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A SPIRIT-FILLED PEOPLE: THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ROLE AND WORK OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CONVERTED CHRISTIAN AS FOUND IN THE LUTHERAN
CONFESSIONS, THE BOOK OF CONCORD

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Systematic Theology
In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

By
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February, 2005

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CHAPTER ONE

**A NEED TO REVISIT THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE LUTHERAN
CONFESSIONS**

In the Christian faith, it is important to understand the proper function and role of each person of the Godhead - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Pentecostal and charismatic groups have asserted for many years that traditional churches, which tend to have a long-standing history and a set standard for doctrine and church practice, have long ago set aside the importance of the Holy Spirit in their doctrine and practice. While this claim may seem at first glance to be well founded due to an apparent gap in theological writings on the Holy Spirit, there are notable exceptions. One of these exceptions is found in the official confessional documents of the Lutheran church, known as the Book of Concord. The importance of the Holy Spirit in the Lutheran Confessions can be a valuable tool in refuting the assertions of the Pentecostal and charismatic groups.

Some of the accusations leveled at the traditional churches can be traced to the fact that, in the whole of Church history, the Holy Spirit and His work does not receive as much attention as God the Father and God the Son. In *The Half-Known God: The Lord and Giver of Life*, Lorenz Wunderlich confirms a certain gap in theology of the Holy Spirit throughout the majority of Church history: “The assertion that the theology of the Holy Spirit suffers from neglect is rather made to underscore a tragic fact which has been in evidence, with some exceptions, from the second century of the Christian era. There is relatively little reference to the Spirit by the Apostolic Fathers.”¹ One reason for this could be that the major errors the church had to combat,

¹ Lorenz Wunderlich, *The Half-Known God: The Lord and Giver of Life* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1963), 16.

especially in the early in church history, involved the nature of God the Father and his relationship to Jesus as Son, as well as several widespread controversies involving the two natures of Christ as truly God and truly man. Only after these errors were dealt with was the church able to tackle the misconceptions pertaining to the Holy Spirit in the fourth century with the Cappodocian Fathers.

Evidence suggests, also, that the idea of the Holy Spirit itself, His nature and His particular work, has long been difficult to grapple with. In *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective*, Veli-Matti Karkkainen notes that “Early in church history, Augustine reflected on the relationship between [Christ and the Holy Spirit] as he noticed that the main difficulty in speaking about the Spirit is that ‘he withdraws from us into mystery even more than Christ.’”² There has always been some difficulty in trying to define the Holy Spirit in concrete terms, and in explaining what He does, without taking away from Christ’s work or from that of the Father.

In contrast to the majority of Church history, the sixteenth century Lutheran Confessions give proper emphasis to the work of the Holy Spirit. His role and function is not neglected but rather highlighted, both in the act of conversion and in His work in our lives thereafter. The Lutheran Confessions serve as the foundational documents of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, which every man who sets his sights on becoming a pastor in this church must read, comprehend, and assent to before he may be ordained. These are the documents we still set as the norm for a proper understanding of God’s Word, to act as a rule and a guide in our studies. Lorenz Wunderlich calls it “instructive and comforting to find that the Book of Concord contains

²Veli-Matti Karkkainen, *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 16.

a complete theology of the Holy Spirit. There is not a single one of the confessional symbols which does not describe in great detail the Person and the work of the Holy Ghost.”³

In *Counterfeit Revival*, Hank Hanegraaff seeks to trace the movements and teachings of these new Pentecostal “revivals” from their beginnings on Azusa Street to more recent phenomena, such as the “Toronto Blessing” and the revival at the Brownsville Assembly of God in Florida. Hanegraaff tells us that William Seymour founded the Azusa Street Mission in 1906, after he heard Charles Parham teach classes on “speaking in tongues” and “was so convinced of Parham’s position that even before he personally spoke in tongues, he told parishioners of a Los Angeles Holiness church that tongues, not sanctification, was evidence of the baptism in the Holy Ghost.”⁴ Many Pentecostal groups today trace their beginnings from the Azusa Street revival of 1906 in one way or another.

Hanegraaff himself was once very involved in the Pentecostal movement, on the board of directors of the Association of Vineyard Churches, until he realized the detrimental effect that this new spirituality was having on his own church. Vineyard Fellowship is a fairly recent group, started by John Wimber, who has expressed new and different ideas of his own:

Counterfeit Revival leader John Wimber, in a message on supernatural healing, expressed concern that evangelical Christians today are placing far too much emphasis on Scripture: ‘Evangelicals all over the country are worshipping the book. They have God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Book. They took the very workings of the Holy Spirit and placed it in the book.’⁵

There are many people who hear Wimber and believe what he says, but even in churches where they would never accept Wimber’s words above, the Pentecostal movement has had an effect.

Stanley Grenz draws attention to the current interest in the person and work of the Holy Spirit and the subsequent confusion in *Created for Community: Connecting Christian Belief with*

³ Wunderlich, *The Half-Known God: The Lord and Giver of Life*, 92.

⁴ Hank Hanegraaff, *Counterfeit Revival* (Nashville: WORD Publishing, 2001), 143.

⁵ *Ibid*, 123.

Christian Living. Grenz tells us that "...we have witnessed the phenomenal growth of Pentecostal churches. And successive waves of the charismatic movement have lapped on our ecclesiastical shores. These developments have set off an unparalleled explosion of interest in and talk about the Holy Spirit."⁶

With this newfound interest and focus on the work and person of the Holy Spirit, one might think that we would now know more than ever about the Holy Spirit, but this does not seem to be the case. On the rise of the Pentecostal and charismatic movements, Grenz makes the following observation:

This new interest has triggered a seemingly incessant production of books about the Holy Spirit and an apparently unending onslaught of seminars and conferences focusing on the Spirit's role in our lives. Yet, we often appear as confused about the Third Person of the Trinity today as at any time in the past.... Some Christians are uncertain about the Spirit's identity. Exactly who (or what) is the Holy Spirit? ...Other Christians are confused about the Spirit's work. What does the Spirit do? And how can we be certain that it is the Holy Spirit who is active in, through, and around us?"⁷

For an example of how Pentecostals view the traditional church and the Holy Spirit, we look in *Five Views of Sanctification*, in which five theologians from five different denominations are asked to give a definition, or expound on what "sanctification" means, as a representative of their larger church bodies. They also critique each of the other four views and make comments. Among them is Stanley Horton from the Pentecostal church. While a Lutheran theologian was not included in the mix of denominational representatives, Horton makes remarks on the Holy Spirit and traditional churches in general. Horton explains his perspective on the Holy Spirit in his response to the Keswick view:

Actually Pentecostals do not deny that many Christians do live on a high level of Christian victory without having experienced the Pentecostal baptism. But we contend that the Holy Spirit helps them, recognizing that the truth of the Pentecostal experience

⁶ Stanley Grenz, *Created for Community: Connecting Christian Belief with Christian Living* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 153.

⁷ Ibid, 153-4.

has been neglected over the centuries. The Scriptural pattern is first new life by the Spirit, then the empowering experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit, then a life of spiritual growth that makes progress in both sanctification and service.⁸

Horton first acknowledges a “high level of victory” for some Christians outside of the realm of charismatic experience while still contending that their experience and faith are lacking according to “the Scriptural pattern” for Christian living. Note that this is the same line of reasoning that charismatics within our own denomination use, as will be seen below. In his response to the Wesleyan Reformed view, Horton then proceeds to make one of the major claims that the Pentecostal church has been making from almost the beginning of the movement:

Unfortunately, a good deal of church history shows a neglect of the third person of the Trinity. Very few books were written about the Spirit in the 1700s and 1800s. Many of the writers of systematic theologies had very little to say about Him. A few decades ago, it was very uncommon in most denominations to hear a sermon on the Holy Spirit. The situation has changed now, which is partly due, I believe, to the faithful witness of the Pentecostal movement.⁹

If anything, this movement in the greater culture has served to raise awareness of the fact that many people are confused or misinformed when it comes to the work of the Spirit.

Just as Grenz asserted, the Pentecostal movement has not only created new church bodies, it has introduced ideas and experiences that have overflowed as a charismatic movement into more traditional denominations. *Spirit and Renewal: Essays in Honor of J. Rodman Williams*, a special publication of the *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*, is written to honor a professor who is both a church-going Presbyterian and an active charismatic. Henry Lederle writes one of these essays, “Life in the Spirit and Worldview: Some Preliminary Thoughts of Understanding, Reality, Faith, and Providence from a Charismatic Perspective.” In it, he comments on the theological challenges set before the charismatic community, “avoiding both

⁸ Stanley Horton, commentary on Keswick view, *Five Views of Sanctification*, ed. Melvin E. Deiter, (Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1987), 193.

⁹ *Ibid*, 96.

the neglect of the Spirit (as in much of conventional theology) and an overinflated pneumatology which seeks to explain everything from a supernatural perspective.”¹⁰ So we see that Lederle believes that the majority of the theology of the non-charismatic churches is lacking due to “the neglect of the Spirit.” He then supports his position by directing his argument to a perceived 2,000-year-old struggle, that is:

...the struggle in the early church between living according to the prophetic Spirit of the risen Lord experienced as ‘a power of both ecstatic utterances and gifts of forgiveness and healing,’ and a developing institutional hierarchy of bishops which felt ‘the need to cut off this ongoing speaking in the name of Christ.’¹¹

Lederle, because of his association with a traditional church body, shows more awareness of traditions of the church, but still sets these as oppositional to the true work of Christ. For Lederle, these developing church institutions put limits on how the Holy Spirit was to work in the Church.

In another essay from the same collection, “Cutting the Taproot,” Stanley M. Burgess relates the history of the Pentecostal movement in order to identify the root of the criticism Pentecostals have routinely leveled against church tradition and traditional churches in general. First he identifies the way in which Pentecostals make the distinction between the traditional church and themselves:

Typical of the early Pentecostal reaction against tradition is B.F. Lawrence, who in *The Apostolic Faith Restored*, distinguished between older denominations and the Pentecostal renewal. Traditional churches had a past which is their own in a peculiar sense. They could trace the beginnings of their church and the course of its history subsequent to its foundation. The time between their church’s founding and the present usually is sufficient to establish precedent, to create habit and to formulate custom.¹²

¹⁰ Henry Lederle, “Life in the Spirit and Worldview: Some Preliminary Thoughts of Understanding, Reality, Faith, and Providence from a Charismatic Perspective”, *Journal of Pentecostal Theology: Supplement Series 5: Spirit and Renewal: Essays in Honor of J. Rodman Williams*, ed. Mark W. Wilson, (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 22-3.

¹¹ *Ibid*, 23.

¹² Stanley M. Burgess, “Cutting the Taproot”, *Journal of Pentecostal Theology: Supplement Series 5: Spirit and Renewal: Essays in Honor of J. Rodman Williams*, ed. Mark W. Wilson, (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 61.

So with this working definition of what the “traditional” church means to its Pentecostal critics, it becomes a question of what it is that replaces the church traditions of the past twenty centuries in relevance and importance. In contrast to the traditional church, the Pentecostal movement “leaps the intervening years crying, ‘Back to Pentecost.’”¹³

In fact, Burgess tells us that it was only after Pentecostalism had gone beyond what was tolerable for the majority Christians, “Pentecostals turned their backs on any Christian traditions later than the first century. The taproot had been cut.”¹⁴ It seems here that Pentecostal groups, with their new teachings, faced opposition from long-standing, more traditional church groups, and as a result, cut themselves off entirely from those churches and from anything having to do with them. According to Burgess, “The most immediate result of this severing of ties with the rest of the Christian world was that Pentecostals began to justify their freedom from tradition. The word ‘tradition’ takes on a negative connotation. In Pentecostal circles it came to mean something stifling or petrifying, without spiritual life and energy.”¹⁵

Burgess also tells us that these new Pentecostal groups, cut off from the mainstream churches sought to establish themselves as the “true” church, and in doing so, “developed a real sense of spiritual elitism. They began to speak of their movement as ‘Full Gospel,’ meaning that the church had lost part of the gospel message until its restoration in the twentieth-century Pentecostal movement.”¹⁶ By cutting themselves off from all church tradition, they were now free to consider themselves and their spirituality on its own merit, without any prior guidelines than what they themselves interpreted from scripture. They felt no need to prove their validity to the Church or to make themselves available to criticism from without. With their emphasis on

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid, 62.

¹⁵ Ibid, 62-3.

¹⁶ Ibid, 65.

restoring the church of the first century, Burgess notes, “Pentecostals have not yet chosen to identify with most heros of the faith between the second and nineteenth centuries (with the exception of Martin Luther, and perhaps to a lesser extent, John Wesley).”¹⁷ Note that Pentecostals are generally open to reading Luther, but their reading of him is different than those who subscribe to his writings in the Small and Large Catechisms and the like.

The overlap of the Pentecostal movement with more traditional denominations is also evidenced in the formation of Lutheran charismatic groups. In his report to the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) in 1985, *Charismatic Renewal and the Lutheran Tradition*, Carter Lindberg traces the formation of the Lutheran Charismatic Movement and seeks to portray it faithfully. He prefaces his discussion by referencing Luther’s own experience with a more subjective form of Christianity: “Ever since Luther’s violent explosion against his former colleague turned ‘spiritualist,’ Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt (c.1480-1541), whom he caricatured as ‘he who has devoured the Holy Spirit feathers and all,’ subjective religious experience has been a neuralgic point in the Lutheran tradition.”¹⁸

There have long been those in the Church who, in the name of true Christian religion, emphasize the subjective experience over and above an objective assurance of faith and forgiveness, a fault that Luther found in Karlstadt nearly 500 years ago. However, in his findings, Lindberg notes, much like Burgess, “there is almost no attempt to discuss Pentecostalism and the charismatic movements in a church-historical context.”¹⁹ The texts dealing with charismata and Pentecostalism typically refer back to texts in Acts and Paul’s letters

¹⁷ Ibid, 66.

¹⁸ Carter Lindberg, *Lutheran World Federation Report 21: Charismatic Renewal and the Lutheran Tradition*, (Geneva: Lutheran World Federation, 1985), 7.

¹⁹ Ibid, 11.

to the Corinthians and delve no later into Church history until one reaches the start of the twentieth century.

To those who have asserted the Lutheran charismatic movement spontaneously appeared as if from God alone, Lindberg responds, "...the charismatic movement within American Lutheran churches has not been formless. It began to take form through Larry Christenson and his parish, Trinity Lutheran Church in San Pedro, California.... In 1961, he experienced baptism in the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues through a Pentecostal evangelist."²⁰ Through Christenson's contact with the Pentecostal experience, this movement was brought into his congregation and soon spread to other Lutherans at a rate that could simply not be ignored. Lindberg comments on how unexpected this movement was within the Lutheran church bodies. "In retrospect, it is clear that no one was prepared for this and that everyone was preoccupied with the issue of speaking in tongues."²¹ Lorenzo Wunderlich, at the time a professor of theology at Concordia Seminary, noticed a lack in Holy Spirit studies, and so, in 1963, provided the church with a good biblical study on the person and work of the Holy Spirit, in *The Half-Known God: The Lord and Giver of Life*. He begins his study by admitting:

...We are living in a time in which the theology of the Holy Spirit suffers neglect. This is the dictum and concern of non-Protestant as well as Protestant church leaders. To quote one of the former, some Christians 'often use His [the Holy Spirit's] name in carrying out their religious practices, but with faith that is surrounded by dense darkness' (Pope Leo XIII, May 9, 1897).²²

Wunderlich draws attention here not only to the fact that the theology of the Holy Spirit generally "suffers neglect" in and among the mainstream churches, but also that there are outside groups using the term "Holy Spirit" in their church practice with very little understanding of

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Wunderlich, *The Half-Known God*, 19.

what that term entails. By using the quote from the Pope from 1897, he demonstrates that this has actually been going on for a little over a century in some parts of the world.

Wunderlich then gives us some of the background on what led to this current lack of interest in and study of the Holy Spirit's work that we find as we enter into the twenty-first century:

In an article on 'Karl Barth on the Holy Spirit' an American theologian, Robert E. Cushman, attributes this neglect to three factors: (1) the rise of the scientific world with its challenge to the Sovereignty of God; (2) the vitiating influence of Pelagian with its stress on man's moral achievement; and (3) the tendency of Schliermacher and his followers to substitute man's religious experience for the ministry of the Spirit.²³

Then Wunderlich himself identifies the rise of six major movements between Luther's time and now that have brought us to the current movement away from the Reformation understanding of the person and work of the Holy Spirit:

Post reformation threats to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit are found chiefly in the various isms, such as Arminianism, mysticism, rationalism, pietism, perfectionism, and subjectivism. Arminianism held that the human will, not the Holy Spirit, determined the matter of personal salvation. Mysticism, with excesses in spiritual and emotional experiences, frequently relied directly on the Holy Spirit apart from the Word of God. Rationalism, with its rejection of the Scriptures as a divine norm and guide and with it also the work of the Holy Spirit, led to skepticism and atheism. Pietism was related to mysticism and frequently separated the Spirit of grace from the means of grace. Perfectionism applied some of the principles of Arminianism and by upgrading man downgraded God and His Spirit. Subjectivism insisted on the assurance of personal experience and inner conviction rather than on the objective guarantee of the Holy Spirit in the Word.²⁴

As the charismatic movement began to take root in Lutheran circles, official responses specifically to the Lutheran charismatic movement were commissioned and drawn up by various Lutheran church bodies. In 1974, the Lutheran Church in America (LCA) made its response, *The Charismatic Movement in the LCA: A Pastoral Perspective*. They were careful not to condemn the movement outright, but to place certain conditions on it: "Where it is authentic – that is

²³ Ibid, 21.

²⁴ Ibid, 93.

where it bears good fruit – the charismatic experience must be understood *within* the scope of the church’s life. There is no cause for Lutheran pastors or people to suggest either explicitly or implicitly that one cannot be charismatic and remain a Lutheran in good standing.”²⁵ As we have seen above, LWF called upon Lindberg to make a careful study of the movement and give his report, a report that was published by LWF in 1985.

