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The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

Witness Always

The Journal of Lutheran Mission

Lutheranism on the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

The 500th anniversary of the Reformation affords the opportunity to consider the state of worldwide Lutheranism. The phrase "worldwide Lutheranism" is in some ways a misnomer, since there is not one worldwide Lutheran Church comparable to the Roman Catholic Church or even to the Orthodox Church. According to the Lutheran World Federation's statistics in 2017, worldwide Lutheranism is comprised of 145 individual Lutheran churches in 89 countries representing about 74 million people. For comparison purposes, in the mid-1950s, it was estimated that there were 77 million Lutherans in the world. These statistics generally do not take into account the member churches of the International Lutheran Council (ILC) which adds another 27 church bodies (39 total members, 12 who have dual membership with LWF). Nor do these numbers include the member churches of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC) which, including the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS), comprises another 32 church bodies. Nor does it include the various independent Lutheran Churches in Scandinavia, Europe, and other places. Thus, there are approximately 200+ Lutheran church bodies in the world representing approximately 80 (perhaps as high as 90) million people. This makes Lutheranism one of the largest Protestant Christian groups, roughly the same size as worldwide Reformed and Anglican groups, only exceeded in size by Baptist church bodies and Pentecostal churches. In one sense, the other 800 million Protestants in the world are children (or step children) of the Lutheran Reformation. Protestant Christians are the second largest Christian group after the members of Roman Catholic churches.

At first glance, it would appear that Lutheranism is flourishing in the world and rather successful after 500 years.[1] The numerical decline of Lutheranism in the West thus far has been more than made up by the growth of the Lutheran church in the Global South. Numbers do not tell the entire story. To those living in Europe and North America, it comes as no surprise that the pressures of secularism, and demographic realities (couples having fewer children) have caused significant declines in church attendance. In the West, regular church attendance ranges from 2 percent to maybe 30–40 percent in the best of cases. The secular progressive movement in the West has become the de facto teaching in many liberal, mainline churches in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. The Reformation message of the Gospel and justification by faith has been redefined in many Western churches to include justice issues, acceptance of same-sex marriage, and a departure from positions of historic Christianity. The birthplace of the Reformation and the places where it flourished have become or are rapidly becoming the new mission field. At the same time, this transitioning or transfer of the historic Christian faith from the West to the Global South (and perhaps back again) has provided new opportunities for partnership. Such is Lutheranism in the twenty-first century.

The essays for this Reformation anniversary issue on the occasion of the 500th anniversary seek to address

[1] Hermann Sasse, "Concerning the Status of the Lutheran Churches in the World," in *Letters to Lutheran Pastors, Volume 1: 1948-1951*, ed. Matthew C. Harrison, trans. Paul Peters. (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2013), Kindle Location: 1823. "At first glance we may gain the impression as if the status of the Lutheran Church were a more splendid one than ever before in her history."

some of the challenges and highlight some of the opportunities the Lutheran Church experiences presently. These essays originally were presented at a conference in Prague on Lutheranism in the twenty-first century. Rev. Dr. Charles Evanson addresses Lutheran Ecclesiology in the twenty-first Century. Rev. Dr. Lawrence Rast discusses how pastoral formation has changed 500 years after the Reformation. Rev. Dr. Timothy Quill describes theological education on the mission field, while Rev. Alexey Streltsov speaks to how communication technology has changed seminary education in the twenty-first century. Finally, Rev. Dr. Jobst Schöne takes up the popular topic of "fake news" and applies it to Martin Luther himself. The book reviews cover books that address topics confronting the Lutheran Church in the twenty-first century. We hope you enjoy this special issue.

Rev. Dr. Albert B. Collver is the executive secretary of the ILC.

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Rooted in Christ, Luther's reforms has had an enormous influence on western culture and thought.

The Impact of the Reformation on Society: Address for the Guatemalan Reformation Celebration, October 5, 2017, Guatemala City

by Matthew C. Harrison

Dear Friends, I wish to thank you all for this marvelous opportunity to speak of the Lutheran Reformation. And I thank the committee for inviting me, especially President and Pastor Abdiel!

I am president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. We have 6200 congregations across the U.S. and 2.1 million members. I bring you warm greetings on behalf of our church.

Before I speak to our topic of the impact of the Reformation on Society, I wish to express to you my thankfulness for our ability to work together in the United States with our friends in the Roman Catholic Church, The Anglican Church of North America, and many others, including Reformed and Evangelical Christians in standing for the sanctity of marriage, in defending the unborn and the preservation of religious freedom for all people.

I am deeply honored to be present in your lovely country for this celebration. Our Guatemalan Lutheran Church celebrates 70 years in this country. We love Guatemala and its people. Perhaps we can build a great ladder or crane to help Guatemalans over our wall on the southern boarder!

The Reformation 500 years ago has had enormous influence upon western culture and thought, and upon the world.

The Reformation had tremendous effect upon art. Think only of the great master, Albrecht Dürer and Lucas Cranach!

It had tremendous affect upon philosophy, the philosophy of science, and science itself. Medicine was advanced.

The study of history was revolutionized. Mathias Flacius Illyricus, who studied with Luther, is the father of modern historiography.

The Reformation welcomed the discoveries of Nicholas Copernicus, and his works were first published by Lutherans. The first astrophysicist, Johannes Kepler was a Lutheran.

The Reformation propelled the rise of the modern nation-state.

The Reformation strongly influenced economies, work habits, honored secular vocations, and Protestant cities of northern Europe blossomed economically, and entrepreneurialism grew tremendously.

The Reformation forced the reform of the Catholic Church, forced it to take the Bible much more seriously.

It is impossible to think of the mass in the vernacular of the Roman Church without Luther's famous "Deutsche Messe," which put the liturgy in the language of the people for the first time in a thousand years.

It is impossible to think of the Bible in the vernacular without remembering the influence of Luther's translation first of the New Testament, and then of the entire Bible. Luther led a committee of translators who continued, as long as he lived, to make sure the translation spoke the heart language of the people. The Luther Bible unified the German language, and through its influence on the King James Bible, shaped the English language and influenced Christians for centuries.

It was in Luther's Wittenberg that the church became a singing church. His opponents complained that through his hymns this "heretical" faith was being sung into the hearts of the common people. The people were no longer observers in church, but full participants.

Luther's full affirmation of the arts in service to the Gospel meant great achievements in music. The text of the Bible was sung and performed in service of the gospel. There is no Bach without Luther. The Reformation sent singing from church into the home. Singing societies,

which became so popular in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, happened because of the Reformation.

Though all this and more is true, and though there are many interpretations of the Reformation. It was finally a great religious movement.

On October 31st, the Eve of All Hallows, Luther walked from his study in the monastery on the east side of the obscure little city of Wittenberg, to the Castle church on the other end of town. It is about an eight-minute walk. There on the church door he posted his famous 95 Theses protesting the abuse of indulgences. He found it outrageous that the church should offer for sale a piece of paper, complete with papal seal, granting full remission of all temporal punishment for sins. Christ, it was alleged by Medieval Catholicism, paid for the eternal guilt, not temporal punishments. So, a person after death had to spend hundreds of thousands of years in purgatory before being purified enough to enter heaven. Johann Tetzel was selling indulgences right and left! "As soon as the coin in the coffer rings, the soul from purgatory springs!" Tetzel preached.

Christ gets my sin, death and hell. I get his sinless birth, life, deeds, suffering, punishment, death, resurrection, and ascension! And all of this comes "not by works," as St. Paul says, "but by faith," and faith alone.

A fire storm was ignited. Luther had touched a nerve! In the months that followed, he was driven deeper into the New Testament. By May of 1518 he had come to a new understanding. He was poring over Romans 1:17, "The just shall live by faith." "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation!" (1:16). Suddenly he realized that the righteousness spoken of by Saint Paul was not an ACTIVE righteousness, NOT OUR deeds, but a PASSIVE righteousness, the righteousness of Christ! Verses from the Bible jumped out at him. "He who knew no sin became sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God!" (2 Cor. 5:21)

Luther knew his thoughts, deeds, and actions were never pure of sin! He could never be holy enough to gain God's favor! He could never be certain of eternal life! But now he discovered what he called the "happy switch," the fröhliche Wechsel! Christ gets my sin, death and hell. I get his sinless birth, life, deeds, suffering, punishment, death, resurrection, and ascension! And all of this comes "not by works," as St. Paul says, "but by faith," and faith alone.

Luther was brought before the princes and the emperor himself in April of 1521 at the city of Worms. It was 4:00 p.m. His books had been piled on a table. The emperor wanted to hear one word from Luther: Revoco! I recant!

Luther responded, "It is neither good or right to go against conscience. Unless I can be shown by reason and clear scripture where I have erred, I cannot, I will not recant, God help me. Amen."

Two enormously significant cultural issues resulted.

The next day, Emperor Charles V personally penned Luther's religious and political condemnation. In the course of his struggles, Luther became convinced that the conscience is free and accountable only to God for religious views. "For freedom Christ has set us free." Luther quoted John 8:36, "If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed." "Thoughts are tax free," Luther asserted! The Christian owes temporal authority and government physical obedience. As St. Paul teaches, civil authority is to be honored. Taxes are to be paid. We are to pray for government. But in matters of the religious conscience, the government has NO authority. Luther lived the rest of his life a condemned man, and in civil disobedience.

As a result of Luther's struggle, in the Peace of Augsburg, the emerging nation states won the right of religious toleration. A century later in the Peace of Westphalia, individuals won the right to believe differently than their prince. The freedom of the conscience from government coercion is perhaps the greatest cultural impact of the Lutheran Reformation.

In this struggle, Luther carefully defined two realms or kingdoms. The Christian lives simultaneously in both. As a citizen of the state he lives in the secular kingdom. He honors the government. He obeys laws. He may well serve as a judge, or a lawyer, or in any god-pleasing vocation. There is but one rule. "In all things, we must obey God rather than men."

The government is given to guard the well-being of its subjects, not to dictate matters of religion or conscience. The supreme authority of government is not the Bible, but reason. And reason—when functioning properly—agrees with the Ten Commandments. The government may punish bad behavior.

The other kingdom is that of the Church. Here the Bible is the highest authority. The Word of God rules.

The gospel knows no coercion, no physical punishment. Its only power is the Word of God to convict and forgive souls.

These two kingdoms should not meddle in the affairs of the other. The church should honor the government so far as the Word of God allows. And the government, if it has any sense at all, will honor the church, and protect its rights and freedoms, because churches produce good citizens.

May God bless the heritage of the Reformation here and now! May God give us all free consciences! May God grant us here and now good government!

Thank you!

Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison is the president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

The Shape of Lutheran Ecclesiology

International Lutheran Conference, Prague, Czech Republic, October 6, 2011

In a derivative and supportive sense, ministry and ordination are marks of the church, for they have been given to the church by the church's Lord for the sake of the gospel, its proclamation, and its administration in the sacraments.

by Charles J. Evanson

Ecclesiology and Ecclesia

The subject is the shape of Lutheran ecclesiology, that is, an ecclesiology which is faithful to the word of God and the confessional writings of the Lutheran church. The term "ecclesiology" derives from the Greek ἐκκλησία, via the Latin *ecclesia*, the doctrine of the church. If ecclesiology is thought of as a circle, then the church, the creature of the gospel, stands second only to the gospel itself at its center. What stands in close proximity to the center derives its significance from what is central, and derives its importance from it. What stands farther out from the center, on the periphery, is of lesser importance. Though itself nonessential, it still derives significance in relation to what is more central. However, if the connection between it and the center, the gospel, becomes obscured or lost, then what stands on the periphery may be regarded as undesirable or even detrimental.

We begin with the center, with the church herself. The term is one for which Martin Luther shows no fondness whatever. In his opinion it has been thoroughly corrupted and its meaning has become unclear. It puts the people in mind of a building made of stones, he writes, or of the pope and the elaborate ecclesiastical structure with which he is surrounded. Few think properly of the church as a community of people made holy by the work of Christ.

> If the words, "I believe that there is a holy Christian people," had been used in the Children's Creed, all the misery connected with this meaningless and obscure word ["church"] might easily have been avoided. For the words "Christian holy people" would have brought with them, dearly and powerfully, the proper understanding and judgment of what is, and what is not, church. Whoever would have heard the words "Christian holy people" could have promptly concluded that the pope is no people, much less a holy Christian people. So too the bishops, priests, and monks are not holy, Christian people, for they do not believe in Christ, nor do they lead a holy life, but are rather the wicked and shameful people of the devil. He who does not truly believe in Christ is not Christian or a Christian. He who does not have the Holy Spirit against sin is not holy. Consequently, they cannot be "a Christian holy people," that is, sancta et catholica ecclesia.
>
> But since we use this meaningless word "church" in the Children's Creed, the common man thinks of the stone house called a church, as painted by the artists; or, at best, they paint the apostles, disciples, and the mother of God, as on Pentecost, with the Holy Spirit hovering over them. This is still bearable; but they are the holy Christian people of a specific time, in this case, the beginning. Ecclesia, however, should mean the holy Christian people, not only of the days of the apostles, who are long since dead, but to the end of the world, so that there is always a holy Christian people on earth, in whom Christ lives, works, and rules, per redemptionem, "through grace and the remission of sin," and the Holy Spirit, per vivificationem et sanctificationem, "through daily purging of sin and renewal of life," so that we do not remain in sin but are enabled and obliged to lead a new life, abounding in all kinds of good works, as the Ten Commandments or the two tables of Moses' law command, and not in old, evil works. That is St. Paul's teaching. But the pope, with his followers, has applied both the name and the image of the church to himself and to his vile, accursed mob, under the meaningless word ecclesia, "church," etc.[1]

The word "church" has such a wide variety of

[1] Martin Luther, *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, Helmut T. Lehmann, and Christopher B. Brown, 75 vols. (Philadelphia: Fortress and St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955–1986), 41:144–45. Hereafter *LW*.

meanings[2] that it is necessary to make clear that Lutheran ecclesiology has to do with the community of Christians, the body of Christ. The classical expression of it is found in Article VII of the Augsburg Confession:

> Also they teach that one holy Church is to continue forever. The Church is the congregation of saints, in which the gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered.
>
> And to the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, that is, rites or ceremonies, instituted by men, should be everywhere alike. As Paul says: One faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, etc. Eph. 4, 5. 6. (AC VII, 1–4)

Because it is the purpose of Augustana VII to indicate where the holy Christian people are to be found, its "located-ness" is necessarily described in terms of sensory phenomena; the church may be known primarily in terms of what is heard in the congregation, and only secondarily by what is seen. The teaching of the gospel enters the ear, not the eye or the nose, and with reference to Holy Baptism, Holy Absolution, and the sacrament of body and blood of Christ, it is Christ's spoken word which makes them what they are and gives them to do what they do. The sheep hear the voice of their shepherd through the voice of him who has been sent in order in and by the church to speak with the voice of the shepherd. "For, thank God, a seven year old child now knows what the Church is, namely, the holy believers and lambs who hear the voice of their Shepherd. For the children pray thus: I believe in one holy Christian Church," writes Luther in the Smalcald Articles (SA III, XII, 2). What is seen may give the appearance of sanctity, but the eye is more easily misled than the ear: "holiness does not consist in albs, tonsures, long gowns, and other of their ceremonies devised by them outside the Sacred Scriptures, but in the Word of God and true faith" (SA, III, XII, 3).

> Every assembly of believers among whom the gospel is preached without corrupting additions or omissions and among whom the sacraments are in like manner administered as the Lord has given them is the church full and whole. Each is full and whole, and all such assemblies are altogether one church, full and whole.

The Background of Augustana VII

Behind the definition of Augustana VII lies more than a decade and a half of Luther's careful consideration of the nature of the church. As early as his lectures on the Psalms of 1513–1515, Luther speaks of the church as indiscernible to human sight, but known only to faith.[3] In the context of the controversies of the 1520s he further developed his arguments. The church consists of believers, he declares, but it is not believers who form the substance of the church. Faith depends upon the word which calls it to life and forever nourishes and sustains it. In his 1521 response to Ambrosius Catharini Luther writes:

> Compared to the bread and Baptism, the gospel is the noblest and most certain symbol of the Church, since it is only through the gospel that the Church is conceived, formed, nourished, brought to life, brought up, fed, clothed, provided with, strengthened, and armed, to put in briefly. The substance of the whole life of the Church is the Word of God, as Christ says, "Man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."[4]

Here gospel and Christ stand together most closely, for the Christ upon whom the church is built is the Christ who is proclaimed and presents himself to man in the gospel, the

[2] *Oxford English Dictionary* lists no less than eighteen definitions under the heading "Church."

[3] Ernest Gordon Rupp, *The Righteousness of God*, Luther Studies (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1953), 317, credits Karl Holl with the insight that Luther's visible/invisible terminology is not the fruit of controversy with Rome, but is already evident in the early Psalms lectures: e.g., "For Christ is concealed in the Church which is hidden from men but manifest to God"; "For the Church is invisible and is recognizable by faith alone."

[4] "Ad librum eximii magistri nostri ambrosii cattharini, defensoris Silbestri Prieratis acerrimi Evangelium enim prae pane et Baptismo unicum, certissimum et nobilissimum Ecclesiae symbolum est, cum per solum Evangelium concipiatur, formetur, alatur, generetur, educetur, pascatur, vestiatur, ornetur, roboretur, armetur, servetur, breviter, tota vita et substantia Ecclesiae est in verbo dei, sicut Christus dicit 'In omni verbo quod procedit de ore dei vivit homo.'" Martin Luther, *Luthers Werke*, Weimarer Ausgabe, 7, 721. Hereafter WA.

Christ who is born of the Virgin Mary, suffers under Pontius Pilate, is crucified, dies, is buried, and rises from the dead on the third day, triumphant over sin, death, and the power of the devil. Werner Elert notes that in this 1521 disputation Luther employs terminology remarkably close to that which would be used by Melanchthon nine years later in Augustana VII:

> The Gospel is the real organizing principle of the church. It begets the believers, gathers them, and combines them into a supra-individual unity. On the basis of this fundamental thought Luther, in his defense against Ambrosius Catherinus, develops a conception of the church which must be regarded as an exact anticipation of the seventh article of the Augsburg Confession. The church is built on the Rock Christ alone, With Him it will remain in the Spirit. "It will remain perpetually" (perpetuo mansura), says the Augsburg Confession. It is the "communion of saints" (communion sanctorum) —"congregation of saints" (congregatio sanctorum) says the confession. Or the "holy congregation of the believers" (sancta fidelium congregatio)—the "assembly of believers" (Versammlung aller Glaubigen). How can it be recognized? "For some visible sign must be given by which are to be gathered into one body for the purpose of hearing the Word of God" (oportet enim aliquod visible signum dari, quo congregemur in unum ad audiendum verbum dei). Such signs are Baptism, the bread, and, above all the Gospel. "These are the three symbols, tokens, and marks of Christians … For in these Christ wants us to be in agreement'' (Triae hanc sunt Christianorum symbola, tessare et caracteres … In his enum vult nos Christus concordare .[5]

Immediately behind Augustana VII (and VIII) stands Article XII of the Schwabach Articles, drawn up in 1529 by Luther to concentrate and articulate Lutheran doctrine.

> There may be no doubt that there is and abides on earth until the end of the world a holy Christian Church, as Christ says, Matthew, the last chapter: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." This church is no other than the believers in Christ, who keep, believe and teach the articles and parts named above, and for this suffer persecution and martyrdom in the world; for where the Gospel is preached and the Sacraments used aright, is the holy Christian church, and it is not bound by laws and outward splendor, to place and time, to persons and ceremonies.[6]

This definition is itself drawn from Luther's more extended confession of the church in his *Confession Concerning Christ's Supper*, 1528.

> I believe that there is one holy Christian Church on earth, i.e., the community or number or assembly of all Christians in all the world, the one bride of Christ, and his spiritual body of which he is the only head. The bishops or priests are not her heads or lords or bridegrooms, but servants, friends, and—as the word "bishop" implies—superintendents, guardians, or stewards.
>
> The Christian Church exists not only in the realm of the Roman Church or power, but in all the world, as the prophets foretold that the gospel of Christ would spread throughout the world, Psalm 2, Psalm 19. Thus this Christian Church is physically dispersed among pope, Turks, Persians, Tartars, but spiritually gathered in one gospel and faith, under one head, i.e., Jesus Christ. From the papacy is assuredly the true realm of Anti-Christ, the real anti-Christian tyrant, who sits in the temple of God and rules with human commandments, as Christ in Matthew 24 and Paul in II Thessalonians 2 declare; although the Turk and all heresies, wherever they may be, are also included in this abomination which according to prophecy will stand in the holy pace, but are not to be compared to the papacy.
>
> In this Christian Church, wherever it exists, is to be found the forgiveness of sins, i.e., a kingdom of grace and of true pardon. For in it are found the gospel, baptism, and the sacrament of the altar, in which the forgiveness of sins is offered, obtained,

[5] Werner Elert, *The Structure of Lutheranism*, trans. Walter A. Hansen (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2000), 259–60.

[6] "Daß kein Zweifel sei, es sei und pleibe auf Erden ein heilige christliche Kirch bis an der Welt Ende, wie Christus spricht Matth. am letzten: Siehe, ich din bei euch bis an der Welt Ende. Solche Kirch is nit ander dann die Glaubigen an Christo, welche obgenannte Artikel und Stuck halten, glauben und lehren und daruber vergolgt und gemartert werden in der Welt. Denn wo das Evangelion gepredigt wird und die Sakrament recht gebraucht, do is die heilige christenliche Kirche, und sie is nit Gesetzen und äußerlicher Pracht an Stätte und Zeit, an Person und Gebärde gebunden." *Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche*, 10th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1986), 61–62. Hereafter *BSLK*.

and received. Moreover, Christ and his Spirit and God are there. Outside this Christian Church there is no salvation or forgiveness of sins, but everlasting death and damnation; even though there may be a magnificent appearance of holiness and many good works, it is all in vain. But this forgiveness of sins is not to be expected only at one time, as in baptism, as the Novatians teach, but frequently, as often as one needs it, till death.[7]

Christ and the Church

Ubi Christus, ibi ecclesia. Where Christ is, there is the church. A proper ecclesiology flows forth from a proper Christology. The definition of the church begins with Christ, the Word of God made flesh to dwell among fallen children of men, to suffer and die for them and for their salvation, and to rise again for their justification. The definition of the church begins with Christ, because it is his saving work which brings her into being and gives her life, and according to his promise he is always in the midst of his believers, always giving freely and fully what he alone has earned and is able to give by virtue of his cross and passion. He is "the head of the body of the church" (ἡ κεφαλὴ τοῦ σώματος τῆς ἐκκλησίας); only where he is confessed and trusted as "the head" (ἡ κεφαλή) is she truly "one body in Christ" (ἓν σῶμά ἐσμεν ἐν Χριστῷ) (Rom 12:5) and "of Christ" (τοῦ Χριστοῦ) (1 Cor 12:27). He is the husband who freely "submits" himself (ὑποτάσσω) (Eph 5:20–21) to the will of his Father, to seek out and win his bride, giving himself for her, sanctifying and cleansing her through water and the word, that she might be made glorious in him and glorify him (Eph 5:21–27). In answer to his love, she lives in submission to him (Eph 5:22) and he pledges to furnish her with all good things. This submission defines the nature of a relationship entered into freely, not by compulsion. She is a faithful bride in response to his love, love freely given, born of his free submission to the Father. A bride who declares her emancipation and refuses her submission would be bride no longer.

It is in the midst of his church, his congregation, that Christ offers what he has obtained for sinners by his passion, cross, resurrection, and ascension. There he offers what he has obtained by means of the preaching of the gospel, by baptism, by absolution, and by giving his body and blood in his supper. Without such offering and giving in the church, there would be no hope for those who are unable to appropriate Christ's merit by the strength of their own spiritual efforts, their ardent passion, and the strength of their heartfelt devotion. Forgiveness and salvation can depend on no such unreliable foundations. What Christ has obtained at such great price on the cross, he offers freely in preaching and in the sacrament. It is there alone that it is to be sought and found. So Luther writes in *Against the Heavenly Prophets*, 1524:

> We treat of the forgiveness of sins in two ways. First, how it is achieved and won. Second, how it is distributed and given to us. Christ has achieved it on the cross, it is true. But he has not distributed or given it on the cross. He has not won it in the supper or sacrament. There he has distributed and given it through the Word, as also in the gospel, where it is preached. He has won it once for all on the cross. But the distribution takes place continuously, before and after, from the beginning to the end of the world. For inasmuch as he had determined once to achieve it, it made no difference to him whether he distributed it before or after, through his Word, as can easily be proved from Scripture.
>
> … I will find in the sacrament or gospel the word which distributes, presents, offers, and gives to me that forgiveness which was won on the cross.[8]

The Center of the Doctrine of the Church

At the heart of the doctrine of the church is the teaching concerning the person and work of Christ. Articles III through VIII of the Augsburg Confession progress from the person of Christ (Article III) to his saving work (Justification—Article IV), sacramental ministry (Article V), the fruits of faith (Article VI), and the holy church and her constitution (Articles VII and VIII). That order is not unexpected, for the church is the fruit of the application of Christ's saving benefits, the *Corpus Christi mysticum*, of which he is the ever-living head. The mystical body is manifested where Christ is present in the *Corpus Christi verum*.

Here no strong distinction is to be introduced between church, gathered congregation, diocese, and national or territorial church body. Where Christ is present by the work of the Holy Spirit in the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments, he is altogether

[7] *LW* 37: 367.

[8] *LW* 40: 212–13.

present to bless and save. The local gathering around the pulpit and altar is the church, the body of Christ, wholly and completely. There is no place here for a *pars-et-tota* ecclesiology, whereby the local, diocesan, or even national gathering is only partially or derivatively church, needing the authentication of association within the larger whole. Nor, on the other hand, is any or every gathering of individuals made to be church by the voluntary decision of the individual members to become a congregation or church. Nor may a particular parish communion, diocese, synod, or other jurisdictional unit define itself as "a member of the Body of Christ" or as "holding membership in the Body of Christ," according to the so-called branch theory which turns churches into "churchettes" or "ecclesial bodies" which are incomplete in themselves and in essential need of outward association with the larger church, its form of ecclesiastical organization, and its spiritual leaders. It is the word, written and orally proclaimed and sacramentally ministered, that renders present the church which will endure forever. Size, shape, polity, and scope aside, this church is the bride of Christ which he came to seek and call to himself, and cleanse in preparation for final presentation, as the apostle announces in the letter to the church at Ephesus (Eph 5:25–27). Here Christology, eschatology, and ecclesiology all stand in closest connection.

The Church and the Churches

The individual or local assembly does not live in isolation. Every assembly of believers among whom the gospel is preached without corrupting additions or omissions and among whom the sacraments are in like manner administered as the Lord has given them is the church full and whole. Each is full and whole, and all such assemblies are altogether one church, full and whole. Unrepentant heresy requires separation, and baseless schisms are to be deplored; they are by nature and definition divisive. But the church is not divided. She is one. Between communities in which the gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments rightly given there should be fraternal recognition of community and mutual submission out of reverence for Christ. That the "churches" (ἐκκλησίαι) are also "church" (ἐκκλησία) is not a human achievement brought about as the result of skillful negotiations and administrative manipulations, or mutual recognition of common notions concerning apostolic or historic church government, episcopal, counciliar, or congregational.

