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CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE CONFERENCE  
ON A LUTHERAN PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

SHORT TITLE:

LUTHERAN PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty  
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,  
Department of Practical Theology  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Sacred Theology

BY

JOHN S. HOFF

June 1958

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Approved by \_\_\_\_\_

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Dean



CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE CONFESSIONS  
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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### The Need for a Philosophy of Education

That the topic of a philosophy of education has excited an intense interest in Lutheran circles would not be difficult to document.<sup>1</sup> The need for such a philosophy of education is obvious.<sup>2</sup> Every individual engaged in the process of Lutheran education has a philosophy in this field, whether he has defined it for himself or not, whether he has spelled out the multifarious implications of it or not. The danger is when it remains undefined that the individual is tempted to improvise when he is confronted by a new problem. His improvisations may not always, unless they are critically evaluated, take a direction in the best tradition of the Lutheran heritage. But it cannot be denied that the assumptions on the basis of which the individual educator acts in the educational process constitute his own individual philosophy of education.

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<sup>1</sup>L. G. Bickel and Raymond F. Surburg, editors, Readings in the Lutheran Philosophy of Education, Thirteenth Yearbook of the Lutheran Education Association (River Forest, Ill., 1956), is a collection of this nature.

<sup>2</sup>Franz Delitzsch, Biblical Commentary on the Proverbs of Solomon, translated by M. G. Easton (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1950), I, 38; Clifton Fadiman, "Today's Lost Generation," Saturday Review, September 12, 1959, p. 13.

### The Task Not Easy

The task to which we have addressed ourselves is not easy. It requires competence in at least three disciplines-- Lutheran theology, philosophy, and general educational theory. Sometimes these disciplines do not employ common concepts or a mutually understood vocabulary. There must be an effort to bring these disciplines into a conversation with each other.

### Definition

Some might even question whether a topic like the Lutheran Philosophy of Education is not a contradiction in terms. They would question whether in such a context the word "philosophy" could be used except only in the loosest of meanings.<sup>3</sup> They might suggest that the term more properly employed would be a "theology" of education. There is no question whether this topic might not be worked out. It would be based on what Scripture has to say about the entire field of education. It would achieve depth through a word study of Biblical terms relating to education. It would seem

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<sup>3</sup>"Of Original Sin" of the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Triglot Concordia (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 105. The Apology here seems even to censure "philosophizing." Hereafter the Apology will be referred to with the abbreviation Ap. The articles of the Triglot Concordia will be given in Roman numerals and the text divisions in Arabic numerals according to those employed in the Triglot, which will be abbreviated Trig.

that a Lutheran philosophy of education must begin here, but unless it goes beyond the circle of Scripture terminology and concepts it would remain theology. A Lutheran philosophy of education would feel free to roam into all fields of philosophic and educational inquiry. It would undertake the daring attempt to build up a philosophy consistent with and in harmony with its theology.<sup>4</sup>

#### Philosophic Assumptions of the Confessions

Some again might question the value of this particular investigation "Contributions of the Confessions to a Lutheran Philosophy of Education." The Confessions, so they would reason, are primarily doctrinal. They are intended to be an exposition or simply a confession of the Faith. There is no quarrel in this essay with this line of reasoning. A Lutheran who is willing to subscribe unconditionally to the doctrinal content of the Confessions can only do so by conviction if and when he believes in the essential perspicuity of Scripture. A Lutheran can only subscribe without any mental reservations if he is convinced the doctrine confessed in the symbolical books is based on passages which constitute

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<sup>4</sup>Ap, IV (II), 9, 12, 14, Trig., p. 123. This paragraph emphasizes the ecumenical character of the Lutheran churches. See also Trig., p. 7. Willard D. Allbeck, Studies in the Lutheran Confessions (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1952), p. 13. Allbeck also underlines the ecumenical character of the Lutheran churches.



their own proof for their own clarity. But the Confessions are more than their doctrinal content. Many of the observations made reveal philosophic assumptions which while not anti-scriptural or unscriptural could not be demonstrated as being derived from Scripture. That this is not so daring as it sounds will be demonstrated, it is hoped, in the body of this document.

### The Confessions Not Anti-philosophical

It might seem also to someone who is fully conversant with the content of the Confessions that they are hostile toward any kind of a "philosophy," including therefore also a philosophy of education. In Article II of the Thorough Declaration it is asserted that the Lutheran teaching on this doctrine is confirmed and substantiated by arguments from God's Word. At this point this article declares that these arguments "are contrary to proud reason and philosophy."<sup>5</sup> This seems to declare God's Word and philosophy are without exception hostile to each other. If this were true, then the whole effort to formulate a Lutheran philosophy of education would be impious, blasphemous.

"Proud reason" and "philosophy" seem here to be equated with

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<sup>5</sup>Thorough Declaration of the Formula of Concord, II, 8, Trig., p. 883. It must be remembered that one of the purposes of Lutheran polemics was to break down scholasticism as a system because of its inherent hostility to Biblical teaching. Scholasticism was nothing more or less than the attempted synthesis by the schools of the philosophy of Greece with Bible teaching.

each other and we know that philosophic speculation may be hostile to God's Word. But one of the purposes of the Confessional writings was to break down scholasticism as a system, and scholasticism as a system was nothing more or less in any of its medieval forms than the attempt to form a synthesis between patristic theology and the various schools of Greek philosophy. Nominalism represented a break from the extreme and moderate forms of realism which were then dominant, and as such was a preparatory current for the Reformation.<sup>6</sup>

While there might be then a philosophic substratum in the Confessions some might further reason that this is still a great assumption that there is in them a Lutheran philosophy of education. Certainly it must be acknowledged that the historical occasion of the Confessions was not oriented toward the formulation or articulation of a Lutheran philosophy<sup>7</sup> of education and yet it is surprising how many deductions can be made which have relevance for a Lutheran philosophy of education. In some areas we must beg the kind indulgence of the reader or critic. Since the task might be conceived in the picture of ground-breaking there is some

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<sup>6</sup>Ap, XXIV (XII), 43, Trig., p. 399. This article contains a statement which seems to disparage or belittle philosophy.

<sup>7</sup>Smalcald Articles, Part II, Article III, 1, Trig., p. 471. The Lutheran interest in education is indicated in this article. It is suggested that monasteries should again be made educational institutions or be closed. It is rather significant here that Luther advocates coeducation.

justification for speculation. Whatever is not worthy will simply not find general acceptance, but the initial effort should be made and we trust that the wheat will outweigh the chaff.

#### Definition

What is the unifying principle in a Lutheran philosophy of education? It is of utmost importance that this idea, concept, doctrine, or proposition be chosen which can give coherence to the whole. It must be a central, focal point, around which all other aspects can be organized. Perhaps, since we have limited ourselves in our range of inquiry to our theme "The Contributions of the Confessions to a Lutheran Philosophy of Education," we must feel obligated to choose that which constituted the material principle of the Reformation and also of the Confessions--the doctrine of justification by faith alone. Prominent thinkers have suggested that another principle might even be more meaningful and central for a Lutheran philosophy of education--the lordship of Christ. There is much to commend this point of view. On the other hand, we believe that these two principles are not as foreign or antagonistic to one another as they seem to be on the face upon first glance. We believe that the Confessions themselves point the way to resolve a seeming conflict, demonstrate that these two are in reality

## CHAPTER II

### THE UNIFYING PRINCIPLE IN A LUTHERAN

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#### Definition

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opposite sides of the same coin.<sup>1</sup> Because of the central place which the Confessions give to the doctrine of justification we feel that we can do nothing less than make this doctrine the unifying principle in this thesis. We do so for this reason that the unifying principle of a Lutheran philosophy of education cannot be much diverse from the material principle of its theology. If theology is the basis or the foundation upon which the superstructure of a Lutheran philosophy of education can be built up, then the two and their unifying principles are more closely related than we might assume.

#### Justification Central in Christian Doctrine

The centrality of the doctrine of justification by faith is stated by F. E. Mayer in his book The Religious Bodies of America. He also indicates how well it might serve as a unifying principle in a Lutheran philosophy of education.

As the various facets of the diamond catch, refract, reflect the light, so the phrase "justification by faith alone" gives brilliance to every phase of Christian revelation, and in turn each facet of Christian truth sheds new brilliance on this so-called central doctrine, whether it is viewed as justification by faith, or as the work of Christ, or as the distinction between Law and Gospel, or as faith in Christ, or as the doctrine

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<sup>1</sup>Preface to the Christian Book of Concord, Triglott Concordia (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 19. Preface to the Emperor Charles V, 4, Triglott Concordia, p. 39. Hereafter Triglott Concordia will be abbreviated Trig. The Third Article of the Nicene Creed refers to the Holy Ghost as "the Lord and Giver of Life." Thus Christian education might be conceived as being under the lordship of the trinity, Triglott Concordia, p. 31.

of the "righteousness before God."<sup>2</sup>

Herbert J. A. Bouman in an article "The Doctrine of Justification in the Lutheran Confessions" indicates how the confessional writings relate almost every doctrine to this central teaching.

The Triune God is brought near to us because of His attribute of . . . infinite goodness. Man is seen in His desperate need of God's justifying act, because in his natural condition he is "without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with concupiscence," and those who ascribe inherent powers to man are condemned because they "obscure the glory of Christ's merit and benefits" and "argue that man can be justified before God by his own strength and reason." The specific concern of the Lutherans in this matter is that "it will not be possible to recognize the benefits of Christ unless we understand our evils." The tremendous mysteries of Christology are not there to furnish material for theological debate, but "that He might reconcile the Father unto us, and be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for all actual sins of men." The office of the ministry has no reason for independent existence as a rank, order, or office, but has meaning only in its function of administering Gospel and Sacraments, through which the Holy Spirit creates justifying faith. Faith, moreover, is seen from the point of view of its content or object "that God . . . for Christ's sake justifies." In stressing the necessity of good works the Lutherans hasten to append the caution that we must not "rely on these works to merit justification before God." Good works are the inevitable consequence of justifying faith ("although love necessarily follows"). In the definition of the church the emphasis rests on the true believers gathered around the Gospel and Sacraments rightly taught and administered. All Lutheran Sacramentology is soteriological. "Through Baptism is offered the grace of God." The "chief thing" in the Sacrament of the Altar lies in the "words here written: Given and shed for you for the remission of sins." The real value of confession lies in the absolution, which asks

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<sup>2</sup>Herbert J. A. Bouman, "The Doctrine of Justification in the Lutheran Confessions," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVI (November 1955), 802.

us to "regard it as certain that the remission of sins is freely granted us for Christ's sake." The heart of repentance is not to be found in an external penance, but in "faith, which is born of the Gospel, or of absolution, and believes that for Christ's sake sins are forgiven." The right use of the Sacraments calls for faith in the promises of the Gospel. Not only in their thetical statements do the Lutheran Confessions link the several doctrines with justification, but also the antitheses are formulated from this vantage point.

The adoration of the saints is repudiated because Scripture "sets before us the one Christ as Mediator, Propitiation, High Priest, and Intercessor." Abuses connected with the Mass must be abolished because "they depart from the Holy Scriptures and diminish the glory of the Passion of Christ." Over against the mechanical and externalized enumeration of sins in confession the Lutherans urge the precious comfort of absolution and the importance of "faith to believe such absolution as a voice sounding from heaven, and that such faith in Christ truly obtains and receives the forgiveness of sins." The idea that the traditions of men are profitable to merit grace is repudiated, because, "first, the doctrine of grace and of the righteousness of faith has been obscured by it, which is the chief part of the Gospel." The evils of the monastic system consist in this, that its devotees "taught that by this kind of life they merited forgiveness of sins and justification before God," and the question is asked, "What else is this than to detract from the glory of Christ and to obscure and deny the righteousness of faith?" Of the errors and abuses associated with episcopal powers it is said that "these errors crept into the church when the righteousness of faith was not taught clearly enough." Whether bishops, in addition to their proper function of exercising the Office of the Keys, also have certain powers delegated jure humano does not cause the Lutherans much concern so long as the doctrine of justification suffers no infringement.<sup>3</sup>

W. D. Allbeck in his Studies in the Lutheran Confessions also acknowledges the central position of the doctrine of justification by faith alone. The Book of Concord, he

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 802-804.



declares, "has found a central principle in justification for Christ's sake through faith."<sup>4</sup>

The Augsburg Confession itself clearly defines the doctrine of justification in Article IV:

Also they teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor, and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who, by His death, has made satisfaction for our sins.<sup>5</sup>

This article contains a flat negation of any human contribution to the sinner's justification. A Scripturally realistic anthropology and soteriology go hand in hand. This article also contains a positive statement to the effect that our justification is exclusively of grace. When it declares that men are freely justified "for Christ's sake," this is a concrete expression of sola gratia. Justification is exclusively God's act and yet the individual who is justified is involved and he does respond. This is indicated by the phrase "through faith."

Faith is not "merely the knowledge of the history."<sup>6</sup> It is "a faith which believes also the effects of the history--namely, this article: the forgiveness of sins, to wit, that we have grace, righteousness, and forgiveness of sins through

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<sup>4</sup>Willard D. Allbeck, Studies in the Lutheran Confessions (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1952), p. 12.

<sup>5</sup>Augsburg Confession, Article IV, Trig., p. 45. Hereafter the articles of the Trig. will be given in Roman numerals and the text divisions in Arabic numerals.

<sup>6</sup>Apology, IV (II), 50, Trig., p. 135.



Christ."<sup>7</sup> The Confessions present a dynamic concept of faith. "Faith is not only knowledge in the intellect, but also confidence in the will."<sup>8</sup> Viewed psychologically faith is seen to involve the whole man. It is an activity of the intellect, the will, and the emotions.

Faith justifies, however, not because of any intrinsic value. "Faith justifies and saves, not on the ground that it is a work in itself worthy, but only because it receives the promised mercy."<sup>9</sup> Justification is freely bestowed or as the German has it aus Gnaden. This emphasizes the source of justification. The meritorious cause is "for Christ's sake." The means by which the individual appropriates this justification to himself is "through faith." Here we have the sola fide, sola gratia emphases of the Reformation.

#### Justification Unique

This unifying principle in a Lutheran philosophy of education distinguishes the religion of Christ from all other religions of human origin, which predominantly teach salvation by works. Professor William Danker has pointed out in an article "Eastern Religions--Threat and Challenge"<sup>10</sup> that

<sup>7</sup>Augsburg Confession, XX, 23, Trig., p. 55.

<sup>8</sup>Apology, III, 183, Trig., p. 205.

<sup>9</sup>Apology, IV (II), 56, Trig., p. 137.

<sup>10</sup>William Danker, "Eastern Religions--Threat and Challenge," Seminarian, 49 (January 1958), 66.

"India has long known its religion of grace in the bhakti strain that runs through Hinduism." It is also true that "Shenshu Buddhism, Japan's dominant sect" has a "doctrine of salvation by the infinite grace of Amida Buddha." Rod Jensen in his article "By Grace Through Faith in . . . Amida Buddha"<sup>11</sup> on the other hand points out the glaring dissimilarities between Bhakti religion and Christianity. The Bhakti religion fails to take sin seriously, sin bringing down the wrath of a righteous God upon the sinner. This God of Ultimate Reality has not atoned for sin and the curse of guilt. He has not sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into the stream of history to redeem the world from sin and death. The grace of the Bhakti religion is a cheap grace, requiring no satisfaction of the holiness and justice of God. The Bhakti religion has a savior, but no atoner. How can God arbitrarily grant salvation, when this salvation has not been purchased in any way? To do so God must compromise His own holiness and thus forfeit His own glory.

#### Justification and Other Problems of Philosophy

The unifying principle of a Lutheran philosophy of education can readily be related to all other problems in a philosophy of education. It does not, to be sure, describe the nature of being. But the explanation of the first

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<sup>11</sup>Rod Jensen, "By Grace Through Faith in . . . Amida Buddha," Seminarian, 50 (November, 1958), 22-25.

Article of the Creed by Luther suggests "For all which it is my duty to thank and to praise, to serve and obey Him."<sup>12</sup>

This does not define the Lutheran conception of metaphysics or ontology, but if our response to the gift of being is to be one of gratitude, it does indicate that "being" is in itself as it proceeds from God essentially good. Gratitude should, in fact, be the response of the child of God even after sin has entered into the world. This then defines and describes one attribute, one dimension, one quality of being which cannot be overlooked.

The unifying principle of a Lutheran philosophy of education can be related to the problem of epistemology. The very first paragraph of the Preface to the Christian Book of Concord relates the ideas of God's love to the knowledge of the Gospel.

It is a remarkable favor of Almighty God that . . . He has willed, according to His unspeakable love, forbearance, and mercy, that . . . the light of His Gospel and Word . . . should arise and shine clearly and purely.<sup>13</sup>

The unifying principle of a Lutheran philosophy of education is also related to the field of ethics. The thesis of Article III of the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, "Of Love and the Fulfilling of the Law," is faith

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<sup>12</sup>Small Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther, II, 2, Trig., p. 543.

<sup>13</sup>Trig., p. 7.

and regeneration precede love and the obeying of the law. Justifying faith is thus a sine qua non of love. "God therefore is not loved until we apprehend mercy by faith. Not until then does He become a lovable object."<sup>14</sup> The relation between the unifying principle and theology proper and anthropology has already been described. "Almighty God . . . has willed that the light of His Gospel . . . should arise and shine clearly and purely."<sup>15</sup> The unifying principle is related both to the philosophy of history and the philosophy of church history. History has a goal and the Christian can be optimistic because the grace of God is both a present possession and its full enjoyment a future heritage. The church is where the grace of God is operative. As such she is always one and must always strive to become one. The unifying principle is related to educational goals. We would single out three which the Confessions emphasize: salvation, sanctification in the narrower sense, and Christian maturation. The grace of God is the core, the foundation, the atmosphere, the orientation in a truly Lutheran curriculum. The teacher is the agent of God in the educational process, spiritually understood. The pupil is the object upon whom the educational process exerts its

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<sup>14</sup>Apology, III, 8, Trig., p. 157. The primary efforts of the Lutheran educator then must be directed toward achieving faith and regeneration in his pupils and in himself.

<sup>15</sup>Trig., p. 7.



influence, although the teacher is also constantly a sharer in its benedictions. It is a case where also the giver is blest. The main guidelines in their relationship (that of teacher and pupil)<sup>16</sup> is spelled out in the ethics of the Fourth Commandment. The "outward Word" is the ultimate authority in this relationship. History as an item in the curriculum is conceived of as the progress of a child of God toward his heaven-intended goal and the Church is the sum total of all who have found in Jesus their Savior and Lord.

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<sup>16</sup> Parentheses the author's. Parentheses occur in quotations of the Confessions from the Triglott to indicate a variation either in the original German or Latin texts.

Confessions as well as Scripture itself in the area of natural physics is at best secondary. The primary interest of Scripture and the Confessions is soteriological. Questions of metaphysics for those who were then involved in soteriological concerns were academic, pedantic, theoretical, speculative, not directly contributing to the primary concerns of soteriology. Yet man needs to speculate. Hall in his commentary on Proverbs declares:

The mysteries of the world without him and of the world within him give him no rest; he must seek to solve them; and whenever he does that, he philosophizes; i.e., he strives after a knowledge of the nature of things [metaphysics], and of the laws which govern them.

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<sup>1</sup> Willard D. Allbrook, Quakerism in the Lutheran Confessions (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1953), p. 62.

## CHAPTER III

### METAPHYSICS

#### Metaphysics Necessary

The first problem in a philosophy of education that we wish to cover in detail is the problem of metaphysics and the related questions of cosmology and cosmogeny. In general, we agree with the judgment of Allbeck: "It will be recognized that this article gives religious answers to questions concerning God. It leaves untouched such philosophical problems as those of monism and pluralism."<sup>1</sup> The interest of the Confessions as well as Scripture itself in the area of metaphysics is at best secondary. The primary interest of Scripture and the Confessions is soteriological. Questions of metaphysics for those who were then involved in soteriological concerns were academic, pedantic, theoretical, speculative, not directly contributing to the primary concerns of soteriology. Yet man needs to speculate. Keil in his commentary on Proverbs declares:

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<sup>1</sup>Willard D. Allbeck, Studies in the Lutheran Confessions (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1952), p. 62.

in the world of phenomena [cosmology] and events [history].<sup>2</sup>

### Metaphysics Inevitable

Herman H. Horne declares that metaphysics is inevitable.<sup>3</sup> In discussing the philosophy of John Dewey he declares that it takes a metaphysics to reject a metaphysics. Philosophy may try to rule out ontology, but it inevitably creeps back in. The defense of the denial of a metaphysics is itself metaphysical. We may, like the writers of the Lutheran Confessions, look at the entire question of metaphysics as peripheral to a Lutheran philosophy of education, because it is not immediately germane to the soteriological thrust of a Lutheran philosophy, and yet it is inevitable. There are in the Lutheran Confessions basic metaphysical assumptions not explicit, but implied in the whole structure for a Lutheran philosophy of education.<sup>4</sup>

### Ontological Dualism

Perhaps one of the most unsatisfying aspects of the metaphysics of a Lutheran philosophy of education is that it

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<sup>2</sup>Franz Delitzsch, Biblical Commentary on the Proverbs of Solomon, translated by M. G. Easton (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1950), I, 38.