The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (LCMS) also commissioned an official study of and response to the Lutheran charismatic movement. “At the request of the president of the Synod, the [CTCR] in 1968 began a study of the charismatic movement with special reference to the baptism in the Holy Spirit.”²⁶ In January 1972, *The Charismatic Movement and Lutheran Theology: A Report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod* was published. It is primarily a biblical study, dealing especially with the passages that Pentecostals and charismatics view as proof texts for legitimacy of their own church practice and beliefs. In this report, there is realized a need for greater biblical knowledge of the Holy Spirit generally, not forgetting the Spirit’s primary role: “While all Christians need to become more keenly aware of the rich biblical testimony to the person and activity of the Holy Spirit, it should not be forgotten that the primary purpose of the Spirit’s work, including the inspiration of Holy Scripture, is to make men wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.”²⁷

In April 1977, the CTCR followed the first report with *The Lutheran Church and the Charismatic Movement: Guidelines for Congregations and Pastors*. This report was drafted with a more pastoral concern: How do you speak to those who have questions about or are

²⁵ Board of Publications, *The Charismatic Movement in the LCA: A Pastoral Perspective* (Lutheran Church in America, 1974), 13.

²⁶ *The Charismatic Movement and Lutheran Theology: A Report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod*, (January 1972) 3.

²⁷ *Ibid*, 30.

involved in the charismatic movement? In this, there is more effort to match passages from the Confessions as well as Scripture to answer charismatic concerns. It concludes thus:

The Lutheran Church has a rich heritage of Spirit theology in its confessional writings, in its exegetical studies, and in its hymns and prayers. As the church seeks to fulfill its mission in the world, we are grateful to God for the renewed interest which many Christians in all generations take in the work of the Holy Spirit. May this same Spirit lead us into all truth as He has promised.²⁸

To these CTCR documents, Theodore Jungkuntz, a theological leader in the Lutheran charismatic movement, made his official response in *The Cresset: Occasional Paper II: A Response*. Since so much of the CTCR focus was on this idea of “baptism in the Spirit” and what it means, Jungkuntz describes this as an event perfectly in keeping with the Lutheran doctrine of baptism as a sacrament: “Such a view in no way diminishes the significance of sacramental baptism, but merely speaks of the manner by which, according to God’s promise, the benefits of sacramental baptism might be more fully released and manifested in the life of the believer.”²⁹ However, in his counter-proposals at the end of his response, he proposes a necessity for prayer on our part “as God’s method of releasing into fulfillment the promise connecting the Holy Spirit with the Word and Sacraments.”³⁰ This makes it sound as if God’s fulfillment of his promises to us is somehow contingent upon our own work, namely, our prayer.

In his response, Jungkuntz also expresses his concern for the life of the Lutheran Church, that it not be reduced merely to a set of dry doctrines and historical facts: “But Lutheran charismatics are concerned that the Gospel of which the Confessions speak not be reduced to barren, doctrinal abstractions about an historically distant Gospel, but that it remain a lively

²⁸ *The Lutheran Church and the Charismatic Movement: Guidelines for Congregations and Pastor: A Report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.*, (April 1977), 15.

²⁹ Theodore Jungkuntz, *The Cresset: Occasional Paper II: A Response* (Valparaiso, IN: Valparaiso University Press, 1977), 4.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

expression of the very voice of the truly present Shepherd effecting faith and thereby a here and now experience with Jesus as Savior and Lord.”³¹ Later, in 1982, Jungkuntz came out with *A Lutheran Charismatic Catechism*, in question and answer format, with the purpose of teaching the basics of charismatic instruction, using Scriptures and even some material from the Confessions to support his teachings. One of the changes he suggests in Lutheran church practice is the addition of a prayer at confirmation asking God “for a fuller release of the Spirit’s variety of gifts.”³²

In a short book, *Serving the Renewal: The Stories of the Men of Lutheran Charismatic Renewal Services*, published in 1978, Don Matzat introduced a wider audience to Larry Christenson’s church, stating, “...the organized church has not been willing to recognize the practical reality of the supernatural, the spiritual, as being the animating force behind the intellectual. Without the dynamic of a real God moving in a real way in the charismatic dimension, we are left with a dead, intellectual dogmatism.”³³ It is clear that Matzat believed here that man’s intellect, and not the leading of the supernatural living God, had been the driving force in the Lutheran church in recent history. “No longer is the church merely puttering along under its own power. It is now moving in the stream of God’s Spirit.”³⁴ Matzat went on to demonstrate how this new charismatic understanding of the Holy Spirit’s work actually focused more on man’s work than on God’s work: “If this charismatic renewal stagnates, it is because we have failed to give the living water of the Spirit to others.”³⁵ Matzat understood success of

³¹ Ibid, 9.

³² Theodore Jungkuntz, *A Lutheran Charismatic Catechism* (Valporaiso, IN, 1979), 7.

³³ Matzat, Don, *Serving the Renewal: The Stories of the Men of Lutheran Charismatic Renewal Services* (NP: Bread of Life Publication, 1978), 14.

³⁴ Ibid, 51.

³⁵ Ibid, 56.

this new movement to be reliant on individuals who must pass it on to others or risk the end of this movement of God entirely.

In *Charismatic Renewal Among Lutherans*, published in 1976, Larry Christenson seeks to demonstrate to non-charismatic Lutherans the spiritual benefits that would be received by accepting the charismatic experience for themselves:

Your own program of sanctification is tailor-made by the Holy Spirit according to your individual need, and according to the place He is preparing you for in the Body of Christ. Of course, this is true in a general way, whether a person speaks in tongues or not. The intellect, however, has an inveterate tendency to categorize and legalize. When the intellect steps aside, the Spirit can operate through this gift with a freer hand, building us up, not where we may think we need building up, not where someone else thinks we need it, but where He, in divine wisdom, *knows* that we need building up.³⁶

For Christenson, it is almost as if the intellect and intellectual thought is the true enemy of a full and free Christian life. By removing the overpowering nature of the intellect, then, God has more freedom to work.

A little later, Christenson expresses his concerns that the Church has more recently chosen to run on its own steam and in fact has chosen to be disobedient to God's Word and lacking in faith and trust in God Himself:

The failure of the church to demonstrate the Spirit and manifest the power of God stems from her unwillingness to trust and obey the Word of God. Spiritual healing is a thing 'too wonderful, which we do not know.' It is a thing which leads us into many difficult questions, into many hours of deep and difficult and soul-searching prayer. But it leads us, also, into a living relationship with Him, who is 'the same yesterday and today and forever' (Heb. 13:8). Most important, it leads us into faithful obedience to the Word of God, and precisely therein lies its greatest blessing!³⁷

In his 1987 book, *Welcome Holy Spirit: A Study of Charismatic Renewal in the Church*, Christenson goes even more in-depth to explain what is happening in this "charismatic renewal."

³⁶ Larry Christenson, *Charismatic Renewal Among Lutherans: A Pastoral and Theological Perspective*, Lutheran Charismatic Renewal Services, dist. Bethany Fellowship, Inc.: Minneapolis, MN, 1976, 83.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 105.

While it is more thorough than the first attempt, it still asserts that the Christian life without the charismatic spiritual gifts, especially speaking in tongues, is lacking. He sees the charismatic movement as “a prophetic presence within the church,”³⁸ but demonstrates a charismatic understanding of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit when he says, “Renewal of this kind...is, at its most ecumenical level, the grace of God seeking us out. It is the Holy Spirit creating true and assured faith.”³⁹ By contrast, the Lutheran confessions make it clear that the “marks of the Church” -- the Word and Sacrament, present in His Church from the beginning-- serve to create a “true and assured faith.”

Christenson also asserts that the traditional church up to now has been running on its own power and not by the power of the Spirit:

It's so radical that we can't handle it. We hang on to the familiar, old anthropology and try to use it to explain the new creation. We conceive of the new creation as a change in our human nature. We may reach for biblical terms: we are even filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit to live a new life. As a result, we think about people and life and things, and we act differently. We have new values, new goals, new commitments, new hopes and dreams. Surrounded by so much that is genuinely new, we scarcely notice that the way we think about ourselves remains fundamentally unchanged. New beliefs and attitudes and behavior there may be, but who is all this happening to? The same, old, self-sufficient individual -- not a new creation at all, just an improved model of the old one. Mere words like commitment, discipleship, and lordship do not make a new creation, not even if we back them up with exemplary action, not even if we say it is all done by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit...⁴⁰

Were the Holy Spirit not actively working through God's Word in the life of the Church, Christenson's scenario would be true-to-life. Instead, again, the Confessions give us a much more enlightened view of the active role the Spirit takes, the truly radical idea that the Holy Spirit actually does His work of change, creating newness of life through the means of water and

³⁸ Larry Christenson, *Welcome Holy Spirit: A Study of Charismatic Renewal in the Church* (NP:NP, 1978), 36.

³⁹ *Ibid*, 139.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 182.

Word, bread and wine. This is such a radical idea that, until the Spirit works faith and new life in him, the unbeliever is incapable of accepting it, as we will see in the Confessions.

Against the traditional Lutheran stance of justification as the very center and core of our message, Christenson states, “Charismatics take issue with such a view - not by detracting from the doctrine of justification, but by calling attention to a deficient doctrine of the Holy Spirit as it relates to sanctification.”⁴¹ Perhaps Lutherans in general are not as familiar with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as they ought to be, but to assert that the doctrine which does exist is deficient and that the charismatic renewal fills in the deficiency, warrants another look at what the Lutheran Confessions have to say about the Holy Spirit’s work and role in sanctification.

As a response to *Welcome Holy Spirit*, Markku Antola wrote *The Experience of Christ’s Real Presence in Faith: An Analysis on the Christ – Presence – Motif in the Lutheran Charismatic Renewal*. In this book, Antola progresses through Christenson’s book point by point and speaks to each point as it is made. Antola makes no attempt to bring in the Confessions themselves, but rather goes back to the Scripture passages as in most of the other responses of the time.

In *The Third Reformation? Charismatic Movements and the Lutheran Tradition* (1983), Carter Lindberg makes an in-depth study of the growth of the charismatic movement and the claims they make. His report to the Lutheran World Federation is actually an abridgement of this study. He begins by describing other widespread revival movements of the past several centuries and comparing them to this newest revival movement. He also undertakes to describe the environment and social climate that led up to it, an environment ripe for this kind of widespread renewal movement:

The church’s loss of credibility and, worse, plausibility reflects a crisis of the modern

⁴¹ Ibid, 188.

world not unlike those faced after the late medieval period and the post-Thirty Years' War in Europe. The modern world, in the sense of Troeltsch's description of the West as determined by the Enlightenment, has been in a context of crisis since the end of World War I. Optimistic beliefs in culture, reason, human autonomy, idealism, and progress have been severely eroded if not destroyed. This has been occurring at the very same time as the Enlightenment methodology and critique of religion have finally arrived in theology with their relativization of history and the Word.⁴²

In his study, he also identifies the major concerns of these emerging charismatic groups and their similarities to previous revival movements. He notes how the concerns of the charismatic Lutherans in this age seems to echo the concerns of the sixteenth century Pietists, who were "focused on both prophetic protest and the goal of renewing a church perceived to have 'missed the mark.'"⁴³ Then he notes that as the charismatics view it, "There is an emptiness in the life of the churches which is reflected in the lives of its members. An educated ministry lacks the 'warmth and conviction of personal dedication' and lives remain unchanged while the hunger of God goes unsatisfied." They ask, "Where is the presence, the power, and the praise of God?"⁴⁴ Then he tells us how the charismatics understand the contemporary currents in society and in the culture at large: "The depersonalization of contemporary life in the midst of materialism and secularism disposes persons to search for a personal experience of reality. In this context charismatic renewal speaks not of having something new but of *becoming* and *being* a new person" and from this "comes the renewal of community without which the church is inoperative and evangelism ineffective."⁴⁵ Thus, from the charismatic viewpoint, this revival provides the sense of community that has been missing in the Church.

Lindberg then points out the areas of weakness exhibited by members of the charismatic movement and charismatic leaders. Traditional Lutheran theology is downgraded and becomes a

⁴² Carter Lindberg, *The Third Reformation? Charismatic Movements and the Lutheran Tradition* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1983), 182.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 180.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

stumbling block to charismatics: Again and again, even in the best representatives of the Lutheran charismatic renewal, one encounters suspicion and angry rejection of traditional theology. Without the charismata it is charged that preaching degenerates into worldly wisdom, lifeless creeds and dogmas, dead ritual, and tradition.⁴⁶

Instead of a greater understanding drawn from scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, there becomes a lesser understanding of the Spirit's work and role in our lives. Lindberg writes, "The renewal's emphasis upon existential experience of the Spirit is no substitute for its lack of pneumatology and doctrine of creation."⁴⁷ In studying the movement, Lindberg has found, "All too often the charismatic experience has happened to people in a theological vacuum which means that they do not know how to interpret their experience."⁴⁸ It is in this "theological vacuum" that people must be instructed in the true nature of the Holy Spirit, how and where He does his work in our lives.

There has been very little attempt in the past to examine the role of the Holy Spirit as it is conveyed in the Lutheran Confessions, especially in light of the recent claims made about the Spirit and His work from groups outside of the realm of the traditional church. Although Wunderlich comments that a full theology of the Holy Spirit is found in the Confessions, he leaves the study of the Confessions to someone else and maintains his purely biblical approach. Another scholar, Reginald Prenter, researched Luther's theology of the Holy Spirit in *Spiritus Creator: Studies in Luther's Theology* (1953). However, Karkkainen notes that in this study, Prenter "sets Luther's doctrine over against Catholic doctrine."⁴⁹ This study, though examining the theology during the Confessional time period, focuses on Roman Catholic opponents rather

⁴⁶ Ibid, 254.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 301.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 323.

⁴⁹ Karkkainen, *Pneumatology*, 79.

than on Protestant groups, especially the Pentecostal and charismatic groups who have had such an overarching effect on the way the Church talks about the Holy Spirit, especially in the past fifty years.

Lindberg identifies another author, Engelsviken, who has undertaken the task of theological analysis regarding the Holy Spirit. In *The Gift of the Spirit*, Engelsviken takes a look at theology of the Holy Spirit, but as Lindberg notes, he “does not attempt to do so by comparison to the specific theology of Luther and the Lutheran Confessions, but nevertheless regards this as an urgent and challenging task which he plans to take up in the future.”⁵⁰ There is an apparent, even perceived need to look into what the Lutheran Confessions say specifically about the Holy Spirit, and yet so little is written about it. What is written about His role and work can primarily be found in a small section or chapter of a general theological overview. In the following chapters, we will examine the wording of the Augsburg Confession as it pertains to the Holy Spirit’s work after conversion, together with outside information that supports it.

In his book, *Getting into the Theology of Concord: A Study of the Book of Concord*, Robert D. Preus admits that perhaps we do not speak as often about the Holy Spirit as we could:

I suppose the criticisms from several sources that Lutherans today do not sufficiently emphasize the work of the Holy Spirit are well taken. How often do we really sing and thank God for His presence and gifts? Perhaps it is such apathy and neglect of the Spirit and His work that has led many Lutherans today to identify with Pentecostalism and other aberrant movements which stress, although often wrongly, the activity of the Spirit and His presence in and among Christians.⁵¹

Preus then directs our attention to the writers of our Lutheran Confessions and how, in their writings, there is no lack of Spirit-talk:

⁵⁰Lindberg, *The Third Reformation?* 18.

⁵¹ Robert D. Preus, *Getting into the Theology of Concord: A Study of the Book of Concord* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1977), 52.

Such criticism, however, could never have been leveled against Luther and the other Reformers who wrote our Confessions. For not only do they reveal the Spirit-filled life and testimony of their authors, but they emphasize throughout in a remarkable manner the saving and comforting work of the Spirit in the life of every believer and throughout the church.⁵²

Preus further demonstrates the Reformers' emphasis on the Holy Spirit by using an example of how Melancthon placed the proper emphasis on the work and role of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life: "To Melancthon the ministry is not first of all the pastoral office...but the Spirit's office, His work of creating faith in Christ through the Gospel and the sacraments."⁵³ Preus then goes on to speak generally of the strength of the Reformers in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit: "Our Lutheran Confessions by no means ignore or demean pastors and preachers and their importance as instruments of the Spirit. But with their strong emphasis on the work and ministry of the Spirit, who alone converts and comforts and saves us through the Word, perhaps our Confessions say something significant for us today."⁵⁴ And he demonstrates again, in Melancthon's description of where to find the church (Augsburg Confession, Article VII), "Actually, Melancthon, when he speaks of the marks of the church, is speaking the same thing as Luther, when he spoke of what makes the church holy. The Holy Spirit makes the church holy through the external marks of the Gospel Word and the sacraments."⁵⁵

Though writing his book a generation or more ago, Preus still speaks to the contemporary culture when he says:

Today we are told that people, Christian people and especially the young, are wary and highly critical of the institutional church and of many pastors and theologians who often seem out of touch with their real spiritual needs. If this is so, such people should be reminded that the Spirit has not abdicated His ministry, but is still active, graciously and

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid, 55.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 55-6.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 58.

wondrously active, in His community, the church, wherever the Word is proclaimed and the sacraments are administered.⁵⁶

We do not simply ignore the Spirit and pretend that He either does not exist or plays very little part in the working of our salvation. Nothing could be further from the truth. What is more, we have the Lutheran Confessions to draw from and to help to remind us of the richness of our doctrine of the Holy Spirit:

If, like our Confessions, we today can focus people's attention on the Spirit of God and His ministry, if poor sinners young and old can experience His saving and sanctifying work in their lives, then they will appreciate too the meaning of Spirit-wrought Christian fellowship and will perceive that the church, as Luther puts it, is indeed 'a unique community in the world' (LC, II, 42).⁵⁷

The Lutheran Confessions deal largely with the basic tenets of our faith. Lutheran churches use the confessions as a norm and guide for Lutheran doctrine and practice. It is both beneficial and timely for our church to take another look at is the Lutheran doctrine of the Holy Spirit. With the many contradictory ideas out there about the Holy Spirit, there is a real need to teach the truth regarding the Holy Spirit's work. The plain and simple truth can be found in the Lutheran confessions, especially as it is expressed in the Augsburg Confession and the Apology.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 56.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

CHAPTER TWO

A SURVEY OF THE ROLE OF THE SPIRIT IN THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION AND APOLOGY

The time was right for reform in the early part of the sixteenth century. Gary D. Badcock, in *Light of Truth & Fire of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (1997), tells us, “The church system of the late medieval era was notoriously corrupt, while its theology – rather like the academic theology of our own day – it did nothing for religion either at the popular level or among the more educated of the time.”¹ It was a time to bring back the Gospel -- by faith we are saved, and the Holy Spirit creates in us new inclinations to trust God and love others. In fact, it is the Holy Spirit who makes it possible for us to do these things.