In his high-priestly prayer in the garden before his crucifixion Christ intercedes for his church. Here the unity of believers in a single church (ἐκκλησία) and the oneness of the churches (ἐκκλησίαι) are found in the reconciling work which he has accomplished by his saving death and resurrection, offered in the proclamation of the one gospel of Christ. The right preaching of that gospel communicates this praying, suffering, dying, and rising Lord and Christ with all that he gives by word and sacrament; consequently those who hear and harken to that gospel are one church, regardless of the limitations of time and space.

The Essential Marks of the Church

In Augustana VII, the church is taught, confessed, and defined, its duration is stated, and its outward marks are noted, although nowhere in the text are these described as outward marks or *notae*. The church is an assembly or convocation of believers which exists at the present time and will continue to exist for all time. This assembly is outwardly identifiable on the basis of what is heard in the assembly (i.e., the teaching or proclamation of the gospel of and about Jesus) and what is observable on the basis of the sacramental activity that goes on within the assembly (i.e., baptism and the sacrament of Christ's body and blood offered to communicants for forgiveness of sins, oneness with himself and the Father, and the foretaste of heaven). Baptism, the Holy Supper, and confession and Holy Absolution will be more thoroughly described in Articles IX–XII.

Where these marks are found, there the church is to be found, because there the person of Christ and the fruit of his saving work are made present by the Holy Spirit, working faith and gathering a faithful, believing people. The manifestation of the church is not prior to or independent of preaching and sacraments, as though they could be listed among a number of activities with which the church appropriately occupies herself. Nor can we posit that the church as institution authenticates and validates preaching and the sacrament. The presence of the church is tied to the marks of preaching and the sacraments by virtue of their dominical designation as the means of Christ's saving presence. The proclamation of Christ gathers the church, just as during his earthly ministry Christ gathers the people to himself by opening his mouth and speaking. *Ubi Christus, ibi ecclesia*. Christ does not go about without his church; where the head is, there too are the members of the body.

The pure teaching of the gospel and the right

administration of the sacraments are essential to the true oneness of the church, for they are constituent to that oneness. As there is only one Lord, proclaimed in the gospel as both Son of God and Son of Man, so too there can be only one baptism, baptism into his death, and there can be only one sacramental banquet which is his very body and blood for forgiveness, life, and salvation. There cannot exist alongside this a second gospel which proclaims a different Christ, some other baptism for some other purpose, and a supper which is something other than his body and blood or is given for some purpose other than eating and drinking. That these are described as "enough" (*genug*) and "sufficient" (*satis*) does not mean that together their proper outward observance represents a minimum standard beyond which everything is permitted. The terms are rather to be understood as a confession that the preaching of the gospel and the right use of the sacraments do fully what God has given them to do—to bear witness to the church's oneness. Man adds nothing to them—no mark or quality—to authenticate, validate, or legitimatize them. What men have instituted may be described as ceremonies (*"Ceremonien, von den Menschen eingesetzt," "ritus aut ceremonias ab hominibus institutas"*) which serve to exalt and extol what God does and gives. They have no power to authenticate, validate, or legitimatize, and it is not necessary that they be kept uniformly in every place.

Included among human ceremonies and traditions are matters concerning which there is no clear dominical institution. Thus, human traditions may be said to include pious and commendable practices that have been handed down from one generation to another, even from the apostles themselves, which the church may continue to use. However, these ceremonies and traditions do not bear witness to the true unity of the body of Christ in quite the sense that the *notae ecclesiae* do, nor are they meant to do so. Thus, their uniform use in all places cannot be made an absolute necessity. And, on the other hand, neither can their abandonment and disuse be uniformly required. The marks of the church stand at the center; human traditions stand outside the circle that marks that periphery. They gain significance from their association with the church, but they are by no means essential.

The Needs of the Church

The ministry of the church (*Predigtamt, Ministerium Ecclesiasticum*) stands within the circle as essential to the church. In *That a Christian Gathering or Community Has the Right and Authority to Judge All Doctrine and to Call, Install, and Depose a Teacher on the Basis of the Scripture* (1523),[9] Luther notes first what a Christian congregation is and where it can be found. It is recognized by the presence of a sure mark, the preaching of the pure gospel. For this reason, and since the soul of man requires it, when bishops and others refuse to provide for the ordination of preachers, the right to do so must be taken from them and given to the community of Christians.

> Thus we conclude that where there is a Christian congregation which has the Gospel, not only does it have the right and power, but it is obligated by its responsibility for the salvation of the souls brought to Christ in Baptism, to shun, flee, dismiss, and withdraw from the authority now exercised by the bishops, abbots, cloisters, foundations, and all such, since one sees clearly that they teach and lead contrary to God and His Word. Therefore it is certain and sure and well-founded and one can depend on it that it is a divine right and necessary to the salvation of souls that such bishops, abbots, cloisters and whatever pertains to their rule be deposed or shunned.[10]

The *Ministerium Ecclesiasticum* arises out of the commission given to the apostles by Christ after his resurrection. They are to "make disciples" (μαθητεύσατε) of all nations by "baptizing" (βαπτίζοντες) and "teaching" (διδάσκοντες) (Matt 28:19–20). What is to be taught is the gospel of Jesus Christ, including what he mandates to be kept and done (τηρεῖν πάντα ὅσα ἐνετειλάμην ὑμῖν). What is to be kept and done includes the baptismal commandment, absolution for the penitent, and the eating and drinking of Christ's very body and blood in anamnesis ("This do in remembrance of me" τοῦτο ποιεῖτε, ὁσάκις ἐὰν πίνητε, εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν) in his supper (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor 11:24–25). Thus, the *Ministerium Ecclesiasticum* is *Ministerium Divini Verbi*—teaching the gospel and ministering the sacraments, and the church herself is the qehal (קָהָל) or "gathered congregation" (ἐκκλησία) gathered by and around the word and receiving the teaching and administration.

The congregation cannot continue without preachers/teachers. When and if ordained priests cannot otherwise

[9] "Das eyn Christliche versamlung odder gemeine recht und macht habe, alle lere tzu urteylen und lerer zu beruffen, eyn und abzusetzen, Grund und ursach aus der schrifft." WA 11: 401–16.

[10] See *LW* 39: 308.

be gotten, the church must itself call into the holy ministry capable men whom God has equipped and gifted for the office of teaching the gospel and administering the gospel sacraments. According to the usual order, the minister of ordination is ordinarily a bishop. Otherwise, the minister of ordination is to be one who already possesses the office of the ministry or who has been designated by the church or other properly constituted authority as the minister of ordination. The newly ordained then takes up the responsibility of ordaining, i.e., ordering of others into the *Ministerium Ecclesiasticum*. A preacher so ordained may not only preach, but also baptize, celebrate mass, and assume the cure of souls.

The evangelical and scriptural justification for such a course of action is clear to Luther. John 6:45–46: "It is written in the prophets: 'And they shall be all taught of God.' Everyone who has heard from the Father and has learned, comes unto me"; Psalm 45:7: "You have loved righteousness, and hated iniquity: therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows"; 2 Corinthians 4:13: "You have received the same spirit of faith, as it is written: 'I believed, therefore have I spoken,' we also believe and therefore speak ..."; and Psalm 116:10: "I believed, therefore have I spoken: but I am brought very low."[11] Where a Christian finds himself isolated and without Christian companions, he must take the work of preaching and teaching the gospel upon himself. However, if other Christians are present, he should not arrogate to himself the office of preacher, but let the office be filled by those called and selected to serve.[12] Although this course of action gives the appearance of not heeding the existing spiritual authorities, the breach is only apparent. Bishops and abbots who do not fulfill their duty do not truly represent the apostles.

In *De Instituendis Ministris Ecclesiae*... (1523),[13] Luther is prepared to press his case further. Papal ordination is not to be desired even if available, since the Roman bishops act as though the priesthood were their own creation and subject in every respect to their regulation. Those whom they ordain are not ordained according to the purpose of Christ, for they are not ministers of gospel and sacrament but mere mass-priests. Ordination was first instituted on the authority of the Scriptures, and it is to be held in honor as the highest of all church offices, since the whole church depends upon the preaching of the gospel. In addition, the papal ordination is to the office of offering Christ's body and blood as a sacrifice before God.

The particular church (ἐκκλησία) lacks no gift or power which a larger or more complete body must offer her, or exercise with her or on her behalf. To each church it is given both to proclaim and live by this gospel and to exercise the "power of the keys" (*potestas clavium*) in conformity to the divine word. Each assembly has the authority to call its own pastor. That it does not also ordain him but leaves that to neighboring pastors and ecclesiastical overseers (bishops, visitors, provosts, et al.) bears witness that the ministry of the church into this pastor being ordained is more than a matter locally constructed and arranged. The ministry which Christ has ordained and established for the church (ἐκκλησία) and the churches (ἐκκλησίαι) and the act of ordination into it both stand as tokens of the unity of the church.

The Place of the Ministry

The church is known only by her marks, and she cannot be discerned on the basis of supposed evidences of antiquity or sanctity, or a traditional or even biblically sanctioned form of ecclesiastical order and polity. Here the primary organ of discernment is the ear of man into which the word of God is spoken, for it is the spoken word of the preacher which gathers the church around itself, and it is the word which makes baptism and the sacrament of Christ's body and blood and speaks the word of absolution. God's word is never apart from God's Spirit; both together do what God intends. The preacher or celebrant whose mouth God employs speaks a word and administers a sacrament to which he personally adds nothing, but he stands in the closest possible connection with the Lord who makes use of him. "Every minister should glory in this, that he is an instrument of God through which God teaches, and he ought not to doubt that he is teaching the Word of God."[14] What Melanchthon says in Apology VII/VIII with specific reference to the ministry of unworthy men surely applies also to those who are not unworthy: "For they do not represent their own persons, but the

[11] "Est scriptum in Prophetis: 'Et erunt omnes docibiles Dei.' Omnis, qui audavit a Patre et didicit, venit ad me."; Ps 45:7 (44:8 (LXX): "Dilexisti iustitiam, et odisti iniquitatem: propterea unxit te Deus, Deus tuus oleo laetitiae prae consortibus tuis"); 2 Cor 4:13: "Habetes autem eundem spiritum fidei, sicut scriptum est: 'Credidi, propter quod locutus sum,' et nos credimus propter quod et loquimur..."; and Ps 116:10 (115:10 (LXX)): "Credidi, propter quod locutus sum: ego autem humiliatus sum nimis."

[12] *LW* 39: 311.

[13] *LW* 40: 3–44.

[14] *LW* 29: 4.

person of Christ, because of the church's call, as Christ testifies (Luke 10:16), 'He who hears you hears me.' When they offer the Word of God or the sacraments, they do so in Christ's place and stead" (Ap VII/VIII, 28).[15] So too, Luther's description of the true, evangelical mass in *On the Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests*, 1532:

> Here everything is done, first of all, according to the ordinance and command of Christ, so that it is offered and given to the church under both kinds on the basis of the words of Christ: "Take, eat, this is my body," etc., and "Do this in remembrance of me." The pastor does not receive it only for himself, as the pope's sacrilege does. He also does not sacrifice it to God for our sins and all kinds of needs, as the pope's sacrilege does. He does not give it to us and he also does not sell it to us as a good work to reconcile God, as the pope's sacrilege does, having made such a blasphemous commercial affair of it; rather, he administers it to us for the comfort and strengthening of our faith. In this way Christ is made known and preached. Here there can be no avarice or idolatry. Here we surely have the intention of Christ and of the church. Here we do not have to be concerned whether the pastor is speaking the words secretly or whether he also is effecting conversion or whether he, too, believes, for we hear the words of institution publicly and say them along with him in our hearts. And the institution of Christ (not our action or the chrism) effects a change or gives us the body and blood of Christ. If the pastor does not believe or doubts, we do believe. If he blunders in speaking the words or becomes confused and forgets whether he has spoken the words, we indeed are there, listen to them, cling to them, and are sure that they have been spoken. For this reason we cannot be deceived, and because the ordinance and true faith are present, it must be certain that we are receiving the true body and blood of Christ. God be praised and thanked, that I have lived to see the true Christian mass and the pure Christian usage of the holy sacrament.[16]

The Holy Ministry and Ordination

The holy ministry teaches the gospel and the administration of the sacraments. It derives its status from its close connection with them. And men must in a fitting manner be set in place in this holy ministry. According to Apology XII, 11–12, if ordination is interpreted correctly, i.e., in relation to this ministry of the word, there will be no objection to calling the rite of laying on of hands a sacrament. The church has the mandate to institute ministers, knowing that God approves and is present in it. Further, according to Augustana XIV, "Concerning Church Order they teach that no one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the Sacraments unless he be regularly called."

Questions may remain concerning the precise meaning of such terms as *offentlich lehren, publice docere, ordentlich beruf*, and *rite vocatus*. The authors of the Pontifical Confutation understand that the terms are used to refer to traditional ordination practices as set down in the ecclesiastical ordinances.[17]

Nothing is mentioned in Augustana XIV about the manner by which those to be set in order are called to the ministry, but ordination/confirmation is identified as the specific act or acts by which this is to be done. By virtue of its connection with the ministry, this rite stands within the periphery. Further, were the bishops willing to faithfully discharge their office and act for the benefit of the church and the gospel, then the usual canonical form of ordination too would stand within the circle. However, they neglect the office conferred upon them and are not only unwilling to ordain those who wish to proclaim the gospel and administer the sacraments properly, they also cast them out and persecute them. Under these circumstances, ordination can and should be conferred without the bishops. Ordination stands within the periphery so long as it is a proper ordering to the ministerial office which Christ has given to his church, and episcopal ordination according to the ancient pattern and the canons also stands within the periphery when and if it retains its connection with the center.

In the Smalcald Articles Luther provides an example:

> If the bishops would be true bishops, and would devote themselves to the Church and the Gospel, it might be granted to them for the sake of love and unity, but not from necessity, to ordain and confirm

[15] "… quia repraesentant Christi personam propter vocationem ecclesiae, non repraesentant proprias personas, ut testatur Christus: Qui vos audit, me audit. Cum verbum Christi, cum sacramenta porrigunt, Christi vice et loco porrigunt." *BSLK*, 240.

[16] *LW* 38: 209.

[17] J. M. Reu, ed., "The Confutatio Pontificia..." in *The Augsburg Confession, A Collection of Sources* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1930).

> us and our preachers; omitting, however, all comedies and spectacular display of unchristian parade and pomp. But because they neither are, nor wish to be, true bishops, but worldly lords and princes, who will neither preach, nor teach, nor baptize, nor administer the Lord's Supper, nor perform any work or office of the Church, and, moreover, persecute and condemn those who discharge these functions, having been called to do so, the Church ought not on their account to be deprived of ministers.
>
> Therefore, as the ancient examples of the Church and the Fathers teach us, we ourselves will and ought to ordain suitable persons to this office; and, even according to their own laws, they have not the right to forbid or prevent us. For their laws say that those ordained even by heretics should be regarded as ordained and remain so, as St. Jerome writes of the Church at Alexandria, that at first it was governed in common by priests and preachers, without bishops. (SA III, X, 1–3)

Under the terms of the situation described above, the connection between the episcopal office and the center has been severed, and an alternative to it is found by making priests the ministers of ordination. The ministry is important for the sake of the gospel and the sacraments; ordination is important for the sake of this ministry; whatever importance may be assigned to episcopal ordination has derivative significance. The later dogmaticians equate bishops and superintendents as church officials charged with the responsibility of ordination. At the same time, they recognize no essential distinction between them and others in the public ministry.[18] Thus, the special office of bishops is peripheral to the office of the ministry itself. It is derived from it and represents a particular instance of it.[19] Ordination itself is not to be omitted except in most exceptional circumstances; both order in the church and the example of the ancient church require it. It is not to be denied that in it "the gifts of the Holy Spirit which are necessary for the discharge of the duties of the ministry of the church are conferred and increased."[20] No provision is made for the temporary conferral of the ministry upon men who are called to be "lay ministers" or to serve in specially conceived ad hoc ministries or of deacons and vicars authorized to preach and administer the sacraments in one or more places for a specified period of time, but without the requisite period of theological and spiritual formation, and the regular call of the church and ordination.

Lutheran departure from the usual form of law, ecclesiastical ordinances, and decrees in the matter of ordination did not come early. It was not until May 14, 1525, that candidate Georg Roerer of Wittenberg was ordained in the first ordering into diaconal ministry of an evangelical candidate not previously ordained according to the traditional pattern by a Roman bishop. This ordination was by no means a precipitous act. Luther had laid his groundwork slowly and carefully. In his treatise *Against Emser* (1521),[21] he had inquired into the nature—real and hypothesized—of episcopal authority and jurisdiction and the relation of the sacramental priesthood to the universal priesthood of believers. The priest who celebrates the mass and consecrates the bread is the messenger and servant of the whole church, the common priesthood which all in the church possess.[22] Such a priest ministers and serves on the basis of his call, and no one is to undertake the office without a call, except under extraordinary, emergency conditions.[23] In *Wider den falsch genantten geystlichen stand des Babst und her bischoffe*n (1522),[24] Luther had reacted against his condemnation and excommunication by calling the ministry of the pope and his bishops into question. He contended that they do not hold and exercise their office according

[18] Johannes Gerhard, *Loci Theologic*i, XII, 159: "we commit ordination to the bishops or superintendents alone, who are called bishops, not only with respect to the flock intrusted to them, or their hearers, but also with respect to other preachers, *viz.*, presbyters and deacons, the oversight of whom has been intrusted to them; yet meanwhile, we do not recognize any such distinction between bishops and presbyters, as though the former alone, according to a divine right and the appointment of the Lord, have a right to ordain preachers, from which the rest of the presbyters have been excluded in such a manner that they cannot administer the rite of ordination even when necessity demands, as when bishops are not present or are neglecting their duty; but we say that, according to an ecclesiastical custom, introduced for the sake of good order, the power of ordaining has been left to the bishops, although from their presbyters have not been purely or absolutely excluded." Heinrich Schmid, *Doctrinal Theology of the Lutheran Church* (Miami: HardPress, 2014), 610.

[19] Bernhard Lohse, *Martin Luther's Theology: Its Historical and Systematic Development* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1999), 296.

[20] In Gerhard, *Loci Theologici,* XII, 168, the grace of ordination is separate from the grace of reconciliation. The conferral is ascribed to the prayers of the church and presbytery.

[21] "Auff das ubirchristlich, ubirgeystlich und ubirkunstlich buch Bocks Emszers zu Leypczick Antwortt D.M.L. Darunn auch Murnarrs geselln gedacht wird." See English *LW* 39: 137–224.

[22] *LW* 39: 156–63.

[23] *LW* 39: 175.

[24] *LW* 39: 239–300.

to the requirements or example of the New Testament episcopacy.[25] The consideration of the action by which men are rightly set in order in the holy ministry occupied Luther throughout his life, and it a continuing subject of discussion among Lutherans down to the present day.

Already in the sub-apostolic era, the presence of factionalism in congregations, along with the increased presence of gnosticism, montanism, and a variety of heretical movements, made clear the need for regularity and proper order in the apostolic ministry. Irenaeus of Lyons writes that those bishops should be heard to whom the care of the churches had been committed—those who hold to the same doctrine of salvation.[26] He had earlier stated that the apostles themselves had instituted these bishops to succeed them (3:3). No heretic could rightly present any apostolic credentials, Tertullian notes; only in apostolic churches would the voice of the apostles truly be heard.[27]

When this approach was not able to carry the weight laid on it, Augustine of Hippo, in his anti-Donatist writings, provided a formulation of the doctrinal intention and a distinction between valid and invalid ministries, with valid or invalid sacraments issuing from them.

If ordination and ministry are run straight from Augustine's anthropocentric definitions, problems are not solved; they multiply. The unity of calling–ordaining–sending is broken, and the unity of the act of ordination dissolves, so that questions that admit to no conclusive solutions now appear concerning what constitutes a valid ordination, a valid ministry, valid sacraments, and at what point in the rite the conditions for validity are satisfied. Without prior theological agreement between the opposing parties' assertions about the validity or invalidity of ordinations in which the minister of ordination is a minister to whom the right has simply been delegated, to say nothing of the status of so-called lay ministries and the ordination of women, the assertions will be ignored.

Luther and the Lutherans frequently state their preference for the continuation of the office of the bishop as a matter of traditional practice as long as it is recognized as jus humanum and is exercised in accordance with its central purposes of teaching, directing, and serving. Although in certain cases selected individuals from the community were invited to participate, ordination did not become a strictly congregational act carried out without the laying on of hands and prayer by one or more ministers of the church. In place of bishops, the Germans and their spiritual descendants overseas got superintendents and church presidents, who served as administrators and inspectors. The Scandinavians kept the title. Johannes Bugenhagen was at least partially successful in fulfilling the purpose for which he was sent to Copenhagen in that traditional episcopal order was maintained, although those who succeeded the papal bishops had not previously been consecrated as bishops.

In any case, the new bishops stood in apostolic succession in that sense which was important to the Lutherans: apostolic doctrine, faith, and practice were maintained through the ministry of those set in order to proclaim the gospel and administer the sacraments in the churches. In this case, episcopal ministry stands within the periphery because of its connection with the center. The reintroduction of episcopal titles does not appear to have brought with it any deep reappraisal of the office. This is especially the case where this reintroduction has run in line with the notion that an historical episcopacy is absolutely essential to a valid ministry and a valid church. Questions concerning this notion only increase where those from whom this episcopacy is supposed to have been gotten or from whom it is understood to be born do not share a common and properly catholic understanding of evangelical and christological ecclesiology.

Final Observations

Order and polity are by no means matters of indifference. For Lutheran ecclesiology, Christ stands at the center, as always he must. He is the word made flesh. Where Christ is, there is his word and Spirit, as always—always together. By means of the word of and about the Christ, the Spirit gathers the church, the קְהַל יְהוָֹה, the ἐκκλησία, the σῶμα Χριστοῦ, which he is never without, the *communio sanctorum*, the communion of those made holy by preaching and the sacraments.

Christ, Spirit, church go together, and therefore stand together at the center. Everything else is peripheral to these: holy ministry and the ordination by which men are set in order within that ministry. In a derivative and supportive sense, ministry and ordination are marks of the church, for they have been given to the church by the church's Lord for the sake of the gospel, its proclamation, and its administration in the sacraments. The giving of it is described in Matthew 28 and its parallels. It is given

[25] *LW* 39: 178–80.

[26] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses,* Book V, chap. 20,

[27] Tertullian, *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*, chap. 32, 36.

first to the apostles, Christ's designated שָׁלִיחַ,[28] who, in addition to the ministry of making disciples of all nations by baptizing and teaching, are given this special office by which they are enabled to do works normally predicated only to God, so that they not only heal the sick and cast out demons, but also raise the dead and speak words to which God has uniquely bound himself, as described in the Acts of the Apostles. This special endowment is not passed on to succeeding generations in the apostolic ministry. In terms of Lutheran ecclesiology "apostolic succession" must be understood in terms of apostolic mandate given to the church to make disciples of all nations by baptizing and teaching ("μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη" [Matt 28:19]).

Christ's mandate is given to the community which the pure prophetic and apostolic word, proclaimed by those called and set in order in the apostolic ministry, gathers around him. Those called to ordain ministers act on behalf of the community of believers. They are themselves ministers of the word (*Divini Verbi Ministri*) called by a variety of titles to serve episcopal functions in the churches. Articles XIV and XXVIII of the Augsburg Confession show preference for both the episcopal title and the provisions for oversight that the canons envision; however continuity of episcopal consecrations are not seen as integral to this. In any case, Rome would not consider complete any form of episcope which does not include submission to its "Apostolic See." The form of election and succession is a subsidiary matter which must remain on the outer periphery of ecclesiology. What is uncertain cannot serve as a solid basis for certainty.

Admission to the public ministry of teaching the gospel and administering the sacraments comes through the call of God, mediated by the church, and the solemn rite of ordination.[29] As the ministry must stand in the service of the word for the sake of the church's life and growth, so ordination must stand in the service of this ministry. It exists for the sake of the ministry in the church, that the church, the body of Christ, and his body mystical might be known among men on the basis of the *notae ecclesiae*. Luther has noted the outward signs of it. They are signs of those who are gathered together by, in, and under one word and Lord, to bear him witness before all the world, and show mercy on those in need.

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[28] Karl Heinrich Rengstorf, "Apostle," in *The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1, ed. Gerhard Kittle (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 407–47.

[29] It is apparently the derivative status of the holy ministry that some dogmaticians have sought to articulate the distinction between center and periphery by asserting that the holy minister is necessary to the church, but not *absolutely* necessary. Such statements may be used by minimalists to work great mischief, contrary to the intentions of those who formulated the distinction. Luther, with those who subscribe to the Augsburg Confession and the other confessional writings, clearly affirms that the holy ministry is necessary for the church and that admission to it is to be gained in the rite of ordination, in which there is the laying on of hands and prayer by the church's designated representative. Other ordination ceremonies may be employed, so long as they are neither inappropriate nor unduly ostentatious. Under no circumstances should ordination be sought or received from the pope or his bishops, for they are unfaithful to the ecclesiastical offices which they hold, introduce novelties to the holy catholic faith, make unscriptural and unnatural demands upon the candidates, and proscribe the proper exercise of the office of the public ministry.

Lutheran Education in the Twenty-First Century in View of Modern Communication Technologies

International Lutheran Conference, Prague, Czech Republic, October 6, 2011

If the pastoral ministry is viewed first and foremost as a transfer of information to people enabling them to make better decisions in their lives, then indeed this information may safely be obtained in a remote mode to be later retranslated to the audiences. … But Lutherans significantly differ from the majority of other Protestants in that they especially value the sacramental context of church life. In the Lutheran tradition the pastor is indeed a Seelsorger, and this part of the ministry takes place through a personal interaction between the pastor and a layperson.

by Alexey Streltsov

The title of this presentation may presuppose that it will be dedicated primarily to questions of a technical character, such as how the incredibly fast development of the IT sector in recent years is capable of revolutionizing the ongoing process of theological pastoral education in the Lutheran church. However, in the global sense the question of naïve romantic trust that scientific-technical progress will lead to the building of a paradise on earth was taken from the general agenda already by the epoch of World War I. Since then a sober perception of reality has replaced fruitless dreams and people understand, for example, that the other side of the "peaceful atom" achievements presupposes not only the ever-present possibility of nuclear conflict, but also technogenic catastrophes on a previously unthinkable scale.

In principle, if the technical aspect were the sole, indeed, the main aspect of this report, then the whole lecture could be reduced to one minute. It is undeniable that new and progressive communication technologies may be utilized in the field of Lutheran education.

Virtually any technical observation on the topic of modern communication technologies is destined to become obsolete in a short time. For example, in the 1990s the high cost of modem-based internet access was a significant factor.[1] The author of this presentation also remembers how thirteen years ago a discussion was held concerning the possibility of acquiring expensive specialized equipment for conducting classes from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN, for the students in Novosibirsk, Russia. Since that time technical progress has completely changed the landscape of communication, not only for businesses, but also for personal users. Now extraordinary complexities of a technical nature are for the most part a matter of the past.[2] It would suffice to say, "We will implement education via Skype," and the case is closed.

