of pantheism (cf. Calov. *Biblia Illustrata*. NT 2:1536).

Philosophy

To understand Calov, the philosopher, a bit of history is required. Luther's own philosophical persuasion is a complicated question. He was not as opposed to philosophy as some think and yet he was by no means a philosopher, either. He borrowed from the *via antiqua*, nominalism (esp. William Ockham and Gregory of Rimini), and the various strands of renaissance humanism. At best he is an eclectic that employed philosophy only to advance the Gospel. Philipp Melanchthon (1497-1560) was far more of a humanist and a philosopher. He too was quite eclectic, but eclectic in the sense that the Renaissance Humanism was a sampling of the classical world. In early days of the Reformation both Martin and Phillip had nearly abandoned most of the disciplines of philosophy for the study of philology. Following the peasants' revolt, Melanchthon with Luther's blessing revived a number of the philosophical disciplines in Wittenberg. Metaphysics would not be revived until the period of Lutheran Orthodoxy. Melanchthon's purpose in reintroducing philosophy and education was to curb the Anabaptist barbarism found among the laity (Kusukawa. *The Transformation of Natural Philosophy*). Thus Melanchthonian eclecticicism with notable exceptions dominated Lutheran circles until the early Golden Age of

Orthodoxy. One of the significant exceptions was the University of Tübingen where Jakob Schegk (1511-1587) professed a strict form of Aristotelianism and waged war on Ramism (cf. *Philosophy in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: Conversations with Aristotle*. 169-187).

In the middle and toward the end of the 16th century other philosophical movements arose. The most significant were Neo-Aristotelianism, Ramism, Neo-Stoicism, and Cartesianism. Lutheran Orthodoxy and Reformed Orthodoxy would generally adhere to Neo-Aristotelianism. This was not a Medieval Aristotelianism. It was a hybrid that studied Aristotle in a humanistic fashion. Some Gnesio-Lutherans and the German Reformed at the University of Herborn became advocates of Ramism. Ramism was founded by Peter Ramus (1515-1572), a Calvinist, who tried to simplify and streamline Aristotle (cf. Ong. *Ramus Method and the Decay of Dialogue*). The sole Lutheran Neo-Stoic was Justus Lipsius. He was a short-time convert to Lutheranism and the pioneer of Neo-Stoicism. Cartesianism was generally embraced only by Dutch Calvinists.

The origins of the revival of Aristotelianism particularly in Lutheran circles is a study in itself (cf. Scharlemann. *Aquinas and Gerhard*. 13-22). It seems to have a variety of origins. First of all Renaissance Humanism never really destroyed the study of Aristotle. The schools of the scholastics continued to study Aristotle with ever improving texts (esp. Thomas de Vio). In Italy, particularly Padua and Bologna (esp. Pietro Pomponazzi, Giacomo [Jacopo] Zabarella), a strict form of Aristotelianism influenced by the ancient commentators and Ibn Rushd (better known as Averroes) was thriving (cf. Iorio. *The Aristotelians of Renaissance Italy*). Dominicans and Jesuits (esp. Francisco Suarez) joined humanism and Aristotelianism to produce their synthesis. The centers of this study were the Spanish University of Salamanca and the Portuguese University of Coimbra. The University of Tübingen, the University of Altdorf, and the University of Helmstedt also played a significant roll. Their influence requires further study. All of these traditions helped initiate the revival of Aristotelianism in Lutheranism.

As was stated earlier, the Aristotelianism of Lutheran

Orthodoxy was not a lapse into the Middle Ages. Rather it was a philosophy aided by the knowledge and tools of the Renaissance. Lutheran Philosophy would not rigidly adhere to Aristotle, but taught the subject of philosophy was *ad res ipsas*, i.e., to the things themselves. Conversely, just as certain elements of Thomism have some influence on the theology of Lutheran Orthodoxy, Thomism is also evident in its philosophy. Michael Wolf (1584-1623), a colleague of Johann Gerhard, used Thomas' *De ente et essentia* in his lectures on metaphysics. The true father of Lutheran Aristotelianism was Jakob Schegk. There are some other Lutherans that deserve to be mentioned. Philipp Scherb, founder and professor of the University of Altdorf in Nürnberg, acquired his knowledge of Aristotle in Italy. The Italian Julius Pacius had some impact. Owen Günther (1532-1615) taught at the University of Jena before teaching at Helmstedt. Finally there was Cornelius Martini (1568-1621) of the University of Helmstedt who was a friend of David Chytraeus (1531-1600), (Wundt. *Schulmetaphysik*. 49-50).

Before one begins the history of the revival of metaphysics in Lutheranism, metaphysics needs to be defined. Metaphysics is the study of *ens qua ens*, i.e., being insofar as being. It was considered the queen of the sciences and is a branch of philosophy. The revival of metaphysics in Lutheranism was more independent than the revival of Aristotelianism, albeit the *Metaphysicae disputationes* of Francisco Suarez would have some impact after the revival. The revival of metaphysics begins with Daniel Cramer (1568-1637), professor at the Gymnasium and pastor of Stettin, Pommern. His lectures titled Isagoge in *Metaphysicam Aristotelis* were published in 1594. Cramer was also known for his uncompleted *Pommersche Kirchenchronik*. Zacharias Sommer of the University of Wittenberg published his *Questiones in primam Aristotelis philosophiam* in 1594. In contrast to Cramer he saw only the theological value of metaphysics. Solomon Gesner (1559-1605), a colleague of Sommer, used metaphysics exclusively to refute the Reformed. This would essentially be the approach of Jakob Martini (1570-1649) and Balthazar Meisner (1587-1626). At the University of Altdorf, Nikolaus Taurellus (1547-1606), Ernst Soner, and Michael Piccart continued the legacy of Scherb. The very independent

minded Taurellus tried to develop a Christian philosophy as Piccart published his *Isagoge in lectionem Aristotelis* in 1605. In Strasburg, Johann Ludwig Hawenreuter, philosopher and physician, published his metaphysics in 1596. The text that set the standard for Lutheranism was the *Compendium metaphysicum* of Cornelius Martini (1568-1621) of the University of Helmstedt. After it was revised, Johann Gerhard used it in his lectures on metaphysics at the University of Jena (Wundt. *Schulmetaphysik*. 51-68).

The Hoffmann Controversy at the University of Helmstedt sealed the revival of metaphysics in Lutheran circles. At Helmstedt a Gnesio-Lutheran by the name of Daniel Hoffmann (1538-1611) had taught double truth, i.e., reason can contradict theology. This was the same Hoffmann that had opposed the *Formula of Concord* and attacked Martin Chemnitz. Hoffmann felt his position was that of Luther and the Scriptures. He also advocated Ramism which was now under attack. Cornelius Martini (1568-1621), who had helped revive metaphysics, opposed him (cf. Thomasius, Gottfried. *De Controversia Hofmanniana*). Martini taught that such things as the Holy Trinity are beyond reason, but that they cannot contradict reason. The “reason” of which Martini speaks is pre-fall or regenerate reason. His argument is the following: If pure reason contradicts theology, then God would be a liar and the origin of evil. Pre-fall or regenerate reason cannot contradict theology, because its origin is from God and He is unable to do evil. Still pre-fall or regenerate reason is not able to comprehend the Holy Trinity even in the beatific vision. Since man will never be omniscient, certain things will always be beyond reason, but they will not contradict reason. This was the position that won the day.

Aristotelianism and particularly metaphysics came to play a very important roll in High Orthodoxy. For example the *Loci Theologici* of Johann Gerhard employed Aristotelian methodology, logic, and metaphysics to advance the Gospel. The *Philosophia sobria* of Balthasar Meisner (1587-1626) made abundant use of metaphysics to demonstrate the superiority of Lutheranism to Calvinism. While there was little advancement among Lutherans in theory at this time, two different approaches to philosophy were beginning to take shape. One part of Lutheranism understood

philosophy as an *ancilla*, i.e., a handmaiden to theology. The other part did philosophy for philosophy's sake. Generally speaking, those who used philosophy for philosophy's sake did not always maintain their orthodoxy.

The high point of Lutheran Aristotelianism was Abraham Calov. This is true because of his contribution to ontology, i.e., the study of being and his distinction between *gnostologia* and *noologia*. Calov produced his philosophical *corpus* in his younger years at the Universities of Königsberg and Rostock. The following are a list and description of these works. *Tractatus de methodo discendi et disputandi* (1632) was a manual for disputations.

