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DR. ADOLPH A. BRUX AND PRAYER FELLOWSHIP IN
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH-MISSOURI SYNOD

A Research Paper Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for elective
H-199

by

John J. Marschhausen

May 1970

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to explore the case of Dr. Adolph A. Brux and his relations with The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod on the subject of prayer fellowship, and in doing that to discover what effect, if any, the work of Dr. Brux had upon the Missouri Synod. F. Dean Lueking, in his book, Mission in the Making, terms the period between 1920 and 1940 "The Struggle for Vision" within Missouri. It is in this period that the case between Dr. Brux and the Missouri Synod took place, and it is during this time that one can begin to see the shift within Synod from a strictly "scholastic confessionalism" to a more "evangelical confessionalism."¹ Scholastic confessionalism, as used by Lueking, signifies a very strict adherence to the late 19th Century and early 20th Century tradition of applying the Missouri Synod position on Scripture and the Confessions. In terms of fellowship with other Christians, which was the underlying and precipitating principle in the Brux case, scholastic confessionalism insisted on absolute and complete agreement on all systematic doctrine before any kind of fellowship could happen. Evangelical confessionalism, as it was emerging within the Missouri Synod and as advocated for prayer-fellowship by Dr. Brux, demanded a re-thinking of many synodical positions based on a re-evaluation of Scripture and the Confessions. The position of Dr. Brux over

against the position of Synod's Board of Foreign Missions, the position of many synodical officials and the position of Synod itself illustrates the very real struggle for vision between those sincerely fighting to maintain traditional attitudes and those open to new ways of thinking.

The method of approach in this paper is to first present a brief biographical sketch of the central figure in the case, Dr. Adolph A. Brux, called by F. Dean Lueking "one of the ablest men the Missouri Synod ever sent abroad."² This outline of the life of Dr. Brux will provide an historical perspective for the events leading to and involved with the controversy as it finally appeared before the delegate conventions of the Synod in 1935 and 1938. The paper then gives a detailed account of the pertinent events of the case as they developed in India in 1924. There is then a study of the positions held by Synod and Dr. Brux and an account of the case as it developed in the United States in 1931-1938. Following this there is an examination of the effect the works and attitudes of Dr. Brux had upon The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

CHAPTER I

THE LIFE OF DR. BRUX³

Dr. Brux was born to Ernst Ferdinand and Emma Brux in 1893 in Racine, Wisconsin. Both parents were from Germany with Ernst F. Brux arriving in 1891 and Emma Brux a year later. They immediately went to Racine because Mr. Brux had employment there through friends he had known in Germany. Through one of these friends, Adolph Hilker, the Brux family became members of the Evangelical Church in Racine. When the children became old enough to go to school, Dr. Brux's parents sent them to the German Lutheran School; and through that connection, the entire Brux family became members of the Lutheran Church. When he had finished his schooling in Racine, Dr. Brux, through the influence of Rev. J.F. Boerger, enrolled at Concordia College, Milwaukee, and he there began preparation for the ministry. He graduated in 1913 and transferred to Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. After one year in St. Louis he vicared near Joliet, Illinois, teaching school and preaching. He returned to the seminary after one year of vicarage and graduated in 1917. He then received a call to teach at Concordia College, Milwaukee, for two years, from 1917 to 1919. In the summer of 1918 he attended the University of Chicago taking a course in Arabic and a course in Hebrew. His instructor, Dr. Martin Sprengling, suggested that Dr. Brux try for a fellowship at the university,

but Dr. Brux gave the matter no further thought until 1919 when his two years at Concordia had expired. He then applied to Dr. J.M.P. Smith for a fellowship at the University of Chicago. His application and an essay he had submitted of his work under Dr. L. Fuerbringer at the Seminary was accepted, and from 1919 until 1923 Dr. Brux studied at the university. His major was Arabic and his minor was Hebrew. On June 12, 1923, he was awarded a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Arabic studies.

In 1922, while at the university, Dr. Brux married Miss Ottilie Eseman, a sister of the pastor of the English District Church in Racine. Dr. and Mrs. Brux were to have six children, one born in Beirut, Lebanon, three in India and two in the United States after the Brux family returned from India.

Very shortly after graduation, in July of 1923, Dr. and Mrs. Brux were on their way to India. They did not go to India directly, but rather to the Middle East. They stayed in Syria for two reasons: 1) Moslem mission work had been conducted there for many years under the direction of a Dr. Zwemer, and Dr. Brux felt that he could gain help in beginning his work in India from the experience of these missionaries; and 2) Mrs. Brux was expecting her first child in September and there was a good hospital connected with the American University in Beirut. While in the Middle East, Dr. Brux visited with missionaries, mostly Presbyterian, in Damascus, Beirut and Cairo; and he also visited Palestine.

In December Dr. and Mrs. Brux and their baby boarded a ship at Port Said that was carrying several other missionaries, and they arrived in Karachi (then a part of India) on January 1, 1924. The next day they arrived in Bombay, and that night took part in a devotion at the hospice where they were staying. That devotion, which included non-Missouri Synod Christians, was the beginning of the problems between Dr. Brux and his church. The following day Dr. and Mrs. Brux and the other missionaries traveled to Vaniyambadi to begin their mission work. Dr. Brux began his work among the Moslem people of India shortly after his arrival. His work was centered in Vaniyambadi. Dr. Brux remained in India until April of 1931, when he returned to the United States on furlough. Mrs. Brux was quite sick when they left India, having suffered from malaria and a reaction to quinine, but it was hoped that she would recover sufficiently for them to return to India in one year.

Dr. Brux and his family lived in Racine, Wisconsin from 1931 until 1935 and then moved to Chicago, Illinois when he took a position at the University of Chicago. While at Racine his case had come before the Board of Foreign Missions and he was without salary beginning November 1932. To support his family he helped in congregations where he could, he received considerable support from friends, especially Rev. Benjamin Mauer and Rev. F.C. Proehl, and he went into \$1500 debt. Because of his financial situation, Dr. Brux took the position of assistant editorial secretary at the Oriental Institute of

Chicago in 1935. He remained in that position until 1940 when, because of the stoppage of archeological material from the Middle East due to the war, his position was terminated. In 1935 his appeal to the Synod came before the Synodical Convention in Cleveland, and in 1938 his re-appeal came before the Synodical Convention in St. Louis. In 1940 Dr. Brux resigned from The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. From 1940 until 1958 Dr. Brux took positions as book editor and proof reader, his last position being with Physician's Record Company of Chicago. He retired in January, 1959 and lives now with his wife in Villa Park, Illinois.

CHAPTER II

THE CONTROVERSY IN INDIA

As already mentioned, Dr. and Mrs. Brux had arrived in Bombay, India, on January 2, 1924. That night, before proceeding to Vaniyambadi, they and the other missionaries stayed at a Protestant hospice in Bombay. After the supper they were all invited into the parlor to have a short devotion consisting of Scripture reading and prayer. Considering this to be against their church's practice, Missionary Milton G. Kuolt and Missionary and Mrs. R.W. Goerss left; the two men taking an "after dinner stroll."⁴ Dr. and Mrs. Brux, Mrs. Kuolt and a Miss Strieter, later to become the wife of Missionary Paul Heckel, did not leave, but rather took part in the devotion.⁵

This little incident became the subject of conversation between Dr. Brux and Missionaries Kuolt and Goerss, and it continued to be discussed the next day on the train from Bombay to Vaniyambadi. Because of these discussions and because Missionaries Kuolt and Goerss did not agree with Dr. Brux, the subject of prayer-fellowship and Dr. Brux's position was placed before all the missionaries of the North Arcot District of India (now North Ambur District).

Because of the disagreement between Dr. Brux and some of the other missionaries, the District, meeting at Vaniyambadi January 24-30, 1924, asked Dr. Brux to present a conference

paper on prayer-fellowship and unionism. This he did, presenting a paper entitled "Christian Prayer and Unionism" at the conference held in Krishnagiri, April 22-25, 1924.⁶ This essay set forth a careful study of Scripture on the subject of prayer, based on the exegesis of 13 passages, of which in the course of the controversy Romans 16:17 was to become the major point of contention. The conclusion he reached was that The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod was going beyond Scripture in its present policy. After much discussion and little agreement, the conference decided to continue the study at its next meeting and asked Rev. F.J.H. Blaess to also present an essay on the subject. The next conference, July 29-August 1, 1924, after hearing the essay by Rev. Blaess and parts of the essay by Dr. Brux and after again reaching no agreement, adjourned with the suggestion that all pastors read both articles for comment at the October meeting. Between August and October Dr. Brux wrote and circulated a rejoinder to the Blaess essay. According to Dr. Brux in his An Appeal to Synod on page 6, Rev. Blaess withdrew his essay at the October conference meeting. However, notes on the Appeal taken by Dr. Friedrich Brand in June 1934 reveal that Rev. Blaess denied withdrawing his essay.⁷ That October conference again ended in disagreement; but since the missionaries all had their work to do, the conference also ended the discussion on the issue with the suggestion that Dr. Brux put his work in final form and send a copy of it to Synod's Board of Foreign Missions in St. Louis.

Parts of Dr. Brux's essay, Rev. Blaess's essay and a record of the conference discussions on the subject had already been sent to the Board as part of the conference minutes.

Dr. Brux completed the essay in 1925, and circulated it among the missionaries for their comments. Only Rev. Kuolt, Rev. Heckel and Rev. Blaess, through his essay, responded to the request for comments on the final essay.⁸ By early 1927 Dr. Brux was ready to send the essay to St. Louis, but in the meantime the Caste Controversy had broken out in India and the Term Controversy was beginning in China. Not wanting to cause more trouble for the Board at the time, Dr. Brux held his essay on file until he himself returned to the United States on furlough in 1931.

While still in India during the years 1927-1932, Dr. Brux continued his work in harmony with the other missionaries. However, Dr. Brux himself states that there was constant suspicion and he always had the feeling of "being in a fishbowl."⁹ An example of this suspicion was when Rev. A.J. Lutz questioned Dr. Brux before the conference on his prayer relationship with a Leipzig missionary in Madras.¹⁰ Another example recorded by Dr. Brux was that one missionary suggested that Dr. Brux not be permitted to take communion with the rest of the conference.¹¹ Other missionaries asked Dr. Brux why he had accepted a call to India in the first place when he knew that he disagreed with the accepted position of the Missouri Synod on prayer-fellowship.¹²

In the personal interview of April 25, 1970, Dr. Brux commented on how he had felt and still feels about the suspicions of him held by most of the other missionaries. He had gone to the same school as his fellow missionaries; he had been taught the same doctrine and practice; he understood the tension his position placed on the sincere consciences of the other missionaries. In regards to the question of why he had accepted the call to India, Dr. Brux states that his position on prayer-fellowship was a gradual development. It began to take shape while he was in the Middle East working with the Protestant missionaries there. He says in the interview:

That (his position on prayer-fellowship) is a position that developed on the field in Syria, in the meeting with these missionaries who were truly devoted Christians. (They) impressed me with the fact that they were as sincere Christians who lived up to the Christian standard as well as we do, perhaps better than some of us. And that naturally had something to do with the question, 'Can we pray with these people?'. And I had no fast and unmovable convictions when I arrived in India, although you might say there was a strong inclination toward the position that I later took; because it was only the study that I undertook then in India at the request of the conference that gave me the Scriptural basis for my position and my firm conviction.¹³

CHAPTER III

CHRISTIAN PRAYER-FELLOWSHIP

It is at this point in the paper before going into the case between Dr. Brux and Synod's Board of Foreign Missions, that the position of the Missouri Synod and Dr. Brux on prayer-fellowship must be studied in some detail. The position of Synod held at the time of the Brux case is outlined first. This is followed by Dr. Brux's analysis of the historical development of that position and why the officials of the Synod were so unwilling to change. Finally there is the presentation of Dr. Brux's position and his reason for taking a stand on that position before Synod.