Still, the philosophical or even the theological aspect of this question looks more interesting. Where is the world going? The famous Latin maxim states, *tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis*, but how decisive are the recent changes as applied to the sphere of Lutheran education?

Certainly, modern technologies are neither good nor bad in and of themselves. The problem, or something that may turn into a problem when one approaches the matter incorrectly or simply underestimates the role of technology, is that it is virtually impossible to escape the influence of modern communication technologies in the contemporary world, and so they influence us in more ways that we can imagine. In this sense the minimum goal is to prevent any harm that modern communication technologies can do in the sphere of education, while the optimistic goal is to learn to use them for the benefit of the church.

In order to move further, we must specify what education and what technologies we imply in this report. In

[1] See, for example Jill M. Galusha, "Barriers to Learning in Distance Education" (paper, University of Southern Mississippi, 1998), *http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED416377.pdf*, accessed September 30, 2017.

2 It does not equally apply to the "primitive" countries, which are technologically behind the first-world countries. However, even in such regions it may become reality in the not so distant future. It would suffice to remember the recent worldwide booming of the cell phone industry, including in the world's poorest regions, which did not even have telephone landlines prior to the advent of mobile phones.

a certain sense all Lutheran tradition, with its emphasis on Luther's catechism, is closely related to education. This includes Christian education in the family, for which the head of the household is responsible; educational activity on the congregational level, such as instruction of the newly converted; Sunday School or its equivalent for children; classes on Scripture or the confessional writings for adults; and special seminars and conferences, at which a number of laypeople and specially invited guests participate. It also involves professional education of the clergy and other church workers. The latter is done today, as a rule, in specialized seminaries or theological institutes. In turn, while the most habitual form of such education implies internal or on-site training, in the last century or so the concept of distance or extramural education, though still somewhat a recent phenomenon, has been able to claim a serious place in the structure of education in general. Accordingly, the usage of modern communication technologies differs significantly, based on the format and goals of training. The picture is made more complex in view of the fact that we rarely deal with one of the pure forms, but rather with a combination of various types. This report pays attention mainly to the professional education of pastors and church workers. Implications of technologies for on-site, combined, and distance forms of education will be touched upon.

> The internal character of the preparation of a pastor has to do with the character of the incarnation of our Lord. God chose not to function in a remote mode, but rather the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). … The relations of Christ and his bride the church presuppose a certain intimacy, including personal interaction in the matter of education.

Education in the Context of Church and Secular History

One might define a "traditionalist" approach as viewing the seminary with an on-site training as a normative model of higher education in the Lutheran context. Nevertheless, it is important to realize that in a certain sense even the so-called traditional seminary represents somewhat of a compromise in the question of pastoral training.

Any educational model in the context of Lutheranism as well as Christianity in general should be viewed against the christological background of the ministry. Christ, as the one who has called disciples, personally instructed them over a period of three years, and then sent them to make disciples of all nations—that must be the true starting point of any genuine model of professional Lutheran education.[3]

Christianity is a path of discipleship. While a Christian always continues to have Christ as his principal teacher, he acquires specific instruction from a minister: a bishop or a pastor/priest.[4] It is impossible to obtain adequate understanding of the goals of education in the Lutheran church without grasping the central role of the holy ministry in this process. Not only is the teacher-disciple model represented as the norm in the New Testament and the history of the ancient church, but even in today's secular context the private lessons are still considered the elitarian type of education accessible only to select individuals.

Antiquity provides a number of examples of such personal instruction both in the non-Christian and Christian milieus. Aristotle taught philosophy to Alexander the Great. Numerous prominent bishops and teachers of the Christian church have received their education from their teachers, also bishops. Thus, many archdeacons who personally served the bishops and shared in their duties subsequently became bishops themselves. Examples include Athanasius the Great, who as a deacon and secretary of Alexander of Alexandria, was with him at the Council of Nicaea in 325, and Leo the Great who, prior to his episcopal office, served as an archdeacon of the Roman church.

Even Augustine, according to his recollections in *The Confessions*, gained his major Christian instruction (we by no means want to diminish the influence of his mother Monica on him becoming a Christian) from the Bishop Ambrose, whose sermons he listened to so carefully while he was in Milan.[5]

[3] Matt 9:36–38; 10:1, 5; 28:18–20.

[4] Rom 10:14–15; 2 Tim 2:2.

[5] Augustine, *The Confessions of St. Augustine*, trans. Edward Bouverie Pusey, (Public Domain, 2012), Book V. Kindle edition.

In this way the system of internal education provided by the universities and seminaries appears to be a certain departure from this original model. However, the person of the teacher has continued to play a major role. Conceptually, internal education remains the king and the sole player on the field.

It is fashionable today to compare the rapid spread of the internet in its importance to the invention of the printing press by Guttenberg and thus await a certain "breakthrough" in relation to the internet comparable with, or even exceeding, the sixteenth-century Reformation. Although the rapid spread of the Reformation throughout Europe is justly associated with the printing phenomenon, it is worth noting at the same time that in this case "distance education" offered through pamphlets and theological works was not considered sufficient enough to fully trigger Reformation ideas in real-life situations. On the contrary, students from all over Europe rushed to Wittenberg University to obtain an education there, and it was afterwards that they brought the Reformation to their homelands with more or less success.[6] For example, paths that the Reformation took in Sweden and Finland depended on the character and content of education that Olavus Petri and Mikael Agricola personally received from the major theologians of the Reformation.

The very high standard of professional university education they received distinguished Lutheran pastors for a long time. And where such conditions did not exist initially (such as on the American frontier or in the Russian Empire), measures were undertaken to correct it and provide means for future ministers to get a full-time education.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, the rapid technological progress and resulting social changes requiring more basic literacy and skills of workers brought to life the concept of distance learning. The idea that it is possible and desirable to provide education even to those people who for some reason were not able to attend ordinary university classes and be involved in full-time studies would not have been viable without the development of the postal system in the nineteenth century, and this is why England at the time was the natural choice for this new approach. Isaac Pitman began teaching by correspondence in Bath, England, in 1840. Students were expected to rewrite passages of the Bible and return them for grading through the new penny post system. Although an analysis of the connection between extramural education and the colonial mindset is outside of the parameters of this report, it is interesting that the spread of distance learning also coincided with the growth of the colonial system.

In the world of education new communication technologies were thus closely, though not exclusively, associated with the context of the extramural education. As new means appeared, such as radio and then television, they contributed to advances made in this type of learning.

In the course of the twentieth century, distance education established itself even in such academically conservative regions as Germany. However, even now there remains a general public uneasiness having to do with the quality of such education; questions are still asked as to whether or not distance education is inferior to traditional internal education. Adherents of distance education keep stating that soon the day will come when the whole world will realize that such learning is no different from any other, but in a day and age of the increasing proliferation of degrees, it becomes harder to believe this.

Further we will address theological and practical issues having to do with distance education as it is applied to preparation for the pastoral ministry in the modern context.

The Incarnation as Key to the Nature of Pastoral Training

We often tend to think that new technologies would irreversibly change many aspects of life to the point that the old ways would be completely forgotten, but it does not always happen this way. When the cinema came into being many thought it would abolish the theater. The invention of television did not eliminate radio. Motorcycles did not phase out bicycles. Likewise, in the area of education, modern communication technologies do not necessarily make obsolete what was before.

We must avoid extremes in our approach to the preparation of pastors. In this sense the core of the problem is not the form of distance education itself or the possibility of partial usage of extramural education for pastoral training, but rather the model that views exclusively or heavily accentuated extramural pastoral training as plausible and even desirable. We must resist this understanding primarily for theological reasons.

[6] Lewis W. Spitz, *The Renaissance and Reformation Movements*, Vol II, The Reformation, rev. ed., (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1987), 560: "Wittenberg… soon began attracting great numbers."

The internal character of the preparation of a pastor has to do with the character of the incarnation of our Lord. God chose not to function in a remote mode, but rather the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). A fundamental disconnect with the theology of the incarnation is inherent in an exclusively extramural approach to pastoral education, whether or not it is accomplished with the means of modern communication technologies. The relations of Christ and his bride the church presuppose a certain intimacy, including personal interaction in the matter of education.

Any attempt to organize preparation of a pastor through off-site training is equivalent to an attempt to conceive a child through the internet, though with usage of some extracorporeal fertility means. The chances are not that great. In addition, in the area of pastoral training the matter is not so much that no pastor will result from it, but that the pastor coming out of such a program would have difficulties applying himself to flesh-and-blood ministry in the parish setting.

A pastor is trained to publicly proclaim the gospel and administer baptism, absolution, and the Lord's Supper. He also conducts weddings and burials, consecrates houses and other places, and does other things that require his personal presence and do not happen at a distance, in a remote mode.

In this sense the ministry that the pastor carries out for his parishioners is inherently "internal" (not extramural). At least it is this on-site activity that the pastor must consider his priority in the course of the ministry. It is true nowadays that more pastors are quite active on the internet, and there is nothing wrong with this, except when a new pattern emerges revealing shifted priorities in the ministry—when, for example, instead of conducting a Bible study in the church or visiting a hospital, a pastor pursues his project on the internet, considering it equally or even more important than his regular duties.

If the pastoral ministry is viewed first and foremost as a transfer of information to people enabling them to make better decisions in their lives, then indeed this information may safely be obtained in a remote mode to be later retranslated to the audiences. This is why the generic Protestant mentality seems to be more compatible with the distance approach. Jesus is infinitely far from us,[7] he is up there in the heavens, and so the extramural pattern of education would correspond to the theological presuppositions (there may still be problems of a social or fiscal character, but not so much theological). But Lutherans significantly differ from the majority of other Protestants in that they especially value the sacramental context of church life. Besides, in the Lutheran tradition the pastor is indeed a Seelsorger, and this part of the ministry takes place through a personal interaction between the pastor and a layperson.

At present even some confessional Lutheran pastors do not mind taking confessions over the phone. While we would not necessarily claim the lack of reality of the sacramental act of absolution performed, the confessional seal may be broken in this case because of deficiencies in technology or some external intentionally malicious activity. Maybe I speak this way because I come from a country where unfortunately there is some tradition of listening in on phone conversations (and now internet and cell phone providers in Russia are required by law to divulge all content to the police in case of enquiry), but in any case people here entrust their souls not just to the person of the pastor but also to anonymous technology and whoever may stand behind it. Few people would agree to walk out to a central city square and confess their secret sins right there, and yet this is exactly what happens when acts that presuppose confidentiality are performed through modern communication technologies. Unfortunately, the modern communication technologies simply cannot provide for us the same level of privacy that is enabled when sins are shared in a traditional confessional.

When theological education primarily implies remote access to certain materials and further work with these materials, the result will be impersonalization of education. In this model there are no teachers to speak of, and that will violate our original teacher-disciple model. When the incarnational approach is lost, there remains virtually no distinction between Christian pastoral education and secular education or education within other religious systems, such as Islam.

Complexities of Technical Character

Besides the major theological difficulty with respect to distance education some observations are in order concerning challenges or potential dangers of a more technical character.

Firstly, an important principle must be followed: the technological level used in the educational process should naturally blend with the local context. It is appropriate

[7] In some ways Protestants also think Jesus is close by, "in my heart." He's my friend. His human nature is far away but as a spirit he is near.

when the suggested technical decisions generally correspond to or only slightly exceed the level of development of a particular society. Thus, usage of special technological devices in a situation where similar patterns are generally unfamiliar outside of the educational institution may turn out to be not very effective. Modern technologies should not by themselves attract students' attention, as all emphasis must be rather on the content of instruction. The less noticeable these technologies are by themselves and the more they correspond to the normal pace of life in a given context, the more efficient their application.

Secondly, and this is a technical aspect of the previously mentioned "impersonalization of education," online communication through text correspondence cannot provide total assurance in the positive identification of the person on the other side. A random person may well speak on behalf of your contact while pretending to be your contact. A life story comes to mind how in one case both a Lutheran pastor and his wife wrote from the same account in a social network group dedicated to Lutheranism, which created major confusion among the group participants.

Thirdly, the sad downside of rapid technical progress is that numerous technologies that were considered new just recently quickly become outdated. It does not make much sense to use tapes as a primary medium for an audio course once the CD and then the MP3 audio format have gained popularity and become the standard. Likewise, there is hardly any need to produce special DVDs when there are more modern, simple, and versatile ways of recording and delivering video content. It is important to take this aspect into consideration especially when starting a new project.

Fourthly, modern communication technologies may become quite dangerous when they get into the wrong hands. That is, technologies will greatly multiply the negative effects of bad teaching. Thus, advanced communication technologies used by the Lutheran Hour in Russia in the previous decade were partly responsible for the creation of a new "schismatic" church through sheep stealing and similar techniques even though this was not part of the original evangelism plan. In another country the local Lutheran Hour office is led by a Baptist minister, who, as one can easily imagine, does not particularly see to it that his contacts get only Lutheran confessional materials in their hands. No wonder that some recipients of these materials later find themselves in non-Lutheran churches and their educational institutions.

Possible Usage of Modern Technologies in the Sphere of Education

Up to this time you were exposed mostly to concerns or problems having to do with modern technologies, so your thinking by now may be that this report presents a very one-sided, ultra-conservative approach to pastoral training, with no other devices allowed other than a blackboard and a piece of chalk. Nonetheless, opportunities for the integration of modern communication technologies into the educational process are enormous. The following description, while far from being complete, will give some idea of how these technologies may be incorporated into the educational process, thus facilitating equipping theological students for their future ministry in the church.

1. Internet resources. The potential for expansion here is virtually limitless. The big question is whether or not there must be free public access to such resources. Even though it might be tempting to limit access to users in an attempt to sell resources directly from the internet or through publication, I would argue that free content is definitely a desirable option. The rapid development and recent political success of the so-called Pirate Parties in Europe may signal in which direction things will develop in the future.[8] We live in a time of easy accessibility of information, much of which is instantly available, and if church or seminary institutions restrict access to their information, then they could eventually fail to impact the target audience.

2. Organization and modification of libraries. This is connected with the previous section, but it is a special issue. This is where technologies really come in handy. New and recent educational institutions that have no large traditional library resources must do whatever it takes to provide internet access for teachers and students and develop some ways to use electronic resources either instantly accessible or downloaded from the internet for course work and research. Libraries should make every effort to also make their book collections (at least the catalogue, if not the content) accessible through the internet.

3. Textbooks. Next to internet resources and digitization of libraries' content comes the usage of textbooks for

[8] "Pirates' Strong Showing in Berlin Elections Surprises Even Them," Nicholas Kulish, NYTimes.com, September 19, 2011, accessed September 27, 2017, *http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/20/world/europe/in-berlin-pirates-win-8-9-percent-of-vote-in-regional-races.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all*. Recent success in Berlin may be just the beginning.

particular courses. It appears that electronic book readers will supplement traditional textbooks in our classrooms. That would help to cut costs in the long run. And for a student (especially one coming from a remote area) it would be easier to assemble his personal pastoral library in this way.

4. Podcasts. This is a new and highly mobile form of education. It allows a student to study on the go using a number of modern mobile devices for this purpose. It is especially useful for the study of disciplines that take a long time to master. In particular, languages may well be studied through podcasts that seminaries develop specifically for the needs of their students. That will allow the seminaries to better prepare capable prospective students for theological training at the seminary, similar to earlier days when biblical and/or classical languages were normally mastered before seminary enrollment. Thus disintegration or deterioration of the Lutheran school system may at least be partly compensated by these technologies. Of course, modern students are still required to know languages despite all the wonders of Google-translate if we are talking about modern languages, or specialized programs such as BibleWorks if we are talking about biblical languages.

5. Skype or similar means of live connection. This mode implies interaction. It would work best if it is implemented in combination with on-site training, that is, if the students already know the instructor from a previous personal engagement with him or if a part of a specific course is done in a classroom. Skype also makes it possible to bring guest lecturers to a classroom setting, eliminating geographical boundaries. It is also possible to continue to privately tutor students via Skype when the class is finished, or use Skype for special programs for the alumni. The list may grow long here; our task is just to mention a few possibilities.

6. Social networks. Even though these do not appear to be the first choice of means for education, since they have a reputation as a medium for primarily entertainment or career purposes, their ubiquity and their potential make them a worthy tool for use in both formal and informal types of education. One of my sons recently dropped a remark about his classmate who was not represented in the popular Russian network "V Kontakte": "He lives in the Stone Age." To be sure, the very name "social network" implies that such networks may be used to develop social skills that are important to have for any Lutheran pastor or church worker.

One potential student for our seminary in Novosibirsk resides in a remote place in the Ural region. I did not expect him to be an active internet user, but when we discussed how to stay connected he asked me what social networks I was on, and he named more than three for himself. Another prospective student contacted me through Facebook and asked me questions based on his reading of the Book of Concord. In some way his education has started even now before he has formally enrolled at the seminary. So it is not a question of starting a special project and utilizing any special resources: communication technologies that we already have available to us make the process of interaction very simple and allow us to proceed in the matter of distance education much quicker than before.

There may be a very good use of social networks within the framework of regular education too, provided that all or nearly all students in the class are a part of the same network. Communication via social networks comes naturally for younger people today, and so it is convenient for the students when an instructor sets up a special group in a particular network where he makes announcements, gives assignments, and answers questions that the students might have. That has been the recent experience of our staff instructors and other church members who do the teaching at higher educational institutions.

Future-in-the-Past

If the church attempts to race with the contemporary secular culture in an attempt to become more accessible to modern people at the expense of her integrity, then she is bound to fail. Modern methods of education cannot create a "new reality" by themselves. This is just a form, while it is the content of instruction, the confessional doctrine that matters, provided that this doctrine is grasped by the students. Overemphasis on distance education would come into conflict with the basic theology of the incarnation as it is expressed in the liturgy and pastoral care.

Traditional seminaries are in danger now from both the outside and the inside. When the seminaries are forced to follow some alien educational and ecclesiastical ideologies, this cannot be approved. Thus, when a seminary makes a decision about the permissibility of exclusive distance education for the purpose of the pastoral ministry,

it cuts the branch on which it is sitting. One may view it as a reasonable compromise that will allow the seminaries to stay floating for a while, but in the end this is a way of self-destruction. It will lead to a situation where there will be no perceived need, practically speaking, for the traditional seminaries. The root of this problem as I tried to delineate before is lack of understanding of the nature of the holy ministry. In a context where formal theological education is understood as just a cumbersome and dull barrier to be crossed in order to finally get to the exciting practical work understood mostly in psychological terms, there indeed remains little place for the classical seminaries.

With the ever-increasing pace of the spread of information technologies, the problem of teaching authority becomes more acute than ever before. Anybody can teach anything and quickly share these ideas using modern equipment. If the seminaries or equivalent institutions are forced to close down and are replaced by alternative decentralized ways of providing education, then the level of competence among the clergy will dramatically decline. Therefore, the solution must be of an institutional nature: seminaries must be specially supported by the church even though it is a major undertaking, especially under present circumstances.

Sometimes opponents of the seminaries go so far as to say that it is sinful to bring the students to the seminary for theological instruction. The rationale behind this claim may vary, ranging from concern for the mission work that is already going on in the local contexts from which the students will be detached for a while to statements that the four years spent at a seminary would hinder future secular career advancement of a seminary graduate in case the church is not able to support him and he has to earn a living on his own (or hinder the career of his wife). To be sure, on-site training is a difficult procedure for the parties involved. But it is part of the theology of the cross beautifully expressed in Luther's famous maxima of *oratio, meditatio, tentatio.* With no *tentatio*, which implies a certain sacrifice on the part of the student, we cannot be sure that we will get a faithful and confessional Lutheran pastor in the end.

As it is important to use modern communication technologies with caution and in a limited way so as to not undermine the meaning of the incarnation, so for the same reason it is desirable for seminary professors to be actively involved in the church and parish life on the liturgical level. Being just a staff instructor with limited involvement in the church reality outside the school is the same as living in the world of virtual reality alone. Even in secular universities ongoing research is very important to keep the professional teaching staff up to date. How much more then this applies to the ecclesiastical context where practical involvement in the ministry on the part of the teaching clergy[9] is vital for them to be able to contribute to the pastoral formation of the students.

So the questions having to do with modern education and the usage of modern technologies within it are complex and multifaceted. My practical report is not designed to make any conclusive judgment on the matter, but only to highlight some issues that have meaning for the seminary and for the church. So should we use modern technologies? It is not an either-or but a both-and dilemma. We must not be fearful of new technologies, that is, we must not be apprehensive that they would necessarily undermine our seminaries. The real issue is not technologies and not even the quality of education per se (this can grow over time if the whole perspective is correct), but understanding of the spiritual nature of the holy ministry, to which pastoral education leads the candidates. We understand pastoral formation vis-a-vis the christological dimension. As long as we keep our priorities straight and goals clear, we will be able to use modern communication technologies for the benefit of the church.

In a way, such usage of modern technologies for the ultimate goal of pastoral formation may well begin before the official seminary course starts. Then it continues alongside the seminary classroom and does not stop after graduation either. But, in any case, there is neither need nor sense in replacing the traditional seminary with an alternative model just because of current missiological or educational conjecture. Even among current internet freelance-based companies, their staff meets in real life from time to time. We may consider seminary training as an instruction for several years in real life, even though online or similar advanced training and interaction may precede, go alongside, and follow the main education.

The key to the future of Lutheran education is in the past: in the confession that does not change over time. Paraphrasing the words of our Lord from the Sermon on

[9] Certainly, not all instructors at the seminaries or at the departments of theology in the universities are clergy. The most prominent example in Lutheran history is Philip Melanchthon. However, proper pastoral education may hardly be envisioned without the central role of the instructors who are pastors themselves.

the Mount, we may thus conclude: Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things—including the modern technological means—shall be added to you.

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Questions about pastoral formation and certification, delivery systems for theological education, the relationship of pedagogy and methodology, and many others will need the attention of the best minds gathered together in prayerful consideration of the future of our confession.

Pastoral Formation in the Twenty-First Century: The Pedagogical Implications of Globalization

International Lutheran Conference, Prague, Czech Republic, October 6, 2011

by Lawrence R. Rast Jr.

I. INTRODUCTION—PEDAGOGY AND GLOBALIZATION?

Pedagogy and globalization—perhaps not the most exciting terms I might have chosen to entice you to engage the topic of pastoral formation. Yet I think they have something to offer us in this particular conference where we are considering the future of Lutheranism in the twenty-first century. For again, as this conference illustrates, there is a place for the confessional witness Lutherans have to offer in the new situations in which we find ourselves. The evidence of the continuing collapse of the Constantinian church, Christendom if you will, is all around us.

But as a professionally trained historian, I would like to note a problem that we all as human beings share. That is, that we tend toward the parochial; we as finite beings tend to think of the beginning of history with our birth and the ending of history with our death. And so, we necessarily live, in a sense, simultaneously in the first days and the last days. Our lives are framed by the shortness of our existence, which is chronologically determined by a locatable moment of birth and a locatable moment of death.

As such, it takes work for us to think beyond these temporal limitations. We have to extend our minds and abstract ourselves from our experience to begin to embrace the church, which has its existence in the eternal and blessed Trinity. The church, therefore, while it exists in time and place, has its being in and through the Holy Trinity himself. This challenges us to think beyond the limitations of our particular time and place.

And so, as we consider globalization and pedagogy this morning, I would like to stretch us *back* over the history of Lutheranism, even as we stretch ourselves *forward* into the twenty-first century. We will do this, as the title implies, primarily in the context of pastoral formation.

When we think of globalization, we tend to think of current trends where the dominance of Europe and the West are moving from the center of human culture and life, to a growing importance of China (at least economically), and the emergence of the "global south," particularly in terms of the growth of Christianity. Philip Jenkins' enormously influential study, *The Next Christendom*, argues that it is in the global south that Christianity is growing most rapidly and that in the next fifty to one-hundred years, a number of the most "Christian" countries in the world will be found in the global south.

At the same time, Jenkins warns western Christians that the kind of Christianity emerging in the global south will challenge certain assumptions and deeply held doctrines of the western church. For him church doctrine is a dynamically developing reality—not in some Hegelian, dialectical sense, but simply in a human, sociological sense. Namely, that every expression of Christian doctrine is located in and subject to cultural and social influences found in the particular context in which the doctrine is applied. This means, very simply, doctrinal change is not only likely, it is inevitable.

This creates a tension in the church. We believe that there is *the faith*—the *fides quae,* the faith once delivered to the saints. This faith is captured in the phrases *sola gratia, sola fide, sola Scriptura*. The Scriptures teach this one, true, catholic, and apostolic faith—and as such, this faith is as true and unchanging as the God who revealed it in the Scripture. The faith does not change. At the same time, we all know that church today exists in rapidly changing circumstances. The theological/religious

questions of the post-Constantinian age in which we find ourselves are framed differently than those uttered by Luther in the sixteenth century, just as the questions Luther framed differed from those of Augustine. Yet at the same time we strive—as did Augustine, Luther, and all the faithful over the ages—to apply the unchanging message of the gospel to these differently framed questions.

This morning I want to draw attention particularly to the issue of pastoral formation and two aspects of Lutheran commitment to this formation. First, I want to stress how Lutheran identity is linked to the way the Lutheran tradition has formed its pastors. Lutheran commitment to biblical doctrine that is confessionally expressed *demanded—absolutely required*—that its clergy be intellectually capable, academically trained, and articulately able. Historically, Lutherans have placed a high priority on the intellectual attainment of understanding the faith—yet, it should be noted, that this deep understanding of the faith always was seen ultimately in the service of teaching the faithful and reaching the lost through the clearest possible proclamation of the gospel. And so Lutheran pastors have been theologically formed from the beginning in universities and seminaries.

Lutherans were deeply committed to the education of their clergy. Only once a man had a strong theological education could he even be considered for the office of the ministry. It was straightforward and simple. But questions continually presented themselves as this commitment was put into practice.

At the same time, however, the settings and circumstances in which Lutherans have found themselves have indeed challenged assumptions about the extent—the duration and character—of pastoral formation, a conversation that is going on even today. And so, there are many historical instances of men who lacked a full theological education being admitted to the pastoral office. However, while employing a variety of forms and modalities (short-term study in the sixteenth century, private tutors in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries), the ideal Lutheran form of pastoral formation has been an extended residential experience that sought to integrate doctrine and practice. So, simply put, my thesis is this: Lutheranism has allowed and employed a variety of modalities in order to bring men to the point that they are "apt to teach." Strongly confessional universities and seminaries, which formed strongly confessional pastors, have led to strongly confessional Lutheran congregations. Pedagogy and the global nature of Lutheranism have always interacted—sometimes harmoniously, though sometimes uncomfortably.