Gnostologia (1633) was the study of *omne scibile qua tale*, i.e., all things cognizable as such. Calov further defines *cognoscibile*, i.e., cognizable with *intelligibile*, i.e., intelligible and states, "*intelligibile est omne, quod est*, i.e., intelligible is everything that exists" (Wundt. *Schulmetaphysik*. 257). *De directione... intellectus... disputatio* (1636) dealt with the intellect. *Metaphysica Divina* (1636) was a metaphysical text that presupposed both Scripture and reason as a basis for knowledge. *Noologia* (1650) dealt with intelligence or the *habitus primorum principiorum*, i.e., the habit or disposition of the first principles. Its object is the *affinitas rerum*, i.e., relationship of things compared with one another. Thus the first principles are derived from the observation of neither the complete dissimilarities nor the complete similarities of these compared things. (Wundt. *Schulmetaphysik*. 259). The philosophical works of Abraham Calov were collected and published in two volumes known as the *Scripta philosophica* (1650-1). A year later his *Encyclopedia disciplinarum realium ideae* was published in 1652. These works dealt primarily with methodology, metaphysics, and epistemology. Some of these works were intended to show that even sound philosophy demonstrated the validity of Lutheranism in contrast to the errors of the Reformed and Roman Catholics. In this manner Calov followed in the footsteps of Balthazar Meisner's (1587-1626) *Philosophia sobria*.

The contributions of Calov to epistemology and ontology are his real claim to fame. Drawing from the works of Wittenberg professors Georg Gutke (1589-1634) and Valentin Fromme (1601-

1675), he anticipated some of the epistemological insights of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) in his works on *Gnostologia* and *Noologia* (Wundt. *Schulmetaphysik*. 134, 259). Nevertheless he is fundamentally Aristotelian in his epistemology and did not advocate the transcendental idealism of Kant, i.e., the distinction between phenomena and noumena. Abraham Calov is also credited with coining the word “ontology,” i.e., the study of being. This is only partially true. Rudolf Goclenius had already introduced the term in his 1613 *Lexicon philosophicum*. Still Abraham Calov was the first to use the term “ontology” in its proper sense. This he did in his *Metaphysica Divina* (1636).

So often the work of the seventeenth century Lutheran, Catholic, and Reformed philosophers has been overlooked. In fact, most histories of philosophy leap from the Middle Ages to Descartes and Kant. Had there not been a Neo-Aristotelian revival, there would never have been a Leibnitz, Wolff, or Kant. Just as St. Augustine should not be equated with Plotinus, so, too, Lutheran Neo-Aristotelianism should not be equated with the rationalism of Leibnitz, Wolff, or Kant. Lutheran Orthodoxy did not use reason magisterially as the theologians of the Enlightenment. Moreover, Lutheran Orthodoxy did not cause Rationalism. To imply this is no different than saying lower textual criticism leads to higher criticism. In any case contribution of Lutheran Orthodoxy should not be underestimated in the history of philosophy.

Approach to Dogmatics

One of the recognized characteristics of Lutheran Orthodoxy was the writing of dogmatics or systematics. Writing a systematic text was orthodoxy’s claim to fame much like writing a sermon book on the historic pericopes was for the Synodical Conference theologians. In order to write a dogmatics book one had to begin with an outline or roadmap. This road map was typically determined by Aristotelian methodology. The first method for doing dogmatics was the *ordo locorum* or the *loci* method popularized by Philipp Melancthon (1497-1560) and the humanists. This method grew out of the *Topics* of Aristotle and the works of Cicero. The *loci* method

makes use of the *habitus practicus* method, but was by no means a *summa* or a *corpus* of theology. For example, the *Loci Communes* (1521) of Melanchthon grew out of his commentary on Romans and treated only certain major points of doctrine.

When the *De natura logicae* of Giacomo Zabarella (1533-1589), the celebrated logician from Padua, was studied, the *Loci* method was abandoned. This work was part of a collection of logical works known as *Opera Logica*. Out of this study grew two ways of approaching systematics. In reality this distinction in methodology did not originate in Zabarella, but was derived from the writing of Galen the Physician, a famous Aristotelian commentator (cf. Edwards. *The Logic of Iacopo Zabarella* (1533-1589)). The first approach was the *ordo compositivus*, i.e., synthetic method, which proceeds from principles to conclusions. The second was the *ordo resolutivus*, i.e., analytical method, which begins with the goal in view and then sets forth ways to reach this goal. These two approaches became necessary to systemize the massive amount of dogmatic material accumulated by Luther, Melanchthon, Chemnitz, Hunnius, and others.

Johann Gerhard followed the *ordo locorum* or loci method of Melanchthon, but also made use of a loose adaptation of the *ordo compositivus*. This is exhibited by Gerhard's treatment of theology's principles, specifically the *principium cognoscendi*. In the same year Gerhard's *Loci Theologici* was printed, Balthazar Mentzer, Gerhard's teacher, adopted the second approach, the *ordo resolutivus*, in his *Synopsis theologiae analytico ordine comprehensa*. About the same time or earlier Bartholomaeus Keckermann, a Reformed theologian from Danzig implemented the analytical method. The analytical method better suited Lutheran theology than Reformed theology. Lutheranism had a soteriological emphasis, which became the *finis* or end goal of Lutheran dogmatics, as opposed to the theocentric viewpoint of the Reformed (Appold. *Abraham Calov's Doctrine of Vocatio in Its Systematic Context*. 29).

The analytical method, particularly in the *Systema Locorum Theologicorum* of Calov, helped facilitate the *habitus practicus* principle. The purpose of this method was to systematize all theology under the single point of view: How will man reach his highest goal,

eternal blessedness? It began with the belief that God is the eternal goal, and then proceeded to deal with the doctrine of man, the subject of theology, and finally with the means whereby man can attain eternal blessedness. Prior to Calov there was no uniformity in dogmatic method. There was also no theological purpose in choosing one methodology over another. After Calov made use of the analytical method specifically because of its soteriological aim, no noteworthy Lutheran would deviate from it. Thus the *Systema Locorum Theologicorum* set the precedence for all future Lutheran dogmatics even though it was not the first to employ the analytical method.

Order of Salvation

Early Lutheran dogmatic works did not treat the entire *ordo salutis* (order of salvation) in a systematic way. However, they did deal with most of the *ordo* under one or more *loci*. When the *ordo compositivus* (synthetic method) was popularized by Johann Gerhard, the *ordo salutis* was still in its early stages. Yet it should be noted that Johann Gerhard would later advocate the *ordo resolutivus* because it treated theology as a *habitus practicus* (as opposed to a theoretical science). Since he had finished his *Loci Theologici* and could no longer restructure it he did not use the *ordo resolutivus* in his *Loci* (Vaahtoranta, Martti. *Restauratio Imaginis Divinae*. 22). Nicolaus Hunnius was one of the earliest to develop the *ordo salutis* in his *Epitome Credendorum* along with Balthazar Mentzer (1565-1627). (A sort of *ordo salutis* can also be found in the *Wahres Christentum* of Johann Arndt). But the *ordo salutis* would not take its final shape until after Calixtus, the arch-heretic from Helmstedt. Abraham Calov is said to be the true founder of the modern Lutheran *ordo salutis* even though he was not the first to develop it. A comprehensive study of the *ordo salutis* can be a tremendous aid to maintaining a proper distinction between justification and sanctification. Many errors have arisen as a result of a misunderstanding of the *ordo salutis*.

Although there are minor differences among Lutheran theologians as to the exact structure of the *ordo salutis*, there is

clearly agreement on its main components. Abraham Calov's *ordo salutis* consists of the following: vocation, illumination, regeneration, conversion, justification, penitence, mystical union, sanctification, and glorification (Calov. *Systema*. 10). This is the most common schema for constructing the *ordo*. The purpose of the *ordo salutis* is merely to systematize what takes place in a believer in a cause and effect relationship. The *ordo* dare not be turned into a temporal relationship or into something caused by man since this would be unbiblical. Furthermore the entire *ordo salutis* occurs simultaneously. The negative of developing such an *ordo salutis* via the analytical method, as C.F.W. Walther (1811-1887) once remarked, is that one could force Scripture into an airtight system whereby doctrine is not based upon a *locus classicus*, but rather on logical deductions (Suelflow. *Servant of the Word*. 106). Moreover the Reformed have often attacked the Lutheran *ordo salutis* claiming it was synergistic, since regeneration and faith precede justification. Biblically speaking, faith precedes subjective justification since man is justified by faith (Galatians 3:28, Romans 8:30). Moreover faith is also caused by the Holy Spirit and therefore is not a work of man (Romans 8:30). Clearly the Reformed charge is unwarranted and clouded by their misunderstanding of election.