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod held that any activity with heterodox or sectarian Christians in the area of worship carries with it the natural danger of unionism. The synodical usage of the term unionism implied an unacceptable compromise of Synod's Scriptural and Confessional position. At that time prayer, prayer-fellowship and denominational fellowship with Christians outside the Missouri Synod and the Synodical Conference were included under unionism and therefore prohibited. Question #222 of Schwan's Catechism states that "all believers are in Christ the children of the Father and should, therefore, pray for and with each other." The scholastic confessionalism of Missouri in the 1930's interpreted this in the catechism to mean only the invisible

church and the members of the Synodical Conference.¹⁴

The position of the Synod can best be summarized by the statements of Rev. E. Eckhardt in his Real-Lexikon. This material is quoted by Dr. Brux in his essay on prayer-fellowship and unionism.

1. God's Word commands that we have no communion with teachers of false doctrines. Rom.16:17; Matt.7:15.
2. We are to confess Christ and our faith before men, Matt.10:32. This duty is not to be shirked for even half an hour for the purpose of joining in common prayer with those who differ from us in doctrine.
3. We must avoid becoming partakers of other men's sins, II John 11, which we should become if we should join in prayer with believers of false doctrine.
4. By common prayer we should pretend complete unity with them when, as a matter of fact, there is no unity. This is hypocrisy. The mouth simulates concord of which the heart knows nothing. It would be falseheartedness, if an assembly, the one part of which rejects what the other teaches, should pray together.
5. We should be praying against one another. Whereas we, eg., should pray for the victory of 'sola gratia,' others would pray for the victory of their false doctrine and for the defeat of the divine truth. Not even the Lord's Prayer could be prayed with the same meaning by two differing parties.
6. He who says 'A' must say 'B'. He who begins partnership in prayer must consequently also introduce partnership in the pulpit and in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Common prayer without common pulpit would be a contradiction.
7. The result would be: the false doctrine would appear harmless and indifferent, while the true doctrine would be forgotten.
8. We are to give no offense. Not only those who believe false doctrines, but also the weak in faith among us would regard such practice as acceptance and unionistic tolerance of their false doctrines.

9. Also our Confessional Writings take this position, Mueller, 724, par. 95-99; 703, par. 31. (Triglot, p. 1095; p. 1063.)
10. At the time of the religious discussion between Lutherans, Reformed, Catholics, and Herrnhuters, the Lutherans declined to join in common prayer.
- a. One cannot pray together with one who has been excommunicated.
 - b. Under this head belongs also the misuse of prayer at the opening ceremonies of conventions, world's fairs, congresses, and parliaments, where now a Unitarian, now a Jew speaks the prayer.
 - c. If in a city or village there be no church that believes and teaches the pure doctrine, one ought to hold services in one's own house.
 - d. If one is compelled by circumstances to be present at the worship of those who hold false tenets, one ought to maintain proper conduct, even though one does not join in the prayers.
 - e. Despite this position we do not regard believers in false doctrines as non-Christians.

Objection: Such a position reveals lack of love and a spirit of contentious dogmatism.

Answer: It is a mark of true love not to accede to every wrong wish of our fellowmen.¹⁵

This strong a position against praying with Christians of other denominations was not always present in the Missouri Synod, at least not in the beginning. Dr. C.F.W. Walther in a series of articles covering three issues of Lehre und Wehre in 1868 set up fifteen theses on fellowship that served as the basis for discussion at a pastoral conference. Dr. Brux, in his essay Christian Prayer-Fellowship and Unionism (published in 1935 as a revised and expanded issue of his original 1924 essay), quotes six of these theses as examples of Dr. Walther's position.

Thesis II. Even an error against the clear Word of God on the part of an individual member of the church does not at once, and in fact, deprive him of church-fellowship, confessional fellowship, or collegueship.

- Thesis III. Even an error conflicting with the Word of God and arising and manifesting itself in an entire church-body a false church with which an orthodox Christian, or the orthodox church, would have to break off fellowship.
- Thesis IV. A Christian may be so simple that he cannot be convinced of the unscriptural-ness of an error which he holds with respect to even a secondary fundamental doctrine, and therefore continues in it without needing to be excluded from the orthodox church.
- Thesis V. The church militant has, indeed, the duty to strive after absolute unity in faith and doctrine as the goal, but it never attains a higher degree of unity than a unity in fundamentals.
- Thesis VI. Even errors with respect to non-fundamental, or even secondary fundamental, articles of faith found in the writings of deceased, acknowledgedly orthodox teachers do not stamp these teachers as false teachers, and do not deprive them of the reputation of orthodoxy.
- Thesis IX. They who determinately (halsstarrig) depart from the Word of God, in whatever particular it may be, are to be excluded from the church.¹⁶

These theses of Dr. Walther, including the last one, support the position of Dr. Brux.

Dr. Brux feels, and he uses the position of Dr. Theo. Graebner in the article "The Burden of Infallibility" printed in volume XXXVIII of Concordia Theological Monthly to support his theory, that there was a gradual development from the evangelical position of Dr. Walther to the strict adherence to synodical practice in the 1930's.¹⁷ According to that theory, there developed within the Missouri Synod a feeling of exclusiveness because of the many problems that arose with the Synod's attempts to get together with other American

Lutheran Synods. In this conscious and sincere effort to remain true to Scripture and the Confessions, the members of the Synod began to depend more and more upon the respected opinions of their theological leaders as expressed in the Synodalberichte, the official position papers read at conferences and published. These papers were looked upon by pastors as being the official and clear statement of Lutheran position. Dr. Brux and Dr. Graebner both say that Dr. F. Bente was very influential in developing this attitude of exclusiveness, and the very existence of Eckhardt's Real-Lexikon shows that the Synodalberichte had become almost a secondary source of doctrine along with Scripture and the Confessions.¹⁸ Dr. Brux alleges that the influence of synodical practice had become so strong by the 1930's that the Scriptural passages relevant to prayer-fellowship were interpreted by the Board of Foreign Missions in light of that tradition rather than by sound exegetical and hermeneutical practice. Even today, however, Dr. Brux maintains that the members of Synod with whom he debated the issue of prayer-fellowship were sincerely and honestly convinced of their position. Dr. Brux stated in the interview mentioned above that he realized that accepting his position meant a somewhat drastic change in the attitude of the Synod. He had the goal of placing the entire issue before the members of the Synod so that there might be a complete and thorough re-thinking of the Bible passages and Confessional statements pertaining to prayer-fellowship. Dr. Brux

feels that the refusal of the Board of Foreign Missions to recommend such a study and the failure of the Synod to undertake such a study shows that at that point in its history the Missouri Synod was not ready to give up the burden of infallibility as it has now done since the 1960's and the publishing of Dr. Graebner's article.

The position of Dr. Brux on prayer-fellowship then, as implied in the introduction and stated immediately above, demanded the complete study of Scripture and the Confessions without any historical or traditional bias. The case of Dr. Brux thus depends upon the assumption that he accomplished this in the essay he presented to his fellow missionaries in India in 1924 and later presented to the Board of Foreign Missions in 1931 and later published in its revised and expanded form in 1935. The very detailed, complete and lengthy exposition of Dr. Brux's position is briefly outlined below.

The essay as published in 1935, is divided into three major parts. Parts I and II deal with an examination of the Scriptures and the comparing of Synod's position with that examination. Part III deals with examining the implications of Scripture as they effect prayer, prayer-fellowship, unionism, and the doctrine of the church.

In parts I and II, after giving his reasons why the re-examination of Synod's position is necessary, after stating the position the Missouri Synod held by quoting Eckhardt and after giving the accepted principles of interpretation and application of Scripture, Dr. Brux devotes 58 pages of the

1935 essay to the detailed study of the passages upon which Synod's position stands. He divides these passages into two groups.

- I. Passages held to enjoin avoidance of any kind of religious fellowship with any kind of erring Christian teachers and their adherents, as Matt. 7:15; Rom. 16:17; II Cor. 6: 14; 11:13-15; Gal. 1:6-9; Phil. 3:2; II Thess. 3:6-15; I Tim. 6:3-5; II Tim. 2:16-18; Titus 1:10-16; Titus 3:10; II Peter 2:1ff.; II John 10:11.
- II. Passages held to show the incompatibility and inherent unionism (compromise with error) of prayer-fellowship, on the part of Christians confessing the truth, with erring Christians, as Matt. 5:23-24; Matt. 10:32-33 (Luke 12:8-9); Matt. 18:15-17; Matt. 18:19; Luke 9:26 (Mark 8:38); John 8:31-32; Acts 2:42; Gal. 5:9; Eph. 4:1-6; I Thess. 5:22; Amos 3:3.¹⁹

Because of the impossibility of going into the exegesis of every one of these passages and because Romans 16:17-18 has become the most important passage in the discussion of the case, this paper will only detail the work of Dr. Brux on that one passage. Most of the conclusions and positions arrived at by Dr. Brux in Romans 16:17-18 are the same conclusions noted in the other passages.

Romans 16:17 was the chief proof-text for supporting the Synod's position on prayer-fellowship, and Dr. Brux begins his discussion of the text with a paragraph that argues that on the basis of context verse 18 must be included with verse 17 for any kind of proper interpretation. Dr. Brux argues that with verse 18 included the context alone invalidates the position of Synod because those to be avoided in verse 17 are those who are branded to be blatantly anti-Christian in verse 18. Dr. Brux refers to Stoeckhardt's

Roemerbrief, Zahn's Roemerbrief and Meyer's commentary to support his contention, but he also refers to articles by Dr. P.E. Kretzmann and Dr. Theo. Laetsch in Concordia Theological Monthly as taking the opposite position.²⁰ Because of these disagreeing articles, Dr. Brux does not leave Romans 16:17-18 simply with the argument of context, but begins a detailed word study.

Dr. Brux begins his word study with the Greek present participle, tous poiountas, translated as "Them which cause." Using A.T. Robertson to support his statements on grammar and syntax, Dr. Brux argues that this word has durative action that implies a deliberate and continuing cause, and that the definite article firmly links this action with the intended results of the action - "the divisions" and "the offenses" - both of which also have the definite article. Dr. Brux states that he feels the people referred to in this action are the Judaizers who constantly dogged St. Paul in order to undermine his work.

Dr. Brux then discusses the term, "the divisions" (tas dichostasias) and says that verse 18 ascribes to the authors of "the divisions" a sinister purpose that is based on "good words and fair speeches." Divisions, then, are external factions created to undermine the message preached by Paul and not internal divisions caused through the giving of sincere testimony to what is held to be truth by individuals or groups.