II. THE PROBLEM OF LUTHERAN IDENTITY

> Be alert, study, keep on reading! Truly you cannot read too much in the Scripture; and what you read, you cannot understand too well; and what you understand, you cannot teach too well; and what you teach well, you cannot live too well. Believe me, I know by experience! It is the devil, it is the world, it is our own flesh that storm and rage against us. Therefore dear sirs and brothers, pastors and preachers: pray, read, study, be diligent! I tell you the truth: there is no time for us to lazy around, to snore and sleep in these evil, wicked times. So bring your talents that have been entrusted to you and reveal the mystery of Christ.[1]

These are Luther's words, and they are not surprising words for us as Lutherans to hear. Luther, after all, was a professor, in addition to being a pastor. The Lutheran Reformation was born in the context of the academy/university and its identity is inseparably bound up with that fact. One thing I always point out to my students and to the faculty at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, IN, is the challenge that defining Lutheran identity presents. Not that it should be, but it is. What I mean is simply this: Lutheranism's identity is bound up with its confession of the biblical witness—the *fides quae*, the faith once delivered to the saints. That confession is found in the Augsburg Confession (1530) as the foundational

[1] Martin Luther, Introduction to *Spangenberg's Postille* of the Year 1542, vol. XIV, 379–81, from C.F.W. Walther, "Third Sermon at the Synodical Convention," trans. Everette W. Meier in C.F.W. Walther, *Lutherische Brosamen: Predigten und Reden* (Saint Louis: Druckerei der Synode von Missouri, Ohio, u. a. Staaten, 1867), 11.

confession of the Lutheran tradition, and in the Lutheran Symbols which make up the Book of Concord 1580, *because* the Lutheran Confessions are a faithful exposition of the doctrine of the Scriptures.

III. LUTHERAN IDENTITY AND THE UNIVERSITY

Wittenberg was the obvious center of the Lutheran educational enterprise in the first century of German Lutheranism. Without Frederick the Wise (d. 1525), John the Steadfast (d. 1532), and, perhaps especially, John Frederick (d. 1554)—all electors of Saxony—it is unlikely that the Lutheran Reformation would have succeeded as it did. Indeed, as John the Steadfast lay dying, he charged his son John Frederick to maintain the educational work begun at Wittenberg.

> It is important that we have clergymen and ministers who are mighty in the defense of the Word of God and in the maintenance of its purity, especially in these recent times when confusion and misfortune appear to increase daily.... Hence, we sound this solemn warning to our dear son and his loved ones. Their father kindly but most emphatically directs that they uphold the institution of higher learning at Wittenberg, *regardless of its cost or the energy required.* This is to be done, especially in praise to Almighty God, because in recent times there has arisen again in that place the rich, saving Grace of the Word of God.[2]

This is a remarkable statement in that it underscores the centrality of education for the success of the Lutheran endeavor. Delivered as the Elector lay dying, it shows how near this was to his mind and heart.

But what would be taught? The foundational text was, of course, the Bible. Here Melanchthon's biblical humanism had global pedagogical impact. Indeed, as incoming students to Concordia Theological Seminary wonder out loud as to why it is they have to take Greek, my answer is, blame Melanchthon! Thomas Coates puts it like this:

> The Missouri Synod has, to be sure, received its religious character from the genius and spirit of Luther himself. The Missouri Synod's educational system, however, bears the stamp of Philip Melanchthon. While Luther was deeply concerned about the Christian education of the youth, and while he wrote with his customary vigor and clarity upon the importance of this subject, it is evident that his concern was not with educational methodology, but with the goals to be achieved. And these goals were always religious—deeper knowledge of God and greater service to mankIN He was content to leave the question of method to the schoolmen, provided that the aims of the Gospel were realized.[3]

The drafting of an educational method and a set of pedagogical assumptions fell, in the end, to Philip Melanchthon. In 1533 he drafted the *Statutes*, which outlined how the university would operate and what formation of students involved. First and foremost, Melanchthon pointed to the Augsburg Confession because it confessed "'the true and perpetual teaching of the Catholic Church'; Wittenberg's theology was not new, but Apostolic."[4]

What was important was the church's confession of the gospel, which Lutherans were convinced that Luther had recovered through his reading of the Scripture and which had been rightly confessed in the Augustana. Pastoral formation was a process of shaping a man in the church's confession so that he might preach the Scripture in its truth and purity. Not surprisingly, then, Melanchthon was deeply committed to students learning the biblical languages.[5] As Schwiebert summarized: "This training produced theologians who knew Biblical teaching on the basis of their own private investigations."[6]

The Lutheran Reformation, then, was inseparably bound up with educational method and pedagogy, and as Lutherans moved into the world over the next centuries, these had global impact—they do still today!

2 Ernest G. Schwiebert, "The Reformation and Theological Education at Wittenberg," *Springfielder* 38 (Autumn 1964): 27 [emphasis added].

3 Thomas Coates, *The Making of a Minister: A Historical Study and Critical Evaluation* (Portland: Concordia College, n.d.), 16.

4 Schwiebert, "Theological Education," 29.

5 Ernest G. Schwiebert, *Reformation Lectures Delivered at Valparaiso University* (Valparaiso, IN: The Letter Shop, 1937), 274: "But it was not until the new Theological Statutes of 1533 (Foersteann, *Liber Decanorum*, p. 153) that this new philological method could be fully realized in the University of Wittenberg. There were now three regular professors in Theology, and in addition the town pastor, Bugenhagen, teaching part time. Henceforth, all theological candidates were to be carefully examined on the basis of the new norm, the *Augsburg Confession*, and after 1537 the ordination of ministers was begun, the prelude to the later Lutheran custom. Naturally, due to the shortage of available candidates, some of those so ordained were rather poorly prepared men including many tradesmen and guild members."

6 Schwiebert, "Theological Education," 32.

IV. THE COST OF PASTORAL FORMATION AND SUPPLY

This kind of intense pastoral formation took time and money. We've seen how John the Steadfast made provision for this. Assumptions regarding the time that this took were embedded within the process of higher education itself. Yet circumstances indicated that there was a gap between the ideally formed pastor and the immediate need of the churches. This was clear to Luther and Melanchthon by the end of the 1520s. It likely informed the revisions of the curriculum that were introduced in 1533 at Wittenberg.

Driving the revisions were the deplorable conditions in the church in Saxony, especially among the clergy, and especially in respect to the clergy's lack of education.

> In the remainder of the Saxon lands, especially those of the Elector's cousin, Duke George, the bitter Luther enemy, conditions were even worse until his death in 1539. A large percentage of the clergy had families through they professed celibacy; others lived in "wild wedlock." The clergy were very incompetent, few of them even knowing the Lord's Prayer or the Ten Commandments. Bibles were rare and seldom used. A committee under Professor Justas Jonas reported that in one region 190 out of 200 lived in open fornication and classified the district as belonging to the very "dregs of society." Congregations reported that the clergy neglected their flocks, spent their time making buttermilk and malt, and on Sundays told their congregations about it, if they attended. Such regions were hardly Lutheran even 22 years after the nailing of the *Ninety-five Theses*.[7]

Not surprisingly, then, as the revised Wittenberg curriculum began to produce capable pastors, they were in great demand.

Admission to Wittenberg assumed familiarity with the Latin language and the classics. The gymnasium was assumed. The responsibility of the university was to help the students become fruitful users of these tools for the sake of the proclamation of the gospel. As the university itself stated:

> The brilliant student, who has been properly trained in the mastery of languages, is indeed well prepared to interpret the Holy Scriptures and is qualified to administer public justice. For how can anyone, who wants to be versed in sacred literature, evaluate the conclusions based on information drawn from the Holy Scriptures if he does not know the languages in which they were written and does not grasp the figures of speech found therein? How can he expect to be able to interpret sacred dogma without the mastery of the correct use of Biblical exegesis, or in case he fails to grasp the context of passages from which conclusions are drawn?[8]

Implicit in the latter part of the previous quotation is the question of sufficient preparation. To put it differently, when is a man adequately formed to fulfill the biblical injunction that he must be "able to teach" in order to be a faithful preacher and teacher of God's word?

Again, the desired outcome was clear preaching of the gospel. Overt piety was necessary in a candidate for the preaching office. But it was not enough; it could not make up for the lack of intellectual capacity, for this would put the preacher's hearers' salvation at stake.

> Poorly trained clergymen would fail to organize their sermons properly, would spread "darkness rather than light," and leave their congregations neither uplifted nor better informed. Just as a medical doctor would not attempt the study of medicine without a mastery of physiology and mathematics, Melanchthon maintained, so the theologian could not study theology without a mastery of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.[9]

Undoubtedly, the Wittenberg *ideal* was a man fully educated and formed for the sake of the clear preaching of the gospel. What I would like to do now is shift somewhat to a consideration of some of the challenges and pressures to putting that ideal into practice—some of which are historical and some of which are contemporary.

V. PROBLEM 1—WHEN IS A MAN "APT TO TEACH"?

The biblical requirements for the candidate for the office of the ministry are well known to us all.

> The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore

[7] Schwiebert, *Reformation Lectures*, 277.

[8] Schwiebert, "Theological Education," 26.

[9] Schwiebert, "Theological Education," 26.

an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil. (1 Tim 3:1–7 ESV)

You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. (2 Tim 2:1–3 ESV)

So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will. (2 Tim 2:22–26 ESV)

One of the early challenges facing the Lutheran tradition—and one that Wittenberg struggled to meet—was the challenge of numbers. In 1521, when Luther was excommunicated, the student population of Wittenberg plunged precipitously. It took years to rebuild the student body. And recall that it was in the midst of the rebuilding of the student population that Luther and Melanchthon revised the curriculum.

Taken together, these two points—the need to attract and train a sufficient number of students—meant that there simply were not enough pastors to push the work of the Reformation forward. Clearly, this put the future of the Reformation at risk. And this, then, drove the question (which we touched on earlier): When is a man actually sufficiently formed to be "able to teach"?

As a result, there were a number of *Notprediger*—emergency preachers—in early Lutheranism. A study of the *Wittenberger Ordiniertenbuch* reveals that when ordinations began in earnest in Wittenberg in 1537, initially a large percentage of the ordinands were *Notprediger*. From a modest eight ordinations in 1537, to twenty-two in 1538, by 1539 the number had climbed to 110. Of those 110 ordinations in 1539, fully one third were men who lacked full classical training.

Ordination of Pastors in Town Church, Wittenberg, 1539

Merchants—1
Town Secretaries—2
Burghers—10
Stone Masons—1
Sextons—6
Councilmen—1
Clothiers—1
Village Schoolmen—3
Printers—11[10]
36 of 110 total (33%)

Luther and his advisors widely chose to send men rich in the spirit, if not in training, to serve until enough candidates could be properly trained. In the ensuing years the number of *Notprediger* decreased quickly; in 1542 it was twenty-seven out of 103; in 1546 it was fifteen out of 102. Increased enrollment at Wittenberg, coupled with the organization of new Lutheran universities at Marburg, Leipzig, and Griefwald, helped to alleviate the immediate pressure.

But it is noteworthy nonetheless that the ideal and its realization was something that took intentionality and time. How was this done? Schwiebert argues, "It was only by means of the extensive educational system of Luther and his coworkers, beginning with the grade schools and continuing through the preparatory schools and colleges, a marvel of organization for the period of the 16th Century, that the Reformation took root and flourished."[11]

This was a Lutheran given—almost a matter of identity. Lutherans were deeply committed to the education of their clergy. Only once a man had a strong theological education could he even be considered for the office of the ministry. It was straightforward and simple. But questions

[10] Schwiebert, *Reformation Lectures*, 285. For narrower studies of the question of ordination in early Lutheranism, see Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *Luther's Pastors: The Reformation in the Ernestine Countryside* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1979), 56–60; Martin Krarup, *Ordination in Wittenberg* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007).

[11] Schwiebert, *Reformation Lectures*, 286.

continually presented themselves as this commitment was put into practice. Let me give several examples.

VI. PROBLEM 2 – WHAT TO DO WHEN THERE IS NOT AN ADJUDICATORY FOR INDUCTING MEN INTO THE OFFICE?

The case of Justus Falckner demonstrates the challenges of applying ecclesiology in the American setting. Born into a clergy family, it was assumed that Justus (1672–1723) would follow his father, Daniel Sr., and brothers into ministerial service. Having studied at Halle, however, Justus was unconvinced that he was a viable candidate for pastoral ministry. In 1700 he came to Philadelphia as a land agent for William Penn. But the presence of a young, theologically trained Lutheran proved too compelling for the Swedish missionary pastors of the American setting.

Andreas Rudman was serving the widely scattered and ethnically diverse Lutheran congregations of America—ranging from the Swedish Lutherans on the Delaware River to the Dutch and Germans in the Hudson River Valley of the former New Netherland. There was even a smattering of English being used in the church at this point. Later there were American Indians and African Americans in the Hudson River congregation. By 1703 Rudman was convinced that Justus Falckner was the perfect candidate for the congregation in New York, which stretched from New York City up the Hudson River Valley to Albany, New York.

The problem for Rudman, however, was how to properly induct the candidate of theology into the ministerial office.[12] Lutherans had insisted that the preparation of pastors required four steps: education, examination by peers, call, and ordination (with the last two being conflated, in some cases). Falckner had the first point, education, but lacked the final three. The Lutheran church in America lacked a bishop, a consistory, or even an organized synod. What churchly adjudicatory would authorize Falckner for ordination? The answer, in the end, was rather complex. Rudman was appointed suffragan bishop—limited to this one episcopal act. Forming a consistory with his Swedish ministerial colleagues, Erik Tobias Bjorck and Andreas Sandel, they examined Falckner and found him properly prepared for service. At the ordination proper, which occurred on November 24, 1703, Rudman served as bishop and ordinator, Bjorck as representative of the consistory, and Sandel as sponsor of the ordinand.[13]

VII. PROBLEM 3 – WHAT DO WE DO IF WE DON'T HAVE SCHOOLS TO FORM LUTHERAN PASTORS?

Lutherans in North America struggled in the colonial period for a series of reasons. One was that the earliest Lutherans, the Swedes, and the Dutch in the seventeenth century, were never fully successful in adapting themselves to the new setting, with its lack of formal structures and institutions. As such, they had to depend on candidates for the ministry from Europe—especially once the Germans began arriving in the early eighteenth century. Pastors received their training, their examination, their call, and their ordination outside of the North American context, for the most part. Attracting candidates to the American frontier was terribly difficult. The result was that there were never enough pastors.

The question thus became, could an adjudicatory authorize or license a man for service in the church when there was no official faculty or institution to provide "certification" for candidates for the office? The American answer was rather simple: Have pastors train candidates on their own. At times, this worked very well. One example is that of the Henkels, where Pastor Paul Henkel trained his son David and ended up producing one of the most articulate and creative Lutheran theologians in history. On the other hand, when this became the norm rather than the exception for pastoral formation, the

[12] There is some evidence that Rudman had attempted to ordain a candidate for the ministry earlier in North America. This ordination was simply not recognized due to its "irregular" character.

[13] One of the questions surrounding Falckner is his pietism. He was trained at Halle; however, over time he clearly moved toward a more robust confessional position. For competing pictures see Kim-Eric Williams, *The Journey of Justus Falckner*, 1672–1723 (Delhi, New York: American Lutheran Publicity Bureau, 2003) and Julius Sachse, *Justus Falckner, Mystic and Scholar, Devout Pietist in German, Hermit on the Wissahickon, Mission on the Hudson: A Bi-Centennial Memorial of the First Regular Ordination of an Orthodox Lutheran Pastor in America, Done November 24, 1703, at Gloria Dei, the Swedish Lutheran Church* at Wicaco, Philadelphia (Philadelphia, 1903). One piece of evidence for this shift toward a more confessional orientation was Falckner's catechetical work, about which Susan Denise Gantt says: "The first book of Christian instruction by a Lutheran clergyman in America was written by Justus Falckner and printed in 1708 (Repp 1982, 19). The title of his book was *Fundamental Instruction upon Certain Points of the True, Pure, Saving Christian Teaching; Founded upon the Apostles and Prophets, of Which Jesus Christ is the Chief Corner Stone; Set Forth in Plain but Edifying Questions and Answers* (Clark 1946, 77). Although it was not based on Luther's Small Catechism, as were many of the catechisms produced during this time, this new catechism was intended to prepare candidates for Holy Communion (Repp 1982, 18)." Susan Denise Gantt, "Catechetical Instruction as an Educational Process for the Teaching of Doctrine to Children in Southern Baptist Churches" (PhD diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2004), 147.

results were extremely uneven and the impact of a less educated clergy made itself particularly evident in the succeeding generation. That is to say, the pragmatic move away from the Wittenberg ideal of education affected the life of the church in longstanding ways.

And here I would like to point to an excellent volume that touches on this subject. While the purpose of Darius Petkunas's *The Repression of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lithuania during the Stalinist Era* is self-evident from the title, Dr. Petkunas does speak to our issue in one section of the book.

Because of the urgent need for pastors, Pastor Ansas Baltris had taken to ordaining cantors and other warm bodies totally lacking in even the most basic theological education. They did not know the difference between a Lutheran and a Baptist and could not care less. What was being heard from the pulpits was drivel and downright heresy.

The outcome of having uneducated pastors in Petkunas's estimation "was indeed serious. The Lutheran Church was being threatened from within. It could easily lose its identity as a Lutheran Church."[14]

VIII. PROBLEM 4—WHAT DO WE DO IN A FULLY DEMOCRATIZED SETTING THAT HAS 1) A DIFFERENT ECCLESIOLOGY, 2) A DIFFERENT UNDERSTANDING OF THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY?

Another problem was the democratization of American Christianity. Americans take their freedom seriously—oftentimes expressed as freedom *from* the past.

This process of democratization, along with its attendant system of checks and balances, is the subject of Nathan Hatch's enormously influential study, *The Democratization of American Christianity*.[15] It was in the churches, argues Hatch, that the people forged their fundamental ideas about the nature of individual responsibility. The preachers of the day stimulated this defining process by seizing the opportunity to lead. They expressed their leadership primarily by organizing religious movements "from the ground up." They did so by using vernacular sermons based on the life experiences of their hearers, popular literature and music, protracted meetings, and, most importantly, new ideologies that both denied the hierarchical structure of elitist religions and promised to exalt those of lower status to at least an equal level with their supposed superiors.

The leaders were accepted because they challenged the people to take their personal destiny into their own hands, to oppose centralized authority and hierarchical conceptions of society. They empowered the people by giving them a sense of self-trust. As the people learned to trust their religious impulses, they in turn spoke out boldly in defense of their experiences. Common people exhibited a new confidence in the validity of their personal religious experience, and when they began to demand that religion offer an avenue to express this newfound individualism, the American church was revolutionized.

According to Hatch, freedom from the domination of the hierarchical clergy required three steps. First, the new preachers refused to defer to the seminary-trained theologians. Second, they empowered the laity by taking seriously their religious practices, affirming and validating the people's experiences. Finally, they exuded enthusiasm about the potential for their movements, and the people caught the vision. "They dreamed that a new age of religious and social harmony would naturally spring up out of their efforts to overthrow coercive and authoritarian structures."[16]

In this context, the fourfold nature of pastoral formation was seriously compressed. Education came to be seen as unnecessary, examination an expression of tyranny and power, the "call" became a personal experience ratified in a quantifiable number of demonstrable "conversions," and ordination an unnecessary act, which, if retained at all, was carried out by the congregation.

Indeed, an overt antagonism emerged toward men who had prepared themselves for ministerial service via seminary or university study.

> Why are we in such slavery, to men of that degree;
>
> Bound to support their knavery; when we might all be free?
>
> They're nothing but a canker; we can with boldness say;
>
> So let us hoist the anchor, let Priest-craft float away.[17]

In this context, Lutherans faced a series of choices that crystalized around, among other issues, the doctrines

[14] Darius Petkünas, *The Repression of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lithuania during the Stalinist Era* (Klaipeda, Lithuania: Klaipeda University, 2011), 226.

[15] Nathan Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

[16] Hatch, *Democratization*, 10–11.

[17] Hatch, *Democratization*, 231.

of church and ministry. What shape would the church take in democratic America? What authority do general, national bodies have over and against particular, local congregations?

What did this mean for pastoral formation? An assumption began to develop in America that had two intensities: 1) theological education is not necessary for one to be a pastor, 2) theological education is a hindrance for one becoming a pastor. As William Warren Sweet put it:

> Alfred Brunson opposed theological schools on the ground that they so often turned out "learned dunces and third rate preachers," while Peter Cartwright compared the theologically educated preachers he knew to the pale lettuce "growing under the shade of a peach tree" or to a "gosling that has got the waddles wading in the dew."[18]

The test of ministerial validity was the success (or failure) of the preacher in producing converts (recall, this was contemporary with the emergence of the market as the dominant economic engine in the United States). If you could win people to Christ (whatever that meant), you had the gift of the Spirit and were a legitimate minister—whatever education you did or did not have. Whatever examination you had or had not passed. Whether or not you had received the laying on of hands in an ordination service.

If you could not gain converts, it did not matter what education you did or did not have. Whatever examination you had or had not passed. Whether or not you had received the laying on of hands in an ordination service.19

IX. CONCLUSION—LUTHERAN IDENTITY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

The purpose of this paper has been to begin to explore the relationship of theological formation (and only tangentially pedagogy as such) to the mission and life of the church. It hopefully has raised some questions in your mind—though it may not have offered any answers. One possible outcome may be to help in framing questions and initial conclusions as we work on Dr. Kalme's homework assignment from yesterday in respect to framing a concrete vision for the future for confessional Lutheranism. Some of the issues that this vision will have to address are at least implicit in this paper. Questions about pastoral formation and certification, delivery systems for theological education, the relationship of pedagogy and methodology, increasing democratization, basic issues of funding, and many others will need the attention of the best minds gathered together in prayerful consideration of the future of our confession.

I hope this paper will contribute modestly to that endeavor, and I look forward to working through these issues with you. In concluding, I'd like to offer the following two statements for your consideration. First: "The educational factor in the growth and spread of the Reformation has not been fully realized and appreciated. In a sense the Reformation rose and fell with the educational system instituted by Luther and his fellow Reformers."[20] And finally, Luther again:

> Be alert, study, keep on reading! Truly you cannot read too much in the Scripture; and what you read, you cannot understand too well; and what you understand, you cannot teach too well; and what you teach well, you cannot live too well. Believe me, I know by experience! It is the devil, it is the world, it is our own flesh that storm and rage against us. Therefore dear sirs and brothers, pastors and preachers: pray, read, study, be diligent! I tell you the truth: there is no time for us to lazy around, to snore and sleep in these evil, wicked times. So bring your talents that have been entrusted to you and reveal the mystery of Christ.[21]

Rev. Dr. Lawrence R. Rast Jr. is president of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN.

[18] William Warren Sweet, "The Rise of Theological Schools in America," *Church History* 6 (September 1937): 271. Later, when some of these denominations began to form clergy in dedicated theological schools, the reasoning was based in the increasing educational level of the laity. "…educated and wealthy laymen … began to demand ministers of whom they need not feel ashamed. Trained ministers, they said, were needed to attract the cultured people of the cities, and scholars were needed to refute the attacks on their theology." Sweet, "Theological Schools," 272.

[19] The literature on the transformation of pastoral formation is enormous. Hatch, *Democratization*, is, of course, a paramount importance. See also E. Brooks Holifield, *God's Ambassadors: A History of the Christian Clergy in America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007); Glenn T. Miller, *Piety and Intellect: The Aims and Purposes of Ante-Bellum Theological Education* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990); Donald M. Scott, *From Office to Profession: The New England Ministry, 1750–1850* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978); Glenn T. Miller, *Piety and Profession: American Protestant Theological Education, 1870–1970* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007). For a quick view of the popular version of this transformation see "Billy Sunday Burns Up the Backsliding World: Whirlwind Evangelist Swings into Action in Boston," *http://youtu.be/Ykn8YcIbmfo*, accessed September 30, 2017.

[20] Schwiebert, *Reformation Lectures*, 290.

[21] Luther, intro to *Spangenberg's Postille*, 11.

Theological Education in International Missions in the Twenty-First Century

International Lutheran Conference, Prague, Czech Republic, October 6, 2011

by Timothy C. J. Quill

Mission, ministry and liturgy share a common owner. They all belong to God and through them he is active in creating and sustaining his church. Mission, ministry, and liturgy are inseparable. You cannot have one without the others. God has established no mission apart from the holy ministry. The ministry knows only the mission given to it by God.

In The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and other Lutheran churches in North America, pastoral formation historically took place in residential seminaries.[1] This model was replicated on the foreign mission field where residential programs lasting up to four years took place on seminary campuses built and sustained by mission funding from America. The curriculum was similar to that used in American seminaries. Such mission seminaries include: India (Nagercoil), Nigeria (Obot Idim), Papua New Guinea, Ghana (Kaneshie, Accra), Brazil (Sao Leopoldo), the Philippines, South Korea, Hong Kong, etc. Scandinavian and German Lutherans followed the same approach in places such as Ethiopia (Mekane Yesus Seminary, Addis Ababa), Kenya (Matongo Lutheran Theological College, Sondu), Tanzania, South Africa (Lutheran Theological Seminary, Tshwane), Madagascar (six regional seminaries, i.e., Antsiribe), India, Indonesia, and so forth.

In recent years, the LCMS has been experimenting with new methods of pastoral formation such as Distance Education Leading to Ordination (DELTO) and more recently, the Specific Ministry Pastor Program (SMP). An article titled, "Lay Leadership Education in the LCMS Today" that appeared in *Issues in Christian Education* in 2004 describes twelve programs operated by districts of the LCMS that prepare lay leaders or licensed deacons for ministry—often explicitly referred to as "word and sacrament" ministry.[2] Similar paradigms have also been employed in international missions such as Meta-Church, Theological Education by Extension (TEE), lay leadership, Mission Training Centers (MTC), and theological education through the use of DVDs.

These leadership programs have been introduced into the mission field alongside or in place of the residential pastoral program. The rationale driving these changes includes: (1) The high cost of maintaining traditional residential seminaries in this day of shrinking financial resources, (2) The notion that curricula from Euro-American cultures should not be imposed from above but grow out of the needs of the local context, (3) The claim that educated African pastors do not want to go to isolated areas and are not welcome as part of the community, (4) The cultural expectations that highly educated clergy expect higher salaries,[3] (5) The claim

[1] This is also true of Lutheran churches in Europe where theological studies take place primarily in the theology departments of the state universities.

[2] David S. Luecke, "Lay Leadership Education in the LCMS Today," *Issues in Christian Education* 38, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 6–11.

[3] Rev. Mark Rabe, LCMS missionary teaching in Otemo Evangelist School and Matongo Lutheran Theological College (seminary) in Kenya disagrees with the assertion that well-educated pastors won't or don't sacrifice. The average ELCK pastor's salary is $36 per month, most of which is spent on transportation to their many congregations and preaching stations. Most pastors survive by growing their own crops and raising animals. Rabe's comments were made at a mission festival in Gresham, California, June 11, 2011. Missiologist Dr. Carl Rockrohr, who served as a missionary in Ghana 1993–98 and currently teaches at Lutheran Theological Seminary and the University of Pretoria, South Africa, posits that African pastors will return from America and go back to isolated villages and can be very faithful and effective pastors. A lot depends on the expectations of the national church body and the student before he begins his studies. Also, the pastor must be thoroughly mentored in his understanding of and commitment to the office of the holy ministry and mission of the church before he is selected to receive a higher education. Another factor to consider is that educated pastors are more apt to successfully return to a village in which the family has land, crops, and dwelling and is thus able to subsist on a limited income. Finally, it is the same in the United States. Some seminary candidates are willing to go anywhere. Most eventually end up as pastors in or near the districts from which they or their wives came. On the positive side, they understand the culture, whether it be in New York City, Iowa, California, or Alabama. Seminaries also play a

that those who go off for higher education are not able to relate to their people when they return, (6) The claim that seminary education diminishes the evangelical zeal of the graduates, hinders rapid church growth, and fosters a maintenance mentality of the church, (7) The promotion of the "Everyone a Minister" movement.

