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BISHOP BO HARALD GIERTZ: PIETISM AND THE *ORDO SALUTIS*

The Office of the Holy Ministry, the Word, and Soul Care

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A thesis presented to the Faculty  
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,  
Department of Systematic Theology  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Sacred Theology

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By

Eric R. Andrae

November, 2003

Ronald Feuerhahn

Charles Arand

Robert Kolb

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Though acknowledged as one of the most influential European churchman of the past century,<sup>1</sup> and widely lauded in American Lutheran circles as the author of the acclaimed *The Hammer of God*, much remains to be learned in the U.S. of Bishop Emeritus Dr. Bo Harald Giertz (Gothenburg [Göteborg] diocese, Church of Sweden, served 1949-1970)<sup>2</sup> and of his theology, especially concerning the specific doctrine which served as the foundation of the novel, the Order of Grace. Furthermore, interest in Giertz in America is increasing rapidly: several translation projects are underway, a film based on the first chapter of *The Hammer of God* is being widely distributed and viewed, and an international symposium on the bishop's life and doctrine is planned. As such, and with the centenary of his birth soon upon us (b. 31 August 1905), it is an appropriate time to examine more closely his confession of the Order of Grace, or the *ordo salutis*: for he maintains it is the purpose of *The Hammer of God*<sup>3</sup> to depict and illustrate the Order of Grace, and that it is indeed the backbone of his entire homiletical and pastoral care

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<sup>1</sup> Through a national survey, the official monthly *Svenska Kyrkans Tidning*, named Bo Giertz "the century's most influential person" in the Church of Sweden (Kerstin Elworth, "From kyrkofader vann folkets röster," *Svenska Kyrkans Tidning* December 1999: 18, this writer's translation).

<sup>2</sup> See Bo Giertz, "The Gothenburg Diocese" in Robert Murray (ed.), *The Church of Sweden: Past and Present* (Malmö, Sweden: Allhem, 1960) 150-161.

<sup>3</sup> Giertz, *The Hammer of God*, trans. Clifford Ansgar Nelson (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1973); from hereon: *Hammer*. First American edition: (Rock Island, Illinois: Augustana Book Concern, 1960). Original: *Stengrunden* (Stockholm: Diakonistyrelsens Bokförlag, 1941); henceforth *S*. References to *S*. will be from the paperback edition of 1963. References to *Hammer* will be from the Augsburg Paperback edition of 1973. Note that the last chapter of *S*. "*I syndares ställe*" [*In the Place of Sinners*] (272-316), has strangely never been published in English. Written over a period of six weeks in 1941, while Giertz served the tiny rural parish of Torpa, this is perhaps Giertz's most important and certainly best known work. (See the brief overview: Appendix III, 74 below.) As such, this writer will herein indicate how the Order of Grace, *ordo salutis*, is its foundation by referring the reader to it often. Giertz himself, in an interview, said that the book was written "to describe how God works when he leads a person to the true faith in Christ. ...I am convinced that it was right to depict the Order of Grace in this way. For modern man to understand this, it is necessary to illustrate it among people of flesh and blood" (Christian Braw, *I Tiden: Essayer och samtal* [Borås, Sweden: Norma Bokförlag, 1995] 134, 135, this writer's translation). Perhaps the translation of *ordo salutis* as "the Order of Grace" is unclear to the English reader, as well as the importance of this concept, specifically in Swedish Lutheranism: see below, especially 10-21, and footnotes 6, 32, 35, 37, 46, and 47, in which these concerns are addressed. The terms *ordo salutis* (literally, "the way/order of salvation") and the Swedish *nådens ordning* (literally, "the order of grace") are commonly used interchangeably by Swedish theologians to refer to the Order of Grace: see, e.g., "Nådens Ordning," *Nordisk Teologisk Uppslagsbok*, 1955 ed.

and of the renewal of the church. As the Order of Grace has commonly been associated with pietism, this thesis will also address Giertz's approach to the latter.

In section I, the thesis begins with a summary of the heritage of West Coast Swedish Lutheranism, or "Schartauanism," and its spiritual father, Henric Scharatu (1757-1825). Giertz described himself as a "Schartauan" and was, throughout his life, a consistent proponent of Schartau's theology. It was from Schartau that Giertz developed his confession of the Order of Grace, which is portrayed in-depth in section II. Sources include his many and various writings, most of which are as yet untranslated into English, as well as secondary literature Swedish theologians, historians, and pastors such as Åkerberg, H. Andrae, Bolling, Braw, Hallbjörner, Hardt, Imberg, Jarlert, Mattsson, Murray, Oljelund, Olofsson, Sidenvall, Söderblom, et al. The conclusion, section III, summarizes my work and answers the questions: Who was Bo Giertz? Was he a pietist, especially in his presentation of the Order of Grace? What elements of pietism did Giertz confess? What did he discard? What does his theology mean for the continual reform and renewal of the Church?

The central task of understanding Giertz's use of the Order of Grace includes several other interrelated questions. Who was Henric Schartau? What is the place of baptism in the Order of Grace? What is the meaning of faith? What are the roles of God and man in conversion? Where does the Lord's Supper fit into the Order of Grace? How are law and gospel distinguished and applied, as well as justification and sanctification? What of the two kinds of righteousness? How does a Christian live a life of prayer in the Church and her liturgy? How and where is all of this illustrated in the classic *The Hammer of God*? To answer these questions, this thesis uses the following approach. The first section explains the teachings and practices of Henric Schartau and how they came to find a home in the Gothenburg diocese, of which Giertz later became bishop. The second section shows how and why baptism is foundational for the

Order of Grace; it also depicts the Order of Grace as, according to Giertz, central to pastoral soul care, prayer, the Church and her liturgy, and ultimately conversion and faith. The third section, summarizes and answers the questions of the thesis while also demonstrating how the Order of Grace, and Giertz's theology as a whole, is pertinent to laity and clergy as well as to the present and future of the Church.

## A. Biographical and Historical Context

Giertz died 12 July 1998 in Stockholm, Sweden, one month short of the age of 93. Known worldwide as a Lutheran writer and leader, he was a staunch defender of the faith. However, it was not always so.

Giertz was born to an atheist father and agnostic mother. Nevertheless, as was universally customary in Sweden at the time, his mother, perhaps influenced by a childhood in the Church, had Giertz baptized on 3 November 1905. Later, as a teenager, Giertz was also confirmed; anything else was unheard of at the time. But Giertz was not yet a believer. The confirmation instruction was encouraged by the parents simply as a way of educating the young man about Christianity from a theoretical point of view: his reading of Darwin and atheistic propaganda from his father's library kept Giertz's faithless guard up during the catechesis. It was not until his matriculation at Uppsala University that Giertz was confronted with a formidable challenge to his atheism: the atheism of others. He found that the ethical atheism which he espoused could not produce convincing arguments against the amoral atheism of his new classmates. Through various extra-curricular activities he also came into contact with several Christians. His stereotype of them as either dumb or dishonest was shattered; rather, he found them to be worthy of respect and interested in serious questions of society and culture. Thus, in the fall of 1925, he decided to visit some lectures held on religious subjects, specifically three lectures on Jesus by Nathanael Beskow, a well-known lay preacher and theologian in Sweden at the time. He had never been ordained due to the fact that he could not fully accept the Church's faith as expressed in the Creed, but in these lectures he simply gave a personal declaration confessing why he believed in Jesus Christ. Giertz was convicted: God existed, the Christian world-view was the one that made sense, and God was behind all that was true and meaningful. He abandoned the world-view of materialistic atheism. He went home and prayed,

thanking God for existing, and at the same time made up his mind that a God that exists must also be served: Giertz determined to become a pastor!

His experiences at Uppsala University set the tone for Giertz: To what early forces would he be responding in his later churchmanship? And where would he try to lead the Church of his day? His encounter with the “Young Church Movement” (YCM) at Uppsala became of great importance. It was a movement born during the first decade of the 1900s, and Giertz lived and studied in its echoes. The YCM defies definition; with its origin in academia, specifically Uppsala, it attempted to awaken Swedes to the central role of and need for the national church, while responding against pietism’s individualism. The YCM wished to create a new and richer view of theology and the Church: the parish and the Church—specifically, the local parish and the Church of Sweden—should provide the natural frame and foundation for all religious work. The YCM presented a unique and almost indescribable mixture of Lundensian high-church ecclesiology, academic theological research and debate, and the folk-church view. Thus, the YCM maintained that the Church is not built on the principle of individual persons’ shared religious experiences, but steps forth as the bearer of God’s universally applicable grace. “The people of Sweden – a people of God” became its motto. Students, inspired by professors and churchmen such as Harald Hjärne, J.A. Eklund, Nathan Söderblom, and Einar Billing, went out in pairs across the land giving lectures and organizing discussions on contemporary religious issues. For example, in the summer of 1909 alone, 50 students visited approximately 250 different parishes. By the following year students from Lund, Stockholm, and Gothenburg also became involved.

Just over a decade later, Giertz began his studies at Uppsala, earning in the B.A. degree in 1928 and the B.Th. degree in 1931. The YCM still held great influence. According to Geirtz, the YCM took intellectual challenges honestly and seriously. It attempted to give answers to the

questions that science posed against conventional Lutheran orthodoxy. It also took liberal theology, radical higher criticism and its torturous questions, seriously. It was not easy to be studying for the ministry when the Lord's Prayer was analyzed in such a way that almost nothing remained and the "historical Jesus" was presented as something very different from what the Church had declared him to be. The YCM wrestled with these issues without complete submission to higher criticism and in great honesty, but an honesty which, according to Giertz, was suspicious of all traditional viewpoints and positions and thus did not proclaim the gospel of the atonement with power or purity.

But nonetheless, there remained something in which to believe. After all the radical criticism, one still has something in which to place one's faith. The presence of this "mini-faith," claims Giertz, allowed room for one's growth under God's guidance and care. Although Giertz's generation was greatly influenced by the YCM, his generation also received its unique impression of the radical scriptural criticism, marked especially by the history-of-religions school with its inclination to consider original Christianity as a mixture of something new and Hellenistic religion, which in essential features was markedly influenced by non-Christian mystic cults.

Nevertheless, in the midst of all this uncertainty there was, remarkably, a will to evangelize. This was part of his generation's inheritance from the YCM: to make Sweden's people God's people.

Meanwhile, young Giertz had been cured of his burgeoning liberal theology by a semester in Palestine, after being encouraged to take the trip by his influential professor of exegesis, Anton Fridrichsen. Giertz appreciated the Norwegian's biblical realism and his concern for and involvement with the students. Fridrichsen's realism maintained that the New Testament was written by people who had truly experienced something divinely and uniquely

great and decisive; the writings were taken at historical face value. For Giertz, the period in Palestine meant that he could read the Scriptures with completely new eyes, appreciating and understanding the realism that Fridrichsen espoused.

However, for Giertz, there was still something missing. Into this vacuum stepped a movement known as *Kyrklig Förnyelse*, or Churchly Renewal (CR). CR was primarily led by Gunnar Rosendal,<sup>4</sup> but Giertz was a close confidant of Rosendal and shared the vision and work of CR. CR gave forth a warmth which was much needed, according to Giertz, especially after one had hibernated in the cold atmosphere of academic Christianity. CR had genuine faith in the revelation of God, the concrete, biblical revelation, not just as information or knowledge, but as a life from the Resurrected one, a life which is otherwise impossible in this world. This life from Christ, in Christ, and for Christ, is supplied through the means of grace in the Church of God. The Church was rediscovered as something essential for living faith, over and against the individualistic interpretations of Christianity which had long been dominant. For CR, the Church was a confession of faith: the Church was confessed as one of God's deeds of salvation, as vital as creation, the Cross, the resurrection, and eternal life. The Church was also confessed as intimately connected with Christ, as the Body of Christ into which we are incorporated through baptism. Academic discussions were essentially moot for CR, as it again became a reality to live in and from one's baptism.

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<sup>4</sup> Gunnar Rosendal: 1897-1988; pastor in Osby, Sweden; leader of the liturgical and sacramental renewal movement *Kyrklig Förnyelse* [Churchly Renewal]; author. See Christian Braw, *Söka förstå* (Borås, Sweden: Norma Bokförlag, 1994) 64-83; and Stefan Ljungman, *Fader Gunnar i Osby* (Lund: Arcus förlag, 1997). Rosendal and Giertz were dear friends and generally worked together for the renewal of the Church, but the latter could be sharp in his criticism toward the former: It seems that you support "...crypto-Romanism...: anti-pietism, disdain for the old-church awakening, ritualism without sufficient pietistic earnestness" (Bo Giertz, Letter to Rosendal, 7 March 1938, Uppsala University Library, Uppsala). All letter excerpts cited from Giertz to Rosendal are archived at the Uppsala University Library, Uppsala, and were transcribed and translated by this writer. The historical material on the YCM (5-6 above) is adapted from "Ungkyrkorörelsen," *Nordisk Teologisk Uppslagsbok*, 1955 ed. Giertz's evaluation of the YCM and appropriation of CR (5-8) is drawn from Bo Giertz, "En återblick," *Opuscula ecclesiastica: Studier tillägnade Gunnar Rosendal den 4 april 1972*, eds. Oloph Bexell, Bengt Ingmar Kilström, Lennart Löthner, and Jan Redin (n.c.: Pro Veritate, 1972) 104-109.

In this new life, all things became new in the daily church life, which is life in the parish. One's prayer-life was understood and strengthened in light of the Church's own prayer-life. The Psalter was not just to be studied and analyzed, but prayed. Faith in God's revelation manifested itself foremost in a living and active faith in the Word. The Word was trusted as the source of all knowledge regarding the Lord Christ, his Church, the Order of Grace, God's merciful invitation. And the Word was regarded as inspired by the Holy Spirit, as Jesus himself had promised and as the Church had always taught.

CR cared for souls, distinguishing and applying law and gospel and encouraging a right use of the means of grace. Communion attendance consequently increased. The Ministry was once again appreciated as an apostolic commission from Christ, carried out in his stead and by his command, with his divine Word.

Ultimately, as it retained the inheritance from the Reformation and from the Swedish Church's own rich history, CR was not another "-ism," but rather a living faith and joy in divine revelation, in the incarnation, and in the Lord's presence among his people; not theory, but life.

Whether through CR and other movements, through his voluminous writings, through his leadership as bishop and in the Lutheran World Federation, through his use of and teaching on the Order of Grace, or through any other means, it was to this new joy and life in the Lord Christ that Bo Giertz sought to lead the Church of his day.

## B. Who Was Bo Giertz?

The former vice-president of the Lutheran World Federation (1957-1963) is, as mentioned above, best known on this continent as the author of the acclaimed novel *The Hammer of God*. Other works of his have also been translated into English, but much more Swedish material remains inaccessible to the English reader.<sup>5</sup> As such, the picture of Giertz remains incomplete in the United States.