III. Abraham Calov's Influence

Abraham Calov was a man of exceptional learning and pastoral concern. He was truly a *strenuus Christi athleta*, i.e., vigorous athlete of Christ. His supporters admired him as the Lutheran Athanasius, while his opponents abhorred him as the Lutheran Torquemada, the Hot-blooded Watchman of Zion, and the Grand Inquisitor (Tholuck. *Geist*. 202, 209, 229). His influence is evident in Hülsemann, Quenstedt, Scherzer, Kromayer, and later Lutheran Orthodoxy. At times his polemics went too far, still they were rather typical for the day. His zeal was primarily driven by a pastoral concern to protect the flock.

Abraham Calov had a profound influence on Johann Sebastian Bach. This is largely attributed to *Die deutsche Bibel*. J.S. Bach also acquired Calov's personal copy of the Altenberg edition of

Luther's works—full of his personal underlining and notes. This was the edition that Abraham Calov had used to produce *Die deutsche Bibel*. J.S. Bach obtained it via the auction of Andreas Winkler's library (Leaver. *J.S. Bach and Scripture*. 25). All of these books were treasured by him as can be seen from the following: Although Bach consulted the Calov Bible extensively, its present condition indicates that he must have taken meticulous care of it. *Die deutsche Bibel* was catalogued first among the theological books that Bach owned in a list written in 1750, indicating its importance in Bach's library. The Altenberg edition of Luther's works and the Calov Bible were set in a place of prominence in J.S. Bach's library. When Bach died, all his books were distributed among his family except for *Die deutsche Bibel* and the Altenberg edition of Luther's works, which were assigned to his widow, Anna Magdalena, because she knew how much her husband regarded these books (Leaver *J.S. Bach and Scripture*. 24-25). These books took precedence over Martin Chemnitz's *Examen* and Johannes Müller's *Lutherus Defensus*.

Abraham Calov left his mark on Synodical Conference Lutheranism as well. C.F.W. Walther frequently quotes Calov in his writings and appears to have had a high regard for him. Adolph Hönecke (1835-1908) had a profound respect for Calov and probably used him more than any other American Lutheran (Preus. *TPRL*. 61). Robert Preus adds that Franz Pieper (1852-1931) more often cites Quenstedt while Hönecke uses Calov (Preus. *TPRL*. 22). What is far more intriguing is that Calov's greatest Synodical Conference disciple, Adolph Hönecke, was converted by August Tholuck, the contentious Prussian union biographer of Calov. Even celebrated exegetes like Georg Stöckhardt (1842-1913) and Heinrich Meyer (1800-1873) frequently cite the *Biblia Illustrata* in their commentaries.

In conclusion, Abraham Calov was indeed one of the greatest theologians in Lutheranism and all of Christendom. Thus it is the hope of this author that he not be forgotten, but diligently read and studied. His theology is just as vital to the present as it was to his own time. May the advice of C.F.W. Walther be heeded!

Do not despise the writings of the old faithful church fathers, the writings of a Luther, Chemnitz, Quenstedt,

Gerhard, H. Müller, etc. Otherwise you disobey the Holy Spirit, who commanded you: “Do not despise prophecy” [that is, exposition of Scripture; I Thess. 5:20]. C.F.W. Walther, 1884 Synodical Conference convention essay.

” *Soli Deo Gloria*

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The Meaning of “Preach the Gospel in all its Fullness”

Addressing the Theology and the Craft of the Sermon

Edward Bryant

The phrase “Preach the Gospel in All its Fullness” appears over and over again in Lutheran theological literature. It usually appears in discussion of the division of Law and Gospel and in reference to preaching. Probably the most memorable and enduring expression is from Walther’s *Law and Gospel*, Thesis VI: “In the second place, the Word of God is not rightly divided when the Law is not preached in its full sternness and the **Gospel not in its full sweetness**, when, on the contrary, Gospel elements are mingled with the Law and Law elements with the Gospel.”¹

How shall we preach the Gospel in all its fullness, all its sweetness? How shall we look at a sermon, a Bible class, a day, a year, our whole ministry and say, “Yes, the Gospel was here in all its sweetness?” As Walther himself said, “Rightly distinguishing the Law and the Gospel is the most difficult and the highest art of Christians in general and of theologians in particular. It is taught only by the Holy Spirit in the school of experience.”²

When we fail to preach the Gospel in all its fullness, it may be from some theological misperception, because the Gospel is so contrary to our sinful nature. But it may also be because we just don’t have control of our sermons or other aspects of our teaching. A happy combination of activities over the years perhaps has provided me with a few experiences to share with you, to give you some things to think about, and to use or not, as befits your own ministry. The result, hopefully, will be treasures of joy and comfort in the hearts of broken sinners as the Gospel pours into them in all its fullness.

In many ways, “preaching the Gospel in all its fullness” is synonymous with “rightly dividing the word of truth,” (2 Timothy 2: 15) and this paper could thus be a condensation of Law and Gospel. Others have already done that, and done it well, so we will not repeat

it here. We will, however, echo Walther's final thesis, "... the Word of God is not rightly divided when the person teaching it does not allow the Gospel to have a general predominance in his teaching."³ It is wrong if the Law predominates. It is wrong even if there is an even balance. The Gospel must stand above all.

This paper, then will deal with HOW we may accomplish this wonderful labor, to have the Gospel predominate in our teaching and in our preaching.

The Gospel is to predominate.

A. Scripture says so.

We won't just take it for granted that the Gospel is to predominate. The antinomian proclivities of our society might make us at least a little suspicious of someone who appears to downplay the Law. We don't downplay the Law, but we divide it from the Gospel and refuse to confuse it with the Gospel. Paul's letter to Timothy, 1 Timothy 1:8-11, states this so clearly:

But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully, knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust. NKJV

The Law accuses and convicts, as Paul teaches, "Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Romans 3:20, NKJV) Those who are righteous by faith already know their sin; it is the lawless who need to be confronted with their sin if they are to come to repentance. One way to see if your people view the Law as determining their relationship to God is to ask, "What does God think of you?" Very often, the answer you get will indicate some measure of displeasure

on God's part. "At bottom," many say, "God must think of me as a filthy, rotten sinner, because that is what I am."

God's opinion of us hinges on how He determines whether we are righteous or not. If He uses the Law, then we are most certainly condemned. But He doesn't. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes." (Romans 10: 4 NKJV) The Law is not what defines our righteousness or lack of it, Christ does. His righteousness is ours by faith, and that is what establishes our righteousness before God. This is why the Gospel must have the final, the predominate, word.

Paul lays this out for us in Romans, where he begins in the first chapter, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek." (Romans 1:16 NKJV) He underscores it in greater detail in the tenth chapter, telling how anyone, Jew or Gentile is to be saved, "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:17 NKJV)

In his last thesis, Walther points to numerous other passages that teach that the Gospel is to predominate in our ministry. We do well to remember how often God urges us through the Apostles to tend to the Gospel as our first work, and the Law as an alien work. We read in Mark 16:15-16, "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.'" (NKJV) This iteration of the great commission underscores the fact that it is the Gospel that is preached and is believed unto salvation.

It should be no surprise then that Paul enjoins upon the young pastor Timothy that he be Gospel-centered. He says, "But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist [ἔργον ποιήσον ευαγγελιστοῦ], fulfill your ministry." (2 Timothy 4:5 NKJV) His labors were to be defined by the "good news" that was his message.

Paul follows his own counsel when speaking to the challenging congregation at Corinth, "For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified." (1 Corinthians 2:2 NKJV) According to our natural tendencies, driven

by the *opinio legis*, we would expect that Paul would not know anything except the very best and most sanctified advice, and set the very best standards of spirit-filled requirements for good church membership, followed by the most skillful persuasion to meet these requirements. Not so, for it is the Gospel that gives life, as Paul also wrote, “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.” (2 Corinthians 3:5-6 NKJV)

Indeed, the preacher is to bring news of great joy, as Paul also says, “Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand.” (2 Corinthians 1:24 NKJV) Walther’s comments on this text are quite apt, “Remember this word of the apostle well: when you become ministers, you become helpers of the Christians’ joy. Do not become ministers who vex and torture the people, filling them with uncertainty and causing them to go home from church heavy-hearted.”