It is not my intention to discourage participation or to diminish the positive contributions of the non-ordained laity in the witness, works of mercy, and life together in the church. This will be obvious when I address the topic of the royal priesthood. Rather, I wish to point out that (1) These movements or paradigms have often led to disunity and conflict in the church, (2) The divinely instituted office of the holy ministry is indispensable for any church whose ministry and mission is built on the means of grace—word and sacrament, and (3) It is my sincere intent to uplift, encourage and extol the royal priesthood as they serve the church and her mission in their God-ordained Christian vocation. It is my desire to encourage the dedicated Christian laity who fill vital positions such as "evangelist," catechist, school teacher, deaconess, church musician, etc.

When I was in high school, while my father was teaching at the seminary in Obot Idim, I was free to explore the dense rainforests that surrounded the compound in southern Nigeria. In the past two years I have been privileged on two occasions to teach at the Lutheran seminary in Accra, Ghana, as well as continuing education courses for pastors inland in Kumasi. On one of the trips I even managed to get away and wander through rainforests that were such an important part of my youth. For this reason I was immediately captivated by the analogy for theological education that appeared in an article titled, "Nurturing the Lutheran Church in Liberia's Theological Ecosystem."

The author, William Russell, describes bouncing "over narrow, washed out, dirt roads" through the rainforests on his way to teach at the Gbarnga School of Theology. The seminary is located "in rural Bong County, some seventy miles inland, where the first Lutheran missionaries to the African continent concentrated their work." Russell explains that his Liberian friends helped him to see how "Lutheran theological education in Liberia is like the rainforest."

> To the casual observer, the huge trees with canopies hundreds of feet in the air are the most prominent feature of the landscape. The giants are majestic, but statuesque. From the ground, not much seems to be going on up there. So one's eye tracks downward to the lower level trees that provide nourishment (like bananas) and shelter (like palms) for those who live in the bush. From the road, the third level of the forest (the grasses, vines, and ivies) seems to flow like a river of green from those trees. Then we stopped and got out. As my friends led me into the forest, they helped me see what I would have missed from our comfortable four-wheeler: the rainforest floor was busy with life. Most of the creatures live on the ground, and the insects and microbes and bacteria that make the earth so fertile live in the ground. It is easy to miss all this action, but it is vital to the health of the whole. It is, after all, an ecosystem.[4]

Any attempt to organize a mission program, movement, or strategy must be consciously, intentionally, inseparably connected to the office of the holy ministry in which thoroughly trained pastors are properly called and ordained through the laying on of hands, word, and prayer.

The Liberians then explained the analogy. In Lutheran theological education, like the huge tree, the seminary is the most prominent feature in the theological landscape. The next level is the "clergy, with their theological degrees and ordination, who protect and nourish the life of Lutheranism in Liberia. As a group these pastors are intensely committed to theological growth," which includes week long continuing education courses. The third level of theological education involves deaconate and lay evangelists who work under the oversight of ordained ministers. The fourth level takes place in homes, schools, and congregations."Study groups, along with

role in that they can shape a wider view for mission in students during their time on campus.

[4] William Russell, "Nurturing the Lutheran Church in Liberia's Theological Ecosystem," *Logia: A Journal of Lutheran Theology* 17, no. 1 (Epiphany 2008): 69.

word-centered worship, directly touch the most lives in Liberian Lutheranism. … In an ecosystem, all levels of life are vital to the whole."[5]

What is true about the Lutheran ecclesial ecosystem in Liberia is also true in Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, America, and the world over. The seminary is the heart and center of a healthy church, for it is the seminary that produces pastors who preach and administer sacraments and conduct liturgy. It is not only about pastors, but how *all the parts live together* in a healthy, growing, interconnected theological "ecosystem."

In this way there will be a beautiful reciprocity in which the laity support those in the holy ministry and in turn are built up and served by their pastors. Therefore, I will begin with the biblical and theological foundation for the office of the holy ministry as it relates to the mission and worship of the church. Second, I will examine issues (including challenges and opportunities) facing theological education in international missions in the twenty-first century.

God's Mission, Holy Ministry, and the Divine Service

It is common to find books and articles that deal specifically with the individual topics of missions, the holy ministry, and worship. In actual practice, however, you cannot talk about one of these individual topics without the conversation involving the other two. God's mission, holy ministry, and the divine service are inseparably connected. "Mission," "ministry," and "liturgy" share a mutual reciprocity.

In the phrase, "*God's* mission, *holy* ministry and *divine* liturgy," "God's," "holy," and "divine" all say the same thing. They indicate that all three *belong* to God. The *mission* to save the world from sin is *God's* mission. The Father chose, authorized, and sent his Son to atone for the sins of the world. The Son was given all authority and therefore called and sent the apostles, who in turn ordained other men to make disciples of all nations.

Paul thus wrote to Titus, "This is why I left you in Crete, that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint/ordain[6] elders in every town as I directed you" (**Titus 1:5**).

The apostle Paul reminded Timothy of his ordination, "For this reason I remind you to *fan into flame* the *gift of God, which is in you* through the laying on of hands, for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control" (**2 Tim. 1:6–7**). Any attempt to organize a mission program, movement, or strategy must be consciously, intentionally, inseparably connected to the office of the holy ministry in which thoroughly trained pastors are properly called and ordained through the laying on of hands, word, and prayer. And so Paul also instructed Timothy, "Do not neglect the gift, which was given you through prophetic utterance when the council of elders laid their hands upon you" (**1 Tim. 4:14**).

In his farewell address to the elders (pastors) in Ephesus, Paul said, "Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers (bishops)" (**Acts 20:28**).[7] It is thus not surprising that Acts 20:28 and 1 Timothy 4:14 are included in the *Lutheran Agenda* "Rite of Ordination."

It is called the *holy* ministry because it was established by God and belongs to God. The inseparable connection between God's mission and God's ministers is clearly articulated in Articles IV and V of the Augsburg Confession.[8]

Article IV on "Justification" states:

> It is also taught among us that we cannot obtain forgiveness of sin and righteousness before God by our own merits, works, or satisfactions, but that we receive forgiveness of sins and become righteous before God by grace, for Christ's sake, **through faith**.[9]

Article V, "The Office of the Ministry," explains how this faith is obtained.

> **To obtain such faith** God instituted the office of the ministry, that is, provided the Gospel and the sacraments. Through these, as through means, he gives the Holy Spirit, who works faith, when and where he pleases in those who hear the Gospel. (AC V, 1–3 [Tappert, 31])

The ordinary, regular, ongoing place in which the gospel and sacraments are preached and administered is in the divine liturgy. The sacraments are not administered without the preaching of the gospel. Preaching the pure

[5] Russell, "Liberia's Theological Ecosystem," 69.

[6] Καταστήσης (aor. subjunctive) of καθίστημι (to appoint, ordain).

[7] Ἐπισκόπους.

[8] Articles IV and V of the Augsburg Confession form one of the best mission statements ever produced.

[9] AC IV, 1–2, Theodore Tappert ed., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1959), 30.

gospel proclaims no other Christ than he who rose bodily from the dead and is truly present with grace in his body and blood in the sacrament. Thus, Christian worship, or the divine liturgy, is nothing other than the liturgy of word and sacrament, namely the liturgy of the gospel. Where the gospel is preached and sacraments administered, the Holy Spirit works faith "when and where he pleases." "When and where he pleases" is mission language. "When … he pleases" eliminates synergistic, Baptist, manipulative mission strategies and revival worship. "Where" applies to wherever the gospel, catechesis, baptism, and the Lord's Supper are going on, whether here in America or overseas.

Mission, ministry, and liturgy share a common owner. They all belong to God and through them he is active in creating and sustaining his church. Mission, ministry, and liturgy are inseparable. You cannot have one without the others. God has established no mission apart from the holy ministry. The ministry knows only the mission given to it by God. There is no ministry without the means of grace which take place where two or three are gathered in Jesus' name to receive his gifts and respond in faith and thanksgiving. There is no true worship apart from God's mission and the holy ministry. Mission and evangelism are not separate activities independent from the liturgy. Certainly, there are evangelism, catechetical, and devotional activities (e.g. daily office) that take place outside of the actual divine service. But these flow from and back into the place where Christ has promised to be present with his preached word and his life-giving body and blood. "There is no separation between liturgy and mission. … [W]orship *is* mission."[10]

Mission, ministry, and liturgy share an intimate reciprocity. A faulty theology of missions leads to a faulty understanding in the holy ministry and a faulty theology of worship. Faulty theology leads to faulty practices. Good missiological practice must understand and be shaped by this reciprocity, as must all theological education undertaken in international mission fields.

Royal Priesthood

I was once making a presentation about the importance of seminary education for missionary pastors. When I made reference to our Lord's mandate to the apostles in Matthew 28 as foundational to the task of pastors, an agitated layperson insisted that Jesus was not only addressing those in the holy ministry but all believers. It is true that Jesus' words are, indirectly or in general, addressed to the entire church, but I pointed out that in the text, Jesus' mandate was directed to the apostles, not to all believers.[11]

I pointed out that Jesus was sending the apostles to make disciples. How are disciples made? By baptizing and teaching. So I asked this woman, "Have you been baptizing people lately? Have you been conducting the liturgy and administering Holy Communion lately?" A proper interpretation of Matthew 28 does not diminish the royal priesthood nor does it falsely elevate the office of the holy ministry to some elitist hierarchy.

The proper reading of Matthew 28 does not preclude the importance of lay people witnessing to others in word and deed, and certainly they are to bring their children to be baptized. Lay people support God's mission prayerfully and financially. They teach and live the faith in their homes. They support the mission when they bring their children to be baptized and when they encourage their sons to enter the holy ministry.

For an excellent treatment of the distinction between clergy and laity, see *The Christological Character of the Office of the Ministry and the Royal Priesthood* by Dr. Jobst Schöne.[12] Schöne writes:

> The Lutherans love it. They love their "royal priesthood." They are very proud of it. … For some Lutherans it seems to be almost as important as or even more important than the doctrine of justification. I think we are right in loving this royal priesthood. We are right in estimating it highly. It is indeed a precious gift and an important doctrine. Nevertheless, the royal priesthood is not immune from misunderstanding and abuse.[13]

Schöne begins by demonstrating the great value, dignity, and significance of the royal priesthood. Priesthood and baptism go together. One becomes a royal priest through baptism. Thus it is something that is simply received. To be reborn in Holy Baptism is to be reborn royalty. "The priesthood is not constituted by our activity or ability to be active or serve. It is constituted exclusively

[10] Thomas H. Schattauer, "Liturgical Assembly as Locus of Mission," in *Inside Out: Worship in an Age of Mission*, ed. Thomas H. Schattauer (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 3.

[11] Matthew 28:16, "Now the *eleven* disciples went to Galilee to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them." The twelve minus Judas.

[12] Jobst Schöne, *The Christological Character of the Office of the Ministry and the Royal Priesthood* (Plymouth, MN: LOGIA Books, 1996).

[13] Schöne, *Christological Character*, 10.

by what our Lord does."[14] On the basis of 1 Peter 2:9, "But you are a *chosen* race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." Schöne writes, "we learn from these scripture passages what makes people into priests. God elects them."[15] "He who speaks of the royal priesthood speaks of holy baptism. Holy baptism is our consecration or sanctification as priests."[16]

> The priesthood of the believers does *not exist* in order to claim rights and to compete with the office of the holy ministry. Instead, it exists in being a priest, which means *to be what we are*. To understand this statement we could read through the entire First Letter of St. Peter. It is an extensive explanation of how a priest in the new people of God lives. Be what you are: a Christian. Be a priest in your family, in your marriage, in your daily life, or whatever the circumstances are in which you live—a priest, a Christian.
>
> One of the basic functions of a priest is to offer. 1 Peter 2:5 speaks of *offering spiritual sacrifices* acceptable to God. Luther explains this as *offering thanks and praise in prayer and devotion*.
>
> A priest is [also] called to *pray for others*—for their salvation and for the whole world so that none are lost but all come to recognize the truth.
>
> The royal priesthood needs the support of the office of the holy ministry and vice versa. The two do not exclude each other.
>
> God gives talents to his church in many ways. Not all of these gifts are restricted to men in the ministry. Pastors are to serve with the word and sacraments. A lot of other things and activities can just as well be done by lay people as members of the royal priesthood. Sometimes pastors think they have to do everything. That is wrong. They should restrict themselves to what their real task is: to preach the gospel, administer the sacraments, to absolve, to help people in their faith, and instruct.
>
> Many other things can be better done by members of the royal priesthood.[17]

Issues Challenges and Opportunities for Theological Education in International Missions

If you were sent to a new mission field in which the Christian church had never existed, what would be the first book you translate? The Bible, catechism, or hymnbook (i.e., liturgy and hymnody)? The catechism is necessary for teaching the faith and preparing catechumens for Holy Baptism. Baptism then leads to the Lord's Supper, which requires a liturgy. The liturgical text consists primarily of passages taken directly from the Bible. To translate the liturgy is to translate the Bible, to translate those parts used by the church for prayer, that is, for a divine conversation between God and his people. To translate the liturgical lectionary is to translate the Bible. When translating the Bible, what book would you begin with—a Gospel? If so, which one? Matthew? Mark? Luke? John? When mission reaches the point where mature and gifted Christian men have been identified as future pastors, it is hard to imagine a seminary curriculum that does not include the entire Bible as a primary textbook for the preparation of future preachers, not to mention the catechism, entire Book of Concord, and liturgy.

Lutheran Churches and Lutheran Missions Use the Lutheran Liturgy

Almost every time the word "liturgy" is used in connection with "missions," someone raises the question of the relationship of liturgy and culture. Should Africans be forced to worship like white Europeans or Americans? The integration of the Christian faith and worship into another culture is a sophisticated and complex art which goes by such names as indigenization, enculturation, and contextualization. Time permits only a few comments, which I hope will stimulate further thought into what is a very intimidating yet exciting and important aspect of theological education in the mission field.

What does or should Lutheran worship look like in Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Ethiopia, Madagascar, India, Indonesia, New Guinea, Japan, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Brazil, Argentina, and Haiti? What should worship look like in North America?

In recent years there has been a desire among some Africans for an authentic African theology and African

[14] Schöne, *Christological Character*, 11.

[15] Schöne, *Christological Character*, 12.

[16] Schöne, *Christological Character*, 13.

[17] Schöne, *Christological Character,* 15–17.

worship. Rightly understood, this is a commendable goal. Its weakness lies in that it is in many ways too expansive. It is more helpful to ask for an Ethiopian theology, Kenyan theology, South African theology, or possibly a Zulu theology, Ibo theology, Hausa theology, or Bantu theology. If one seriously desires an authentic and catholic "African theology," then it should include the African fathers of the early church. The church fathers did their theology from a serious exegesis of Holy Scriptures, as did the Lutheran fathers. The Nicene theology is as much an African theology as it is European. Any attempt to create an African theology or African worship independent from the experience of Christians who have gone before (e.g., the early church fathers and Lutheran fathers) is sectarian.

Lutheran missions should lead to Lutheran churches with Lutheran liturgies. Witness leads to catechesis (which goes on both outside the liturgy and in the liturgy with prayer and preaching). Catechesis leads to baptism which leads to the divine liturgy. The Lutheran liturgy makes people Lutheran and keeps them Lutheran.

Lutheran churches in the mission context do not start from scratch creating entirely new worship forms in the name of American Christianity, African Christianity, or Asian Christianity. What I have observed firsthand in Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, not to mention in India, Indonesia, and elsewhere) is that what is often passed off as indigenous African worship is actually an "Africanization" of American Protestant "revival worship."[18] What should Lutheran worship look like? What should American, African, Asian, European Lutheran worship look and sound like? First of all, it should be clear that it has been shaped by Lutheran theology—in short, the gospel. And it should clearly confess, proclaim, and extol Christ and the gospel.

The challenge for all those involved in mission work is to train indigenous pastors in both theology and prayer. This means planting the liturgy in the local language and culture. This is no small task. It requires the translation and composition of liturgical texts that are biblically faithful and theologically correct and clear. It requires liturgical texts and hymnody that are linguistically sound, poetic, and beautiful. It requires thoughtful attention to music, rite, and ceremony.

So let me return to my earlier question. If you were sent to a new mission field in which the Christian church had never existed, what would be the first book you translate? The Bible, catechism, hymnbook? Whatever your answer, books never stand alone, they require teachers. Great time and energy is given to teaching the Bible and catechism, and rightly so. But people also need to be taught how Lutherans worship, and why they worship as they do. The instruction begins with the pastors, who are the stewards of the mysteries (sacraments), who are called to stand before the altar in the presence of God and lead the divine services. The manner in which the pastor conducts the liturgy is the primary and ongoing way in which he teaches the theology of worship. Seminary education must also emphasize the history, theology, and conduct of the liturgy. The liturgy must also be taught to church musicians as well as evangelists and lay leaders who lead the liturgy of the word in the absence of a pastor. If they are not taught to do it right, they will do it wrong—they will import practices from Pentecostals and other sects. Finally, the laity also needs to be taught. The entire endeavor must be given a major emphasis in the (1) seminary curriculum, (2) lay leadership programs such as TEE and MTC, and (3) catechetical curriculum. This is where missionaries can be very helpful to emerging churches throughout the world today.

Liberalism and Secularism

Another serious challenge for Lutheran missions comes from the powerful influence of the liberal German and Scandinavian Lutheran state churches. The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) churches in Europe are perplexed that churches around the world find the theology of the LCMS and other confessional Lutheran churches appealing. In an attempt to understand this phenomenon, they resort to some very fanciful explanations and caricatures. For example, we turn to the powerful Lutheran church in Germany. In his address to the Evangelical Commission for Middle and Eastern Europe, which met in Brandenburg, Germany, in April 2002, Bishop Stefan Reder[19] put forth this thesis: "The Theology of the LCMS

[18] I am using the term "revival worship" rather broadly to include a variety of forms of worship that go by a host of designations such as, evangelical worship, contemporary worship, Pentecostal worship, Charismatic, Revivalist, blended, emerging worship, etc. The taxonomy is so extensive it is difficult to find one title to describe this current phenomenon. The historical roots of this worship are found in the Reformed and Armenian theology of the immigrants who came from Europe and established churches along the eastern seacoast of America and across the Allegany Mountains in the isolated American frontier in the nineteenth century.

[19] Former *Stellvertreter des Erzbischof* Georg Kretschmar (ELKRAS). On Reder's address and its implications for the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuania, see Timothy Quill, "Lithuanian Aspirations and LWF Ambitions," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 66, no. 4 (October

comes, to a large extent, in answer to the present day needs of the people of the former Soviet Union, because it has a 'Soviet' Character."[20] The address notes that under the Soviet system, values and ideals were clearly designated—what was good and evil, true and false, was clearly defined. Even if all citizens did not agree with the alleged Soviet identity, it was the point of orientation. With the fall of the Soviet Union, the state was no longer able to sufficiently offer a national identity. Therefore, many are turning to religious and spiritual movements to shape their self-identity. Religions that offer complete and predetermined answers in what is good and right and wrong remain more appealing to those coming out of the Soviet world. Bishop Reder then posits:

> Here lies the unmistakable strength of the LCMS theology. It asserts clear and unambiguous answers and corresponds therefore in a certain fashion to the Soviet ideology. An independently thinking people was out of the question in the Soviet time. The Soviet government did the thinking for the people … . The people rarely learned to think for themselves … . Here lies the strength of the LCMS theology. Here one doesn't need to think. Here is offered a complete system with a full claim to truth, which one can adopt for himself … . The Soviet Union ideology had the proclivity for explaining all the fundamental things on the basis of the indisputable authorities and writings: Marx, Lenin and so forth… . The LCMS does this in the same way, in that it subscribes itself uncritically to Luther and the Lutheran Confessions and looks at these as a completely infallible foundation.[21]

The Lutherans in Russia and the former Soviet Union are worthy of more respect. The patronizing rhetoric expressed in the Brandenburg address is more reflective of the verbal nominalism of past Soviet propaganda than of the present day Lutherans in Russia, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and Baltic countries, who are quite capable of thinking for themselves. When they choose a theological course instead of a sociological-based ideology, they are labeled as narrow-minded and fundamentalists.

Despite hemorrhaging membership losses in the liberal churches of Western Europe and Scandinavia,[22] the leadership of the established Lutheran churches continues to force their agenda on churches that have no desire for it. In Latvia, Archbishop Janis Vanags has expressed a common sentiment found among these churches: "For churches that have lived under persecution, liberalism has nothing to offer because it has nothing to die for." The struggling emerging Lutherans often find strings attached to the financial help they are offered from their brothers in the west. Individual pastors and congregations are courted and tempted with financial rewards to change their doctrine and practice.

In the wake of the Church of Sweden's approval of homosexual marriage and the ordination of non-celibate pastors, all seven bishops from the three Baltic countries (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) met in Tallinn, Estonia, on November 3–4, 2009, to discuss the problem this presents to Lutheran unity. In a signed "Message from the Meeting of the Baltic Lutheran Bishops," the following courageous and faithful confession is included:

> At the present time a common witness of churches is vitally important, therefore we express our deepest concern about modern tendencies that weaken the fellowship among Christians and cause divisions in and among churches. The recent decisions made by some member churches of the Lu-

2004): 361–64.

[20] "These: Die Theologie der LCMS kommt in großem Masse den gegenwärtigen Bedürfnissen der Menschen in der ehemaligen Sowjetunion entgegen, weil sie ‚sowjetischen' Charakter hat."

[21] "Hier leigt dei eindeutige Stärke der LCMS Theologie. Sie gibt klare und eindeutige Antworten vor—und enstpricht daher in gewisser Weise der sowjetischen Ideologie. Eigenständiges Denken der Menschen war in sowjetischer Zeit nicht gefragt. Die Sowjetregierung hat für die Menschen gedacht….Die Menschen haben selten gelernt, selbständig zu denken. … Darin liegt die Stärke der LCMS-Theologie. Hier braucht man nicht zu denkern. Hier wird ein Komplettsystem mit einem unfassenden Wahrheitsanspruch präsentiert, worauf man sich einlassen kann. … Die sowjetische Ideologie hatte die Neigung, all grundlegenden Dinge auf unstrittige Autoritäten und deren Schriften zurückzuführen: Marx, Lenin usw. Die LCMS tut dies in gleicher Weise, indem sie sich unkritisch auf Luther und die lutherischen Bekenntnisschriften bezieht und diese als völlig unfehlbare Grundlagen ansieht."

[22] Recent statistics released by the Lutheran World Information in Geneva report that the number of Lutherans worldwide has climbed to sixty-six million. "The highest regional growth (9.3 percent) was recorded among churches in Africa, where an additional 1,115,141 Lutherans were registered, pushing the number of Lutherans on the continent up from 11,953,068 in 2001 to 13,068,209 by the end of 2003." "Total number of Lutherans worldwide climbs to nearly 66 million," Lutheran World Information, Religiscope, February 17, 2004, accessed October 1, 2017, *https://english.religion.info/2004/02/17/total-number-of-lutherans-worldwide-climbs-to-nearly-66-million/*. During the same period, Lutheran churches in Europe continue their dismal decline in membership—down a staggering 640,000. Lutheran churches in North America lost 84,179 members.

theran World Federation to approve of religious matrimony for couples of the same gender and to equate such conjugal life with marriage or to ordain non celibate homosexual persons for pastoral or Episcopal office epitomize these tendencies that are tearing apart fellowship among Christians. We affirm that marriage is the conjugal life between a man and a woman and that a homosexual activity is incompatible with the discipleship of Christ. We believe that in following the modern trends, churches are departing from the apostolic doctrine of human sexuality and marriage. We see the Lutheran community and ecumenical efforts endangered by such decisions and actions because they lead to a situation where the Lutheran churches, members of the Lutheran World Federation are not able to fully recognize each others ecclesiastical offices, to exchange the ministries and to participate together in preaching the Word and celebrating the sacraments.

We call upon our Lutheran sisters and brothers to unity and co-operation based on the foundation of Holy Scripture and loyalty to the Lutheran confessions. Contemporary challenges demand a firm stand based upon timeless truths and values. The common understanding of the Gospel by churches is a treasure we cannot afford to lose and it needs to be passed on to the current and future generations. Our mission is to be faithful in that which we have received, God's mercy.[23]

Lutherans in Africa are also experiencing LWF arrogance and oppression. In Kenya the battle to retain a Lutheran identity is being waged on two main fronts. In addition to American "evangelicalism," they are being pressured by the dry rot of theological liberalism, particularly from Europe and Scandinavia. In his opening address to the Fourth International Confessional Lutheran Conference at Matongo Seminary in Kenya, Bishop Walter Obare pointedly reacted to the liberal theological pressures from some Lutheran churches in Europe and America. Bishop Obare explains:

We are grateful for the beneficial work of various Bible schools and enter of the past and present. Simultaneously, it is, however, of extreme importance to acknowledge the urgent need for higher confessional theological education in Africa. *We also need more missionaries of significant theological caliber. The time of theological amateurs is over in the global missions if we are going to prevail.* Unless this can be achieved, the future field of theology as a whole, will be seriously handicapped, since the foundation of all true theology, the Sacred Bible, will still be found in the Babylonian Captivity of liberal critical German, Scandinavian, English and American theologies with their limited and yet strict philosophical presuppositions and categories.[24]

Lutheran missions must vigorously establish and support both partner and non-partner Lutheran churches around the world, and where possible, protect them from liberal intolerance. This will involve sending professors to teach at Lutheran seminaries of Lutheran churches that are not in fellowship with the LCMS. Missionaries must therefore be knowledgeable of and sensitive to the ramifications to church relations. In today's world, mission work and church relations overlap. Thus the Board for International Missions, regional directors, and missionaries must work very closely with the president of Synod and the office/director of church relations.

Islam

We are living in a time of shrinking economic capacity which will diminish the ability of Christian churches in the west, including the LCMS, to carry out vigorous mission work around the world. At the same time Islam has increasing wealth at its disposal and is using it to project its power around the world. Last January I was visiting with Bishop Obare. Over coffee we talked about the various challenges facing the church in Africa: neo-Pentecostalism, Western liberalism, poverty, etc. Then Bishop Obare added, "What I am the most worried about is Islam." Muslims are in the minority in Kenya but they are gaining political influence. They also bring in a lot of money in order to build mosques. In many places they offer congregations money for their churches, an

[23] Signed by Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia Archbishop of Riga Janis Vanags, Bishop of Daugavpils Einars Alpe, and Bishop of Liepaja Pavils Bruvers; Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuania Bishop Mindaugas Sabutis; Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church Archbishop Andres Põder, Archbishop emeritus Kuna Pajula, and Bishop Einar Sonne.

[24] Walter Obare Omwanza, "The Bible Under Attack," in *The Three Witnesses*, ed. Dean Apel and Reijo Arkkila, MLTC Monograph Series 2; Papers from the Fourth International Confessional Lutheran Conference, Matongo, Kenya, Feb. 16–19, 2004 (Kisumu, Kenya: National Printing Press, 2004), 11.

amount they find hard to refuse, and then they tear down the buildings.