In the study of "the offenses" (ta skandala), Dr. Brux

argues that this word throughout Scripture conveys the meaning of a deliberately set trap. He asserts that the use of this word implies insincerity and hypocrisy on the part of those causing the offenses; thus using deception to cover up the real intent, which is to undermine Paul's message. To support his argument, Dr. Brux refers to Thayer, Moulton, Milligan and Zahn, and in the footnotes he studies the 12 other times skandala is used in the New Testament.²¹

A major part of Dr. Brux's study of the text is the usage of the definite article before the three preceding words. The question is whether these three articles are generic and general or specific and particular in defining their subject.

A generic article is one that designates a genus or a group as a whole and does not specifically, by distinguishing marks or circumstances, single out this one species from the rest of that genus. A specific or particularizing article is one that singles out an individual or individuals from other individuals, or a genus or group from other genera or groups, by designating it as something that is known or that has been pointed out before, or as something that is distinguished by specific marks or circumstances, or as something that is contrasted with others.²²

According to these definitions, tous poiountas, tas dichostasias and ta skandala all have specific definite articles strictly distinguishing them by the qualifiers of verse 18. A further conclusion is that if these articles were generic, then they would imply the word "all" before the participle and the two nouns; thus placing an impossible demand upon the Roman Christians. Finally, Dr. Brux points out that Synod's

position would imply the word "any" before the participle and the nouns; thus demanding indefinite articles that are there, and thus in clear violation of Greek grammar.

The discussion of the clause "contrary to the doctrine which you have learned" centers around two points. The first is that the term "contrary to" must not be taken to mean "alongside of" as had been done in the past, but rather according to New Testament usage as a metaphorical form meaning "in opposition to." Secondly, Dr. Brux argues that "the doctrine which you have learned" does not mean all Christian doctrine, but rather the fundamentals that are being undermined by those which cause the divisions and the offenses. He bases his argument again on the definite article which ties the doctrines into the context; and upon the fact that taking this to mean all Christian doctrine, fundamental and non-fundamental, would force a Christian to deny fellowship in the body of Christ to any person who disagreed with him in the smallest matter.

The term "avoid them" is strong and unequivocal according to Dr. Brux, and therefore, must refer to those people known to the Romans to have never been Christians or are no longer Christians. If St. Paul was referring to erring Christians, he would have suggested a brotherly admonition before urging a complete break, as he did in Titus 3:10-11, I Timothy 1:3 and I Timothy 6:2-3.

In studying the connection between verse 17 and verse 18, Dr. Brux grammatically argues that the connecting particle (gar)

cannot be taken in any way other than as expressing a causal relationship between those people singled out in verse 17 and the actions and motives of those same people in verse 18. He again quotes Stoeckhardt's Roemerbrief to support his position.²³ Dr. Brux also states that the definite article of hoi toioutoi grammatically requires that verses 17 and 18 be connected.

The remaining part of verse 18 is used by Dr. Brux to support his claim that this text refers only to those people who are known to be openly anti-Christian in their attitudes, motives and actions. The ou - alla construction in "serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly" is interpreted to show how mutually exclusive Christians are from those people in the text. The final clause, "and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple," reaffirms and defines the deliberate intentions, motives, and actions of "they which cause the divisions and the offenses."

In his concluding argument on Romans 16:17-18, Dr. Brux states that valid exegesis and interpretation of the text can only reveal that St. Paul was not addressing himself to the question of prayer-fellowship with other Christians, but rather that he was strongly warning the Roman church against people who were well known by their actions as open opponents of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. By this conclusion Dr. Brux has dismissed Romans 16:17 as an argument in support of the Synod's position on prayer-fellowship. By the end of part I and part II of the essay, Dr. Brux has not only done the same thing for every other proof-text used by Synod to support its

position; but one text, II Thess. 3:6-15, he finds to actually come out in support of maintaining fellowship with the erring brother.²⁴

Part III of the essay deals with the implications of what Scripture says or does not say on the subject of prayer-fellowship. The reason for this section is because the Synod's position also rests upon logical deduction as it takes its interpretation of the passages involved and applies that interpretation along with the doctrine of prayer and the doctrine of the church. Dr. Brux asks and answers three major questions in this section: 1) What is Christian Prayer? 2) What is Christian prayer-fellowship? and 3) Are the objections raised against viewing prayer-fellowship as an act of universal Christian fellowship tenable?²⁵ Dr. Brux defines prayer as communion with God, and he quotes synodical statements to support this definition. He concludes that it is a violation of prayer to make this communion with God a confessional statement to men. Dr. Brux then concludes that prayer-fellowship is not objectionable unionism when rightly understood and used, and that it is a proper act of universal Christian fellowship. Quite naturally then, Dr. Brux negatively answers question number three, and he points out the impossibility of carrying out Synod's position in practice.

In concluding the entire essay, Dr. Brux pleads for a truth that rests somewhere in the middle between open unionism and absolute exclusiveness. He ends with the following summary.

Our present Synodical position with respect to prayer-fellowship with Christians of other denominations is that such prayer-fellowship is not permissible on Scriptural grounds.

The foregoing Scriptural investigation of this position has revealed to us:

1. That the Bible passages of group I refer to such persons as may not be regarded as Christians, or, as in the case of II Thess. 3:6-15, clearly enjoin that Christian religious fellowship should be maintained.
2. That the Bible passages of group II do not prove that prayer-fellowship with Christians differing from us in doctrines which do not overthrow the foundation inherently involves a violation of confessional conscience and therefore unionism (compromise of truth).
3. That there is, therefore, not one Bible passage to uphold Synod's negative position, and that the claim that the Scriptures forbid prayer-fellowship with Christians of other denominations thus falls to the ground.
4. That, on the contrary, the Scriptures base prayer and prayer-fellowship on fundamental faith in Christ as Redeemer, not on agreement in every particular of doctrine, and thereby make prayer-fellowship an act of universal Christian fellowship and a normal expression of the existing brotherhood of all Christians in the universal church.
5. That prayer-fellowship with Christians of other denominations becomes impossible only when circumstances carry into the act such implications as will necessarily involve a violation of the confessional position and conscience and thereby give offense.
6. That Synod's negative position breaks down in practice, because it is felt by many to violate the facts and truths of the universal church, and that it should, therefore, be changed to conform to what the Scriptures teach with respect to the church, to prayer, and to prayer-fellowship, to wit: Eph. 2:18-22 and Eph. 4:1-6.²⁶

CHAPTER IV

CONTROVERSY PART I

As has been already mentioned, Synod's Board of Foreign Missions knew of Dr. Brux's position long before he returned to the United States in 1931. The Board's visiting committee had met with Dr. Brux in India. Dr. Friedrich Brand, Executive Director of the Board, makes reference to that visit in a letter of May 11, 1931.²⁷ In the same letter, Dr. Brand also advised Dr. Brux that he has asked Rev. J.F. Boerger (the same man who had persuaded Dr. Brux to enter the ministry), a member-at-large of the Board and later the President of the South Wisconsin District, to discuss the subject with Dr. Brux. These two men met in May of 1931 in Racine. In his Appeal, Dr. Brux indicates that Rev. Boerger agreed with him on his interpretation of the passages involved.²⁸ However, the Board minutes of August 4, 1931 reveal a report by Rev. Boerger to the Board saying that he has not yet convinced Dr. Brux of his error.²⁹ During that summer Dr. Brux sent two copies of his essay to St. Louis, the receipt of which was acknowledged by Dr. Brand on August 22, 1931. According to Dr. Brux, one of the copies was to be used by Dr. Brand and the Executive Committee in St. Louis; the other was to be circulated among all the members-at-large on the Plenary Board.³⁰

On August 25, 1931, Dr. Brux, with several other missionaries on furlough, met with the Board in St. Louis, in Plenary

Session. During that meeting the second part of the essay, the part dealing with the application of the exegesis in the first part, was discussed and in some cases attacked. Dr. Brux pointed out that in fairness the second part of the essay could not be discussed until the first part had been properly studied. Since nobody but Dr. Brux, Dr. Brand and Rev. Boerger had read the essay, the meeting made no progress and the Board resolved that Rev. Boerger and Professor M.S. Sommer form a committee to discuss the issues with Dr. Brux. The first meeting of this committee took place the next day at Concordia Publishing House, but since Prof. Sommer had not yet studied the paper, it made no progress. The second meeting was held at the Hotel LaSalle, Chicago, on September 18, but made no headway because Prof. Sommer insisted on discussing only the second part of the essay. A third meeting was held in Racine, in Rev. Boerger's study on October 10. The discussion centered on the interpretation of Titus 3:10-11, but made no progress, and ended when Prof. Sommer made the statement, "I am not open to instruction in this matter. I ceased to be open to instruction from the day I took office in the ministry."³¹ This lack of openness on the part of Prof. Sommer, and later by other members of Synod is cited by Dr. Brux in his Appeal for the following reasons:

It grieves me to have to report such facts; but since a knowledge of the attitude shown by the Board, by individual members of it, and by committee members, is absolutely necessary to an understanding of the unfairness and injustice involved in the Board's procedure against me, I am constrained to record what I would otherwise

gladly leave unmentioned. What is said here holds also for other facts to be mentioned later.³²

In October, Dr. Brux attempted to meet privately with Dr. Brand, but before that could happen, Dr. Brux was invited to attend a meeting of the Plenary Board on November 17. This invitation was extended by resolution by the Board on October 19, after they had received a negative report from Rev. Boerger and Prof. Sommer on the meeting of October 10. That Board resolution also includes the statement, "that if he (Brux) does not alter his position, we cannot let him return to India."³³ This statement by the Board of Foreign Missions indicates that the Board had already made up its mind on the position of Dr. Brux. The members of the Board saw that it was in clear violation of the accepted position of Synod. However, it must also be stated here, that throughout the history of the case the Board maintained that it was a representative of the members of Synod and not a Board to decide Synod's theological position. It felt that it was correct in not returning to the field a man who disagreed with accepted positions, and that it was correct in refusing to theologically debate the issue. If Synod's position was to change, then that was up to Synod and not the Board of Foreign Missions.

At the Plenary Session of the Board on November 17 and 18, it became apparent that Dr. Brand had not circulated the Brux essay since only Dr. Brux, Dr. Brand, Prof. Sommer, Rev. Boerger and Prof. S.C. Ylvisaker (a professor at Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, Minnesota and a member of the Norweg-

ian Evangelical Lutheran Synod) had read it.³⁴ After much argument and an attempt to apply Gal. 1:8-9 against Dr. Brux, there was no mutual understanding. At that time Dr. Brux felt that he might as well ask the Board for a decision, but Dr. William Arndt, secretary of the Board and professor at Concordia Seminary, suggested that it would be better if the faculty of the seminary give a thorough study to the whole matter.³⁵ This was in keeping with the Board's attitude that it was not a theological policy maker and in keeping with Synodical practice that the seminary faculty review theological matters. Dr. Brux agreed to this suggestion in a letter of November 18, and he also agreed that in the meantime he would abide by the accepted practices of the Missouri Synod.

The faculty of the seminary informed the Board that it declined to hear the issue, and suggested that two of Dr. Brux's former teachers, Profs. L. Fuerbringer and Theo. Graebner, have a meeting with Dr. Brux and discuss the problems.³⁶ Dr. Brux was not informed of this decision until February 6, 1932, because the seminary faculty did not inform the Board of its decision until February 2. Dr. Brux was advised by letter that a meeting was to be held the following February 12, in President Fuerbringer's office. The meeting took place, but Dr. Fuerbringer had not read the essay and Dr. Graebner had only read part of it. Still, on the basis of the discussion, the two faculty representatives made a negative report to the Board on March 1, 1932.³⁷ On that same day Dr. Arndt requested that Dr. Brux write a study on C.F.W.