Who was Bo Giertz? The following labels have been variously applied to the man: high-church, low-church, old-church, the new view of the church, confessional, non-confessional, biblically traditional, not biblically traditional, man of awakening, arch-Lutheran, catholic, exegete, dogmatician, practical theologian, sacramentalist,<sup>6</sup> not sacramental enough, non-Schartauan, non-pietist, Schartauan, pietist.<sup>7</sup> It is these last two labels which will especially draw the attention of this thesis. Indeed, Giertz himself, especially in various letters to Rosendal, defends pietism and contends that he is a sacramental “Rosenius-influenced<sup>8</sup> Schartauan.”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> One of the purposes of this thesis is, by translation, to make more material accessible to the English reader.

<sup>6</sup> Pastor Docent Folke T. Olofsson (Rasbo, Uppsala), a noted Giertz researcher, points out that the Order of Grace is the subjective part of Giertz’s theology, developed to fight the charge of (objective) hyper-sacramentalism (Folke T. Olofsson, personal interview, 12 June 1998). See Giertz, *S.*, 277 and footnote 47 below.

<sup>7</sup> For more insight on why Giertz has been labeled in these ways, see Anders Jarlert, *Kontinuitet och Förnyelse i Bo Giertz Kyrkohistoriska Romaner*, (Varberg, Sweden: Bröderna Carlssons Boktryckeri AB, 1990); and Hans Åkerberg, *Teologin i Stengrunden* (Stockholm: Petra Bokförlag, 1985).

<sup>8</sup> Carl Olof Rosenius: 1816-1868; Swedish Lutheran lay preacher influenced greatly by English Methodist evangelist George Scott; Rosenian Pietism is synonymous with New Evangelicalism (Giertz actually battles against the latter in the second novella of *S.*); though not a separatist, influenced by “Readers,” a separatist group (Giertz, *S.*, 115; Giertz, *Hammer*, 141; the word “pietists” does not appear in the original); one of the organizers of the National Evangelical Mission Society; a founder and editor of *Pietisten* (Giertz, *S.*, 126; Giertz, *Hammer*, 155). “The Word of God in the Bible is, for Rosenius, the foremost of the means of grace; baptism and communion are of less importance in his individualistic, Lutheran-pietistic understanding of Christianity” (“Rosenius, Carl Olof,” *Nationalencyklopedien*, 1998 ed., this writer’s translation; the encyclopedia also refers the reader to S. Lodin, *C. O. Rosenius: Hans Liv och Gärning* [1956].) Giertz calls him an “...orthodox man of God” (Giertz, *S.*, 111; Giertz, *Hammer*, 135). However, though admitting Rosenius’s influence, Giertz clearly and strongly takes distance from the lay preacher’s non-sacramental views: “The rebirth of the liturgy strikes me as being just about necessary in order to preserve that which through the Word has been gained, so that things do not go the way of Rosenianism: that you can certainly convert people, but not keep them in a healthy godly life of worship and sacramental fellowship” (Letter to Rosendal, 7 March 1938).

<sup>9</sup> Giertz, Letter to Rosendal, 25 April 1941.

## II. WEST COAST SWEDISH LUTHERANISM, OR “SCHARTAUANISM”

### A. Introduction

As historian Robert Murray notes,

The life of the Church varies from place to place, from province to province. The “ecclesiastical geography” of Sweden is a large and difficult subject. A considerable difference normally exists between a parish on the West Coast and one in central Sweden. . . . The latter is located in a more broadminded or even indifferent region, where the personal characteristics of the minister are the essential [sic] and most people have a very vague idea as to what “pure doctrine” means.<sup>10</sup>

Henric Schartau (1757-1825) was, according to some, the greatest theologian Sweden has produced.<sup>11</sup> “[S]everal leading churchmen of the last century were directly or indirectly influenced by Schartau.”<sup>12</sup> Giertz was one of them.

Schartau served as pastor in the southern city of Lund and as dean of its cathedral from 1780 until his death. Though early in his ministry he was influenced by the German pietists,<sup>13</sup> he strongly opposed conventicles,<sup>14</sup> emotionalism,<sup>15</sup> lay preaching, separatist movements within the

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<sup>10</sup> Robert Murray, *A Brief History of the Church of Sweden* (Stockholm: SKDB, 1961) 87.

<sup>11</sup> Henrik Hägglund, *Henric Schartau and The Order of Grace* (Rock Island, Illinois: Augustana Book Concern, 1928) 25. *The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church* mentions Schartau, along with C.O. Rosenius and P.P. Waldenström, as one of the three leading Swedish theologians, post-Reformation through the nineteenth century. (Julius Bodensieck, ed., *The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church* [Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1965] 2305). Giertz calls Schartau, “...one of the most remarkable personalities of our Church” (Giertz, “The Gothenburg Diocese,” 151).

<sup>12</sup> Murray, *A Brief History of the Church of Sweden*, 62.

<sup>13</sup> “Schartau was friendly to German pietism, though he clearly saw its deterioration from the lofty beginnings of Spener and Francke. He fully appreciated the merits of these great leaders. The author whom he valued most of all, however, was Luther” (Hägglund, *Henric Schartau and The Order of Grace*, 17).

<sup>14</sup> Schartau disapproved of their lack of clerical supervision and of their separatist nature (Murray, *A Brief History of the Church of Sweden*, 67-69).

<sup>15</sup> “Schartau could not feel at home among the Moravians. His manly personality naturally reacted against a too pronounced emotionalism” (Hägglund, *Henric Schartau and The Order of Grace*, 16).

Church of Sweden,<sup>16</sup> and the discarding of the traditional liturgies.<sup>17</sup> As will be further shown, he could be called a “high-church pietist.” Yet, as can be seen, the meaning, connotation, and usage of the term “pietist” have been quite different in Sweden than in the United States.

Schartau’s disciples, especially students at the University of Lund originally from the Gothenburg Diocese, spread Schartau’s message after his death, mainly in their home diocese. This diocese, covering the entire western coast of Sweden, has been synonymous with what is called West Coast Swedish Lutheranism, or “Schartauanism,” which “still carries the spiritual stamp of Schartau’s disciples with firm concentration on public worship, pure doctrine, and great respect for ‘the true teacher.’”<sup>18</sup> It is this West Coast area in which Giertz served as bishop for 21 years.<sup>19</sup> The selection of Giertz as bishop was a shock, both due to his young age (44) and his position as an associate pastor of a rural parish (Torpa). Bishops were routinely selected from among cathedral deans, university chairmen of theology, and court chaplains. Upon Giertz’s arrival, “. . . the west coast and thereby also Gothenburg. . . were characterized by. . . Schartauanism.”<sup>20</sup> In 1960 Giertz wrote, “. . . From the religious point of view, this diocese is one of the most homogeneous in Sweden. This uniformity is the fruit of the great spiritual revival that emanated in the nineteenth century from the work of Henric Schartau. . . .”<sup>21</sup>

Perhaps most influential for Giertz’s appropriation and praise of Schartau and the Order

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<sup>16</sup> Giertz, *S.*, 115; Giertz, *Hammer*, 140.

<sup>17</sup> West Coast Lutheranism “...shows the influence of pietism, but at the same time lays great stress on tradition within the Church...” (H.M. Waddams, *The Swedish Church* [London: SPCK, 1946] 27).

<sup>18</sup> Murray, *A Brief History of the Church of Sweden*, 87. The Swedish for “true teacher:” *rätt lärare*.

<sup>19</sup> “If ‘the spiritual’ has not come forth on the West Coast, then I do not know [what] is meant by spirituality. Rather, it is certainly so, that the pietistic heritage, as it in West Swedish and in old-church piety has been unified with sound orthodoxy, is the spiritual foundation for our whole renewal of the church” (Giertz, letter to Rosendal, 7 March 1938).

<sup>20</sup> Stefan Oljelund, “Bo Giertz och Göteborg,” *Till Bo Giertz 31 augusti 1965*, eds. Carl Henrik Martling, Anna Greta Norén, Sten Edgar Staxäng, and Carl Strandberg (Uppsala: Merkantil-Tryckeriet, 1965) 56.

<sup>21</sup> Giertz, “The Gothenburg Diocese,” 151.

of Grace was Giertz's early stay with the traditional-church<sup>22</sup> pastor and Schartauan, Gösta Nelson. Ordained in late 1934, Giertz received his first call to a parish in the spring of 1935; the year he spent in Östra Husby would turn out to be decisive for his ministry and for his view of the Church, the Bible, and the confession of the faith, for there he encountered a traditional, low-church, biblical, and sincerely faithful piety which caused him to recognize his shortcomings and struggles. Giertz comments:

The year in Östra Husby... gave me much to consider, regarding some of the most essential issues of the faith. Among us theologians at Uppsala [University], Christianity was first and foremost a series of theoretical problems, which were to be discussed... But the YCM academic piety questioned or ignored Christ's work of atonement, in order to make the Gospel more understandable and acceptable to our time. In Östra Husby I was given reason to re-think this approach. I could not help but notice that in the midst of all the love and appreciation with which I was met, there was, nonetheless, a touch of disappointment that I did not preach Christ as one would have wished. ... [I did] not [struggle] regarding God's existence..., [but] I felt unsure in the application of my Christian faith and I asked myself if I really had the right to call myself Christian. ... The Christian answer is, of course, that he who believes in Jesus Christ—he has eternal life, [and] that there is a forgiveness which is valid despite all that is lacking. [But] no one was able to make these truths clear to me until I started reading Henric Schartau....

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<sup>22</sup> "Traditional church:" The Swedish *gammalkyrkliga* is literally translated as "old-churchly." It indicates a generally low-church, biblical, and pious Christian faith. The material in this paragraph, including the quotations from Giertz, as well as other personal-historical anecdotal data in the introduction above (4-5), is adapted from Algot Mattsson, *Bo Giertz: ateisten som blev biskop* (Göteborg: Tre Böcker Förlag AB, 1994) 15-16, 43, 50-54, 78-79, 82-88, 123, 126, this writer's translation.

Giertz's struggles and his reading of Schartau inspired him to contact Nelson, a parish pastor in Bokenäs in the Gothenburg diocese, who was recommended as a faithful servant in the West Coast tradition, an intelligent Schartauan, and one who was extremely knowledgeable when it came to the state of affairs in the diocese. In a letter of September 1936, Giertz was so bold as to request a one-week stay with the man who, interestingly, later would be one of the three finalists for the bishopric which Giertz attained: Giertz desired to live with Nelson in the parsonage, accompany him on his ministerial tasks, converse with him, ask him questions; in short, Giertz wished to be renewed and solidified in his Christian knowledge. Nelson readily honored Giertz's request that very autumn. While with Nelson, in a letter to his wife, Giertz wrote: "[Nelson] is patiently instructing me in the pure doctrine and I have received a great deal to think about.... The main principle is: 'Everything depends on God's Word.' ... That which keeps people faithful to the church [here]...is, above all, the rich, clear, and almost thrilling instruction regarding the way of salvation..., the Order of Grace." According to Giertz biographer Algot Mattsson, Nelson immersed Giertz in the Order of Grace and the piety of this West Coast parish. This immersion by Nelson, the true teacher and the great master of doctrine, not only renewed and solidified disciple Giertz's knowledge, but gave him an entirely new perspective for his continued walk of faith. This perspective, centered around the Order of Grace, remained primary for Giertz throughout his subsequent life and service to the Church.

Though henceforth a self-proclaimed Schartauan, it is interesting that Giertz "... was at times strongly critical of the west coast heirs of the awakening, whom he felt represented an all-too-rigid Schartauanism. At the same time, he has always shown much respect for the traditional-church piety."<sup>23</sup> Meanwhile, Clifford Ansgar Nelson noted that Giertz "...has a profound

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<sup>23</sup> "Giertz, Bo," *Bra Böckers Lexikon*, 1985 ed., this writer's translation.

appreciation of the high-church liturgical movement<sup>24</sup> as well as of low-church evangelicalism. If one should characterize the type of piety which is most congenial to his spirit, it would be as a broad evangelical orthodoxy that makes him congenial to the atmosphere of West Coast Lutheranism in Sweden.”<sup>25</sup> It is therefore clear that, before proceeding with our study of Giertz, we must look at the background, development, and features of Schartauanism.

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<sup>24</sup> Eighteen years before Giertz began his bishopric, Otto Bolling wrote, “...[the] high-church movement’s part of the country is West Sweden. It has been given this character through the Schartauesque piety-movement, which there has deep roots in the soul of the people. The so-called Schartauanism’s actual homeland is the Gothenburg Diocese...” (Otto Bolling, *Svenskt Fromhetsliv av I Dag* [Stockholm: SKDB, 1931] 108, this writer’s translation). Bolling continually points to the high-church movement/piety and Schartauanism as synonymous with one another (see 109ff.). However, Giertz contends, “The Church of the West Coast is...not High-Church, as it is sometimes labeled by badly informed newspapers. In its entirety it is Lutheranism along Low-Church lines with the addition of pietistic elements. On the subject of church rituals the average parishioner is loyal but not overly interested. The office of the church is held in high esteem, but always with the typical Low-Church reservation that the clergyman must be a true teacher. The sacraments are loved and honored, but most beloved is the Word in pure and clear form” (Giertz, “The Gothenburg Diocese,” 157).

<sup>25</sup> Clifford Ansgar Nelson, “An Introduction” in Giertz, *Liturgy and Spiritual Awakening* (Rock Island, Illinois: Augustana Book Concern, 1950) 6-7; henceforth *Liturgy*.

## B. Background of Schartauanism

Schartau was born in Malmö on 27 September 1757 and received his Master of Arts degree from the University of Lund 20 years later. He was ordained in 1780 and served as pastor in the city of Lund and dean of its cathedral until a few years before his death on 3 February 1825. Schartau was a Moravian briefly as a young man, and his opposition to the pietistic practices mentioned above<sup>26</sup> was in large part a reaction against Moravian-influenced, Herrnhutistic pietistic groups such as the Readers (1760-1780), originally a northern sect which later spread into the south, as well as against neology. The Readers held private meetings centered on reading the Bible, Luther, and Anders Nohrborg's Postil.<sup>27</sup> However, the "...readers were often seized with epileptic fits and convulsions, and...often gave vent to deep sighs and groans, which were taken as signs of the presence of the Holy Spirit."<sup>28</sup> In response, Schartau rejected sentimentalism and subjectivism, "...the pietistic stress on personal experience as the ground for spiritual certainty."<sup>29</sup> Only the Word of God, preached and taught through the exalted ecclesiastical office of the ordained minister, can serve as this ground. Schartau held a high regard for the Church, her sacraments,<sup>30</sup> and her ordinances, and thus separated himself from the pietists.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> 10-11above.