<sup>3</sup>Herman H. Horne, The Democratic Philosophy of Education (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1935), pp. 471-72.

<sup>4</sup>L. W. H. Hull, History and Philosophy of Science (New York: Longmans Green and Company, 1959), On page 218 this



cannot be reduced to one unifying principle. If we were to make an attempt to describe the metaphysics or ontology underlying the Lutheran Confessions we could describe it as an ontological dualism of the realistic class or category. It is realism as opposed to an idealism, which would declare material substance not real. And it is realism as opposed to materialism, which declares that material substances are alone real.

It is significant that there are modern-day advocates of the type of realism underlying the Lutheran Confessions. C. E. M. Joad in his Great Philosophies of the World declares:

In recent years . . . there has grown up a school of philosophers who, without seeking deliberately to uphold the common-sense view of the universe as composed of a number of independent, material entities have, nevertheless, succeeded in presenting us with a philosophy which, so far at least as its theory of perception is concerned, is more akin in spirit and conclusions to the instinctive attitude of the man-in-the-street than the great idealist philosophies of the past. Philosophers who belong to this school are known more or less loosely as "realists," because they affirm the reality, a reality which is independent of knowledge, of the objects which we perceive.<sup>5</sup>

He mentions especially Professor G. E. Moore as giving an account of the external world, which approximates more or less closely to the ordinary view. The view of the Lutheran confessional writings would then be basically similar to the

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author declares: "In the 20th century, science has given up trying to explain things metaphysically." He goes on then to state in which role science is functioning today.

<sup>5</sup>C. E. M. Joad, Great Philosophies of the World (New York: Robert M. McBride & Company, n.d.), p. 65. See also footnote on this page.



above description except that it would also include the entire spiritual universe as it is delineated in Scripture. In other words, we might begin with the common-sense view metaphysics of the Lutheran Confessions, take an excursion through the Subjective Idealism of Berkeley, the Absolute Idealism of Hegel, the spiritualistic naturalism of Bergson, and come back to the realism of the Confessions and we find we are still in respectable, philosophic company.

### Visible and Invisible

In fact, the Confessions take their stand with the ancient symbols of the church in the field of metaphysics. The Nicene Creed declares that God created all things, visible and invisible. This refers then both to the visible, material universe, and the invisible part of creation, the spirit world.<sup>6</sup> Philaret in his Catechism says that the word "invisible" means "the invisible or spiritual world, to which belong the angels."<sup>7</sup> In the highest category of being would be God Himself, the eternal, the uncreated. In the realm of creation we have both spiritual and material. The angels belong to the realm of spirit, man in the realm of both spirit and matter.<sup>8</sup> The uniqueness of man consists in this

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<sup>6</sup>Triglote Concordia (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), I, 31. Hereafter the Triglote will be abbreviated Trig., the articles of it will be given Roman numerals and the text divisions Arabic numerals.

<sup>7</sup>Allbeck, op. cit., p. 35.

<sup>8</sup>Alexander Eliot, "The Sense of Truth," Saturday Evening

that God made him for fellowship with Himself.

Dr. R. G. Owen emphasizes the materialistic aspect of Christian ontology.

Christianity is the most avowedly materialist of all the great religions. . . . The Christian doctrines of creation, the incarnation, the sacraments, and the resurrection involve a special relationship to the material which insists on its reality and importance in the divine scheme, but at the same time also insists that this is not the only or the most important phase of reality.<sup>9</sup>

### Metaphysics and Evil

Evil is also one aspect of the created beings. The third paragraph of the Preface of the Christian Book of Concord contains a reference to the "enemy of mortals."<sup>10</sup> This obviously refers to Satan. There are then not merely evil principles and thought patterns in the universe, but also a personal spirit of evil, the devil. This enemy of mortals is pictured as the source of heresy, dissension, division, and offenses in the church and in the universe at large. This enemy has caused Lutheran churches and schools to be disparaged and has rendered erring

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Post, February 20, 1960, p. 54. "Another down-to-earth observation of Dr. Johnson's was that in putting on a pair of pants it makes no difference which leg goes in first. That idea applies precisely to the quest for a sense of truth. One may begin with either material or spiritual reality, so long as one ends with both together."

<sup>9</sup> R. G. Owen, Scientism, Man, and Religion (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1952), pp. 186-87, 189.

<sup>10</sup> Trig., p. 7.

consciences "to be more compliant in bearing and tolerating the yoke of the papal slavery."<sup>11</sup>

The fourth paragraph of the introduction mentions why the precious gift of God's Word was taken away from the churches of their day. It was due to their sins and the looseness of the times. This defines one area of the relationship of God to evil. God wills good, but He has at the same time permitted a degree of liberty and activity to evil. When individuals and churches submit to the evil, God permits Satan eventually to rob them of the Word, the precious heritage which He in His grace has given them.<sup>12</sup>

#### Matter Not Inherently Evil

The Apostles' Creed indicates how early the Church rejected the Gnostic error that matter is inherently evil. The ancient creeds affirm faith in "the resurrection of the flesh." This is even a clearer and more emphatic denial of Gnostic metaphysics than the translation "the resurrection of the body," which dates from the time of Henry VIII.<sup>13</sup> The Augsburg Confession also denies that matter is inherently evil in Article I, "Of God," when it condemns the Manichean heresy, which assumed two principles one Good and the other

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<sup>11</sup>Trig., p. 7.

<sup>12</sup>Trig., p. 9.

<sup>13</sup>Allbeck, op. cit., p. 29. The Apostles' Creed, Trig., 8, p. 31.



Evil.<sup>14</sup>

### Origin of Evil

The Confessions clearly state that God is not the cause of sin. The cause of sin is the will of the wicked, that is, of the devil and ungodly men.<sup>15</sup> In his explanation of the First Commandment in The Large Catechism Luther accepts sorcerers and magicians as real, human beings in league with Satan.

Here belong those also, as, e.g., sorcerers and magicians, whose idolatry is most gross, and who make a covenant with the devil, in order that he may give them plenty of money or help them in love-affairs, preserve their cattle, restore to them lost possessions, etc.<sup>16</sup>

### Metaphysics, Christology, and Pneumatology

It would seem that the Christology and the pneumatology of the Confessions would also involve its implied metaphysics. In Christ we have not merely the union of body and soul, but also the personal union of the human nature with the divine. His lordship and his ubiquity also seem to have implications for a metaphysics. Whatever the final structure of our ontology, it must be complemented or make room for or be able to include these distinctive doctrines. The Formula of

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<sup>14</sup>Augsburg Confession, I, 5, Trig., p. 43.

<sup>15</sup>Augsburg Confession, XIX, 2, Trig., p. 53.

<sup>16</sup>Large Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther, 12, Trig., p. 583.

Concord in Article VIII, "Of the Person of Christ" in the Epitome, lists a number of affirmative propositions which Lutherans accept. "The divine and human natures in Christ are personally united." Whatever the nature of the ontology of the creature man is, it must be such that his nature at least on one occasion had the capacity for union with the divine. The divine and human natures are not mingled into one substance, nor is the one changed into the other. The divine nature has its proper properties and the human nature its proper properties. In Christ there is the highest communion. There flows everything human that is said and believed concerning God, and everything divine that is said and believed concerning the man Christ. Here God is man and man is God.<sup>17</sup> The primary interest of these formulations is, of course, soteriological but their metaphysical implications cannot be sidetracked. The incarnation of Christ, together with the ubiquity of His human nature in communication with the divine, have definite bearings on the nature of being. God is not merely immanent. In Christ He is immanent in His humanity. God is not impersonal and distant. He is near in that very nature which makes Him our Brother. Luther's defense of Christ's ubiquity according to His human nature seems to be particularly relevant to the problem of metaphysics.

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<sup>17</sup>Epitome of the Formula of Concord, VIII, 1-6, Trig., p. 819.

Now, if He [Christ] is naturally and personally wherever He is, He must also be man in the same place. For there are not (in Christ) two separate persons, but only one person: wherever it is, there it is the one undivided person; and wherever you can say, Here is God, there you must also say, Then Christ the man is also there. And if you would point out a place where God is, and not the man, the person would already be divided. . . .

yet even death and all devils could not divide or rend them from one another.<sup>18</sup>

Luther in emphasizing the ubiquity of the human nature of Christ in communication with the divine also draws in, in effect, the unifying principle of a Lutheran philosophy of education in terms of the grace of God.

For thereby the very great consolation is taken from Christians which they have in the aforecited promise concerning the presence and dwelling with them of their Head, King, and High Priest, who has promised them that not only His mere divinity would be with them, which to us poor sinners is as a consuming fire to dry stubble, but that He, He, the man who has just spoken with them, who has tried all tribulations in His assumed human nature, and who can therefore have sympathy with us, as with men and His brethren,--He will be with us in all our troubles also according to the nature according to which He is our brother and we are flesh of His flesh.<sup>19</sup>

### The Lord's Supper and Metaphysics

There also seems to be some relationship between the Lord's Supper and metaphysics. Matter cannot be inherently evil. Otherwise God would not use it as a vehicle through which

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<sup>18</sup> Thorough Declaration of the Formula of Concord, VIII, 82-83, Trig., p. 1045.

<sup>19</sup> Thorough Declaration of the Formula of Concord, VIII, 87, Trig., p. 1047.



to come into fellowship with us in His body and blood. The natural and supernatural modes of presence cannot be completely divorced. Otherwise the oral reception of the supernaturally present body and blood of Christ would not be a possibility.<sup>20</sup> The possibility of a fellowship with God through which man incurs guilt is postulated by the unworthy reception of the body and blood in the sacrament.<sup>21</sup>

### Cosmology and Cosmogony

The doctrine of creation as presented in the Lutheran Confessions also has direct bearing on the problem of metaphysics. In general we might say that the Confessions as well as Scripture have no particular cosmology,<sup>22</sup> nor a particular "scientific point of view." When they speak of the universe or nature, they speak from the observational point of view. The Confessions probably did use a Platonic concept when they spoke of the divine essence<sup>23</sup> and followed a Platonic way of thinking when they linked attributes to this concept, but there is no evidence that they endorse a Ptolemaic world-view or one patterned after the Mesopotamian cosmologies.

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<sup>20</sup>Epitome of the Formula of Concord, VII, 6, Trig., p. 811.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 7-9, Trig., p. 813.

<sup>22</sup>Jaroslav Pelikan, "The Doctrine of Creation in Lutheran Confessional Theology," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVI (August, 1955), 570.

<sup>23</sup>Allbeck, op. cit., p. 60

The ecumenical creeds already describe God as eternal and the world as having a beginning in creation. The Apostles' Creed speaks of God the Father as "Maker of heaven and earth." This phrase, not occurring in the Old Roman Symbol which developed into the Apostles' Creed, but occurring in some of the ancient rules of faith and in the writings of Irenaeus and Tertullian, was used in opposition to Marcion and the Gnostics who did not believe that God was the creator of all things.<sup>24</sup>

The Nicene Creed speaks of the activity and the participation of both Jesus and the Holy Spirit in the work of creation. Of Jesus it declares "by whom all things were made." The Holy Spirit is spoken of as "the Lord and Giver of life."<sup>25</sup> Thus we could speak of the lordship of the trinity in Lutheran education,<sup>26</sup> if we desired to use the concept of lordship as a unifying principle. The triune God would then have a triple claim on the cosmos and on the educational process by virtue of creation, redemption, and sanctification.

#### The Laws of Nature

Article VI, "Of the Third Use of God's Law," of the Thorough Declaration discussing the fact that believers are

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<sup>24</sup>Allbeck, op. cit., p. 60

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., pp. 36-37.

<sup>26</sup>Pelikan, op. cit., p. 571.



not completely or perfectly renewed in this life, has an interesting observation on the relationship between God and the laws of nature, which would indicate at least a passing interest in the field of cosmology.

Just as the sun, the moon, and all the constellations of heaven have their regular course of themselves, unobstructed, without admonition, urging, driving, force, or compulsion, according to the law of God which God once appointed for them.<sup>27</sup>

There seems to be involved in this comparison the concept of the laws of nature and the idea that God after He established them is not directly operative in and through them, but that they nevertheless operate in accordance with His will. So much for the discussion of metaphysics and related problems.

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<sup>27</sup>Thorough Declaration of the Formula of Concord, VI, 6, Trig., p. 965.

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<sup>1</sup>The Confessions contain no discussion on what is worth knowing (Plato), how we know (Locke), what we can know (Kant), or the hierarchies of knowing (Jante).

<sup>2</sup>Tristram Kidder (St. Louis, West Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 19. This declares in effect that there are certain realities, certain verities, which are a priori incomprehensible, unfathomable to the human intellect. Hereafter Tristram will be abbreviated Trig.; the articles of it given under the title of the text divisions under the title.

<sup>3</sup>Apology of the Augsburg Confession, II (1), 13, Trig., p. 109.

## CHAPTER IV

### EPISTEMOLOGY

#### Reason--Limited and Obedient

In the area of epistemology, the next division of our topic, we note on the one side an emphasis on the limitations of reason and the necessity of taking it captive into obedience to Christ. On the other hand, we find no agnosticism or skepticism with regard to the instrumental functioning of reason or the assurance and content of the faith.<sup>1</sup> The Preface to the Christian Book of Concord declares that the human nature of Christ possesses a majesty in being elevated and placed at the right hand of God according to the method and economy of the hypostatic union.<sup>2</sup> It declares this "a mystery so great as to exceed all the powers of our natural ability and understanding." Reason again demonstrates its limitations when it attempts to comprehend the corruption of original sin.<sup>3</sup> "This hereditary sin is so deep and (horrible) a corruption of nature that no reason can understand it,

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<sup>1</sup>The Confessions contain no discussion on what is worth knowing (Plato), how we know (Locke), what we can know (Kant), or the hierarchies of knowing (Comte).

<sup>2</sup>Triglot Concordia (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 19. This declares in effect that there are certain realities, certain verities, which are a priori incomprehensible, unfathomable to the human intellect. Hereafter Triglot will be abbreviated Trig., the articles of it given Roman numerals and the text divisions Arabic numerals.

<sup>3</sup>Apology of the Augsburg Confession, II (I), 13, Trig., p. 109.

but it must be (learned and) believed from the revelation of Scriptures."<sup>4</sup>

The very first paragraph to the Preface of the Christian Book of Concord indicates the definite convictions which the Lutherans had and thus throws light on their basic assumptions in the field of epistemology. They spoke of the "darkness of papistical superstition" on the one hand and of "the light of His [God's] Gospel and Word" on the other.<sup>5</sup> They believed in absolutes and ultimates. They had none of the subjectivism and relativism of modern day humanism, which frequently has definite convictions only on what or how much cannot be known. The Lutherans were not philosophical skeptics. In the introduction to the Apology of the Augsburg Confession Melanchthon speaks of the "reasons why we could not receive the Confutation." The Lutherans were expected by their opponents to accept the Confutation as a refutation of the Augsburg Confession sight unseen. But the Lutherans believed in the validity of rational processes.<sup>6</sup> In Article XII (V) of the Apology Melanchthon declares in a similar vein:

We know that what we have mentioned is the true and genuine meaning of Paul; we know that this our belief brings to godly consciences (in agony of death

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<sup>4</sup>Smalcald Articles, Part III, Article I, 3, Trig., p. 477.

<sup>5</sup>Trig., p. 7.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 101.



and temptation) sure comfort, without which no one can stand in God's judgment.<sup>7</sup>

In Article III of the Apology Melancthon declares concerning the doctrine of justification: "This we shall make so plain and certain that anybody may grasp it."<sup>8</sup> It is almost as though he were declaring that the truth can be grasped by intuition, that it has self-authenticating power. A little later he raises in the same connection the rhetorical question: "What can they invent and devise against the plain truth?" The authors of the Formula of Concord similarly defended the essential perspicuity of Scripture. In Article VII of the Epitome they reject the proposition that "the words of the testament of Christ . . . are obscure expressions, whose meaning must first be sought in other passages of Scripture."<sup>9</sup> In the Introduction to the Thorough Declaration the Lutheran authors indicate that they are satisfied concerning the soundness of their own doctrine. They trusted their own rational powers as applied in the exposition of their doctrine so thoroughly as to declare that their doctrine has remained unrefuted. "This Confession was received with disfavor by their opponents, still, thank God, it remains to this day unrefuted and unoverthrown."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Apology, XII (V), 84, Trig., p. 277.

<sup>8</sup>Apology, III, 39-40, Trig., p. 167.

<sup>9</sup>Epitome of the Formula of Concord, VII, 4, Trig., p. 817.

<sup>10</sup>Epitome of the Formula of Concord, Introduction, 4, Trig., p. 847.



But the self-assurance exhibited in the Confessions did not harden into dogmatism, bigotry, fanaticism. In the Preface of the Augsburg Confession to the Emperor Charles V. they declare their willingness to confer with the Romanists regarding their confession of faith. A Lutheran philosophy of education must maintain such an open-minded approach to truth. There must be for the church in every age a willingness to reexamine official doctrine in the light of Scripture.<sup>11</sup> That the Lutherans had no fear that their doctrine could hold its own in the free exchange of ideas is also evident from their appeal to the Emperor for a free Christian council which had been promised them. In the introduction to the Articles on Abuses they remind the Emperor that "the truth cannot be gathered from common rumors or the revilings of enemies."<sup>12</sup> Here is an appeal to fairness and impartiality in getting at the facts of the matter.

#### Epistemology and Individual Responsibility

False teachers are to be held responsible for their pernicious errors and it is against them especially that the condemnations in the Book of Concord are directed.<sup>13</sup> These same condemnations are not directed against such as err from

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<sup>11</sup>Augsburg Confession, Preface, 21, Trig., p. 43.

<sup>12</sup>Trig., p. 59.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 19.

simplicity of mind or have not discerned their errors. Melancthon says that the Romanist adversaries make an arbitrary use of reason, but also admits that deductions may be properly or improperly made.

Now you see, reader, that our adversaries have not wasted labor in learning logic, but have the art of inferring from the Scriptures whatever pleases them (whether it is in harmony with the Scriptures or out of harmony; whether it is correctly or incorrectly concluded).<sup>14</sup>

Allbeck indicates that the Confessions did not favor an unlimited individualism in the interpretation of Scripture.

That the confessions display Lutheran testimony concerning the gospel is the chief fact. But connected with it is the further fact that it is a united testimony. It is a mistake to think that the Reformation made its most important contribution by asserting the right of private judgment in matters of religion. It is a distortion of the Lutheran movement to interpret it as giving a man a Bible and telling him to formulate his own doctrines. Such excessive individualism is foreign to the Lutheran Church.<sup>15</sup>

The Thorough Declaration, in fact, declares that our understanding is to be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

And we admonish all Christians, since in the Holy Scriptures Christ is called a mystery upon which all heretics dash their heads, not to indulge in a presumptuous manner in subtle inquiries, concerning such mysteries, with their reason, but with the venerated apostles simply to believe, to close the eyes of their reason, and bring into captivity their understanding to the obedience of Christ.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Apology XX, 89, Trig., p. 341.

<sup>15</sup>Willard D. Allbeck, Studies in the Lutheran Confessions (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1952), p. 7.

<sup>16</sup>Thorough Declaration of Formula of Concord VIII, 96, Trig., p. 1049.