The Lutheran Confessions did not come to being in the course of one night; it took many years of study and discussion. As Robert Preus observes, “The Lutheran Confessions represent the result of more than 50 years of earnest endeavor by Martin Luther and his followers to give Biblical and clear expression to their religious convictions.”² The Confessions were written in a distinct order, addressing the concerns particular to that time. The Augsburg Confession and its Apology were the first two documents approved by and subscribed to by Luther’s followers. David Scaer, in *Getting into the Story of Concord: A History of the Book of Concord*, tells us, “These two documents, the Augsburg Confession and the Apology, both written by Melancthon, were adopted as representative of the Lutheran position by the princes and theologians who gathered at Smalcald in 1537.”³ They also served as a foundation for the

¹ Badcock, Gary D., *Light of Truth & Fire of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit*, 1997, 87.

² Preus, Robert D., *Theology of Concord*, 11.

³ Scaer, David, *Getting into the Story of Concord: A History of the Book of Concord* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1977), 53.

adoption of the rest of the documents comprising our Confessions, so these are the two documents we will examine for our study.

In this paper, we will take a closer look at just what it is that the Augsburg Confession and the Apology have to say about the importance of the role and work of Holy Spirit in the life of the converted Christian. We will first identify each occurrence and then organize the information in order to better understand what these two documents have to say about the work and role of the Holy Spirit.

Some topics were dealt with first for good reason. Luther's followers had first to defend their practices and doctrines before the Roman Catholic Church. There was little need, at first, to address the errors of the Anabaptists and other groups who broke away from Rome. As more and more people began to break away and their teachings were spread more widely throughout the land, there was more need to address the errors being taught about salvation, Christ, and the work and role of the Holy Spirit.

The Augsburg Confession and the Apology to the Augsburg Confession are the two official documents that were prepared expressly for presentation at the Imperial Diet at Augsburg. They were both signed and approved by the German princes who agreed with Luther. We learn from Bente the history, background, and circumstances of these events surrounding the Diet at Augsburg in his *Historical Introductions to the Book of Concord*. Emperor Charles V called the Diet at Augsburg, and his proclamation included these words:

The diet is to consider furthermore what might and ought to be done and resolved upon regarding the division and separation in the holy faith and the Christian religion...to display diligence in hearing, understanding, and considering with love and kindness the opinions and views of everybody, in order to reduce them to one single truth and agreement, to put aside whatever has not been properly explained or done by either party, so that we all may adopt and hold one single and true religion....⁴

⁴ F. Bente, *Historical Introductions to the Book of Concord*(Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965), 15.

From this, the German princes and theologians prepared for a forum in which to discuss and debate their differing views in order to preserve the unity of the Church and yet reform it according to God's Word. Kolb and Nestingen tell us:

As supporters of the reform movement condemned by the Edict of Worms in 1521, Elector John of Saxony and other Evangelical princes recognized the seriousness of their situation within the empire. Therefore, the elector commissioned his theologians to prepare such a statement soon after he received the call to the imperial diet on 11 March 1530. The Wittenberg professors Martin Luther, Philip Melanchthon, Johann Bugenhagen and Justus Jonas began working on drafts of their position and their understanding of the reform almost immediately.⁵

The articles they prepared for the diet were called the Torgau Articles. This document in progress consisted of a preface, ten articles, and a conclusion. The articles dealt primarily with issues of church practice – marriage of priests, both kinds in the Lord's Supper, conducting the mass, confession, jurisdiction of the church, the nature of ordination, monastic vows, invocation of the saints, and singing during service in the native language of the parishioners. There was little or no effort to address matters of doctrine in Torgau. It was not deemed necessary for the diet at Augsburg.

Melanchthon went to Augsburg armed with the Torgau Articles, to prepare them for presentation at the Augsburg diet. According to Bente, in his *History of the Lutheran Confessions*, "This plan, however, was modified when the Lutherans, after reaching Augsburg, heard of and read the 404 Propositions published by Dr. John Eck, in which Luther was classified with Zwingli,... Carlstadt,... and Denk, and was charged with every conceivable heresy."⁶ The Torgau Articles would not be enough to appease Charles V.

⁵ Robert Kolb and James Nestingen, *Sources and Contexts to the Book of Concord* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001), 93.

⁶Scaer, *History of the Book of Concord*, 16.

Melanchthon then wrote the Augsburg Confession to make plain what they have been teaching in their schools and churches about the basics of Christian faith and practice. Freidrich Mildenerger, in his *Theology of the Lutheran Confessions*, states, “As such an apology in response to the charge of heresy, it was intended to demonstrate the orthodoxy of Lutherans.”⁷ The first consideration in the new document was to defend themselves and clarify their position in face of the heresy charges laid out most expressly in John Eck’s pamphlet. For a better look at what they were up against when they arrived in Augsburg, we will take a look at some of John Eck’s propositions. In it, he claimed to quote Luther’s errors to make it appear that Luther was a proved heretic. “3. The tinder of sin, even if no actual sin is present, keeps a soul from going into heaven.”⁸ John Eck was, of course, making the assumption that a person could physically be without sin in this life. Proposition 202 quotes Luther thus: “God does not care about our works. Luther. Or if they amount to anything before him, they are nevertheless all equal when it comes to merit.”⁹ Some quotes were included in Eck’s propositions simply because they were at variance with the traditional Roman Catholic viewpoint. Eck quotes Luther as saying, “In wanting to confess absolutely everything, we only show we are unwilling to leave anything for God’s mercy to forgive.”¹⁰ He also included quotes from other heretics to portray the idea that they were all lumped together in error. “189. Those who once believed that Jesus Christ redeemed them have the seal of the Holy Spirit and are never able to commit a mortal sin. Bucer.”¹¹

⁷Freidrich Mildenerger, tr. Erwin L. Lueker, ed., Robert C. Schultz, *Theology of the Lutheran Confessions* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 95.

⁸ Kolb and Nestingen, *Sources and Contexts*, 35.

⁹ Ibid, 56.

¹⁰ Ibid, 35.

¹¹ Ibid, 55.

The second consideration in writing the Augsburg Confession was for the original purpose designated by Charles V in calling for the Diet at Augsburg. They believed they were there to open up discussion and debate with representatives of the Roman church so that they might all come to agreement on these matters they sought to change within the existing church. Kolb sets the scene in *Confessing the Faith: Reformers Define the Church 1530-1580*: "...At Augsburg in 1530, seven princes of the empire and the representatives of two imperial cities stood before the emperor – in effect, before the entire empire – to confess their faith."¹²

After Luther's followers received the answer to their signed confession, in the form of the Roman Confutation, they finally realized that there would be no opportunity for debate. The Confutation ends in this way:

On the basis of this confession and the answer that has been made to it, his Imperial Majesty perceives that the Elector, princes, and estates agree on many of the articles with the catholic and Roman church. Further, these same authorities also condemn and reject the godless teachings that have been spread by pamphlet among the German people. His Imperial Majesty hopes and does not doubt that when the princes and estates have heard and understood this response to the articles which up to this time have been disputed, that they will now come to agreement in these things as well as the other matters mentioned above. Thus, they will prove obedient to the Christian faith and the Roman church.¹³

The Confutation was to be the final word. In answer to the Confutation, the "princes and estates" then had Melanchthon draw up the Apology to the Augsburg Confession in order to further define and defend their beliefs. The Reformers were not going to admit to charges of heresy, whether by false accusations or genuine doctrinal differences.

While these documents focused primarily on Christ and justification we see Melanchthon's emphasis on the Spirit's work in the lives of converted Christians especially in the articles that focus on original sin (II), justification (IV), free will (XVIII), and good works

¹² Robert Kolb, *Confessing the Faith: Reformers Define the Church 1530-1580* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1991), 14.

¹³Kolb and Nestingen, *Sources and Contexts*, 139.

(XX). Also, we see him taking issue on several points in the Apology article on the Church (corresponding to the Augsburg Confession articles VII and VIII). As the articles in the Augsburg Confession line up numerically and thematically with the articles in the Apology, we will be looking at the articles of both documents together to see what they have to say about each topic.

Article II of the Augsburg Confession and its Apology deals with the doctrine of original sin. There was nothing in the Confession that spoke directly of the Holy Spirit's role in our sanctification, but in answer to Roman Catholic charges, Melancthon addressed the role of the Holy Spirit in the corresponding article of the Apology. It is here that Melancthon first alluded to the importance of the role the Holy Spirit plays in the Christian life. "What need will there be for the Holy Spirit if by our human power alone we can love God above all things and keep God's commandments?"¹⁴ By this he demonstrated that he understood the necessity of the Holy Spirit in loving God or to doing any good work.

The Confutation made this statement in reply to Article II: "However, this article's declaration that original sin means that humanity is born without fear and trust in God is to be completely rejected. As every Christian acknowledges, adults fail to fear and trust God, but this is not a fault found in infants, who lack the use of reason."¹⁵ This was an error that had to be set right, for this false line of reasoning led the Romanists into another error regarding original sin.

The Confutation reads:

Also rejected is their teaching that inherited or original sin is concupiscence, if they mean that concupiscence is a sin that remains a sin in children after their Baptism. The apostolic see has already condemned two articles by Martin Luther where he taught that sin remains in infants after Baptism and the 'fomes' of sin hinders the soul's entrance into heaven. But if they are speaking in the manner of St. Augustine's teaching and call

¹⁴ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 114.10.

¹⁵ Kolb and Nestingen, *Sources and Contexts*, 107-8.

the inherited sin concupiscence in the sense that it ceases to be sin in Baptism, then this teaching can be accepted....¹⁶

This assertion of the Roman Confutation echoed the sentiments of John Eck's Proposition 2. In Eck's first section, dedicated to exposing Luther's errors, he quoted Luther's "error" in this way: "To deny that sin remains in the baptized child is to trample on both Paul and Christ."¹⁷ The Roman representatives reject the idea that original sin remains with the person after baptism; the Holy Spirit is sent to fight what remains of original sin in every Christian's life.

In answer to this charge, Melancthon writes a clearer explanation to promote proper understanding of original sin and the believer:

For the opponents know in what sense Luther intended the statement that original sin remains after baptism. He has always written that baptism removes the guilt of original sin, even if the 'material element' of sin, as they call it, remains, namely, concupiscence. He even added about the material element that when the Holy Spirit is given through baptism he begins to put concupiscence to death and to create new impulses in the human creature.¹⁸

This "concupiscence" that the Holy Spirit begins to put to death was further described just two paragraphs later, when he wrote, "Therefore, when Luther wanted to expose the magnitude of original sin in the human weakness, he taught that the remnants of original sin in the human being are not in their essence neutral, but need both the grace of Christ, so that they might not be held [against us], and also the Holy Spirit, so that they might be put to death."¹⁹ In this, they not only corrected this wrong view but explained how the Holy Spirit begins working on a person, even as soon as he is baptized.

¹⁶ Ibid, 108.

¹⁷ Ibid, 34.

¹⁸ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 117.35.

¹⁹ Ibid, 119.45.

Melanchthon even made mention of the Holy Spirit's work in Article III of the Augsburg Confession, "Concerning the Son of God." He spoke of the reasons why Christ sent the Holy Spirit and why we have need of him. In the German text, Melanchthon wrote:

...Christ 'descended into hell, truly rose from the dead on the third day, ascended into heaven, is sitting at the right hand of God' in order to rule and reign forever over all creatures, so that through the Holy Spirit he may make holy, purify, strengthen, and comfort all who believe in him, also distribute to them life and various gifts and benefits, and shield and protect them against the devil and sin.²⁰

In the words of the Latin text, "He will sanctify those who believe in him by sending into their hearts the Holy Spirit, who will rule, console, and make them alive and defend them against the devil and the power of sin."²¹

In *The Augsburg Confession: A Commentary*, Leif Grane explains why the Holy Spirit is included in this article, an article chiefly about Christ and His particular work of atonement:

While the central statement on the atonement stresses Jesus' death as a sacrifice, it is significant that the article does not end here, but continues equally to stress the kingly rule of Christ, the goal of which is the sanctification of every believer. Since this aspect of Christ's work is executed through the Holy Spirit, the confession of the Spirit must also be made here rather than leaving it for a later article on God the Holy Spirit.²²

The text speaks of the Holy Spirit from the perspective of Christ and His work, and indeed, they do work together. Melanchthon included in his list the working of the Holy Spirit, who was sent by Christ to ensure that the people He bought and redeemed are made holy, purified, strengthened, and ruled by the same Spirit that made them God's children. This role is not a one-time event but a continuing process the Spirit works in the Christian as Christ distributes gifts for building up His Church. He also sends His Spirit to shield and protect His people from the tricks of the devil and the tugging of the sinful nature. This is, as we will see again, a continual and on-going need for Christians.

²⁰ Ibid, 28.4-5, German version.

²¹ Ibid, 29.5, Latin version.

In Article IV of the Augsburg Confession on justification, Melanchthon did not feel the need to address the work of the Holy Spirit and good works. However, because the Romanists included good works after baptism as part of the justification process, a need developed to address this in the Apology. The Romanists understood the process of justification to include good works which were worthy of merit before God. This was shown more clearly in this part of their response to Article IV:

However, to reject human merit, which is acquired through the assistance of divine grace, is to agree with the Manicheans and not the catholic church. St. Paul says, 'I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on, there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day,' 2 Timothy 4[:7-8].²³

To this they added many more Scripture passages in order to drive their point home and prove by Bible texts the truth of what they were saying. It became Melanchthon's task to identify the right relationship between faith and the works that follow, according to the Spirit's working.

In response to Article VI, "Concerning New Obedience," the Romanists made a clear statement of disagreement with Luther's followers: "Consequently, it is not enough to say we are justified only by faith because justification pertains to faith and love."²⁴ With this the Romanists showed again that they held a different understanding of faith and the role the Holy Spirit plays. As Preus points out in his discussion, it is the working of the Spirit that is implied when the working of "faith" is used in the first line of Article VI: "Faith - or more precisely, the Holy Spirit working in believers - always, like a good tree, brings forth 'good fruits.'"²⁵ What the Romanists failed to recognize was that the proper understanding of Christian "obedience" is

²² Grane, Leif, *The Augsburg Confession: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1987), 53.

²³ Kolb and Nestingen, *Sources and Contexts*, 108.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 110.

²⁵ Preus, *Getting Into the Theology of Concord*, 75-6.

correctly portrayed as flowing naturally from the believer in thanksgiving and praise, not as something else he can or must do in order to “merit” or add to his salvation in some way.

Since the issues of the charges in Articles IV, V, and VI are somewhat interrelated, Melancthon made his answer in the form of one article to cover all three. In their answer to these “proofs” given in the Roman Confutation, the Reformers addressed how the Spirit comes in and guides and reigns over the heart and mind. It was evident to the Reformers that the rule of the Spirit keeps the Christian in the faith and does not allow sin to gain the upper hand.

Because we are speaking about the kind of faith that is not an idle thought, but which frees us from death, produces new life in our hearts, and is a work of the Holy Spirit, it does not coexist with mortal sin. Instead, as long as it is present, it brings forth good fruit... What can possibly be said more simply and clearly about the conversion of the ungodly or about the manner of regeneration?²⁶

This is a different kind of faith, a faith worked by the Holy Spirit, causing fruit to grow. Holsten Fagerberg, in his 1972 book *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions*, tells us, “The notion that justification should not lead to a life of good works was absurd to the reformers. The faith of which they spoke is the work of the Holy Spirit (Ap IV 64) and is kept alive through the struggle against sin by daily repentance.”²⁷ In fact, as Grane puts it, “Luther sees nothing but the delusion of Satan in the notion that faith, which is the gift of the Holy Spirit, can remain inactive and exist even in mortal sin. When God comes near, as He does in faith, something happens.”²⁸ Faith is not an idle thing, nor is faith merely an assent to truth. As Grane tells us:

Precisely because faith is not a person’s more or less well formulated ideas about God, but the Holy Spirit’s gift through the Word, it is impossible for faith not to bear fruit. With the Holy Spirit a new life of obedience ensues as well, for the Holy Spirit does not permit people to remain idle, as Luther says. It is simply impossible, therefore, that works should not follow faith.²⁹

²⁶ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 131.64.

²⁷ Fagerberg, Holsten, tr. Lund, Gene J. *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions (1529-1537)* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1972), 276.

²⁸ *The Augsburg Confession*, 85.

²⁹ *Ibid*, 83.

So then, when the Holy Spirit is present, He is active, producing good fruit in our lives.

Melanchthon wrote so as to be clear that no mortal man is able to merit his own salvation, even though he may be baptized and outwardly performing good works. “When they speak about the disposition [habitus] of love, they imagine that people merit [the Holy Spirit] through works - just as the present-day Anabaptists teach - and do not teach that it is received through the Word. However, God cannot be dealt with and cannot be grasped in any other way than through the Word.”³⁰ Melanchthon explained that it is not we ourselves who do these wonderful things and make all the changes to our character, but the Spirit Himself. Fagerberg draws out the implications of Word and sacrament ministry:

The confessional writers emphasize [that the Holy Spirit works through Word and sacrament] everywhere. Because they placed such a strong accent on the external Word and sacraments, they were strongly opposed to opinions both on the left and the right whose common characteristic, they felt, was to obscure the Word and the sacraments. Among the 'enthusiasts' and the Anabaptists this was done first, by teaching that the Spirit works directly upon man's heart, and second, by referring to spiritual experiences. Among the Roman Catholics this was done by pointing to the power of the papacy.³¹

The Romanists erred in their view that Christian life and salvation depends even in part upon our keeping of the law, as evidenced by their statement in the Confutation: “All Catholics admit that our works of themselves have no merit but God's grace makes them worthy to earn eternal life.”³² In his rebuttal, Melanchthon stated clearly that their mode of thinking was flawed. “After all, the law does not teach the free forgiveness of sins. Likewise, the law cannot be kept without the prior reception of the Holy Spirit.”³³ In his explanation of how good works are done and how this is separate from justification, Melanchthon mentioned several times that it is the Holy Spirit who makes us new and leads, guides, and enables us to do good works before

³⁰ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 131.65.