<sup>27</sup> See footnote 33 below. For more on Nohrborg, who had some influence on Schartau, see John Wordsworth, *The National Church of Sweden*, (London: A.R. Mowbray & Co. Ltd., 1911(329).

<sup>28</sup> Wordsworth, *The National Church of Sweden*, 363.

<sup>29</sup> Bodensieck, *The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church*, 2307.

<sup>30</sup> For a fascinating and moving account, in Schartau's own words, of his "conversion" upon hearing absolution during a communion service, see Hägglund, *Henric Schartau and The Order of Grace*, 15. According to Söderblom baptism was not emphasized by Schartau: "Strangely, baptism...is not a principle comfort" (Nathan Söderblom, *Svenskarnas Fromhet*, 48). He did, however, emphasize the Lord's Supper: "Let nothing exclude you from appropriating Him in Holy Communion" (Schartau as quoted in Hägglund, *Henric Schartau and The Order of Grace*, 116).

<sup>31</sup> However, Schartau still "...strongly disapproved moderate drinking. A Christian should not only be sober, abstaining from excessive drinking, which is self-evident, but he should abstain to such an extent that the temper of

### C. Development and Features of Schartauanism

Some of the emphases and features of Schartau's theology have already been indicated. Elaboration on these will now occur by discussing the legacy carried forward by his disciples. Interestingly, Schartauanism did not really have its beginnings until after Schartau's death, and really not so much in Lund. Numerous theology students from the University of Lund, many of them from western Sweden, heard Schartau preach and attended his Bible classes. After ordination and return to their homes, mostly in the Gothenburg Diocese, they doggedly spread his message and methods as the diocese moved them around from parish to parish. In this way, and through his writings, the Schartau revival truly began spreading rapidly in the mid-1800s, even into central and southern Sweden.

Schartau emphasized faithfulness to the Church, a pure doctrinal foundation, and the authority of the pastoral office. These, and any other of Schartau's teachings, centered on the Order of Grace,<sup>32</sup> or *ordo salutis*, the way of salvation.<sup>33</sup> The Holy Spirit first enlightens the mind; this enlightened intellect then affects the will.<sup>34</sup> While it has been presented in many similar formats,<sup>35</sup> Söderblom gives us the basic order of the process: "Enlightenment through law

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his mind not be altered by the use of drink" (Hägglund, *Henric Schartau and The Order of Grace*, 26). Excessive drinking was rampant at this time in Sweden.

<sup>32</sup> Swedish: *Nådens ordning*. Besides that of Giertz presented herein, other Swedish interpretations of Schartau's Order of Grace can be found in Söderblom, *Svenskarnas Fromhet*, Tore Hulthén, *Jesu Regering* (Lund: C.W.K. Gleerup, 1969), and Josef Imberg, *Guds Nåds Evangelium* (Uppsala: Bokförlaget Pro Veritate, 1978) especially 297-366. For a brief English summary of Imberg's interpretation see Josef Imberg, *God with us* (Borås, Sweden: Centraltryckeriet, 1999) 28-30.

<sup>33</sup> The Swedish word for "salvation:" *salighet*. Nohrborg's book of postils was entitled *Den fallna människans salighets ordning* (*The Way of Salvation for Fallen Man*). See 15 above and also footnote 27 above.

<sup>34</sup> Schartau held that God commands nothing "...which is contrary to either Scripture or reason" (Bodensieck, *The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church*, 2307). This is reminiscent of Luther's stance at Worms: Unless I can be proven wrong by reason or Scripture.... It is, furthermore, indicative of a proper and Lutheran understanding of the doctrine of creation and its anthropology. For more on this, the reader is referred to the many works on creation by twentieth century Swedish theologian Gustaf Wingren.

<sup>35</sup> For example, Hulthén's summary of the "...order, which never changes...[is] forgiveness, justification, new birth, sanctification, [and] glorification." Hulthen also gives us Schartau's explanation of the foundation, order, and means of salvation: "1. The foundation, which never fails, 2. The order which never changes, and 3. The means, which are always efficacious, when they are rightly administered. The foundation is the payment and the merit, in other words redemption through Jesus. [The order has already been given above.] The means are baptism, the Word and the Holy Supper" (Hulthén, *Jesu Regering*, 117, this writer's translation). See 55-56 below.

and gospel..., conversion,<sup>36</sup> justification, new birth, renewal, [and] glorification....”<sup>37</sup>

This Order of Grace was the source and center of Schartau’s emphases on teaching and on preaching. His catechesis was unique because of its discussion method and in its large classes. His works on catechetical instruction, published posthumously, were widely influential. They emphasized clarity in orthodox doctrine, understanding of dogma, and faithfulness to the historic, institutional, evangelical church and its forms and confessions.

One of the most distinctive features of Schartauanism is the style and structure of its sermons.<sup>38</sup> After the Trinitarian invocation, the introduction begins with a verse of Scripture, followed by its interpretation or brief exegesis, and then the Lord’s Prayer. The proposition or theme is then stated along with its subdivisions or parts. The main body of the sermon consists of expounding the theme while addressing the hearer in the third person. The closing application has three sections applied to the hearer in the second person: one addressed to the “confident sinner,” another to the stricken sinner or “mournful soul,” and finally one to the forgiven sinner who knows and believes the “assurance of grace.”<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> *Omvändelsen*: literally, the action of reversing one’s direction.

<sup>37</sup> Söderblom, *Svenskarnas Fromhet*, 49-50, this writer’s translation. This Order has been criticized: Schartau’s “...fault, which was exaggerated by his followers, was certain constant reference to the forms and divisions of logic and to the inward state of the soul—in other words to psychology. This led...to the requirement of a conscious ascent through certain stages of progress, which was not altogether healthy” (Wordsworth, *The National Church of Sweden*, 365). Giertz, though, maintains that Schartau’s “...doctrine is...the exact opposite of that which it is sometimes held to be. ...The order of grace is often understood as a doctrine about the soul’s way to God through a series of improvements and cleansings. It is completely different... The essential in the order of grace is not the order but rather the grace” (Giertz, *Herdabrev Till Göteborgs Stift* [Stockholm: SKDB, 1949] 151, this writer’s translation; henceforth *Herdabrev*).

<sup>38</sup> For fifteen examples of Schartau’s sermons see Hägglund, *Henric Schartau and The Order of Grace*, 38-216.

<sup>39</sup> Hägglund, *Henric Schartau and The Order of Grace*, 125, 126. Giertz seems to counter this particular structure: [The sermon] must not be especially ‘liturgical.’ It must not in any special way become liturgically constructed. Many pastors have a dangerous inclination to do this. The sermon is introduced by a special small liturgy which includes an apostolic greeting, hymn reading, set prayers, the Trinitarian formula and other things. Such a fixed introduction to the sermon is often only a meaningless duplication of the liturgy already celebrated. The greeting was already there (in the *Salutatio*), as was the appropriate prayer (in the *Collecta*); and the sermon hymn should have completed the essential preparation of prayer. Personally, I am of the opinion that sermon preambles in the pulpit should be as short as possible. A brief prayer, usually a free one, will in most cases be sufficient (Giertz, “The Meaning and Task of the Sermon in the Framework of the Liturgy,” *The Unity of the Church* [Rock Island, Illinois: Augustana Press] 138).

However, Giertz makes other points, such as the emphasis on the prophetic nature of the sermon as God’s Word, that complement Schartau. Also: “For him who has learned to understand this sort of sermon, it has more to offer

Söderblom opines that, considering "...the dryness of the Schartauesque sermon style,<sup>40</sup> one is surprised at eyewitness accounts of Schartau's energetic preaching. As fearful as he was of the emotional, he still was himself at times moved to tears in the pulpit."<sup>41</sup> Söderblom also discusses the above-mentioned typical outline for Schartauanism's preaching.<sup>42</sup> The preaching itself was to be done in the public worship. Corporate worship was vital and all-important for Schartau, though he certainly did also emphasize the individual in pastoral care and counseling.

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and is easier to remember than any other manner of speaking. ... But if you lack sufficient preparation and knowledge, this kind of a sermon is rather unfathomable" (Giertz, "The Gothenburg Diocese," 154).

<sup>40</sup> "He does not try to be amusing or entertaining in any way. His sermons first seemed almost tedious, then struck [one] as being admirably organized, finally captured [one] completely" (Giertz, "The Gothenburg Diocese," 152-54)

<sup>41</sup> Söderblom, *Svenskarnas Fromhet*, 43, this writer's translation.

<sup>42</sup> See Söderblom, *Svenskarnas Fromhet*, 43ff.

## D. Closing

Even a cursory study of Giertz would make it clear that he was strongly influenced by Henric Schartau. There were of course others,<sup>43</sup> but for the purposes of this study, it will more than suffice to address the following: What of Schartau, Schartauanism, and pietism has Giertz confessed? What has he rejected?<sup>44</sup> What role does the *ordo salutis*, so foundational to the teaching of Schartau, play in Giertz's pastoral theology and soul care? These are complex questions. An unnamed spokesman for the Church of Sweden today says that within the high-church movement associated with Giertz, "...there are those who are favorable toward the traditional-church movement [piety]...of Schartauanism."<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> For example, Martin Luther and C.O. Rosenius. See footnote 8 above, as well as Giertz, *Herdabrev*, especially 83-146 and 147-68. See also 47-49 below.

<sup>44</sup> According to the Hans Andrae, who while a pastor in Sweden worked with Giertz in the confessional, intra-Church group *Kyrklig samling* (see footnote 180 below), Giertz would probably not consider himself a Schartauian, although agreeing with much of Schartau's teachings. (Hans Andrae, telephone interview, 23 March 1997). Pertinently, Giertz says, "[A]ntagonists called them 'Schartauans', but they [the "Schartauans"] did not desire to be known by any label...except good Lutheran Christians" (Giertz, "The Gothenburg Diocese", 153). However, see 8-9 above.

<sup>45</sup> "Rörelser i Svenska Kyrkan," The official web-site of the Church of Sweden, <<http://www.svkyrkan.se>>. See 11-14 above and footnote 22.

### III. *NÅDENS ORDNING*: THE ORDER OF GRACE

#### A. Introduction

As stated, Schartau's teachings center on the Order of Grace, or *ordo salutis*, the way of salvation.<sup>46</sup> The doctrine of the Order of Grace in our earthly life takes up a third of Bo Giertz's *Kyrkofromhet* (henceforth *KF*).<sup>47</sup> "The special frame, in which...Giertz's writings fit [is]...the *ordo-salutis* theology."<sup>48</sup> It is to *KF* then that we must turn in order to gain proper insight into his understanding of the Order of Grace. By doing this, much comprehension will be gained regarding Schartau's influence upon Giertz's confession of the chief doctrine of the justification and conversion of the sinner, his confession of "...undeserved grace and...Christ's atonement..., the article of faith upon which the church stands or falls..., "<sup>49</sup> his appropriation of pietism, and thus his pastoral confession of the Word, soul care, and, indeed, the faith. In his writings, Giertz himself often points to Schartau and his influence:<sup>50</sup> "Schartau has given us the classic summary of how conversion occurs in his teaching on the Order of Grace."<sup>51</sup>

Though originally published early in the writing career of Giertz (1939), the bishop writes in the foreword to the 1962 edition that *KF* "...deals with questions which never lose their

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<sup>46</sup> For more on the origins of the doctrine of the Order of Grace, see, among much available material, David Scaer, *A Latin Ecclesiastical Glossary for Francis Pieper's Dogmatics* (Ft. Wayne, Indiana: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1978); Richard A. Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms: drawn principally from Protestant scholastic theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1985) 215; John Theodore Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955) 362-366; and Werner Elert, *The Structure of Lutheranism* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1962) 140-153.

<sup>47</sup> Giertz, *Kyrkofromhet* (Stockholm: SKDB, 1962); first edition, 1939. This work is a continuation of Giertz, *Kristi Kyrka* (Stockholm: SKDB, 1960); first edition, 1939. These two works, along with *Stengrudnen*, are unanimously regarded as Giertz's most important. Unfortunately, there are no English editions of *KF* or *Kristi Kyrka*. The latter represents what could be called the objective part of Giertz's theology. See footnote 6 above.

<sup>48</sup> Åkerberg, *Teologin i Stengrudnen*, 10, this writer's translation.

<sup>49</sup> Giertz, *KF*, 13. Unless otherwise noted, from hereon all quotations are from the pages of *KF* and are this writer's translation.

<sup>50</sup> See 14. Also: Giertz, *Herdabrev*, 150ff.; and Giertz, "The Gothenburg Diocese," 151-157. "...Schartauanism for many means Lutheranism in its purest form.... Regarding pietism..., here in the [Linköping] diocese, Schartau has meant immensely much to us younger people" (Giertz, letter to Rosendal, 7 March 1938).

<sup>51</sup> Giertz, *Herdabrev*, 151, this writer's translation; and see Giertz, *S.*, 7-110 (especially 98-99), 164ff., 271; Giertz, *Hammer*, 3-131 (especially 116-17), 202ff., 334.

topical value.”<sup>52</sup> Thus he made no significant changes to the book during those 23 years. Apparently, its views remained the bishop’s late into his writing career.<sup>53</sup> Its views on the doctrine of the Order of Grace, which “is always current”<sup>54</sup>, will be presented below, providing ministers especially with a practical guide for pastoral soul care. This will also lead us to appreciate the place of pietism and the Order of Grace in the theology of Bo Giertz.

It is vital to note that for Giertz, the Order of Grace does not consist of stages one must go through, steps one must climb, or even classes one must pass. The Order of Grace, as is continually emphasized,

is rather a descent, a process of impoverishment, in which God takes away from man one after the other of his false grounds of comfort. At its heart it is a description of how God’s love overcomes the obstacles and breaks down the dams which prevent the divine grace from freely pouring itself over a life. These obstacles usually are in a certain context and group themselves in a complementary order. Therefore grace also has its order.<sup>55</sup>

Giertz presents this order thus: the call, enlightenment through the law, enlightenment through gospel, justification and rebirth, and sanctification.

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<sup>52</sup> 6.

<sup>53</sup> According to Olofsson, there is no differentiation to be made between an “early” and a “late” Giertz (Olofsson, personal interview, 12 June 1998). See also the excellent article: Folke T. Olofsson, “Kyrkan återupptäckt,” *Tro & Tanke* 1-2 (1994): 291-318, which strongly complements the material in this thesis.

<sup>54</sup> 54.

<sup>55</sup> 40. See footnote 37 above.

B. *Heliga Dopet*: Holy Baptism

Giertz first points out what the Order of Grace is not. It is not, as many assume, a teaching on how the soul finds its way to God. Rather, it teaches how God finds his way to man's heart. This begins with Holy Baptism.