### Faith and Knowledge

Jaroslav Pelikan in an essay "The Relation of Faith and Knowledge in the Lutheran Confessions" has a fine delineation of the bearing of faith and knowledge upon the problem of epistemology. Faith does not fasten upon itself. Faith is not its own object. Only then can there be certainty of faith, if faith does not build upon faith, but upon the Word of God. We know because we are known.<sup>17</sup>

### Sources of Knowledge

E. L. Lueker in a mimeographed essay "Sources of a Lutheran Philosophy of Education" divides his topic under such divisions as natural knowledge, reason, experience, intuition, conscience, Holy Scripture, and the Lutheran Confessions.<sup>18</sup> The Thorough Declaration quotes Luther as saying that "even the heathen to a certain extent had a knowledge of God from the natural law, although they neither knew Him aright nor glorified Him aright."<sup>19</sup> This, no doubt, refers to the testimony of conscience or the moral proof for God's existence. In the Apology Melancthon appeals to experience as one means through which truth may be corroborated. "For this

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<sup>17</sup>J. J. Pelikan, "The Relation of Faith and Knowledge in the Lutheran Confessions," Concordia Theological Monthly XXI (May, 1950), 321-31.

<sup>18</sup>Unpublished essay, March, 1957.

<sup>19</sup>Thorough Declaration of Formula of Concord, 96, Trig., p. 959.

is quite certain, and experience teaches forcibly enough, that when we truly feel the judgment and wrath or become afflicted, our works and worship cannot set the heart at rest."<sup>20</sup> In the sphere of God's revelation and inspired Scripture we shall perhaps never surpass that level of dependence of which Luther speaks in his explanation of the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed: "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him, but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel."<sup>21</sup> Here we are dependent upon the divine initiative and subsequently adequate only through divine preservation.

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<sup>20</sup>Apology of the Augsburg Confession III, 39-40, Trig., p. 167.

<sup>21</sup>Small Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther, II, 6, Trig., p. 545.



## CHAPTER V

### ETHICS

#### Soteriology and Ethics

The next area into which we wish to penetrate in the effort to present the contribution of the Confessions to a Lutheran philosophy of education is the problem of ethics. This area, of course, should be the most familiar to all those engaged in the work of Lutheran education in general, including pastors, parochial school teachers, Sunday School teachers, and all those involved in the levels of secondary and higher education in the church. We will attempt to point to unique features in the field of ethics as presented in the Lutheran Confessional heritage and to areas which perhaps need contemporary emphasis. Those only superficially acquainted with Lutheranism accuse it of quietism in the field of ethics. If this accusation is true of Lutheranism in whole or in part as it has penetrated into the modern world, this certainly is not an emphasis found in the Lutheran Confessions. Perhaps the primary emphasis is naturally on the soteriological, but a very close second and the only second is the emphasis on the ethical. The Confessions, in fact, relate the ethical life to the unifying principle in a philosophy of Lutheran education. Melancthon in the Apology declares that justifying faith "mortifies concupis-

cence."<sup>1</sup> One of the results then of justifying faith is the Christian ethical life. The inner relationship between these two areas is even more cogently stated. Lest the Lutherans be accused of being antinomian, they declare that we are justified by faith without love. Justification is never conditioned by human works or merits. But love is always the fruit of justifying faith. We are "accounted righteous for Christ's sake before we love and do the works of the law, although love necessarily follows."<sup>2</sup> There are no truly ethical works under the first table of the law before the individual is converted. "God therefore is not loved until we apprehend mercy by faith. Not until then does He become a lovable object."<sup>3</sup> The Lutheran educator may go so far as to declare that the ethics of his philosophy are the only genuine ethics. They are thus for two reasons. One, only Christ and the Holy Ghost teach how the law can be observed. Two, only Christ and the Holy Ghost can teach works that can please God.

#### Civil Righteousness

In order to understand the viewpoint of the Confessions

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<sup>1</sup>Apology of the Augsburg Confession, IV (II), 45, Triglott Concordia (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 133. Hereafter Triglott will be abbreviated Trig. and the Apology abbreviation will be Ap. The Roman numerals refer to the articles and the Arabic numerals to the text divisions according to those employed in the Triglott.

<sup>2</sup>Ap, IV (II), 114, Trig., p. 155.

<sup>3</sup>Ap, III, 8, Trig., p. 157. Thorough Declaration of

in the field of ethics it is useful to review what they have to say concerning natural ethics, or the ethics of unregenerate man. In his Large Catechism Luther declares that the moral law is written in the heart of man. "Moreover, apart from this, the ten commandments are written in the hearts of all men."<sup>4</sup> Here Luther is contrasting the ten commandments with the Apostles' Creed, which no human wisdom can comprehend. The reason that natural ethics or civil righteousness is at all possible is that man has a free will in a limited way. The Thorough Declaration says: "For in other respects, as regards natural, external things which are subject to reason, man still has to a certain degree understanding, power, and ability."<sup>5</sup> The Lutherans do not repudiate the righteousness of reason, operative in mundane matters. In fact, they declare that God requires it. Civil discipline has the effect of restraining gross sinners.<sup>6</sup> And yet the final verdict on works of natural righteousness is that they are sin. The Thorough Declaration affirms: "The natural free will according to its perverted disposition and nature is strong and active only with respect to what

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the Formula of Concord, II, 7, Trig., p. 911. Hereafter the Thorough Declaration will be abbreviated TD.

<sup>4</sup>Large Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther, The Creed, III, 67, Trig., p. 697. Hereafter the Large Catechism will be abbreviated LC.

<sup>5</sup>TD, I, 3, Trig., p. 863.

<sup>6</sup>Ap, IV (II), 22-24, Trig., p. 127.



is displeasing and contrary to God."<sup>7</sup> While the Apology at one place praises civil righteousness, on the other hand it declares: "If the carnal mind is enmity against God, the flesh sins, even when we do external civil works."<sup>8</sup> The reason for this is that "the human heart without the Holy Ghost either in security despises God's judgment, or in punishment flees from, and hates, God when He judges."<sup>9</sup> Men truly sin, even when, without the Holy Ghost, they do virtuous works, because they do them with a wicked heart. The final appeal is to the verdict of Scripture: "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

The Confessions also delimit the area of good works, attacking the superstitious elements in the piety of the medieval church, which it labels as "childish and needless works, as particular holy-days, particular fasts, brotherhoods, pilgrimages, services in honor of saints, the use of rosaries, monasticism, and such like."<sup>10</sup> Article XXVI, "Of the Augsburg Confession," emphasizes the Gospel freedom from human traditions. These traditions have obscured the doctrine of grace and the righteousness of faith and the doctrine of the divine law. They have unnecessarily

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<sup>7</sup>TD, II, 7, Trig., p. 883.

<sup>8</sup>Ap, IV (II), 34, Trig., p. 129.

<sup>9</sup>Ap, IV (II), 35, Trig., pp. 129-31.

<sup>10</sup>Augsburg Confession, XX, 3, Trig., p. 53. Hereafter the Augsburg Confession will be abbreviated AC.



troubled consciences.<sup>11</sup> In Article XXVII, "Of Augustana," the Lutherans also took a stand against monastic vows. In the very first paragraph of this article Melanchthon is anxious to point out that monasteries were free associations in Augustine's time. The compulsory character of monastic life and vows was used as an argument against them. Vows, this article comments, were added for the purpose of restoring discipline. These vows were tyrannical, often made by an individual at an early age when he did not have mature judgment or could not know whether he had the power of complete continency. Those who desired to be justified by the fulfillment of these vows are fallen from grace. The monks thought that they merited more than they needed for themselves and so developed the theory of works of supererogation.<sup>12</sup> In the Apology Melanchthon flatly rejects works of supererogation and this entire theory.

They imagine that they (are the most holy people who) observe (not only) precepts and (but also) counsels (that is, the superior counsels, which Scripture issues concerning exalted gifts, not by way of command, but of advice). Afterwards these liberal men, since they dream that they have the merits of supererogation, sell these to others.<sup>13</sup>

At best Melanchthon observes these works are in the field of adiaphora. "Obedience, poverty, and celibacy, provided the

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<sup>11</sup>AC, XXVI, 4-17, Trig., pp. 71-73.

<sup>12</sup>AC, XXVII, 1-61, Trig., pp. 75-83. 1-2, Trig., p. 53.

<sup>13</sup>Ap, XXVII (XIII), 24, Trig., p. 427.

latter is not impure, are, as exercises, adiaphora (in which we are not to look for either sin or righteousness)."<sup>14</sup>

### Ethics and Repentance

The Christian life, the ethical life, should be one of continual repentance.<sup>15</sup> This repentance is to continue to death. The Thorough Declaration quoting the Smalcald Articles declares: "In Christians this repentance continues until death, because through the entire life it contends with sin remaining in the flesh."<sup>16</sup> Perhaps it must be said that in a truly ethical life good works are necessary.<sup>17</sup> They are in keeping with the will of God. They arise out of believing hearts renewed by the Holy Spirit.<sup>18</sup> Good works follow faith, but they should be excluded from the question concerning salvation.<sup>19</sup> The truly believing, or far as they are regenerate, render due obedience not from the driving of the law, but from a voluntary spirit. The regenerate cannot retain faith if he intentionally perseveres in sin. The liberated spirit does good works not from fear of punishment,

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<sup>14</sup>Ap, XXVII (XIII), 21, Trig., p. 427.

<sup>15</sup>AC, XII, 1-10, Trig., p. 49.

<sup>16</sup>TD, II, 34, Trig., p. 895.

<sup>17</sup>TD, IV, 30, Trig., p. 947.

<sup>18</sup>TD, IV, 33, Trig., p. 949; AC, XX, 1-2, Trig., p. 53.

<sup>19</sup>TD, IV, 35, Trig., p. 949.

like a servant, but from love of righteousness, like children. This voluntariness, this liberty of spirit, in the elect children of God is not perfect. Nevertheless for the sake of Christ, the Lord does not impute this weakness to His elect. Works do not maintain faith and salvation in us, but this the Spirit of God alone does, through faith, of whose presence and indwelling good works are evidences.<sup>20</sup> The Thorough Declaration lays an obligation upon believers to exercise themselves in good works.

And since the Holy Ghost dwells in the elect, who have become believers, as in His temple, and is not idle in them, but impels the children of God to obedience to God's commands, believers, likewise, should not be idle, and much less resist the impulse of God's Spirit, but should exercise themselves in all Christian virtues.<sup>21</sup>

The Formula also defines the word "necessary" when the phrase good works are necessary is properly used.<sup>22</sup> "Thus also in the Holy Scriptures themselves the words necessity, needful, and necessary, likewise, ought and must, are used concerning what we are bound to do because of God's ordinance, command, and will."<sup>23</sup> A little further on another distinction is noted. "A necessity of Christ's ordinance, command, and will, and of our obligation, but not a necessity of coercion." The Apology indicates in which spheres and areas the ethical

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<sup>20</sup>Epitome of Formula of Concord, IV, 7-10, Trig., p. 799. Hereafter the Epitome of Formula of Concord will be abbreviated Ep.

<sup>21</sup>TD, XI, 73, Trig., p. 1087.

<sup>22</sup>TD, V, 38, Trig., p. 951.

<sup>23</sup>TD, IV, 14, Trig., p. 943.



life may be pursued as it contrasts the monastic life with a secular calling. "The works of God's commandments (the true, holy, good, works)" are defined as "the works of one's calling, the administration of the state, the management of a family, married life, the bringing up of children."<sup>24</sup>

### Ethics and the Law

The preaching of the Law has a very vital place in the ethical life of the believer. Men truly believing in Christ are not on this account without Law. The preaching of the Law is to be urged with diligence also upon true believers. Regeneration and renewal is not complete in them in the present life.<sup>25</sup> The Thorough Declaration declares:

Although the truly believing are verily moved by God's Spirit, and thus, according to the inner man, do God's will from a free spirit, yet it is just the Holy Ghost who uses the written Law for instruction with them,<sup>26</sup> by which the truly believing also learn to serve God.

The Law is used by the Holy Ghost in a disciplinary measure.

He exhorts them thereto, and when they are idle, negligent, and rebellious in this matter because of the flesh, He reproves them on that account through the Law, so that He carries on both offices together: He slays and makes alive.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Ap, XV (VIII), 25, Trig., p. 323.

<sup>25</sup>Ep, VI, 1-3, Trig., p. 805.

<sup>26</sup>TD, VI, 3, Trig., p. 963.

<sup>27</sup>TD, VI, 12, Trig., p. 967.



The Law of God is still used as a rule in the Christian life, even when it is not employed by the Holy Spirit as a prod.

But when man is born anew by the Spirit of God, and liberated from the Law, that is, freed from this driver, and is led by the Spirit of Christ, he lives according to the immutable will of God comprised in the Law, and so far as he is born anew, does everything from a free, cheerful spirit.<sup>28</sup>

The reason the Law must be used in any manner for the Christian is that he never sheds the old Adam. "Nevertheless the old Adam clings to them still in their nature and all its internal and external powers."<sup>29</sup> Therefore no child of God can keep the Law perfectly. The Thorough Declaration rejects as falsehood the teaching that "a Christian man who is truly regenerated by God's Spirit can in this life keep and fulfill the Law of God perfectly."<sup>30</sup> Yet good works have their reward in this life and after this life, both bodily and spiritual. Only one item is excluded as a reward for good works and that is remission of sins.<sup>31</sup>

#### Christian Asceticism

The Confessions also contain references to the role of asceticism in the Christian ethical life. The spurious

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<sup>28</sup>TD, VI, 17, Trig., p. 967.

<sup>29</sup>TD, VI, 7, Trig., p. 965.

<sup>30</sup>TD, XII, 5, Trig., p. 1101.

<sup>31</sup>Ap, III, 73-74, Trig., p. 175.

asceticism which was found in monasticism did not lead them to disavow the true. Salvation can be lost by wickedness, they declare. "Some imagine and think that faith and the righteousness and salvation which they have received can be lost through no sins or wicked deed."<sup>32</sup> Even more pertinent a quotation from the Apology: "Wherefore, the faith which receives remission of sins in a heart terrified and fleeing from sin does not remain in those who obey their desires, neither does it coexist with mortal sin."<sup>33</sup> Article XXVI, "Of Augustana," has perhaps the most explicit comments on Christian asceticism. "Moreover, they teach that every Christian ought to train and subdue himself with bodily restraints, or bodily exercises and labors, that neither satisfy nor slothfulness tempt him to sin."<sup>34</sup> Again the Augsburg Confession comments on a passage by Paul:

Here he clearly shows that he was keeping under his body, not to merit forgiveness of sins by that discipline, but to have his body in subjection and fitted for spiritual things, and for the discharge of duty according to his calling.<sup>35</sup>

#### The Christian Life and Affliction

We conclude our discussion ethics in general with a

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<sup>32</sup>TD, IV, 31, Trig., p. 947.

<sup>33</sup>Ap, III, 23, Trig., p. 161.

<sup>34</sup>AC, XXVI, 33, Trig., p. 75.

<sup>35</sup>AC, XXVI, 38-39, Trig., p. 75.

discussion of the role of affliction in the Christian life. Article VI of the Apology defines the disciplinary role of affliction. "Likewise afflictions are inflicted because of present sin, since in the saints they mortify and extinguish concupiscence, so that they may be renewed by the Spirit."<sup>36</sup> Afflictions may also be spiritually beneficial.

Therefore afflictions are not always punishments for certain past deeds, but they are the works of God, intended for our profit, and that the power of God might be made more manifest in our weakness (how He can help in the midst of death).<sup>37</sup>

The Christian, however, is not to choose his own cross. Mortification is not to be self-inflicted. "A true and not feigned mortification occurs through the cross and afflictions by which God exercises us (when God breaks our will, inflicts the cross and trouble)."<sup>38</sup> There is, however, also a voluntary kind of self-discipline and mortification of the flesh as a following section of this paragraph indicates.

#### Commandments One, Two, Three

In the Large Catechism Luther indicates how the First Commandment is related to all the rest. This emphasizes

<sup>36</sup>Ap, VI, 55, Trig., p. 299.

<sup>37</sup>Ap, VI, 63, Trig., p. 301.

<sup>38</sup>Ap, XV (VIII), 45, Trig., p. 327.

that Christian ethics are essentially theo-centric.

Thus the First Commandment is to shine and impart its splendor to all the others. Therefore you must let this declaration run through all the commandments, like a hoop in a wreath, joining the end to the beginning and holding them all together.<sup>39</sup>

The real spiritual worship of the heart is to be distinguished from the external forms which worship may take. The observance of universal rites is not necessary to eternal life, because these universal rites are in reality only outward regulations.<sup>40</sup> Ceremonies or church rites are in the category of adiaphora, things neither commanded nor forbidden in God's Word. Sunday is not to be observed by divine command. On this last item Luther in his Large Catechism reveals the basically conservative character of his approach. This custom, Luther suggests, is worthy of keeping "in order that everything be done in harmonious order; and no one create disorder by unnecessary innovation."<sup>41</sup>

#### The Fourth Commandment

In his discussion of the Fourth Commandment in the Large Catechism Luther includes all types of authority.

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<sup>39</sup>LC, Conclusion of the Ten Commandments, 326, Trig., p. 675.

<sup>40</sup>Ep, X, 1, Trig., pp. 829, 831; Ap, VII. VIII, 31, Trig., p. 237.

<sup>41</sup>LC, Third Commandment, 85, Trig., p. 605.



There are fathers in blood and fathers in office, or those to whom belongs the care of the family, and those to whom belongs the care of the country. Besides there are yet spiritual fathers . . . who govern and guide us by the Word of God.<sup>42</sup>

When Luther defines the honor that we owe our parents, he declares that this is something more than the love which we owe all men. Honor comprehends also "modesty, humility, and deference as to a majesty there hidden." This obligation rests upon son and daughter. "However lowly, poor, frail, and queer they may be, nevertheless they are father and mother given them by God."<sup>43</sup> On the other hand, parents also have their responsibility. They are to look after the education of their children. Thus children will be able to make constructive contributions toward government and all other areas of life.

Let everyone know, therefore, that it is his duty, on peril of losing the divine favor, to bring up his children above all things in the fear and knowledge of God, and if they are talented, have them learn and study something, that they may be employed for whatever need there is (to have them instructed and trained in a liberal education, that men may be able to have their aid in government and in whatever is necessary).<sup>44</sup>

Luther also indicates how God punishes sins against the Fourth Commandment.

Therefore God punishes one knave by another, so that, when you defraud and despise your master, another

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<sup>42</sup>LC, Fourth Commandment, 158, Trig., p. 627.

<sup>43</sup>LC, Fourth Commandment, 105-108, Trig., p. 611.

<sup>44</sup>LC, Fourth Commandment, 173-74, Trig., pp. 629-31.

comes and deals in like manner with you, yea, in your household you must suffer ten times more from wife, children or servants.<sup>45</sup>

In the very Preface to the Christian Book of Concord the Lutherans strike a patriotic note when they speak of Germany as "our most beloved fatherland."<sup>46</sup> The Augsburg Confession declares that civil government has divine sanction.<sup>47</sup> The Apology declares that subjects are to obey the civil state.

Neither does the Gospel bring new laws concerning the civil state, but commands that we obey present laws, whether they have been framed by heathen or by others, and that in this obedience we should exercise love.<sup>48</sup>

The Augsburg Confession indicates that the Church should not interfere with the civil government. The office of the keys is spoken of as belonging to the Church. The Church thus possesses only spiritual power. If the Church remains in its sphere, this will not interfere with secular rule "no more than the art of singing interferes with civil government."<sup>49</sup> The government, however, also has its obligations to the governed. The king is admonished to

do good works, administer your office, do not be a tyrant, but see that your government is profitable to

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<sup>45</sup>LC, Fourth Commandment, 154, Trig., p. 625.

<sup>46</sup>Trig., p. 7.

<sup>47</sup>AC, XVI, 1, Trig., p. 51.

<sup>48</sup>Ap, XVI, 55, Trig., p. 331.

<sup>49</sup>AC, XXVIII, 10, Trig., p. 85.

your country and people, preserve peace, and protect the poor against unjust force. These are princely aims.<sup>50</sup>

A Christian also has the obligation to participate in civil government.<sup>51</sup> The state has the right to punish, but private revenge is forbidden.

Therefore private redress is prohibited not by advice, but by a command. . . . Public redress, which is made through the office of the magistrate, is not advised against, but is commanded, and is a work of God. . . . Now the different kinds of public redress are legal decisions, capital punishment, wars, military service.<sup>52</sup>

The Formula of Concord both in the Epitome and the Thorough Declaration rejects Anabaptist errors with regard to government. Included among them are such that the magistracy is not an estate pleasing to God, that a Christian cannot with a good, inviolate conscience hold or discharge the office of magistrate, that a Christian cannot without injury to conscience use the office of magistracy against the wicked, that a Christian cannot with good conscience take an oath, that under the New Testament magistrates cannot, without injury to conscience, inflict capital punishment upon malefactors.<sup>53</sup>

### The Fifth Commandment

In his explanation of the Fifth Commandment in the

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<sup>50</sup>Ap, III, 143, Trig., p. 195.