I am here reminded of an anecdote repeated more than once by our brother, George Orvick. He had a member who told him once, “I work with people all week long, and in my position I meet plenty of people who are angry with me. It is a great burden to come to church on Sunday and hear my pastor speak as though God is mad at me too.”(paraphrase) Pastor Orvick’s whole point was that we so easily and so wrongly burden with the Law people who are already crushed beneath the weight of their own consciences.

B. The Confessions place the Gospel first.

The Confessions also reflect the Biblical emphasis on the Gospel. In the *Augsburg Confession*, Article IV, we read, “1] Also they teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for 2] Christ’s sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor, and that their sins are forgiven for Christ’s sake, who, by His death, has made satisfaction for our sins. 3] This faith God imputes for righteousness in His sight. Rom. 3 and 4.”²⁴ The clear implication

of the whole doctrine of justification by grace through faith is that the law, which cannot save, must make room for the Gospel, which alone can save.

The *Smalcald Articles*, Part II, Article I makes the primacy of the Gospel just as clear,

The first and chief article is this,

1] That Jesus Christ, our God and Lord, died for our sins, and was raised again for our justification, Rom. 4, 25.

2] And He alone is the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world, John 1, 29; and God has laid upon Him the iniquities of us all, Is. 53, 6.

3] Likewise: All have sinned and are justified without merit [freely, and without their own works or merits] by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, in His blood, Rom. 3, 23f.

4] Now, since it is necessary to believe this, and it cannot be otherwise acquired or apprehended by any work, law, or merit, it is clear and certain that this faith alone justifies us as St. Paul says, Rom. 3, 28: For we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the Law. Likewise 3, 26: That He might be just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Christ.

5] Of this article nothing can be yielded or surrendered [nor can anything be granted or permitted contrary to the same], even though heaven and earth, and whatever will not abide, should sink to ruin. For there is none other name under heaven, given among men whereby we must be saved, says Peter, Acts 4, 12. And with His stripes we are healed, Is. 53, 5. And upon this article all things depend which we teach and practice in opposition to the Pope, the devil, and the [whole] world. Therefore, we must be sure concerning this doctrine, and not doubt; for otherwise all is lost, and the Pope and devil and all things gain the victory and suit over us.⁵

Likewise, the *Apology*, Article IV, argues in detail for the importance of the Gospel, without which there is no difference between the Christian faith and the pagan philosophers.

5] All Scripture ought to be distributed into these two principal topics, the Law and the promises. For in some places it presents the Law, and in others the promise concerning Christ, namely, either when [in the Old Testament] it promises that Christ will come, and offers, for His sake, the remission of sins justification, and life eternal, or when, in the Gospel [in the New Testament], Christ Himself, since He has appeared, promises the remission of sins, justification, and life eternal. 6] Moreover, in this discussion, by Law we designate the Ten Commandments, wherever they are read in the Scriptures. Of the ceremonies and judicial laws of Moses we say nothing at present.

7] Of these two parts the adversaries select the Law, because human reason naturally understands, in some way, the Law (for it has the same judgment divinely written in the mind); [the natural law agrees with the law of Moses, or the Ten Commandments] and by the Law they seek the remission of sins and justification. 8] Now, the Decalog requires not only outward civil works, which reason can in some way produce, but it also requires other things placed far above reason, namely, truly to fear God, truly to love God, truly to call upon God, truly to be convinced that God hears us, and to expect the aid of God in death and in all afflictions; finally, it requires obedience to God, in death and all afflictions, so that we may not flee from these or refuse them when God imposes them.

9] Here the scholastics, having followed the philosophers, teach only a righteousness of reason, namely, civil works, and fabricate besides that without the Holy Ghost reason can love God above all things. For, as long as the human mind is at ease, and does not feel the wrath or judgment of God, it can imagine that it wishes to love God, that it wishes to do good for God's sake. [But it is sheer hypocrisy.] In this manner they teach that men merit the remission of sins by doing what is in them, i.e., if reason, grieving over sin, elicit an act of love to God, or 10] for God's sake be active in that which is good. And because this opinion naturally flatters men, it has brought forth and multiplied in the Church many services, monastic vows, abuses of the mass; and, with this opinion the one

has, in the course of time, devised this act of worship and observances, the other that. 11] And in order that they might nourish and increase confidence in such works, they have affirmed that God necessarily gives grace to one thus working, by the necessity not of constraint but of immutability [not that He is constrained, but that this is the order which God will not transgress or alter].

12] In this opinion there are many great and pernicious errors, which it would be tedious to enumerate. Let the discreet reader think only of this: If this be Christian righteousness, what difference is there between philosophy and the doctrine of Christ? If we merit the remission of sins by these elicited acts [that spring from our mind], of what benefit is Christ? If we can be justified by reason and the works of reason, wherefore is there need 13] of Christ or regeneration [as Peter declares, 1 Pet. 1, 18ff]? And from these opinions the matter has now come to such a pass that many ridicule us because we teach that an other than 14] the philosophic righteousness must be sought after. [Alas! it has come to this, that even great theologians at Louvain, Paris, etc., have known nothing of any other godliness or righteousness (although every letter and syllable in Paul teaches otherwise) than the godliness which philosophers teach. And although we ought to regard this as a strange teaching, and ought to ridicule it, they rather ridicule us, yea, make a jest of Paul himself.] We have heard that some after setting aside the Gospel, have, instead of a sermon, explained the ethics of Aristotle. [I myself have heard a great preacher who did not mention Christ and the Gospel, and preached the ethics of Aristotle. Is this not a childish, foolish way to preach to Christians?] Nor did such men err if those things are true which the adversaries defend [if the doctrine of the adversaries be true, the Ethics is a precious book of sermons, and a fine new Bible]. For Aristotle wrote concerning civil morals so learnedly that nothing further concerning this need be demanded. 15] We see books extant in which certain sayings of Christ are compared with the sayings of Socrates, Zeno, and others, as though Christ had come for the purpose of delivering certain laws through which we might merit the remission of sins, as

though we did not receive this 16] gratuitously because of His merits. *Therefore, if we here receive the doctrine of the adversaries, that by the works of reason we merit the remission of sins and justification, there will be no difference between philosophic, or certainly pharisaic, and Christian righteousness.*⁶ (Emphasis added.)

So emphatic are Scripture and the Confessions, that we must ask ourselves why it is that we would spend so much time with the Law? Why is it that we can look at sermons, Bible classes, conversations, classroom management, even whole periods of our ministry and see that the Gospel has seemingly been rationed with terrible stinginess to our people?

C. The faithful dogmaticians underscore the necessity to cling to the Gospel.

The dogmaticians tell us why as they consider and apply what God teaches us about our nature and our love of the Law. They tell us why we seem to be so stingy with the Gospel. Pieper, in discussing the “Nature and Character of Theology,” stresses the fact that left to ourselves, we fallen human beings can know nothing of the grace of God, and that the *opinio legis* holds our hearts captive. Consequently, left to ourselves, we humans will, on the one hand, be very religious beings and see the need for religion, but we will always construct a religion based upon the Law.

What religion means to the heathen is the exact opposite of what it means to the Christians. Since the heathen know nothing of the Gospel of Christ (1 Cor. 2:6-10: “neither have entered into the heart of man”), but have some knowledge of the Law (Rom. 1:32 “knowing the judgment of God”; Rom. 2:15: “work of the Law written in their hearts”), their entire religious thinking moves in the sphere of the Law. Religion to the heathen means man’s endeavor to placate the deity through his own efforts and works, through worship, sacrifices, moral exercises, ascetic discipline, and the like. The religion of the heathen is therefore a religion of the Law.⁷

Because of this, apart from the guidance of the Holy Spirit through the Word, we are always biased toward the preaching of the Law. The Law will appear to be the solution to spiritual problems. Just as there is a natural tendency to walk in a circle when walking in the dark, so there is a natural tendency toward the Law in our preaching and applications.

The Law is an alien work of the ministry.