Baptism is the second birth: It is in water and the Spirit that the Almighty acts on his child for the second time. The creature has already been born in pain and sorrow into a fallen world of guilt and suffering. The child is thus under the condemnation of sin and death. But in Baptism God enters with a new creative work, a miracle just as amazing as the first time he created human life. Here a man is born a second time, now with high ceremony and holy joy, into a world in which God has once again established the covenant<sup>56</sup> we had previously broken, into a fallen but redeemed world with its combination of atonement and mercy. In this world the baptized child becomes a participant in a new creation and an heir of the coming age with all its glory and joy. The baptismal rite itself is the meeting place, the holy act, which God himself has chosen for this miracle.<sup>57</sup>

This is God's work, his activity. But as long as you<sup>58</sup> rely on your own works, then you will want to be re-baptized, so that you can be really sure you have done something, wanted something, and thought something regarding your baptism. Or you may accept your baptism, but build your trust on something "more certain:" your repentance, your faith, your feelings, your zeal, or your conversion—all as if there were anything more certain than God's faithfulness and his election. "You foolish person..., it is not in any way *you* who try, but rather *God!* It is not

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<sup>56</sup> See Giertz, *Kristi Kyrka*, 154-68.

<sup>57</sup> Giertz, *Kristi Kyrka*, 173.

<sup>58</sup> There is difficulty in translating Swedish pronouns. The sometimes awkward nature of "one" and the connoted gender specificity of "he" or "she" is basically not apparent in the Swedish use of pronouns. This reader should keep this in mind.

you who have intended that you will be a Christian, but rather *God!*” And in baptism God consecrates you unto a life of sanctification and obedience to him.<sup>59</sup>

Baptism is also the first of the Means of Grace to reach us, before the Lord’s Supper and even the Word.<sup>60</sup> The place of baptism in relationship to the Word and the Means of Grace must be understood ecclesialogically. Baptism, especially infant baptism, can only be rightly understood and interpreted if the Bible is allowed to remain within the Church. After all, it is Mother Church which offers us the Bible, it is she who has decided which scriptures are holy, and it is she who helps us understand them. It is only when one leaves the Church’s fellowship or tears the Bible out of her hands and tries to interpret it individually that uncertainty sets in. We become blind and helpless and try unconsciously to read our own desires and our modern ideas into the ancient and timeless Christian message.<sup>61</sup>

“We can never think highly enough of our baptism.”<sup>62</sup> In baptism our heavenly Father breaks into our lives, unifies us with the life of Christ, makes a covenant with us, and chooses us for citizenship in his kingdom. Thus, the baptized person has an inheritance, a home. As a baptized person I can deny and reject this, but “...I cannot erase the fact that I have a home and a Father who has not forgotten his child and never ceases to yearn for it. I also cannot prevent him from seeking me and sending offers to me. And this is exactly what God does. So this is how ‘a person finds the way to God.’”<sup>63</sup> Baptism is foundational to the Order of Grace.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Giertz, *Kristi Kyrka*, 175, 177, 179, this writer’s translation.

<sup>60</sup> Giertz, *Kristi Kyrka*, 169.

<sup>61</sup> Giertz, *Kristi Kyrka*, 177-78. For more on Giertz’s view of Scripture, see his essay, “Bibelns syn och bibelsyn,” in Giertz, *Då föll Herrens eld: Nytt liv i tjänsten* (Göteborg: Församlingsförlaget, 1996) 207-18.

<sup>62</sup> 15.

<sup>63</sup> 16.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Giertz, *S.* 172-87; *Hammer*, 214-22, and *Kristi Kyrka*, 169-83. There is both a law aspect and, more importantly, a gospel aspect to baptism, which relates it to the law-gospel distinction in the Order of Grace discussed below (28-33). From the law perspective, baptism is a call unto repentance, a call to be a good steward of the sanctified life. From the gospel perspective, which is the greater of the two, we see that God cannot regret his gracious gifts and his baptismal call. He is faithful and steadfast in relation to the promise of baptism. For baptism’s sake, you dare believe that the work of the crucified Christ is credited also to you. (See Giertz, *Kristi Kyrka*, 182).

## C. Giertz's Outline and Presentation of the Order of Grace

### 1. *Kallelsen*: The Call, The Invitation

God's invitation to come to him, to come to faith, is constant at baptism and thereafter.

God's call comes in a number of ways, but it comes most clearly, most surely, through the proclaimed Word. It places you before a "decision of eternal importance."<sup>65</sup> After years of ignoring the call within baptism, its personal significance is now being felt, and then its initial peace.<sup>66</sup> This feeling is caused by "the calling grace" as "the old spiritual guides,"<sup>67</sup> Schartau and others, named it. This feeling says "yes" to God.<sup>68</sup> However, this is not yet conversion. God's work on the cross and in one's baptism has not yet been appropriated truly through faith. Conversion will only take place as the person is enlightened by law and gospel, justified and re-born.

At this point, it is essential to make use of God's Word and to pray, especially within the Church of Christ, one's home as one who is baptized. All that we need to know God publicly gives us in His Word. Even prayer is learned and practiced in the Church's confession and praise. Giertz rejected individualism as Schartau did. The same is true of sentimentalism. One must not rely upon the wonderful new feelings, even if one thinks they are meritorious, but only

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<sup>65</sup> 17. Note that, though implicit, Giertz does not explicitly say that it is *man's* decision. Compare, for example, Giertz's statements on baptism (22-23 above) and on the "foundation of our Christian faith" (37-38 below). Scriptural sources regarding the teaching on the "the call": 1 Cor. 1:2, 24; John 1:48; Romans 8:28-30; Acts 26:14; 2 Pe. 1:10; Phil. 1:6; 1 Cor. 1:26-31; Acts 2:37, 16:25-34; Eph. 5:14; Luke 22:31-34; Mark 16:15-16; Matt. 28:18-20; Luke 24:47, 14:17; John 3:16-21; Matt. 17:5, 22:1-14; Is. 55:1; Mark 1:14-15; Matt. 23:37, 13:58; Acts 7:51; Heb. 3:7-19; Is. 55:10-11. (See Imberg, *Guds Nåds Evangelium*, 302-352).

<sup>66</sup> Before proceeding further, it is helpful to remember that Giertz writes primarily to a Swedish audience. At that time, even more so than today, almost all Swedes were members of the Lutheran Church of Sweden, a state church. As such, they were indeed baptized and confirmed, but were becoming increasingly secularized and distant from the Church. As such, it was, and still is, very common for the baptized Swede to fall away from the faith of baptism, thus necessitating a later experience of conversion or God's call and a reintroduction of faithful church life. Giertz himself experienced such a call from God during his student years at Uppsala, as noted above. However, the Order of Grace and its call retains its pertinence for others, as such an experience is also a daily necessity for any Christian, which the Small Catechism makes clear in its confession of Holy Baptism. (Small Catechism IV).

<sup>67</sup> This is a common phrase throughout Giertz's discussion of the Order of Grace.

<sup>68</sup> 18.

upon the objective Word of God and the Church. Feelings and emotions waver and fail.<sup>69</sup> And when they do, there is bitterness.

Thus is encountered the first of what “the old spiritual guides” and Giertz call the three “obstacles to salvation:<sup>70</sup> ...man’s natural aversion to prayer and the Word.”<sup>71</sup> It is only the calling grace that can overcome this obstacle and move one into the habit of the Word: prayer, Bible, and worship. If one stands firm here, then one has truly said “yes” to God. One has become a disciple of Jesus.<sup>72</sup> It is now time for the right use of His Holy Supper. For even though true<sup>73</sup> faith is not yet present, the person is a true disciple.<sup>74</sup> The Lord’s Supper is specifically for such people, for disciples to work faith in them. And it is the *Lord’s* Supper, emphasizes the bishop. Indeed, this section of *KF* continually and properly emphasizes the Christocentricity of *Nådens ordning* as well as its exclusive reliance on Christ Jesus our Lord. It is through the right use of the Lord’s Supper and the other means of grace that God works on man.

Giertz often gives warnings. The Order of Grace has frequently been misunderstood and thus wrongly criticized. Giertz makes it clear that the essential point within the Order of Grace is grace, not the order.<sup>75</sup> Thus the focus is not on when the turning point occurred in the journey: “Therefore a true Christian usually does not speak much about his first encounter with God [after

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<sup>69</sup> Giertz, *S.*, 240; Giertz, *Hammer*, 297.

<sup>70</sup> For more on the obstacles to salvation see Giertz, “Frälsningshindren - I,” *Svensk Pastoraltidskrift* No. 3 (1977): 27-29; “Frälsningshindren - II,” *Svensk Pastoraltidskrift* No. 7 (1977): 105-107.

<sup>71</sup> 20.

<sup>72</sup> In Swedish “doctrine” (*lära*) and “disciple” (*lärlunge*) have the same root. As a verb, *lära* means “teach.” By baptizing/teaching disciples of Jesus are made (Mt. 28:16-20). See 50-53 for more on the Church’s duty to teach.

<sup>73</sup> Swedish: *rätta*.

<sup>74</sup> 37, 21. Giertz also refers to a true, or real, Christian (“*en riktig kristen*”), as well as dead faith (“*död tro*”). Cf. Giertz, *S.*, 239 (“*rätta tron*”), 217; Giertz, *Hammer*, 296 (“true faith”), 267. Martin Luther, in a sermon on Luke 16:19, remarks (1522):

Some people hear and read the Gospel and what it says about faith, quickly assent, and call what they are thinking “faith.” But they go no farther in their thinking than the notion that faith is something that lies in their own power.... For what is that notion which they call faith but a dream...made with their own power, without the grace of God in their hearts? But the *real faith*...cannot be brought into being by our own thoughts. On the contrary, it is entirely God’s work in us, without any co-operation on our part (Ewald M. Plass, ed., *What Luther Says* [St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959] 474, emphasis added; also found in the Weimar edition of Luther’s Works, 103: 285).

<sup>75</sup> Giertz, *Herdabrev*, 151.

baptism]. He knows that it is nothing to build upon. For if [God's] work has not continued, then the call has been wasted...."<sup>76</sup> A wasted call is a serious matter. God does always forgive anew, but we are not to test God, unfaithfully and unthankfully seeking to cheapen his grace. No one knows when the last call will be given in this life.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> 23.

<sup>77</sup> 23, 16. However, as indicated above (23, 24), the call of baptism remains as God continues to send his offers.

### a. Discipleship: God's Word and His Supper

It is truly good, right, and salutary to commence this section on Giertz's confession of the Lord's Supper with an excerpt from one of his narrative writings. After all, as already mentioned, Giertz is undoubtedly best known in the United States for being the author of *The Hammer of God*, "a novel about the cure of souls."<sup>78</sup>

Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink of it, all of you: for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you I shall not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.'<sup>79</sup>

Again they looked at him with wondering eyes. They watched the tough, unleavened bread being torn into small pieces between his hands, watched him hold it out, heard him say that it was his body that was now being given for their sake. They were to do that in memory of him. His body. Given. For their sake. In memory...the words fell from his lips, heavy and significant, and sank into their hearts. Transparently clear they were, yet impossible to penetrate. ...

He took the chalice with the red wine and again thanked his Father and blessed it. They were all looking at him intently. Yes--this too was new. The chalice was the new covenant in his blood that was being shed for the many for the forgiveness of sins. ...

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<sup>78</sup> Giertz, *Hammer*, ii.

<sup>79</sup> Matthew 26:26-29.

*His blood? Shed for the many? Again they had reached the limit of their understanding, beyond which they saw only darkness and enigma. Was the Messiah going to shed his blood? For the masses? For the forgiveness of sins? The chalice stood on the table in front of him, empty. ...*

He had set the door of the future ajar and said that this last Passover was also the first, the end, the beginning, and that what was never to happen again should always happen in a new form. None of them could put that into words. It was vision and surmise. It lay beyond the limits of the utterable. It was he who spoke, who commanded, who gave. They kept silent and accepted.<sup>80</sup>

It is helpful, within the context of the sacramental Order of Grace, to acquaint the reader with Giertz's general understanding of our Lord's Supper.

An underappreciated but key work for understanding Giertz's confession of the Lord's Supper is *Trons ABC: En stuiebok i kyrkans tro för lekmän*,<sup>81</sup> published in 1971. As Giertz says in the preface, the book is intended for the layperson wishing to deepen his understanding of the faith of his church. Giertz's pastoral approach can be seen in this work, while he nonetheless remains strongly theological.

In *ABC* it is interesting to note where Giertz begins his explanation of the Lord's Supper. It is not until the ninth of ten chapters that he discusses at length what he himself has called "the center of all liturgy."<sup>82</sup> Prior to this come chapters on "What Is It to Believe?," "Revelation in the Bible," "Who Is God?," "The Creator and His Creation," "The Savior," "The Salvation," "The

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<sup>80</sup> Giertz, *With My Own Eyes: A Life of Jesus* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1960) 174-176.

<sup>81</sup> Giertz, *Trons ABC: En studiebok i kyrkans tro för lekmän* (Stockholm: Verbum, 1971). Henceforth *ABC*.

<sup>82</sup> Giertz, *Liturgy*, 12.

Spirit and the Church,” and “The Spirit and the Faith.” Then we reach the chapter on the Lord’s Supper, “In the World but Not of the World,” and finally “The Eternal Life.”

The chapter on “The Spirit and the Church” does have a brief section on the means of grace. Here Giertz tells us that it is “through the means of grace that the Spirit carries out his work in the church.... The sacraments are...means of grace. They are usually defined as being instituted by Christ as holy matters, to which he has tied a promise of grace. We evangelicals include as sacraments Baptism and Communion<sup>83</sup>...[S]ometimes one also includes Absolution.”<sup>84</sup>

The ninth chapter deals with the two realms and the “now, not yet” tension, placing the Supper within an eschatological context and progressing to its central locus. After introducing the means of grace<sup>85</sup> as “necessary for the Christian life,”<sup>86</sup> though reception of Communion alone does not make one a Christian,<sup>87</sup> Giertz speaks of what Communion is, what it gives, and worthy reception.<sup>88</sup>

“Communion is instituted by Christ.... The invisible gift is Christ’s body...and his blood” under the outer sign of the bread and the wine.<sup>89</sup> Giertz then refers to 1 Corinthians 10:16 while reminding us that here it is a “...matter of a supernatural, for us incomprehensible, eating and not crass, fleshy, Capernaistic.”<sup>90</sup> It is completely unique. “There is an eternal difference between the Lord’s body and other food.”<sup>91</sup> It was also special at the first Lord’s Supper: “This Passover meal was different,” writes Giertz simply.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> *Nattvarden*: literally, “night meal” or “supper”.

<sup>84</sup> Giertz, *ABC*, 93, this writer’s translation.

<sup>85</sup> For even greater detail on the theology of the Means of Grace in Giertz, see Giertz, *Kristi Kyrka*, 139-212.

<sup>86</sup> Giertz, *ABC*, 119, this writer’s translation.