<sup>51</sup>Ac, XVI, 1-7, Trig., p. 51.

<sup>52</sup>Ap, XVI, 59-60, Trig., p. 331.

<sup>53</sup>Ep, XII, 1-5, Trig., p. 841; TD, XII, 12, Trig., p. 1099.



Large Catechism Luther gives it a spiritual meaning, warning against sins of omission as well as sins of commission much as he does in his Small Catechism.

In the first place, that we harm no one, first with our hand or by deed. Then, that we do not employ our tongue to instigate or counsel thereto. Further, that we neither use or assent to any kinds of means or methods whereby anyone may be injured. And finally, that the heart be not ill disposed toward any one, nor from anger or hatred wish him ill, so that body and soul may be innocent in regard to everyone, but especially those who wish you evil or inflict such upon you. . . . Secondly, under this commandment not only is he guilty who does evil to his neighbor, but he also who can do him good, prevent, resist evil, defend and save him, so that no bodily harm or hurt happen to him, and yet does not do it.<sup>54</sup>

#### The Sixth Commandment

Much of the treatment of the topic of ethics under the Sixth Commandment is absorbed in the Lutheran polemics against monasticism. Article XXIII. of the Augsburg Confession gives us Scriptural justification for the marriage of priests. It affirms that powers of procreation and the institution of marriage come from the Creator.<sup>55</sup> According to it, exceptions would constitute special cases--for those who had the God-given power of continence.<sup>56</sup> But God honors marriage and His laws cannot be annulled by human

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<sup>54</sup>LC, 188-89, Trig., pp. 633-35.

<sup>55</sup>AC, XXIII, 1-26, Trig., pp. 61-65.

<sup>56</sup>LC, 211, Trig., p. 641.



laws or vows. The righteousness of faith is productive of good works within normal social relations, among which marriage is included. Celibacy is not a meritorious work either for the laity or the clergy. The home may be more a place of holiness than the monastery. The Apology contributes the thoughts that marriage is a natural right of man. Marriage is a remedy for concupiscence. Marriage is necessary for the sake of procreation. Concupiscence has the property of inflaming the natural appetite. Incontinence is not overcome by labor, hunger, and other means. Marriage per se is not impure. In the believers marriage is pure because it has been sanctified by the Word of God. By the Word consciences become certain that God approves. It is used with prayer, i.e., by faith, which uses it with thanksgiving as a gift of God.<sup>57</sup>

In his discussion of the Sixth Commandment in the Large Catechism Luther castigates monasticism and declares that those who have been ensnared by it are free to marry.

Therefore all vows of chastity out of the married estate are condemned by this commandment, and free permission is granted, yea, even the command is given, to all poor ensnared consciences which have been deceived by their monastic vows to abandon the unchaste state and enter the married life.<sup>58</sup>

Luther also in the Smalcald Articles declares that marriages between sponsors are not prohibited, also that

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<sup>57</sup>Ap, XXIII (XI), 9, Trig., pp. 368-71.

<sup>58</sup>LC, 216, Trig., p. 641.

innocent persons are free to remarry after a divorce. The Roman bishops had misused their powers in refusing marriage between such as had been sponsors of the same child at baptism.

For the traditions concerning spiritual relationship (the prohibition of marriage between sponsors) are unjust. Unjust also is the tradition which forbids an innocent person to marry after divorce.<sup>59</sup>

Luther also condemns clandestine engagements and the breaking of such. "And this especially prevalent in marriage affairs, where two go and secretly betroth themselves to one another, and afterward abjure (their plighted troth)."<sup>60</sup> It is significant that Luther makes this observation under the Second Commandment where he discusses the misuse of the divine name. Under the Sixth Commandment again Luther declares that love must remain paramount in marriage. "For where conjugal chastity is to be maintained, man and wife must by all means live together in love and harmony, that one may cherish the other from the heart and with entire fidelity."<sup>61</sup> Melancthon emphasizes that man and wife have the obligation to maintain purity also within marriage. "Besides, the saints will know in the exercise of marriage how far it is profitable to restrain its use, and as Paul says, I Thes. 4,

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<sup>59</sup>Smalcald Articles, 78, Trig., p. 527.

<sup>60</sup>LC, 53, Trig., p. 595.

<sup>61</sup>LC, 219, Trig., p. 643.

4, to possess his vessel in sanctification."<sup>62</sup> One final remark under the ethics of the Sixth Commandment. The Epitome rejects the Anabaptist error that "the married may be divorced on account of (diverse) faith."<sup>63</sup> This reveals the essential conservative approach of the Lutherans to this entire field.

#### The Seventh Commandment

Other Anabaptist vagaries concerning economic life were also repudiated, such as, that "a Christian cannot with a good conscience hold or possess property, that a Christian cannot with a good conscience be an innkeeper, merchant, or cutler."<sup>64</sup> This perhaps is the most significant observation which the Confessions make relating to the content of the Seventh Commandment.

#### The Eighth Commandment

Under the Eighth Commandment Luther defines false witness as "everything which cannot be properly proved."<sup>65</sup> The individual is forbidden to make a public judgment of his neighbor's sins. "Therefore, to avoid this vice we should note that no one is allowed publicly to judge and reprove

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<sup>62</sup>Ap, XXIII (XI), 66, Trig., p. 381.

<sup>63</sup>Ep, XII, 19, Trig., p. 841.

<sup>64</sup>Ep, XII, 17-18, Trig., p. 841.

<sup>65</sup>LC, 271, Trig., p. 657.

his neighbor, although he may see him sin, unless we have a command to judge and to reprove."<sup>66</sup> Where sins are public, the reproof may also be public. "For where the sin is public, the reproof also must be public, that every one may learn to guard against it."<sup>67</sup>

### The Ninth and Tenth Commandments

We conclude our entire discussion of the subject of ethics for a Lutheran philosophy of education with a summarization of some pertinent remarks by Luther in his discussion of the Ninth and Tenth Commandments. The essence of the Ninth Commandment for him is the injunction to have a pure heart. "For He would especially have the heart pure, although we shall never attain to that as long as we live here."<sup>68</sup> His discussion on the conclusion of the commandments is directed against work righteousness. He exclaims:

But see, is not that a cursed presumption of those desperate saints who dare to invent a higher and better life and estate than the Ten Commandments teach, pretending (as we have said) that this is an ordinary life for the common man, but that theirs is for saints and perfect ones?<sup>69</sup>

Luther defines the motivation in the ethical life as follows:

Thus He demands that all our works proceed from a heart which fears and regards God alone, and from such

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<sup>66</sup>LC, 265, Trig., p. 655.

<sup>67</sup>LC, 284, Trig., p. 661.

<sup>68</sup>LC, 310, Trig., p. 669.

<sup>69</sup>LC, 315, Trig., p. 671.



fear avoids everything that is contrary to His will, lest it should move Him to wrath; and, on the other hand, also trusts in Him alone, and from love to Him alone does all He wishes, because He speaks to us as friendly as a father, and offers us all grace and every good.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>70</sup>LC, 323, Trig., pp. 673-75.

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L. W. Spivey, "The Soteriological Aspect of the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity According to the Lutheran Confessions," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVI (March, 1955), 151-71.

## CHAPTER VI

### THEOLOGY PROPER

#### Its Place in a Philosophy of Education

The doctrine of God is usually the first to be treated in a systematic presentation of Christian theology, as L. W. Spitz has pointed out in his essay "The Soteriological Aspect of the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity According to the Lutheran Confessions."<sup>1</sup> But Dr. A. G. Merckens in a mimeographed essay on "Metaphysics" treats definition and systems of metaphysics before he treats the topic of God. The theological approach, it would seem, would be through God to nature, while that of philosophy would be through nature to God. The central interests of theology would be indicated in the threefold division which most dogmatical works employ: "God, man, and salvation." Interests like metaphysics and epistemology would only be peripheral. In philosophy the inquiry into metaphysics and epistemology would be central and questions concerning soteriology and even theology proper would be more peripheral. Perhaps another reason to justify the sequence of discussion that we have chosen is that we have much more in common with philosophy in general in the

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<sup>1</sup>L. W. Spitz, "The Soteriological Aspect of the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity According to the Lutheran Confessions," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVI (March, 1955), 161-71.

areas of metaphysics, epistemology and ethics, areas which we have already treated. Science furnishes us with the data for observation. The attempt of philosophy is to make the observable intelligible. Its dominant method until modern times was inquiry through the tool of reason. In modern times pragmatism and instrumentalism have elevated experience to the level of authority. Existentialism denies the restrictions of scientific rationalism. When we come to the doctrine of God, we are immediately confronted with the most violent of rational tensions. If non-Christian thinkers are ever to give a hearing to a Lutheran philosophy of education, it would seem most expedient to discuss those large areas where we can more easily understand each other.

#### Definition

The entire doctrine of God is adequately treated in rather short compass in the Athanasian Creed. Nothing essential as to the nature of deity by definition or description is lacking. God is three in person, one in essence. Allbeck suggests that the term "essence" might be a Platonic concept. Neve suggests that discussion of the nature of God and the trinity is not a closed issue.<sup>2</sup> He points out the difficulties which early Eastern Christendom

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<sup>2</sup>J. L. Neve, A History of Christian Thought (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The Muhlenberg Press, 1946), I, 106.

had when it stressed the trinity of persons, which almost developed into a tritheism and which early Western Christendom had when it emphasized the unity of the Godhead and by adopting the term "substantia" ended with a concept of God which is more abstract and less personal than is desirable. Pieper finds the solution in hypostasizing the essence of the trinity, but he is compelled to admit then that we cannot comprehend the distinction between person and essence.<sup>3</sup> The deist Thomas Jefferson quite naturally wishes to do away "the incomprehensible jargon of Trinitarian arithmetic, that three are one, and one is three."<sup>4</sup> Bainton has a very striking summarization of Luther's views of this problem.

Neither can philosophy reveal God. In making this assertion Luther was in part echoing the language of the late scholastics, on whose works he had been reared. The Occamists had wrecked the synthesis of Thomas Aquinas whereby nature and reason lead through unbroken stages to grace and revelation. Instead between nature and grace, between reason and revelation, these theologies introduced a great gulf. So much so indeed that philosophy and theology were compelled to resort to two different kinds of logic and even two different varieties of arithmetic. The classic illustration was the doctrine of the Trinity, which asserts that three persons are one God. According to human arithmetic this is preposterous, and yet according to divine arithmetic it must be believed. Luther at this point outdid his teachers and asserted that whereas by the standard of human

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<sup>3</sup>Francis Pieper, Christian Dogmatics (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1953), I, 371-466.

<sup>4</sup>Norman Cousins, In God We Trust (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), p. 157.



reason two and five equal seven, yet if God should declare them to be eight, one must believe against reason and against feeling.<sup>5</sup>

### Theology Proper and Justification

The first paragraph of the Preface to the Book of Concord relates God to the unifying principle in a philosophy of Lutheran education. It strikes the key-note of all the Confessional writings when it speaks of the love, forbearance, and mercy of God. Numerous references to the second person of the Holy Trinity, the Lord Jesus Christ, link His activity with this same teaching of justification by faith alone. Article III, "Of Augustana," emphasizes in opposition to Zwingli who ascribed the suffering to the human nature of Christ alone that Christ suffered both as God and man, both according to His human nature and the divine.<sup>6</sup> This guarantees the universality of the atonement and thus every individual can have full assurance of His own redemption. Christ manifested His divine majesty already in His state of humiliation. Thus the death of Christ which gives offense to reason is at the same time the foundation of the Christian

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<sup>5</sup>Roland Bainton, Here I Stand (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1950), p. 219.

<sup>6</sup>Augsburg Confession, III, 1, Triglot Concordia (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 45. Hereafter Triglot will be abbreviated Trig. and the Augsburg Confession will be abbreviated AC. The Roman numerals refer to the articles and the Arabic numerals to the text divisions according to those employed in the Triglot.

faith.

Likewise in death, when He died not simply as any other man, but in and with His death conquered sin, death, devil, hell, and eternal damnation; which the human nature alone could not have been able to do if it had not been thus personally united and had not had communion with the divine nature.<sup>7</sup>

Luther quoted in the Thorough Declaration admits that divinity cannot suffer and die. Yet he goes on to declare: "Yet, because in Christ divinity and humanity are one person, Scripture, on account of this personal union, ascribes to the divinity everything that happens to the humanity and vice versa."<sup>8</sup> Luther did not find it difficult to speak as follows: "God died," "God's passion," "God's blood," and "God's death."<sup>9</sup> Luther would not hesitate to declare that the blood of Christ actually cleanses. "In the work or act of justification not only the divine nature in Christ, but also His blood per modum efficaciae (by mode of efficacy), that is, actually, cleanses us from all sins."<sup>10</sup> Even the power to quicken resides in the flesh of Christ. "The power to quicken is in the flesh of Christ not in that manner in which it is in His divine nature, namely, as an essential property."<sup>11</sup> But it is there. Thus the doctrine of the

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<sup>7</sup>Thorough Declaration of the Formula of Concord, VIII, 25, Trig., p. 1023. Hereafter the Thorough Declaration will be abbreviated TD.

<sup>8</sup>TD, VIII, 41, Trig., p. 1029.

<sup>9</sup>TD, VIII, 44, Trig., p. 1031.

<sup>10</sup>TD, VIII, 59, Trig., p. 1035.

<sup>11</sup>TD, VIII, 61, Trig., p. 1037.

person and work of Christ as it unfolded to us is inextricably linked with justification.

### Theology Proper and Cosmology

The doctrine of God is related to the problem of cosmology in the description of the divine initiative and activity in the work of creation.<sup>12</sup> The conviction expressed in the words "Father Almighty" found both in the Apostles' and the Nicene Creed is that He is immanent, guiding and directing the affairs of His creation.<sup>13</sup> For the Greek equivalent of "Almighty" (pantokratora) has the significance, not so much of possessing all power, as of exercising all power and rule. Christ is also immanent in His humanity. The Epitome indicates this when it rejects certain propositions as

that the body of Christ is enclosed in heaven, that Christ has not promised, neither could have effected, the essential presence of His body and blood in the Holy Supper, that God is not able to cause His body to be essentially present in more than one place at one time.<sup>14</sup>

In the sacrament Christ fellowships in His true body and blood with both believers and unbelievers.

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<sup>12</sup>Willard D. Allbeck, Studies in the Lutheran Confessions (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1952), pp. 36-37; AC, XXIII, 2, Trig., p. 61.

<sup>13</sup>Allbeck, op. cit., p. 35.

<sup>14</sup>Epitome of the Formula of Concord, VIII, 32-34, Trig., p. 815. Hereafter the Epitome of the Formula of Concord will be abbreviated Ep.

God is pictured as a God of power when He is linked to the means of grace, the Gospel and the sacraments. The efficacy of the means of grace is assured by their divine source.<sup>15</sup> The means of grace are valid even though hypocrites are present among the saints in the church. The validity of the means depends upon neither the moral nor priestly character of the administrator. He can save without them.

The entire Lutheran conception of the sacrament as contrasted with the Reformed is theocentric, while the Reformed is anthropocentric. Therefore the Zwinglian description of the sacraments points to them as "marks of profession among men."<sup>16</sup> The Lutheran description terms the sacraments "signs and testimonies of the will of God toward us." Thus the Lutheran point of view, as brought out in Article XIII, "Of Augustana," is that the sacramental dominates over the sacrificial in the Christian's daily life.

The Holy Spirit is also pictured as a God of power when through the means of grace He grants the individual free will even in spiritual matters<sup>17</sup> and when He utilizes the Law for disciplinary purposes. God is portrayed as the Absolute. He is the frame of reference for all. He is the criterion by which everything is measured. Works, for

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<sup>15</sup>AC, VIII, 4, Trig., p. 47.

<sup>16</sup>AC, XIII, 1, Trig., p. 49.

<sup>17</sup>AC, XVIII, 6, Trig., p. 53.



example, are called good works, when they are in keeping with His will.<sup>18</sup>

### Theology Proper and Christology

There are two further centers in which the theology proper is still further elaborated and that is in the exposition of the person and work of Christ and in the discussion of the doctrine of the election of grace. When the Nicene Creed declares that Jesus was "begotten of the Father before all worlds," when it inserted the words "of one substance with the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God," it affirmed the essential deity of Christ and anathematized all who denied His eternity.<sup>19</sup>

It was Arius, who held that Christ is not true, natural, and eternal God.<sup>20</sup> The Thorough Declaration further declares

that there was no change in the divine nature of Christ at His incarnation.<sup>21</sup>

The interest of the Apostles' Creed, on the other hand, was to defend Christ's humanity. It was

Marcion who later held that Christ did not have a true human nature.<sup>22</sup> The Augsburg Confession teaches that Jesus assumed

the human nature in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>18</sup>AC, XX, 20, Trig., p. 53.

<sup>19</sup>Allbeck, op. cit., p. 31.

<sup>20</sup>Ep, VIII, 22, Trig., p. 823.

<sup>21</sup>TD, VIII, 49, Trig., p. 1031.

<sup>22</sup>Ep, VIII, 23, Trig., p. 823.

<sup>23</sup>AC, III, 1, Trig., p. 45.

It is important for the doctrine of Christ and for the authority of the Scriptures that the Epitome rejects the idea, that Christ according to His human mind has a certain limit as to how much he is to know, and that Christ does not yet have a perfect knowledge of God and all His works.<sup>24</sup>

The Thorough Declaration defines the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the human nature of Christ. "The entire fullness of the Spirit has been communicated by the personal union to Christ according to the flesh, which is personally united with the Son of God."<sup>25</sup> It is the human nature of Christ which has been exalted.

Hence also the human nature, after the resurrection from the dead, has its exaltation above all creatures in heaven and on earth: which is nothing else than that He entirely laid aside the form of a servant, and yet did not lay aside His human nature.<sup>26</sup>

Christ is also present in the Church according to His human nature.

Also according to His assumed human nature and with the same He can be, and also is, present where He will, and especially that in His Church and congregation on earth He is present as Mediator, Head, King, and High Priest, not in part, or only one-half of Him only, but the entire person of Christ is present, to which both natures belong, the divine and the human.<sup>27</sup>

The Thorough Declaration describes how both natures in

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<sup>24</sup>Ep, VIII, 36, Trig., p. 825; TD, VIII, 74, Trig., p. 1043.

<sup>25</sup>TD, VIII, 73, Trig., p. 1041.

<sup>26</sup>TD, VIII, 26, Trig., p. 1023; TD, VIII, 58, Trig., p. 1035.

<sup>27</sup>TD, VIII, 78, Trig., p. 1043.

Christ were operative in our redemption.

For the human nature alone without the divine, could neither by obedience nor suffering render satisfaction to eternal almighty God for the sins of all the world; however, the divinity alone, without the humanity, could not mediate between God and us. Since it is the obedience of the entire person, it is a complete salvation and expiation for the human race, by which the eternal, immutable righteousness of God, revealed in the Law, has been satisfied, and is thus our righteousness, which avails before God.<sup>28</sup>

The Epitome rejects the idea of the Sacramentarians that "in the person of Christ God has nothing realiter, that is, in deed and truth, in common with humanity, and humanity nothing in common with divinity, its majesty and properties."<sup>29</sup> Against Nestorius it affirms that "the divine and human natures in Christ are personally united." Against Eutyches it asserts that "the divine and human natures are not mingled into one substance, nor the one changed into the other."<sup>30</sup>

#### Theology Proper and the Election of Grace

The doctrine of the election of grace is also illustrative of theology proper because it plumbs into the unfathomable mysteries of God. It also admirably serves as a

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<sup>28</sup>TD, III, 57, Trig., p. 935.

<sup>29</sup>TD, VIII, 3, Trig., p. 819.

<sup>30</sup>TD, VIII, 5, 9, Trig., p. 819, Ep. XII, 21, Trig., p. 841.

transition to our discussion of anthropology since it pictures man in his insufficiency, contrasted with the all-sufficiency of God. The Epitome indicates that this doctrine is first properly treated after a full discussion of other pertinent doctrines.

Saint Paul . . . in the Epistle to the Romans . . . first directs men to repentance, to knowledge of sins, to faith in Christ, to divine obedience, before he speaks of the mystery of the eternal election of God.<sup>31</sup>

First of all a distinction is made between the foreknowledge of God and His eternal election of grace. "The foreknowledge of God is nothing else than that God knows all things before they happen."<sup>32</sup>

This foreknowledge is not the cause of evil, neither of sin, but it only regulates it, and fixes a limit to it, how long it should last, and all this to the end that it should serve His elect for their salvation.<sup>33</sup>

The eternal election of God, however, vel praedestinatio (or predestination), that is, God's ordination to salvation, does not extend at once over the godly and the wicked, but only over the children of God, who were elected and ordained to eternal life before the foundation of the earth was laid.<sup>34</sup>

God's election is the cause of salvation.