Relapse into Paganism

The temptation to relapse into paganism, whether through the complete renunciation of the Christian faith or by a partial selective return to syncretistic rites and lifestyle, is an ongoing problem that requires vigilant preaching, catechesis, and pastoral care. It can be seen by the attraction of voodoo in Haiti, juju in West Africa, fertility festivals in Madagascar, and polygamy and libations in general. Of course, this phenomenon is also growing in Europe and America as people are dabbling with pagan religions and spirituality both within and outside the church.

Pastoral Formation

Pastors must be prepared to meet the above challenges and numerous others on a daily basis. The training of pastors is an intense, costly, time-consuming enterprise. There are no short cuts. Whenever short cuts are taken, it is more costly to the church in the end. Many Protestant denominations and mission organizations have adopted mission models or strategies built on training leaders with minimal theological education. In many cases, lay leadership models are emphasized over the traditional approach of building church and mission on theologically trained, ordained ministers. One expert in pastoral care who is recognized worldwide offers prudent insight for those who aspire to the office of the holy ministry:

> No one ventures to teach any art unless he learned it after deep thought. With rashness, then, would the pastoral office be undertaken by the unfit, seeing that the government [care] of souls is the art of arts! For who does not realize that the wounds of the mind are more hidden than the internal wounds of the body? Yet, although those who have no knowledge of the powers of drugs shrink from giving themselves out as physicians of the flesh, people who are utterly ignorant of spiritual precepts are often not afraid of professing themselves to be physicians of the heart…They crave to appear as teachers and covet ascendancy over others, and, as the Truth [Jesus] attests: "They seek the first salutations in the market place, the first places at feasts, and the first chairs in the synagogues."[25]

[25] Gregory the Great, *Pastoral Care* [Regula Pastoralis] trans. Henry Davis (New York: Newman, 1950), 21–22.

These words were written in AD 590 by St. Gregory the Great in the opening chapter of his *Regula Pastoralis (Pastoral Care)*. Gregory returned to this theme again in chapter three where he admonishes men who are unfit to preach yet who are impelled by impatience and hastiness to the office. "They should not presume to preach before they [are] competent to do so."[26] They are like

> young birds who attempt to fly upward before their wings are fully developed; they fall down from where they tried to soar. They are like a new building in which the frame has not been sufficiently strengthened and heavy timbers are placed on it, the result is not a dwelling but a ruin. They are like a woman who gives birth to offspring not fully developed; they are filling not a home but a sepulcher.[27]

I think we get the point. But actually doing something about it, namely, recruiting, educating, and shaping men for the holy ministry in America and in the foreign mission fields requires steadfast commitment on the part of our congregations, seminaries, mission societies, and church mission boards.

If Lutheran seminaries, Lutheran missions, and Lutheran theological education are going to retain the name "Lutheran" with integrity, they do well to retain those ideals to which Martin Luther and the theologians at Wittenberg were utterly committed. Luther addressed the necessity of competent pastors for mission work over four hundred years ago. In his treatise *Receiving Both Kinds in the Sacrament* Luther observed,

> The gospel naturally ought to be preached throughout the whole world, and why is it not? Certainly it is not the fault of the gospel, for it is right and true, profitable and blessed. No, the trouble is that there are not enough people who are qualified to do it. And if a person doesn't have the qualifications it is better to keep silent than to preach; otherwise the preaching will be false and harmful.[28]

This was not some shoot-from-the-hip, uninformed opinion of an ivory tower academician cloistered away in an ivory tower. What does Luther mean by "people who are qualified"? An examination of the radical revision of

[26] Gregory, *Pastoral Care*, 180.

[27] Gregory, *Pastoral Care*, 180.

[28] Martin Luther, *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, Helmut T. Lehmann, and Christopher Boyd Brown, 75 vols. (Philadelphia and St. Louis: Fortress and Concordia Publishing House, 1955–), 35: 298–99.

the curriculum at the University of Wittenberg demonstrates the rigorous commitment to the study of theology: Holy Scriptures (including Latin, Greek, and Hebrew), the classics, rhetoric, liberal arts, etc., were prerequisite to producing preachers. The reason the theological faculty at Wittenberg stressed the sacred languages (Greek, Hebrew, and Latin) is because they were convinced the original languages were "the keys to unlock the Scriptures and the Church fathers."[29] For Phillip Melanchthon, who worked with Luther to transform the way pastors were trained, "the study of languages was not in itself sufficient, but only a tool toward a goal. He, therefore, combed the Classics for those materials which might be useful to [1] train future ministers and [2] help develop a well-informed Christian laity."[30]

What Luther and the faculty understood as "people who are qualified" to preach also included the issue of personal character. "An eloquent speaker presupposed a good and noble character. Thus, a ministerial student who lacked prudence and wisdom was not properly prepared to preach."[31]

Even for the highly gifted candidates who went on to doctoral studies, the ultimate goal of theological education was the preaching of the gospel and the spiritual formation of the student. This is articulated in the practice of Formatus. Prior to receiving the doctorate degree, the candidate was required to go through a rigorous public disputation known as the Formatus. On this occasion,

> [The] candidate was solemnly enjoined to approach this degree in all seriousness with the *same reverence with which he would approach an altar*, for with the granting of this degree he would be entrusted with the explanation and interpretation of divine doctrines. No one improperly taught, or adhering to beliefs contrary to the pure doctrine of the Church, should even be permitted to apply. Nor would those without proper moral character be considered. Only those should be admitted to all degrees who were modest and chaste. If married, they should be respectable husbands, for marriage was ordained wonderfully and ineffably by the plan of God.[32]

In many Lutheran churches today, the idea of *approaching the altar with reverence* has been replaced with *liturgical frivolity*, and the serious study of theology dispensed with as not practical for the needs of modern man (or is that post-modern?).

Rev. Alexey Streltsov, Rector of Lutheran Theological Seminary in Novosibirsk, Siberia, echoes Luther's concerns. He recently explained, that because of the vast distances in Siberia and the isolation of mission congregations, it is important to have ordained pastors who are thoroughly trained in Lutheran doctrine and practice, otherwise serious problems develop. Streltsov's comment demonstrates common sense and also reflects the traditional practice of the Lutheran church going back to the time of Luther and the reformers in the sixteenth century. Lutheran churches have historically demanded well-educated pastors.

The sainted Dr. Jonas Kalvanas, Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lithuania until his sudden death in 2003, worked valiantly to reestablish a well-educated ministerium following the fall of the Soviet Union. He sent young men to study in Klaipeda, Lithuania, and at Concordia Theological Seminary (CTS) in Fort Wayne, IN. Bishop Kalvanas also worked with CTS to organize theological seminars for his pastors in Lithuania and in Fort Wayne. During a meeting in Klaipeda with representatives from the LCMS to discuss fellowship between the two churches in May 2000, Bishop Kalvanas explained, "We need well-trained pastors who are strongly grounded in the teachings of the Lutheran Confessions. This is very important for our small church."

> The training of pastors is a rigorous academic and intellectual process. However, making pastors into good theologians involves more than mastering facts and doctrinal formulations. This was clearly understood by those who established our synod's seminary in Fort Wayne in the nineteenth century. In 1850, seminary president Wilhelm Sihler gave a timeless address at the dedication of the Wolter Dorm titled "On Preparation to Be a Minister of Christ." The address had two parts. Under Part I, "What are the necessary requirements for an upright minister of the holy Church?" Sihler first notes that he must hold to the saving doctrine that the Orthodox church has believed, confessed, and taught from the beginning. Then he adds, "He must not merely have a sound and well-ground-

[29] Ernest G. Schwiebert, "The Reformation and Theological Education at Wittenberg," *The Springfielder* 28, no. 3 (1964): 21.

30 Schwiebert, "Theological Education," 31.

[31] Schwiebert, "Theological Education," 31.

[32] Schwiebert, "Theological Education," 30.

> ed knowledge of this salvific doctrine. As God grants, he shall also have experienced it himself." Unless the inexperienced minister himself begins to live and move personally in the important article of justification, he is merely a doctrine machine [Lehr-Maschine], an orthodox watch mechanism, a lifeless and loveless clanging cymbal, and a ringing shell. He is like a wooden figure pointing in the right directions, but which cannot go that way himself. Thus the faith of the Church proceeds from his mouth, but his heart is far from it.[33]

In Part II, "What is the right preparation in order to become a capable minister of the holy Church?" Sihler explains, "The goal is not to obtain a mere knowledge of all kinds of individual facts; [but] rather, as God grants, to obtain ever more deeply a comprehensive knowledge of the divine truth. Through the challenges of their studies, they come to a living understanding of the divine truth."

According to Sihler, the reading and study should produce a *joyous earnestness* in the seminarian that is manifest especially with others and in public. On the other hand they must avoid the "evil danger of carrying about a forced spiritual countenance for show, like the Pietists and Methodists …. On the other hand, however, it is certainly an evil condition when joyousness is not supported by a deeper seriousness, such that there results a silly comicality, a cockiness of the flesh, a worldly disposition and all kinds of loose and unspiritual talk."[34]

Ultimately, God (not the seminary and its faculty) makes pastors. Martin Luther gave much theological, pedagogical, and practical thought into what it takes to make a true pastor-theologian. Australian scholar Dr. John Kleinig describes the nature of Luther's contribution to theological education in "*Oratio, Meditatio, Tentatio:* What Makes a Theologian?"[35] His excellent article is worthy of generous quotation.

> Luther distinguished his own practice of spirituality [*Oratio, Meditatio, Tentatio*] from the tradition of spiritual foundation that he experienced as a monk. This tradition followed a well-timed, ancient pattern of meditation and prayer. Its goal was 'contemplation,' the experience of ecstasy, bliss, rapture, and illumination through union with the glorified Lord Jesus. To reach this goal, among ascended in three stages, as on a ladder, the ladder of devotion, from earth to heaven, from the humanity of Jesus to His divinity. This ascent began with reading out loud to himself a passage from the scriptures to quicken the affections; it proceeded to heartfelt prayer, and culminated in mental meditation of heavenly things, as one waited for the experience of contemplation, the infusion of heavenly graces, the bestowal of spiritual illumination.[36]

Luther discovered that a man only becomes a theologian through a process of prayer (*oratio*), meditation (*meditatio*), and temptation (*tentatio*). Unlike the medieval practice of contemplation, where one ascends a ladder from earthly to heavenly spiritual experience, Luther's practice always stayed grounded on earth.

> We have no need to climb up by ourselves into heaven. The Triune God has come down to earth for us. God has become incarnate for us, available to us externally in our senses, embodied for us embodied creatures in the ministry of the word … The sacred Scriptures not only teach us about eternal life; they actually give us eternal life as they teach us.[37]

Since the real teacher of the Holy Scriptures is the Holy Spirit, the process begins with a humble and earnest prayer that through the Son, the Holy Spirit would enlighten you by and give you the proper understanding of the word. This is followed by a serious, rigorous, humble study of Holy Scriptures. This then led to *tentatio. Tentatio* for Luther was not the devil's temptation to sin, but "*Anfechtung*." This is not mystical contemplative experience but real life experience. "This is the touchstone that teaches you not only to know and understand, but also to experience how right and true, how sweet and lovely, how powerful and comforting God's word is, wisdom above all wisdom."[38] This *Anfechtung* is an attack on the person of the pastor. For Luther this happens in the public domain.

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[33] Wilhelm Sihler, "On Preparation to Be a Minister of Christ At the Dedication of the Wolter House, August 1850" in *At Home in the House of My Fathers: Presidential Sermons, Essays, Letters, and Addresses from the Missouri Synod's Great Era of Unity and Growth*, ed. Matthew C. Harrison (Fort Wayne, IN: Lutheran Legacy, 2009), 812–13.

[34] Sihler, "Preparation," 815.

[35] John Kleinig, "*Oratio, Meditatio, Tentatio*: What Makes a Theologian?," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 66, no. 3 (2002): 255–67.

[36] Kleinig, "*Oratio, Meditatio, Tentatio*," 257–58.

[37] Kleinig, "*Oratio, Meditatio, Tentatio*," 259.

[38] LW 34: 286–87.

> It involves public antagonism and opposition to those who are pastors or about to become pastors. It is an attack upon the ministry of the word….As long as any pastor, or student of theology, operates by his own power, with his own intellect and human ideas, the devil lets him be. But as soon as he meditates on God's word and so draws on the power of the Holy Spirit, the devil attacks him by stirring up misunderstanding, contradiction, and persecution. The attack is mounted by him through the enemies of the gospel in the church and in the world.[39]

Such attacks cause the theologian to return to prayer and meditation, that is, to humble reliance on the Holy Spirit and on his holy word. Thus seminary pastoral training involves not only rigorous academic study, it also involves a life of liturgy and prayer. The curriculum must not separate pastoral theology from academic theology, systematic theology from liturgical theology, private spirituality from corporate worship, subjective spiritual experience from objective revelation, the private life of the pastor from his public role.[40]

Bishop Walter Obare's twenty-first century *Notruf* (emergency call or distress call)[41] identifies an "urgent need for higher confessional theological education in Africa" which requires thoroughly trained pastors, theologians, and missionaries, or as he put it, "The time of theological amateurs is over in the global missions if we are going to prevail." The seminaries of the LCMS are well-positioned and resourced along with other sister seminaries in the world to answer this *Notruf*. I can speak confidently for CTS in Fort Wayne that our professors have had extensive long- and short-term experience teaching internationally. They are constantly in demand from our partner Lutheran churches around the world. But they lack where our long-term, full-time missionaries excel. Long-term missionaries are on the ground day in and day out, year in and year out, and thus possess a depth of knowledge, experience, and wisdom. We must forge a close working relationship between our seminaries and the missionaries in the field.

Training the first generation of Lutheran pastors in the art of pastoral care (*Seelsorger*, i.e., the cure of souls) in a culture where the Christian church does not exist is particularly challenging. Pastoral care cannot be learned from class lectures and books alone. Spiritual care is learned by observing experienced pastors in action and in the school of experience. Most LCMS seminarians grew up in Lutheran congregations (or at least Christian congregations). Many were raised in Lutheran parsonages and teacherages. In the mission fields, many seminarians are recent converts who have never even met a seasoned, indigenous Lutheran pastor. Of course, this is nothing really new. The early church faced the same problems. St. Paul was speaking from firsthand experience when he said, "A pastor must be apt to teach," and "Don't lay on hands too quickly."

We are constantly hearing about how the center of gravity of worldwide Christianity has moved to the global South. "Christianity as a world religion has been changing. More than 20 percent of all Christians now live in Sub-Saharan Africa; Christianity in that region grew an amazing seventy-fold during the twentieth century, to almost 500 million adherents."[42] The influence of the global South has already been felt in the Anglican Communion and LWF churches as seen above in the section on "Liberalism and Secularism." In view of this presentation, the question needs to be asked, what impact will this have on the missionary enterprise in general and theological education in particular? Dr. Klaus Detlev Schulz has observed that the job description of missionaries today

> have little in common with the classic pioneer model of mission that was employed throughout most of the eighteenth century to the better part of the twentieth century. Missionaries at that time went to remote regions to preach and baptize and with the task of establishing churches where none existed. Today missionaries are only indirectly involved in those tasks since the major part of their work concentrates on teaching and training indigenous leadership. Missionaries today are more likely to be

[39] Kleinig, "*Oratio, Meditatio, Tentatio*," 264.

[40] Kleinig, "*Oratio, Meditatio, Tentatio*," 258.

[41] Notruf is in reference to Friedrich C. D. Wyneken's 1844 tract titled, "*Die Not der deutschen Lutheraner in Nord-Amerika*" ("The Distress of the German Lutherans in North America"), in which he describes the deplorable spiritual conditions of the Germans on the American frontier and the need for Lutheran pastors. Wilhelm Loehe and others answered the call by sending *Nothelfer* (emergency helpers) or *Sendlinge*. See Carl S. Meyer, ed., *Moving Frontiers: Readings in the History of the LCMS* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), 91–97.

[42] Daniel Aleshire, "The Future Has Arrived: Changing Theological Education in a Changed World." Paper presented at the OCI Institute for Excellence, May 2011, 3.

> teachers or facilitators who enable local indigenous leaders to assume the task of church planting.[43]

As Dean of International Studies at CTS, Fort Wayne, I have observed firsthand the shift in emphasis of the missionary role from church planter to seminary professor/theological educators. However, this does not eliminate missionary pastors from being directly involved in word and sacrament congregational and evangelistic work. Where feasible, foreign missionaries should regularly serve in local congregations. Proficiency in the local language is a priority. Given the shortage of ordained pastors in many areas, missionaries can be of great help in celebrating the Lord's Supper as well as preaching. Today and in the future, there will be a demand for missionaries who have done graduate work beyond the MDiv (namely, STM and PhD) who are good teachers, and who have had parish experience.

There is a great need to train qualified indigenous faculty to take the Lutheran churches of the global South into the next generation. This means sending qualified students for graduate work at the finest, confessional seminaries in the world to ensure that they receive a sound theological education in addition to masters and PhD degrees. Attention must also be given to building up indigenous seminaries so they are able to meet the national standards for registration and accreditation.

The need for theological educators is not limited to the younger missions in the so-called global South. Missionaries who are qualified to teach on the seminary level are also needed in places like Europe, Russia, and Central Asia. The Lutheran seminaries in Siberia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan are young and still developing indigenous faculty. The Lutheran churches in Lithuania and Latvia still rely on short- and long-term professors from Europe and America. The Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church is also in need of qualified professors to both strengthen the confessional identity of the church and meet the academic standards required by the government. Dr. Vieko Vihuri explains:

> After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, (the theological faculty at the University of Tartu) was reopened. At the beginning of the 1990s, a private theological academy was founded in Tartu by a Lutheran pastor who represents the more low-church and pietistic theology. In Tallinn, the Theological Institute of Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church continues its work. It was founded after World War II to train Lutheran pastors, and was the only place in Estonia where theology was taught throughout the Soviet period. The theology that is taught in the University and the Theological Institute is moderately liberal. The historical-critical method is widely used in the study of the Scriptures. The systematic theology is focused on modern Protestant theology. The most influential foreign Protestant theologians for Estonian theological thinking during the past decades include Karl Barth, Rudolf Bultmann, and Paul Tillich. Most Estonian Lutheran theologians are more open to German theology than Anglo-American or Scandinavian theology.
>
> There are some striking examples of liberal theologians within our church as well. The professor of church history at the Theological Institute has recently written a book in which he states that Jesus began his ministry after the death of his wife and that his real father was a Jewish priest or rabbi, for the name of the angel Gabriel who visited Mary means "the man of God," and that is exactly why twelve-year old-Jesus was hoping to find his father in the temple. One may ask how such a man can teach theology at the Theological Institute owned by the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church. The answer is that the Theological Institute desperately needs academically qualified tutors in order to meet the criteria required by the state. Expressing such views then is considered as a matter of academic freedom.[44]

Maintaining Quality Residential Seminaries is a Costly Endeavor

Building the campus is the easiest part of establishing a residential seminary. It is more difficult to provide ongoing support for maintenance, utilities, salaries for professors and staff, and tuition and living expenses for students—many of whom are married with families. It often takes generations for new churches in developing countries to take full financial ownership.

[43] Klaus Detlev Schulz, *Mission from the Cross: The Lutheran Theology of Mission* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2009), 9.

[44] Vieko Vihuri, "The Present State of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 72, no. 3 (2008): 268.

Bringing Men and Women to Study in America and Europe is a Costly Endeavor

Faculty development requires the brightest and best being brought to Fort Wayne and St. Louis for graduate work. It costs approximately $30,000–$35,000 per year for a single student. In the past, the CRISP program provided numerous scholarships, but has been unable to provide new scholarships in recent years. LCMS President Matthew Harrison is dedicated to raising new funds and is working with both seminaries and the Joint Seminary Fund to make this a reality. Short-term visiting professors from America and Europe will continue to play an important role overseas, but it is not enough in every case. Many foreign seminaries are still pleading for long-term missionary professors.

Establishing of Seminary Libraries

Building a good theological library is essential to creating a good seminary. "It has been said that an academic institution may well be judged by the size and quality of its library."[45] In Wittenberg, Latin was the common language of instruction. But it was the Lutheran faculty who saw the need to build up the holdings of Hebrew and Greek grammars, dictionaries, biblical tools, and the classics. As such, the library, housed in the town castle, was "renovated to accommodate students and faculty, and equipped with the most modern furniture consisting of bookracks, tables, and chairs. The library was also given special attention in the 1526 reorganization, but did not reach its full fruition until the founding of the first Lutheran University in the middle thirties."[46] This was a project that took over twenty years and had been initiated in 1514 when "Frederick the Wise had established the library and wisely provided for its growth and usefulness."[47]

In the mission field, good libraries have been built by competent missionary boards and societies. This has taken a great investment of time and money. Where English is the language of instruction, and this is the case in many places, the task is easier. Where instruction is only in the indigenous language, the challenges are magnified, particularly where the local language lacks a sophisticated scientific or theological capacity. Even where English is used, students often need courses in theological English if they are to use English texts. I have seen relatively good libraries in places like Kenya, South Africa, India, Hong Kong, and Novosibirsk, Russia. I have also seen what was once a good library that fell into disorder following the departure of missionaries in the 1970s and 80s.

Along with good libraries, the challenge for international theological education in mission countries requires adequate textbooks for students and for pastors to take with them when they enter the parish. The paucity of books in the personal libraries of many pastors who must write sermons each Sunday and teach catechism and Bible class is enough to make one weep. During the reorganization of the University of Wittenberg between 1533 and 1536, the *Statutes of 1533* began "by asserting that young clergymen should be taught 'the pure teaching of the Gospel' for which the Augsburg Confession was to be the norm."[48] In some mission fields missionaries have not even bothered to translate the Small Catechism, let alone the Book of Concord.

Establishing an excellent library and seminary campus is of course not enough in and of itself. Books can remain unread and disintegrate on the shelves. Brick and mortar crumble. Seminary libraries must be places filled with living students inspired by faithful, qualified, stimulating professors. Prague and Europe are filled with magnificent churches that took generations to build but are now visited primarily by tourists who marvel more at the beautiful architecture. I recall one evening entering the impressive Sacra Coeur in Paris. The gawking visitors wandered in with tourist maps and cameras in hand. Then the organ quietly began to play and a priest entered the chancel and began to chant Vespers. Suddenly the entire building was transformed from cold architectural stone to what it was meant to be—a place of worship. So it is with seminaries, when professors teach and students are abuzz with theological questions and conversation and all gather daily in the campus chapel to sing and pray. Living seminaries require not only professors who are passionate about the gospel, but also students in whom the faith has been instilled in pious homes and by faithful pastors who have nurtured them from font, pulpit, and altar.

Continuing Education

In many mission fields, "necessity" has led to pastors with inadequate theological education being prematurely ordained. As a result, there is a crucial need for continuing education. There is a great desire among most

[45] Schwiebert, "Theological Education," 26.

[46] Schwiebert, "Theological Education," 27.

[47] Schwiebert, "Theological Education," 27.

[48] Schwiebert, "Theological Education," 29.

indigenous pastors for ongoing education. This is best organized through the local seminary, e.g., Pastor Gordon Gyampo Kumi in Ghana. LCMS missionaries can provide programs but should work in affiliation with the partner church (bishop/president and seminary). For example, plans are underway to bring the Mission Training Centers (MTC) initiated by LCMS missionaries under the direction of the ELCK Seminary in Matongo. Other entities that can offer occasional assistance in this area include LCMS seminaries and organizations such as the Confessional Lutheran Education Foundation (CLEF), the Luther Academy, and Lutheran Heritage Foundation, especially in connection with the distribution of its theological literature.

Conclusion

No one can predict how a particular mission will fare in the future. What will be the fate of a young church if western missionaries and resources are suspended due to lack of funds, government persecution, or for other reasons? One thing missionaries can and must do is to thoroughly teach the faith, beginning with pastors, evangelists, and on down to the youth and children. Strong seminaries will produce strong pastors who will produce a strong laity through faithful preaching, catechesis, and liturgy. So permit me to return to the metaphor of the large trees in the African rainforest. The rainforests encountered by the first missionaries have been replaced by urban sprawl. One still comes upon majestic trees in West Africa that have managed to survive deforestation. Despite the financial temptation, some one or some people, at great financial cost, chose to preserve this beautiful tree.

With limited resources it may be prudent to explore the idea of "hub seminaries." In many places, students are willing to attend Lutheran seminaries in other countries in their part of the world if it provides them a better education—and in some cases opportunities to earn a degree from an accredited institution. This is already happening on every continent.

President Harrison has been very clear that Lutheran missions must lead to Lutheran churches and this requires Lutheran pastors who are thoroughly trained in and committed to Lutheran doctrine and practice. As we have seen, this involves a variety of complex issues and is filled with many problems and challenges. It is also filled with many opportunities. These are difficult and exciting times to be involved in international missions work. We are not called to be successful but faithful.

Theological education involves more than simply imparting theological and biblical knowledge. It imparts theological understanding, which is inseparable from doxology. It must take doctrine very seriously, but "doctrine is not a theoretical abstraction but it is rather embodied in the concrete practices of the church: liturgy, preaching, pastoral care, catechesis, and mission [it offers] an understanding of Christian faith which is Christ-centered and biblically based, confessionally Lutheran and evangelically active."[49]

In the introduction to this paper I stated that in recent years, the LCMS has been experimenting with new methods of pastoral formation in America and that similar paradigms have also been employed in international missions. It is not my desire to criticize all pastoral training models other than the traditional full-bodied residential seminary system. In many places, particularly in the southern hemisphere, Lutheran churches are growing at such a phenomenal rate that it is simply impossible to provide enough adequately trained pastors. In Ghana, Uganda, and Kenya, missionaries helped the churches develop a Theological Education by Extension (TEE) approach that consists of about eighteen intensive courses in which the students come to a central place for a week of study with an instructor. From what I was told recently by a missionary who helped develop the curriculum, the purpose of the program is not to prepare "lay pastors" (which is an oxymoron), but to prepare leaders who will go on to ordination after more complete study.

In South America, Lutherans have been able to introduce a program of distance education. This approach is also under discussion by the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Novosibirsk, Russia. In both cases, this is not seen as a replacement for residential study, but as a supplement to or as a pre-seminary program. There is no intention to replace face-to-face theological education with professors.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya trains her pastors at a traditional residential seminary—Matongo Lutheran Theological Seminary. It also has two evangelist residential schools to train evangelists. Even between the three institutions, it is not able to keep up with the demand for pastors and evangelists by the rapidly growing number of congregations. The distance separating these congregations, along with costs of transportation,

[49] John T. Pless, "A Curriculum from and For the Church," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 70, no. 1 (2006): 86.

means that many parishes must go for Sundays on end without a visit from a trained and ordained pastor. Thus, worship and spiritual care falls to untrained local laymen. Thus, Mission Training Centers have been developed to give these dedicated men at least some, if not extremely limited, theological education by coming together for short intensive classes. Again, the MTCs are seen as an emergency situation until enough pastors can be properly trained and ordained.