From God's point of view, however, the preaching of the Law is not what we are here for. It is called an "alien work" because it is not what we are most directly called upon to do, as Jesus commands, "... Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15 NKJV) Likewise, He describes His own ministry, "for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10 NKJV)

Luther repeatedly discusses the concept of God's Law, His judgment and His affliction of mankind as God's "alien work."

These are reliable and excellent proofs that God no longer hates man but is kindly disposed toward him. Accordingly, this historical account gives examples of both facts: just as God's wrath is unbearable when He has begun to be incensed, so His compassion is boundless and without measure after it begins to shine again. Therefore His compassion is more abundant because it is a part of God's nature, *since wrath is truly God's alien work, in which He engages contrary to His nature, because He is forced into it by the wickedness of man.* [Footnote: From Is. 28:21 Luther derived the idea of the opus alienum of God: His proper work was to comfort, but His alien work was to terrify. Cf., for example, Luther's Works, 14, p. 335.] (Emphasis added)⁸

In his comments on Isaiah 28:21, Luther says,

As on Mount Perazim, etc. It is as if he were saying: "Because you scoff at the Word, the Lord is forced to do a strange work, namely to judge and to destroy." For the

proper work and nature of God is to save. But when our flesh is so evil that it cannot be saved by God's proper work, it is necessary for it to be saved by His alien work. Because in good times we stroll and stray from the Word, our covers have to be made narrow, and we must be disciplined by various afflictions so that we may be saved by God's alien work; the ungodly are altogether driven by God's proper and foreign work because they do not want to get under these narrow covers but want to stretch out in their own. Meanwhile God keeps His own by means of the cross and narrow covers and thus separates them from ungodly. *This is God's alien work, by which He condemns the ungodly, so that we may be saved. So you see that our flesh is outwardly indulgent when it is without the cross, and therefore various afflictions are necessary to control that flesh.*⁹ (Emphasis added.)

Luther doesn't discount the importance of the Law in any way, but he does emphasize that the Law can never complete, it can only begin. It can never bring salvation, only mortify the flesh which then is saved by God through the Gospel.

D. Certain theological shortcomings commonly arise.

With our love for the Law so rooted in our nature, and our pietistic and legalistic tendencies so deeply ingrained, it would surprise us if we didn't have a host of examples at our fingertips of the Gospel losing out in our ministry, and so in the hearts and minds of our people. Following are a few ways in which the Gospel is often eclipsed in our ministries. It is not coincidence that these examples resemble Walther's comments in Law and Gospel, because he covered the ground so thoroughly.

The Gospel is preached to "undo" the Law.

It is common to hear the Gospel used to set aside the Law. We give a stirring pronouncement of how wrong we are, only to follow it up with, "But Christ has forgiven us all of our sins." It

is as though the Law doesn't matter, because God is loving. It is a confusion of forgiveness with toleration. It doesn't offer much hope, either, because the convicted soul stands convicted, and is difficult to convince that the Law somehow doesn't count any more, for how can the Law be true and then not true?

This trend toward toleration is particularly common today because most of the mainline churches publicly speak against the vicarious atonement. To them, Christ's death was merely an illustration of His love. It would be a beastly God who would demand a bloody punishment for sins.

We will do better if we show the price Christ paid to deliver us from the condemnation of the Law. The Law stands, but the Law is satisfied by Christ.

The Law is not preached as absolute.

It is especially easy to let the Gospel undo the Law when the Law isn't presented absolutely. Sin HAS separated you from your God. The soul that sins WILL die. Anyone who has sinned IS condemned. This is the Law of God. Nothing has changed that. God hasn't repealed the Law, and He hasn't changed His mind.

The hope of the Gospel isn't in the Law becoming weak, but in Christ fulfilling the Law in our place, and giving us a righteousness that counts with God.

Tell how this condemnation fell upon us – in the person of Christ. Proclaim the Law in all its fierceness.

The Law is for others.

Sometimes referred to as, "third person law," is our condemnation of "those people," "them." It could be the ELCA; it could be the homosexual lobby, or the abortionists. We may talk about what others do and have done rather than what we and our people do and have done. To hear the Law fire salvo after salvo and never come near me is a comfort to my flesh, but it undermines the preaching of the Gospel, for my hope is not in escaping the Law but in the righteousness of Christ.

A secondary problem with “third person law” is that it seems to teach that those horrible sins, committed by “those people” are so bad that they keep people out of heaven because of their very severity. Consequently our people may be led to believe that there is no forgiveness or hope for them if they fall into such sins, or have committed them in the past.

We do better to preach the Law against our own sins and the sins of our people, for then the Law keeps its sting and fire. Truly, we warn against the other, because these are the temptations of the day, but not in a way that justifies us for not committing them.

There are “poor” “good” and “better” Christians.

This is the scourge of pietism. In the final analysis, the Galatians could tell the REAL Christians from the so-so, because REAL Christians were circumcised. REAL Christians don’t smoke or drink or chew, or ever go with those who do. REAL Christians are the ones in Bible class, not just in church and at the Lord’s Table. Good Christians are at church meetings. Better Christians will hold an office. Those who only attend church are not so good. There are certain things a genuine Christian will do, and there are certain sins a genuine Christian would never commit. According to the pietist, in the final analysis, there is some thing, some work, some condition that makes a Christian more acceptable to God than another.

Never let it be forgotten that there is only one righteousness that counts with God, the righteousness of Christ that is from God and is by faith. You had nothing to do with acquiring it.

There is no difference between unbelievers and Christians.

Sometimes we’re not careful with the “Christians sin too,” line. Indeed we do sin, but it is not our desire; it is our grief. It is my observation that among some Christians a sinful way of life is viewed as the way that the other people, the unbelievers, live. It has appeal to us, and we fall into those sins, but fornication, drunkenness, and other sins of the flesh are identified with those

who do not treasure Christ. Among other Christians, unfortunately, it is taken for granted that drunkenness, fornication, etc. are to be expected just as much within the church as without. When we preach that way, though, we deny the importance of faith, and the fact that faith is a real spiritual condition that works in the hearts of people.

It is a difficult task to teach clearly that there is no sin so great that it can separate us from the grace of God, and at the same time teach clearly that unrepented sin (the impenitence, really, rather than the sin) reveals us as an unbeliever. How do we keep clarity?

First, affirm the fact that your hearers are new creatures, who truly desire to do what is right, even though they may fall. Make sure that they understand that faith is not a decision, or a learned concept, but a spiritual condition worked in us by the Holy Spirit and having a real affect on our lives. Christians do want to do the right thing; it is the natural fruit of the spirit, as Paul says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law." (Galatians 5:22-23, NKJV)

Second, do not diminish the warning of Galatians 5, "Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." (Galatians 5:19-21 NKJV) When teaching this, be sure to point out that Paul is describing an impenitent way of life. This ongoing character of living is implied in at least two translations, "those who practice such things," (NKJV) or "those who live like this" (NIV).

Some sins are worse, more "mortal" than others.

This is the flip side of our previous error, when we fail to comfort the sinner because his sinfulness is too great, or too often repeated. It seems that there are at any time in society such "unthinkable" transgressions as put the poor sinner immediately

outside the pale. Abortion and homosexuality come to mind today. In Galatians, the point is that some PRACTICE, LIVE IN, such sins without repentance.

Be ready to absolve all who confess to their sin, however shocking. Do not hesitate to preach the Gospel unconditionally.

We appeal to the Old Nature, as though our people are unregenerate.

An indirect way in which we preach and teach that our hope depends upon ourselves is when we appeal to the old nature in our hearers. We do this sometimes in our sermons, but probably more often in our personal relationships with people. We speak to others, or speak about others as though we know they want to do the wrong thing. We treat children as though they hate their parents, one spouse as hating the other, and so forth. This implies that their state is not one of grace, but of persistent impenitence. It implies that the grace of God does not apply to them, for we treat them as we would an unbeliever. Though we are teaching the Law and the Gospel, it is as though only the Law really counts.

Don't preach to your congregation as though they need to be converted; treat them as Christians. Treat the baptized confessing Christian before you as one who, plagued as he or she is by sin, still wants to do the right thing. Teachers, view your students who fall short in their performance as you view yourself when you fall short in yours.

We may make forgiveness conditional upon faith, or the right kind of faith.

Because we are confronted with such a penchant for universalism today, we must be clear to proclaim every aspect of salvation by grace through faith in Christ Jesus. Still, we must beware lest we point to faith as a condition that we must meet. I remember going to a pastor when I was in college and struggling with the constant assault upon my faith. His reply to my concerns was "You mustn't lose your faith!" He did not preach Christ, but faith.