³¹ Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions*, 123.

³² *Sources and Contexts*, 109.

God. “Because faith truly brings the Holy Spirit and produces new life in our hearts, it must also produce spiritual impulses in our hearts.”³⁴ Where the Holy Spirit is, He not only produces new life in our hearts, He also creates spiritual impulses where there previously were none, when we were dead in our sins and transgressions.

Preus, in his discussion of the Augsburg Confession and Apology, sums up Melancthon’s thoughts in this section (para. 122-182, esp. 111 and 125) in this way: “Melancthon is saying that the Holy Spirit, when He through the Gospel creates faith in a person and justifies him, at the same time gives that person a new life, a life of love toward God and all men.”³⁵ Fagerberg describes the Spirit’s work in this way: “When the Holy Spirit comes to occupy man’s heart, a new work begins therein. In place of evil desires new activities are set in motion. When we receive the Holy Spirit by faith, a new life is born. This is described as spiritual impulses or as new affections.”³⁶ Edmund Schlink, in his book, *Theology of the Lutheran Confessions*, brings us a more concrete description of what these new impulses are:

The law of the Spirit comprises the works and fruits of the Spirit, and his law is a gift. The law in which the believer lives is the product of the Spirit of God in the believers who have been liberated from the law through Christ....The Holy Spirit bestows the same gifts which the law demands. The law forbids murder, adultery, etc., and the Holy Spirit, likewise, does not produce murder and adultery, but gentleness and chastity.³⁷

It is evident that these authors are not alluding to a one-time event but to a lifetime of the Spirit creating and sustaining these new impulses toward God.

Melancthon went on to explain why the Romanists fell short in their understanding of good works and puts the error right: “Even though civil works, that is, the outward works of the law, can be carried out to some extent without Christ and without the Holy Spirit, nevertheless, it

³³ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 132.70.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 140.125.

³⁵ Preus, *Getting into the Theology of Concord*, 74.

³⁶ Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions*, 121.

is evident from what we have said, that those things which go to the heart of the divine law (that is, those attitudes of the heart toward God that are taught in the first table) cannot be rendered without the Holy Spirit.”³⁸ Or to put it another way,

Since God as Holy Spirit is now active among us, the new life is a reality to be reckoned with. In the First Table of the Law God directs His demands at the evil desires of the heart, but through the faith effected by the Holy Spirit it is possible to fight these evil desires. Inasmuch as the heart awakened by faith harbors ‘spiritual and holy impulses,’ it is possible to love both God and one’s fellowman.³⁹

We may be able to do outwardly the kinds of things the law requires, like keep our hands from violence against our neighbor, but to keep God’s commands with no intention to gain something for ourselves is impossible apart from the Holy Spirit.

Melanchthon also referred back to the Biblical narrative to remind us that the Holy Spirit was always a major part of the plan in the saving of God’s people. “Christ was given for this very purpose that on account of him that forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit, who produces in us a new life and also eternal righteousness, may be given to us.”⁴⁰ Melanchthon returned to the basic fact that the Holy Spirit works on us, changing our hearts and minds to the likeness of Christ so that we now do good works before God. “Therefore, we cannot truly keep the law until we have received the Holy Spirit through faith [John 16:15]. Therefore Paul states that the law is established, not abolished, through faith, because the law can be kept only when the Holy Spirit is given.”⁴¹ Preus further sheds light on this understanding of good works and the Spirit when he says:

All that I do is pleasing to God because I am in Christ, because I accept Him as my Savior and Mediator...everything I do, everything, small and great - even though imperfect and tainted with sin and bad motives - everything pleases God! And all because

³⁷ Edmund Schlink, *Theology of the Lutheran Confessions* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1961), 110.

³⁸ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 141.130.

³⁹ Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions*, 122.

⁴⁰ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 141.132.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, 141.133.

I am in Christ, because I believe in Him with a faith and confidence wrought through the Gospel by the Holy Spirit alone.⁴²

It is because the Holy Spirit is working in my life, causing me to believe, causing me to be confident in that faith, that I am able to do things that are pleasing in God's sight.

Melanchthon then consulted Scripture further to back his stance on justification and the work of the Spirit. He used Paul's example of Moses, who covered his face with a veil because the glory of the Lord was something only Moses was allowed to look upon, too bright for any other Israelite:

And Paul teaches in 2 Corinthians 3[:15] that the veil, by which the face of Moses was covered, cannot be removed except by faith in Christ, by which the Holy Spirit is received. For this is what he says: 'Indeed, to this very day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their minds; but when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.'⁴³

This "veil" is no longer necessary for us. God through Jesus Christ has made Himself accessible. We can now understand the hidden things of God as He reveals them to us in His Word, through His Church and by His Holy Spirit:

But the 'veil' is removed from us (that is, this error is taken away) when God shows our hearts our impurity and the magnitude of our sin.... Then we experience how we fail to believe that God pardons us and hears us. But when we are consoled by faith through hearing the gospel and the forgiveness of sins, we receive the Holy Spirit, so that we are now able to think rightly about God, to fear God, and to believe him, etc. These things make it clear that the law cannot be kept without Christ and without the Holy Spirit.⁴⁴

In its response to Article VI, the Romanist Confutation emphasized the importance of good works according to the Scriptures: "The Gospel does not exclude good works, for 'glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good' Romans 2[:10]. Why is this the case? Because David, Psalm 62[:12]; Christ, Matthew 16[:27]; and Paul, Romans 2[:16] testify that

⁴² Preus, *Getting into the Theology of Concord*, 75.

⁴³ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 141.133.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 141.135.

God will reward everyone according to their works.”⁴⁵ With this list, the Romanists sought to confirm that the major figures of the Bible were in agreement with their teaching that good works are an important part of salvation for the Christian. However, Melancthon affirmed that all good works were not thrown out because of the Gospel but were finally rightly understood through their teachings and in their churches:

We openly confess, therefore, that the keeping of the law must begin in us and then increase more and more. And we include both simultaneously, namely, the inner spiritual impulses and the outward good works. Therefore the opponents’ claims are false when they charge that our people do not teach about good works since our people not only require them but also show how they can be done.⁴⁶

The Reformers also understood that the power of the Holy Spirit is needed to combat and to protect us from the power and cunning of the devil, which is very real. “Against the devil the power of Christ is needed. That is, because we know that on account of Christ we have the promise and are heard, we pray for the Holy Spirit to govern and defend us so that we may neither be deceived and thus err nor be driven to undertake anything against God’s will.”⁴⁷ Christ did not leave us alone in this battle, but knew we would need something beyond ourselves in order to be strong against these attacks. “For Christ conquered the devil and gave us his promise and the Holy Spirit so that with God’s help, we, too, might conquer.”⁴⁸ Schlink understands this in the context of the power we have through the Spirit to say no to sin and no to the devil when he tempts us. “Thus regeneration means that man can now do works which formerly were impossible for him. He is now free from obligations which his own decision never mastered. He is now master of vices which formerly conquered him again and again.”⁴⁹ Not

⁴⁵ Kolb and Nestingen, *Sources and Contexts*, 109.

⁴⁶ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 142.136.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 142.139.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Schlink, *Theology of the Lutheran Confessions*, 112.

only do we need help in fighting battles that come from outside ourselves, we need help against the remnants of our old sinful nature:

Likewise, the faith about which we are speaking exists in repentance, that is, it is conceived in the terrors of the conscience that experiences the wrath of God against our sin and seeks forgiveness of sins and deliverance from sin. In such terrors, and other afflictions, this faith ought to grow and be strengthened. Therefore, it cannot exist in those who live according to the flesh, who take pleasure in their lusts, and who succumb to them. Accordingly, Paul asserts [Rom. 8:1, 4], 'There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.' Again [Rom. 8:12-13], 'We are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh - for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.' Therefore, the faith that receives the forgiveness of sins for the heart that is terrified and fleeing sin does not remain in those who succumb to their lusts, nor does it coexist with mortal sin.⁵⁰

As long as we let the Spirit lead and guide, and do not give that control over to sin, we remain in safety and faith. We can, however, push the Spirit away, when we give the reins back to open sin without repentance. Melancthon demonstrated that he understood the powerful pull of the sinful nature, even on the Christian. "For in this life we cannot live up to the law, because our sinful nature does not stop bringing forth evil desires, even though the Spirit in us resists them."⁵¹ In this we begin to understand why the working of the Holy Spirit is so important in the Christian life. It remains the difference for us between life and death.

Another important aspect to understand is that even with these new impulses and desires to do good that the Spirit creates in us, the Spirit does not enable us in this life to keep the law perfectly, in its entirety. The pull of the sinful nature is still strong even after conversion. "Therefore, Paul says, [Ro. 3:31] that the law is established through faith. This should not only be understood to mean that by faith the regenerate receive the Holy Spirit and that they have impulses which agree with God's law, but it is by far more important to add this as well: that we

⁵⁰ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 142-3.142-4.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 143.146.

should realize that we are a long way from the perfect keeping of the law.”⁵² Fagerberg explains this dynamic more thoroughly: “The evil affections, with their hostility to God, are superceded by the good impulses, which the Holy Spirit awakens in the heart. We then begin to fear and love God, look to Him for help, thank Him, even in outward need, and love our neighbor. Since the spiritual impulses are in harmony with the Moral Law, we are enabled by the Spirit’s help to fulfill it.”⁵³ He then brings it full circle, directly in line with Melanchthon’s conclusion. “The Holy Spirit creates the prerequisites for our keeping of the Law, but the power of sin is such that the Law is never kept perfectly. Inasmuch as sin is present, good works in the Holy Spirit involve a constant struggle against it in daily repentance.”⁵⁴

In AC VII, the Church was identified as “the assembly of saints in which the gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are administered rightly.”⁵⁵ The Apology to this article and Article VIII: “What Is the Church?” expounds further on this dual idea of how the Holy Spirit is at work in the Church. We will focus our attention more on how the Holy Spirit gathers and connects the believers within the Church body.

Rome declared that to have the true Church meant to have all customs alike, and adhere firmly to the traditions of the Church, or at least as the Pope dictated it. They gave their response to Article VII with, at best, conditional praise:

They are...to be praised when they say that differences in church rites do not threaten the unity of faith. This refers only to particular (local) rites, as Jerome says: ‘Every province abounds in its own sense (of propriety).’ However, if their confession is extended to cover the practices of the universal church, then this article cannot be accepted.... All believers must observe the universal rites, as Augustine...so splendidly taught.⁵⁶

⁵² Ibid., 146.175.

⁵³ *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions*, 277.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 278-9.

⁵⁵ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 43.1, Latin version.

⁵⁶ Kolb and Nestingen, *Sources and Contexts*, 111.

Melanchthon's answer was to the point. "However, the church is not only an association of external ties and rites like other civic organizations, but it is principally an association of faith and the Holy Spirit in the hearts of persons."⁵⁷ Fagerberg tells us that "Apart from the spiritual membership one does not really share in the life of Christ and the spiritual gifts made available through the church."⁵⁸ The Holy Spirit is vital in every Christian, for He is the One who connects every Christian to the true Church, not conformity to tradition. "Human traditions, whether universal or particular, contribute nothing to this giving of life. Nor are they caused by the Holy Spirit, as are chastity, patience, the fear of God, love of one's neighbor, and works of love."⁵⁹ As the Holy Spirit gathers His Church, He binds the believers together, that they may support one another, love one another, and forgive one another. The Spirit uses all aspects of the Church to sanctify the believers. In their *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions*, Gassman and Hendrix tell us, "Within the church there is forgiveness of sins and salvation through proclamation of God's grace, the sacraments, absolution, the comfort of the gospel, and also through mutual forgiveness and support of the faithful. Through the church the Holy Spirit sanctifies believers and leads people to Christ."⁶⁰ They continue this line of thought as they write:

The church is to support reconciliation and to provide healing, to help overcome divisions within humanity, and to bring people into saving relationship with God. The church as communion is oriented toward God in praise and thanksgiving for all that God has done in creation and salvation. It is sent by God in Christ through the Holy Spirit to be the sign and instrument of God's saving and transforming purpose for all humanity and creation.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 174.5.

⁵⁸ Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions*, 261.

⁵⁹ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 179.31.

⁶⁰ Gassman, Gunther, and Hendrix, Scott, *Fortress Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1999), 138.

⁶¹ *Ibid*, 139.

In this true Church, the Holy Spirit effects an entire life change in the Christian that no rule concocted by the mind of man could ever do. “The righteousness of the heart is a spiritual thing that enlivens the heart. It is evident that human traditions do not enliven the heart and are neither results of the Holy Spirit’s working (as is love of neighbor, chastity, etc.) nor instruments through which God moves hearts to believe (as are the given Word and divinely instituted sacraments).”⁶² He not only brings us together but He brings us His gifts again and again, week after week. “Melancthon’s explanations are thus clear enough. He says that the AC speaks of *spiritual unity*. Therefore, he refuses to involve himself with the objections of the Confutation which concern an eternal demonstrable unity.”⁶³ Preus summarizes his thoughts on the Church saying, “The Lutheran doctrine of the church is wonderfully comforting. It agrees perfectly with the doctrine that a sinner is saved and justified by grace alone without works, and it agrees with the doctrine that the Spirit of God alone works faith in our hearts and keeps us in Christ’s church.”⁶⁴ The Holy Spirit not only brings us into Christ’s church, but He is now the one who keeps us in Christ’s church.

There was a big difference what the proper understanding of “free will” was between the Romanists and the Reformers. “The reason a special article of the AC is devoted to the problem is due to the violent attacks by their opponents, including Eck. Clearly, the primary concern of Article 18 is to maintain that the teaching of the reformers is not deterministic. This colors the article, both in form and in content. It contains two statements: (1) in earthly matters, a person possesses some freedom; (2) the righteousness of God is created by the Spirit who is received through the Word.”⁶⁵ Regarding the concept of free will, John Eck made many claims of heresy

⁶² Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 181.36.

⁶³ Grane, *The Augsburg Confession*, 96.

⁶⁴ Schlink, *Theology of Concord*, 59.

⁶⁵ Grane, *The Augsburg Confession*, 193.

on Luther's part. In Proposition 36, he quoted Luther thus: "Free will after sin is free in name only; in doing what is in oneself, a person commits a mortal sin."⁶⁶ There were obviously several points that had to be clarified in answer to this proposition, a clarification of the work of the Holy Spirit included. In Propositions 31 and 32, we read quotes that show a difference in doctrine, words that are better understood in context if, in fact, Eck quoted Luther correctly. "31. In every good work, a righteous person sins. 32. A work done in the best possible way is a venial sin."⁶⁷ Eck, in his differing understanding of the will and also the role of the Holy Spirit, used another similar quote. "35. None are certain that they are not always involved in mortally sinning because the vice of pride is so deeply hidden [within the human being]."⁶⁸ Later, with Proposition 331, Eck presumed to quote Luther, Carlstadt, and Rhegius all together in the same error. "This term 'free will' came from Satan's teaching for seducing people away from God's way. In fact, this is a mere fantasy because the will contributes nothing toward it willing, and it is wrong [to say] that it is active in good works."⁶⁹

In writing Article XVIII: "Concerning Free Will," Melancthon combated the prevailing opinion that was present in Eck's work - that man can make the choice to love God and, at least to some measure, keep His commandments:

Concerning free will it is taught that a human being has some measure of free will, so as to live an externally honorable life and to choose among the things reason comprehends. However, without the grace, help, and operation of the Holy Spirit a human being cannot become pleasing to God, fear or believe in God with the whole heart, or expel innate evil lusts from the heart. Instead, this happens through the Holy Spirit, who is given through the Word of God. For Paul says (I Cor. 2[:14]): 'Those who are natural do not receive the gifts of God's Spirit.'⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Kolb and Nestingen, *Sources and Contexts*, 38.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 73.

⁷⁰ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 50.1-3, German version.

We of ourselves do not have any measure of freedom to choose the good and reject the bad without the gracious working of the Holy Spirit. “Rejected here are those who teach that we can keep the commandments of God without grace and the Holy Spirit. For although we are by nature able to do the external works of the commandments, yet we cannot do the supreme commandments in the heart, namely, truly to fear, love, and believe in God.”⁷¹ The Latin text says much the same thing:

Concerning free will they teach that the human will has some freedom for producing civil righteousness and for choosing things subject to reason. However, it does not have the power to produce the righteousness of God or spiritual righteousness without the Holy Spirit, because ‘those who are not natural do not receive the gifts of God’s Holy Spirit.’ [I Cor. 2:14] But this righteousness is worked in the heart when the Holy Spirit is received through the Word.⁷²

Therefore, we have choice in things that are subject to reason, but these are not the things of God. We need the Spirit in order to choose anything godly, to love God, to serve Him, and to believe that He is a good God, who loves us.

The Roman Confutation also rejected the important role the Holy Spirit plays in the Christian life by diminishing it. The Confutation started off acknowledging some of the truths of Article XVIII. “In the eighteenth article, they confess that the free will has the power to effect civil righteousness but that it lacks the power, apart from the Holy Spirit to produce the righteousness of God. This confession is received and approved.”⁷³ It admitted that we do not possess enough power to perfectly keep God’s laws, but it would not acknowledge that we are completely powerless to produce anything that could be labeled the “righteousness of God” without the Spirit. “For it would be an inhuman error to deny that people possess free will since it is in accord with human experience and often asserted by the Holy Scriptures... Thus St. Paul

⁷¹ Ibid, 52.8, German version, from 1531 *editio princeps*.

⁷² Ibid, 51.1-3, German version.