The eternal election of God, however, not only foresees and foreknows the salvation of the elect, but is also

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<sup>31</sup>Ep, XI, 11, Trig., p. 835.

<sup>32</sup>Ep, XI, 3, Trig., p. 833.

<sup>33</sup>Ep, XI, 4, Trig., p. 833; TD, XI, 7, Trig., p. 1005.

<sup>34</sup>TD, XI, 5, Trig., p. 1065.



from the gracious will and pleasure of God in Christ Jesus, a cause which procures, works, helps, and promotes our salvation and what pertains thereto.<sup>35</sup>

The Epitome speaks of God's grace and the promise of the Gospel as being universal. Among negative propositions which it rejects are mentioned that

God is unwilling that all men repent and believe the Gospel.

That when God calls us to Himself, He is not in earnest that all men should come to Him.

That God is unwilling that every one should be saved.

That . . . also in us there is a cause of God's election, on account of which God has elected us to everlasting life.<sup>36</sup>

The Scriptures teach this doctrine of election with no other purpose than through it to direct us to the Word.

The Scriptures teach this doctrine (of God's eternal election) in no other way than to direct us thereby to the (revealed) Word, exhort to repentance, urge to godliness, strengthen faith and assure us of our salvation.<sup>37</sup>

It is God's Holy Spirit who gives an inner testimony to the elect.

Thus the Spirit of God gives to the elect the testimony that they are children of God, and when they do not know for what they should pray as they ought, He intercedes for them with groanings that cannot be uttered.<sup>38</sup>

The doctrine of election is nothing but pure Gospel and

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<sup>35</sup>TD, XI, 8, Trig., p. 1065.

<sup>36</sup>Ep, XI, 17-20, Trig., p. 837; TD, XI, 28, Trig., p. 1071.

<sup>37</sup>TD, XI, 12, Trig., p. 1067; TD, XI, 31, Trig., p. 1073.

<sup>38</sup>TD, XI, 31, Trig., p. 1073.

pure comfort and consolation.

Paul in a very consolatory way treats this, . . . that God in His purpose has ordained before the time of the world by whatever crosses and sufferings He would conform every one of His elect to the image of His Son, and that to every one His [sic] cross shall and must work together for good.<sup>39</sup>

We on our part should not pry into God's mysteries.<sup>40</sup>

Our curiosity is perverse.<sup>41</sup> Things which we cannot har-

monize have the tendency to challenge us. Election is only

election in Christ.<sup>42</sup> Believers are to look to Him.<sup>43</sup> The

doctrine of election should not lead to quietism, but rather

spur us on in good works.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>TD, XI, 46-49, Trig., p. 1079.

<sup>40</sup>TD, XI, 52, Trig., p. 1081.

<sup>41</sup>TD, XI, 53, Trig., p. 1081.

<sup>42</sup>TD, XI, 65, Trig., p. 1083.

<sup>43</sup>TD, XI, 70, Trig., p. 1085.

<sup>44</sup>TD, XI, 73, Trig., p. 1087.

## CHAPTER VII

### ANTHROPOLOGY

#### Man the Creature in the Image of God

The anthropology of any philosophy of education, whether it be Lutheran or otherwise, is basic to that entire philosophy.<sup>1</sup> It will determine the soundness or the lack of realism of the entire system. Is man's nature essentially animal? Do his powers lie largely in the area of social and biological adaptation? Is his reason for existence unknowable or (should he advance one) a form of self-delusion (Some exponents of modern existentialism declare that the only meaning that existence has is that which we superimpose on it.)?

Of course, the Christian or Lutheran anthropology is a part of a fabric. It does not exist in isolation. Man can only be fully known in God, in Christ, in the Scriptures.<sup>2</sup> Man can only fully or even adequately be known by such an

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<sup>1</sup>Clifton Fadiman, "Today's Lost Generation," Saturday Review, September 12, 1959, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>Apology of the Augsburg Confession, II (I), 12-13, Triglott Concordia (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 109. Hereafter Triglott will be abbreviated Trig. and the Apology abbreviation will be Ap. The Roman numerals refer to the articles and the Arabic numerals to the text divisions according to those employed in the Triglott. Jaroslav Pelikan, "The Doctrine of Creation in Lutheran Confessional Theology," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVI (August, 1955), p. 573.

individual who has been known of God, i.e., one who has been converted, brought into living fellowship with Christ through a genuine faith. Man's self-understanding--apart from revelation--does not provide him with a true understanding of his nature and his relationship to God.<sup>3</sup> True knowledge of self only results where there is true knowledge of God. There is no substitute, neither the scientific or any philosophical, for the Christian understanding of man. The basic presupposition of Christian anthropology is that man is a creature created in the image of God. It is the latter that makes man distinctive. This sets him apart from the animal world. Man was created righteous and holy and since sin and evil were no impediment, he knew God, and since he lived in intimate fellowship with God, he was perfectly happy.

### The Fall

What was it that disrupted this harmony? It was the fall of Adam. Our Confessions conceive of the fall as history, as a "real," not merely a "true" story. Only when we take the story of the Fall to be historical reality, do we do justice to the pronouncements of the Lutheran Confessions on anthropology and original sin. If this is not "real," then Adam is merely "the Biblical symbol of a broken humanity."<sup>4</sup> But even after the Fall man continues to be a

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<sup>3</sup>Smalcald Articles, Part III, Article I, 3, Trig., p. 477.

<sup>4</sup>Smalcald Articles, Part III, Article I, 4, Trig., p. 477.



creature and a work of God.<sup>5</sup> The essential worth of the human nature is revealed in the incarnation of Christ. God did not think it below His dignity to assume our humanity.<sup>6</sup> Even in His exaltation Christ did not lay aside His human nature.<sup>7</sup> This is implicit also in the observation of the Epitome, which distinguishes between man's nature and original sin.<sup>8</sup> "This distinction is as great as the distinction between a work of God and a work of the devil."<sup>9</sup> God is not the creator of sin as Satan is not the creator of this our nature, of our body and soul. In fact, the Apostles' Creed already in its third article opposes the Gnostic idea that the physical body is inherently evil,<sup>10</sup> when it testifies to its conviction in the "resurrection of the body."

#### Original Sin

Article II, "Of Augustana," describes man in his fallen state, both as to negative and positive characteristics. Man after the fall is without the fear of God, without

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<sup>5</sup>Pelikan, op. cit., p. 574.

<sup>6</sup>Augsburg Confession, III, 1, Trig., p. 45. Hereafter the Augsburg Confession will be abbreviated AC.

<sup>7</sup>Thorough Declaration of the Formula of Concord, VIII, 25, Trig., p. 1023. Hereafter Thorough Declaration abbreviated TD.

<sup>8</sup>Epitome of the Formula of Concord, I, 2-10, Trig., pp. 779-81. Hereafter Epitome abbreviated Ep.

<sup>9</sup>Ep, I, 2, Trig., p. 779.

<sup>10</sup>AC, XXVII, 1-61, Trig., pp. 75-83.

trust in God. Positively he is described as with lust or concupiscence.<sup>11</sup> These are powerful statements picturing the demonic forces in man, which have been "rediscovered" in more recent times by Freud and depth psychology. The entire discussion of man's freedom of will is expressly limited by the Confessions to his condition after the fall and before regeneration or conversion. It is then a study of human nature not as originally created, nor as reborn by the Holy Spirit, but as born into the world by nature.

In stating the doctrine of original sin the Confessions had to follow a perilous course. On the one hand, following Saint Augustine they rejected the Pelagians, who declared that man is not corrupt, that man can save himself.<sup>12</sup> The Pelagians, of course, had directed their teachings against the Gnostics and Stoics, who said that man is forced to sin, that man cannot help himself.<sup>13</sup> This the Confessions could not accept because it is Fatalism. Man is not forced to sin, but he sins freely and willingly because his nature is corrupt and depraved. Comparing the Lutheran description of original sin with the descriptions of their contemporaries, their definition differs from that of both the Romanists and the Zwinglians. They look upon it not as mere guilt or servitude, but an innate evil.<sup>14</sup> The Romanists, on the

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<sup>11</sup>AC, II, 1-2, Trig., p. 43.

<sup>12</sup>AC, II, 3, Trig., p. 45.

<sup>13</sup>AC, XVIII, 8-9, Trig., p. 53.

<sup>14</sup>Ap II (I), 5-11, Trig., p. 107.

other hand, judged original sin from the light of reason, while the Lutherans declared that it is to be judged from the Word of God alone.

The Confessions further describe the characteristics of the heart of natural man by declaring: "The human heart without the Holy Ghost either in security despises God's judgment, or in punishment flees from, and hates, God when He judges."<sup>15</sup> The Epitome declares that in spiritual matters "the understanding and reason of man are blind, and by their own powers understand nothing. . . . The unregenerate will of man . . . has become an enemy of God."<sup>16</sup>

#### Actual Sin

The Thorough Declaration relates original sin to actual sin. "Original sin . . . is a horrible, deep, inexpressible corruption of the nature of man. . . . Because of this corruption and inborn sin . . . all actual sins flow from the heart."<sup>17</sup> It repudiates the idea that God creates sin. "God does not create and make sin in us, but with the nature which God at the present day still creates and makes in men original sin is propagated from sinful seed."<sup>18</sup> In this

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<sup>15</sup>Ap, IV (II), 35, Trig., pp. 129-31.

<sup>16</sup>Ep, II, 2-3, Trig., p. 787.

<sup>17</sup>TD, I, 2, Trig., p. 859.

<sup>18</sup>TD, I, 7, Trig., p. 861.

connection the Thorough Declaration rejects the Manichaean doctrine that "human nature is in the beginning created pure and good, and that afterwards original sin from without is infused and mingled with the nature by Satan."<sup>19</sup>

### Original Sin and Determinism

There has been some discussion as to the role Determinism plays with relation to original sin. O. T. Walle in an article "Toward an Evangelical Philosophy of Science" quotes D. R. G. Owens to the effect that

Determinism is actually one aspect of the Biblical doctrine of sin, namely, that man is not free but in bondage to sin, to a self-centeredness which pervades every aspect of his being and thinking and which could be and was removed only by Christ's sacrifice of self.<sup>20</sup>

This mechanistic determinism is hardly the view of the Confessions and, we believe, of Scripture. The opening sentence Article XVIII, "Of Augustana," indicates that its denial of free will is not absolute. "Man's will has some liberty to choose civil righteousness."<sup>21</sup> The Thorough Declaration also declares that the will of man is free in mundane matters. "For in other respects, as regards natural, external things which are subject to reason, man still has to a

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<sup>19</sup>TD, I, 26, Trig., p. 867.

<sup>20</sup>O. T. Walle, "Toward an Evangelical Philosophy of Science," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXX (November, 1959), p. 819.

<sup>21</sup>AC, XVIII, 1, Trig., pp. 51-53.



certain degree understanding, power, and ability."<sup>22</sup> The Epitome also rejects fatalism and an absolute determinism. It lists as false doctrine that "Everything that happens must so happen and that everything man does he does by compulsion and that he is coerced to evil works and deeds."<sup>23</sup> Two concluding observations on the doctrine of original sin. The doctrine of man's inability is not to lead to idleness. The Thorough Declaration states:

These prayers and passages concerning our ignorance and inability have been written for us, not for the purpose of rendering us idle and remiss in reading, hearing, and meditating upon God's Word, but first, that we should thank God from the heart that by His Son He has delivered us from the darkness of ignorance and the captivity of sin and death.<sup>24</sup>

On the other hand, the doctrine of man's inability is not to lead the individual into despair. Even in the discussion on original sin an optimistic note is sounded.

No one but God alone can separate from one another the nature and this corruption of the nature, which will fully come to pass through death, in the (blessed) resurrection, where our nature which we now bear will rise and live eternally without original sin and separated and sundered from it.<sup>25</sup>

### Anthropology and Conversion

The teaching of the Confessions on conversion or

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<sup>22</sup>TD, I, 12, Trig., p. 863.

<sup>23</sup>Ep, II, 8, Trig., p. 789.

<sup>24</sup>TD, II, 15, Trig., p. 887.

<sup>25</sup>TD, I, 10, Trig., p. 781; TD, II, 14, Trig., p. 885.

regeneration also throw light on the Lutheran doctrine of man. The Thorough Declaration explains how long man persists in his resistance to the Spirit's work of conversion in him. "Man with his will so long resists God the Lord, until he is (has been) converted."<sup>26</sup> "For he resists the Word and will God, until God awakens him from the death of sin, enlightens and renews him."<sup>27</sup> Conversion, however, is not coercion. "God does not force man to become godly."<sup>28</sup> After conversion man has a "freed will." "But when man has been converted, and is thus enlightened, and his will is renewed, it is then that man wills what is good . . . and henceforth does good spontaneously."<sup>29</sup> A little further on in the same article it is stated "All who have been baptized have put on Christ and thus are truly regenerate, they now have arbitrium liberatum (a liberated will)."<sup>30</sup>

The Epitome makes the observation that there are two efficient causes in conversion--the Holy Ghost and the Word of God.<sup>31</sup> This may strike modern Lutheran dogmaticians as not being entirely accurate terminology. Perhaps it would

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<sup>26</sup>TD, II, 59, Trig., p. 905.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>TD, II, 60, Trig., p. 905.

<sup>29</sup>TD, II, 64, Trig., p. 905.

<sup>30</sup>TD, II, 67, Trig., p. 907.

<sup>31</sup>Ep, III, 19, Trig., p. 791.

be more accurate to say that the Holy Ghost is the cause and the Word of God the instrument, means, channel through which the Holy Spirit operates. Even in this area, however, man has some freedom. Man has at least the capacitas locomotive.<sup>32</sup> Article II. of the Thorough Declaration declares "For in these external things, as said above, man even since the Fall has to a certain extent a free will, so that he can go to church and hear or not hear a sermon."<sup>33</sup> Robert D. Preus in an article with the title "The Significance of Luther's Term Pure Passive as Quoted in Article II of the Formula of Concord" states the problem very definitively with which we are confronted in the Lutheran teaching on conversion:

The Lutheran Doctrine of conversion, standing as it does between Calvinism and synergism, is always a difficult position to maintain and defend; for it is built on a paradox, a paradox of exclusive divine action and complete human participation. Faith is at the same time passive and active; passive in that man, blind and dead spiritually, in coming to faith only suffers God to work this change in his heart, active in that man himself believes and is in no way coerced in this nor divested of any of his faculties.<sup>34</sup>

The Thorough Declaration indicates specifically what it is that is converted. "But the intellect and will of the unregenerate man are nothing else than the subiectum con-

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<sup>32</sup>TD, II, 24, Trig., p. 891. Cf. Latin text, p. 890.

<sup>33</sup>TD, II, 53, Trig., p. 903.

<sup>34</sup>Robert D. Preus, "The Significance of Luther's Term Pure Passive as Quoted in Article II of the Formula of Concord," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXIX (August, 1958), 561-70.



vertendum, that is, that which is to be converted."<sup>35</sup> While the individual has a freed will after conversion, as has already been indicated above, he never reaches a state of perfection. Luther commenting on the Ninth and Tenth Commandments in the Large Catechism indicates that the Christian never reaches the goal of perfection in the sanctification life. "For He," i.e., God, "would have the heart pure, although we shall never attain to that as long as we live here."<sup>36</sup> The Epitome also rejects the idea that "man, after he has been born again, can perfectly observe and completely fulfill God's law."<sup>37</sup> The Epitome also rejects an error related to the idea of perfectionism and that is that "in conversion and regeneration God entirely exterminates the substance and essence of the old Adam."<sup>38</sup>

A corollary of the survival and persistence of the sinful nature after baptism and conversion<sup>39</sup> is the unique Lutheran emphasis that the fact of conversion is not established ex sensu. The individual is instead directed to the objective promises of the Word. "For concerning the presence, operation, and gifts of the Holy Ghost we should not

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<sup>35</sup>TD, II, 90, Trig., p. 915.

<sup>36</sup>Large Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther, 310, Trig., p. 669.

<sup>37</sup>Ep, II, 12, Trig., p. 789.

<sup>38</sup>Ep, II, 14, Trig., p. 789.

<sup>39</sup>TD, VI, 7, Trig., p. 965.



and cannot always judge ex sensu (from feeling), as to how and when they are experienced in the heart."<sup>40</sup> This profound Lutheran insight is designed to comfort the sinner uncertain of his faith and salvation and has tremendous implications for the problem of epistemology in a Lutheran philosophy of education.

The Thorough Declaration, as a final note, also rejected the errors of synergism and enthusiasm. Synergism could be defined as saying that man "still has so much of natural powers left before regeneration as to be able to prepare himself to a certain extent for grace." The enthusiasts were those who declared that "God converts men . . . without any created means and instrument."<sup>41</sup> The Christian view of man is not then to be understood as man's own answer to his existence. It is rather God's answer and it can only be understood against the background of and in relation to God's redemptive acts in history. The Christian view of man should help us to avoid a naive optimism which skirts the radical nature of evil. On the other hand, it should help avoid an undue pessimism since man can be converted and God desires nothing less than this for each individual. We can afford to take a realistic look at ourselves, because God is reliable.

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<sup>40</sup>TD, II, 56, Trig., p. 903.

<sup>41</sup>TD, II, 3-4, Trig., p. 883.

## CHAPTER VIII

### A PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

The philosophy of history is a significant element in a Lutheran philosophy of education. Writers in the field of the history of history and the philosophy of history have sometimes disparaged the early Lutheran philosophy of history. Sometimes this was due to an anti-supernaturalistic bias. Such writers have declared that the Lutheran Reformation viewed secular history as a struggle between God and Satan. God was looked upon as the prime mover in history. World events were explained as the result of divine and not human action. History, in short, is the record of the divine will.<sup>1</sup> H. E. Barnes in A History of Historical Writing declares that Luther valued history as a divine lesson, but only as a divine lesson. Melancthon set himself to trace in it the hand of God. Popes were considered responsible for the disasters of the Middle Ages. Miracles were considered genuine if they bolstered the Protestant cause. The secession of the Protestant princes from the Church was regarded as legal.<sup>2</sup> The Lutheran Confessions do not enter

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<sup>1</sup>James Westfall Thompson, A History of Historical Writing (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1942), I, 523.

<sup>2</sup>Harry Elmer Barnes, A History of Historical Writing (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1938), p. 121.

into most of these areas. They have very little, if anything, to say on canons of historical criticism. Since the Confessions attained the status of a norm, though a norm derived from the Holy Scriptures, what they have to say on the philosophy of history may be considered somewhat definitive for Lutheran thought in this area.

### Providence and the Present

First of all, the Confessions recognized God's providence as operative in the present. In his "Exposition to the Appendix to the First Commandment" Luther speaks of God's judgments as operative especially upon those who do not trust in Him.

Therefore, although, proud, powerful, and rich worldlings (Sardanapauluses and Phalarides, who surpass even the Persians in wealth) are now to be found, who boast defiantly of their Mammon, with utter disregard whether God is angry at or smiles on them, and dare to withstand His wrath, yet they shall not succeed, but before they are aware, they shall be wrecked, with all in which they trusted; as all others have perished who have thought themselves more secure or powerful.<sup>3</sup>

Later on in his discussion of the Fourth Commandment Luther illustrates how God works providentially in human affairs and thus punishes transgressions against this commandment.

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<sup>3</sup>Large Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther, 35, Triglote Concordia (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 589. Hereafter Triglote will be abbreviated Trig. and the Large Catechism LC. The Roman numerals refer to the articles and the Arabic numerals to the text divisions according to those employed in the Triglote.



Therefore God punishes one knave by another, so that, when you defraud and despise your master, another comes and deals in like manner with you, yea, in your household you must suffer ten times more from wife, children, or servants.<sup>4</sup>

God is also presented as blessing the government and protecting especially His own children against their enemies. Under the Fourth Petition of the Lord's Prayer as discussed in the Large Catechism Luther expresses a desire framed in the words of a petition.