Preach Christ, and faith will come. “Christ is risen, and has forgiven your sins, whether you feel like it today or not, whether you have doubts or not.”

E. Weaknesses other than theological ones interfere with our Gospel preaching.

It would be great if all we needed were an “A” in theology, or to master all Walther’s theses to properly preach the Gospel in its sweetness. Sad to say, something as profound as our own spiritual struggle, so common as fatigue, or so trivial as failure to write an outline may be among the greatest obstacles standing in the way of teaching and preaching the Gospel in all its sweetness and fullness.

Troubled spirits struggle with Law and Gospel.

There are times when we are struggling personally, perhaps in our marriage, perhaps in other relationships, perhaps with temptations or adversities. At these times we might relate so well to people that we serve them very well, but it also happens that our crushed consciences or our weak faith keep us from proclaiming the Law as clearly as we should. It may be also that we do not proclaim the Gospel sweetly because we are weak in our confidence that such glorious news could be for us.

It has been my observation in my own ministry, and in the ministry of others whom I know well, that tired preachers preach Law. Maybe it is just the fatigue that lets our sinful nature assert itself, as when we are grouchy or easily angered. Maybe it is that fatigue just lends a darkness to our thoughts and our demeanor. Whatever it is, it can hang like a pall over our preaching. Don’t let pietism or spiritual pride work you to the edge of exhaustion. Tired people do things they wouldn’t otherwise dream of.

Forgiveness is talked about, but not offered.

At times our hearers suffer from mere oversights on our part. Our theology is great; we just forget to include it in the composition of our sermon or in our class preparations. We talk about the Law,

and about justification, and we tell what Christ did, but we never say to our people what Nathan said to David, “You are the man!” and “The Lord also has put away your sin.” There are times when we need to use the second personal pronoun, and look people in the eye and say, “You are most truly beloved, redeemed and forgiven.”

Poets have only made a living, I believe, because they can give us more ways to say, “I love you” to those whom we treasure, more ways than we would think of on our own. Our people depend upon us to be poets in a way, to speak the love of Christ to them, personally, in ways that are new and fresh.

Doctrine is not applied.

A corollary to the foregoing is that we must take care to apply doctrine carefully, and not make it a mere treatise. To speak in a vacuum of the unforgivable sin, or impenitence as an indicator of unbelief, or of the depravity of man can be to preach the Law in a way we do not intend. Likewise, to preach about forgiveness and reconciliation and atonement without applying it to those whom we are teaching can stop short of proclaiming the Gospel. It isn't a theology problem in such cases, it is a problem with the construction of our sentences. Use examples, illustrations, and explanations to sufficiently convey the whole truth.

The Gospel may be lost in a complex sermon.

At times our people suffer from our erudition. The complexity of our thought, the elevated level of discourse, and the magnificence of our tropes may be gratifying to some, but keep our flock from hearing, “You, dear soul, are forgiven.”

The connection between Law and Gospel is lost in transition.

We may also take our faithful theology and shred it in poorly engaged gears of our composition. Simple things like transitional elements can distort meaning. “You are a sinner, lost and condemned

forever ... heaven is yours.” What fits in where the ellipse is? How do we make this transition? Composition problems can become theological problems. It doesn't hurt to keep a list of transitional elements on the desk.

Delivery and demeanor can obscure the Gospel.

Even our delivery can have an impact upon the meaning of otherwise good and correct things we say. I heard a preacher once who spoke with such volume and intensity that he appeared unkind. Since we stand in Christ's place, this can effectively mask Christ's mercy and His kindness. I might add, that this particular pastor was one of the kindest people I have ever known, and worked diligently to speak in a more conversational tone. Also beware the sneer, the snide comment, the condescending tone, that implies a secret understanding that “some people” just will never be acceptable to God. Likewise, try to deal with those mannerisms that spread an aura of disapproval over those with whom you have to do.

Lack of clarity obscures the light of the Gospel.

I find it frightening in the extreme that a production company can invest in award-winning writers, actors, and directors, and that they can spend months and millions on a movie, only to have audiences and critics say, “They didn't quite make their point.” I find that frightening, because I am expected to compose a sermon in the space of a few hours each week that will hit the point exactly! How can I ever hope to succeed? How can I ever hope that the Law and Gospel will be so perfectly and clearly proclaimed that my people will apply each to themselves just as they should? *Mea culpa!*

The least I can do, then, is follow good composition practices. But sad to say my good theology may be part of a disorganized mish-mash and leave my people going home wondering just what I had to say, really. Those boring elements of style, like topic sentences, unity, transitional elements, and purposeful progression of thought are not for sissies. They are part of a demanding discipline.

F. The Gospel is to predominate rhetorically

1. The art of preaching and teaching

This brings us to the next part of our discussion on how we are to preach and teach the Gospel in all its fullness. It is a matter that has been debated in Lutheran circles over the years – is there room for art in preaching? If not, then Christ had no business using parables, nor Paul allusions to the philosophers. The important thing is that Law and Gospel are clearly communicated and aptly divided, and to the extent that we compose our sermons, we have recourse to “art.”

I have no word from Scripture to enjoy any of the specific suggestions that I make, but we are told “... And he who has My word, let him speak My word faithfully.” (Jeremiah 23:28 NKJV). No less pointedly, Paul told Timothy (and us), “Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.” (2 Timothy 1:13 NKJV) We cannot correctly convey or restate the meaning of the Scriptures, we cannot be faithful to the meaning or be true to the words if we do not attend to basic principles of composition. That will serve as a postulate. We have an obligation to control the meaning of what we say so that the Gospel predominates.

In my experience, most of us have a grasp of the lexicon and the grammar. We know what the words mean and we put our sentences together “correctly.” But there are other things that are of importance in the greater composition of our sermons.

2. Unity, Coherence, Emphasis

Unity, Coherence, and Emphasis are three watchwords of effective preaching. The sermon has every part necessary to convey a specific theme or idea, and nothing extra. The parts are put together in a way that the congregation can follow, and the relative importance of the parts is clear to the hearers.

Unity

Luther frequently speaks of the *res*, the thing which is the subject of a passage in the Bible, or in a dissertation upon some subject, or in a sermon. Until we know the *res*, we cannot know the theme, the intent, and the meaning of the passage. So it is our responsibility as we analyze a text for preaching to know the *res*. This needs to be part of our overall exegesis and textual preparation.

Take the passage; “Be perfect, as I the Lord your God am perfect.” What thing is being spoken of? It is clearly an injunction to be holy and perfect, but is it talking about how we are to obtain salvation, or is it talking about why we need a Savior? Since Romans teaches us, “Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin,” (Romans 3:20, NKJV) we know that God has not given us this injunction to be perfect in order to get us to heaven.

Having analyzed a text, so that we know what it is about, we then proceed to the Spirit-intended sense of the text, what God intended to convey by causing this text to be written in the first place. Take the parable of the sower. It isn't about agriculture. Christ Himself does the exegesis and tells us that the preaching of the Gospel will have varied results. The *res*, the thing it is talking about is the varied results of preaching the Word of God. Of course, this thing may be subject to subdivision. We may look at just one result, that some believe but because of the riches and cares of life lose their faith, or that some believers bring forth fruit in different fullness.

Knowing what the thing is that the text is saying, we can teach it a number of different ways, textual-synthetic, textual-analytic, and so forth. However we do it, we still need to know what it is that we are saying, in other words, we need to have a theme. I have a preference for expressing the theme in a simple declarative sentence. It can be hard to do. It means that we have to have our brain wrapped around it rather well. We have to know the one thing that we are saying. Only then can we know if we have all the parts there, or if there are extra parts.

For the purpose of this paper, we need to know clearly what we are saying so that we can gauge whether it is Law or Gospel. The text may be one or the other, or include both, but in any case our sermon must divide them both. In the parable of the sower, there is a warning about letting the riches and cares of life divorce us from Christ; this is the message of the Law. The Gospel isn't spoken in so many words, but we surely will take care to point out that the Word that is sowed is a Word to you that your sins are fully and freely forgiven for Christ's sake.

Coherence

The way we present the parts of our theme makes our sermon coherent or incoherent. Our people will follow our train of thought, or we will lose them on the way and they will go home and say, "I couldn't quite follow him."