Walther's articles in Lehre und Wehre of 1868 dealing with fellowship with other Christians, and the Board resolved for a further statement by Brux on his position. This Dr. Brux did, sending his comments to Dr. Brand and Dr. Arndt on March 11. The Board minutes of March 21, 1932 acknowledge the receipt of Dr. Brux's material and ask Dr. Brand and Dr. Arndt to study the matter. There is no further reply ever given by the Board to this material on Walther.

At its next two meetings, April 26 and May 3, the Executive Committee discussed the Brux case. Then on May 16, 1932, the St. Louis Board drafted the following resolution to be presented to the Plenary Board at its next meeting:

WHEREAS, Missionary A.A. Brux no longer holds and confesses with us that Christians having the pure Word of God should not have prayer-fellowship with sectarian Christians, but on the contrary holds and declares that the prayer-fellowship is required of them not only in private, but also in public, e.g. in prayer-meetings;
 THEREFORE, be it herewith resolved with sincere regrets that we cannot return him as a missionary to India.

It was resolved to adopt this resolution and to submit it to the Plenary Board for approval.³⁸

Dr. Brux was not informed of this resolution until June 10, with the Plenary Board scheduled to meet at Concordia, Milwaukee, on June 14. Dr. Brux was invited to attend that meeting by a St. Louis Board resolution of June 8.³⁹

At the meeting of June 14, Dr. Brux defended himself and refuted the resolution of the St. Louis Board. First, he pointed out that only three of the seventeen present had read the essay in question, and that no mention had been made of

his comments on Walther's article. Dr. Brand then read some excerpts from the essay for the benefit of those present, but Dr. Brux objected to this as being unfair. Dr. Brux refuted the resolution on two points. Against premise I of the resolution, Dr. Brux pointed out that the Confessions nowhere mention prayer-fellowship as such and that they do not condemn his position as he has qualified it, "When circumstances and need require it and when no violation of our confessional position is involved."⁴⁰ He also appealed to question #222 of Schwan's Catechism. Against premise II, he appealed to several limiting statements in the essay. The Board finally resolved to put off a vote until they all had time to study the essay.⁴¹ At this meeting, Professor Sommer re-affirmed the statement he had made at the meeting of October 10, 1931. The Board also resolved to ask Dr. Brux to supply all members with a copy of his essay.

Dr. Brux, however, was not satisfied, since the resolution of May 16 was still pending. Therefore, on July 11 he wrote a letter to Dr. Brand asking that the resolution be dropped. In that letter he restated the arguments verbally given at the Plenary Board in 13 short paragraphs. Dr. Brux also furnished all the members of the Plenary Board with copies of his essay and with copies of his comments on Walther's articles. Another problem arose over Dr. Brux's request for a written statement of the Board's position. He believed that the meeting of June 14, 1932, resolved to supply him with that

statement, and on June 24, asked for that statement. He was informed by letter that no such resolution had been passed. Feeling that he was entitled to a written document for study and reply, he then requested a stenographic record of the next Plenary Board meeting tentatively scheduled for October 4. No written reply was made by Dr. Arndt or Dr. Brand to this request.

During this period before the October Plenary Board meeting, the St. Louis Board had met several times. On July 5, it had appointed Rev. H. Maack and Rev. Wm. Maschoff to read the essay and report on it to the Board.⁴² On July 18, the Board also asked Rev. Maack and Rev. Maschoff to consider the July 11th letter of protest from Dr. Brux.⁴³ On August 15, 1932, Rev. Maack and Rev. F.A. Mehl report that they cannot approve of returning Dr. Brux to India, and the Board resolves to request all the members to express their opinions.⁴⁴ By the September 6th meeting Rev. K. Kretzschmar, Rev. S.C. Ylvisaker, Rev. H.M. Zorn and Rev. Wm. Maschoff report against Brux. That meeting also resolved to invite Brux to the Plenary Session.⁴⁵ By the September 19th meeting the two remaining members of the Executive Committee, Rev. F.H. Eggers and Rev. H.C. Steinhoff had replied against returning Dr. Brux to India. At this meeting the Plenary Session was officially set for October 4, 1932, in order to finalize the Brux case, however, some members could not attend so the meeting was changed to October 11-12, 1932.⁴⁶

At the October 11 meeting of the Plenary Board the re-

quest for a stenographic copy was denied Dr. Brux on the basis that it would be expensive and that the board members would have to be careful of what they said.⁴⁷ The meeting then began its discussion of Dr. Brux's essay, but limited its work on the first part to Romans 16:17. There was considerable disagreement over the exegesis of ta skandala and the intent of St. Paul in dealing with the teacher or the doctrine in the text.⁴⁸ The Board minutes on this discussion are very complete and record much of the discussion. Dr. Brux argued that the Board's exegesis was untenable and that other passages need consideration also. Despite the objection of Dr. Brux, the members of the Board then moved on to Part II of the essay (Part III in the 1935 essay). Dr. Brux also objected to the Board's assumption that since his exegesis had not been accepted that his conclusions on prayer-fellowship and church-fellowship must also be wrong. He also argued against the Board's usage of the Confessions (Triglot, 983, 847, 857, 1095 and Art. XII of the Formula of Concord) since he was not arguing for any toleration of error. The Board adjourned on the 11th and informed Dr. Brux that his presence was not necessary the next day. The minutes of the Mission Board of October 12, 1932, record the following resolution:

On the morning of Oct. 12, Dr. Brux no longer being present, several resolutions were passed pertaining to his case. They read as follows:

1. Since Dr. Brux in his paper on "Prayer-Fellowship" has departed from the accepted Scriptural position of our Synod with respect to prayer with heterodox Christians, as he himself acknowledges, and since

our long continued efforts to convince him of the error of his position have been unavailing, RESOLVED that we cannot return him to the field in India if he does not recede from his position within the time stated in his remarks as given in the Minutes above.

2. RESOLVED furthermore that we await the definite answer of Dr. Brux referred to in the foregoing, and that if he continues to hold his present position, his connection with our Board terminate Oct. 31, 1932, and that his salary cease Nov. 30, 1932.⁴⁹

Dr. Brux had requested on October 11, that in lieu of a stenographic record that had been refused, the Board send him a copy of the secretary's minutes. This arrived on October 20. Dr. Brux then, on October 29, replied in a letter of twelve pages to the charges brought against him. First of all, he objected to the "ultimatum" tone of the resolution coming from what he thought to have been a meeting of brotherly concern and love over difference in Scriptural interpretation. Secondly, he strongly objected to being judged on "the accepted Scriptural position of Synod." Beyond knowing that he was not in agreement with the accepted position, he believed this resolution to be in complete disagreement with Synod's own position on the Reformation and Confessional doctrine of sola Scriptura. Finally, in defense of his conscience being judged only by the Word of God, he quoted Luther's refusal to recant before the Diet of Worms. In the meantime, several supporters of Dr. Brux from Chicago had written to the Board on his behalf, and on November 5, a proposition was sent by Dr. Brux and several supporters to the Board. This statement contained four parts for settling the controversy. It pro-

posed, A) that the essay be placed before Synod, B) that the Board itself drop the controversy altogether, C) that a Scriptural modus vivendi be achieved between Dr. Brux and the Board pending synodical action, and D) that Dr. Brux refrain from objectionable prayer-fellowship and that both parties put out no propaganda.⁵⁰

The Board meeting on the first of November acknowledged Dr. Brux's latest letter, the receipt of several protest letters and impending suggestions from the protesting clergymen in Chicago. Dr. F. Pfothauer, President of the Missouri Synod, was present and reported that Dr. Brux has the right to a Fiduciary Committee if he so asks. It was resolved to ask all the members of the Board whether or not a Fiduciary Committee should be granted.⁵¹ The Board met again on November 21, and at that meeting 35 protest letters were read. The Board stated again that Dr. Brux's quarrel is with a Synodical position and not with the Board itself. It also re-affirmed that since it has the right to issue calls into the foreign mission field, it also has the right to withdraw calls. The Board resolved that Dr. Brux had been admonished sufficiently and thus the protests were unjustified. It resolved to appoint a committee to answer the Chicago solution it had received. It resolved not to form a Fiduciary Committee unless asked to so do. It resolved to re-affirm its resolution of October 12th. That evening the Board further resolved unan-
imously to decline to Chicago solution and to form a committee

to answer the protest letters.⁵² On November 29th the Board read the suggested letter of reply to the protest letters; adopted the letter of reply, and sent copies of the reply to all the members-at-large for their comments.⁵³ On December 6th the Board sent their reply to all the protesters and resolved to ask Dr. Brux not to accept a call while his case is pending or the Board would be forced to report to the District Presidents.⁵⁴

On December 8, 1932, before receiving notification of the Board's action of December 6th, Dr. Brux replied to their resolutions of November 21st with the strongest letter he had written to date. He again attacked the Board for its position of judging on the accepted position of Synod rather than on Scripture alone. He also made comments on the injustices of the Board up to this point in the controversy, and in conclusion he made a very strong analogy between the way the Board was treating him and the treatment Martin Luther received at the hands of the Roman Catholic Church during the Reformation. He again appealed for settlement by a mutually acceptable committee and for written proof of where he was wrong Scripturally and/or Confessionally. On the same day that Dr. Brux mailed the above letter, he received the letter of December 6th from the Board stating the resolutions.

We regret very much that it is incumbent upon us to notify our brethren in the Synod of the saddening relation obtaining at present between you and us. As you are aware, you are now not eligible for a ministerial office in our organization because of your erring doctrinal position (Titus 1:9).

However, we are loathe to publish your name as we have not yet given up all hope that you will by the grace of God retrace your steps and return to the Scriptural doctrinal position you formerly confessed with us.

In this hope we would like to ask you herewith for a written promise that you will not be a candidate for nor accept any ministerial office, pulpit or otherwise, in the Synodical Conference without first making your peace with our Synod, respect with our Board. If you will kindly consent to give us that assurance, we believe we shall be warranted to withhold for the immediate present the publication of the fact that you are not now available.

May we not hope that you will find it possible to favor us with the promise in question within the limits of one week?⁵⁵

One can imagine the response of Dr. Brux to this statement. He replied in a seven page letter, dated December 23, and sent a copy to the Board, one to President Pfothenauer and one to every person who had protested the Board's action on his behalf. This letter restated the history of the case up to then, restated his objections to the Board's actions and appealed for a committee hearing. He also stated rather strongly just how and where the Board had overstepped its authority in declaring him ineligible for a call. At that time in Synod and still today, only the district to which a minister belongs has the right to declare a man ineligible for a call. On December 26th the Board acknowledged the letter from Dr. Brux and restated its position. On the request for a hearing committee, the Board said that it would grant a Fiduciary Committee as recommended by President Pfothenauer.⁵⁶ On the basis of this letter, Dr. Brux answered with more defense of his position, and on the same day, January 2, 1933, he applied to President

Pfotenhauer for a Fiduciary Committee.