<sup>87</sup> “Certainly [Satan] will be concerned when a man begins to seek the Lord’s Supper or comes within hearing distance of the Word of God. But as long as there is preaching of such a kind that it does not awaken a sleeping sinner, and as long as the system only creates self-satisfied work-righteousness among Christians, so long Satan himself could be, officially, a church Christian” (Giertz, *Liturgy*, 29).

<sup>88</sup> *Rätt nattvardsgång*: literally, “Right Communion-going”.

<sup>89</sup> Giertz, *ABC*, 119, this writer’s translation.

<sup>90</sup> Giertz, *ABC*, 119, this writer’s translation.

<sup>91</sup> Giertz, *Att leva med Kristus* (Stockholm: Verbum, 1974) 213, this writer’s translation.

<sup>92</sup> Giertz, *Att leva med Kristus*, 170, this writer’s translation.

There is certainly a prominent eschatological dimension in Giertz's presentation. In the Lord's Supper it is a "matter of being given a share in the resurrected Savior and his life. In other words, it is a matter of the life of the world to come, which already now is presented as a gift to us under the outer forms of bread and wine."<sup>93</sup> This gift can only be received by and in faith; only faith comprehends the incomprehensible. "All who partake of the bread and the wine receive Christ's body and blood, but only those who believe receive the blessings of the gift and can profit by it."<sup>94</sup> In *Kristi Kyrka*, Giertz points out that one of the blessings is all-important unity: "This is the foundation for the church's unity: bound together with the same Savior in the same mysterious fellowship, sharing in the same atoning sacrifice, received in *one* faith, mediated through *one* baptism, enclosed in *one* bread."<sup>95</sup> At the Communion table, we are made brothers and sisters. While Communion is utterly communal, it is also very specifically individual: "When the pastor nears my place, I hear it again and again: For you...For you...For you. Yes, *for me*, also for me was this sacrifice given for the forgiveness of sins."<sup>96</sup>

So, what is the gift? It is "the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation."<sup>97</sup> Here again Giertz is led to eschatological musings:

Forgiveness is found where Christ is found. If one has a share in Christ, then one has a share in his life. One has a share in that kingdom which is not of this world, the kingdom to come. We look forward to that kingdom at every reception of communion. We confess our faith in this: "As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Giertz, *ABC*, 120, this writer's translation.

<sup>94</sup> Giertz, *ABC*, 120, this writer's translation.

<sup>95</sup> Giertz, *Kristi Kyrka*, 60, this writer's translation.

<sup>96</sup> Giertz, *Kristi Kyrka*, 163, this writer's translation.

<sup>97</sup> Giertz, *ABC*, 120, this writer's translation.

<sup>98</sup> Giertz, *ABC*, 120, this writer's translation.

Elsewhere Giertz says, “It is a premonition, an anticipation, a fore-feast to the big feast.”<sup>99</sup> And yet here is a great paradox, for while the Lord’s death is proclaimed, it is “the Life within him that had defeated sin and death. ...It was of this life and of this victory that he wanted to ensure them a share, when he before his suffering brought them into the new covenant.”<sup>100</sup>

While Giertz powerfully connects the Holy Supper to the world to come, the afterlife, he also acknowledges its timeliness and relevancy for the here and now. This is the “now, not yet” tension. “The King invites us to a feast, already here and now, while we are already on the way. He sets the communion table.”<sup>101</sup>

The communion liturgy renders this faith that He, who is going to come in His kingdom, already now descends to us and is present among us. Therefore is united in one and the same, the song of praise, the seraphim’s “holy, holy, holy”—the song of praise which fills heaven—with the disciples’ shouts before this Lord, who has his kingly procession among us: Blessed is he, who comes in the name of the Lord.<sup>102</sup>

In *Liturgy*, Giertz stresses this connection between Communion and liturgy again and again.

Typical is the following:

Liturgy is the work of the same Spirit in preserving the flame which has been lighted. It is the means by which the awakened soul is bound together with the fellowship of the church. It is a pathway for walking in the light, a road that leads forward through the years, and the soul is ever anew called to join itself with that royal priesthood which worships before the altar of God with prayer and thanksgiving, with Communion, and with a quiet listening to the Word of the

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<sup>99</sup> Giertz, *Att leva med Kristus*, 213, this writer’s translation.

<sup>100</sup> Giertz, *Kristi Kyrka*, 159, this writer’s translation.

<sup>101</sup> Giertz, *Att leva med Kristus*, 213, this writer’s translation.

<sup>102</sup> Giertz, *ABC*, 120, this writer’s translation.

Lord. ... Liturgy is...needful. There can be no normal church life without liturgy.

Sacraments need form....<sup>103</sup>

Giertz stresses our future heavenly life and our present earthly life, but he also bids us to look back in time. Everything about Communion “says to me that the Savior once lived among us, that he walked with purposeful steps on the earth as our brother, that he ate and drank as one of us and that I here celebrate the commemoration of a happening....”<sup>104</sup> And that Savior still lives among us: through the gift of his body and his blood “I am one with him and live with him in a secret, unbreakable and inner unity, in a mystical union.”<sup>105</sup>

Giertz discusses the issue of worthy reception within the context of the worship life of the church. He points to Paul:

Since it is Christ’s body and blood which is given to the communicants,<sup>106</sup> an abuse of communion means that one “sins against oneself with the Lord’s body and blood,” as Paul puts it. This happens, says Paul, if one eats this bread or drinks the Lord’s cup in an unworthy manner. In other words, there is no mention of unworthy *communicants*. *Worthy to receive such a gift can no human be*. But one can receive the gift in an unworthy *manner*.<sup>107</sup>

Paul does not discuss the matter of unworthy communicants because it is clear for both Paul and Giertz that all communicants are receiving here undeserved gifts out of God’s grace. The key is to receive in a worthy manner. So if “worthy to receive such a gift” no human can be, for whom then is the gift intended?

The simplest and most biblical answer is this: the disciples. A disciple of Jesus is

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<sup>103</sup> Giertz, *Liturgy*, 13, 17.

<sup>104</sup> Giertz, *Kristi Kyrka*, 162, this writer’s translation.

<sup>105</sup> Giertz, *Kristi Kyrka*, 164, this writer’s translation.

<sup>106</sup> *Nattvardsgästerna*: literally, “night meal guests.”

<sup>107</sup> Giertz, *ABC*, 121, this writer’s translation.

one who follows him, which in our situation means to listen to his Word and pray to him for proper understanding of Him, whether it is to be given the right faith or to be preserved in it. In other words, one does not need to torture oneself over the matter of whether one already has the right faith. The key is to give Jesus his due and listen to him in order to learn from him.<sup>108</sup>

Furthermore, a disciple of Jesus is one who comes in humility and wants to produce the fruits of repentance, even if he is weak and faulty. These daily faults do not make one unworthy to receive. Rather, it is precisely as someone who is unclean, pitiful, unworthy and undeserving of his lovingkindness that one approaches the Lord's Table in the right, worthy manner. "In order to be proper guests we must examine ourselves and judge ourselves. Then we must not stay away, but confess our sins, trust in Christ, and thus eat of the bread and drink of the cup."<sup>109</sup> In, by, through, and because of Christ's person and work alone, God has declared us, contrary to our sin, worthy to be given his merciful gift. The saint/sinner comes asking for grace and absolution, set on amendment of this earthly life, though the Christian is intimately aware that this life is but a pilgrimage on the way home to another world.

Coming to the table is even a witness, a confession: "To go the few steps from one's church pew forward to the altar rail means that something is being said...perhaps to the furthest corner of the parish...that one wants to belong to this Lord."<sup>110</sup> This is a Eucharistic element of the Lord's Supper, one reason why it is a Eucharist, a thanksgiving.<sup>111</sup> One can only offer thanks by putting oneself and all one's plans, wishes, will, time, and problems "as a gift before the

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<sup>108</sup> Giertz, *ABC*, 121, this writer's translation.

<sup>109</sup> Giertz, *Preaching from the Whole Bible* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1967) 49.

<sup>110</sup> Giertz, *Kristi Kyrka*, 161, this writer's translation.

<sup>111</sup> Giertz rightly points out that "...the word Eucharist is taken from the accounts of the first communion. It says Jesus, 'after he had given thanks'—praised and blessed...—distributed the bread and the wine" (83).

altar.”<sup>112</sup> And what a Lord we have, who accepts this meager thank-offering given in faith. “This one welcomes sinners and eats with them.”<sup>113</sup> “Most important continues to be that contribution which every church attendant makes in the pew...Even here what matters is that a Christian is not coming in order to be served—not by the preacher, the choir, or the cantor—but rather to serve. To celebrate divine service<sup>114</sup> really means to serve God with one’s songs of praise and prayer, devotion, and folded hands.”<sup>115</sup>

Despite this emphasis on the individual, Giertz continually stresses the centrality of the Lord’s Supper in the life of the corporate Church, the body of Christ, and bemoans the lack of frequent celebrations in the Church of Sweden: “To where has Communion disappeared?”<sup>116</sup> “A morning service<sup>117</sup> without communion is and will continue to be...an unsatisfactory expedient emergency measure.”<sup>118</sup> Because of its gifts, Giertz calls for weekly Communion or, at the very least, bi-weekly. “Therefore the Church calls for courageous sons and daughters...so that God can give a stream of life in our devastated congregations and give us a wave of devoted spirituality, which can teach our Swedish people again to experience the Christian service as the soul’s saving meeting with God.”<sup>119</sup> This is what a truly sound “awakening” is: It leads “people into a regular worship life and a faithful use of the sacrament of Communion.”<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Giertz, *Kristi Kyrka*, 165, this writer’s translation.

<sup>113</sup> Luke 15:2.

<sup>114</sup> Swedish: *Gudstjänst*.

<sup>115</sup> 97. It is important to note the national-historical context of this citation: Giertz is here reacting against the practice of the “Swedish people, who to a great extent have become inactive in God’s house and declined into a merely observant, apathetic, and critical audience” (98). Rather, Giertz exhorts them to be involved: to pray, praise, hear God’s Word, and make use of the sacraments in zeal, not only with heart and mouth, but even with their very manners and behavior.

<sup>116</sup> Giertz, *Kristi Kyrka*, 154, this writer’s translation.

<sup>117</sup> *Högmassa*: literally, “high mass”.

<sup>118</sup> 100.

<sup>119</sup> 102.

<sup>120</sup> Giertz, *Liturgy*, this writer’s translation.

Let us close this section in the manner with which it began, by hearing from one Giertz's narrative writings which poignantly illustrates his confession of the Lord's Supper.

Johannes was dying.

[He] lay perfectly still with eyes closed. The wrinkles about his mouth and between his eyebrows had been smoothed by an unseen hand. Was it a smile that played upon his lips? The smile of a child, a very happy child, thought Savonius.

He read the Admonition and the Words of Institution over the bread and the wine. The holy words restored his confidence. Here, nothing depended on himself. Here he was simply a steward, a nameless link in the long succession of hands which Christ had used throughout the ages to distribute His gifts to men. For the first time he felt it a relief, rather than a compulsion, to be nothing but a servant of the church, without any contribution of his own, and with no other glory to seek than to steward the holy heritage honorably.

He distributed the bread. Dividing one of the wafers made enough for all. Then he gave them the cup. ...

'Good-bye then, Peter,' he said haltingly. 'Thank you for the ride. I am sorry I could not do more for Johannes.'

'More?' Peter look at him questioningly. 'Pastor, have you not brought him Christ's body and blood? Have you not exercised the blessed authority of the keys, which comes from God? Can a man do more?'<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Giertz, *Hammer*, 33-34, 41.

## 2. *Upplysningen genom lagen*: Enlightenment through the law

With the call, one is now facing an alternative: one knows that one wants to be a Christian.<sup>122</sup> One is on the way which might lead one to true Christianity. One must be enlightened through the law and through the gospel. This division, Giertz warns again, cannot be thought of in terms of chronology. All the parts of the Order of Grace are intertwined. They may be separated in order to be studied more easily and to be understood more clearly. “In its deepest sense, the Order of Grace is a doctrine on faith, not a division of stages which you must go through in order to become a true Christian. It is, [rather], a depiction of all the obstacles in the heart of man, which stand in the way of faith, and of that work through which God’s Spirit destroys [the obstacles].”<sup>123</sup>

After one has been called, one’s faith is at first generally moralistic and legalistic. Christianity is only viewed in terms of God’s commands and requirements, which are seen as within the reach of fulfillment. The focus is misplaced: It is on what “we are to do for God, instead of what God has done for us in Jesus Christ.”<sup>124</sup> While this may very well be in some ways an active faith, its activities are not really part of the whole and completed true faith. Instead, this false faith often displays itself in pride, dangerous self-security, and spiritual arrogance. But here the law of God, as a guide, teaches one what kind of person one should really be, and, more importantly, it shows one what kind of person one truly is—a sinner. For

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<sup>122</sup> It is important to realize that here Giertz is in all likelihood speaking for a corrupted *human* perspective, speaking in behalf of the perspective of one who is experiencing the Order of Grace. For, as we know, one who wants to believe, does believe. Furthermore, Giertz would contend that at this point, such a person has only “first article faith,” but does not yet know God as the personal Lord and *Redeemer* (second article); this person is certainly a worshiping creature and is now aware of the law written on the heart, but has not yet understood Jesus as *Savior*. 24. Scriptural sources regarding the teaching on “enlightenment through the law and through the gospel”: Is. 55:3, 6; Jer. 21:8; Josh. 24:14-15; 2 Cor. 4:6; 1 Pe. 2:9; 2 Pe. 1:19; Eph. 5:8; 1 Kor. 13:9-12; Phil. 3:12-14.

<sup>123</sup> Giertz, *Herdabrev*, 151, this writer’s translation.

<sup>124</sup> 26. Compare this to Giertz’s mindset and decision to become a pastor, in response to Beskow’s university lectures (4-5 above).

Giertz, this latter use, commonly called the second use of the law, plays the chief role in the Order of Grace.<sup>125</sup> It is the mirror that provides enlightenment and correct vision.

Thus, it is also here that God will slowly destroy the second obstacle to salvation—the sinner’s love of sin. Through the Word, God works regret and repentance. Giertz divides true repentance into three parts: confession of sins, sorrow over sin,<sup>126</sup> and a longing to be freed from sin. This repentance, especially the sorrow, is not to be understood in a psychological manner. The sorrow is real, not forced by the penitent for comparative purposes in regard to others or drawn out falsely by a misleading confessor, but rather actually caused by the law’s swift sword. One realizes, as true repentance is worked, that “...in your own efforts...you are much worse off than you ever imagined.”<sup>127</sup> It is a matter of original sin, not just actual sin. This original sin, which clings to and corrupts all that you do, good and bad alike, is the root cause of all obstacles to salvation. The comprehension of total depravity is a harsh reality. Hopelessness may set in.<sup>128</sup> If so, first one stays away from the Lord’s Table. Then one gets lazy in one’s prayer life and Bible reading. This path, to which moralism leads, must eventually meet its end in Paul’s cry of distress.<sup>129</sup> At last, Paul reminds himself and us that even this is the work and blessing of God, his alien work, the work of the law. It is the excruciating time in which the law is, as always, accusing; “the old spiritual guides” called it the “awakening.”<sup>130</sup> Indeed, it is a strange blessing. The law shows us that we cannot save ourselves; it points to the gospel, which tells us that we have one who can save—a Savior. Thus Giertz states, “At last it is clear also to you, that the foundation for our Christian faith, for that covenant which the living God made with us in

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<sup>125</sup> Giertz does not emphasize the three distinct uses of the law. For Giertz and for the Order of Grace, the accusatory law as reflective of the sinner’s condition provides the enlightenment needed in the Order of Grace, before enlightenment through the gospel.