Go ahead. Make an outline. I won't get into the argument between those who write every word versus those who preach from notes. It doesn't make any difference, organization is organization, and whether it is written in hierarchical form on paper, or kept track of between our ears isn't the point. But if we are not well organized one way, then we need to find another. Written down or not, there are many ways to string the thoughts together.

Inductive – follows from thought to thought, reaching to a conclusion.

Deductive – starts with a conclusion and follows it with supportive thoughts.

Spatial – follows from place to place.

Chronological – proceeds in the order of time.

Logical – follows an order of reasoning, cause to affect, circumstance to result, etc.

General to Particular – presents a general principle and supports it with examples.

Particular to General – begins with examples and follows them to a general principle.

Familiar Essay – begins with a theme and moves from point to point via association and returns to the theme again. A kind of stream-of-consciousness.

Explication/Illustration/Application – States the theme of the text, illustrates the theme through examples, and applies it to the hearers.

The important thing is that you go from your introduction to your conclusion in such a way that it conveys the theme of your sermon so that your people can follow you. If we are coherent, our people start out with the same text we do; they end up hearing the same truth that we seek to express, and at the end walk away forgiven. It is very difficult for me to do this without an outline of some sort. It is at the outline stage that we make decisions that affect the whole architecture of the sermon, including its coherence.

How you control the flow of thought in your sermon determines whether it is coherent – and what the message of your sermon is. Back to the parable of the sower again: If we speak of the seed as the word, and the ground as the different hearts on which it falls, and we speak of the darkness of the human heart, and its depravity, and its preoccupation with riches, pleasures and anxieties, and then move on to examples of unbelief and how we have the same tendencies in our own hearts, so that all of us stand in danger of losing our faith before our final hour, then we have led our people down a sobering path. How do you get from there to the Gospel without losing them? How do we speak of Christ when we have been speaking so much of our dark hearts? How will you help your people follow you when you make such a change in thought? The Gospel is the power of God Himself to lift us out of the darkness of despair, but we had better be sure that we preach it.

There are ways, of course. The psalms provide wonderful examples. Consider Psalm 32.

When I kept silent, my bones grew old
Through my groaning all the day long.
For day and night Your hand
was heavy upon me;
My vitality was turned into the
drought of summer. Selah. I acknowledged my sin to
You, And my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, “I will
confess my transgressions to the Lord,” And You forgave
the iniquity of my sin. Selah (Psalm 32:3-5 NKJV)

Notice the progression from our misery to His forgiveness. There is a pathway from the sinner's self-loathing and introspection to his looking toward God and finally God's gracious declaration of forgiveness. It is coherent. There are plenty of other examples as well.

Emphasis

When we say that the Gospel is to predominate in our preaching, we are not referring to a word count. We are referring to what carries the "last word," so to speak, the enduring impression that is communicated.

While in college, I expected that once I entered the ministry, my main effort would be to convict sinners; after all, the 60s gave rise to a blatant expression of hedonism that still takes one's breath away. Vice was defended and justified on every hand. It was defiantly expressed, and practiced with reckless abandon, the more shocking the better. To decline to join in was considered anti-social. Surely I would spend my whole time pointing out that wrong was wrong! Indeed, there was some explaining to do, for many people to this day are so poorly instructed in their consciences that they feel no twinge of guilt over really grotesque vices.

But particulars aside, these same people are often crushed by their sins.

Without a word of the Law from us, many of our people bring hearts on the verge of despair into the church with them. Making sure our 20-minute sermon has 12 minutes of Gospel in it doesn't come close to overpowering the condemnation of the Law that weighs us down, at least not by quantity.

The important thing is that the Gospel receives the greatest emphasis.

There are several ways in which emphasis can be given to the Gospel in our sermons.

Clarity – The Gospel is crystal clear, and set out by simple sentences set off by pauses and/or other rhetorical devices.

Ascendancy – The Gospel shows that Christ has fulfilled

the law and overcome death. It is the nature of the Gospel itself to predominate in this way.

Resolution – The crisis of death in which the Law places us is resolved by the atoning work of Christ.

Personalization – The Law is emphasized by the way it applies to you personally.

Proportion – Give the Gospel the greatest share of the sermon.

Position – Place the gospel in the most important place, usually at the end, or at the end of a series of ascending ideas.

Contrast – Emphasize the Gospel by a change in sentence structure and rhythm, by gestures, by pauses, etc.

Figures of Speech – Use allegory, analogy, simile, metaphor and the like to emphasize the Gospel portion of your sermon.

Repetition – Repeat a word or phrase to stress the Gospel.

Express Statement – Tell the people it is important.

The question we must ask ourselves, and probably should ask our elders or others in the congregation, is: “Have you heard your Savior assure you of His love and forgiveness.” The unity, coherence, and emphasis of our sermons should all serve to assure that the answer would be a fervent “Yes!”

3. Delivery

A good composition is great, but as we all know, the Word as read and as spoken can be quite different. The delivery can communicate differences in meaning, in significance, in personal application and so forth. The delivery can give the preacher a great advantage over the writer because he has a “greater bandwidth” through which to convey thought. Changes in volume, pauses, rate, gestures, tone, eye contact, timbre, and pitch all contribute to the meaning of what we say.

Keep it Conversational

Consider working on a conversational tone, as contrasted

with a bombastic or “elevated” tone. The Gospel is not true because it is spoken loudly, or because we sound ever so reverent when we speak it. Using a conversational tone makes it easier to provide emphasis when it is called for. It creates the dynamic of a personal conversation with an individual.

Objective and Subjective

Related to the conversational tone is the expression of both the subjective and objective character of the Gospel. Objective justification speaks of what Christ has done for all people at all places and at all times. But because of what Christ has done, I can assure you that you, you who have erred so badly, you and I who have fallen so far short of the best Gospel preaching, you and I are treasured because of the perfection of Christ’s sermons, and because of the aptness of His illustrations, and His unfailing ability to speak Law or Gospel as it was truly needed.

That was a little example of some ways in which we can make the objective subjective. It uses an objective statement, and then follows it with subjective statements using personal pronouns, linking the speaker with the hearer, and addressing an actual situation in which our hearers are personally involved. This is one way in which the Gospel can predominate in our message – it can be made truly personal.

Fluency and Extemporaneity

These are simply a matter of control, control of the message. If we are writing for readers, let’s write. If we are writing for hearers, let’s preach. If we are to bring all things to bear on our message, eye contact, voice control, gestures, pace, etc., then we need to have our sermon on the tip of our tongue, ready to roll off.

All of these things that I have mentioned are gifts given in unique measure to each of us, and some will come easily while others will never be mastered even with great devotion. But a level of competence is surely achievable if we acknowledge that it is a worthy goal.

4. Audience – Preaching vs. Teaching vs. Seelsorge

The rhetorical aspects of homiletics also take the audience into account, perhaps more than in other forms of public speaking. Probably all of us know our audience better than most other public speakers ever hope to. There is, however, a different dynamic in our proclamation of Law and Gospel depending upon the situation. When we are preaching from the pulpit, we proclaim Law and Gospel in a more general way. We must to some extent depend upon the hearers to apply our expression of Law and Gospel to themselves. Our hearers may include both hard hearts and tender consciences, so we must make sure that the Law is clear and forceful for the hard-hearted and the Gospel is clear and forceful enough for the smoking flax and the bruised reed.

Teaching is a little different. Surely we are “preaching” in the strict sense of proclaiming Law and Gospel, declaring it in all its truth and fullness, but there is also an interchange that may enable us to tailor our message more to the struggles of our people. Their comments and questions enable us to speak the Law more clearly and take away any hope they have in their flesh. Likewise we may hear the despair that they may have in their flesh, and then place their hand in the hand of Christ, so that He may lift them up and comfort them.

The Law and Gospel may be applied most pointedly in one-on-one situations. If preaching for everyone makes your heart cringe in fear, then how much more difficult it is to decide whether the one before us needs the Law or the Gospel, for we cannot read a heart, and seeming impenitence requiring the crushing blow of the Law may be only despair hidden by silence. If in doubt, let the Gospel speak.

Conclusion

I conclude with the dangers of dwelling upon sanctification so that it dwarfs justification. Examples of this are before us all the time, but I am not going to make us all feel better by pointing them out. I need only point to myself and this paper. For pages now we

have considered what we as faithful preachers must do, or might do, or should do in order to carry out our duty and accomplish what our true Shepherd wants for His sheep. What can we say but “My sin, my sin!”?