Likewise, that He give to emperors, kings, and all other estates, and especially to the rulers of our country and to all counselors, magistrates, and officers, wisdom, strength, and success that they may govern well and vanquish the Turks and all enemies.<sup>5</sup>

#### The Outlook for the Future

Perhaps the Lutheran philosophy of history is even more clearly revealed in the outlook toward the future. The Preface to the Christian Book of Concord speaks of "the awful judgment of the Lord" and "the tribunal of Christ" indicating both the terminus of history and the Judge of all humanity. Those who have persecuted the godly because of their faith "will then certainly render a most strict account, and suffer fearful punishment."<sup>6</sup> The view of the Confessions is not that the universe is morally neutral,

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<sup>4</sup>LC, 154, Trig., p. 625.

<sup>5</sup>LC, 77, Trig., p. 721.

<sup>6</sup>Trig., p. 21.



but rather that Christ is sovereign over all and that He will demand a strict account from all as to what they have done with their lives.

Article XVII, "Of Augustana," still further defines the Lutheran philosophy of history. At the consummation of the world Christ will appear for judgment. The criterion of judgment will be faith in Him. The universalism of the Anabaptists who deny the eternity of punishment is rejected. The theories of Millennialists which made the final victory of Christ some sort of temporal rule were also rejected.<sup>7</sup>

The point of view of the Confessions is that this judgment is imminent. The Preface of the Christian Book of Concord speaks of the time of its composition as "these last times" and "this old age of the world."<sup>8</sup> The Apology also speaks of the time of its presentation as "these last times." It also declares that "Nature is growing old and is gradually becoming weaker, and vices are increasing."<sup>9</sup> The implication of these statements is that history is not an endless series of meaningless cycles.<sup>10</sup> History has a goal, a purpose, a termination.

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<sup>7</sup>Augsburg Confession, XVIII, 1-5, Trig., p. 51. Hereafter the Augsburg Confession will be abbreviated AC.

<sup>8</sup>Trig., p. 7.

<sup>9</sup>Apology of the Augsburg Confession, XXIII (XI), 53-54, Trig., p. 379. Hereafter the Apology will be abbreviated Ap.

<sup>10</sup>L. J. Spitz, Jr., "John Lorenz Mosheim's Philosophy of History," Concordia Theological Monthly, XX (May, 1949), 326.

The Apostles' Creed already presents "the life everlasting" as the consummation of all of God's promises and of mankind's hopes.<sup>11</sup> When the Nicene Creed speaks of Christ's coming again with glory it represents the enthusiastic faith of the Church in the second advent. This sense of triumph continues in the words of this same symbol "Whose kingdom shall have no end." This phrase expresses conviction in the final victory of the faith. It indicates the optimism inherent in the Christian interpretation of history. D. R. R. Owens speaks of the

concept of optimism in the Christian belief in the divine purposefulness of historical events eventually leading to a fulfillment of the creative and redemptive acts in the establishment of the eternal kingdom of God.<sup>12</sup>

This optimistic outlook involves God's children, however, in serious responsibilities. The followers of Christ have a duty and a responsibility to attack false doctrine. They are not to be passive and quiescent, but aggressive against, the dissemination of false doctrine. This is a duty to themselves and to posterity.<sup>13</sup> This involves viewing humanity as an organic whole, transcending the limitations

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<sup>11</sup>Willard Dow Allbeck, Studies in the Lutheran Confessions (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1952), p. 29.

<sup>12</sup>O. T. Walle, "Toward an Evangelical Philosophy of Science," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXX (November, 1959), 186-87.

<sup>13</sup>Trig., p. 9.

of time and space. One way to implement our responsibility toward posterity is through the proper education of men for the ministry. This is one way to insure purity of doctrine in anticipation of the second advent of Christ. This program is urged in the Preface to the Christian Book of Concord.

We most earnestly exhort that especially the young men who are being educated for the holy ministry of the churches and schools be instructed in this faithfully and diligently, in order that the pure doctrine and profession of our faith may, by the help of the Holy Ghost, be preserved and propagated also to our posterity, until the glorious advent of Jesus Christ, our only Redeemer and Savior.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Trig., p. 21.

According to His assumed human nature and with the same He (Christ) can be, and also is, present where He will, and especially that in His Church and congregation on earth He is present as Mediator, Head, King, and High Priest, not in part, or one-half of Him only, but the entire person of Christ is present, so which both natures belong, the divine and the human.<sup>1</sup>

Christ's presence in the Church is distinctive because it especially involves His role as Mediator and High Priest.

As the judgment is the harbinger of history, so it also represents the goal of the Church. The same Christ who is sovereign over the world is also sovereign over His Church.

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<sup>1</sup>Thorough Declaration of the Formula of Concord, VIII, 75. *Trinität Concordia* (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1924), p. 143. Hereafter *Trinität* will be abbreviated *Trig.* and the Thorough Declaration, *TD*. The Roman numerals refer to the articles and the Arabic numbers to the text divisions according to those employed in the *Trinität*.

## CHAPTER IX

### A PHILOSOPHY OF CHURCH HISTORY

Intimately related to the Lutheran philosophy of history is the Lutheran philosophy of church history. In a certain sense, church history is a part of the whole, a part of world history. Since God's providence was operative in the world in general, it follows that it must at the same time be operative in the Church. The Thorough Declaration speaks not only of Christ's presence in the world, but also His being present in the Church at the same time with a certain plus.

According to His assumed human nature and with the same He (Christ) can be, and also is, present where He will, and especially that in His Church and congregation on earth He is present as Mediator, Head, King, and High Priest, not in part, or one-half of Him only, but the entire person of Christ is present, to which both natures belong, the divine and the human.<sup>1</sup>

Christ's presence in the Church is distinctive because it especially involves His role as Mediator and High Priest.

As the judgment is the terminus of history, so it also represents the goal of the Church. The same Christ who is sovereign over the world is also sovereign over His Church.

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<sup>1</sup>Thorough Declaration of the Formula of Concord, VIII, 78, Triglote Concordia (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 1043. Hereafter Triglot will be abbreviated Trig. and the Thorough Declaration, TD. The Roman numerals refer to the articles and the Arabic numbers to the text divisions according to those employed in the Triglote.



The lordship of Christ implicit in His sitting at the right hand of the Father, stated already in the Apostles' and Nicene Creed, is at the same time dominant in the kingdom of grace as well as His kingdom of power. The responsibility to attack error and confess the truth is a responsibility toward posterity in general, in the world as well as in the Church.<sup>2</sup> Church councils in this connection were not something that the Lutherans needed and yet were very desirable because they afforded an opportunity to confess the truth. The same optimistic outlook which a Lutheran would regard as an essential element of his philosophy of history would also be an integral part of his philosophy of church history, for it is in the Church especially where God's purposes are operative and find fulfillment.

#### Proper Definition of the Church Vital

Pelikan has pointed out in an essay "Church and Church History in the Confessions" that an inadequate and erroneous interpretation of the nature of the Church issues a fallacious method for the study of its history.<sup>2a</sup> It is here especially evident how the Confessions managed to avoid the Scylla of Roman institutionalism and the Charybdis of Anabaptist spiritualism. Melancthon in the Apology rejects

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<sup>2</sup>Trig., p. 9. Smalcald Articles, 3, Trig., p. 455. Hereafter the Smalcald Articles will be abbreviated SA.

<sup>2a</sup>Jaroslav Pelikan, "Church and Church History in the Confessions," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXII (May, 1951), 305.

the overemphasis on the external and temporal aspects of the Church.

If we will define the Church only as an outward polity of the good and wicked, men will not understand that the kingdom of Christ is righteousness of heart and the gift of the Holy Ghost (that the kingdom of Christ is spiritual, as nevertheless it is; that therein Christ inwardly rules, strengthens, and comforts hearts, and imparts the Holy Ghost and various spiritual gifts). . . .<sup>3</sup>

The Augsburg Confession defines the Church as "the congregation of saints."<sup>4</sup> The German text of the Augsburg Confession declares that it is "die Versammlung aller Gläubigen." The Church is not some Platonic idea, above space, time, and history. Yet it is also not the organization under the papal hierarchy and those who are caught in the net of the pope, but those who cling to Christ, those who are justified before God through the righteousness of faith, the saints. The Church is recognized by distinguishable marks "where the Gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments are rightly administered." The German text here declares of the believers in the Church that they are those "bei welchen das Evangelium rein gepredigt und die heiligen Sakramente laut des Evangelii gereicht werden." The evidences of the existence of the Church become clearer and stronger in proportion as the preaching of the Word and the

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<sup>3</sup>Apology of the Augsburg Confession, VII-VII, 13 Trig., p. 231. Hereafter the Apology will be abbreviated Ap.

<sup>4</sup>Augsburg Confession, VII, 1-2, Trig., p. 47. Hereafter the Augsburg Confession will be abbreviated AC.

administration of the sacraments conform to the Gospel.

### Versus a Spurious Spiritualism

The Confessions resisted the spurious spiritualism of the Anabaptists by declaring that the means of grace are valid even with the presence of hypocrites in the Church,<sup>5</sup> and though administered by evil men.<sup>6</sup> With this same intent they also defended the custom of infant baptism.<sup>7</sup> For this reason the Confessions also declare that the true Church may be there where no public excommunication is observed.<sup>8</sup> This was only another variation of Anabaptist demand for an absolute purity. The Confessions were willing to identify any group where the Gospel was preached and the sacraments rightly administered as the Church, even though many irregularities would cast doubt on their genuine relationship to Christ. If the Church were a Platonic Republic above space and time and therefore above history, then it would bear no relationship to Christendom. Then there could be no church history.

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<sup>5</sup>Epitome of the Formula of Concord, XII, 9, Trig., p. 839. Hereafter the Epitome will be abbreviated Ep.

<sup>6</sup>TD, XIII, 35, Trig., p. 1101. TD, VII, 24, Trig., pp. 979-81. AC, VIII, 2-3, Trig., p. 471.

<sup>7</sup>Ep, XII, 6, Trig., p. 839.

<sup>8</sup>Ep, XII, 26, Trig., p. 843. TD, XII, 34, Trig., p. 1101.



### Not Identical with Organizationalism

On the other hand, the Church was not the same as organizational Christendom. Luther in his polemics against the Romanists goes so far as to declare that the Church was no church under the papacy because of what it lacked in emphasis on faith, on Christ as Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit as Sanctifier. "Therefore, it is not a Christian Church either."<sup>9</sup> This does not imply the Anabaptist extreme of absolute purity. The Church could err and still be the Church. The Church could be deceived and still remain the Church. The Confessions recognized that "there is a great diversity among the Fathers. They were men, and could err and be deceived." And yet they also were regarded at least tacitly, if not expressly, as children of God, the Church.<sup>10</sup>

### The Unity of the Church

The Confessions as well as the ecumenical creeds emphasize the unity of the Church. This is an important ingredient in a Lutheran philosophy of church history when dealing with modern denominationalism as well as with the schisms and heresies in the Church's past. Against Rome which looked upon her own alleged ceremonial uniformity as the evidence

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<sup>9</sup> Large Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther, II, 45, Trig., p. 689.

<sup>10</sup> Ap, XXIV (XII), 95, Trig., p. 417.



of the unity of the Church the Confessions declare that ceremonies do not constitute its real, true unity. The Apology declares:

For this we say that similarity of human rites, whether universal or particular, is not necessary, because the righteousness of faith is not a righteousness bound to certain traditions (outward ceremonies of human ordinances) as the righteousness of the Law was bound to the Mosaic ceremonies, because this righteousness of the heart is a righteousness that quickens the heart.<sup>11</sup>

The true unity of the Church, however, is related to its apostolic origin. "The Church . . . looks backward in history and sees the continuity through the years of the faith taught by Christ to His disciples."<sup>12</sup>

A Lutheran philosophy of church history then would when applied avoid the extremes of separatism and unionism. With all the imperfections in the Church's doctrines and in her life it still could find the Church in history, rallying about Word and Sacrament. A Lutheran philosophy of church history would lead the individual to escape the debilitating effect of indifferentism on the one hand and the lovelessness of fanaticism on the other.

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<sup>11</sup>Ap, VII-VIII, 31, Trig., p. 237; AC, VII, 4, Trig., p. 47.

<sup>12</sup>Willard Dow Allbeck, Studies in the Lutheran Confessions (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1952), p. 39.

## CHAPTER X

### THE GOALS OF LUTHERAN EDUCATION

#### Salvation and Sanctification

The goals of Lutheran education would grow largely out of its entire philosophy. In our section on metaphysics we already indicated above that the primary interests of the Confessions are soteriological and ethical--God's confronting man with His grace and man's response in the ethical life, which includes also the ethics according to the first table of the law (a Lutheran emphasis). Contrasting the church life of the Romanists with the Lutherans Melanchthon indicates that clear doctrine and a godly life are the most significant in the life of the Church. "And the true adornment of the churches is godly, useful, and clear doctrine, the devout use of the Sacraments, ardent prayer, and the like."<sup>1</sup> This, it seems, would also summarize the Lutheran conception of the goals of education and would harmonize with its overall stress on soteriology and ethics. The Confessions also define the relationship between the two primary emphases of salvation and ethics. They stress the

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<sup>1</sup>Apology of the Augsburg Confession, XXIV (XII), 51, Triglott Concordia (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 401. Hereafter Triglott will be abbreviated Trig. and the Apology will be abbreviated Ap. The Roman numerals refer to the articles and the Arabic numbers to the text divisions according to those employed in the Trig.

dominance of the sacramental over the sacrificial or ethical in the Christian's daily life.<sup>2</sup> This is true in a narrower sense in the right use of the Lord's Supper, in the wider sense of Christian worship, and in the widest sense the entire Christian life, which in all its phases is conceived of as worship.

### Removing Ignorance

On the lowest level, one of the goals of Lutheran education is the removal of ignorance. In the discussion on the Lord's Supper the Lutherans have avoided using the term "sacrifice" because of its ambiguity. The Lutheran purpose was not to bank on ignorance and confuse the issues in theological discussions. It was rather to shed light wherever they might and present their convictions in a perspicuous style. To this end they were ready to accommodate themselves to people of limited attainments. In his discussion on Article XXIV, "Of the Mass," in the Augsburg Confession Melancthon indicates the Lutheran pedagogical interest in this direction. He declares that the Lutherans have not discarded the mass. Instead they have retained it and with it the usual ceremonies, except that hymns in German are inserted for the edification of the uneducated. The unlearned are

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<sup>2</sup>Augsburg Confession, XIII, 1-2, Trig., p. 49. Hereafter Augsburg Confession will be abbreviated AC.

thus to be taught what they need to know of Christ.<sup>3</sup>

We have indicated above the Lutheran interest in purity of doctrine. For that reason especially the Lutherans were concerned about the adequate training and education of ministers. The Reformation principle was that Scripture alone was to be the norm for doctrine and thus also by implication the standard for orientation in a Lutheran philosophy of education. The goal of education is through pure doctrine in which Scripture is the norm to work and create in the individual the justifying faith which is "bound to bring forth good works."<sup>4</sup> The Christian life, as the goal of education, is to be one of continual repentance.<sup>5</sup> One of the characteristics of a justifying faith is that it mortifies concupiscence. The purpose then of Lutheran education is that it bring the individual into a living relationship with his Lord through justifying faith. Where this is accomplished, the Holy Spirit working through the means of grace and employing the agencies of education, will also produce the mortification of concupiscence and the generation of a new life of sanctification.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>AC, XXIV, 1-3, Trig., p. 65.

<sup>4</sup>AC, VI, 1-2, Trig., p. 45.

<sup>5</sup>AC, XII, 1-10, Trig., p. 49.

<sup>6</sup>AC, IV (II), 45-46, Trig., p. 133.



## The Goals of Education and Baptism

The goal of Lutheran education might also be related to the Sacrament of Baptism. Article IX, "Of Augustana," states that it is necessary for salvation. The aim of Lutheran education then for any unbaptized in its midst would be a conscious preparation for this sacrament. Since it is necessary for eternal life, another objective would be to explore its importance for the daily life of the Christian, for one who has already been brought into a vital fellowship with Christ through baptism.<sup>7</sup>

The Lutherans were also anxious to describe the quality of the ethical life which is the result of a living fellowship with Christ in terms of the thankoffering of a grateful heart. The Lutherans emphatically rejected the semi-pelagianism of Rome and ascribed all merit that we have before God as due to Christ.<sup>8</sup> The work righteousness of Rome would involve the motivation of fear and pride, fear of punishment or pride in one's achievements, while the righteousness of grace provides gratitude as the motivating power in the life of God's children. Genuine service to God arises spontaneously, is rendered freely, voluntarily. It is not the servile performance, perfunctorily rendered, of a slave, but the free

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<sup>7</sup>The necessity of baptism is not absolute. As Augustine already observed, it is not the lack of it, but the contempt for it that damns.

<sup>8</sup>Ap, IV (II), 17-20, Trig., p. 125.

thankful outpouring of a heart filled with gratitude, the joyful service of a son. The achievement of the goals of Lutheran education faith and life is presented in the Confessions as a result of the preaching of the Gospel.

Melanchthon declares in the Apology:

The preaching of the Gospel produces faith in those who receive the Gospel. They call upon God, they give thanks to God, they bear afflictions for their confession, they produce good works for the glory of Christ.<sup>9</sup>

The highest goal of Lutheran education is referred to in this last phrase. It is the "extension of God's name and glory."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Ap, XXIV (XII), 32, Trig., p. 395.

<sup>10</sup>Trig., p. 23.

Lutheran Confession, VII, 4, Original German (1901), p. 40; Concordia Publishing House, 1901, p. 40. Hereafter the Original will be abbreviated Trig. and the Lutheran Confession will be abbreviated L.C. The terms Original and Trig. refer to the articles and the books referred to in the last divisions according to those employed in the Trig.

## CHAPTER XI

### EDUCATIONAL METHODS

The Confessions themselves have relatively little to say on the question of educational method. Yet some of their assumptions and discussions on the question of adiaphora are basically related in principle to the theory of Lutheran educational method. Article VII, "Of Augustana," declares that there is liberty in rites and ceremonies of human origin.<sup>1</sup> If for "rites and ceremonies" we were to substitute "educational method" we would have a positive statement of the basic principle to be followed. Lutheran educators therefore may differ from each other in these areas without losing the unity of faith and spirit. This does not mean that a degree of uniformity also in such externals as educational methods is not desirable, but it certainly is not a prerequisite to unity. The Thorough Declaration rejects the converse of this basic principle in which "the ordinances of men in themselves are regarded as a service or part of the service of God" and in which "these ordinances are by coercion forced upon the congregation of

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<sup>1</sup>Augsburg Confession, VII, 4, Triglott Concordia (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 47. Hereafter the Triglott will be abbreviated Trig. and the Augsburg Confession will be abbreviated AC. The Roman numerals refer to the articles and the Arabic numbers to the text divisions according to those employed in the Trig.

God as necessary."<sup>2</sup>

### Liberty, Orderliness, Historicity, and Edification

Article XV (VIII) of the Apology has an even broader discussion of the issues involved in the question of adiaphora which also has its specific implications for Lutheran educational method. This article mentions four principles applicable to liturgical usage. We would use them as criteria in the choice of educational method. They are the principles of liberty, of orderliness for the people, of historicity, and of edification.<sup>3</sup> Allbeck declares in this connection:

The principles of liberty and historicity are noted for their values, but they are not accepted without limitations. If unrestricted, the one runs to fanaticism, the other to ceremonialism. But orderliness and edification need no reservations, and Melancthon wrote of them without qualification.<sup>4</sup>

Applying these principles to educational method, we might also declare that the principles of orderliness and edification can be followed without qualification or limitation. On the other hand, the unlimited application of the principles of liberty and historicity can lead to abuses and

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<sup>2</sup>Thorough Declaration of the Formula of Concord, X, 27, Trig., p. 1061. Hereafter the Thorough Declaration will be abbreviated TD.

<sup>3</sup>Willard Dow Allbeck, Studies in the Lutheran Confessions (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1952), pp. 170-71; Apology of the Augsburg Confession, XV (VIII), 1-52, Trig., pp. 315-29. Hereafter the Apology will be abbreviated Ap.

<sup>4</sup>Allbeck, op. cit., p. 171.



extremes. Liberty might be transformed into licence and chaos. Historicity might lead the educator to make a fetish of some methods merely because they are old. Administrators and supervisors could employ the canon of historicity to support educational tyranny. A judicial application of the canons of liberty and historicity in the field of method can be beneficial. Then both will coincide with and be in harmony with the goal of edification.

As already indicated, the exercise of liberty in the field of adiaphora and consequently in the sphere of educational method is not to be absolute. Liberty is to be exercised in love. The Apology indicates how this is to lead to consideration for the welfare of others, to flexibility, to tolerance.