⁷³ Kolb and Nestingen, *Sources and Contexts*, 116.

says: ‘But if someone stands firm in his resolve, being under no necessity but having his own desire under control,’ 1 Corinthians 7[:37].”⁷⁴

The Romanists preferred to take a moderate stance on the issue of free will between two heretical extremes: “On this issue Catholics pursue a middle way, siding neither with the Pelagians, who ascribing too much to free will, nor with the godless Manicheans, who take away all liberty.”⁷⁵ Melanchthon had to explain what was wrong with simply trying to take the middle road in this issue. “But what is the difference between the Pelagians and our opponents? Both hold that apart from the Holy Spirit people can love God and keep the commandments of God ‘according to the substance of the act’ and can merit grace and justification by works that reason can produce by itself.”⁷⁶ The Romanists clearly sought to separate themselves from Pelagius and his heretical teachings, but as Melanchthon points out, there was no real difference in what they were teaching from Pelagianism, taken to its natural conclusion:

Even though the principle of avoiding both Pelagianism and Manichaeism is certainly correct, he asks whether there is any difference between the Pelagians and his own opponents, since they both believe that human beings are able to love God, to do the good works which are required by the commandment, and to merit grace and justification with the help of reason without the Holy Spirit.⁷⁷

It is simply impossible to love God and keep His commandments apart or separate from the Holy Spirit. Melanchthon writes, “For apart from the Holy Spirit human hearts lack the fear of God and trust in God. They do not believe that God hears their prayers, forgives them, or helps and preserves them.”⁷⁸ Gassman and Hendrix say it this way: “Believers could not simply reverse

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 233.2.

⁷⁷ Grane, *The Augsburg Confession*, 184.

⁷⁸ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 234.6.

themselves and choose to love God above all things instead of despising God. The will first had to be redirected toward God by the Holy Spirit”⁷⁹

What the Romanists failed to understand or distinguish was the difference between the works one can see and the condition of one’s heart. The things that are truly spiritual are impossible to see with the naked eye, but they are far more important than what one can discern from the outward appearance:

“Therefore, even though we concede to free will the freedom and power to perform external works of the law, nevertheless we do not ascribe to free will those spiritual capacities, namely, true fear of God, true faith in God, the conviction and knowledge that God cares for us, hears us, and forgives us, etc. These are the real works of the first table, which the human heart cannot produce without the Holy Spirit, just as Paul says [2 Cor. 2:14]: ‘Those who are natural,’ that is those who use only their natural powers, ‘do not perceive the things which are of God.’⁸⁰

The Reformers were able to make this distinction using the terms “civil righteousness” and “spiritual righteousness”:

“Therefore, it is helpful to distinguish between civil righteousness, which is ascribed to the free will, and spiritual righteousness, which is ascribed to the operation of the Holy Spirit in the regenerate. In this way outward discipline is preserved, because all people alike ought to know that God requires civil righteousness and to some extent we are able to achieve it. Nevertheless, it reveals the distinction between human and spiritual righteousness, between philosophical teaching and the teaching of the Holy Spirit. It is necessary to have the Holy Spirit to understand this. Nor did we invent this distinction, for Scripture teaches it most clearly.”⁸¹

Melanchthon went so far as to criminalize those who would attribute love for God and obedience to anything but the working of the Spirit. “But those who dream that people can obey the law of God without the Holy Spirit and that the Holy Spirit is given to them out of regard for the merit of his obedience have criminally supported this teaching.”⁸²

⁷⁹ Gassman and Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction*, 150.

⁸⁰ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 234.7.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, 234.9.

⁸² *Ibid*, 235.10.

In the Augsburg Confession, Article XX: “Good Works,” Melanchthon drew attention to the role and work of the Holy Spirit in several places. First, Melanchthon pointed out that it is the Spirit who enables anyone to do good works. “Moreover, because the Holy Spirit is received through faith, consequently hearts are renewed and endowed with new affections so as to be able to do good works.”⁸³ Second, he pointed to the desperate situation of man without the Spirit. “For without the Holy Spirit human powers are full of ungodly affections and are too weak to do good works before God. Besides, they are under the power of the devil, who impels human beings to various sins, ungodly opinions, and manifest crimes.”⁸⁴ This shows what a poor job even the best men do when they seek to govern themselves without the working of the Holy Spirit. “This also may be seen in the philosophers who, though they tried to live honestly, were still not able to do so but were defiled by many obvious crimes. Such is the weakness of human beings when they govern themselves by human powers alone without faith or the Holy Spirit.”⁸⁵ Grane puts it this way: This section “emphasizes the necessity of faith with respect to good works, since it is the Holy Spirit, received by faith, who recreates the person and gives the person ethical powers. Primary emphasis is given to the contrast between the person who is renewed by the Spirit and the person who, in his folly, ‘governs himself by human strength alone.’”⁸⁶

When the Confutation brought up “merit” with reference to good works again, a correct understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit was needed in order to clarify why it is that good works in no way merit salvation. The Romanists explained their position thus:

We are not disparaging the merits of Christ for we know that our works merit nothing in and of themselves unless they proceed from the merits of Christ’s passion. For we know that Christ is ‘the way, the truth, and the life,’ John 14[:6]. However, Christ, as the Good Shepherd, began to act and teach, Acts 1[:1], and gave us an example in order that what

⁸³ Ibid, 57.29.

⁸⁴ Ibid, 57.31-32.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 57.33-34.

⁸⁶ Grane, *The Augsburg Confession*, 204.

he has done we might also do, John 13[:15]. He went through the desert, the way of good works, with the intention that all Christians should follow him and bear the cross according to his will, Matthew 10[:38], 16[:24]. And whoever does not bear the cross is not a disciple of Christ.⁸⁷

In the Apology to Article XX, then, Melanchthon needed to distinguish the true purpose of good works that are done after a person becomes a Christian. As Melanchthon points out from 2 Peter 1:10,

Peter is talking about the works that follow the forgiveness of sins and teaches why they should be done, namely, in order to confirm their calling, that is, so that they do not fall from their calling by sinning again. Do good works to persevere in your calling and to keep from losing the gifts of your calling, which were given beforehand, not on account of the works that follow, and which are now retained by faith. Faith does not remain in those who lose the Holy Spirit and reject repentance. As we said above, faith exists in repentance.⁸⁸

As Melanchthon ended this article, he again pointed to the importance of the Holy Spirit in the performance of any good work. He used a passage of scripture from Paul, from Romans 3: “Besides, we have sufficiently shown above that we maintain that good must necessarily follow faith. For we do not abolish the law, Paul says [Rom. 3:31], but we establish it, because when we receive the Holy Spirit by faith the fulfillment of the law necessarily follows, through which love, patience, chastity, and other fruits of the Spirit continually grow.”⁸⁹ These thoughts can be summed up in this way: “The documents in this section, however, argue that all Christians, including Lutherans, have to obey the Commandments and produce genuine good works and that they will do so if the Holy Spirit has converted their wills from sin to faith.”⁹⁰ If Eck quoted Luther correctly, this understanding of good works was the proper context in which to understand the words Eck used in his attempt to accuse Luther of heresy in Proposition 200:

⁸⁷ Kolb and Nestingen, *Sources and Contexts*, 118.

⁸⁸ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 237.13.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 237.15.

⁹⁰ Gassman and Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction*, 173.

“The commandments are to be fulfilled prior to the performance of any other work. Luther.”⁹¹

Gassman and Hendricks point out how “[Melanchthon] attempted to explain how faith can spontaneously produce the works that must be done by Christians without having them rely on those works to earn grace. ...the ‘heart is moved to do good works’ that it was too weak to do when it was under the power of the devil before the Holy Spirit came [AC XX, 29-31].”⁹²

In the Apology, Article XXIV: “The Mass,” we find that the way the Spirit works in the Christian is strongly linked to the Word and sacraments:

Therefore, just as the promise is useless unless it is received by faith, so also the ceremony is useless unless faith, which really confirms that the forgiveness of sins is being offered here, is added. Such a faith encourages contrite minds. Just as the Word was given to awaken this faith, so also the sacrament was instituted in order that, as the outward form meets the eyes, it might move the heart to believe. For the Holy Spirit works through the Word and the sacrament.⁹³

We see here that the Holy Spirit continues to do His work through Word and sacrament, even in the life of the believer. It states that faith (which implies that the Spirit is indwelling already) must be present in order to receive the full benefit of the sacrament, that is the forgiveness of sins. As Fagerberg tells us, “The faith which is necessary for receiving the sacraments is created by God Himself through the Holy Spirit, who works through the sacraments. Word and sacrament are the instruments through which God works to touch the hearts and create faith.”⁹⁴

There were just a handful of places where the Confutation spoke about the Holy Spirit and Melanchthon kept silent. These occurrences are found not where Melanchthon is answering the first section on doctrinal issues but where the Confutation refers to the Holy Spirit in its response to the articles on differences in church practice. In every case, the Confutation uses the Holy Spirit to justify a change in Church practice. Melanchthon had no need to respond to their

⁹¹ Kolb and Nestingen, *Sources and Contexts*, 56.

⁹² Gassman and Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction*, 168.

⁹³ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 270-1.70.

claims that change in church practice was the working of the Holy Spirit, for he took all his arguments either from Scripture or from the writings and practices of the early church fathers.

In defending the change of church practice to commune the masses with the bread only and not the wine, they asserted, “the churches (whose custom had been to commune in both kinds) were led – undoubtedly by the Holy Spirit – to give only the bread. This was based on the reasoning that the whole Christ is under each kind and is no less received under one kind than under two.”⁹⁵ It was assumed by the Romanists that the Holy Spirit led them to make this change in practice, maybe even helping them to understand that the blood must be inherently part of the body, and therefore, only the bread was needed. Since this understanding is nowhere based in Scripture, Melancthon felt no need to attend to it from that angle. Rather, he took the words from Scripture in order to demonstrate that communion called for bread and wine as Christ instated it. The Romanists confirmed that it had been Church practice at one time to offer every Christian the bread and the wine, but argued that they had to change this practice in order to combat a certain heresy in the Church. Since the Roman Catholic Church changed from the prescribed pattern as recorded in Scripture, the Romanists once again attributed this change to the directing of the Holy Spirit:

In former times, it was a matter of freedom whether to receive the sacrament under one or both forms. However, the appearance of this heresy, which taught that it was not necessary for salvation to receive both forms, led the church, directed by the Holy Spirit, to forbid the laity from receiving both the bread and the wine. Sometimes the church must combat heresy by means of an opposite teaching.⁹⁶

In the Confutation’s rebuttal to Article XXIII: “Concerning the Marriage of Priests,” the Romanists assert that it was God’s will to demand the celibacy of priests. Furthermore, they assert that the Pope was led to this decision by the leading of the Holy Spirit: “However, by the

⁹⁴ Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions*, 172.

⁹⁵ Kolb and Nestingen, *Sources and Contexts*, 121-2.

grace of God the church grew, and there was no longer a shortage of priests. Thus, 1,140 years ago, Pope Siricius, without doubt not apart from the guidance of the Holy Spirit, declared that priests should remain celibate.”⁹⁷ Melancthon does not address this change in church practice according to whether the Holy Spirit willed it, but again according to the clear pattern set in Scripture. In response to Article XXVII: “Concerning Monastic Vows,” the Confutation asserts again that the change in church practice is due to the leading and guiding of the Holy Spirit: “Their claim that the monastic life is a human invention is an empty one. For it is grounded in the Holy Scriptures, and the Holy Spirit has inspired this teaching in the church fathers.”⁹⁸ As we have seen, the Romanists used the guiding of the Holy Spirit as part of their answer in responding to the second set of articles on church practice. In these instances, they talked about the role of the Holy Spirit as One who directs the Church to make changes in its practice rather than the One who changes human hearts and minds.

So we find in the Augsburg Confession and the Apology to the Augsburg Confession several different ways that the role and work of the Holy Spirit is important and integral in the Christian life. In Article II on original sin, we discover that the Holy Spirit begins to put to death the remnants of original sin that remain after baptism. In Article III, about Christ, we are reminded that Christ sent the Holy Spirit to His people to “rule, console, and make them alive and defend them against the devil and the power of sin” throughout their struggles in this Christian life. In Articles IV, V, and VI, on justification and new obedience, we understand that the Holy Spirit produces new life in our hearts and new impulses from which flow good fruit, or works. Without the Holy Spirit we cannot even begin to love or serve God. The Holy Spirit moves us to keep God’s Law inwardly with our hearts and outwardly in our actions, and is to be

⁹⁶ Ibid, 122.

⁹⁷ Ibid, 123.

expected when the Spirit is present. Through the working of the Spirit who works through the Word, we are able to “think rightly about God, to fear God, and to believe him, etc.” In this same article, we learn that the Spirit acts on our behalf, both against the power of the devil and the old sinful flesh. There are some limits in this life to the role and work of the Spirit in this life. He will not remain if the Christian turns and gives free reign to sin and the flesh, and He will make none of us to be able to fulfill perfectly all that God’s law requires. In Articles VII and VIII on the church, we come to understand that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to bind us to the Church. In this Church, He produces in us love and chastity and other good fruits and strengthens us in our faith. In Article XVIII on the notion of “free will”, we are reminded that it is only through the working of the Holy Spirit that we are able to love, fear, and serve God, to pray, believe, and trust in Him. In Article XX about good works, we find that we are very limited in our abilities without the Spirit, for it is the Spirit who creates new impulses, and it is the Spirit who combats human reason and the devil so that we can do good works at all. As long as the Holy Spirit is ruling in our hearts, we will grow in the fruit of the Spirit. Finally, in Article XXII on Word and Sacrament, we understand that even for the converted Christian, the Holy Spirit accomplishes His work through Word and sacrament.

⁹⁸ Ibid, 137.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ROLE OF THE SPIRIT IN THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION AND APOLOGY

Gassman tells us, “Only a few sections in the confessional texts deal themselves thematically with the Holy Spirit. Yet these texts, together with many other pneumatological references in the confessions, clearly express the fundamental significance of the reality of the Holy Spirit for the theology of the Lutheran movement.”¹ With the wealth of information from the Augsburg Confession and Apology compiled in Chapter 2, the challenge set before us is to organize this information in order to get a working definition and description of the role and work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian’s life after conversion.

In compiling the material from the Augsburg Confession and Apology, we are able to identify the various works and tasks attributed to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit brings about a change of attitude and thought-pattern in how we relate to God, how we think about God, and how we deal with God. The Holy Spirit does not only change the way we relate to God, but the Holy Spirit also brings about a change in how we relate to and view other people. Another important role the Holy Spirit takes is in fighting the remnants of sin that remain in the Christian even after he is baptized and brought into God’s family. Because our enemies come not only from within but also from without, the Holy Spirit defends us from the tricks and assaults of the devil as well. The Holy Spirit also works many other changes for our benefit as we live a new life before God and man, making us holy and supporting us through every trial and need. Additionally, it is the Holy Spirit who actually connects us to the entire Christian Church as members of the body of Christ. In the end, we recognize from the Augsburg Confession and

¹ Gassman and Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction*, 70.

Apology that the Holy Spirit is vitally important to us as Christians because of the unwillingness and inability of man to do any of these things on his own.

As we discover in the AC, it is the primary role of the Holy Spirit to bring about change in the way the converted Christian relates to God and even feels about God. Because of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian, he has an entirely different way of thinking about God. According to the AC, only the Holy Spirit can provide what is needed to carry out what is at the “heart of the divine law (that is, those attitudes of the heart toward God that are taught in the first table).”² It is only as the Holy Spirit works in our lives that we can “think rightly about God.”³ This right attitude and right way of thinking about God is what Augsburg Confession and Apology describe as “spiritual righteousness.” This “spiritual righteousness,” in Ap XVIII, “is ascribed to the operation of the Holy Spirit in the regenerate.”⁴ There is no mention here of partial credit or that the Holy Spirit does His part to add to what the Christian does on his own. No, this “spiritual righteousness” is ascribed fully to the operation of the Holy Spirit alone.

Throughout the text, there are several descriptions of the new attitudes and thought patterns that the Holy Spirit creates and sustains in the converted Christian. Apology IV asserts that through the work of the Holy Spirit “we are now able...to fear God.”⁵ In Article VII, the Apology states that the “fear of God” is “caused by the Holy Spirit.”⁶ Apology XVIII, paragraph 6, makes it clear that only by the working of the Holy Spirit is it possible to live in the “fear of God”. In the paragraph that follows after, the idea is stated again that the human heart can only produce the “true fear of God” by the working of the Holy Spirit. Apology XVIII

² Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 141.30.

³ *Ibid*, 141.135.

⁴ *Ibid*, 234.9.

⁵ *Ibid*, 141.135.

⁶ *Ibid*, 179.31.

denotes that this true fear is one of the “spiritual capacities” that are worked in man by the Holy Spirit.⁷

Another one of these “spiritual capacities” mentioned together with the fear of God is the ability to love God.⁸ On the topic of “free will,” the German text of the Augsburg Confession states that if not for the working of the Holy Spirit, no man would be capable of loving God. The text describes love for God as one of the “supreme commandments” that is done “in the heart.” The first and foremost command to us is that we are to “fear and love God above all things,” and this task is only accomplished by the working of the Holy Spirit upon the heart of the Christian.⁹

The day-to-day belief in God is also a work of the Holy Spirit upon the Christian’s life. This is an important work of the Holy Spirit in creating and sustaining the Christian. To believe in God is also included in the list of the “supreme commandments” which is and can only be done “in the heart.”¹⁰ In the text of the Augsburg Confession we discover that this is not done “without the gracious working of the Holy Spirit.”¹¹ Article IV, paragraph 135 of the Apology states: “When we are consoled by faith through hearing the gospel and the forgiveness of sins, we receive the Holy Spirit, so that we are now able to think rightly about God...to believe him.”¹² The text tells us that the act of believing God and what He says is possible only because the believer has the Holy Spirit. Article XVIII, paragraph 6 of the Apology talks in more detail about what it means to believe God and to believe in him. As the Holy Spirit works “fear of God and trust in God” in Christian hearts, they can “believe that God hears their prayers,” that God is listening and desires to hear their prayers, “forgives them” on account of Christ’s sacrificial

⁷ Ibid, 234.7.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid, 52.8, German version.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid, 141.135.

death and resurrection, and “helps and preserves them,” and that God acts on their behalf and sustains them in this life and the next.¹³ In the paragraph that follows after, the Apology emphasizes that “the conviction and knowledge that God cares for us, hears us, and forgives us” are also “spiritual capacities,” and that these are things “which the human heart cannot produce without the Holy Spirit.”¹⁴ According to Article XVIII of the Apology, the capacity to understand that the Holy Spirit works in this way is itself a work of the Holy Spirit.¹⁵

The Holy Spirit plays an important role in the life of the converted Christian, working fear of God, love for God, trust in God, and belief in God and what He says. Because of the working of the Holy Spirit in his life, the Christian can now pray and trust that God is listening and will answer his prayers. Because the Holy Spirit is working in his heart, a Christian can now believe that God is on his side and loves him dearly. Because of the working of the Holy Spirit in his life, the Christian can thank God and love Him, praising Him for forgiveness of sins and help in every time of need. Because the Holy Spirit is working the Christian can now think about God and relate to Him as he ought.