<sup>126</sup> Giertz, *S.*, 69; Giertz, *Hammer*, 78.

<sup>127</sup> 28.

<sup>128</sup> Giertz, *S.*, 32; Giertz, *Hammer*, 28-29.

<sup>129</sup> Romans 7:24

<sup>130</sup> 31.

baptism, truly is not our righteousness or our improvement<sup>131</sup> or our fulfillment of his holy requirements, but rather God's incredible mercy, his undeserved grace and our Lord Jesus Christ's atoning work on Golgotha."<sup>132</sup> When waiting for the light of this gospel to come totally clear, one must, no matter what, never abandon the Church of Christ; God there proclaims the Word, invites us to his Supper, and wants to hear our private confession.

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<sup>131</sup> Or "repentance."

<sup>132</sup> 32.

### 3. *Upplysningen genom evangelium*: Enlightenment through the gospel

Our incredible God knows our sinful lot. As has been shown he even uses our sin in the way to salvation! In our rebellion, *he* repents *us*,<sup>133</sup> he turns us around toward him, so that we may be given more than the self-righteousness of the Pharisees.

The law shows us our unholy sin, our separation from holy God. Certainly we can be righteous through the law, but this is righteousness only toward our neighbor, not *coram deo*. Giertz speaks rather of the righteousness of the gospel—a righteousness which is a gift from God, through a faith in Christ which is a gift from God.<sup>134</sup> If we could improve ourselves, then God's law would be enough. But we cannot. We want to earn God's grace, but he gives freely the undeserved benefits of that blood-stained cross. This is the forgiveness of sins. This is the gospel.

We can either believe this or we can despair. Despair will occur at the awakening if we break the ties to the Church of Christ and lose prayer and the Word. But we are allowed to believe. And our Savior's faithfulness will not be moved one inch despite our unbelief and our struggles. Christ alone is the foundation of salvation. It is Christianity, after all, not fideism.

Nonetheless, it is a struggle to believe that all God's work is *for you*. This is the third great obstacle to salvation: the struggle to believe that all depends on the Christ who is *for you*; this obstacle is unbelief, really. One will encounter doubt, struggles, and terrors of the conscience if one focuses on self. The focus is to be on Christ alone, on what he has done, his love, his death, and his incredible mercy. The struggle in and with sin is brought to light by the law, in

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<sup>133</sup> Giertz, *S.*, 239; Giertz, *Hammer*, 296. The enlightenment through the gospel occurred for Giertz during his visit with Nelson described above.

Scriptural sources for the teaching in this section, especially on conversion and faith: 2 Cor. 3:5; 1 Cor. 2:13ff.; Rom. 1:19-21, 28, 32; John 15:5; Luke 13:5, 24:46; Jonah 3:5, 8, 10; Matt. 12:41, 11:28; 2 Cor. 7:10; Rom. 5:1; 2 Cor. 13:5; Phil 2:12-13; 2 John 8-9; Rom. 10:8-10; 1 John 3:14; Luke 15:7; 2 Sam. 11; Rom. 7:23; Heb. 11:1; 2 Cor. 5:7; John 20:29; 1 Pe. 1:8; Heb. 11:6; Is. 44:6; John 6:29; Phil. 1:29; Matt. 12:20; John 6:66-67; 1 Tim. 1:19; Luke 22:31-32; Matt. 13:18-23, 14:31, 15:28, 16:8; Luke 7:9; 1 Tim. 6:11-12; Eph. 6:10-17; 2 Cor. 5:17.

<sup>134</sup> In *KF*, Giertz does not indicate that he is specifically working with Luther's complementary doctrine/terminology of the two kinds of righteousness. However, he does make direct use of Pauline material, especially Romans 3-8. For more on the two kinds of righteousness, see 43 and 46-49 below.

order that grace may be brought to light by the gospel.<sup>135</sup>

The obstacle of unbelief is conquered as one is opened by the Lord to be given gifts from him, the Giver, in his Church.<sup>136</sup> These gifts come to one as one is in prayerful reception of the Word and the Sacrament of the Altar. Through these, God creates faith in the Savior alone as exactly that: our Savior and Atoner. *It is when this faith, the true Christian faith, is present that conversion has been accomplished.*<sup>137</sup> This work of God transforms one and places one in a completely new situation and condition; it effects justification and new birth. This is the very heart of Giertz's presentation on the Order of Grace. He comments:

These are not stages or steps in the process of grace.... One must be careful not to make the Order of Grace a staircase on which one gradually moves up to God.... It is rather a descent, a process of impoverishment, in which God takes away from man one after the other of his false grounds of comfort. At its heart it is a description of how God's love overcomes the obstacles and breaks down the dams which prevent the divine grace from freely pouring itself over a life. These obstacles usually are in a certain context and group themselves in a complementary order. Therefore grace also has its order. But this order is not to be forced and is never allowed to be made a law. God's grace works everywhere it is given the opportunity. Therefore everything becomes intertwined in the work of conversion. Already in the call there can be a deep insight into the mystery of the Cross. Every meeting of the law and every new confession of sin usually

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<sup>135</sup> Giertz, *S.*, 238-39; Giertz, *Hammer*, 295. Cf. Romans 5:20-21, and Giertz, *Kristi Kyrka*, 179-80.

<sup>136</sup> 39.

<sup>137</sup> A similar line of thought can be found in Luther (1538): "Faith must be complete and embrace everything. Although it may be weak and subject to trial, it must in any case be complete...and not false. To be weak in faith does not do the damage, but to be wrong—that is eternal death" (Plass, *What Luther Says*, 488; also found in the Weimar edition, 50, 269).

carries with it a new revelation of grace. And when finally faith victoriously enters in, then “justification” and “new birth” is already a reality.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> 40.

#### 4. Rättfärdiggörelse och pånyttfödelse: Justification and rebirth

Faith is kindled in the poverty of the spirit. The true faith, which is not the same as believing in God (for even devils do that) is present when one realizes that one is not what one should be and yet holds onto Christ for dear life. One's spirit is poor, but one's Savior is rich.<sup>139</sup> The Atonement actually means something to oneself. True faith is faith in Christ and in the cross. This realization, and nothing else, is conversion: God has led one to faith. It is not, as already mentioned, fideism: "If you have faith in your own faith, then it has ceased to be a faith in the Savior."<sup>140</sup> One dare not say *when* it happened, but simply *that* it happened.

What has happened in conversion is described from two perspectives. First, one has peace with God. This is not some feeling, but the objective truth; there is reconciliation. One is no longer under the wrath of God, but under his grace. God forgives; God justifies. But while God is justifying in heaven, something is also happening on earth.<sup>141</sup> Man is born anew.<sup>142</sup> As a reborn Christian, now united with Christ, one does not willfully sin against one's neighbor.

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<sup>139</sup> "The longer you proceed in the Order of Grace, the poorer you become" (Giertz, letter to Rosendal, 2 May 1941). Scriptural sources regarding the teaching on "justification and rebirth": Rom. 4:3-25; Ps. 32:1-2; Luke 18:9-14; Rom. 3:26, 28; John 14:6; Lev. 19:2; 1 John 3:14; John 15:5; Heb. 11:6; 1 Cor. 1:31; 2 Cor. 10:17; James 2:24; Luke 24:47; Titus 3:5; Is. 55:10-11; John 3:5; James 1:18; 1 Pe. 1:23; Eph. 4:22-24; Gal. 5:17; Rom. 7:21, 23; 1 Cor. 9:27; Rom. 6:12; Gal. 6:14; Ps. 119:1; Heb. 13:21; Gal. 2:20; 2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 8:9; John 3:3-8; Eph. 2:12; Col. 2:6; Gal. 5:16; James 4:5; John 14:23; 1 John 4:16; John 15:4-5, 17:20-23; Col. 1:27; Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 2:10-11; Rom. 8:15; John 14:26, 16:14; Luke 17:21; Rom. 8:14; 1 Pe. 3:4; Rom. 2:16; Jer. 31:33; Rom. 7.

<sup>140</sup> 43.

<sup>141</sup> Cf. Swedish theologian and Giertz's contemporary Gustaf Wingren, *Luthers Lära Om Kallelsten* (Lund: C.W.K. Gleerup, 1942), especially 9-88; *Luther on Vocation* (Evansville, Indiana: Ballast Press, 1994), especially 1-77.

<sup>142</sup> This new birth is very much like sanctification. See section 5 below for more on this subject.

## 5. *Helgelsen*: Sanctification

After conversion, the law still remains. However, the new man delights in God's law and wants nothing more than to keep it.<sup>143</sup> Here are distinguished the two kinds of righteousness, even the two realms of God's kingdom and his rule. Civil righteousness consists of looking at oneself in light of God's commands in the Word for benefit of one's neighbor. On the other hand, Christ's righteousness comes only when one looks upon the Atoner for salvation's sake. These two kinds of righteousness bring one to the realization that one is *simul justus ac peccator*. But as man is set free from sin and the condemnation of the law, how is Christian liberty to be prevented from becoming a license for evil? The "old spiritual guides" remind us: "Just make sure that you believe and are kept in the faith."<sup>144</sup> But how does one ensure this? Again, the answer lies in faithful use of God's Word, prayer, and the meeting with one's Savior in his Holy Supper.

One needs to pray and be in the Word as faithfully now as before; especially if one does not feel the desire. This is the struggle in which one must engage, for in the Word and in prayer the truth of law and gospel is held ever before one's eyes.

Also, it must be remembered that God's Word, prayer, and the Holy Supper are enjoyed as a member of the body of Christ, the Church of Christ. The Lord's Supper is not only a part of worship, it also impacts everyday life and is "...the heart of [God's] *sanctifying* work."<sup>145</sup> In preparation to receive it, one is better formed in the struggle of and for faith, and one's self-examination is taken more seriously; preparation thus has direct consequences for day-to-day

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<sup>143</sup> 46. Scriptural sources regarding the teaching on "sanctification": Phil. 1:6, 3:12-14; 2 Cor. 7:1; 1 Cor. 3:5-9; 1 Pe. 2:5; Eph. 2:19-22, 4:24; 1 John 3:2; Gen. 1:27; Heb. 5:12; Eph. 3:16, 4:15; 1 John 2; 2 Cor. 13:5; 1 Tim. 2:15; Col. 3:3; Eph. 2:13; 1 Cor. 4:3-4; 2 Cor. 11:30, 12:9-10; Gal. 6:14; John 19:30; Rom. 8:3; 2 Cor. 6:1; Rom. 6:6; Eph. 4:20-24; Rom 8:4; Gal. 5:17; Rom. 7:6, 14 21, 23, 12:7, 8, 10:4; 1 Tim. 1:8; Rom. 3:31; Gal. 3:24; Deut. 12:8, 28, 32; 1 Cor. 4:4; Rom. 2:15, 3:20; 1 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 2:10; Matt. 10:42; 2 Pe. 1:10; Phil. 3:7ff.; Heb. 13:15; 1 Pe. 2:5; Heb. 11:4.

<sup>144</sup> 47.

<sup>145</sup> 48, emphasis added.

life. If one's heart is fixed on the altar, knowing that soon one will again meet one's Savior there, then everyday morality has received its sure foundation: "It becomes so obviously clear what you are allowed and what you are forbidden to do.... It is easier to choose the right when you instinctively choose the road that leads back to the altar." Even Christian fellowship itself during work and other hours becomes easier to preserve, the more hours of one's life one has given to fellowship with the Savior at his table.<sup>146</sup>

This Christian life is limitless security, an unshakable trust in Christ's atonement, and, on the other hand, a never-ending battle for sanctification. This life is nothing more and nothing less than daily conversion effected by the foundation of baptism and by "the hammer of the Word of God."<sup>147</sup> Daily the Word has the same effect as the first time it brought one to salvation: it shows one's faults, awakens sorrow and drives one anew to that cross which alone opens the gate into the kingdom of forgiveness. Emotions and experience may waver, but the Word is steadfast in its promises and in its sanctifying work.<sup>148</sup> This sanctifying work has three results: sin is curbed, a Christian character is formed, and there is growth in God's grace and thus firmness of faith.

First, sinfulness, which indeed remains in one's nature, is held in check and prevented from becoming actual sin. And forgiveness daily covers and heals that which sin breaks or neglects, whether in thoughtlessness or in haste.

Second, everything that occupies one—one's work and leisure, one's opinions and knowledge—is brought before the Savior's face and is continually sifted and cleansed. Primarily

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<sup>146</sup> 48.

<sup>147</sup> 53.

<sup>148</sup> 49.

in this way can Christianity eventually permeate a people, for in this way Christ daily has his Word in all matters of a person's life and thus also in the common life of a people.<sup>149</sup>

Third, the deeper one gazes into the world of faith, the more one is astounded by its immeasurable riches and the more precious and indispensable Christ becomes. The more one thinks on Christ's faithfulness in wonder, the more steadfast one becomes in the faith. It is usually after years of sanctification that a person receives absolutely immovable faith in the resurrection and boundless confidence in the face of death, which even non-believers can notice and by which they are moved. Such people of faith are perhaps God's best witnesses. They are engrafted in their Lord and so completely filled with new life of resurrection in Christ that it has become a part of their very nature. They shine forth that glory which belongs to another world. Of their state one finally dares to use that great word, toward which all of God's work in a person's life is moving: holy.<sup>150</sup>

Therefore, it can be seen that faith and good works have a mutual complementary relationship. With the three results of sanctification, one has "become fully complete,' as complete as you can be on this earth."<sup>151</sup> At the same time, less than one year before his death, Giertz responded to the question of whether he was thinking much about heavenly life beyond

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<sup>149</sup> It is important to remember that this includes his Word on the two realms and the two kinds of righteousness spoken of above (43) and below (47-49).

<sup>150</sup> 49-50.