This is hardly the first time the church has been faced with such challenges. From its inception, the Lutheran church has put value on the necessity of a highly trained pastorate. The laity themselves has demanded such of their church. "Wittenberg graduates were in demand in the cities of Lutheran Lands."[50]

> In the smaller parishes and villages, pulpits had been filled in the early days of the Reformation by *Notprediger,* a pious and sincere but poorly-trained emergency preacher, who was placed in charge of a congregation following the Church Visitations, in the belief that he would serve the congregation better than the unqualified Catholic Priest. By the late thirties the *Notprediger* began to disappear and by the early forties regularly ordained clergymen trained at Wittenberg were taking their places. It was not until the new theological training instituted at the University of Wittenberg had produced the necessary qualified clergymen that the Reformation was brought to full fruition in Lutheran Lands throughout Germany.[51]

Distance learning employing the latest technology is here today, both in America and the world over. Alternative forms of theological education leading to the ordination of Lutheran pastors are as old as the sixteenth century. True emergency situations should not become the norm. If so the church will suffer. The faithful will suffer.

The formation of such qualified preachers requires years, not weeks, in which future pastors learn, along with fellow seminarians, in face-to-face contact with their professors. Ernest Schwiebert points out that

> The key to [Luther's] great success, where others before him had tried and failed, lay in the training of the clergymen *who sat at his feet and those of his fellow professors* and were taught how to interpret the Scriptures in the light of the Bible and the Apostolic Age.[52]

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[50] Schwiebert, "Theological Education," 32.

[51] Schwiebert, "Theological Education," 32.

[52] Schwiebert, "Theological Education," 32.

There are a lot of quotes and stories attributed to Luther. Are they true? Or fake news?

Luther Without Fake News

by Jobst Schöne

Luther and "fake news"—how well do the two go together? A few decades ago (or even less) you could hardly find anyone in Germany or Europe who could tell you what "fake news" meant. Now this term has become quite familiar to us and a popular expression. And we found out that "fake news" is nothing new in history. The eighteenth-century German philosopher Georg Christoph Lichtenberg said, "The greatest lie is truth moderately distorted," and I think that's precisely what fake news is all about. Fake news spreads as legends or speculations, often attached to prominent people, about whom telling stories is always quite entertaining or amusing, whether they are true or not. Luther is such a person. There exist numerous fake news stories about him. I will take up and examine a few of them. In the end this might destroy some illusions you may have. Reality will not always please us, but it's always better to know the real facts instead of holding fast to fake news.

Being keen on finding the "true" Luther, you should go to Wittenberg and step into the former Augustinian monastery where he lived for most of his lifetime. Today you'll find there a most interesting exhibition of authentic books, pictures, and all kinds of other relics left behind by this great reformer of the church. Having walked through all the rooms, rather exhausted by all you have seen, you will finally come to a room where paintings and sculptures of Luther are presented from all the five-hundred years after him, portraying Luther in very different ways. And soon you will learn that each epoch made up a different portrait of him. This fact tells you sometimes more about the respective epoch and its feelings than about Luther himself. What seemingly did not fit into the picture that people had of Luther was left out or eliminated. People invented in Luther what they wanted to see or want. In the end you can have all kinds of Luthers: a holy one; a heroic one; a romantic Luther; or a nationalistic one; liberator or revolutionary; a family man; statesmanlike; or a man in the street; elitist or popular; destroying the church or saving the church; a socialist or even a Marxist—just the way you want him to be.

Luther indeed was somewhat inconsistent and can be understood and interpreted quite differently. He cannot defend himself against his interpreters anymore, except by his own works and writings, which reveal what is true and what is false. In fact you'll find with him a personality of different characteristics: he can be a rude fellow (as most of his contemporaries were); he can be extremely tender and sensitive as well, a real pastor caring for one's spiritual welfare or vehemently polemical; sometimes naive, sometimes calculating; of keen insight or remarkably short-sighted; courageous or timid—and always rooted in his own century, representing his epoch, but at the same time a genius and totally exceptional.

What he wrote and published often shows inconsistency, since his writings are casual work, induced on occasion. You'll find with him entirely different statements on papacy and monasticism, on peasants and princes, on Jews and Muslims, concerning the "priesthood of all believers" (traditionally traced back to him, but strictly taken with limited justification), and bishops and clergy. Luther was indeed no systematician. No wonder that he has been interpreted so differently, not only by his contemporaries, but also in later times. Quite often have Protestant scholars attributed to him untenable thoughts and opinions. And Roman Catholic scholars had to walk a long way before they reached positions nowadays common in their circles. For instance the Jesuit, church historian, and Luther expert Peter Manns, who used to speak of Luther as of "a father in faith."

Around this many-sided and sometimes inconsistent Luther, who you can't always classify so easily, numerous legends and "fake news" have developed in the course of time. To some of them we shall now pay attention.

1) Was Luther a Runaway Monk? or What Happens When You Start Out in a Monastery?

Indeed, Luther was a runaway monk, for he finally left

the monastery. But when and why did he do so? In 1505 he joined the Augustinian Eremites at Erfurt, one of the strictest monasteries in this city. A few years later his order sent him to Wittenberg, a small city of some 2000 inhabitants by that time, much smaller than Erfurt. He was to fill the position of a professor at the recently founded university. In Wittenberg, Luther lived in the Augusteum, the newly built Augustinian monastery. And there he stayed—how long? In 1522 most of his fellow monks in this place gave themselves permission to leave—and their order did not intervene. Luther, however, remained in the monastery, along with just one other monk. He explicitly disapproved of the *tumultuous exodus* that had happened, writing *Non probo egressum istum tumultuosum*, a letter to Johann Lang in Erfurt in 1524. He put off the monk's cowl not before October 1524, being left alone in this cloister by that time. And from then on he dressed with the professors' robe.

In 1525 Luther married. This seems to be the ultimate end of his monastic career. But was it the end? By then, Luther had lived almost one-third of his life in a monastery, struggling with all the negative aspects of monastic life. And there were many. But he also took with him many practices and experiences which sank into his memory forever. To give some examples: Luther reconstructed the congregational worship service to be translated into the vernacular instead of Latin so that all could participate. Frequent Holy Communion, common in monasteries but not in normal parishes, became customary among the Lutherans, as did regular private confession and prayer, familiar to Luther from the monastery. The catechism replaced the monastic rule and had to be learned and repeatedly recited in the family, as Luther had experienced it as a monk, now making the family father responsible like an abbot over the monks. So, when did he really leave the monastery? Technically in 1524. But somehow he remained there forever, bringing all the people around him into a kind of "monastery." Luther tore down the walls surrounding the monastery, opened it, and made some kind of monastic lifestyle common among Christians.

> But the Old Testament's ban on images had a different intention according to Luther, namely only to protect the people of Israel from idolatry common among their neighbors. Luther, following the tradition of the ancient church, considered this ban to be cancelled ever since God made himself visible by his son's incarnation: "Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father" (John 14:9) and "Whoever sees Me sees Him who sent Me" (John 12:45), says our Lord. ... Simplicity and lack of art has never been a principle of Lutheran worship and Lutheran church buildings, but comes from Calvinism and the Enlightenment.

2) Did Luther Nail His Ninety-five Theses to Wittenberg's Church Door? or What Really Happened on October 31, 1517?

October 31, 1517 is generally considered to be the beginning of the Reformation. It's true: in this year Luther wrote his famous Ninety-five Theses against the indulgence business common in the Western church of that age. Luther wrote in Latin, since they were intended to be debated among Latin speaking scholars. They were quickly translated into German, and at lightning speed spread all over Germany, due to printers smelling the scent of a profitable business, more than due to Luther, who was quite surprised about what was happening.

But did he in fact nail his theses to the door of Wittenberg's Castle Church? With a hammer in his hand? That's the general conviction, but unfortunately not fully provable. Nobody knows for sure how he handled it. Luther himself never mentioned this event. We hear of it for the first time in 1540 (twenty-three years later) in a brief memo written into Luther's private copy of the New Testament, telling us that these theses had been affixed to Wittenberg's church doors (in the plural!) "on the eve of All-Saints-Day." This memo was written by Georg Rörer, deacon at St. Mary's church in Wittenberg and a kind of secretary for Luther. And later on, Melanchthon,

Luther's friend[1] and collaborator, also mentioned this, but not before 1548 (two years after Luther's death). Melanchthon, however, had not been an eyewitness himself, since he came to Wittenberg in 1518. These are the only two existing references to the Ninety-five Theses on church doors. Professors can be mistaken after so many years, and deacons even more. So it remains uncertain whether the Ninety-five Theses have ever been affixed to that famous church door or not.

The fact is that this door had been used for academic announcements, but a professor would not have ever nailed them to the door. It would have been the janitor's job to do so, and not with a hammer and nails (that would have ruined the wooden door), but with sealing wax. Once more: there is no doubt whatsoever that Luther wrote the Ninety-five Theses. In question is only their nailing to the church door and the very date itself: was it on the evening of October 31 or in the morning of November 1 when the exhibition of the Prince Elector's collection of relics was opened for the public? Last year a German newspaper said: "If Luther has fixed his 95 Theses to the door in October 1517 or simply sent them as a letter to his Archbishop Albrecht of Mainz—this only knows the merciful God." So it is, indeed.

3) "Here I Stand; I Cannot Do Otherwise" or What In Fact Did Luther Say at the Diet of Worms?

In 1521, Luther was summoned to the Diet of Worms to justify himself before the emperor and the princes and all the elite of the empire. His defiant words, refusing to revoke his writings and teachings, deeply sank into the collective memory of the Germans. But what did he really say? "My conscience is captured in God's Word. I cannot and I will not revoke, since it is uncertain and dangerous to act against conscience." This he said in Latin, for His Majesty didn't understand German, then repeated it in German for those who could understand. Thus, it is recorded reliably. The next words following this statement were lost in the tumult that immediately burst out. Peter Manns, an expert on Luther, says, "He does not become the defiant hero people prefer to see. He certainly never spoke the words 'Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise.' They are legendary."[2] Today you find these words embroidered on socks and sold in Wittenberg. Perhaps Luther said something similar, but rather faintly, disheartened, intimidated, looking the coming danger in the face. If so, I think it would make him look even more sympathetic—more humane and a man like us.

All attempts to change his mind failed completely at the Diet of Worms. On his way back to Wittenberg, Luther was kidnapped by order of his prince elector, and brought to Wartburg castle to hide him and protect him for awhile.

4) The Inkpot at Wartburg Castle or Did Luther Ever Throw It at the devil?

There is traditional fake news about an inkpot Luther is said to have cast at the devil while he was translating the New Testament from the Greek into German. And though it is a nice popluar legend, it is nothing but a legend, of no reality whatsoever. The story says Luther felt disturbed by the devil while he was working hard and threw his inkpot, leaving a remarkable inkblot on the wall. But that's all nonsense, though quite effective for tourism. Clever guides have for a long time renewed this inkblot when it was going to fade. But in the end they stopped. Luther, during the three hundred days he spent at the Wartburg, had better things to do than throwing inkpots.

5) Worshipping the Saints/Iconoclasm or What Was Luther's Position in These Matters?

On March 1, 1522, Luther left Wartburg castle and returned to Wittenberg, though his prince elector, who was concerned about Luther's safety, was quite upset about this decision. Luther decided to come back, to Wittenberg, because pure chaos had broken out while he was absent. The monks of his convent had left in droves; Karlstadt, Luther's colleague at the university, had started a furious iconoclasm in Wittenberg's churches and introduced new forms of worship which he considered "contemporary" and believed to be fitting for a new age. The students at the university rebelled and Karlstadt told them not to attend classes any more. To learn and to study wasn't necessary any more, he said; the Spirit would give all wisdom, coming down directly to their minds. The city council turned out to be absolutely helpless to master this situation. In short, everything was at sixes and sevens. All the troublemakers and revolutionaries referred to Luther,

[1] Timothy Wengert, "The Priesthood of All Believers and Other Pious Myths" in *Liturgical Institute Conference Proceedings*, 1–36 (Valparaiso University: Valparaiso, 2005), 2. "I looked for the friendship between Luther and Melanchthon and discovered that they were colleagues not friends." Perhaps, the notion that Luther and Melanchthon were friends is another example of "fake news."

[2] Peter Manns, Martin Luther: *An Illustrated Biography*, trans. Michael Shaw (New York: Crossroad, 1983), 82.

claiming that they did nothing but translate his ideas into action. Luther, however, was far away and couldn't stop this hustle and bustle before he came back to Wittenberg to see what had happened. And he performed a masterpiece of pastoral care, namely preaching for one week, just eight sermons (sermons, not more!) to clear up this confusion, reestablish order, and expel the troublemakers from the city.

Iconoclasm was certainly not Luther's affair. Instead, he was a close friend to Lucas Cranach, the most famous artist in Wittenberg. He held music in high esteem and wanted to save and preserve all art, decoration, paintings, sculptures, and any customs and traditions that did not contradict the Scriptures. Lutheran churches, therefore, kept all the art, vestments, and candles, even incense. The Divine Service was celebrated in its traditional form, except for the prayers and rituals contradictory to the biblical teachings.

The reformers in Switzerland, Zwingli and Calvin, had a totally different opinion. They regarded images and sculptures to be diabolic, degrading God's majesty to human level and contrary to God's command. But the Old Testament's ban on images had a different intention according to Luther, namely only to protect the people of Israel from idolatry common among their neighbors. Luther, following the tradition of the ancient church, considered this ban to be cancelled ever since God made himself visible by his son's incarnation: "Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father" (John 14:9) and "Whoever sees Me sees Him who sent Me" (John 12:45), says our Lord. Therefore the bare, empty church buildings of the Calvinists, deprived of all pictures, differ in this respect from churches of Lutheran tradition. Simplicity and lack of art has never been a principle of Lutheran worship and Lutheran church buildings, but comes from Calvinism and the Enlightenment.

Let's go back to Luther: There is a lot of fallacy behind the idea that he banned the saints and their images from the churches. Luther protested against the role given to the saints at his time, namely that they were used as mediators, interceding for poor sinners or even transferring their "merits" to Christians living with a deficit of good works. As such, the saints superceded their rightful role as examples and models, and darkened the perfect, sufficient merit of Christ himself. Luther's commentary on the Magnificat, Mary's song of praise in the Gospel of St. Luke, illustrates his high esteem for her. Luther remained an admirer of the mother of God until the end of his life. The prayerbook that he published in 1522 (followed by fifty-one editions until 1604) included the Ave Maria prayer in it, a prayer Luther had brought along from his years in the monastery. Forgetting all the saints? Doing away with images and decoration in the churches? Not Luther, who never approved of any iconoclasm.

6) The Schism of the Church in the Occident or Who Wanted It, Effected It, and Gave Rise to It?

Many believe that Luther split the church. But this is legendary and not quite true. In fact, Luther never intended to establish a new church, or a new confession besides the one that existed. He firmly objected to such an idea, regarding himself to be a member of the *one* holy church, which he confessed in the Creed, into which he was baptized, which ordained him to the priesthood, which called him to be a teacher of the church. He felt himself challenged to free this church from distortion in doctrine and practice. In 1522 he wrote:

> At first, I ask you not to mention my name and not to be called "Lutheran," but simply Christians. Who is Luther? The doctrine isn't mine, nor have I been crucified for anybody. … How could I, a poor stinking bag of maggots, ever give my unholy name to designate the children of Christ? Not so, dear friends, let us blot out such partial names and call ourselves Christians, having Christ's teaching. I am not and don't want to be anybody's master.[3]

Luther could not imagine a divided church, split up into churches in the plural. But this became the inevitable result of history, originating from the papal orientated bishops and clergy rejecting the necessary renewal of the church.

Confessional church bodies as we know them nowadays actually came into existence about 150 years after Luther. For over a century following Luther, the different groups in the one Western church, still called themselves "factions" or "parties," but not "churches." They developed into separate church bodies later on, as we have them today. From about 1650 on we had Lutheran churches, the Roman Catholic church, Anglican and Calvinistic churches (often called Reformed churches), Anabaptists,

[3] Martin Luther, "A Sincere Admonition by Martin Luther to All Christians to Guard against Insurrection and Rebellion," vol. 45 in *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress and St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955–1986), 70. Hereafter cited as *LW*.

and many more, apart from each other.

To clear up another widespread misconception: the famous slogan of "the church is always to be reformed" (*ecclesia semper reformanda*) does not come from Luther, though many people believe so.[4] Instead, it first appeared with the councils of the late Middle Ages striving for the church's renewal. Later, this slogan became popular with Pietism in the seventeenth century, in particular among the Calvinists in the Netherlands, and finally in the twentieth century by the Reformed theologian Karl Barth from Switzerland. Luther never spoke that way nor could he see a characteristic mark of the church in such a permanent remodeling. He considered himself placed into the one, permanent church, the *perpetua mansura* of the Augsburg Confession, Article VII, abiding with the ancient church and its apostolic origin.

7) The Priesthood of Believers or Has Luther demoted pope, bishops, and clergy?

It looks indeed as if Luther made pope, bishops, and clergy to shrink to the size of ordinary mortals like you and me, when putting an accent on the priesthood of all believers, which is generally taken as a distinguishing mark of the Lutherans. In 1520, Luther proclaimed, "Whosoever has crept out of baptism, can boast of being an ordained priest, bishop, pope."[5] This statement however has a continuation with it, which reads as follows: "though it doesn't fit to everybody to hold such an office." Which means not everybody is authorized to do what a priest, bishop, or even pope is supposed to do. What Luther denied is a *character indelebilis*, an everlasting inviolable stamping of one's nature by holy ordination, lifting the ordained up above other Christians and bringing him nearer to God. To be baptized means to be near to God, to be his heir and child. You can't get any closer to him than by faith and baptism. That's Luther. On the other hand he doesn't deny an office, a ministry, instituted by Christ, coming to us through the apostles. Priests and bishops do have an office. They are not any higher than other Christians, but they have been entrusted with a special ministry for which they are authorized, appointed, and blessed.

When Luther, in 1520, accentuated the equality of all baptized, he had before him a fundamental distinction between clergy and laity, common in those days. The entire people of God making up the church had largely been forgotten. So Luther stood up for the right of a congregation to elect priests and bishops, who normally should receive their ordination from other already ordained ministers. To install pastors without that regular ordination should be left to cases of emergency ("Suppose a group of earnest Christian laymen were taken prisoner and set down in a desert without an episcopally ordained priest among them"[6]), but it can't be the rule and should not be the regular procedure. Instead, Luther describes a more theoretical than real solution for the problem of lacking pastors, a problem he had to face in 1522.

He later moved away from this position after he had learned what a tremendous misuse could come from neglecting holy ordination. To view the church as the people of God (not only the clergy) and the body of Christ in this world does not mean to equalize all Christians and make the church an amorphous entity of equal minded and equally authorized people, with the pastor just a functionary of the congregation. Instead there are offices, ministries, and scopes of duty in which specific persons are called, ordained, and authorized to work. That's ordination. Whether or not traditional graduations and hierarchies should be preserved was for Luther a question of usefulness. But a holy office in the church and specific office holders was for him given by God and instituted by Christ.

Luther, being critical of the hierarchy in the church of his time, unwillingly paved the way for the priesthood of all believers later to be a mark of Lutheranism in terms of equal rights and equal abilities of all Christians to carry out this ministry. Luther himself never went that far. It became, however, a common opinion among the Pietists. What Luther had written in his early years should not be taken as his final word in this matter, but has to be seen in the context of the controversy of those days: To fight the misunderstanding of the holy ministry as giving power to the clergy over against the laity, instead of being service and duty.

[4] See Werner Klän, "Reformation Then and Now: Ecclesia Semper Reformanda," *Journal of Lutheran Mission* (September 2016): 14. "Before we turn to what it might mean 'the church is always to be reformed,' we must note that this phrase was first used by the Reformed theologian Karl Barth in 1947. It can be shown that an early example is Jodocus van Lodenstein, who claims the 'truth … that also in the Church there is always much to reform.' Another version of the term *Ecclesia reformata semper reformanda* ('the reformed church [is] always to be reformed') is widely used informally in Reformed and Presbyterian churches today as their motto."

[5] *LW* 44: 129.

[6] *LW* 44: 128.

8) Luther: Sovereigns' Servant or a Revolutionary? or How historians in communist Germany had to change their minds

Luther's attitude towards the ruling classes of his time was somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand he considered princes and sovereigns to have their authority from God, to be "fathers of the fatherland," a God-given institution, and Christians therefore must obey them. To be fair, one has to keep in mind that democracy was more or less beyond peoples' imagination at this time, while the power of princes and other rulers was generally accepted without any objection. On the other hand Luther could take these rulers to task quite severely and reproach them concerning their behavior and actions. A clear separation between state and church and their representatives' respective power corresponded to Luther's theology, but could not generally be achieved. State and church were traditionally linked too closely with each other, the rulers having power not only in secular matters but over the church as well as its "first members" (*membra praecipua*), liable to protect and support the church. And no one in power was ready to surrender his control of church affairs in his respective territory.

In 1525, the Peasants' War broke out, caused by the miserable conditions under which they lived and their pitiless exploitation by the landlords. It soon came to violent uprisings, with castles and cloisters being burned down and destroyed. The suppressed peasants committed terrible acts of revenge out of pure despair. Total chaos was in view, having a kind of "ideological foundation" with it: Namely, the peasants referred to "the gospel" (or what they took for and believed to be the gospel) as making every human being equal, blessing the poor and promising freedom, to be realized right now in their precarious situation. This they believed to be the will of God.

Spokesman, leader, and commander of these uprising peasants was Thomas Muentzer, formerly a student of theology at Wittenberg, and a clergyman, but later on Luther's most embittered opponent, jeering at him as the "soft living flesh at Wittenberg," labeling him as the "sovereigns' slave." Luther, having admonished the peasants and landlords to make peace in his *Admonition to Peace: A Reply to the Twelve Articles of the Peasants in Swabia*, 1525,[7] found himself fallen between two stools. People took offense at Luther's refusal to exclusively side with the peasants. A few months later he published another pamphlet entitled *Against the Robbing and Murdering Hordes of Peasants*,[8] taking thereby a totally one-sided position in favor of the landlords. He called upon a most brutal crushing of the peasants' revolt. And it happened: the peasants were defeated, almost slaughtered, and Muentzer was executed. In our present day view, Luther's one-sided judgement on the rebels leaves no room for it having been a painful mistake, as he later felt. In 1533, he wrote: "I (!) have killed myself all peasants in riot, their blood is on my neck. But I give it to our Lord God, he ordered me to speak in such a way."[9] Such a statement reflects his conviction that there should be no mixing of state and church and their respective affairs, no appealing to the gospel when resorting to force. A gospel enforced by secular power is no gospel any more; instead, it will end up in terror.

For the Marxists and their interpretation of history, Thomas Muentzer, however, remained a hero, a revolutionary, a protector of the underprivileged and suppressed. In former East Germany, you will find still today in almost every town streets named after him. For decades he was considered in East Germany to be a forerunner of socialism. But in 1983 a special anniversary came up: Luther's 500th birthday. And the communist rulers, always in urgent need of foreign currency to keep alive their system of suppression, didn't want to irritate solvent visitors from abroad. Therefore the government prescribed a total turnaround to the historians' teaching and publishing in their country. From then on they had to describe Luther as "a progressive actor in the early bourgeois revolution." This turnaround was not easy and required a lot of flexibility. In the end you can see that being a slave to the rulers can have many faces.

9) Luther—An Anti-Semite? or Bad words, horrible suggestions, but little or no effects

Luther's opinion on the Jews has never been accentuated and discussed as much as in the last eighty years, in particular in Germany in the time of the Nazi regime. The Nazis used him to legitimize their own terrible racially based anti-Semitism. And nowadays he is accused and blamed for what he had written in his later years. In many cases these discussions take place without sufficient expertise and competence. First of all, we have to state: there exists no racial theory or racial discrimination whatsoever with

[7] *LW* 46: 5–45.

[8] *LW* 46: 45–57.

[9] From *Table Talk*, *LW* 54: 181.

Luther, no racial theory characterizing anti-Semitism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Luther's opinion on the Jews is determined only by theology and piety. To be Jewish is for him a question of religion, not of race or ethnicity. Luther firmly believed that the Jews in his time would turn to Christ, being convinced of the gospel's unresistable contents, and would accept Jesus Christ as their Messiah, since the gospel had been freed from all infiltration and distortion. With this expectation and estimation—you may call it naive—Luther found himself in the end totally disappointed. Nothing happened. The Jews didn't move or stir a finger. In his early years (1523), Luther published a pamphlet entitled *That Jesus Christ Was Born a Jew*,[10] in which he spoke of the Jews in a very courteous, appreciative, and respectful manner, attributing solely to the Christians what had so far eroded the Christian-Jewish relationship. He called for an end of all persecution, excesses, professional bans, and segregation, altogether quite common then. "If I had been a Jew and had seen such dolts and blockheads govern and teach the Christian faith, I would sooner have become a hog than a Christian."[11]

Twenty years later he expressed himself entirely differently and published another pamphlet entitled *About Jews and Their Lies* (1543).[12] It is an unmerciful and intolerable document, full of hatred, in no way to be palliated. It is a terrible blot never to be excused. For Luther recommended all the measures that became a horrible practice in Nazi Germany and Nazi-occupied Europe in the twentieth century: Destruction of their synagogues and homes, expropriation, expulsion, forced labor to be imposed, prohibition of worship—he did not (not yet?) call for mass murder. This indicates a complete change of Luther's mIN And the reason for that seems to be found in rumors of which he had heard, namely the Jews beginning with mission work among Christians, misguiding them to circumcision and observation of Sabbath rules.

Jews, so Luther believed, had calumniated Christian belief, spreading lies about Christ and the Trinity ("polytheism") and St. Mary (to have been a prostitute). And for Luther you would become an accessary to that crime if you didn't resist such blasphemy. This may somewhat explain Luther's reaction, but doesn't excuse it. It is and will always be a terrible lapse in Luther, and we Lutherans of today should not hesitate to admit it.

Luther's opinion wasn't unique at his time. For instance, the famous Eramus of Rotterdam, generally taken as peaceful and gentle, wanted the Jews to be treated even worse. Germany's neighboring countries like France, Spain, and Bohemia had already expelled all Jews from their territory. To expel them became quite popular: by doing so, you could get rid of your creditors. But all of that doesn't excuse Luther. It should be noted that his 1543 pamphlet had almost no influence in Lutheran churches afterwards. His evil recommendations were hardly followed anywhere—until the Nazis took over.

10) The World—A Three Floor Building? or How To Overcome an Outdated Outlook on this World

In 1534 Luther had finished his translation of the Bible into German. The first complete edition put on the market had a woodcut on the front page showing God the Father as creator of the world and the earth as a disk surrounded by water on which Adam and Eve disported themselves along with different animals, with the sun, moon, and the stars all around. This composition followed a traditional pattern from long before Luther. It tells us how people in the sixteenth century (and before) envisioned heaven and earth. In Luther's time the famous astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus (1473–1543) had just discovered that the sun didn't revolve around the earth, but the other way around. We don't know for sure how Luther felt about Copernicus and what he discovered. It seems as if he had rejected his ideas and stayed with the traditional view.[13] But how should it have been otherwise, how should he get away from his contemporaries' conception? A person of the sixteenth century thought of the earth as a disk, of course, being in the center of all creation. He also understood all nature as created by God. His knowledge of the world came from what he can see with his own eyes, and from the Scriptures interpreting this creation as emerging from God. Traditionally this world was regarded to be like a three-floor building. On top you'll find God and heaven,

[10] *LW* 45: 199–231.