The Holy Spirit not only changes the way we relate to and think about God, He also changes the way we relate to and think about other people. It is the Holy Spirit who creates in the Christian a love and care for others. In Article VII of the AC, the Holy Spirit is identified as the cause of “works of love.”¹⁶ The Holy Spirit is also identified in this same passage as the cause of “love of one’s neighbor.”¹⁷ The Apology reiterates just four paragraphs later that “love of neighbor” is one of the “results of the Holy Spirit’s working.”¹⁸ Because of the Holy Spirit

¹³ Ibid, 234.6.

¹⁴ Ibid, 234.7.

¹⁵ Ibid, 234.9.

¹⁶ Ibid, 179.31.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid, 181.36.

working in our lives, we are able to truly care about one another and tend to the needs of the people around us in service and love.

It is also important to examine the role of the Holy Spirit to defend us and fight for us. The Holy Spirit fights on our behalf against our own flesh, which is ever an enemy of the Spirit, as well as fending off the attacks of the devil. In Article III, we discover that this is one of the tasks that Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to perform on our behalf. Christ did all that was necessary for our salvation “in order to rule and reign forever over all creatures, so that through the Holy Spirit he may...shield and protect them against the devil and sin.”¹⁹ The Latin text at the same place in the text tells how Christ “will sanctify those who believe in him by sending into their hearts the Holy Spirit, who will...defend them against the devil and the power of sin.”²⁰

In Article II of the Apology, we discover that the “remnants of original sin” are still with us even after baptism, and we need the Holy Spirit “so that they might be put to death.”²¹ These “remnants” of sin that linger are properly termed “concupiscence.” While the Apology asserts that the guilt of original sin does not remain after baptism, it does say “...when the Holy Spirit is given through baptism he begins to put concupiscence to death...”²² We need the Holy Spirit to work in this area because we cannot do it ourselves. In Article XVIII of the Augsburg Confession, it is clearly stated that we are incapable of fighting off temptation and to keep ourselves from sinning, for “...without the grace, help, and operation of the Holy Spirit a human being cannot...expel innate evil lusts from the heart. Instead, this happens through the Holy Spirit, who is given through the Word of God.”²³ Without the Holy Spirit to fight off these sinful desires that linger, we would quickly succumb to temptation and be lost to sin and death again.

¹⁹ Ibid, 28.4-5, German version.

²⁰ Ibid, 29.5, Latin version.

²¹ Ibid, 119.45.

²² Ibid, 117.35.

²³ Ibid, 50.1-3, German version.

In paragraph 146 of Article IV, the Apology addresses the importance of the Holy Spirit to be working in this area, for “our sinful nature does not stop bringing forth evil desires, even though the Spirit in us resists them.”²⁴ We see here that the battle the Holy Spirit is fighting is constant and continues as long as we live this life.

Our enemies are also found outside ourselves. The Augsburg Confession and Apology identify the devil as a reality in our world, a tempter and a deceiver. We cannot fight off his attacks and temptations any better than we can rid ourselves the “remnants of sin” that stay in our flesh. This is why the texts include fighting the devil as one of the roles of the Holy Spirit. In Article IV of the Apology, we discover this truth: “Against the devil the power of Christ is needed. That is, because we know that on account of Christ we have the promise and are heard, we pray for the Holy Spirit to govern and defend us so that we may neither be deceived and thus err nor be driven to undertake anything against God’s will.”²⁵ It may be the “power of Christ” that is needed, but it is the work of the Holy Spirit to “govern and defend us” from being deceived or tricked into doing something we ought not. He fights on our behalf so we may not be led down the path to godlessness and be separated from God. “For Christ conquered the devil and gave us his promise and the Holy Spirit so that with God’s help, we, too, might conquer.”²⁶ Since the Holy Spirit works this way in our lives, we can be sure that we will win this fight against the devil and all his weapons.

As the Holy Spirit fights constantly and consistently on our behalf, He prevents us from committing a mortal sin, that is, unrepentant, public sin. If we let sin have free reign, we have sent the Holy Spirit away, for the Holy Spirit and mortal sin cannot dwell together. Apology IV uses a passage from Romans 8 to demonstrate how vital this is in the struggle against our own

²⁴ Ibid, 143.146.

²⁵ Ibid, 142.139.

²⁶ Ibid.

sinful nature: “[Rom. 8:12-13], ‘We are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh - for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.’”²⁷ The Apology goes on to explain that “the heart that is terrified and fleeing sin does not remain in those who succumb to their lusts, nor does it coexist with mortal sin.”²⁸ The Holy Spirit works on our behalf to keep our hearts and minds in Christ, that we may not give way to mortal sin and so be separated from God. Mortal sin, and faith, which is worked by the Holy Spirit, cannot dwell together. “Faith does not remain in those who lose the Holy Spirit and reject repentance. As we said above, faith exists in repentance.”²⁹ When faith comes, mortal sin cannot remain. If mortal sin gets a foothold, faith is gone, and the Holy Spirit who worked it no longer remains: “Because we are speaking about the kind of faith that is not an idle thought, but which frees us from death, produces new life in our hearts, and is a work of the Holy Spirit, it does not coexist with mortal sin. Instead, as long as it is present, it brings forth good fruit....”³⁰ It is the Holy Spirit’s work to keep mortal sin from coming in and taking a foothold, and instead to produce and grow in us “good fruit.”

There are many varied ways in which the Holy Spirit works for our general benefit. He renews us, He gives us a new life in Christ, He makes us holy, and He works to support us in this Christian life. In Article II, the German text of the Augsburg Confession tells us that Christ, after all was accomplished for our salvation, sent the Holy Spirit so that “through the Holy Spirit he may make holy, purify, strengthen, and comfort all who believe in him, also distribute to them life and various gifts and benefits....”³¹ The same section of the Latin text tells us that Christ “will sanctify those who believe in him by sending into their hearts the Holy Spirit, who will

²⁷ Ibid, 142-3.142-4.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid, 237.13.

³⁰ Ibid, 131.64.

³¹ Ibid, 28.4-5, German version.

rule, console, and make them alive....”³² Christ Himself sent the Holy Spirit in order that we may have these gifts and benefits. The Holy Spirit provides the things we need in order to live the life we are called to live in Christ. In fact, this idea is reiterated in Article IV of the Apology. “Christ was given for this very purpose that on account of him that forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit, who produces in us a new life and also eternal righteousness, may be given to us.”³³ The Holy Spirit makes sure that we are given the gifts Christ prepared for us.

With the Holy Spirit comes new life and renewal. Christ sent the Holy Spirit to give us new life, to make us alive.³⁴ In creating this new life, faith and the Holy Spirit in this context are almost synonymous since “faith truly brings the Holy Spirit and produces new life in our hearts....”³⁵ as we find in Article IV of the Apology. In Article XX of the Augsburg Confession, we see again that “because the Holy Spirit is received through faith, consequently hearts are renewed....”³⁶ The Holy Spirit is giving this new life at Christ’s command, and when it comes to who or what rules our hearts in this new life, we discover also that Christ sent the Holy Spirit “who will rule.”³⁷ Because we know that we are forgiven and made new on account of Christ, “we pray for the Holy Spirit to govern and defend us so that we may neither be deceived and thus err nor be driven to undertake anything against God’s will.”³⁸ Because the Holy Spirit has taken residence in our hearts, we have new life, and the Holy Spirit tends to this new life and keeps our feet from straying.

As we are given this new life in Christ, it is the role of the Holy Spirit to make us holy, to purify us, and to create in us new impulses to do good and not evil. Christ sent the Holy Spirit so

³² Ibid, 29.5, Latin version.

³³ Ibid, 141.132.

³⁴ Ibid, 29.5, Latin version.

³⁵ Ibid, 140.125.

³⁶ Ibid, 57.29.

³⁷ Ibid, 29.5, Latin version.

³⁸ Ibid, 142.139.

that through Him “he may make holy, purify...all who believe in him.”³⁹ The Holy Spirit gives us new impulses and desires to do good works as part of His role and work. In Article II of the Apology, it states “when the Holy Spirit is given through baptism he begins to...create new impulses in the human creature.”⁴⁰ These are not arbitrary changes in disposition, but changes from desires of the flesh and of the world to desires that are good and godly. In Article IV of the Apology, we discover “by faith the regenerate receive the Holy Spirit and...they have impulses which agree with God’s law.”⁴¹

In the same section of Article IV, we also see how new spiritual impulses and good works go together. It states, “the keeping of the law must begin in us and then increase more and more. And we include both simultaneously, namely, the inner spiritual impulses and the outward good works.”⁴² In Article XX of the Augsburg Confession, we find the same correlation with new “affections,” or spiritual impulses, and good works. “Moreover, because the Holy Spirit is received through faith, consequently hearts are...endowed with new affections so as to be able to do good works.”⁴³ As the Holy Spirit gives us new impulses to do good, He then also gives us the power and the will to carry out these good works we now desire to do. In Article XX of the Augsburg Confession, we find this connection between the activity of the Holy Spirit and good works: “...When we receive the Holy Spirit by faith the fulfillment of the law necessarily follows, through which love, patience, chastity, and other fruits of the Spirit continually grow.”⁴⁴ When the Holy Spirit is working and active, we see new life and with it new impulses toward good which are then accompanied by good actions, “good fruit” in the life of the Christian.

³⁹ Ibid, 28.4-5, German version.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 117.35.

⁴¹ Ibid, 146.175.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid, 57.29.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 237.15.

There is an emphasis in the Augsburg Confession and Apology not only to speak of the necessity of good works for the Christian, “but also show how they can be done”⁴⁵ and to what extent they may be done in this life. The “how” is done only through the work of the Holy Spirit. In Article IV of the Apology, we are told “the law can be kept only when the Holy Spirit is given” and “we cannot truly keep the law until we have received the Holy Spirit through faith [John 16:15].”⁴⁶ Though we may try on our own to do good things and live rightly, the law can only be kept because the Holy Spirit is working through us. A little later in Article IV, we discover that even though “by faith the regenerate receive the Holy Spirit and...have impulses which agree with God’s law,” it is important to “realize that we are a long way from the perfect keeping of the law.”⁴⁷ Even with the constant help and work of the Holy Spirit, we cannot truly accomplish perfect obedience to God’s law here and now, no matter how we try. “For in this life we cannot live up to the law, because our sinful nature does not stop bringing forth evil desires, even though the Spirit in us resists them.”⁴⁸ With the Holy Spirit working we can and do keep the law in part, at least until this life is ended. And when we receive all the benefits of eternal life and keep the law fully, that is the Holy Spirit working too. “Christ was given for this very purpose that on account of him...the Holy Spirit, who produces in us...eternal righteousness, may be given to us.”⁴⁹ The Holy Spirit not only produces good spiritual desires and good works here and now, but He also produces in us a righteousness that is eternal and goes far beyond the bounds of this life.

Since we live this life full of struggles and hardships, Christ sent the Holy Spirit to be more to us than just an enabler, a defender, and a life-changer. Christ accomplished His great

⁴⁵ Ibid, 142.136.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 141.133.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 146.175.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 143.146.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 141.132.

work of salvation and reconciliation and sent the Holy Spirit to us “so that through the Holy Spirit he may...strengthen...all who believe in him.”⁵⁰ The Holy Spirit was also sent to “comfort all who believe in him.”⁵¹ In the words of the Latin text, the Augsburg Confession talks about how Christ accomplished all this, “sending into their hearts the Holy Spirit, who will...console...them.”⁵² The Holy Spirit is here to comfort and console when hardships come and when our own strength fails us. With the Holy Spirit we live a life of freedom, as the Apology quotes Paul in 2 Corinthians 3:15: “Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.”⁵³ We do not live under the old rules, but we have God’s truth by God’s Holy Spirit, and it is a truth that brings freedom, just as sure as it brings comfort knowing that we are no longer bound to God’s law on account of Christ, by the working of His Spirit.

The Holy Spirit works through means. This is part of His role and work. Article VII of the Apology tells us “God cannot be dealt with and cannot be grasped in any other way than through the Word.”⁵⁴ The Holy Spirit uses the Word as the instrument with which He comes to us, and in this way we receive the Spirit so we are able to know God and deal with Him as He is. In Article XVIII of the Augsburg Confession, it talks about all the gifts and abilities we have “through the Holy Spirit, who is given through the Word of God.”⁵⁵ It is the same to say “the Holy Spirit works through the Word and the sacrament”⁵⁶ because “sacrament” in the Confessions is understood as a visible God-given means of delivering the Word to us in a way that we can see and feel and touch. “Just as the Word was given to awaken this faith, so also the sacrament was instituted in order that, as the outward form meets the eyes, it might move the

⁵⁰ Ibid, 28.4-5, German version.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid, 29.5, Latin version.

⁵³ Ibid, 141.133.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 131.65.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 50.1-3, German version.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 270-1.70.

heart to believe.”⁵⁷ The Apology points out in Article VII of the Apology, that human traditions do not come under the umbrella of the roles and works of the Holy Spirit: “It is evident that human traditions do not enliven the heart and are neither results of the Holy Spirit’s working (as is love of neighbor, chastity, etc.) nor instruments through which God moves hearts to believe (as are the given Word and divinely instituted sacraments).”⁵⁸ It is for the administration of Word and sacrament that congregations gather together, because “the church is not only an association of external ties and rites like other civic organizations, but it is principally an association of faith and the Holy Spirit in the hearts of persons.”⁵⁹ The Holy Spirit not only binds us to Christ through the Word and sacrament, but He also binds us to each other in an association that is unlike any other.

The work and the role of the Holy Spirit is so important to our faith lives because we have such need of Him and His gifts. Indeed, we are spiritually powerless without him. Though it identifies that there are some who believe “that people merit [the Holy Spirit] through works,”⁶⁰ the Augsburg Confession and the Apology assert that the Holy Spirit is only given through the Word on account of Christ. It is impossible for man to merit anything before God, “For without the Holy Spirit human powers are full of ungodly affections and are too weak to do good works before God. Besides, they are under the power of the devil, who impels human beings to various sins, ungodly opinions, and manifest crimes.”⁶¹ We are too weak and too full of ungodly desires to truly do any good thing before God. What is more, even if we were not so weak in our own selves, we would still be enslaved under the power of the devil, which makes us doubly enemies of Christ, enemies of God. “This also may be seen in the philosophers who,

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 181.36.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 174.5.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 131.65.

⁶¹ Ibid, 57.31-32.

though they tried to live honestly, were still not able to do so but were defiled by many obvious crimes. Such is the weakness of human beings when they govern themselves by human powers alone without faith or the Holy Spirit.”⁶² No man is able to govern himself so as to live a perfectly moral life. This is an impossible task for man.

Without the Holy Spirit, we cannot do what God demands: “We cannot truly keep the law until we have received the Holy Spirit through faith [John 16:15].”⁶³ Article IV of the Apology uses 2 Corinthians 3:15 as part of its discussion and demonstrates the need for the Holy Spirit and how lost we are, as if behind a veil, without the Holy Spirit:

But the ‘veil’ is removed from us (that is, this error is taken away) when God shows our hearts our impurity and the magnitude of our sin....Then we experience how we fail to believe that God pardons us and hears us. But when we are consoled by faith through hearing the gospel and the forgiveness of sins, we receive the Holy Spirit, so that we are now able to think rightly about God, to fear God, and to believe him, etc. These things make it clear that the law cannot be kept without Christ and without the Holy Spirit.⁶⁴

Only when the “veil” is removed can we do any of those things that make us Christian, and only because of the important role the Holy Spirit plays. Article XVIII of the Augsburg Confession tells us, “without the grace, help, and operation of the Holy Spirit a human being cannot become pleasing to God, fear or believe in God with the whole heart, or expel innate evil lusts from the heart. Instead, this happens through the Holy Spirit, who is given through the Word of God.”⁶⁵ Without the activity of the Holy Spirit working in us and on our behalf, we could do none of these things. The role of the Holy Spirit is vital because He gives us spiritual capacities for things we cannot and do not do on our own, from loving God and our neighbor to fleeing from temptation and sin.

⁶² Ibid, 57.33-34.

⁶³ Ibid, 141.133.

⁶⁴ Ibid, 141.135.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 50.1-3, German version.

The Augsburg Confession and Apology does concede, "...civil works, that is, the outward works of the law, can be carried out to some extent without Christ and without the Holy Spirit."⁶⁶ They cannot be done with the right heart, but the outward works can physically be performed without the Holy Spirit. As we discovered above, however, there is only so much of these outward works that can be done on our own because of the natural desires of the flesh and the constant urging of the devil to do ungodly things. Since there is a difference between merely outward works and works that spring from a pure and loving heart, it is

helpful to distinguish between civil righteousness, which is ascribed to the free will, and spiritual righteousness, which is ascribed to the operation of the Holy Spirit in the regenerate. In this way outward discipline is preserved, because all people alike ought to know that God requires civil righteousness and to some extent we are able to achieve it. Nevertheless, it reveals the distinction between human and spiritual righteousness, between philosophical teaching and the teaching of the Holy Spirit.⁶⁷

In summary, it helpful to look at Galatians 5, where St. Paul paints two very different pictures describing the works of the flesh and the works of the Spirit:

Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control; against such things there is no law.⁶⁸

St. Paul contrasts the "fruit of the Spirit" with the "works of the flesh" and so draws a line between the two. This is a distinction we find as we examine the text of Augsburg Confession and Apology. In Apology XX, paragraph 29, the text emphasizes that only by the working of the Holy Spirit are good works done. Because the Holy Spirit is working and renewing the Christian heart, he is "endowed with new affections so as to be able to do good works."⁶⁹ The Spirit

⁶⁶ Ibid, 141.130.

⁶⁷ Ibid, 234.9.

⁶⁸ Galatians 5:19-23, *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: Good News Publishers, 2001) [ESV].