<sup>151</sup> 50. Giertz references 2 Timothy 3:17. See also Giertz, *S.*, 285. As stated earlier, *KF* deals with the Order of Grace in *earthly* life. Others, such as Södeblom and Hulthén, included also the *glorification* of the afterlife. Giertz, of course, does not deny this. As a matter of fact, the last Giertz book published is actually an interview with Giertz in 1994 by Henrik Linjer dealing with life, death, and eternity: Giertz, *Om livet, döden och evigheten* (Varberg, Sweden: Argument, 1998). An excerpt:

The praises which are eternally raised....

Imagine! I am not a musical person, so there is nothing that I long for more, and maybe childishly am counting on, than the great privilege to sing praises unto God. Can you imagine: to participate in singing in parts! I have never been able to do that. And I have had interminable difficulty just to learn enough so that I could sing along with the hymns and the liturgy in the church. I have missed it bitterly. I am now too old to learn anything new and I can therefore never celebrate the Lord's Supper [lead its liturgy] as I could before. Simply because I cannot handle the melodies.

this earth; he said, “Yes, I do, with greater and greater confidence and joy.”<sup>152</sup>

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I am not a musical person, but nonetheless I am the kind that is enchanted [by the music] in some way...my heart is filled with joy. But not in my mind and not in my lips' ability to form it. Imagine: to be allowed to be a part of praise-singing choirs!

I am not completely tone-deaf, but I have absolutely no musical talent, except for that I can experience it. And that is maybe the most important gift one can receive in that regard.

No, I long for the day when I am enabled to praise Him in song...(34-36, author's translation).

<sup>152</sup> Per Arne Gjerdi, “Biskop Giertz vil bare ha fred og ro,” *Aktiv* (September 1997)

<<http://www.mediemisjon.org/aktiv/97/07/giertz.htm>>.

### a. Luther's Two Kinds of Righteousness in Giertz

Luther's concept and terminology of the two kinds of righteousness does not find explicit or frequent mention in Giertz's presentation of the Order of Grace. However, that does not mean that Giertz is unaware of this distinction or that he does not make use of it in his theology.

Rather, his high appreciation of and reverence for Luther's genius leads Giertz to rely on all of Luther's confession and theology. Giertz understood and highlighted the distinction of the two kinds of righteousness in his evaluation of Luther, especially within an analysis of the doctrine of the two realms, or the two kingdoms.

According to Giertz, Luther was the great defender of civil occupations, who preached their worth better than anyone before him. However, Luther drew a sharp boundary between civil righteousness and Christ's kingdom. Here on earth, in the worldly regiment, the key is judicial fairness and a sense of social responsibility. Here God has authoritatively established all earthly occupations so that order and right may hold power. Earthly worthiness is rewarded with earthly success. But in the kingdom of Christ, the spiritual regiment, all this is turned on its head. That which in the world is worthless and despised, is grand in God's kingdom. Justice is replaced by grace, the breaking of the law is met by forgiveness, and the enemy is met by love.<sup>153</sup>

In the kingdom of Christ, we are given Christ's very own righteousness, which makes the godless righteous. Luther came to this discovery while wrestling with the concept of *justitia Dei* in Romans. Upon his re-discovery of the gracious nature of this righteousness as a gift, rather than a requirement, righteousness through faith took the central place of truth in all that he confessed.<sup>154</sup> This is the doctrine upon which the church stands or falls.

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<sup>153</sup> Giertz, "Fram till Luther," *Julboken till församlingarna i Göteborgs stift* 32 (1958): 41-42.

<sup>154</sup> Geirtz, "Luther och vi," *Vår Lösen* 53.1 (1962): 7.

As such, it is every pastor's sacred duty to preach this righteousness of faith to his hearers. In order to do so, God's righteousness and holiness must be preached, and in turn, the righteousness of faith and the righteousness of works must be distinguished and preached. The righteousness of works, which Giertz also calls civil, earthly, or outer righteousness, ought to be promoted and practiced. It needs to be preached in concrete and living form. People need help to see what their everyday lives entail; the earthly calling in home and workplace is where they meet God, where which he disciplines and shapes them, and where God's love is poured out into the world through their hands when they faithfully serve him in seemingly mundane tasks. Even a non-believer, with the law written upon his heart, can practice this kind of righteousness; true, he would have done it better had he believed, but nonetheless, his righteousness can often surpass that of a believer. This righteousness and obedience is rewarded in the here and now, as is promised in the fourth commandment and seen by experience.<sup>155</sup>

However, this righteousness is not the same as righteousness before God. Righteousness before God means being confronted with all of God's commands and saying: "Lord, all of this I have kept." As good as civil righteousness is, God's righteousness, and righteousness before him, is much higher. Nonetheless, it is damning without the proper preaching of Christ. It is he who was placed under the law which we have broken, and he who kept and fulfilled it, so that now he stands there as the obedient, righteous one, the one who can truly say for us: "Father, all of this I have kept." It must be made clear to all that he *is* God's righteousness and God's love,

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<sup>155</sup> Giertz, *Då föll Herrens eld*, 173.

who has come here to seek and save what was lost.<sup>156</sup>

To preach the righteousness of faith, then, means to point to this Christ and in the name of God proclaim that each and every one who believes on him receives the forgiveness of all sin. One does not preach the righteousness of faith by abstractly pointing to God's love and his fatherly goodness. No, mankind needs someone who has borne their guilt and given them his righteousness; it must be explicitly proclaimed that God's love for us is only in Christ the Atoner, and in his death for and in place of us. But this is not just a doctrine that is explained or taught; it is an enacted reality. The pastor truly stands as God's called and sent herald and offers in God's name the forgiveness of sins; here God is active, awakening faith and forgiving sin. There is an exchange in which Christ takes all that is ours, guilt, punishment, shame, and death, and gives us instead his blessedness, his glory, his life, his righteousness. This righteousness of Christ that we are given is a declared righteousness; we are accounted righteous instead of sinful, not by our own righteousness, but by another's.<sup>157</sup> The Christian, the one righteous through faith, also practices civil righteousness, not to *become* righteous, but because he *is* righteous.

The righteousness of faith is Christ's righteousness. The understanding of Christ's person and work as atoner is key to understanding and living in civil righteousness and the righteousness of faith. A Christian does not possess eternal life in and of himself apart from Christ; nor does he possess a righteousness of his own. Rather it is a gift; it comes through faith alone, and from, of, and in Christ alone.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> Giertz, *Då föll Herrens eld*, 174-76.

<sup>157</sup> Giertz, *Då föll Herrens eld*, 176-78.

<sup>158</sup> Giertz, *Då föll Herrens eld*, 178. See also Giertz, *Herdabrev*, 83-147, especially 83-98.

b. Liturgy: The Order of Grace and the Life of the Christian in the Church

*The Order of Grace is a tool for pastoral care, an instrument for the seelsorger to use in the soul care of his entrusted people.* In the Order of Grace it is not for one to decide, or even know, where one is on the way to salvation or to attempt to figure out what will occur next. Rather, it is for one to be involved with the Word and prayer, to listen to the Church,<sup>159</sup> to see baptism as the foundation for all of Christian life, and to make right use of the means of grace.<sup>160</sup> All this comes to one in and through the corporate worship of the Church.

The pastors of the Church of Jesus Christ have been made stewards of her liturgical heritage.<sup>161</sup> It is to be preserved and passed on. To hold fast to the old heritage is to abide in the Lord. It is at the same time something new, renewed by the Resurrected Christ who himself, during his earthly ministry, officiated within structural forms.<sup>162</sup> The unbroken connection with apostolic times is revealed in the external forms of the liturgy. There is nothing in the world today which embraces so much of an ancient culture or so many revered traditions as our Divine Service. This is not something dead, but very alive. The fire of the Lord upon our dead souls awakens us. Liturgy is the work of the Spirit in preserving this awakening, especially through the preached Word. Awakening needs liturgy. Liturgy speaks wisdom among those who are growing within the Order of Grace and among those who are fully mature, precisely because liturgy constantly turns back to the same holy forms. It dares to make use of the hidden wisdom of the Scriptures revealed to those in faith, to those in Christ.

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<sup>159</sup> Giertz, *S.*, 269; Giertz, *Hammer*, 332. See also Giertz, *Kristi Kyrka*, 40, 70. Faith in Christ and faith in the Church is one act of faith.

<sup>160</sup> 52. For a beautiful depiction of the centrality of the Lord's Supper to the Order of Grace, see Giertz, *S.*, 311-12; also Giertz, *S.*, 70; Giertz, *Hammer*, 79. The remainder of this section is adapted: *Liturgy*, 8-32; *Herdabrev*, 47-66.

<sup>161</sup> Acts 2:46, Acts 3:1, 1 Corinthians 4:1.

<sup>162</sup> Luke 4:14-28.

There can be no normal church life without liturgy. Sacraments need form; the Divine Service must have some definite pattern. It is possible to live for a short time on improvisations and on forms that are constantly changing. But the possibilities are soon exhausted. One will have to repeat, and with that, the making of rituals is in full swing. In circles where people seek to live without any forms, new forms are nevertheless constantly taking shape. Favorite songs are used again and again with monotonous regularity, certain prayer expressions are constantly repeated, and traditions take form. Forms that grow up in this way are usually less attractive and more secular than the ancient liturgy. Such people pray and speak without Scriptural direction. They are not so much concerned with expressing the whole content of Scripture, but are satisfied with one thing or another that seems to be especially attractive or popular. The “new liturgy,” or alternative “contemporary” worship, that grows in this manner is poorer, less Biblical, and less nourishing to the soul and body than the discarded ancient order.

There is, of course, such a thing as dead liturgy. But this is not the liturgy’s fault. It is due to dead hearts that are still sleeping in darkness, not yet fully awakened and enlightened by law and gospel in the Order of Grace. Some, however, blame the liturgy and find it difficult to feel at home in the liturgical forms. This is because all true liturgy demands the total submerging of self, pride, and the destruction of the first obstacle to salvation: aversion to prayer and the Word. The Christian is, after all, a member of the body of Christ, not living to please self but as part of an organism. Thus when people in the name of revival attack the Divine Service itself, they are violating Christian fellowship. Often this is done in the name of liberty, but the freedom that is desired will mean a lack of freedom for the greater number of people. It will mean that certain

pet interests shall characterize that which should be the common possession of all. Of course, in private devotion and worship there must be freedom. Private devotion is the privilege of the family and of the individual, but public worship is the responsibility of the Church and her ministers. Awakened faith sees the liturgy's richness and strength, for a sound awakening moves one in the direction of regular worship life and a faithful use of the sacrament of Holy Communion, showing how to celebrate corporate worship in a proper way and to use aright the Church's books of devotion. It is absolutely necessary that our young people, already at the time of confirmation, should learn to understand the liturgy, to find their way in the hymnal and lectionary, to be able to fully worship. Ancient, beautiful custom is really more than just custom. It becomes an expression for the life which is born again, the same life which once created the custom and now fills it with warmth and inwardness.

The need for awakening will one day cease. It belongs to this world, where men still sleep the sleep of death. When Christ has awakened his own on the last great day, there will no longer be any need for awakening. It will be just as obsolete and unnecessary as hospitals and agencies of social service. However, the liturgy will remain. What the Scripture permits us to imagine concerning the ineffable splendor which will then begin, includes a picture of heavenly liturgy—a holy service before the throne of God, with hymns of praise and thanksgiving making music like the sound of great waters,<sup>163</sup> with golden chalices full of incense, and with throngs falling down in worship before the almighty and merciful God who is the King of kings and the

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<sup>163</sup> See footnote 151.

Lord of lords.<sup>164</sup> Of this there is already a powerful foretaste in the liturgy.

This, then, is our program: to learn of the past that we may be prepared to meet the coming day, to immerse ourselves so deeply in the great life stream of the Church that we may be equipped to speak the Word of God in a new age, and (for modern men and women) to live the Lord's life in the manner which the new century in the history of the Church demands.

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<sup>164</sup> Revelation 7:9-8:4.

#### IV. CONCLUSION, SUMMARY, AND FINAL ANALYSIS

The question this thesis asks is: Who was Bo Giertz? The question this thesis begs is: Was Bo Giertz, especially in his confession and use of the Order of Grace, a pietist? Let us have Giertz himself answer, in his own words:

We should stop stabbing at pietism. It is always misunderstood, so that one would think that we disdain conversion and lack a sense of the factor of personal responsibility in Christianity.... Personally, I am convinced that the portion of pietism, which is found in Schartau, is useful for salvation, not to mention necessary. [It is this] vigorous unifying of pietism and orthodoxy, which comes to us in the awakening of the early 1800s.<sup>165</sup>

Furthermore, Giertz contends that not all the forms of pietism can or should be judged the same. If so, "Schartau and the entire Kronobergian<sup>166</sup> old-church piety would be lost."<sup>167</sup> Then would be forfeited

...the classic heritage of the Swedish Church, in which Schartau and the other pastors of the awakening take the places of honor. Is there any branch of our Church which provides such a solid and sharp, and yet merciful, care of souls, as that which was practiced during our classic time of church awakening? The Order of Grace is for me the very cornerstone in churchly preaching and the care of souls. A renewal of the church, which is not thorough and genuine on these matters, is no true renewal.... As such, you understand why I so stubbornly hold fast to pietism. If with pietism is

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<sup>165</sup> Giertz, Letter to Rosendal, the last of February 1938 [sic].

<sup>166</sup> Kronoberg: One of the twenty-five counties in Sweden, within the province of Småland in the south. At the time that Giertz wrote this letter he was serving a small rural parish (Torpa) in Småland.

<sup>167</sup> Giertz, Letter to Rosendal, 7 March 1938.

meant that pastoral<sup>168</sup> wisdom which is laid out in the doctrine of the Order of Grace, then it is just about the last thing that I would want to strike from my church program.<sup>169</sup>

Finally, Giertz's summary of our very salvation's foundation, means, and order in his catechetical *Grunden* neatly brings it all together:

Salvation's foundation: Christ alone, the Atoner of our sins, our heavenly King and Intercessor, Judge of the living and the dead. In no one else is there salvation, but each and every one who believes on Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

Salvation's means: God's Word and Sacraments, administered by the *Church of Christ*, our mother, which gives birth to and nourishes every Christian,<sup>170</sup> by us received with prayer and obedience in the congregation's worship and in daily devotions. Of these means alone can faith be awakened. Without them no one is a Christian, but through them every sinner can receive saving faith in Christ.

Salvation's order: The work of sanctification which leads a person from sin's and death's power to life in Christ through *baptism* and *faith*, through *conversion* for the wayward, through the Spirit's enlightenment for all, so that we through poverty of spirit are lead to the riches of grace and in true faith in Jesus always remain, here on earth and in eternity, children of

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<sup>168</sup> Swedish: *själasörjare*. Literally: "spiritual guide" or "tender of souls" (Giertz, *S.*, 136; Giertz, *Hammer*, 166).

<sup>169</sup> Giertz, Letter to Rosendal, 7 March 1938.