The Fiduciary Committee was to have three members; one chosen by Dr. Brux, one by the Board and the third by the other two members. By January 13, Dr. Brux had selected Dr. W.H.T. Dau as his representative on the Fiduciary Committee; but the Board, because Prof. F. Wegner of the Springfield seminary and Dr. Theo. Engelder declined to serve on the committee, was not able to make its selection of a representative until March 20th, when Prof. Theo. Laetsch was chosen.⁵⁷ Rev. H. Daib, President of the North Wisconsin District, was chosen as the third member of the committee on May 1, and the Fiduciary Committee was scheduled to meet in Chicago on May 18-20, 1933.⁵⁸

Between the decision to have a Fiduciary Committee and its actual meeting, several things happened in the case. First, in January, President Pfotenhauer spoke before the District Presidents and announced that Dr. Brux was ineligible for a call into the ministry.⁵⁹ This action was one of the four charges brought by Dr. Brux against the Synodical President because it violated the Synod's Constitution (Article XI, par.1) and the By-Laws (page 9, par.8; page 19, par. 4; and page 27 E). Those charges involved the fact that President Pfotenhauer acted before the South Wisconsin District had even considered the case, and that only the District President can pronounce a man ineligible. Also in the Spring of 1933 the Board had asked President Boerger to use his in-

fluence in stopping Dr. Brux from mailing his essay to all the ministers in Synod, and the Board issued on March 27th the "Second Statement of the Board of Foreign Missions on the Case of Dr. A.A. Brux."⁶⁰ Dr. Brux replied to this on April 6, 1933, and the bulk of the reply centered again around the Board's insistence on "the accepted Synodical position on Scripture" over against Dr. Brux's insistence on an open use of sola Scriptura. Dr. Brux felt that this attitude of the Board prejudged any discussion on Scripture and was in direct violation of Scripture, Luther, the Confessions and the article of Dr. C.F.W. Walther of 1868 which Dr. Brux had reviewed, but on which the Board had decline to comment. The Board, of course, felt that it was doing a responsible job in fulfilling the task Synod had given to, and that to do more in the field of theology or less in the field of upholding Synodical position would be in violation of its purpose.

Finally the Fiduciary Committee met in Chicago on May 18-20, 1933. The following is the statement issued by that committee:

The Fiduciary Committee, organized to examine the differences that have arisen between Dr. A. Brux and his Board of Foreign Missions, reports with regret that it has been unable to arrive at a unanimous conclusion as regards the doctrinal differences between Dr. A. Brux and the Board.

The Committee, however, is unanimous in the conviction that in the important issue that has been created, a fraternal discussion of the points in the controversy should be continued. And the Committee suggests that for such discussions with Dr. Brux the Board choose one of its members and one who is not a member of the Board, the latter to be agreeable to Dr. Brux.

Signed: H. Daib
 Theo. Laetsch
 W.H.T. Dau⁶¹

Since he was without salary, Dr. Brux expected quick action on the recommendation of the Fiduciary Committee, but it was not until July 29th that the Board acted. In the meantime, Dr. Brux, Rev. Boerger and the South Wisconsin Pastoral Conference had all appealed to the Board and to President Pfotenhauer to speed things up, but the President had refused to become involved. This was rather odd since in a meeting much later on September 12, with Rev. Boerger, Rev. Grother and Rev. Grueber, President Pfotenhauer admitted that he had recommended to the Board that it reject the Fiduciary Committee report.⁶²

The statement of the Board of Foreign Missions on July 29th said the following:

. . .resolved:
 To enter into no new negotiations with Dr. A.A. Brux, because it considers these to be unpromising (aussichtslos);

To desist from further financial assistance of Dr. Brux.⁶³

Dr. Brux considered the actions of the Board unjust, shocking and unfair. While the Fiduciary Committee did not have a mandatory authority, Dr. Brux felt that the Board was at least morally obligated to honor the opinion of a committee it had suggested and to which it had agreed. Correspondence in August with President Pfotenhauer convinced Dr. Brux that an application for a hearing before a Synodical Committee would be foolish. This was because 1) President Pfotenhauer said that

normally there was no appeal from the decision of a Synodical Committee and 2) Dr. Brux felt that President Pfothenhauer's interpretation of a Synodical Committee as representing all of Synod in its final judgment was in violation of Synodical practice.

Dr. Brux then turned to his home South Wisconsin District for help. He supplied President Boerger with a statement of his position of September 9, and on the basis of that statement the Pastoral Conference sent a committee to meet with President Pfothenhauer. The result was the previously mentioned meeting of September 12, in which President Pfothenhauer acknowledged his advice to the Board, but also in which he indicated that he would be favorably disposed to a District recommendation to the Board that it re-open the case. This the District did on October 2, 1933.⁶⁴ Its main argument was that many pastors agreed with Dr. Brux and his exegesis of Scripture, and therefore Synod ought to settle this issue rather than bury it. It cited as example a paper delivered by Dr. Victor Bartling on Romans 16:17 at Concordia College, Milwaukee. On October 30, the Board rejected the South Wisconsin overture, stating that it had "dealt sufficiently patiently, frequently, and untiringly with Dr. Brux...."⁶⁵

Dr. Brux now had a formal appeal to Synod ready for publication, but Rev. Boerger convinced him to try once more. This Dr. Brux did in a letter of January 18, 1934, in which he appealed for one more plenary Board meeting. The Board agreed only to an Executive Board meeting, which met in St. Louis on

January 30. Along with the Executive Board and Dr. Brux; Rev. Boerger, Rev. Wm. Grother, Rev. F.H. Eggers and Rev. Frank Esemann were present representing the South Wisconsin District. The district representatives asked that Dr. Brux be declared eligible for a call if he agreed to a statement on II Thess. 3:6-11. To this the Executive Board resolved that Dr. Brux would be declared eligible for a call only if 1) he signed the statement on II Thess. 3:6-11, 2) if he retracted the introduction of his essay, 3) if he retracted all statements rejecting the position of the Synod in the first part of his essay, and 4) if he retracted the entire second part of his essay.⁶⁶ This Dr. Brux refused to do in a letter of February 18th to the South Wisconsin District, and on April 23, 1934, Dr. Brux formally published his An Appeal to Synod. Dr. Brux had become convinced that there was no hope of getting the Synod to study the question of prayer-fellowship by going through established channels, so he stepped outside of those channels and took his case directly to the members of Synod. He mailed his Appeal to every pastor in the Missouri Synod and to as many convention delegates as he could find names and addresses. The Board of Foreign Missions acknowledged receiving the Appeal on June 18, 1934, and resolved to refer it to the Plenary Board for study.⁶⁷ In August the South Wisconsin District supported the Board and declared Dr. Brux ineligible for a call.⁶⁸ The Mission Board also resolved in November not to answer the Appeal publically and to appoint

Dr. Brand, Rev. K. Kretzschmar and Rev. F. Eggers to represent it at the Cleveland Convention.⁶⁹

The Appeal itself was a 34 page booklet privately printed by Dr. Brux. In it is the appeal itself, 24 charges directed against the Board of Foreign Missions and its General Secretary, The Rev. F. Brand, D.D., four charges against the President of Synod and a history of the case. It was with this publication that Dr. Brux rested his case until The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod met in delegate convention in Cleveland, Ohio, on June 19-28, 1935.

CHAPTER V

SYNODICAL CONVENTION - 1935

The appeal of Dr. Brux came under the area of Miscellaneous Matters at the convention and was referred to Committee 22B, consisting of Pastors T. Strieter and J. Kavasch, Teachers L.B. Abraham and Lay Delegates E.W. Bartig and O. Rentner. They were to deal with the charges brought against Synod by Dr. Brux and with the essay, Christian Prayer-Fellowship and Unionism, officially published and distributed to Synod by Dr. Brux in May of 1935. On June 24, Committee 22B reported to Synod that it had reached agreement. The Committee agreed on the Scriptural basis for prayer-fellowship, on warning against compromising the truth in certain situations, on changing some objectionable phrases by Dr. Brux on clarity of Scripture, on recommending that Dr. Brux be eligible for a call and be returned to India, and finally, that this whole matter be submitted to Synod for serious study; the results of which were to be published through official church organs. The resolution stated that Dr. Brux would withdraw his appeal upon acceptance of the resolution.⁷⁰

The resolution was presented to President Pfothenauer the evening of the 24th, and he objected to much of the wording. He thus directed the committee to re-work the resolution.⁷¹ This was done on June 25th, with, according to Dr. Brux, the personal assurance of Dr. Arndt and Rev. Kretzschmar that this

would be done in a fair and loving way that included a financial settlement for the period of November 30, 1932 to June 30, 1935.⁷² The final resolution was shown to Dr. Brux on the morning of June 26. He objected to the inclusion of the word "Therefore" before the sentence declaring him eligible for a call; on the grounds that such wording indicated that he was exonerated of guilt because of his statements at the time of the convention. Dr. Brux felt that he had never been in error. Committee Chairman Strieter agreed to drop the word in question. Dr. Brux also objected to the wording of the second paragraph on the grounds that it failed to communicate properly that he had withdrawn his charges of false doctrine "in view of the acceptance of my doctrinal statement" and that he had withdrawn his appeal "in view of the amicable settlement reached."⁷³ Rev. Strieter said that such re-wording would take too long that morning, and he assured Dr. Brux that such was the intention of the present wording. Dr. Brux reluctantly accepted Rev. Strieter's assurance and the resolution was adopted by Synod before lunch on that day.

The adopted resolution (page 293 of the Proceeding of the 1935 convention) appears to say basically the same as the first resolution, only in a more vague way. The vagueness caused many problems of interpretation later, but the resolution caused the most problems for what it did not say. The call for an official Synodical study of prayer-fellowship was dropped, and there was no specific mention of financial settlement.

CHAPTER VI

CONTROVERSY PART II

Almost immediately after the convention, at which all had thought that an agreeable solution had been reached, trouble broke out again between Dr. Brux and the Board of Foreign Missions. It centered around three basic issues: 1) Dr. Brux and his attempt to receive a salary and reimbursement of back pay, 2) Dr. Brux's attempt to attain clarity in the meaning of paragraphs 2 and 3 of the 1935 resolution, and 3) the returning of Dr. Brux to the Indian mission field. This paper takes these issues separately rather than chronologically since it would be quite confusing to use the latter method.

Based on his discussions with members of Synodical Committee 22B and members of the Board of Foreign Missions during the convention, Dr. Brux had assumed that he would immediately be started on salary as a missionary in status quo and that he would receive reimbursement for the years he was not paid. On July 3, 1935, Dr. Brux wrote to the Board inquiring as to his financial status since he had received nothing to that point, and Dr. Arndt had promised that his salary would begin on July 1. On July 6th the Board resolved to ask the Brux family to have physicals in preparation for returning to India and it also passed the following resolution:

That you are not on salary with the Board;

That you will not be on salary of the Board until you

have obtained a call here in the States in case the medical examination to which we asked you and your wife to submit should result in a negative verdict;

That a one-time grant of \$150 be made to you, which will reach you as soon as we can get the money from the Fiscal Office.⁷⁴

During the week of July 6th, the Board also received a letter from Rev. W.O. Speckhard expressing the opinion that Dr. Brux was entitled to back salary. To this the Board responded in the negative. The Board also received a request from the South Wisconsin District, through Rev. Boerger, that the Board in love and good will should help Dr. Brux with his \$1500 debt; especially since friends were raising money to get him back to India. To this the Board resolved: 1) not to assume Dr. Brux's debt in part or in whole, 2) that it was correct in already having begun discussions on returning Dr. Brux to India, 3) that it would be better for the friends of Dr. Brux to pay his debt and let the Board pay his traveling expenses, and 4) when Dr. Brux returns to India his salary will be computed as if he had served continually since 1923.⁷⁵

Dr. Brux acknowledged receiving the \$150 grant on July 15, but he was quite unhappy about the settlement. First of all, this made it financially necessary for him to accept a position at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago in the summer of 1935 in order to support his family. Secondly, it reflected an attitude on the part of the Board that made his first call to India in 1923 (still valid in the mind of Dr. Brux) depend upon a physical examination in 1935.