⁶⁹ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 57.29.

changes the man who can do nothing to please God and be nothing that would please God into someone who is new, filled with love for others and a desire to do good. This desire to do good spills out into the Christian's life as it reveals the "fruit of the Spirit." But the Holy Spirit does not leave him there. He wages a war against the sin that remains in his flesh and against Satan, who is always plotting to separate him from God. Not only that, but the Holy Spirit implements the rule of Christ here on earth. He also comforts, and consoles God's people. The Holy Spirit connects us to God through the Word and sacraments and connects us to the rest of the church as well. There is no doubt that we need the Holy Spirit to live the Christian life, for we know all too well the works of the flesh and our own weaknesses. The Holy Spirit plays an important role in the life of the converted Christian, and the Augsburg Confession and the Apology help to make us aware of how important that role is for us.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

There are several theologians, like Lorenzo Wunderlich and Veli-Matti Karkkainen, who have looked back on the Church's history of theological discourse as a whole and noticed a lack, generally, in writings on the theology and study of the Holy Spirit, especially in light of all that is written about the Father and Jesus, the Son. Whether it is from a general disinterest, because of the inability of man to fathom a person that is "spirit" as Augustine suggested,¹ or for some other reason, the Holy Spirit has gained little attention comparatively throughout the two millennia since Christ sent the Holy Spirit. In *The Half-Known God: The Lord and Giver of Life*, Wunderlich confirms that there has been a certain gap in theology of the Holy Spirit throughout the majority of Church history: "The assertion that the theology of the Holy Spirit suffers from neglect is rather made to underscore a tragic fact which has been in evidence, with some exceptions, from the second century of the Christian era. There is relatively little reference to the Spirit by the Apostolic Fathers."² In the introductory chapter of this paper, we identified the multitude of references to the Holy Spirit prevalent in twentieth century Pentecostal movements. In the main body of this paper we were able to recognize that the Holy Spirit is mentioned as integral to the work God is doing in our salvation and our life in the faith.

The lack of references to the Holy Spirit is not prevalent in the Lutheran writings of the sixteenth century. The Augsburg Confession and Apology, foundational documents in the Lutheran church, which together marked the beginning of the Lutheran church as a separate entity from the Roman Catholic Church, contain many references to the Holy Spirit, his role and work. These references help us to more clearly identify the role the Holy Spirit plays in our faith

¹ Karkkainen, *Pneumatology*, 16.

² Wunderlich, *The Half-Known God*, 16.

life, from the time we first believe in Jesus, through the struggles of this life, and into eternity. In examining the Augsburg Confession and its Apology, we realize that the Reformers had a great awareness of the importance of the role the Holy Spirit plays in the day-to-day life of the converted Christian. These additional references to the role and work of the Holy Spirit help us to understand the breadth and depth of the tasks the Holy Spirit was sent to do.

The general lack of reference in the Church to the Holy Spirit and his work is not to be found in the Pentecostal and charismatic writings of the twentieth century either. With the dawn of the twentieth century came a renewed interest in this relatively unknown third person of the Trinity in the form of the Pentecostal movement and the charismatic movement. “This worldwide movement has experienced explosive numerical growth in the twentieth century.... In many ways, it is best understood as a living critique, mostly from the pews, both of the church’s traditional thinking about the Spirit and of its general stance in relation to religious experience.”³

In his article, “Life in the Spirit and Worldview,” Henry Lederle identified the charismatic movement as a natural move against rationalism, which came to the forefront as part of the Enlightenment: “After three centuries of relegating the non-rational and intuitive aspects of humanity to ‘primitive remains’ from superstitious times, a new climate has arisen, characterized by a deep hunger for spiritual experience and reality.”⁴ Lederle believed that the remedy for this “hunger” could be found in the charismatic movement, which must “make a major contribution, or else the counterfeit currency of New Age syncretism will fill the void.”⁵ Here he calls for more experiences with the “spiritual” aspects found in the charismatic movement, as a remedy against the more worldly spiritualism of the New Age philosophies. To

³ Badcock, *Light of Truth*, 137.

⁴ Lederle, “Life in the Spirit and Worldview,” 26.

⁵ *Ibid.*

Larry Christenson, it seems that the charismatic movement is a remedy for an affliction found within the church body, the emotionless void of “dead orthodoxy”:

Whatever else people may know about the charismatic renewal, they know that it has brought the experiential side of the Christian faith to the fore again. Luther’s sharp criticism against dead orthodoxy sounds like an echo of present-day conversations in the charismatic renewal. If God is a real God and Jesus is a real Lord, he will not leave people unaffected in their emotions, thinking, and will – they will experience the reality of their encounter with him.⁶

In that real “encounter,” it is expected that the Holy Spirit will work in a certain way and affect the believer in a certain way. “Somewhat like the earlier renewal movements, the Lutheran charismatics see a deficiency or impoverishment in the churches, which they believe baptism in the Spirit will remedy. When all is said and done about charismata, what the charismatics see missing in the life of the church is the appropriation of the power to lead a new life.”⁷

In some cases, the charismatic departure from the scriptural teaching, saying that tongues and miraculous signs, not love and good works, are the designated evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit, will result in the departure from other scriptural truths. J. Massyngberde Ford, who is a Catholic charismatic herself, “has suggested an ‘unconscious’ modeling of the two major Catholic charismatic communities upon a theology ‘not dissimilar to that of the Radical Reformation.’” She describes the patterning of her own charismatic group after “Anabaptist” or “Hutterian” pattern of a “strong and rigid hierarchy to whom absolute obedience is required, a non-professional teaching body...a complicated exclusion system, the subordination of women and withdrawal from the world.”⁸ She noted how the scriptural passages denoting respect for women seemed to be ignored or rewritten by these groups.

⁶ Christenson, *Welcome Holy Spirit*, 210.

⁷ Lindberg, *Charismatic Renewal and the Lutheran Tradition*, 78.

⁸ Lindberg, *The Third Reformation?* 14.

Lutheran charismatic theologians have sought to define their movement in terms of Word and sacrament ministry, asserting that the charismata are simply a fuller pouring of the Spirit, a greater gift given to us, almost in addition to the Word and sacrament. In Lutheran charismatic circles, “baptism in the Holy Spirit” is described as an event within the context of “sacramental” baptism. In his response paper to the CTCR report: *The Lutheran Church and the Charismatic Movement*, Jungkuntz asserts, “Such a view in no way diminishes the significance of sacramental baptism, but merely speaks of the manner by which, according to God’s promise, the benefits of sacramental baptism might be more fully released and manifested in the life of the believer.”⁹ For Jungkuntz, this release of benefits is accompanied by “speaking in tongues.”

As we examine the Augsburg Confession and Apology, we discover that they do not allow for this understanding. In fact, this Pentecostal or charismatic “spiritualizing” of the work and role of the Holy Spirit is dissuaded, not promoted, in Luther’s writings: “Luther opposed all spiritualization because the desire and effort for an unmediated relationship with God as he is in himself is a theology of glory that can lead only to idolatry, despair, or atheism.”¹⁰ This is because the “spiritualizing of the sacraments and the Word shifts justification from *outside us* to *within us*.”¹¹ Jungkuntz appeared to uphold the sacraments, insisting that through the “baptism of the Spirit”, in the speaking of tongues “the benefits of sacramental baptism might be more fully released and manifested in the life of the believer.”¹² By asking that God somehow add more to His gifts of forgiveness and salvation by giving us the speaking of tongues as assurance of faith and the presence of the Holy Spirit negates the surety of the Word itself. It leads to some uncertainty as well, since

⁹ Jungkuntz, Theodore, *The Cresset: Occasional Paper: II: A Response*, Valparaiso University Press, Valparaiso, IN 1977. This paper was written as a response to the CTCR Report.

¹⁰ *Charismatic Renewal and the Lutheran Tradition*, p. 50

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Jungkuntz, *The Cresset: Occasional Paper II: A Response*, p. 4.

...inner repentance, cognizance of a worthy remembrance of Christ, level of belief, etc.,...are ambiguous and intrinsically uncertain. The modern psychological question of how do I know I have believed my best is not far removed from the medieval ethical doubt of knowing when I have done my best.¹³

Lindberg contrasts this notion with the Lutheran notion of faith, which is “faith that comes by hearing not by experiences, even successful ones, which put the burden of proof upon the person.”¹⁴ Lutheran charismatic theology is detrimental as it makes salvation and assurance of the presence of the Holy Spirit our responsibility again. If the feeling is gone or the tongues stop, this leads one to ask why this is so: “What have I done or failed to do, that God has taken this away from me?” It is important to remember that the Holy Spirit, as a particular person of the Godhead has as His primary role that of bringing men to faith, keeping them in that faith, and growing them in that faith. Through careful study of the Scriptures, we understand the specific roles and works the Holy Spirit performs.

As we have seen in chapters two and three, the additional “baptism in the Spirit,” accompanied by manifestations and new power for living, is not promoted in the early Lutheran writings, particularly the Augsburg Confession and its Apology. This was not Luther’s remedy to the “dead orthodoxy” that was so prevalent in the church in his time, nor was it the solution according to Melanchthon. “Protestants in general and Lutherans in particular have been criticized that they have, at least until recently...not given the reality of the Holy Spirit its proper place in theological reflection and Christian worship and life. However justified these criticisms may be, they certainly have no basis in the Confessions. On the contrary!”¹⁵ In the Augsburg Confession and its Apology, we discover that the Holy Spirit works in a fuller, more dynamic way in the life of every living Christian than confining His role primarily to the performance of

¹³ *Charismatic Renewal and the Lutheran Tradition*, 50.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 54.

¹⁵ Gassman and Hendrix, *Fortress Introduction*, 73.

signs and wonders. “We encounter in the confessions...a clear and consistent affirmation of the place and function of the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit there would be no Christians and no Christian church.”¹⁶

The role of the Holy Spirit, as found in the Augsburg Confession and Apology, is vital for Christian life and salvation. He fights many battles we cannot see. “Without the Holy Spirit we would not be able to grasp the mystery that people are led to believe in God and that the Christian church continues to exist in many lands despite persecution and discrimination from outside and failure and disobedience from within.”¹⁷ The ability to “grasp the mystery” and to believe in God are the true “signs” that the Holy Spirit is at work in the Church today. These are the kinds of works of the Spirit that we find in the Confessions:

According to the teaching of the confessions, it is the Holy Spirit who creates faith and hope in each individual person, who he leads to Christ and a right relation with God, who sanctifies and preserves the faithful in their faith, who inspires love toward God and neighbor, who brings together each individual Christian community, and who calls, gathers, enlivens and enlightens the whole Christian church on earth.¹⁸

It is this full and dynamic view of the role of the Holy Spirit that we seek to hold to and preserve for future generations, remaining true to the Scriptural foundation it is built upon. The Confessions focus their attention more on what the Holy Spirit does rather than seeking to provide a definition of the Holy Spirit. They demonstrate a “fairly expansive view of the Spirit as mediating the incorporation of the believer into Christ, so that a theology of the Head and the members of Christ’s body emerges, in keeping with the strongly Christocentric character of the theology of the Reformation.”¹⁹ In the Lutheran Confessions, we find the role of the Holy Spirit in correlation with His role as a distinct person of the Trinity, with each of the three persons

¹⁶ Ibid, 74.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Badcock, *Light of Truth*, 92.

performing Their particular role in our salvation.

The Augsburg Confession and Apology is just a beginning point for study of the Confessions as a whole. As a whole, the Confessions say a great deal about the Spirit. Lorenz Wunderlich affirms this richness in theology of the Holy Spirit: “There is not a single one of the confessional symbols which does not describe in great detail the Person and the work of the Holy Ghost.”²⁰

Even in the Preface to the Book of Concord, we find several references to the Holy Spirit and his work. They included a confirmation that “through the particular grace of the Holy Spirit,” the Lutherans of their time “wrote down in good order and brought together into one book everything that pertains to and is necessary” to promote harmony among Christian teachers.²¹ In paragraph 20, it is their hope that those teachers who have up until now disagreed with them will, “through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, will give themselves over to and turn toward the infallible truth of the divine Word.”²² This thought is followed by a desire that “the pure teaching and confession of the faith may be kept and spread through the help and assistance of the Holy Spirit....”²³ using the Book of Concord as a teaching tool and a guide. As the writers continue, they state that they are convinced of the truth of their Confessions “through the grace of the Holy Spirit.”²⁴ These examples are just the beginning of references to the Holy Spirit and descriptions of His work.

The Smalcald Articles which followed the Augsburg Documents are rich with reference to the Holy Spirit. Luther tells us, “As Paul bears witness in Romans 7[:23], he wars with the law in his members, etc. - not by using his own powers but with the gift of the Holy Spirit which

²⁰ Wunderlich, *The Half-Known God*, 92.

²¹ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 9.12.

²² *Ibid.* 13.20.

²³ *Ibid.* 14.21.

²⁴ *Ibid.* 14.22.

follows from the forgiveness of sins.”²⁵ The Holy Spirit is there to fight against the desires of the sinful flesh not just once, but every day. As Luther prepared the Smalcald Articles for publication in 1538, he focused on some of the errors of the new “sects” regarding their view of the work and role of the Holy Spirit. He points out their mistaken belief “that if someone sins after receiving faith and the Spirit, then that person never really had the Spirit and faith.”²⁶ He goes into more detail to point out the error in believing that the Spirit either comes to man or works in him apart from the Word; the “enthusiasts” claim the Holy Spirit apart from the external Word. “Instead, they fill the world with their chattering and scribbling - as if the Spirit could not come through the Scriptures or the spoken word of the apostles, but the Spirit must come through their own writings and words.”²⁷ He continues by leading their argument to its logical conclusion: “Why do they not abstain from their preaching and writing until the Spirit himself comes into the people apart from and in advance of their writings? After all, they boast that the Spirit has come to them without the preaching of the Scriptures.”²⁸

The next two documents that deal with the special role that the Holy Spirit plays in the life of the converted Christian are the Small and Large Catechisms. In the Small Catechism, Luther gives us this simple understanding of the third article of the Apostles’ Creed, which focuses primarily on the importance and work of the Holy Spirit:

I believe that by my own understanding or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him, but instead the Holy Spirit called me through the gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, made me holy and kept me in the true faith, just as he calls, gathers, enlightens, and makes holy the whole Christian church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one common, true faith. Daily in this Christian church the Holy Spirit will raise me and all the dead and will give to me and all believers in Christ eternal life.²⁹

²⁵ Ibid, 318.40.

²⁶ Ibid, 318.42.

²⁷ Ibid, 322.6.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid, 355.6.

In the Large Catechism, Luther goes into greater detail to describe what that means, referring specifically eleven times to the role of the Holy Spirit in the converted Christian. He points out how the Third Article of the Creed expresses and portrays “the Holy Spirit and his office, which is that he makes us holy.”³⁰ He then draws our attention to what it is about the Spirit that qualifies Him as the “Holy” Spirit. “But God’s Spirit alone is called a Holy Spirit, that is the one who has made us holy and still makes us holy....the Holy Spirit must be called a Sanctifier, or one who makes us holy.”³¹

In the Large Catechism, Luther explains how it is that the Holy Spirit does this work: “...the Holy Spirit effects our being made holy through the following: the communion of saints or Christian church, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.”³² He tell us that the Holy Spirit “has a unique community in the world, which is the mother that begets and bears every Christian through the Word of God, which the Holy Spirit reveals and proclaims, through which he illuminates and inflames hearts so that they grasp and accept it, cling to it, and persevere in it.”³³ On the very next page, Luther is talking about the Church and the Holy Spirit again: “I believe that there is on earth a holy little flock and community of pure saints under one head Christ. It is called together by the Holy Spirit in one faith, mind, and understanding.”³⁴ Luther outlines the role of the Holy Spirit in the Church here and now: “The Holy Spirit will remain with the holy community or Christian people until the Last Day. Through it he gathers us, using it to teach and preach the Word. By it he creates and

³⁰ Ibid, 435.35.

³¹ Ibid, 435.36.

³² Ibid, 435.37.

³³ Ibid, 436.42.

³⁴ Ibid, 437-8.51.

increases holiness, causing it daily to grow and become strong in the faith and in its fruits, which the Spirit produces.”³⁵

In the Large Catechism, we also find that Luther addresses how the Holy Spirit protects and preserves us: “Although we have sin, the Holy Spirit sees to it that it does not harm us....”³⁶

Luther describes how the Holy Spirit is needed so long as we are in this life: “The Holy Spirit must always work in us through the Word, granting us daily forgiveness until we attain to that life where there will be only perfectly pure and holy people....”³⁷ Luther points to the work of the Holy Spirit in the life to come: “All this, then, is the office and work of the Holy Spirit, to begin and daily increase holiness on earth through these two means, the Christian church and the forgiveness of sins. Then, when we pass from this life, in the blink of an eye he will perfect our holiness and will eternally preserve us in it through the last two parts of this article.”³⁸

In his closing thoughts on Article Three of the Creed, Luther brings the role of the Holy Spirit back to His place in the Trinity. Luther puts the Holy Spirit’s work in Biblical perspective. “For creation is now behind us, and redemption has also taken place, but the Holy Spirit continues his work without ceasing until the Last Day, and for this purpose he has appointed a community on earth, through which he speaks and does all his work. For he has not yet gathered together all of this Christian community, nor has he completed the work of granting forgiveness.”³⁹ Luther concludes by describing the way that all three persons function together: “...We could never recognize the Father’s favor and grace were it not for the Lord Christ, who is

³⁵ Ibid, 438.53.

³⁶ Ibid, 438.55.

³⁷ Ibid, 438.58.

³⁸ Ibid, 438.59.

³⁹ Ibid,439.61.

a mirror of the Father's heart. Apart from him we see nothing but an angry and terrible judge. But neither could we know anything of Christ, had it not been revealed by the Holy Spirit."⁴⁰

Preus remarks on Luther's enthusiasm over the Spirit's activity in the Church as found in the Large Catechism: "Luther is most emphatic that the Spirit does all this Himself and does it all only through the ministry of the Gospel Word and through the sacraments. 'Where Christ is not preached, there is no Holy Spirit to create, call and gather the Christian church, and outside it no one can come to the Lord Christ' (LC, II, 45). Again, we notice that Luther does not even mention preachers and teachers - so taken up is he, so enthralled, by the Spirit's activity through the Word to bring us all the benefits Christ has acquired for us by His life and death and resurrection, by His ascension and sitting at God's right hand; so captivated is Luther by the Spirit's activity to bring us, through that same Gospel Word, God's forgiveness, comfort, peace, and the certain hope of eternal blessedness with Him."⁴¹

The Formula of Concord gives a more in-depth treatment to the work and role of the Holy Spirit. In Article II on free will, it talks about how "...God changes recalcitrant, unwilling people into willing people through the drawing power of the Holy Spirit, and that after this conversion the reborn human will is not idle in the daily exercise of repentance, but cooperates in all the works of the Holy Spirit which he performs through us."⁴² Then it speaks of how "God's Spirit takes hold of the human will solely through his divine power and activity" and "the new human will is an instrument and tool of God the Holy Spirit, in that the will not only accepts grace but also cooperates with the Holy Spirit in the works that proceed from it."⁴³

⁴⁰ Ibid, 440.65.