And nevertheless we teach that in these matters the use of liberty is to be so controlled that the inexperienced may not be offended, and, on account of the abuse of liberty, may not become more hostile to the true doctrine of the Gospel, or that without a reasonable cause nothing in customary rites be changed, but that, in order to cherish harmony, such old customs be observed as can be observed without sin or without great inconvenience. And in this very assembly we have shown sufficiently that for love's sake we do not refuse to observe adiaphora with others, even though they should have some disadvantage; but we have judged that such public harmony as could be produced without offense to consciences ought to be preferred to all other advantages.<sup>5</sup>

While not as rigidly as in the field of ceremonies and rites the exercise of liberty in love is also to be a guiding principle in educational method.

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<sup>5</sup>Ap, XVI, 51-52, Trig., p. 329.

There is, as the Thorough Declaration points out, an abuse of the concept of adiaphora, which is not allowable.

When under the title and pretext of external adiaphora such things are proposed as are in principle contrary to God's Word (although painted another color), these are not to be regarded as adiaphora. . . . In like manner, too, such ceremonies should not be reckoned among the genuine free adiaphora, or matters of indifference, as make a show or feign the appearance, as though our religion and that of the Papists were not far apart.<sup>6</sup>

In modern times educational method itself may be practically identical between the Lutherans and Roman Catholics.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, there may be some phases of modern, progressive education in the field of methodology that may be inherently hostile to Lutheran educational goals and aims. Certainly the liberty inherent in the field of adiaphora cannot be invoked as an excuse for the failure to confess that which is distinctly Lutheran. There is to be no yielding in adiaphora to the pressures of the errorists.<sup>8</sup>

In the category of orderliness for the people Luther gives an excellent suggestion which can be applied in the general area of method. In his Preface to the Small Catechism he declares:

In the first place, let the preacher above all be careful to avoid many kinds or various texts and forms of

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<sup>6</sup>TD, X, 5, Trig., p. 1053.

<sup>7</sup>J. D. Redden and F. A. Ryan, A Catholic Philosophy of Education (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1949), pp. 3-96.

<sup>8</sup>TD, X, 13, Trig., p. 1057.

the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Sacraments, etc., but choose one form to which he adheres, and which he inculcates all the time, year after year.<sup>9</sup>

In the light of this advice perhaps every English-speaking church body might undertake a study as to how to take concerted action in the interests of harmony and to avoid confusion in the transition from one English translation of the Bible to another more modern. To neglect such a consideration may only place unnecessary impediments to the faith of the simple and the weak.

In the category of historicity the Augsburg Confession indicates the conservative nature of the Reformation not only in the field of doctrine but also in the field of adiaphora with its obvious implications for educational method. The Reformation preserved those elements in church usage which it could and thus demonstrated its historical continuity with the church of the past. At the same time it removed those elements which are an offense to faith. Also in the field of method there should not be any unnecessarily radical break with the past, no change for the sake of change, but change only for the sake of more effective service to the Lord. It would seem wise for Lutheran education in its American milieu to preserve its own historical continuity in education with its past. At the same time, it would seem advisable to conform as much as possible to American educa-

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<sup>9</sup>Small Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther, 7, Trig., p. 533.



tional patterns. This would not mean that the possibility of contributing leadership in the field of education must necessarily be eliminated or avoided. This would not mean that sectional differences in education and the characteristic cultural pluralism of our country must be ignored. On the other hand, private innovations perhaps are to be discouraged, especially when they prove a burden.<sup>10</sup>

Methods, following the above mentioned principles, are to be adopted with a view to edification<sup>11</sup> and in consideration for the weak.<sup>12</sup> Perhaps the Lutheran rejection of the ex opere operato concept has its implications for educational method. It is not enough to hear. Worship must be understood. The Lutherans themselves were in a state of transition on these matters. Melancthon declared:

We retain the Latin language on account of those who are learning and understand Latin, and we mingle with it German hymns, in order that the people also may have something to learn, and by which faith and fear may be called forth.<sup>13</sup>

Whatever educational methods one employs, the practical aim as deduced from this observation must be that they are chosen with a view to achieve educational goals and assist in the educational process.

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<sup>10</sup>TD, X, 21, Trig., pp. 1059-61.

<sup>11</sup>TD, X, 9, Trig., p. 1055.

<sup>12</sup>TD, X, 13, Trig., p. 1057.

<sup>13</sup>Ap, XXIV (XII), 3-5, Trig., p. 385.



The Confessions reveal that the Lutherans had elements both of strictness and freedom in their choice of educational method. Luther, for example, believed in word for word memorization of Scripture passages. Speaking of the chief articles of the faith Luther declares: "These are the most necessary parts which one should first learn to repeat word for word."<sup>14</sup> The discipline that Luther suggests also was quite rigid:

Likewise, every head of a household is obliged to do the same with respect to his domestics, man-servants and maid-servants, and not to keep them in his house if they do not know these things and are unwilling to learn them.<sup>15</sup>

Certainly the Lutheran concept of discipline is in glaring contrast to the goals of modern progressive education.<sup>16</sup>

Yet the play concept is also prominent in Lutheran educational theory and the democratic atmosphere which progressive education tries to achieve is not entirely lacking.

Luther declares in this connection: "For since we are preaching to children, we must also prattle with them."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Short Preface, Large Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther, 15, Trig., p. 577.

<sup>15</sup>Short Preface, Large Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther, 17, Trig., p. 577.

<sup>16</sup>R. La Piere, "The Apathetic Ethic," Saturday Review, August 1, 1959, p. 42.

<sup>17</sup>Large Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther, 77, Trig., p. 603.

## CHAPTER XII

### TEACHER AND PUPIL

The teacher and pupil are rarely directly referred to by the Confessions. Whatever information therefore we can derive from the Confessions under these headings must be obtained from implications in the Confessions themselves and application of their doctrinal content. Perhaps the chief areas to which both teacher and pupil are to be directly related are the problems of anthropology, ethics, and the means of grace. The entire educational process itself would be oriented under the distinctive epistemology in a Lutheran philosophy of education. Attitude and subject matter, content and goals would be oriented under the Lutheran philosophy of history and church history. We will restrict ourselves in drawing out the implications to the doctrine of the Confessions on anthropology, the means of grace, and ethics. The Augsburg Confession indicates the close relation to the chief doctrine of the faith and the ministry by treating these in succeeding articles. Article IV treats of justification. Article V treats of the ministry and thus attempts immediately to instruct how justifying faith is obtained. It is obtained through the means of grace. The bearer of the means of grace is the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments. In the German text it is called the "Predigtamt." As the

context indicates the ministry from which the teaching office is derived and in which it shares is not a priestly order, but an office and a function.<sup>1</sup> This constitutes the status of the teacher in a Lutheran philosophy of education. Article V in the German text indicates that it was God who established the ministry and authorized its perpetuation by the church. Article XIV, "Of Ecclesiastical Order," has the general purpose of advocating good order in the church but it also spells out implications for the call of the teacher into his teaching ministry. Teachers in the Lutheran educational system are to be called and ordained in an orderly way. The office of the teacher then must not be removed from the control of the church, which it serves for the sake of its Lord.<sup>2</sup>

#### The Teacher and the Means of Grace

The second paragraph of Article V, "Of Augustana," indicates the relationship of the teacher to the means of grace. It repudiates every form of Enthusiasm or the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit upon the heart of the individual.<sup>3</sup> In Lutheran education there can be no reliance upon the

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<sup>1</sup>Augsburg Confession, V, 1., Triglot Concordia (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 45. Hereafter the Triglot will be abbreviated Trig. and the Augsburg Confession will be abbreviated AC. The Roman numerals refer to the articles and the Arabic numbers to the text divisions according to those employed in the Trig.

<sup>2</sup>AC, XIV, Trig., p. 49.

<sup>3</sup>AC, V, 4, Trig., p. 45.



"inner light," no encouragement to the individual to attempt to rise up to a mystic communion with God through the faculty of "intuition." Lutheran education would place the stress on the use of the Word, in preaching it, reading it, hearing it. Only through such activity does one obtain any assurance that the Holy Spirit is being provided with the opportunity to work on the heart of both teacher and pupil in the teaching situation.

### The Teacher, Pupil, and Christian Anthropology

The Lutheran anthropology is basic and fundamental to an understanding of both teacher and pupil and their relationship to each other in the teaching situation. This anthropology indicates the obstacles to be overcome in man's lack of fear, trust, and love of God, and man's lust, the climate which original sin may produce and in which education must be operative, and the nature of the object on which education must direct the dynamics of the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacrament. Education will more fully realize the difficulty of its task when it faces up to the fact of natural man's blindness, deadness, and innate enmity to God. By condemning the Pelagian heresy of free will in spiritual matters Lutheran education teaches the individual, both teacher and pupil, to despair of himself and to look only to the power of the Spirit to give him a new birth. Lutheran education thus declares to the individual that he



is helpless without the vivifying influence of divine dynamics.

Perhaps some Lutheran educators themselves will object that we are not dealing with people in their natural state in the educational process but with Christian teachers and pupils. But the task is no less formidable on this account. Article II (I) of the Apology quoting Luther declares that "Original sin remains after baptism."<sup>4</sup> So even in the case of Christian people Lutheran education has to contend with the same old Adam, which the individual possesses in his natural state. The teacher as an agent of the Holy Spirit in the educational process has constantly within him that factor which thwarts and frustrates his full effectiveness for spiritual ends. Also in terms of the pupil this is the kind of material with which the teacher must work. This constitutes the difficulty of his task. The goals of salvation and sanctification would be unattainable unless the Holy Spirit were operative in the means of grace. The teacher, however, must view the pupil with understanding and sympathy as a fellow-sinner since they are both in the same plight. The teacher is dealing with a fellow-sinner for whom Christ died.

Since Lutheran theology has a more realistic conception

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<sup>4</sup>Apology of the Augsburg Confession, V, 1, Trig., p. 45. Hereafter the Apology of the Augsburg Confession will be abbreviated Ap.

of the radical problem with which education must deal, with Rome ascribing to man some spiritual powers after the fall and the Zwinglians looking upon original sin merely as a servitude, there is also less reliance on merely intellectual attempts to deal with its problem, less reliance on the resources of culture and rhetoric, less reliance on the part of the teacher on his own person, strength, reason, and other abilities, more reliance on the Word, the Spirit, and prayer.

### Discipline

There is perhaps one other area in the teacher-pupil relationship that needs definition. That is the area of discipline. Perhaps the Lutheran teacher should somewhere find a golden mean between the permissive, non-directive laissez faire policy of some modern progressives who would entirely avoid the role of disciplinarian<sup>5</sup> and the medieval legalism which characterized Luther's early educational experiences. Article XII, "Of Augustana," rejects the Romanist legalistic emphasis on the satisfaction of works. It speaks of the Christian life as one of continual repentance.<sup>6</sup> It also rejects the legalistic emphasis of those who allow no restoration to those fallen after baptism. Article VI of

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<sup>5</sup>Richard La Piere, "The Apathetic Ethic," Saturday Review, August 1, 1959, p. 42.

<sup>6</sup>AC, XII, 1-10, Trig., p. 49.

Augustana also speaks of faith as being "bound to bring forth good works"<sup>7</sup> and defines this not as consisting of compulsion from without but of inner necessity. This is certainly the ideal to be followed. Success cannot be considered as complete unless this ideal is achieved. On the other hand, it must be admitted that where this procedure breaks down entirely with an individual pupil the teacher may have to resort to other forms of discipline consonant with his position according to the ethics of the Fourth Commandment. Outer compulsion in terms of withholding privileges or other punishments may have to be resorted to, when the dynamics of the Gospel have not achieved the goal, in order to keep order and preserve respect for authority. In a sense, this may be considered a failure, but some failures will occur where you are dealing with the perverse nature of man.

#### Responsibility in Education

On the subject of responsibility in education the Lutheran Confessions divide it among teachers, parents or householders, and magistrates. The nineteenth paragraph of the Preface to the Christian Book of Concord declares that the condemnations in this book are directed only against false teachers and their pernicious errors and not against those who err from a certain simplicity of mind. A teacher has, in other words, an obviously greater responsibility

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<sup>7</sup>AG, VI, 1, Trig., p. 45.



than the untaught.<sup>8</sup> He assumes the responsibility for what he teaches. The Lutheran teacher can never adequately discharge this responsibility unless, as this paragraph suggests, "the Word of God" be followed as a norm. Every other course is blasphemy and stubborn resistance of the sovereignty of God. The word "teacher" as used in this connection is, of course, applied to any incumbent of the ministry of the Word and by inference then can be related to the office of teacher in a stricter sense of the word.

In his "Short Preface" to the Large Catechism Luther affirms that religious education should be carried on in the home, that it includes both children and domestic servants, and that it is the chief responsibility of the father of the family. No doubt, Luther has a narrower concept of religious education than many Lutherans have today and not that of a total education under religious auspices when he declares:

Therefore, it is the duty of every father of a family to question and examine his children and servants at least once a week and to ascertain what they know of it, or are learning, and, if they do not know it, to keep them faithfully at it.<sup>9</sup>

Later in his discussion of the Sacrament of the Altar Luther repeats this injunction: "Therefore let every father of a family know that it is his duty, by the injunction and com-

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<sup>8</sup>Trig., p. 19.

<sup>9</sup>Large Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther, 4, 17-18, Trig., pp. 575-77.



mand of God, to teach these things to his children, or have them learn what they ought to know."<sup>10</sup> In his Preface to the Small Catechism Luther indicates that religious education is the responsibility of both parents and magistrates. Where religious education and its responsibilities are omitted, dire consequences are sure to follow. "For by such neglect they overthrow and destroy both the Kingdom of God and that of the world, acting as the worst enemies both of God and of men."<sup>11</sup>

#### Education and Church-State Relations

The explicit discussion of church-state relations in the Confessions is not ample. The implicit assumptions, however, cover all basic principles. The Augsburg Confession declares that civil authority has divine sanction.<sup>12</sup> As far as the fears then of those are concerned, who think of religious schools as unAmerican, it might be stated that there is no conflict in loyalties where a truly Lutheran philosophy of education is dominant. In fact, a Lutheran should be a better citizen, not only because he loves his country and fears punishment if and when he breaks a law,

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<sup>10</sup>Large Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther, 87, Trig., p. 773.

<sup>11</sup>Small Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther, 19, Trig., p. 537.

<sup>12</sup>AC, XXVIII, 8-11, Trig., p. 85.

but also because he recognizes government as ordained by God. The only area where a conflict might occur is where a government might theoretically ask a Lutheran citizen to act against conscience, to commit sin. This the Lutheran would be compelled to resist, for he "ought to obey God rather than man" (Acts 5:29). In such a situation disobedience to a questionable directive of the government might well be conceived of as a higher loyalty and in the real interests of government.

In the area of church-state relations it is also of significance that the Confessions reject the radical and revolutionary views of the Anabaptists who were against the Christian participation in government. Article XVI of the Apology recognizes the distinction between church and state.<sup>13</sup> While it would not prohibit the participation of the individual Christian citizen in the affairs of the state, it would speak out against the church's interference with the laws of the state.

Neither does the Gospel bring new laws concerning the civil state, but commands that we obey present laws, whether they have been framed by heathen or by others, and that in this obedience we should exercise love.<sup>14</sup>

The Lutherans showed themselves as fervent in their loyalty to the emperor as they were resentful of the pope's political maneuvering. They even accepted the commonly

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<sup>13</sup>AC, XXVIII, 8-11, Trig., p. 85.

<sup>14</sup>Ap, XVI, 55, Trig., p. 331.

shared superstition of subjects of the empire that in this emperor the predictions of the Sybilline Oracles were fulfilled.<sup>15</sup> On the other hand, Luther does not hesitate in the Smalcald Articles to speak openly of the political ambitions of the papacy.

Next, the Popes began to seize upon kingdoms for themselves; they transferred kingdoms, they vexed with unjust excommunications and wars the kings of almost all nations in Europe, but especially the German emperors, sometimes for the sake of occupying cities of Italy, at other times for the purpose of reducing to subjection the bishops of Germany, and wresting from the emperors the conferring of episcopates.<sup>16</sup>

The patriotic appeal of this type of denuntiation is obvious. In this discussion of the investiture controversy Luther enuntiates the principle of the separation of church and state, which if not absolute, certainly rejects any usurpation of political power on the part of church leaders.

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<sup>15</sup>Ap, XXIII (XI), 2-4, Trig., p. 363.

<sup>16</sup>Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope, 35, Trig., p. 513.



## CHAPTER XIII

### THE MEANS OF GRACE AND EDUCATION

#### The Law

Four topics still command our interest as we trace contributions of the Confessions to a Lutheran philosophy of education. The first is the use of the means of grace in Lutheran education. Luther speaks at least of two uses of the Law as curb and mirror, but the preaching of the Law in itself is no means of grace.<sup>1</sup> The Epitome declares that "the distinction between the Law and the Gospel is to be maintained in the Church." In its function as curb and rule "the Law is properly a divine doctrine." The preaching of the Law is defined thus: "Everything that reproves sin is, and belongs to the preaching of the Law." The Law is not operative as a means of grace "because men do not learn from the Law to perceive their sins aright, but either become presumptuous hypocrites or despair like Judas."<sup>2</sup> The Augsburg Confession

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<sup>1</sup>Smalcald Articles, Part III, Article II, 1-5, Triglote Concordia (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 479. Cf. Thorough Declaration of the Formula of Concord, VI, 1-2, Triglote Concordia, p. 963 for all three uses of the Law in the Formula of Concord. Hereafter the Triglote will be abbreviated Trig. and the Smalcald Articles will be abbreviated SA. The Thorough Declaration will be TD. The Roman numerals refer to the articles and the Arabic numbers to the text divisions according to those employed in the Trig.

<sup>2</sup>Epitome of the Formula of Concord, V, 2-8, Trig., pp. 801-03. The Epitome will hereafter be abbreviated Ep.



already indicates the relation of the Law and Gospel to each other, when it declares the dominance of the sacramental over the sacrificial in the Christian's daily life.<sup>3</sup> It is the same dominance that the soteriological exhibits over the ethical.

We have already indicated by whom the means of grace are employed in the educational process in our discussion of the role of the teacher.<sup>4</sup> Used by a Christian teacher the means of grace, employed as a channel by the Holy Spirit, produce justifying faith. Again and again the Confessions declare that the Holy Spirit does not work without means.<sup>5</sup> The ministry is valid even when performed by hypocrites.<sup>6</sup> The means of grace are valid even though hypocrites are present among the saints in the church.<sup>7</sup> The individual is encouraged to find the certainty of his conversion not in his own feelings and senses, but in the objective promises of the Word.<sup>8</sup> The efficacy of the means of grace is assured by

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<sup>3</sup>Augsburg Confession, XIII, 1-2, Trig., p. 49. Hereafter the Augsburg Confession will be abbreviated AC.

<sup>4</sup>AC, V, 1-2, Trig., p. 45.

<sup>5</sup>AC, V, 1-3, Trig., p. 45; Ep, II, 4, Trig., p. 787; TD, II, 4, Trig., p. 881.

<sup>6</sup>Ep, XII, 27, Trig., p. 843.

<sup>7</sup>AC, VIII, 1-3, Trig., p. 47.

<sup>8</sup>TD, II, 56, Trig., p. 903.

their divine source.<sup>9</sup> The church, in fact, is recognized and its presence is assured by the use of the means of grace. The distinguishable marks of the church are "where the Gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments are rightly administered."<sup>10</sup> Since faith, the gift of the Holy Spirit, may be lost, a regular, faithful, conscientious use of the means of grace is mandatory.<sup>11</sup>

Included in the means of grace are also the sacraments and private absolution. Melanchthon in the Apology defines a sacrament as "a ceremony or work in which God presents to us that which the promise annexed to the ceremony offers."<sup>12</sup>

### Baptism

The Confessions emphasize that baptism is comprehended in God's command and promise. In the Large Catechism Luther declares: "Here stands God's commandment and institution, lest we doubt that Baptism is divine, not devised nor invented by men."<sup>13</sup> The Confessions are elaborate in depicting the value and benefits of baptism. In the Large Catechism Luther says: "But what God institutes and commands cannot

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<sup>9</sup>AC, VIII, 1-3, Trig., p. 47.

<sup>10</sup>AC, VII, 1, Trig., p. 47.

<sup>11</sup>AC, XII, 1-10, Trig., p. 49.

<sup>12</sup>Apology of the Augsburg Confession, XXIV (XII), 18, Trig., p. 389. Hereafter the Apology will be abbreviated Ap.