Dr. Brux expressed his concern over what he considered this violation of the 1935 resolution in a letter dated September 30, 1935, and addressed to the new President of Synod, Dr. J.W. Behnken. On the part of the Board of Foreign Missions, it must be said that the Board itself was hard pressed in these financial matters. There was no written resolution instructing it to issue reimbursement for Dr. Brux; and because its budget had already been submitted and approved by Synod, it had enough trouble finding funds just to get Dr. Brux over to India and pay him there.

As for the wording and interpretation of the second and third paragraphs of the 1935 resolution, there was a growing and bitter misunderstanding by Dr. Brux and by the Board. Those two paragraphs read as follows:

Dr. Brux states that he withdraws his appeal and expressed his regret for the publication of any subjective judgements. He withdraws the charge of false doctrine against Synod. As for the essay Prayer-Fellowship, he states that he had never considered the treatise as final, but merely as a contribution to the discussion of the issue. Dr. Brux states his doctrinal position thus: --

'Scripture very plainly prohibits compromise of the truth, indifference to doctrine, unionism, and giving of offense and therefore forbids every kind of prayer-fellowship which involves one of these objectionable features. -- There are in the domain of casuistry cases where the question whether unionistic prayer-fellowship is involved cannot be answered in advance.'⁷⁶

Dr. Brux took these paragraphs to be in complete agreement with what he had been saying all along. He had withdrawn his Appeal and he had withdrawn his charges of false doctrine, but he did not take the resolution to imply at all that he had withdrawn his doctrinal stance on prayer-fellowship. He had

also assumed that Synod would make a complete study of the matter. In the afternoon of June 26, 1935, immediately after the resolution had been passed, Dr. Brux again received the assurance of Rev. Strieter that the committee was of the same interpretation of the resolution as was Dr. Brux. That, however, did not change the wording and on July 3, 1935, Dr. Brux wrote to Rev. Strieter asking that a footnote be approved by President Behnken and attached to the resolution clarifying the statement of paragraphs 2 and 3. Rev. Strieter answered on July 9th that he could not instruct Rev. M.F. Kretzmann, the convention secretary, to make any additions to the proceedings of the convention, but that he would send a signed statement of intention and interpretation to Rev. Kretzmann. If Dr. Behnken approved, it could then be attached to the resolution. On July 11, Dr. Brux sent his suggested rewording to Rev. Strieter, who in turn on July 17, submitted it to Rev. Kretzmann and Dr. Behnken.

The request to have this statement attached to the proceedings was denied, and for unexplained reasons, on July 30, in response to a request for comment by Dr. Brand on the issues, Rev. Strieter made a complete about-face in regards to Dr. Brux. His statement of July 30, was in direct opposition to the views of Dr. Brux as to what was meant by the Cleveland resolution. On September 2, 1935, Dr. Brand visited Dr. Brux in Chicago to discuss the financial arrangements of returning to India, but in the course of the visit Dr. Brux

stated that he held the Board and the South Wisconsin District to be in error as to carrying out the 1935 resolution. Dr. Brand requested that the reasons for error be submitted to the Board in written form, and Dr. Brux did this in a letter of formal charges dated September 8, 1935, with copies sent to Dr. Brand, Dr. Arndt and Rev. Strieter. On September 16th Dr. Brand reported to the Board that he had met Dr. Brux.⁷⁷ He reported that Dr. Brux disagreed with the Board's interpretation of the Synodical resolution, and that he (Dr. Brand) had requested Dr. Brux to make his charges in writing. Dr. Brand then read the September 8th letter of Dr. Brux which charged the Board and the South Wisconsin District of error. Dr. Arndt wrote a memorandum which stated that Dr. Brux still held the position he had held prior to the Cleveland convention and that he had not retracted anything. This memorandum was referred to the Board's Executive Committee for study. The opposite interpretations of the Cleveland resolution now had the two contending parties back to where they had been before the convention.

The Executive Committee never met on the subject of Dr. Arndt's memorandum, because on September 30th Dr. Brux had appealed to Dr. Behnken to settle the issue. The Board held a special meeting on October 7, 1935, at which time Dr. Brux's appeal to Dr. Behnken was reported. The Board resolved to send a detailed statement to Dr. Brux of all it had done to carry out the Synodical resolution; to postpone the steamship

reservations to India that had been arranged; to request President Behnken to set up a meeting with all concerned; to send Board members Wm. Arndt, G. Schmidt and K. Kretzschmar to such a meeting; and to affirm that it did not owe Dr. Brux back salary.

The special meeting called by President Behnken met in Chicago at the Morrison Hotel on November 7, 1935. Present at this meeting were Dr. Brux, President Behnken, Dr. Pfotenhauer, Dr. Arndt, Vice-President Kretzmann, Mr. G. Schmidt, Rev. Strieter; and at the request of Dr. Brux, Revs. Dankworth, Mauer, Proehl, Sievers and Attorney O. Rentner, who had been a lay delegate on Committee 22B at Cleveland.⁷⁸ While this meeting discussed all three major issues that arose after Cleveland, the end results were that Dr. Brux was instructed to retract his letter of September 8, 1935, and to affirm the Board's interpretation of paragraphs 2 and 3 of the 1935 resolution. In return for this the Board would expedite the sending of Dr. Brux back to India and the re-establishment of his salary. Dr. Brux refused to do this on the grounds that the Cleveland convention had accepted his position and he therefore need not retract or recant anything; and on the grounds that the Chicago meeting's part of the bargain was already granted to him by the 1935 convention. At this Chicago meeting, Dr. Arndt also raised the charge of heresy against Dr. Brux; but it was never formally presented to Synod, although Dr. Brux did include reference to that charge in his

re-appeal of 1938.⁷⁹

As for the issue of returning Dr. Brux to India after the Cleveland Convention, Dr. Brux charged that the Board here too had dragged its feet and failed to carry out the directives of the Synod. The first delay was because of the legitimate request of the Board that Dr. Brux and his family receive medical examinations, as was required of all missionaries before they returned to the field from furlough. Corresponding to this delay and extending to August 28, was the problem of getting funds allocated to finance Dr. Brux once he did return to India. On July 18th the Board had, through Dr. Behnken and Dr. Pfotenhauer, requested the Synodical Board of Directors to finance Dr. Brux's return to India since the Board of Foreign Mission's budget would not cover it.⁸⁰ The Board of Directors declined to take any action then, so on August 16th the request was re-submitted.⁸¹ There was some confusion as to who had the authority to allocate the funds, but finally on August 28th the money (\$3000) was granted. The Board began drafting a call to Dr. Brux and it instructed Dr. Brand to visit him.⁸² The major problem began, however, when Dr. Brand visited Dr. Brux on September 2, 1935. The purpose of the visit was to inform Dr. Brux of the \$3000 made available and to make arrangements for transportation from Chicago to India. As mentioned earlier, the subject of back salary came up at this visit as well as charges of error by Dr. Brux against the Board. This resulted in the letter of

September 8, 1935, the memorandum of Dr. Arndt, the letter of Dr. Brux to President Behnken of September 30, and the meeting in Chicago on November 7. After that meeting, and although there was some further correspondence, neither the Board was predisposed to send Dr. Brux to India, nor was Dr. Brux willing to accept the Board's preconditions to a call to India.

Nothing further happened in regards to the case of Dr. Brux, on an official level, until Dr. Brux published his Re-Appeal to Synod on April 30, 1938. This re-appeal contains the reasons for his re-appeal, his statement of what was meant by the Cleveland resolution, his account of what happened in violation of that resolution between 1935 and 1938, a demonstration of the correctness of his position on prayer-fellowship as opposed to the position of the Board of Foreign Missions, a refutation of the charges of heresy by Dr. Arndt, a restatement of the charges against the Board, Dr. Brand and Dr. Pfothenhauer, and finally, a summary of pleas made in the re-appeal. The pleas are basically 1) to carry out the Cleveland resolution properly, e.g. to pay and reimburse him, to return him to India and to open his position to official discussion in Synod; and 2) to take appropriate action against Dr. Arndt for his unproven charges of heresy against Dr. Brux.

CHAPTER VII

1938 CONVENTION - ST. LOUIS

The Re-Appeal of Dr. Brux was directed to Committee 19A of the 1938 St. Louis Convention, which met June 15-24. Pastors Ernest T. Lams and P.C. Barth, Teacher Reinhold Arkebauer and laymen Wm. F. Schultz and Wm. J. Hinze were the members of that committee. Six sessions were held by that committee with Dr. Brux and the Board of Foreign Missions.⁸³ The Committee directed itself toward the problem of implementing the Cleveland Resolution, therefore, the report presented to the convention floor deals only with the problem of getting Dr. Brux back to India and Dr. Brux's financial status, plus reference to the heresy issue with Dr. Arndt. The major portion of the accepted report dealt with the correspondence between Dr. Brux and the Board between July and September 1935. On the basis of that, the committee found that the Board had been earnest and diligent in its attempts to carry out the Cleveland resolution to return Dr. Brux to India. The really important part of the report read,

We hold that the resolution of the Cleveland Convention reinstated Dr. Brux as a missionary in status quo and that he should have received the monthly salary of a missionary on furlough. We therefore recommend that Synod in brotherly love take care of Dr. Brux in financial matters as far as he is entitled to remuneration, which means that his salary be paid from December 1, 1932, to July 31, 1935.

In accepting this recommendation, Synod resolved that this action does not in any case pass judgement on the

action of the Mission Board or the South Wisconsin District.⁸⁴

As for the heresy charges of Dr. Arndt, Synod delined to get involved because 1) it was a personal matter between Dr. Brux and Dr. Arndt, 2) because the process of Matthew 18 had not been carried out and 3) because Dr. Brux had erred in making the whole thing public before Matthew 18 had been completed.⁸⁵

This resolution, like the 1935 resolution, is glaring for what it does not say. It sorely disappointed Dr. Brux in that it once again did not call for an opening of the issue on a Synod-wide basis. Neither Dr. Brux nor the Board failed to notice that by separating the salary issue from the question of error, no real problems were solved. The demands by the Board at the November 7, 1935 meeting placed on Dr. Brux and Dr. Brux's Re-Appeal were never officially before Committee 19A,⁸⁶ and thus the most serious question pertaining to the 1935 resolution, the question of interpretation of paragraphs 2 and 3, were never settled.

After the 1938 convention, the case of Dr. Brux publically ended within the Missouri Synod. Dr. Brux accepted the payment of salary due between 1932 and 1935,⁸⁷ but he did not return to India because the demands of the 1935 Chicago meeting had never been withdrawn. He remained at his position at the University of Chicago, and in 1940, still bitter at the 1938 convention's failure to publically and openly discuss the real theological problems, Dr. Brux resigned from the Missouri Synod.