[11] *LW* 45: 200.

[12] *LW* 47: 123–309.

[13] *Table Talk* records one conversation attributed to Luther about Copernicus dated June 4, 1539. *LW* 54, 359: "There was mention of a certain new astrologer who wanted to prove that the earth moves and not the sky, the sun, and the moon. This would be as if somebody were riding on a cart or in a ship and imagined that he was standing still while the earth and the trees were moving. [Luther remarked,] 'So it goes now. Whoever wants to be clever must agree with nothing that others esteem. He must do something of his own. This is what that fellow does who wishes to turn the whole of astronomy upside down. Even in these things that are thrown into disorder I believe the Holy Scriptures, for Joshua commanded the sun to stand still and not the earth [Josh. 10:12].'"

in the middle the earth with the sky above, and under your feet (literally) the realm of evil, hell, and Satan. In this way Luther had learned to look at the world.

And now it comes to an ingenious step that Luther took, still linked to that medieval concept of old, but at the same time breaking it open and ready to overcome it. His theological opponents in Switzerland, Zwingli and Calvin, held fast to the three-story concept, strictly separating heaven and earth from each other, with the intention thereby to safeguard God's majesty and establish an infinite distance between God and his fallen creation.

Luther, on the other hand, focused on incarnation, i.e. God humiliating himself when becoming man in Christ—the infinite God making himself equal to his creatures out of pure love. Luther's great Christmas hymn speaks clearly: "The gift from God's eternal throne / Here clothed in our poor flesh and bone."[14] And Luther comes to the conclusion: The right hand of God is simply everywhere, heaven not anymore a locality in a three-story setup where God is locked up, unable to be fully present in our midst. While Zwingli and Calvin thought that the finite can never become a vessel of the infinite, Luther was convinced that the contrary was true: *finitum capax infiniti.* For him all categories of space and time will fail when you try to describe God's ubiquity—you can indeed find him everywhere. But that's not mixing up the "everywhere" and the "nowhere," ending in a kind of unclear pantheism. Instead Luther makes a clear distinction between a general omnipresence "as such" and an omnipresence "for me," the latter one linked to God's word (where it is proclaimed and can be heard) and to the Sacraments being the "visible Word." Word and sacraments, however, can be found at concrete, definite places in which therefore God himself can be found.

Luther thereby overcomes this Middle Ages concept of the three stories or levels, separating God from his creation. He accentuates the biblical report on creation (adjusted by the the Holy Spirit to the limited comprehension of people from a period of no deeper insight in natural sciences). Insofar he puts all scientific questions and details in the background. "I believe," he teaches us,

> that God has made *me* and all creatures; that He has given *me* my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them. … For all this it is my duty to thank and to praise, serve and obey Him. (SC II)

That's the way in which he explains to us the Creed's First Article on creation, focusing on what God has done and is doing to me, a human being of today, leading us away from speculation about questions of minor importance.

11) Has Luther Been a Fighter for Freedom? or Has He Pulled Us Out of the Darkness of the Middle Ages?

Let's go back once more to the time before the Diet of Worms in 1521 and the time Luther spent afterwards in the Wartburg. In the year 1520 he had already published three famous pamphlets. Since the nineteenth century they have been regarded as his chief publications: *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate*[15]; *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*[16]; and finally, *The Freedom of a Christian*.[17] All three of these pamphlets have been taken as proof of Luther having broken with the church and theology of the Middle Ages, presenting himself to be a freedom fighter.

This is certainly not altogether incorrect, but on the other hand, Luther shouldn't be overestimated in this respect. He had his roots in the Middle Ages' way of thinking and never lost them, but transcended them. In his lifetime the Western church had not yet decided on all theological questions and laid down respective decisions. Instead, what Luther was teaching was still "permitted," not condemned, at least tolerated, although not approved at all or desired by the pope and other authorities. His opponents falsely accused him of deviating from the faith; rather, he confessed it along with the ancient church.

The freedom for which Luther stood had a different meaning than what is understood today. Today, you frequently find Luther identified with ideas he had never thought of. For him freedom is not something we can achieve by our own efforts, nor a legal title we can claim. Instead, when he spoke of freedom, he found it based on God's action to free us from the powers of evil, from Satan, from our own ego, from sin and death, from being curved in to ourselves. For Luther, freedom means to be freed *from* something, and to be freed *to do* something. He put it into a classical formulation: "A Christian is a free man above all things and subject to no one—a Christian is

[14] "We Praise You, Jesus, at Your Birth," *LSB* 382, stanza 2. The hymn also can be found in *LW* 53: 240–42.

[15] *LW* 47: 115–219.

[16] *LW* 36: 12–127.

[17] *LW* 31: 329–79.

a subservient slave to all things and subject to everyone." In this statement you find Luther's understanding of freedom: it's not autonomy, not self-determined, but a divine gift, a grace, and at the same time it calls for responsibility and service to your neighbor.

Did Luther regard the Middle Ages as dark as we have called it ever since the epoch of Enlightenment? Certainly not. A liberation, a freedom from darkness of the centuries before him would have been unintelligible for him. Fake news, therefore.

12) "And If Tomorrow Will Come the End of the World" or Would Luther Then Have Planted an Apple Tree?

It's one of the most popular quotations from Luther, at least in Germany, this dictum which reads "If I would know that tomorrow will come the end of the world, I would still plant my little apple tree today." It sounds so optimistic, so defiant, that these words are considered to come from Luther, confirming the picture one has made of him. But it is not that easy to trace back to the reformer. A Protestant bishop in Germany some time ago offered a considerable reward to him who could give proof of Luther's authorship, but so far could never send that money to anyone.

Many apocryphal sayings of uncertain authorship exist. To give an example, the famous prayer, "Lord, make me a tool of your peace," is often attributed to St. Francis of Assisi. Francis died in the year 1226. The first traceable information about this prayer, however, is from 1912 (!), almost 700 years later and in the French language. From France it set off to England, from England it came to the European continent. Once located incorrectly in history, it will easily be located falsely forever. But it is nevertheless a wonderful prayer.

Let's go back to Luther and his little apple tree. This dictum became popular and was frequently quoted in Germany after World War II, seemingly words of comfort and encouragement in a difficult situation. And even more in the 1950s. Prominent people often made use of it; for example, Federal Chancellor Helmut Kohl, Federal President Gustav Heinemann, Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Gentscher, Bishop Hans Lilje (1899–1977),[18] the poet Gottfried Benn, even the prime minister of the East —"German Democratic Republic," Otto Grotewohl (who declared it to be "an optimistic expression of the rising bourgeoisie") and finally Mrs. Margot Käßmann, this year's "Luther representative" of the liberal state churches in Germany. Having all such people quoting this dictum as from Luther, hardly anyone had any doubts about his authorship. It gave some comfort in times of war and danger. The general public learned this apple tree phrase in the 1950s as an expression of hope for the future. The World Exhibition in Brussels, Belgium in 1958 had the entrance to the German showroom decorated with this dictum in four languages and explicitly ascribed to Luther. Planting trees in remembrance of Luther became popular and is still going on today. In the meantime you find a real small forest of Luther trees in Wittenberg.

There is, however, a remarkable difference between this dictum and the true Luther. First of all, this dictum doesn't mention Christ at all, and therefore is not consistent with Luther's way of thinking. And secondly Luther's expectation of the world's end has never been of resignation nor of any fatalism. He rather longed for that day with ardor to come as God's day, revealing the kingdom of God, and freeing us from all evil. And that's different from what this dictum seems to express. For Luther it wasn't a fateful disaster that was to come, which one may brave or simply ignore, but the ardently expected hour of our redemption.

Now: where and why did this dictum of the little apple tree come into existence? Not with Luther. You can find it for the first time not before the year 1944 (!), quoted in a circular letter dated October 5, 1944. That's far away from Luther. The ardor by which he waited for Christ to come, judging the living and the dead, doesn't give way to any human activity, more or less ignoring the event which God is going to bring about, and which we should long for instead of letting it happen with stoic equanimity. If you like this dictum anyway, okay. But Luther—that's clear—would not have planted an apple tree "if tomorrow will come the end of the world."

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[18] Hans Lilje was the President of the Lutheran World Federation from 1952–1957.

The Necessary Distinction: A Continuing Conversation on Law & Gospel

edited by Albert B. Collver III, James Arne Nestingen, and John T. Pless (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2017)

by Matthew Richard

I have heard it said before that law and gospel are *not* a mixed drink; they are not a divine cocktail where law and gospel are rightly balanced, shaken together, and served in a coupe glass. Rather, law and gospel are like two different drinks that should not be mixed, but poured into separate shot glasses and served.

Considering this metaphor, I was pleased to read within the pages of the new book, *The Necessary Distinction: A Continuing Conversation on Law & Gospel*, that the twelve different authors (who are pastors and theologians from different Lutheran denominations and traditions) neither served up a mixed drink nor gave recipes to make a divine cocktail. But rather, the authors made the necessary distinction between God's two words of law and gospel.

The Necessary Distinction is an exploratory work published to be a basis for dialogue and study amongst individuals in the North American Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Church Canada, and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, regarding law and gospel. Therefore, while I believe the authors have done an admirable job of distinguishing law and gospel, there is no room for debate and deliberation. Paraphrasing C.F.W. Walther from *The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel*, understanding law and gospel is not an impossible task with the aid of the Holy Spirit, for children can learn this; however, it is the practical application and use of the doctrine that presents the greatest difficulty.[1] Yes, debate and deliberation should arise after reading this book, for its pages contain discussions of law and gospel in a number of applicable settings where much conversation is needed. More specifically, there is much beneficial and edifying law and gospel dialogue on the history of the LCMS, the liturgy, pastoral care, the Christian life, the penitential Psalms, missions, preaching, etc. I will offer a taste of what is offered to whet your appetite for this scholarly reading:

- Early in the book, Mark Seifrid discusses the differences between Martin Luther and John Calvin regarding their conceptualization of the human being, especially the regenerate human being. He further makes note of Luther's chief view of the law (second use) and Calvin's chief view of the law (third use). But it is with the third use of the law that Seifrid does an excellent service to the reader. He shows how the different anthropological assumptions impact Luther and Calvin's understandings of the third use of the law, which consequently bring forth different definitions of the third use of the law for Lutherans and Calvinists. *Continuing the Conversation: Do the different understandings of the third use of the law lead to confusion in law and gospel conversations today? Has Calvin's anthropology bled into the Lutheran Church via Evangelicalism, since Evangelicalism has roots in the New England Puritans influenced by Calvin's theology?*

- In chapter three, William Cwirla maintains that the proper distinction between law and gospel is of utmost importance for pastors concerning the liturgy. If law and gospel are blurred, blended, or mixed in the liturgy, Christ-crucified for the forgiveness of sinners is lost as the central focus. While this chapter is beneficial regarding law and gospel concerning the liturgy, I found myself drawn to the question of what happens to churches when the liturgy is adjusted for seeker sensitive reasons? Though Cwirla does not specifically address churches that change the liturgy for so-called contemporary mission reasons, his chapter forces us to reckon with the implications of altering the Divine Service. *Continuing the Conversation: If one changes the Divine Service, how*

[1] C.F.W. Walther, *The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel*, trans. W.H.T. Dau (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1928), 42–43.

does it impact law and gospel and consequentially, is the worshipper—who is a saint and sinner—still held in the dynamic tension of law and gospel?

- While it is easy to believe that more law is the antidote to individuals ensnared in antinomianism and more gospel is the antidote to people trapped in legalism, Larry Vogel points out that we must guard against becoming a Peter without Jesus or a David without Nathan. In other words, when we put antinomianism and legalism on a sliding scale, we can inadvertently apply law to the exclusion of the gospel toward antinomians or the gospel to the exclusion of the law toward legalists. However, Vogel points out the mistake of this thinking in his closing paragraph of the chapter titled, *Law and Gospel in the Christian Life*, saying, "The weapons of Christ … never change—they are ever His Word of Law and Gospel." [107] Indeed, law *and* gospel are the proper response to legalism and antinomianism. *Continuing the Conversation: Could it be that some of the law and gospel debates in our modern times are nothing more than individuals reacting to each other much like a pendulum swinging back and forth over a sliding scale, when in reality what is needed is not just more law or just more gospel, but 'both' law and gospel?*

- Stephen Hultgren offers an extensive essay on *The Problem of Freedom Today and the Third Use of the law*. While Hultgren is to be commended for his thoroughness, I humbly disagree with him in his interpretation of Romans chapter 7. Parting from Augustine, Aquinas, and Luther, Hultgren understands Romans 7 as referring to the "person under the law before (or without) faith in Christ, but from the perspective of one who through faith in Christ has been delivered from that situation and is now able to see life under law in its true colors."[222]. As a result of this exegetical move, Hultgren proceeds to talk about freedom and the third use of the law within this context. Due to the brevity of this review, permit me to say this: while I am certainly interested to hear more from Hultgren on the specific reasons why he arrived at his interpretation of Romans 7, I am glad that he did not spend too much time on his exegesis of Romans 7. His conciseness on the exegesis of Romans 7 allowed me the time to see things played out regarding freedom and the third use of the law. *Continuing the Conversation: If our understanding of Romans 7 impacts our view of the third use of the law, can people successfully debate the third use of the law without addressing the exegetical assumptions of Romans 7 first?*

- Along with the differences between Calvin and Luther regarding anthropology and the third use of the law, a subtle theme emerged in many chapters which pointed to the difference between Augustine and Luther regarding the Christian. Otherwise stated, when understanding the Christian as simultaneously saint and sinner (i.e., simul), several authors pointed to the importance and ramifications of Luther parting from Augustine's ecumenical tradition of the Christian as *partim-partim*. As a result, the application of law and gospel will be different, depending on whether or not one embraces Augustine's view of the *simul* or suspends this view in favor of a more *totus-totus* perspective. *Continuing the Conversation: Are some of the differences over the application of law and gospel in our modern day due to the disagreements between an Augustinian view of the simul (i.e., partim-partim) versus a Lutheran view (i.e., totus-totus)?*

- The term *contextualization* has been very popular within missiological language over the last several decades. In Chapter 12, Albert Collver III discusses the etymology of *contextualization*. In so doing, he asserts in the last chapter that, "Contextualization most helpfully or at its best is the proper distinction between law and gospel to a particular people group." [308] While emergent church philosophy and sacramental entrepreneurship ideology is all the rave in missional talk today, it is very encouraging to read from Collver that some things never change—law as a point of contact in missions and the gospel as the absolving message. C*ontinuing the Conversation: What are the dangers of not understanding contextualization in terms of the proper distinction/application of law and gospel to particular people groups?*

- Finally, it is worth noting Roland Ziegler's essay titled, *What Happens When the Third Use of the Law is Rejected?* So what happens? Ziegler posits that one does not automatically become a libertine. Ziegler supports his thesis through a brief survey of Werner

Elert, Steven Paulson, and Joseph Fletcher. He shows "that a denial of the third use of the law as it is commonly understood among Lutherans does not lead in iteself to libertinism. Neither Elert nor Paulson is a libertine. They both believe that the Law continues to convict the Christian of his or her sin." [329] Regarding Fletcher, though, his antinomianism is not merely tied up with a rejection of the third use of the law but rather with a refusal of the law altogether in exchange for a vacuous idea of love. You see, it seems—according to Ziegler—that antinomianism comes about from a *complete denial* of the law and/or replacing the law with an idea of love that is disconnected from the commandments altogether. *Continuing the Conversation: What criteria is needed to truly classify a person as an antinomian? Is Ziegler right that a denial of the third use of the law does not lead in itself to antinomianism?*

As you can see, this book contains a continuing conversation about law and gospel that is intended to cause all of us to dive deeper into the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. This book is a worthwhile discussion for our times with the goal of clearly proclaiming Christ-crucified for the forgiveness of our sins to a world that needs not a mixed drink; but rather, two distinct shots of law and gospel.

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Reformation 500: The Enduring Relevance of the Lutheran Reformation

Compiling editor Curtis A. Jahn (Milwaukee: Northwestern, 2017)

by Mark A. Loest

The observance of the Reformation's quincentennial this year is proving you cannot separate that event from the reformer Martin Luther. The year 2017 is as much about the reformer as it is about his hammer blows.

Reformation 500 is the contribution to the party by theologians of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), which seeks to show ways in which the Reformation is relevant today. Along with a preface from WELS president Mark G. Schroder, ten essays explore topics including "Luther and the Biblical Canon," "Luther on Infant Baptism," and "The Lutheran Influence on Education."

It shows me there is much agreement in doctrine that is traceable back to our common theological and confessional heritage in the Reformation and Luther.

There are also essays that address specific topics and concerns of WELS pastors, teachers, and congregations. Mark Zarling, president of Martin Luther College, New Ulm, MN, answers the question, "With What Attitude Should We Celebrate the Reformation?" by offering commentary on seven stanzas of the hymn "In Trembling Hands," number 199 in the WELS hymnal *Christian Worship*. His contribution is that of a college president to his supporting church body.

John F. Brug writes "Luther and Fellowship: The Courage to Break and the Courage to Be Patient" in which he traces the challenges and difficulties of maintaining and breaking fellowship from the time of Luther to the breakup of the Synodical Conference.

There is also plenty that will interest those outside the WELS. Paul O. Wendland discusses the New Perspective on Paul and how theologians like N.T. Wright make Luther's Reformation and theology, and especially the doctrine of justification, out to be a terrible misread and mistake. Where does that leave us? The church cannot continue without the *articulus stantis*.

Daniel M. Deutschlander, in "The Enduring Uniqueness of the Lutheran Reformation," seeks to address why Luther was successful when so many others failed. Deutschlander says it is because Luther took God seriously. He also recognizes the Lutheran teaching on law and gospel as important.

It was good to read how our fellow Lutherans and friends in the WELS are celebrating and talking about the Reformation. It shows me there is much agreement in doctrine that is traceable back to our common theological and confessional heritage in the Reformation and Luther.

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Church Planting in the Secular West: Learning from the European Experience

by Stefan Paas (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016)

by Adam Koontz

Some years before Hilaire Belloc asserted that "The Faith is Europe, and Europe is the Faith," Matthew Arnold heard the tidal wave of faith receding, "The Sea of Faith/ Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore/ Lay like the folds of a bright gurdle furled./ But now I only hear/ Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar." The secularization of what was once Christendom and the presumed decadence of its ancient churches are familiar tropes, particularly for churches outside Europe descended from and planted by European emigrants. Stefan Paas' new book, drawn from his extensive experience as a church planter and a missiologist in the Netherlands, has something to unsettle and something to enrich Belloc and Arnold, those who long for Christendom and those who are happy to bid it goodbye.

His first chapter compares an older missiology of *plantatio ecclesiae* ("the classic paradigm") with the now-widespread missiology of church planting (the "modern" or "late-modern evangelical paradigm"). The distinction is that whereas modern church planting focuses on the growth and multiplication of (generally free-church) congregations, *plantatio ecclesiae* factors much more into the mission of Christ: evangelization as a preliminary proclamation of Christ without necessary recourse to organization, baptism, and ingathering of converts once that proclamation has been received, and the planting of new congregations only once the first two steps have been achieved. Paas finds this older paradigm to be more biblically defensible than a singular focus on increasing the number of congregations. He observes pointedly that the "church" is never the object of "planting" or "sowing" in the Bible, even considering the pioneer missionary situation of the New Testament, but that congregations are the "*result* of planting, not its object," something that springs up where the vineyard of the Lord is cultivated.

The heart of the book are three chapters that evaluate different reasons buttressing the "late-modern evangelical paradigm" of church planting in Western Europe: 1) to plant *better* churches than the decadent churches of Christendom, 2) to plant *more* churches because church growth happens more quickly through church planting than any other method, and 3) to plant *new* churches because they will enable the gospel's spread better than older congregations. The book is rich in historical, missiological, and even exegetical detail, so we will confine ourselves to some salient observations rather than recounting all.

What Paas terms the "confessionalization" of church planting is the planting of denominational churches in an area because that denomination has few or no congregations in that place. He understands this motive as potentially sectarian because the indifference to what is already being done in that place by the churches already present sloughs off the responsibility to take seriously the Christianity of other confessions within the church. He tracks historical examples from the Reformation-era Anabaptists to the DAWN initiatives in the early 1990s in Europe to show that too often church planters have treated any place without evangelical free churches as if they were "pioneer" areas similar to pagan Corinth or Thessalonica. This is a mistaken understanding of the context of the gospel in a post-Christendom and post-Christian area like Western Europe or many sections of North America. Even if we can theologically justify our presence where others may have once built, we cannot speak or behave as if we are the sole representatives of Christianity who have been or are there.

Paas' discussion of post-Christendom as a different state of affairs from a post-Christian society is also helpful. Many Christians, especially evangelicals with a prior commitment to "religious liberty" not shared by magisterial Protestant confessions like Lutheranism or Calvinism, welcome the passing of official sanctions

against certain confessions and the attendant disestablishment of Christianity. His tracking of the varying reactions among Catholic, Protestant, and free-church traditions in all parts of Europe is informative and enlightening, but for our purposes he says that to be "post-Christendom" is to have lost those societal blessings and curses surrounding establishment and/or social acceptability for Christianity. To be "post-Christian" is something else: for people to have lost altogether the knowledge of Bible stories, of basic Christian customs and notions, never to have heard of "Jesus." He recognizes in Western Europe a trend from post-Christendom to being post-Christian, a trend with which some of our pastors in North America will be familiar.

This connects to his hard-hitting critique of the methodology of church-growth theory (CGT) and its related sociological school, religious market theory (RMT). He believes much of CGT was formulated with presupposed and unexamined Baptist convictions about baptism and conversion on the basis of data or experiences from the Global South and only masquerades as a confessionally neutral technique. RMT in the work of Stark, Finke, and Bainbridge likewise presumes without explanation that religion functions like economics with supply and demand. Can the church actually work like a business, even if there is a religious marketplace? What if the demand for pastoral absolution has nearly dried up in Europe? Should the church continue offering absolution if no one avails himself of it, or should it shift its product line into areas more compatible with the modern religious consumer? And what of people who have no felt need for religious goods and services?

Paas contends that the theories of classically liberal economics and Baptist theology undergirding CGT and RMT are unprofitable for places without preexistent religious demand. He finds both CGT and RMT to be lacking in confessional and methodological clarity, which complicates or obviates their usefulness for the church in places neither predominantly Baptist nor with a large percentage of the population looking for new kinds of churches. He notes several times that CGT has "worked" in the Netherlands only in the Dutch Bible Belt, the one place in his country with relatively high levels of people looking for a wide variety of "church options." Otherwise, throughout Europe and especially in Western Europe, he does not find that what worked in the American South or the Global South works at all in secularized Europe. He recounts the fact that Global South immigrant congregations in the Netherlands nearly always express a sense of mission to evangelize the native Dutch and include "Global" and "Worldwide" and "International" in their churches' names, but with all that fervor, they still fail, "most immigrant churches are not very effective at reaching Europeans."

This is all rather hopeless if one remains narrowly focused on planting new congregations as quickly as possible. As a church planter in the Northeast, I myself was surprised to see Paas eviscerate the data on which so much church planting material is based, but I was unsurprised to see that it was possible, knowing that much of the wisdom on church planting in the US itself was developed in and for the South and the Midwest and not for our country's more secular regions. What hope can Paas provide for the future of the gospel in secular places?

Church planting should be *one* part of the church's mission. For him the priority in Scripture and in the successful planting of the church in Europe once upon a time was the preaching of the gospel. This sounds elementary, since church planters presumably do that while they organize new congregations, but he contends that a primary focus on the spread of the knowledge of Jesus, God, the Bible, and all the other mental and moral vocabulary secular people do not have is powerful. If we begin by asking how we can acquaint people with the idea of God, of his Son Jesus, and of life after death, we will carry out the preaching of the gospel in more contextually appropriate and more fruitful ways than if we set out to plant congregations right away. Congregations will be the *result* of planting, not its object. The word of the Lord will grow, and churches will grow up alongside. Whether you are intrigued by his approach or a fervent advocate of the "late-modern evangelical paradigm," I cannot recommend this thought-provoking, sometimes idiosyncratic, and always stimulating book highly enough. You will be challenged and grow in thinking and wrestling through Paas' provocations, discussions, and thoughtful proposals for the gospel of Christ in a secular age.

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With My Own Eyes

by Bo Giertz, trans. Bror Erickson (Irvine, CA: New Reformation Publications, 2017. Paperback. 303 pp.)

by John T. Pless

Bishop Bo Giertz's life spanned the twentieth century. He was born in 1905 and died in 1998. The son of atheistic parents, Giertz came to faith in Christ as a university student. His conversion would also mean a change in his course of studies as he switched from the study of medicine to the study of theology. A prominent figure on the Uppsala faculty was the New Testament exegete Anton Fridrichsen, from whom young Giertz gained an appreciation for a "realistic interpretation of the Bible" (vii). It was Fridrichsen who urged Giertz to spend time in Palestine. In 1931, Giertz spent six months in Palestine fully absorbing the landscape, customs, and climate of territory where Jesus was born, lived, died, and was raised again. There is no Gospel without place and time. His immersion in the "holy land" gave Giertz a life-long appreciation for the earthy and historically embedded truth of the evangelical narrative. It was shortly after that trip Giertz would write *With My Own Eyes*. It would eventually be published in an English translation in Great Britain. Rather than attempting to "Americanize" and update that earlier translation, Pastor Bror Erickson has rendered a completely fresh translation based on the Swedish text.

With My Own Eyes is essentially a "life of Jesus" drawn from the four Gospels. While "Gospel harmonies" generally cause exegetes to retch and frown, they do have a long history in the church. Bo Giertz is not writing with the precision of the exegete but with heart of a man who has heard the voice of his living Lord in the pages of the Gospels and now seeks to echo that voice in the form on a continuous narrative. It might be best appreciated as a kind of devotional commentary on the Gospel record. Certainly it was not intended by Giertz as a replacement for the Scriptures or even as a paraphrase.

The warm and humble piety so characteristic of Bo Giertz shines through this book. Here we hear a man narrate the story of Jesus with an eye toward unobtrusively calling others to "come and see" the Messiah, the Savior of the world in the glory of His humanity. This is a glory not divorced from the world that His Father created, but a glory made manifest in the comings and the goings of His life in the concrete specificities of Palestine. The word pictures painted by Giertz are vivid and often provocative as he gives attention to the ordinariness of this life, with an eye to the detail that he observed during his days in the holy land. His writing invites readers to enter into the world of Jesus, imagining the sounds, smells, and sights while hearing His words which are "Spirit and life."

This book deserves a place alongside of Giertz's *Preaching from the Whole Bible* and *To Live with Christ* in the collection of his devotional writings. Pastors will find insights for preaching. All Christians who take the time to ponder the Bishop's telling of the story of Jesus will be edified and enriched in their faith. We are indebted to Pastor Bror Erickson for his lively translation as well as the insightful historical introduction to the book.

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Witness Always