We, too, even as we seek to carry out the will of the Good Shepherd must fear that we are at times mere hirelings. We know that all the good that we faithfully preach comes round to find us wanting. Can pastors too, be saved? Yes! We have examples of God’s forgiveness toward John Mark, who didn’t come up to Paul’s standards, evidently. We know of Christ’s pointed forgiveness of Peter after his denial. Peter’s snubbing of the Gentiles too did not separate him from the love of God.

But most importantly we have the shepherding of Christ Himself. He taught and He preached. Many didn’t believe Him, and He didn’t have the “results” that many would expect of the Messiah. But His ministry was flawless. He never flubbed a chance to speak the truth, and divide Law from Gospel. We know this is so because we have the verdict of God the Father, ... “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!” (Matthew 17: 5 NKJV)

And that, by God’s grace, is the verdict upon you, for that righteousness that Christ lived and earned is yours. With Paul we say, “Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; (Philippians 3:8-9 NKJV) This is your righteousness now, by faith, a righteousness that counts with God. To Him alone be the glory, AMEN!

Endnotes

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- ² Ibid, p. 42
- ³ Ibid, p. 403
- ⁴ Bente, F., *Concordia Triglotta*, (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Northwestern Publishing House) 1997.
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Book Review:

Speaking the Truth in Love to Muslims

by *William B. Kessel*

Roland Cap Ehlke, Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 2004.

Order from Bethany Lutheran College Bookstore at 1-800-944-1722. Price: \$13.99

In recent years militant Muslim terrorists have presented a horrific challenge to the free world. Through hijackings, bombings and other despicable acts they make the bold statement that no one is safe who opposes them, their ideology, or their religion. Governmental authorities, like those in the United States, realize that they must meet the attackers head on. National, state and local officials are commissioned by their constituents and by God to “bear the sword” and to be “agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer” (Romans 13:4). They have sworn responsibilities to protect the citizenry from harm and danger.

While politicians wrestle with the problem of militant Muslims, religious thinkers too must react in one way or another. It is not surprising, therefore, that in the past two years the shelves of Christian and secular bookstores have been overrun with books and briefs about Muslims. Side by side, row after row are books which bear titles such as *Why I am Not a Muslim* (by Ibn Warraq), *Secrets of the Koran* (by Don Richardson), *What You Need to Know about Islam & Muslims* (by George W. Braswell), and *The Complete Idiot's Guide to The Koran* (by Shaykh Muhammad Sarwar and Brandon Toropov). For the Christian reader the problem is not how to find information about Islam but how to find good, factual, and useful information. This is where Roland Cap Ehlke's new book, *Speaking the Truth in Love to Muslims*, fits in. In this reviewer's

opinion, this 219 page book is in a class by itself. It meets the needs of the Christian reader who wants to learn more about the religion of Islam and its followers. Furthermore, throughout the book, Ehlke's thorough Lutheran understanding of Law and Gospel adds a dimension which is lacking in most other studies. Ehlke draws on his first-hand experience with Muslims as well as his extensive research into the subject to provide a book which is readable, fascinating, authoritative and eminently practical. This is a rare combination not often found between the covers of one study.

Ehlke's outline is logical and simple. In Part 1 he provides background information about Muhammad, Islam's history, and the divisions within the religion. In Part 2 Ehlke focuses on the holy book of Islam, the Qur'an, defines Muslim beliefs and explains Muslim practices. The final portion of the text is directed specifically toward the Christian. It compares and contrasts the two largest world religions, Christianity and Islam. Ehlke clearly points out the mistakes and damning theology of the Qur'an. He then goes on to suggest how Christians can "speak the truth in love to Muslims."

This book serves a variety of purposes. The solitary Christian reader gains a clear understanding of the basics of Islam. The book can also be used in connection with Bible classes and group discussions. Thirteen pages of discussion questions are provided at the end of the book.

The editors of *Speaking the Truth in Love to Muslims* should be commended for making this an attractive book. Four maps, five photographs and two illustrations are carefully chosen and appropriately located throughout the book. The study questions, glossary, bibliography and indexes make this book even more useful.

The advanced student of world religions in general and Islam in particular will find this book somewhat simplistic. The average reader, however, will tap into a wealth of information in this brief introduction and will be well satisfied.

The Theological Commission of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC)

Gaylin Schmeling

The Theological Commission of the CELC met May 22-June 5, 2004, in Lusaka, Zambia. The members of the Theological Commission of the CELC are Prof Lyle Lange, WELS; Prof. Gaylin Schmeling, ELS; Dr. Gottfried Herrmann, ELFK, Germany; Prof. Salimo Hachibamba, LCCA, Zambia; Rev. Takeshi Nadaira, LECC, Japan; and Prof. Em. Armin Panning, CELC president, ex officio.

The commission reviewed a statement entitled “Holy Spirit: His Person and His Work” for publication and began preparing a statement entitled “The Person and Work of Christ.” These topics are Article III and Article IV respectively of *The Eternal Word: A Lutheran Confession for the Twenty-First Century*. Article I is a study of the doctrine of Holy Scripture and Article II of the doctrine of Justification.

While in Zambia, members of the commission lectured at the Seminary of the Lutheran Church of Central Africa in Lusaka. Dr. Herrmann gave an essay entitled “The Time After Luther’s Death.” An essay was presented by Rev. Nadaira on the geography of the Holy Land. An exegetical study of 2 and 3 John was given by Prof. Panning. Prof. Lange gave a presentation on the canon and text of Holy Scripture with special reference to the Apocrypha. This was a portion of the dogmatics text that he is preparing. The essay “The Lord’s Supper the Feast of Salvation” was presented by Prof. Schmeling.

The members of the commission had an opportunity to visit Good Shepherd and St. Matthew’s congregations in Lusaka and a number of rural congregations in the bush country around Lusaka. There was ample opportunity to see the work being carried out by our sister church in Central Africa. The congregations portray a fervent love for the Redeemer and His saving Gospel. The Lord is certainly blessing the proclamation of the Gospel in Central Africa.

The Lutheran Church of Central Africa (LCCA) is a strong confessional Lutheran church because thousands of people in Central Africa are passionate about Jesus Christ their only Savior from sin. The Gospel has had phenomenal effect here in the heart of the African continent. This church body, founded in 1953, now has over 40,000 members, a total that makes it the second largest church in the CELC. People are begging to be fed the life-giving Word in Zambia and Malawi and even in the neighboring countries of Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Congo. In 1992 the Lutheran Church of Central Africa divided itself into two conferences—the Malawi Conference and the Zambia Conference. Several years later the Bible Institute was placed in Lilongwe, Malawi, and the Seminary in Lusaka, Zambia.

The fifth triennial convention of the CELC will be held in Tokyo, Japan, May 31-June 2, 2005. The Lutheran Evangelical Christian Church of Japan has graciously agreed to host this meeting. The Planning Committee of the conference has chosen the convention theme: “Eagerly Await the Savior,” based on Philippians 3:20-21. This topic will be discussed in five essays by pastors from the various church bodies that make up the CELC. Each member church of the CELC is eligible to send two voting delegates (“the president or leader of the church and another representative chosen by the church”) plus up to four advisory, non-voting representatives. Additional visitors and observers are always welcome.

A highlight of the 2002 convention at Gothenburg, Sweden, was the acceptance into membership of three national churches, the Confessional Lutheran Churches in the Czech Republic, Latvia, and Ukraine. The Lutheran Church of Indonesia (Gereja Lutheran Indonesia—GLI) is asking to be received into membership at the 2005 meeting. The 2004 ELS synod convention resolved to declare fellowship with the Lutheran Church of Indonesia.

The CELC is the third largest worldwide Lutheran fellowship following the larger Lutheran World Federation and the International Lutheran Council. It was organized in 1993 at Oberwesel, Germany, and has approximately 450,000 members in 19 church bodies. The conference accepts the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments (the verbally inspired and inerrant Word of God) as sole

authority for doctrine, faith, and life. The conference also accepts the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as contained in the Book of Concord of 1580, not insofar as, but because they are a correct exposition of the pure doctrine of the Word of God. The CELC continues to strengthen each of its member churches through mutual encouragement and consultation. We praise and thank our Triune God who has permitted us to establish this confessional organization on the firm foundation of Jesus and His Word.

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