CHAPTER VIII

THE INFLUENCES OF DR. BRUX

It cannot be said that after the 1938 convention of Synod Dr. Brux and his work had any direct and official impact and influence upon the Missouri Synod. Beyond the issue of prayer-fellowship itself, the work of Dr. Brux was, in effect, challenging Synod to open itself up and ask the penetrating question of whether or not accepted Synodical position can be wrong. At that immediate point in its history, the Missouri Synod was not ready to accept such a challenge; nor was it really capable of making what must have seemed to be a radical change in the minds of its leaders. However, during this period, called "The Struggle for Vision" in the introduction, the Synod was ready for the first step that would lead to a gradual acceptance of a new spirit of evangelicalism; and it is in this area that the work of Dr. Brux had its influence upon the Synod. In referring to the major influence of Dr. Brux, Dr. Richard R. Caemmerer says "the man who for the first time charted a new course, faced up to his own conscience in the matter of prayer-fellowship, was Brux."⁸⁸ The following paragraphs in this section of the paper present a few examples of how that "new course" of Dr. Brux effected the Missouri Synod.

In the early 1940's an increasing number of men in the Synod were coming under attack for what was called "unionistic

prayer fellowship." In answering these attacks and feeling that something must be said, a group of men, clergy and laymen, gathered in Chicago on September 6-7, 1945.⁸⁹ The result of their work was titled A Statement. It has become better known throughout Synodas The Statement of the 44 because 44 men signed the document, or as The Chicago Statement. The statement contains twelve theses, all of which have a close affinity to the spirit of Dr. Brux's work, and five of which have a direct contact with the concerns expressed by Dr. Brux 21 years earlier in 1924. These five theses are quoted below:

- Thesis V. We affirm our conviction that sound exegetical procedure is the basis for sound Lutheran theology.
- We therefore deplore the fact that Romans 16:17-18 has been applied to all Christians who differ from us in certain points of doctrine. It is our conviction, based on sound exegetical and hermeneutical principles, that this text does not apply to the present situation in the Lutheran Church of America.
- Thesis VI. We affirm the historic Lutheran position concerning the central importance of the una sancta and the local congregation. We believe that there should be a re-emphasis of the privileges and responsibilities of the local congregation also in the matter of determining questions of fellowship.
- Thesis VIII. We affirm our conviction that any two or more Christians may pray together to the Triune God in the name of Jesus Christ, if the purpose for which they meet and pray is right according to the Word of God. This obviously includes meetings of groups called for the purpose of discussing doctrinal differences.
- Thesis IX. We believe that the term "unionism" should

be applied only to acts in which a clear and unmistakable denial of Scriptural truth or approval of error is involved.

Thesis XI. We affirm our conviction that in keeping with the historic Lutheran tradition and in harmony with the Synodical resolution adopted in 1938 regarding Church fellowship, such fellowship is possible without complete agreement in details of doctrine and practice which have never been considered divisive in the Lutheran Church.⁹⁰

It should be noted here that two of the signers of the statement were Dr. Wm. Arndt, and Dr. Theo. Graebner. It should also be noted that nowhere in A Statement is the name of Dr. Brux mentioned. However, Dr. Richard Caemmerer, one of the 44, recalls that during the formulation of these twelve theses, Dr. O.A. Geiseman made the statement that "this is the man (Dr. Brux) to whom we owe this thing getting started."⁹¹ According to Dr. Caemmerer the work of Dr. Brux was in the minds of many of the men who wrote and signed The Statement of the 44, and the five theses quoted above strongly support the position of Dr. Brux. The Continuation Committee, a group of men from the 44, published the booklet Speaking the Truth in Love in 1946. This booklet is a series of twelve essays; one for each of the twelve theses. The essays on Theses V and VIII especially show strong support for the position of Dr. Brux.

Already at the 1938 convention and continuing to the present time, there were resolutions proposed and adopted that show that the issues raised by Dr. Brux remained on the minds of many members of Synod. In the 1938 convention in

St. Louis, the Committee on Lutheran Union and Convention Committee 16, while investigating the possibilities of fellowship with The American Lutheran Church and the United Lutheran Church of America, remained strongly within the spirit of scholastic confessionalism. However, within their report to the Synod, the committees did allow for disagreement on certain non-fundamental doctrines.⁹² This report was accepted by the convention.

At the 1941 convention in Fort Wayne, Indiana, the Missouri Synod, in its resolution on church union, included a statement on prayer-fellowship at intersynodical conferences.⁹³ Prior to the 1941 convention meetings between the Missouri Synod and The American Lutheran Church and the United Lutheran Church of America had not opened with prayer because some Missouri representatives felt it was in violation of their synodical position. The 1941 resolution said in effect that in certain circumstances (intersynodical conferences) prayer-fellowship might be considered proper although prayer-fellowship as such is forbidden. The memorials at the 1944 convention in Saginaw, Michigan, reveal that the vagueness of the 1941 resolution resulted in conflicting interpretations. The Queens-Long Island Pastoral Conference presented a memorial asking for clarification of the 1941 resolution,⁹⁴ and Messiah Lutheran Church, New York, went so far as to resolve that the following words be added to the 1941 resolution: "prayer fellowship here meaning a prayer only which would imply denial of truth or support of error."⁹⁵ This was to be added to

clarify the limitation placed on prayer-fellowship and was thus in complete agreement with Dr. Brux's position. The 1944 convention's actions on these memorials was to re-affirm the limited 1941 prayer-fellowship statement, and at the same time to allow for intersynodical conference prayers.⁹⁶

The 1947 convention in Chicago reflects a strong swing away from Dr. Brux's position. The attempts to establish fellowship with The American Lutheran Church had failed, and the disappointment on the part of Synod is reflected in a strong re-affirmation of the Brief Statement of 1932, in the rescinding of the 1938 resolution on church union, and in some rather strong statements against prayer-fellowship.⁹⁷ Romans 16:17 was consistently used in the way Dr. Brux had so strongly argued against. In response to Memorial #614 (1947 Proceedings, page 516) Synod resolved A) to affirm a very strict, closed interpretation of the 1941 resolution on prayer-fellowship, B) to encourage pastoral conferences to study the question of prayer-fellowship and C) to issue a strong warning against unionism.

Several things occurred between 1946 and 1950 that greatly effected the 1950 convention in Milwaukee. In June, 1946, the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, issued a statement saying that it could no longer apply Romans 16:17-18 as a warning against Christian fellowship.⁹⁸ The Statement of the 44 continued to draw much comment, mostly against it, despite the fact that a committee had been set up to study

the document. Finally Dr. Theo. Graebner, editor of the Lutheran Witness, supported the interpretation of Romans 16:17-18 that Dr. Brux had taken, and Dr. Graebner had published Prayer Fellowship, a booklet strongly supporting the position of Dr. Brux.

The 1950 Milwaukee convention approved the document, "A Common Confession," that had been drawn up by a joint commission of the Missouri Synod and The American Lutheran Church; but at the same time, it took a very strong stand against the Brux-Graebner-seminary faculty interpretation of Romans 16:17-18 and against prayer-fellowship.⁹⁹ The convention declined to take any of the memorialized steps against Dr. Graebner, the Lutheran Witness, the seminary faculty or A Statement, but rather it referred all these to various channels in Synod for study.¹⁰⁰ Dr. Brux, in the personal interview, said that he received the report of the 1950 convention with deep regret; feeling that perhaps all of his work had been for nothing within the Missouri Synod.¹⁰¹

Such was not the case however, since during the 1950's the Synod again began to open up its attitude toward the study of fellowship. The 1956 convention in St. Paul requested a restudy of "fellowship, prayer fellowship and unionism."¹⁰² The result of that request was the printing in 1960 of The Theology of Fellowship. This booklet strongly defends the fellowship all Christians have in the Body of Christ, it places prayer (with limitations) in this broad area of fellowship, and it uses Romans 16:16-20 only as a warning against

those who work to destroy the fellowship all Christians share. Dr. Brux takes this booklet to be a complete vindication of his position.¹⁰³ This booklet was also printed as a part of a larger book, Four Statements on Fellowship, that also contained statements on fellowship from the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod and the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches. These other three statements however maintained the position Missouri had held in the 1930's. In October, 1960, the St. Louis faculty, in Concordia Theological Monthly, issued "A Statement on the Form and Function of the Holy Scriptures" in which it urged the continued re-study of Scripture so that theological positions and practices would be constantly checked by the only true source and norm of doctrine.

The 1965 convention in Detroit is also an important event in showing how the work which Dr. Brux began was influencing the direction in which Synod was going. That convention officially recommended that the Theology of Fellowship, which had been published in 1960 and only slightly revised, be adopted at the next convention¹⁰⁴ Most importantly, that convention adopted six "Affirmations on God's Mission" that do not go into the doctrinal problems faced in the Brux case, but that do show an open and concerned attitude on the part of the Missouri Synod that joins with Dr. Brux in turning away from the exclusiveness of the 1930's.¹⁰⁵

The 1967 convention in New York officially brought the

Missouri Synod to the same position that had been held by Dr. Brux in the 1930's. On July 8, 1967, Synod made the Theology of Fellowship official policy and practice, and began to take the steps that resulted in the 1969 declaration of fellowship with The American Lutheran Church.¹⁰⁶ Yet, at the same time Dr. Brux could rejoice at this action of Synod, he was sincerely disappointed at another action. Overture 13-22,¹⁰⁷ "To Redress a Wrong of Long Standing," was placed before the convention and given complete support by President Oliver R. Harms.¹⁰⁸ This overture stated briefly that whereas Dr. Brux had placed the issue of prayer-fellowship before Synod in the 1930's, whereas Dr. Brux had been removed from the ministry because of his position, and whereas Synod had now accepted Dr. Brux's position; therefore Synod ought to petition Dr. Brux for forgiveness, assure him of its love and friendship, recognize his 50th anniversary of graduation from Concordia Seminary "by instructing the Synod's Board of Directors to take appropriate steps to help brighten the evening hours of Dr. Adolph Brux's life."¹⁰⁹ Dr. Brux was not disappointed in this overture, in fact he would have been very pleased if it had passed. However, the overture went through some rather serious alteration in the wording before it came before the convention for a vote and was adopted. The revised resolution, now titled "To Resolve a Matter of Concern", stated that whereas Dr. Brux had served as a missionary in our Synod, whereas a matter of long standing severed relations and brought wounds, whereas agreement

now existed between Dr. Brux and the Synod; resolved to approve the evangelical pastoral concern of Dr. Harms in meeting with Dr. Brux, to resolve the causes of misunderstanding, and to "implore the blessings of God upon Dr. Brux in the evening years of his life."¹¹⁰ Dr. Brux, in the paper "Analysis of Synod's 1967 Resolution Regarding Dr. Adolph A. Brux (Proceedings, p. 163) In Both Its Immediate and Its Wider Context," feels that this resolution badly misrepresents the members of Synod and the policy of Synod. He says that the resolution as approved was not the same as intended by the original overture, and he cites the change in title to illustrate his point. Furthermore Dr. Brux feels that the vague language ("a matter of long standing" and "the causes of misunderstanding") misled the delegates who did not know the facts, while the original overture was clear at least in its intent. Finally Dr. Brux asserts that there never was any "misunderstanding"; that the officials of Synod at the time of his case knew very well what he was proposing in his essay and his appeals; that the present officials of Synod know very well Synod has resolved "a matter of long standing" itself by coming over to Dr. Brux's position; and finally that Synod still finds itself unwilling to openly admit error and ask for forgiveness even though that forgiveness had been extended by Dr. Brux.