⁴¹ Preus, *Getting into the Theology of Concord*, 55.

⁴² Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 474.17, negative thesis 8.

⁴³ Ibid, 474.18, negative thesis 9.

In the Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord, the Reformers speak of “.... the gift of the Holy Spirit, which cleanses human beings and daily makes them more upright and holier. Our own powers are completely excluded from this process.”⁴⁴ The Reformers speak of “how and through which means...the Holy Spirit desires to be active in us and to give and effect true repentance, faith, and the new spiritual power and capability to do good in our hearts...”⁴⁵ They talk of how “...the presence, effectiveness, and gift of the Holy Spirit should not and cannot always be assessed *ex sensu*, as a person feels it in the heart. Instead, because the Holy Spirit’s activity is often hidden under cover of great weakness, we should be certain, on the basis of and according to the promise, that the Word of God, when preached and heard, is a function and work of the Holy Spirit, through which he is certainly present in our hearts and exercises his power there (2 Corinthian 2 [1 Cor. 2:11f. or 2 Cor. 3:5-6]).”⁴⁶ The Reformers also speak of how “people do good only to the extent that and as long as the Holy Spirit impels them.”⁴⁷ They continue their exposition on the work of the Holy Spirit: “This leading of the Holy Spirit is not *coactio* (or a compulsion), but rather the converted person does the good spontaneously.”⁴⁸

From Romans 7:22-23,25 and Galatians 5:17 the Reformers assert “as soon as the Holy Spirit has begun his work of rebirth and renewal in us through the Word and the holy sacraments, it is certain that on the basis of his power we can and should be cooperating with him, though still in great weakness.”⁴⁹ As the text continues, we find “the converted do good to the extent that God rules, leads, and guides them with his Holy Spirit.”⁵⁰ The Reformers continue, “Because in this life we receive only the first fruits of the Spirit and our rebirth is not complete but rather

⁴⁴ Ibid, 551. 35.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 553.48.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 554.56.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 556.63.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 556.64.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 556.65.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 556-7.66.

only begun in us, the struggle and battle of the flesh against the Spirit continues even in the elect and truly reborn.”⁵¹ A little later, they speak about how the Holy Spirit “ignites faith and other God-pleasing virtues in us so that they are the gifts and the activities of the Holy Spirit alone.”⁵² They also admonish us to “exercise ourselves diligently to considering what grievous sin it is to impede and resist the working of the Holy Spirit.”⁵³ They also point out the “error of the coarse Pelagians, that on the basis of its own natural powers, the free will apart from the Holy Spirit can convert itself to God.”⁵⁴

In Article IV of the Formula on good works, the Reformers affirm, “...only God’s Spirit, working through faith, preserves faith and salvation in us.”⁵⁵ They reject “...the teaching that faith and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit are not lost through intentional sin, but that the saints and elect retain the Holy Spirit even when they fall into adultery and other sins persist in them.”⁵⁶ In the Solid Declaration, they describe the “work which the Holy Spirit performs in faith.”⁵⁷

In Article VI of the Formula, Concerning the Third Use of the Law,” the role of the Holy Spirit draws a little more attention. In speaking of the need for Christians to hear the Law, they make this observation: “Indeed, if the faithful and elect children of God were perfectly renewed through the indwelling Spirit in this life, so that in their nature and all their powers they were completely free from sin, they would need no law and therefore, no prodding.”⁵⁸ In continuance of this thought, they refer to the Holy Spirit again in that “the killing of the old creature and the

⁵¹ Ibid, 557.68-9.

⁵² Ibid, 557.71.

⁵³ Ibid, 558.72.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 558.75.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 499.15, positive thesis 10.

⁵⁶ Ibid, 499.19, negative thesis 3.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 576. 10-11.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 588.6.

renewal of their minds in the Spirit has begun”⁵⁹ in the Christian.

They point to the futility of trying to accomplish good works without the Holy Spirit: “For the law indeed says that it is God’s will and command that we walk in new life. However, it does not give the power and ability to begin or to carry out this command. Instead, the Holy Spirit, who is given and received not through the law but through the proclamation of the Gospel (Gal. 3[:2,14]), renews the heart.”⁶⁰ The text continues: “Thereafter, the Holy Spirit uses the law to instruct the reborn and to show and demonstrate to them in the Ten Commandments, what is the ‘acceptable will of God’ (Rom. 12[:2]) and in which good works, ‘which God prepared beforehand,’ they are ‘supposed to walk’ (Eph. 2[:10]). The Holy Spirit admonishes them to do these works, and where because of the flesh they are lazy, indolent, and recalcitrant, he reproves them through the law.”⁶¹ In reference to 2 Tim. 3:1, they deduce “... as often as believers stumble, they are reproved by God’s Spirit from the law and by the same Spirit they are restored again and comforted with the proclamation of the holy gospel.”⁶² In the Formula, the Reformers describe works that “are not, properly speaking, works of the law but works and fruits of the Spirit...”⁶³ They point to the life to come, when “...just as they will see God face-to-face, so they will perform the will of God by the power of the indwelling Spirit of God spontaneously, without coercion, unhindered, perfectly and completely, with sheer joy...”⁶⁴

Robert Preus, in *Getting into the Theology of Concord*, goes through the Confessions thematically, concluding: “...our Confessions everywhere stress the work of the Holy Spirit, His work, His exclusive work, in converting and regenerating and justifying us and His work, His

⁵⁹ Ibid, 588.7

⁶⁰ Ibid, 589. 11

⁶¹ Ibid, 589.12

⁶² Ibid, 589.13-14

⁶³ Ibid., p 590.17

⁶⁴ Ibid, 591.25

exclusive work in sanctifying us and keeping us as God's children."⁶⁵ As he examines the Confessions, Preus notes, "they say rather little about the 'extraordinary' gifts which are stressed by the sects today, e.g., healing, casting out demons, speaking in tongues, etc. Why? Clearly because the two great works of the Spirit, to bring Christ to us and to work the Christian life in us, are of such palmary and overarching importance. The ministry of the Spirit is the ministry of the Gospel (AC, V)."⁶⁶ This Lutheran identification of the role and the work is unique to Lutheran doctrine as we find it in the Augsburg Confession and Apology as well as the rest of the Lutheran Confessions.

The Lutheran understanding of the role and work of the Holy Spirit has a different focus than we find in either the Roman understanding or the Pentecostal understanding of the Holy Spirit's role and work. In studying either view, we discover "much that binds them together in common opposition to the Lutheran concept. Both are characterized by the attempt to make the supernatural character of the church externally visible."⁶⁷ Within the Roman Catholic Church, men seek to do this "through a hierarchy which by virtue of its divine authority can ensure that the Holy Spirit speaks through the church,"⁶⁸ as noted in Chapter Two. For example, Roman Catholic theologians alleged that changes in church polity and practice were appropriate and godly because the Pope or bishop was directed by the Holy Spirit to refuse marriages for priests, instate monastic orders, etc. In the case of the Pentecostal and charismatic groups, they seek to do this "through an empirical possession of the Spirit which separates the church from the world."⁶⁹ The Lutheran Confessions stand wholly apart from both of these views of the role of the Holy Spirit. The proper role and function of the Holy Spirit remains the creation and

⁶⁵ Preus, *Getting into the Theology of Concord*, 53.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Grane, *The Augsburg Confession*, 94.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

preservation of each Christian in the faith.

Since the Lutherans stand apart on this issue from most other church groups, there is a great deal of literature in the bookstores and on bookshelves that portrays the role and function of the Holy Spirit differently than our Lutheran Confessions do. In *The Third Reformation?* Carter Lindberg provides us with a concrete example of the high number of Pentecostal publications alone: “Already in his 1971 publication, *Die Pfingstkirchen*, Walter J. Hollenweger included a bibliography of seventy pages of selected Pentecostal journals.”⁷⁰ This is only a small representation of the material available on the Holy Spirit from a contrary viewpoint, over three decades ago. Much more has been written since.

Evidence has shown that the massive amount of material available from Pentecostal and charismatic sources has had an effect on people who have a different background from these groups. In approaching charismatic Lutherans, the CTCR document, *The Lutheran Church and the Charismatic Movement* suggests, “Advise strongly that the charismatic pastor read Lutheran commentaries as he studies the Scriptures and that he examine the Lutheran Confessions. A steady diet of Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal literature frequently turns Lutherans into Pentecostals.”⁷¹ So it is that with proper understanding, with increased exposure to Lutheran materials like the Augsburg Confession and its Apology, one can increase his understanding of the important role the Spirit plays and recognize the erroneous claims of the Pentecostal and charismatic groups in light of the Scriptural understanding of these things.

The idea that the charismatic movement is somehow more “spiritual” in nature can be a selling point for those who are looking to experience more of something they already feel is lacking. They often believe that they have a very good reason to separate themselves from a

⁷⁰ Lindberg, *The Third Reformation?* 11.

⁷¹ CTCR, *The Lutheran Church and the Charismatic Movement*, 13.

perceived “indifference” in their own church group. *The Lutheran Church and the Charismatic Movement* also gives this advice:

Do not treat charismatics as emotionally unstable or religious fanatics. If one reads the testimonials of many charismatics, it becomes apparent that some become interested in the movements because of concerns over such things as indifference in the church, lack of assurance regarding their own salvation, inability to sense the nearness of God in times of crisis, a sense of personal failure, illness and drugs. Frequently they are deeply troubled by problems in their personal lives, problems in Synod, or problems in their family.⁷²

For these people the promise of revival and real Christian zeal in a Pentecostal church or a charismatic group can be a very appealing proposition.

In the 1992 book, *Truly Transformed*, we find that Don Matzat, who wrote *Serving the Renewal* in favor of the charismatic movement in 1977, has now walked away from it. He writes about the charismatic experience again, but now he tells us his story in hindsight. He describes how he was introduced to the charismatic movement and how he came to leave the charismatic movement behind with the help of, among other things, the Lutheran Confessions. In chapter two, he describes an experience in which his faith began to be more meaningful and God’s Word just seemed to be opened to him:

The Bible had become a new and exciting book to read. It was amazing – the sections of the New Testament which dealt with the dynamic nature of the Christian life were now alive and meaningful. It was just as if the apostle Paul had written the epistles just for me. I knew in my heart that the Person of Jesus Christ was alive and that he really did dwell in me. I experienced for the first time what real peace and joy were all about.⁷³

After the Bible and his faith had become more meaningful, he looked for some way to identify and describe what had happened to him. This excitement was a new experience for him, and he had no term for it, no descriptor.

⁷² Ibid, 13.

⁷³ Don Matzat, *Truly Transformed* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1992), 21.

In chapter three, Matzat describes a visit to friends, Bill and Joannie, where they notice the change in his enthusiasm for God's Word. They immediately identify his new experience as "baptism in the Holy Spirit." Bill goes to get him some reading materials on baptism in the Holy Spirit, and Joannie tells him, "Now that you have been baptized in the Spirit, supernatural things are going to be happening. The miraculous gifts of the Spirit will be part of your experience."⁷⁴ Matzat had no other way to explain what had happened to him, so he took their word for it, took the books with him, and became part of the charismatic movement. As a result of his exposure to charismatic literature and people within the movement, he became so convinced of the validity of the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" that in the first few years of involvement with charismatics, he nearly quit the Lutheran church altogether and seriously considered getting rebaptized. Instead, he remained in the Lutheran charismatic circles and became recognized as a leader within the charismatic movement.

Matzat remained in the charismatic movement for fifteen years, but something happened in those years that led him away from the charismatic claims and into a different understanding of what had happened. He began reading and studying. He not only read and studied the Bible, but he read and studied the Lutheran Confessions, the writings of Martin Luther, Calvin, and other Reformers that followed them. In studying all these materials, he observed, "There was no doubt that the lives of the Reformers had been transformed. What had happened to them?"⁷⁵ Luther seemed to have that same love for God's Word, but he did not talk about some spiritual experience accompanied by speaking in strange tongues. Neither did the Lutheran Confessions speak in this way.

As Matzat continued to study the Bible and Lutheran and Reformation literature, he

⁷⁴ Ibid, 26.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 27.

became disenchanted with the charismatic movement. He describes the circumstances thus:

I simply could not agree with most of the “Charismatic” teachings that I heard. The movement had become “miracle happy.” Techniques were being used to seemingly produce miracles that were not biblical. In fact, some of them bordered on silliness and even occultism.... While miracles were advertised and promoted, I had never actually seen any. I had never seen a person miraculously healed of an evident affliction. Everyone talked about miracles and had their “pet stories,” but nobody had ever demonstrated the power to heal or work miracles.⁷⁶

Something was wrong with the theology of the charismatic movement. He came to realize that “baptism in the Holy Spirit” was not the right descriptor at all. He had “spent 15 years teaching and promoting false doctrine.” The phrase “baptize in the Holy Spirit” in the Bible was merely to point out how the ministry of Jesus was different and far superior to the ministry of baptism John the Baptist offered. However, there was still no descriptor among Lutheran theologians to describe what had happened to him either: “While they were quick to point out what *didn't* happen to me, they offered no suggestion as to what *did* happen. It appeared to me, as far as they were concerned, that any spiritual experience or awakening was suspect.”⁷⁷ He was forced to go back to the books to seek out what he was looking for. What was different about the Reformers?

As he continued his studies, he came across the terms “enlightenment” or “illumination” as a work of the Holy Spirit. As he read on, this seemed to be a key descriptor for what had happened to him. Luther’s eye-opening experience seemed to mirror his own as Luther grasped for the first time what it meant to be justified freely by faith. Matzat includes Luther’s description of what had happened to him: “I felt as if I had been completely reborn and had entered Paradise by widely opened doors. Instantly all Scripture looked different to me.”⁷⁸ In comparing his own experience with the descriptions of enlightenment he found in writings of the

⁷⁶ Ibid, 27-28.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 27.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 29.

Reformation, he “discovered a perfect match.”⁷⁹ With the discovery of a descriptor for his experience from the Reformation writings, and supported by Scripture, he gave up his involvement in the charismatic movement for good.

It is important in this current day and age to rediscover in our literature the importance of the Holy Spirit in the working of our salvation so that we may have a ready answer for our belief, that we may be strengthened in the truth and not stray from it. The truth of the work and role of the Holy Spirit is sometimes neglected even now. To take a recent example, there is a certain lack in emphasis on the Holy Spirit, even in a recent study of the Augsburg Confession and Apology from which we found so much on the Holy Spirit. In the 1999 CPH Bible study, *The Lutheran Confessions Series: The Augsburg Confession and Its Apology*, Charles T. Knippel begins each of his thirteen sessions, “By the power of the Holy Spirit working through God’s Word we will...”, but he assumes that the meaning is clear to all participants, since there is no explanatory information. In thirteen weekly sessions, there are a total of three questions pertaining to the role of the Holy Spirit, and only one question dealing with the Spirit’s role in the converted Christian. Upon closer study of the Augsburg Confession itself, however, we have found that a proper understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit is vital to our understanding of the entire document, lest we come to believe we can somehow do God’s work ourselves.

Although the Confessions are primarily focused on Christ as the author of our salvation, the role of the Holy Spirit is interwoven into the fabric of what makes salvation possible. A greater awareness of the importance of the role the Spirit plays in our salvation helps us to understand that we can do no good nor can we resist the devil on our own. We must not neglect to speak about and study the Holy Spirit, so that we may not lose our theology to voices that are

⁷⁹ Ibid, 30.

louder and of greater number, or lose our church members to these movements that claim to have a franchise on the work of the Holy Spirit.

In conclusion, we have seen why a proper understanding of the role and work of the Holy Spirit is so important, especially in the current spiritual climate. We have seen how significant a role the Holy Spirit played in Melanchthon's understanding as he wrote the Augsburg Confession and Apology. As we sort through all the information on the role and work of the Holy Spirit, especially after conversion, we find that the Holy Spirit has a great number of roles – renewing us in faith and love toward God and in love for one another, keeping us safe from spiritual enemies, increasing in us holiness, and much more. In *The Lutheran Church and the Charismatic Movement*, the CTCR committee admits, “The Lutheran Church has a rich heritage of Spirit theology in its confessional writings, in its exegetical studies, and in its hymns and prayers....we are grateful to God for the renewed interest which many Christians in all generations take in the work of the Holy Spirit...”⁸⁰ In *The Half-Known God*, Wunderlich quotes from another author who has been looking into studies of the Holy Spirit. In *The Holy Spirit of God: Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary 1913*, W. H. Griffin Thomas states:

One thing is certain, that the spiritual power of the Church has always been closely associated with the prominence given to the person and work of the Holy Spirit, and whenever this has been absent, loss has inevitably followed. Purely abstract ideas never existed long, and never exercised great influence. The secret of spiritual blessing has been found in the constant emphasis on the redemptive aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit in relation to Christ, the Savior of the world.⁸¹

Martin Luther and those who followed him had a high regard for the work and role of the Holy Spirit, ever active, ever watching, here to strengthen and to comfort. The work and role of the Holy Spirit does indeed hold a great significance in the Augsburg Confession and Apology,

⁸⁰ CTCR, *The Lutheran Church and the Charismatic Movement*, 15.

⁸¹ Wunderlich, *Half-Known God*, 93. Wunderlich quotes directly from W. H. Griffin Thomas, *The Holy Spirit of God: Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary 1913* (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1955) to strengthen his own argument.

the rest of the Lutheran Confessions, and other contemporary writings of Luther and his followers. As Preus puts it, “Oh if only we could recapture some of Luther’s intense joy and (one might say) preoccupation with the Holy Spirit’s work and ministry to bless us and save us!”⁸²

⁸² Preus, *Getting Into the Theology of Concord*, 55.

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