<sup>13</sup>Large Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther, 6, Trig., p. 733. Hereafter the Large Catechism will be abbreviated LC.

be a vain, but must be a most precious thing, though in appearance it were of less value than a straw."<sup>14</sup> The monastic life does not compare in value with that of the Sacrament of Baptism. "The Scriptures teach thus: Even though we collect in one mass the works of all the monks, however splendidly they may shine, they would not be as noble and good as if God should pick up a straw."<sup>15</sup> God indicated His evaluation of baptism when He confirmed the sacrament by a miracle.

Thus, and much more even, you must honor Baptism and esteem it glorious on account of the Word, since He Himself has honored it both by words and deeds; moreover, confirmed it with miracles from heaven. For do you think it was a jest that, when Christ was baptized, the heavens were opened and the Holy Ghost descended<sup>16</sup> visibly, and everything was divine glory and majesty?

Luther summarizes the benefits of baptism largely in terms of God's redemptive purpose.

Thus it appears what a great, excellent thing Baptism is, which delivers us from the jaws of the devil and makes us God's own, suppresses and takes away sin, and then daily strengthens the new man; and is and ever remains efficacious until we pass from this estate of misery to eternal glory.<sup>17</sup>

Baptism and its blessings are universally necessary and intended for all. Luther presents cogent argumentation from experience for the necessity of infant baptism.

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<sup>14</sup>LC, 8, Trig., p. 733.

<sup>15</sup>LC, 12, Trig., p. 735.

<sup>16</sup>LC, 21, Trig., p. 737.

<sup>17</sup>LC, 83, Trig., p. 751.



That the Baptism of infants is pleasing to Christ is sufficiently proved from His own work, namely, that God sanctifies many of them who have been thus baptized, and has given them the Holy Ghost.<sup>18</sup>

The Epitome rejects as an erroneous article of the Anabaptists not to be tolerated in the church that

children who are not baptized are not sinners before God, but righteous and innocent. . . .

children are not to be baptized until they have attained their reason. . . .

children of Christians, because they have been born of Christian and believing parents, are holy and children of God even without and before Baptism. . . .<sup>19</sup>

Baptism is necessary to salvation,<sup>20</sup> but it is not effective mechanically.<sup>21</sup> The Confessions reject the Roman theory of the ex opere operato efficacy of the sacraments. Faith is necessary in order to obtain the benefits of the sacrament. Luther describes how this benefit is derived. "Thus faith clings to the water, and believes that it is Baptism, in which there is pure salvation and life."<sup>22</sup> On the other hand, "Baptism is valid, even though faith be wanting."<sup>23</sup> This would obviate the necessity of being baptized again if one has fallen from faith. Since baptism

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<sup>18</sup>LC, 49, Trig., pp. 743-45.

<sup>19</sup>Ep, XII, 6-8, Trig., p. 839.

<sup>20</sup>AC, IX, 1, Trig., p. 47.

<sup>21</sup>AC, XIII, 3, Trig., p. 49.

<sup>22</sup>LC, 29, Trig., p. 739.

<sup>23</sup>LC, 53, Trig., p. 745.



is necessary for eternal life, its relevance and importance for the daily life of the Christian should be explored. On the other hand, if there are any unbaptized enrolled in any agency of Lutheran education, this education should be a conscious preparation for the reception of the sacrament.

### The Sacrament of the Altar

On the Sacrament of the Altar the Confessions affirm the true and essential presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament.<sup>24</sup> The grounds of the doctrine of the real presence is that Jesus Christ is the true, essential, natural, perfect God and man in one person, undivided and inseparable.<sup>25</sup> The presence of the body and blood in the Holy Supper is to be ascribed only and alone to the almighty power of our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>26</sup> The Thorough Declaration quotes Luther to the effect: "For in no way will I deny that the power of God may accomplish this such that a body might be in many places at the same time, even in a bodily, comprehensible way."<sup>27</sup>

As with the Sacrament of Baptism the Confessions deny

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<sup>24</sup>AC, X, 1-2, Trig., p. 47; Ep, VII, 15, Trig., p. 811; Ep, VII, 1-6, Trig., p. 809; Ep, VII, 25-36, Trig., p. 815; TD, VII, 2-3, Trig., p. 973; TD, VII, 103, Trig., p. 1007.

<sup>25</sup>Ep, VII, 10, Trig., p. 811.

<sup>26</sup>Ep, VII, 8, Trig., p. 811.

<sup>27</sup>TD, VII, 103, Trig., p. 1007.

the mechanical efficacy of the Lord's Supper.<sup>28</sup> This implies that faith is necessary for the individual to appropriate to himself the gift of forgiveness offered in the sacrament. The ex opere operato conception of the efficacy of the Sacrament makes no demand upon the individual toward repentance.<sup>29</sup> The Apology declares that there is among Lutherans a more frequent and conscientious use of the sacrament than among the Romanists where priests hired for pay used the sacrament. Among the Lutherans the people use the Sacrament, but having first been instructed and examined.<sup>30</sup>

In the Large Catechism Luther gives some very excellent advice on personal self-discipline with relation to the Sacrament. "If any one have not committed sin for which he can be rightly put out of the congregation and esteemed as no Christian, he ought not stay away from the Sacrament, lest he deprive himself of life."<sup>31</sup> Personal weakness should not be a deterrent to those desiring to participate in the Sacrament. "But those who are sensible of their weakness, desire to be rid of it and long for help, should regard and use it only as a precious antidote against the poison which they have in them."<sup>32</sup> Luther defines who the truly unworthy are.

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<sup>28</sup> AC, XIII, 2-3, Trig., p. 49.

<sup>29</sup> Ap, XXIV (XII), 11-12, Trig., p. 387.

<sup>30</sup> Ap, XXIV (XII), 40, Trig., p. 401.

<sup>31</sup> LC, 59, Trig., p. 767.

<sup>32</sup> LC, 69-70, Trig., p. 769.

"Therefore those alone are called unworthy who neither feel their infirmities nor wish to be considered sincere."<sup>33</sup> In general the Confessions prefer to omit using the word sacrifice in relation to the Sacrament because of its ambiguity and the false impressions it can create. Melancthon in the Apology however indicates that this word may be used in a limited sense of the Sacrament when he declares: "Thus the ceremony becomes a sacrifice of praise."<sup>34</sup>

### Private Absolution

Compared with its scant emphasis in much of current Lutheran church life there is a great appeal in the Confessions for private absolution. It should be retained because it is useful to conscience.<sup>35</sup> In fact, it should be esteemed.<sup>36</sup> The emphasis on private confession and absolution in contrast to that of Rome with its legalism, its insistence on enumeration and oral confession of every sin, is evangelical because in the absolution the grace of God is declared.<sup>37</sup> It is also significant that the Augsburg Confessions declares that confession was retained in preparation

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<sup>33</sup>LC, 74, Trig., p. 771.

<sup>34</sup>Ap, XXIV (XII), 74, Trig., p. 411.

<sup>35</sup>Smalcald Articles, Part III, Article VII, 2, Trig., p. 495. Hereafter the Smalcald Articles will be abbreviated SA.

<sup>36</sup>AC, XI, 1-3, Trig., p. 47.

<sup>37</sup>AC, XXV, 1-13, Trig., pp. 69-71.



for Holy Communion.<sup>38</sup> There is no reference relating Confession and absolution to God's covenant grace in baptism.<sup>39</sup>

### Scripture as Authority

The Word of God or the sacred Scriptures are viewed in the Confessions not only as a means of grace, but also as an authority, an authority that is opposed to the Romanist emphasis on church tradition. The authority of the Scriptures, the mysteries of the faith, are also spoken of as transcending reason. Article XXII, "Of Augustana," for example, objects to customs "introduced against the commandments of God."<sup>40</sup> In the Smalcald Articles Luther speaks concerning the authority of the "outward Word" in distinction to the enthusiasts "who boast that they have the Spirit without and before the Word."<sup>41</sup> Generally the Anabaptists are referred to as those guilty of Enthusiasm, but Luther applies this same label to the papacy.

For (indeed) the Papacy also is nothing but sheer enthusiasm, by which the Pope boasts that all rights exist in the shrine of his heart, and whatever he decides and commands with (in) his church is spirit and right, even though it is above and contrary to Scripture and the spoken Word.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>AC, XXV, 1, Trig., p. 69.

<sup>39</sup>Review of "A Historical Survey of the Theology of Private Absolution," by Robert C. Schulz, Una Sancta, Transfiguration, 1959, p. 21.

<sup>40</sup>AC, XXII, 8-9, Trig., p. 61.

<sup>41</sup>SA, Part III, Article VIII, 4, Trig., p. 495.

<sup>42</sup>SA, Part III, Article VIII, 4, Trig., p. 495.



Melanchthon also makes a strong appeal to the authority of Scripture. The Romanists in their Confutation had denied that faith is the second part of repentance. They had declared that their teaching was the consensus of the church. Over against this the Apology appeals to the consensus of Scripture: "We concede neither to the Pope nor to the Church the power to make decrees against this consensus of the prophets."<sup>43</sup> In its discussion of the Lord's Supper the Thorough Declaration states that faith is to transcend reason.

Thus we, too, are simply to believe with all humility and obedience the plain, firm, clear, and solemn words and command of our Creator and Redeemer, without any doubt and disputation as to how it agrees with our reason or is possible.<sup>44</sup>

The mysteries of the faith transcend reason. "It (this mystery) is above nature and reason, even above the reason of all the angels in heaven."<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>Ap. XII (V), 67, Trig., p. 271.

<sup>44</sup>TD, VII, 47, Trig., p. 989.

<sup>45</sup>TD, VII, 102, Trig., p. 1007.

## CHAPTER XIV

### AXIOLOGY

#### Axiology and Justification

All the preceding material in our discussion of the various problems in a Lutheran philosophy of education sheds light on the question of axiology or the philosophy of values. A few factors may be presented in a discussion of this problem. The unifying principle in a Lutheran philosophy of education is particularly significant for and indicative of its axiology. This principle is not only central, but it is also dominant. It expresses the chief values. Making the doctrine of justification by faith alone the integrating factor indicates that the grace of God, conceived of as His unmerited love to mankind, and His forgiveness, are considered the chief values. In Luther this emphasis on justification and the grace of God becomes almost a bias. In his discussions under the Second Article of the Creed in the Large Catechism Luther stresses that the soteriological aspects even of the lordship of Christ are paramount. "Let this, then, be the sum of the article that the little word Lord signifies simply as much as Redeemer."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Large Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther, II, 31, Triglot Concordia (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 685. Hereafter the Triglot will be abbreviated Trig. The Roman numerals refer to the articles and the Arabic

### Axiology and Metaphysics

There are axiological implications also in the area of metaphysics. When the Lutherans accepted the ecumenical creeds and with them the term "the resurrection of the flesh" in the Apostles' Creed, they indicated an interest in opposing the Gnostics and others like them who taught that the physical body was inherently evil.<sup>2</sup> This repudiation of matter and physical life as evil is also indicated in the use of the term "bodies" in relation to the resurrection in the latter part of the Athanasian Creed. This attitude to the flesh or toward the human body is, however, only one phase of a general outlook on the universe and all created things. This phase, however, must be kept in mind in relation to the general other-worldly emphasis of the Confessions. The inference must never be made, because the Confessions have a strong other-worldly emphasis, that this indicates a suspicion, a contempt, or a lack of appreciation for our physical bodies and the entire order of creation.

### Axiology and Epistemology

There are axiological implications in the field of

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numbers to the text divisions according to those employed in the Trig.

<sup>2</sup>Willard Dow Allbeck, Studies in Lutheran Confessions (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1952), p. 29.



epistemology. The Confessions have some very definite convictions in the field of religious values. They speak of "the darkness of papistical superstition" and "the light of His Gospel and Word."<sup>3</sup> They look upon error as pernicious.<sup>4</sup> They are concerned about purity of doctrine.<sup>5</sup> The axiology of the Confessions is illustrated in the attitude of the Lutherans toward Holy Scripture. They regarded it as the Word of God.<sup>6</sup> Scripture was not merely the human witness and reaction to revelation. It was revelation itself. They were thus convinced that revelation was not only possible and probable, but also a demonstrable reality in Holy Scripture, which they describe as "the most holy writings of the Prophets and the Apostles." They make no attempt to solve the rational tension between divine initiative and human instrumentality in the transmission of revelation to man. If any title or label is to be affixed to it, they simply label it "the Word of God." Because it is the Word of God, it is also regarded as infallible.<sup>7</sup> The Confessions also affirmed the efficacy of the Word. Lutheran education has the responsibility of using the Word with a consciousness

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<sup>3</sup>Trig., op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 19.



of its power and with the assumption that it has the potential to transform the individual.

### Axiology and History

The ancient creeds also have axiological implications when they regard as historically genuine the narrative of Christ's life as related in Scripture. The Virgin Mary is named in the Second Article of the Creed as a historical personage. The ancient creeds are interested in affirming the genuineness of the incarnation. The birth of Jesus was a reality, an occurrence in history. The Creed is further interested in the evidence of His humanity as seen in the fact that He suffered, was crucified, died, and was laid in a tomb. The mention of Pontius Pilate further establishes the fact in history. The resurrection of Christ was as certain and definite as the specific "third day" on which it occurred.<sup>8</sup>

### Axiology and Ethics

Lutheran axiology also obtains illustration in the field of ethics. Article VI, "Of Augustana," declares that the Lutheran churches do not repudiate good works.<sup>9</sup> Quietism is not inherent in the genius of true Lutheranism. It is not

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<sup>8</sup>Allbeck, op. cit., pp. 27-28.

<sup>9</sup>Augsburg Confession, VI, 1, Trig., p. 45. Hereafter the Augsburg Confession will be abbreviated AC.

an integral part of its philosophy of education as derived from its confessional symbols. The emphasis, on the contrary, is on full participation in government, in social and economic activities, and by implication, also in religious and even public education.

### Axiology and Anthropology

The Lutheran anthropology is also related to its axiology. The individual as such is clothed with dignity, his needs considered, his rights respected. Private confession, for example, was retained because of its usefulness to the individual conscience. The enumeration of all sins in confession as required by the Romanists was repudiated and attacked because it burdened consciences with unnecessary anxiety.<sup>10</sup> Man's need for self-examination and for personal absolution is recognized. The entire Lutheran emphasis here is evangelical with the stress on the grace of God as opposed to His justice and holiness.<sup>11</sup> The entire approach has the effect of transforming service to God from the task of a slave to the willing service of a son, and demanding from the individual Christian a higher degree of responsibility, maturity, and intelligence.

### Axiology and the Goals of Education

The goals of Lutheran education are also related to

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<sup>10</sup>AC, XXV, 4.7, Trig., p. 69. <sup>11</sup>AC, XII, 1-10, Trig., p. 49.



## CHAPTER XV

### LUTHERAN EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY ECUMENICAL

We wish to conclude our thesis with the Lutheran claim for ecumenicity. The Preface to the Christian Book of Concord is eager to point out that the Lutheran Church is not a new Church, but that it confesses that which was at all times and in all places believed by all Christians.<sup>1</sup> The Lutheran Church emphasizes its continuity not only with Western Christendom, but especially also with the early apostolic faith. If this contention is valid and this claim encourages and invites all to investigate, to test, and try, and prove for themselves, then a Lutheran philosophy of education is in the truest sense a Christian philosophy of education. The Confessions of the Lutheran Church often repeat that they are fully in accord with the ancient Church. They assert that their position may be substantiated by reference to the church fathers and the documents of the ecumenic age. They declare that both the Scriptures and the early Church, exhibiting the original Christian and apostolic message, support their views.<sup>2</sup> Defining the issue even more basically the Lutherans view their doctrine not as a human,

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<sup>1</sup>Triglott Concordia (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>Willard Dow Allbeck, Studies in Lutheran Confessions (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1952), p. 12.



but as a truly supernatural product, bringing light from above. It is not a product of the human mind, but it is a revelation of God. This does not mean that a Lutheran philosophy of education is not subject to development, that there is no further possibility of human contributions. There may be development, but if there is, then it is a development in the valid deductions derived from a correctly understood doctrine of the Gospel. This thesis has as one purpose to challenge the Christian reader to investigate whether the Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Confessions, and this particular presentation qualify on that score, whether they are truly ecumenical.

of the grace. Grace is the removal of that grace, which is a spiritual and eternal grace.

A vocabulary of grace is faith. This relates justification to the field of epistemology. To know God and things spiritual only as we are known. "God's knowledge of us is the active element, penetrating us with His power and life; that of the believers is the passive principle, the reception of His life and light." This is supplementary to natural knowledge with its multifarious sources and channels of reception. All other things being equal, there should be a

Robert Schlegel, A. H. Fausen, and David Brown, "The Lutheran Church," (John 10:11) in A Lutheran Encyclopedia, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1957.

## CHAPTER XVI

### SUMMARY

The claim of the Lutheran Confessions for ecumenicity for their doctrinal content and by deduction for their philosophy of education is substantiated primarily by the material principle of Lutheran theology--the doctrine of justification by faith alone. This is also the unifying principle of a Lutheran philosophy of education. If we were to reduce it to one word, it would be adequately comprehended in the Scripture concept of grace. God's grace is involved in the field of metaphysics. Being is the gift of His grace. Death is the removal of that grace, death in a spiritual and eternal sense.

A corollary of grace is faith. This relates justification to the field of epistemology. We know God and things spiritual only as we are known. "God's knowledge of us is the active element, penetrating us with His power and life; that of the believers is the passive principle, the reception of His life and light."<sup>1</sup> This is supplementary to natural knowledge with its multifarious sources and channels of reception. All other things being equal, there should be a

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, "Bible Commentary," (John 10:7-14) in A Commentary Critical and Explanatory (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.), p. 147.

heightened comprehension of nature and art for the individual who has received the gift of saving faith--through God to nature.

The ethical life is also related to saving faith. It is faith that does good works. Works that please God are the fruit of justifying faith. The motive is gratitude for mercies received, and an encouragement is rewards anticipated.<sup>2</sup>

Grace is the expression of God's regard and concern for mankind. This relates the unifying principle of a Lutheran philosophy of education to theology proper. Christ is the only historic expression of God's grace to humanity. He is the Way.

While a Lutheran philosophy of education is essentially theocentric, its emphases on the subject of anthropology are basic. Man is a creature of God and exists in a continuity with all the rest of creation. But man is preeminent because he was created in God's image. This involves moral and spiritual uprightness, knowledge of God, and resultant happiness. But man lost this image and with it holiness, knowledge, happiness. By the disobedience of one the guilt of the fall is imputed to each individual of the race. By heredity each individual has transmitted to him this depraved condition. In Christ righteousness is imputed to each

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<sup>2</sup>Francis Pieper, Christian Dogmatics (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1953), III, 43, 52-53.

individual. This is potential and becomes available in the moment of conversion, the moment when justifying faith is implanted. The anthropology of a Lutheran philosophy of education when viewed with reference to the corporate head of the race and the redemptive head of the race might be termed a pessimistic optimism.<sup>3</sup> It is not so naive as to underestimate the radical nature of evil. It is not so negative as to conclude that the way to God is not open. The Christian anthropology is also involved in education's concept of teacher and pupil and in the topic of responsibility in education.

The philosophy of history and the philosophy of church history might also be described as pessimist-optimist. It is pessimistic as it views the failure of unregenerate man. In the light of divine grace it is optimistic concerning his future. "The future is as bright as the promises of God." History and Church history are viewed from both poles. History has a goal. Under divine sovereignty it represents the working out of God's purposes. When that goal has been reached, all will have to acknowledge God's grace or justice. "Every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord."

The goals of Lutheran education are salvation, sanctification, the full maturation of the individual in mental,

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<sup>3</sup>Earle E. Cairns, Christianity through the Centuries (Third edition; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1958), pp. 15-16.



emotional, and volitional capacities. Methods in Lutheran education are oriented by the four classic principles in the field of adiaphora--liberty, orderliness, historicity, and edification.

All foregoing affirmations reveal the Lutheran axiology as primarily theocentric. Matter is not inherently evil, because it too came from God. Creation is man's abode, but also a source of enjoyment. Men are to find pleasure in fellowship also with each other. Lutheran axiology is neither ascetic nor monastic. The elements of highest value are found in soteriology and ethics--in that order. Finally, because Lutherans are convinced that their theology as well as any proper philosophical deductions from it are not a distortion or perversion, but a faithful presentation of truth, they are also persuaded of their heaven-sent and ecumenical characteristics.

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