Before concluding this section on the influence Dr. Brux's work had in starting the Missouri Synod on the road

that led to adopting the Theology of Fellowship, this paper must make reference to the relationship between Dr. Brux's position and the positions of Dr. William Arndt and Dr. Theo. Graebner. These two men, as leaders in the church, at first took a very strong position against Dr. Brux.

Dr. Arndt, as secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions, was particularly close to the case. During the time of the case, Dr. Arndt was a strong supporter of the accepted Synodical position and a strong opponent to what Dr. Brux was saying. His sincere feelings went so deep that he personally, though unofficially, accused Dr. Brux of heresy at a meeting in Chicago on November 7, 1935.¹¹¹ In 1937 Dr. Arndt wrote the book, Christian Prayer, in which he very strongly comes out against any type of prayer-fellowship with Christians who are not in doctrinal agreement with the Missouri Synod. Dr. Arndt, however, apparently changed his mind over a gradual period of time. This man, who opposed Dr. Brux in the 1930's, was one of the 44 signers of the 1945 A Statement. These twelve theses, as already shown, supported the position of Dr. Brux, and to have attached his signature to them must have meant that Dr. Arndt must have been convinced of the Scriptural correctness of Dr. Brux's position. Dr. Richard Caemmerer, in discussing Dr. Arndt's part in formulating A Statement, says that he is personally convinced that Dr. Arndt did, after 1945, fully support Dr. Brux on the question of prayer-fellowship.¹¹² Dr. Caemmerer also reflects, as a personal friend of Dr. Arndt, that for many years after the case

had ended Dr. Arndt's mind was burdened with what had happened to Dr. Brux. Dr. Brux says that he is now personally convinced that Dr. Arndt supported him, but he deeply regrets that Dr. Arndt never personally conveyed this change of heart to him.¹¹³

Dr. Theo. Graebner was not as personally involved in the case as was Dr. Arndt, but as editor of Synod's official publication, the Lutheran Witness, he was well aware of what was being said in Synod and he was in a position to influence that opinion. Dr. Graebner, as early as 1917, came out against prayer-fellowship and used Romans 16:17 to support his position.¹¹⁴ Again in 1923,¹¹⁵ and in 1931¹¹⁶ he publically stated his support of the Synodical position. Dr. Graebner, however, began to rethink and change his position early in the 1940's. He and Dr. Paul E. Kretzmann wrote the book, Toward Lutheran Union, which was published in 1943. In that book the authors came out against the absolute and legalistic practice of Synod in regards to prayer-fellowship and suggested a rethinking of the issue. They supported Dr. Brux's position on Romans 16:17 and that prayer did not necessarily mean confession of doctrine. In the Lutheran Witness in 1943 he repeated his stand taken in the book.¹¹⁷ In 1945 Dr. Graebner wrote the booklet, Prayer Fellowship, in which he came out more clearly than ever to support the work of Dr. Brux. Dr. Graebner was one of the 44 signing A Statement. Because his position was very clear by the 1950 convention, Dr. Graebner was strongly attacked by two overtures to the convention. Even though Synod declined to

pass judgement on Dr. Graebner, the overtures show that the members of Synod were well aware of the position of their Lutheran Witness editor. Finally, of course, there is Dr. Graebner's article, "The Burden of Infallibility," which has been mentioned earlier and which is used by Dr. Brux to point to Dr. Graebner's change in heart and the change in Synod. Unfortunately, Dr. Graebner, like Dr. Arndt, never personally revealed this change to Dr. Brux.¹¹⁸

Dr. Brux has a very positive attitude about the influence his work has had upon the Missouri Synod.¹¹⁹ He firmly believes, as the evidence seems to show, that the Synod has now completely moved to the same position he has held for 45 years. Dr. Brux has received many letters from personal friends over the years, and many of these letters use the phrase "instrument of God" to illustrate Dr. Brux's influence. Dr. Brux also considers himself to have been an instrument successfully used by God to begin the process of opening up Synod. He feels the immediate impact of his work was upon many individual pastors in Synod. These pastors would not let the issue die, nor would they abide by the synodical position; thus causing the rest of the Synod to react and hopefully to think and study. Such was the case, Dr. Brux feels, with the men who produced the Statement of the 44, with the personal convictions of Dr. Arndt and Dr. Graebner, and with the evolution of Theology of Fellowship. Dr. Brux confesses to a feeling of bitterness for many years after the end of his case, but he now shows only a feeling of forgiveness and

understanding toward Synod and the men of Synod. He does not question the sincere desire of those men to do what they felt to be proper, and at the same time he rejoices in the movement of Synod to the position he has always considered proper.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

The case of Dr. Brux is a clear example of the tensions that existed from 1920 to 1940 in the Missouri Synod between scholastic confessionalism and evangelical confessionalism. The stand Dr. Brux took on interpreting Scripture only from Scripture, on prayer-fellowship and on the authority of synodically accepted position all were in direct opposition to the spirit of his church at that time. By defending his position on the basis of Scripture and the Confessions only, even though that meant sacrificing his career as a clergyman and missionary, Dr. Brux was a very definite influence in starting the process that pointed the Missouri Synod toward a reformulation of its attitudes on the position of synodical opinion in interpreting the Bible, on prayer-fellowship in particular and fellowship in general, and finally, on the doctrines of the church and prayer. In the end, this process of reformulation led the Missouri Synod in 1967 to accept the position it had refused to even consider in 1935 and 1938.

FOOTNOTES

¹F. Dean Lueking, Mission in the Making (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), p. 270.

²Ibid., p. 271.

³Adolph A. Brux, A personal taped interview conducted between the author and Dr. Brux on April 25, 1970. A copy of that interview is on file with Dr. John Constable, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri. Hereafter referred to as "Brux Interview!"

⁴Brux Interview and Lueking, p. 271.

⁵Brux Interview.

⁶Adolph A. Brux, An Appeal to Synod (privately printed booklet, 1934), p. 6. Hereafter referred to as Appeal.

⁷Friedrich Brand, handwritten notes on file at Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis, Missouri: Filed under Board of Foreign Missions, Supplement III, Box #22, Brux Case. The material of Box #22 hereafter referred to as "Correspondence"

⁸Brux Interview.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Lueking, pp. 271-272.

¹⁵Adolph A. Brux, Christian Prayer-Fellowship and Unionism (privately printed booklet, 1935), p. 4. Hereafter referred to as Prayer-Fellowship.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 90-91.

¹⁷Brux Interview.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Brux, Prayer-Fellowship, p. 7.

- ²⁰Ibid., pp. 10-11.
- ²¹Ibid., pp. 13-16
- ²²Ibid., p. 17.
- ²³Ibid., p. 20.
- ²⁴Ibid., p. 31.
- ²⁵Ibid., p. 67.
- ²⁶Ibid., pp. 100-101.
- ²⁷Correspondence, May 11, 1931.
- ²⁸Brux, Appeal, p. 7.
- ²⁹Board of Foreign Missions, Minutes (on file at Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis, Missouri, August 4, 1931). Hereafter referred to as Minutes followed by the date.
- ³⁰Brux, Appeal, p. 7.
- ³¹Ibid.
- ³²Ibid.
- ³³Minutes, October 19, 1931.
- ³⁴Brux, Appeal, p. 7.
- ³⁵Minutes, November 18, 1931.
- ³⁶Ibid., February 2, 1932.
- ³⁷Ibid., March 1, 1932.
- ³⁸Ibid., May 16, 1932.
- ³⁹Ibid., June 8, 1932.
- ⁴⁰Brux, Appeal, p. 9.
- ⁴¹Minutes, June 14, 1932.
- ⁴²Ibid., July 5, 1932.
- ⁴³Ibid., July 18, 1932.
- ⁴⁴Ibid., August 15, 1932.

- ⁴⁵Ibid., September 6, 1932.
- ⁴⁶Ibid., September 19, 1932.
- ⁴⁷Ibid., October 10-11, 1932.
- ⁴⁸Ibid.
- ⁴⁹Ibid.
- ⁵⁰Brux, Appeal, p. 14.
- ⁵¹Minutes, November 1, 1932.
- ⁵²Ibid., November 21, 1932.
- ⁵³Ibid., November 29, 1932.
- ⁵⁴Ibid., December 6, 1932.
- ⁵⁵Ibid.
- ⁵⁶Correspondence, dated December 26, 1932.
- ⁵⁷Minutes, January 3, 1933, January 16, 1933, January 30, 1933, February 20, 1933, March 7, 1933, March 20, 1933.
- ⁵⁸Ibid., May 1, 1933.
- ⁵⁹Brux, Appeal, p. 21.
- ⁶⁰Ibid.
- ⁶¹Ibid., pp. 23-24.
- ⁶²Ibid., p. 26.
- ⁶³Correspondence, July 29, 1933, in German.
- ⁶⁴Ibid., October 2, 1933.
- ⁶⁵Minutes, October 30, 1933.
- ⁶⁶Ibid., January 30, 1934.
- ⁶⁷Ibid., June 18, 1934.
- ⁶⁸Ibid., August 28, 1934.
- ⁶⁹Ibid., November 20, 1934.

⁷⁰The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Proceedings of the Thirty-Sixth Regular Convention (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1935), p. 293. Hereafter, all references to synodical convention proceedings will be referred to as Proceedings, followed by date and page.

⁷¹Lueking, p. 274. and Adolph A. Brux, Re-Appeal to Synod (privately printed booklet, 1938), p. 4. Hereafter referred to as Re-Appeal.

⁷²Brux, Re-Appeal, p. 6.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Minutes, July 6, 1935.

⁷⁵Ibid., July 12, 1935.

⁷⁶Proceedings, 1935, p. 293.

⁷⁷Minutes, September 16, 1935.

⁷⁸Brux, Re-Appeal, p. 27.

⁷⁹Ibid., pp. 37-54.

⁸⁰Minutes, July 27, 1935.

⁸¹Ibid., August 16, 1935.

⁸²Ibid., August 31, 1935.

⁸³Proceedings, 1938, p. 317.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 323.

⁸⁵Ibid., pp. 323-325.

⁸⁶Minutes, June 27, 1938.

⁸⁷Brux. Interview.

⁸⁸Richard R. Caemmerer, A personal taped interview conducted between the author and Dr. Richard Caemmerer on May 7, 1970. A copy of that interview is on file with Dr. John Constable Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri. Hereafter referred to as "Caemmerer Interview."

⁸⁹Ibid.

⁹⁰Richard R. Caemmerer, Speaking the Truth in Love (Chicago: The Willow Press, 1946), pp. 7-9.

- 91Caemmerer Interview.
- 92Proceedings, 1938, pp. 228-231.
- 93Proceedings, 1941, p. 303.
- 94Proceedings, 1944, p. 245.
- 95Ibid., pp. 245-246.
- 96Ibid., pp. 251-252.
- 97Proceedings, 1947, pp. 510, 517.
- 98Concordia Seminary Faculty Opinion, "Church Fellowship"
(St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1946), p. 19.
- 99Proceedings, 1950, pp. 656-657, 659.
- 100Ibid., pp. 658-659,
- 101Brux Interview.
- 102Proceedings, 1956, p. 550.
- 103Brux Interview.
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- 114Theo. Graebner, "Joint Reformation Celebrations,"
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- 115Theo. Graebner, "Letters to a Masonic Friend,"
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119 Ibid.

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