<sup>170</sup> Large Catechism II.42. See also Giertz, *S.*, 187; Giertz, *Hammer*, 223.

our heavenly Father, members of the body of Christ, participants of<sup>171</sup> the Holy Spirit.<sup>172</sup>

This writer maintains that this is what Giertz refers to as “...the traditional pietism and faith...”<sup>173</sup> which he virtually equates with the doctrine of the Order of Grace.

The Order of Grace is applicable not only to the laity but to the clergy as well. Giertz makes this clear in *Då föll Herrens eld: Nytt liv i tjänsten*, in which he speaks of the pastor and his soul by giving seven points that the *själasörjare* (the pastor; cf. the German *seelsorger*) must keep in mind for his own spiritual well-being: 1) Even the pastor has an Old Man; 2) Even the pastor needs God’s Word; 3) Even the pastor also needs to be converted (i.e., needs to be a Christian); 4) Even the pastor needs the support of an outer order (i.e., public worship and prayer); 5) Even the pastor needs Holy Communion; 6) Even the pastor has need of confession; 7) Even the pastor has a merciful Savior, who does not tire of forgiving.<sup>174</sup>

In summary, then, the *ordo salutis* is a systematic presentation of God’s grace, specifically the way in which the Holy Spirit applies it to man. From the perspective of the history of dogma, the Order of Grace covers the development of the analytical method in dogma, which, during the Age of Orthodoxy (ca. 1580-1680), followed the earlier loci-method. Biblically, the connection is found implicitly in such places as Acts 26:17-18 and Colossians 1:13-14, but primarily and explicitly in Romans 8, in which Paul describes God’s work for man’s salvation in terms of foreknowledge, call, justification, and glorification. Upon this Scriptural

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<sup>171</sup> Or, perhaps, “indwelt by.”

<sup>172</sup> Giertz, *Grunden* (Stockholm: SKDB, 1962), 129, this writer’s translation. Cf. footnote 35 above.

<sup>173</sup> 53.

<sup>174</sup> Giertz, *Då föll Herrens eld*, 109-120. If Baptism seems to be conspicuously absent, though it is certainly implied in points six and seven, it is due to the fact that during most of Giertz’s lifetime virtually all Swedes were baptized in the state church. Again, Baptism is foundational to Giertz’s teaching on the Order of Grace and his theology as a whole, and is therefore often assumed, when not explicitly mentioned.

foundation, several and varied detailed systems were then built, utilizing and adapting elements from, among others, the order of penance from the Middle Ages, as well as mysticism's traditional stages of salvation. The systematic formulation of the Order of Grace, during orthodoxy as well as later, has often been discernibly inconstant. The Order of Grace can be seen as an attempt of late orthodoxy's dogmaticians, such as Nicolaus Selnecker (ca. 1528/30-1592), Matthias Hafenreffer (1561-1619), Johannes Andreas Quenstedt (1617-1688), and David Hollaz (1648-1713), to illustrate what change happens to and in the person who journeys from outside the faith to a mature Christian life, as acted upon by the Spirit. *In a sense, the ordo salutis is really nothing more and nothing less than a presentation of the reality confessed so wonderfully by Luther in his explanation to the third article of the Creed: call, enlightenment, sanctification, true faith: this is the language of the Small Catechism and it is the language of the Order of Grace.* At times, this Order of Grace developed simultaneously within Lutheranism (for example, in the literature of pietism), within the Reformed tradition, and also within Methodism, especially as Methodism was often greatly influenced by Reformed theology in areas where such theology was prospering. In these developments, the various elements of the Order of Grace became understood as stages through which a person must pass, or steps he must successfully complete, on the way to a fully mature Christianity. As such, the *ordo salutis* has come ordinarily to be associated not with sound Lutheranism (at least not in the U.S.) but rather with Reformed theology. However, this Order of Grace, as developed and presented by the Reformed and by pietists, is actually a corruption of that confessed by Giertz as he inherited it from Schartau via Nelson.

The doctrine of the Order of Grace certainly can be misused, seeming to support works righteousness in a Reformed, synergistic, or even Puritan way. Among those who would corrupt the *ordo salutis*, terms such as “awakening,” “repentance,” “rebirth,” and “righteousness” are

often given meanings different than what we find in Luther. Also, the proper distinction of law and gospel, and of sanctification and justification, is threatened by those who stray toward a legalistic interpretation. Furthermore, the *ordo salutis* can be misused to direct one to look inward at the psychological state of one's mind, rather than outward to the proclamation of the Word and the distribution of the sacraments. However, Giertz continually gives warnings on common misunderstandings and misapplications such as these. And, on the other hand, he is able uniquely to synthesize the *ordo salutis* with sacramental and liturgical Lutheran orthodoxy, avoiding the pitfalls of the Reformed and synergistic models.<sup>175</sup>

When one first encounters Giertz and his confession of the Order of Grace, one may indeed be struck by its pietistic elements and by its perhaps disquieting use of Lutheran language regarding conversion and faith, discipleship and worship, the place of the sacraments and the role of sanctification. But upon closer and more objective inspection of the whole of his work and theology, one finds that Giertz has indeed accomplished what he always intended and lived to do: following the lead of Schartau, who apparently borrowed the *ordo salutis* from the pietists and kept what was of value but discarded anything antithetical to pure Lutheranism, Giertz has taken the best of the various traditions within Lutheranism and synthesized the parts into an orthodox whole. This has been why he attracted such a broad and devoted following within the Church of Sweden, and through his writings, still does so today. With the Order of Grace especially, he has done this in a way that is systematic, practical, accessible, pastoral, and invigorating. Like Schartau, he has ably discarded whatever of pietism is foreign to sound

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<sup>175</sup> Material in the preceding two paragraphs is mainly drawn from "Nådens Ordning," *Nordisk Teologisk Uppslagsbok*, 1955 ed., as well as Werner Elert, *The Structure of Lutheranism*, 141-142, 148, 153. For an example of a mostly negative critical evaluation of Schartau's Order of Grace on the points already addressed herein, see Carl Norborg, *Arvet från Schartau* (Göteborg, Sweden: Pro Caritates Förlag, 1951), especially 250-262. However, even Norborg admits that "the Schartauesque proclamation, at its best, can preach free grace with much power, so that one truly takes it to heart" (261, this writer's translation). For an excellent presentation of the heart of Giertz's theology in homiletical form see Giertz, *S.*, 256-263; Giertz, *Hammer*, 313-323. See also footnote 39 above. The remaining analysis and summary relies especially on Giertz, 196, 208-209, 211 and Giertz, *Kristi Kyrka*, 251.

Lutheran doctrine and practice—the denigration of the Office of the Holy Ministry, the emphasis on emotionalism, and the promotion of conventicles, lay preaching, schismatic movements, and the distaste for the traditional liturgy of the Church. At the same time, he has, like any good reformer, kept that which is of value: the personal aspect of the faith, the seriousness of conversion, genuine soul care by a directly involved *seelsorger* who applies the Order of Grace, the emphasis on the proper distinction and application of the Word, the central place of the Word, the need for pure doctrine and true teaching, the proper role of prayer, the Christian life lived in the Church and in society, the fruits of an active and awakened faith, the confession of Jesus alone as the Atoner, and Christ crucified as the true and sole source and object of saving faith. Giertz has even restored baptism to its proper foundational place in relation to the Order of Grace, something which had been to a great extent lost by Schartau.

It is this, Giertz's faithful synthesis, which may cause the confusion surrounding the various labels applied to him, as mentioned in the introduction. However, paradoxically, it is also this synthesis which sounds the clarity of his confession.

According to Giertz, one is to honor and love the sacramental life and the divine proclamation, which stand fast regardless of any human thought or work. At the same time, one loves and values the personal Christian life, of whose richness one partakes and personally appropriates. Only thus does one truly understand the life of the Church, the life of faith, life in communion with the indestructible and imperishable Body of Christ.

Giertz's program, in style and in substance, is especially depicted in *Kristi Kyrka*, *Kyrkofromhet*, and *The Hammer of God* and confessed in the doctrine of the Order of Grace. It is one of renewal and re-birth for the Christian and for the Church, while continually proclaiming the timeless, eternal, and age-old message of salvation in the Cross of Christ. For Giertz, any demand for ecclesial activity, for a new paradigm, or for reforms or renewal, must always be a

demand for greater faithfulness to that Lord who has died, risen, and will return in judgment and victory. It is this future which the Church awaits in hope and looks to in faith. Therefore she has no anxiety, no wish to compromise with the spirit of the current age or to test the fads at the marketplace of ideas. Giertz maintains that only as the biblical and apostolic faith enlivens today's Church and her members, as holy zeal and overwhelming joy once again inspire God's people, will they go out, not to recruit more members or organize movements, but, with prophetic truth and the Spirit's power, to invite all to the wedding feast of the Lamb.

The question "Who was Bo Giertz?" has therefore been answered. He was a tireless, no-nonsense churchman. He was a biblical exegete and prophet. He was a man of awakening, who preached the Word of God with power and persuasion. He was a reformer, who calls upon us to listen once again to the Reformer. He was an author, writing on every topic imaginable, from creation to church photography, from literature for teenagers to the Order of Grace.

Who was Bo Giertz? He was a bishop, a leader, a staunch confessor, a Lutheran pastor who cared for souls with the Word of his gracious Lord. Appropriately, he is buried in Torpa, the birthplace of *The Hammer of God*, under the inscription *Verbum crucis Dei virtus*, his bishop's motto, fitting his service to the Church and his confession of the faith, in life and in death.

## V. APPENDICES

### A. Introduction

The appendixes serve the study at hand and the reader by giving three different examples of Giertz's confession of the Holy Ministry, of the Word, and of soul care in action. These are his preaching at ordination, exhorting the candidates to a lively and faithful care of souls and reliance upon the Word; his analysis of women's call to the Holy Ministry; and a short summary of the enlightenment through law and gospel enfolded in literary form.

B. Appendix I:<sup>176</sup> Ordination addresses: Translated excerpts from Giertz, *Då föll Herrens eld: Nytt liv i tjänsten*.<sup>177</sup>

1. “Be not discouraged, for I am your God”<sup>178</sup>

Ordination,<sup>179</sup> 19 May 1959<sup>180</sup>

“Do not fear, for I am with you. Be not discouraged, for I am your God. I strengthen you and help you; I uphold you with my right hand of righteousness.”

Isaiah 41:10

Thus spoke the Lord to Israel which he had called and chosen as his witness in the world. The same word and the same promise holds true for each and every one that the Lord has chosen as his witness, even a Swedish pastor<sup>181</sup> in the twentieth century.

Do not fear and do not be discouraged. Entering the pastoral office, one can certainly have reason both to fear and to be discouraged. It would actually be wrong if a pastor were to enter his vocation sure of himself and confident in his ability. A pastor always has reason to think: Who am I? How shall I, who am such a sinner, be able to admonish others? Especially a young pastor has reason to ask himself: How am I, with such little experience, supposed to be a teacher and guide for others who have seen so much more of life than I? If I look at myself, it

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<sup>176</sup> Appendix I consists of ordination addresses, not sermons from the pulpit of sermon length, but given from the altar specifically to the candidates.

<sup>177</sup> The following excerpts are translated by this writer.

<sup>178</sup> Giertz, *Då föll Herrens eld*, 45-48.

<sup>179</sup> *Prästvigning*: literally, “pastoral [priestly] ordination.”

<sup>180</sup> It is helpful to remember that the Assembly of the state Church of Sweden, under pressure from the government, approved women’s ordination in 1958. Giertz, especially through his leadership in “*Kyrklig Samling kring Bibeln och bekännelsen*” [Ecclesiastical Gathering around the Bible and the Confession], vigorously opposed this move throughout his life. (See Appendix II, 71 of thesis below.) The first women were ordained on Palm Sunday 1960. The issue continues to be a volatile and divisive one in Sweden today, much more so than in its Nordic neighbors. In-depth analysis of this issue, however, is beyond the scope of this thesis.

<sup>181</sup> *Präst*: literally, “priest.”

must often feel like silly arrogance that I dare stand up and speak to this whole large crowd in the pews,<sup>182</sup> people of all ages and occupations.

But the Lord says: “Be not discouraged, for I am your God.” Here is the entire foundation for that fearlessness and authority, which is not boasting and arrogance. I am your God. God is God, the God of all power and wisdom. When he calls servants and witnesses, he does not command them to go out and witness out of their rich life experiences or share from their own spiritual depths. Rather, he makes them into heralds, who are given a message to proclaim.<sup>183</sup> He makes them into stewards and places in their hands that word and those sacraments with which they shall work. He says: “I am your God. See, I place my words in your mouth. Speak all that I have commanded you. It is I, the Lord your God, who has said this. I shall also keep watch over my word.” Here it is not dependent upon a poor, weak, sinful person being more intelligent or more experienced than others. Rather, it is dependent upon the steward being faithful to his Lord, that the herald bring forth the message without corruption. True fearlessness comes from a humility that recognizes its own unworthiness and limited ability, but that dares trust the power in the Word of God.

Do not fear, says the Lord. A pastor has many reasons to fear. It is not easy to be a pastor. The work is hard. The price we pay for getting to serve the Lord in this time is the willingness to work without counting the hours. We do not have enough pastors. A government study has shown that our pastors on average have a far longer workday than what one would consider reasonable to require of a public official.<sup>184</sup> From a purely human point of view, this is unfair. But we who know which Lord we serve should not complain, but serve him with joy. Worse than the length of the workday, is the pressure inherent in being ready time and again at a set hour to

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<sup>182</sup> ...*nedanför predikstolen*: literally, “below the preaching chair” (i.e., below the pulpit).

<sup>183</sup> *Förkunna*: also means “to preach.”

<sup>184</sup> *Tjänsteman*: literally, “service man” or “man of service.”

come forth with a sterling and rich message. Especially for a young pastor, this can feel stressful. Right from the start, he is held to the same standards and requirements, and shoulders the same burden, as an experienced brother in the ministry. It is not strange if he fears and wonders how he shall manage.

He can also have reason to fear when he thinks about the church's perceived status in our land. A pastor is watched. If he makes a mistake it is noticed and maybe publicized in a way that few other people need to fear. The world likes to call itself tolerant, but there is one thing which it seldom tolerates, and that is a vibrant Christianity.

But now the Lord says: "Do not fear, for I am with you." The Savior has never promised that it would be easy for his messengers, but he has promised to be with them every single day. It must never become routine to proclaim the Word, and the task does not get any easier as the years go by. The herald<sup>185</sup> does not stand on his own feet. He is, and remains, dependant on his Lord. If the Lord draws back his hand, then he will fail and fall. But he has promised to be with his servant, as long as the servant realizes his dependence upon and leans on his God. Again, all one's fearlessness is totally dependent upon this: I do not have confidence in myself and I know that I cannot do this if I am directed to myself. But I also know that the Lord says: I strengthen and I help you. Wisely has the Lord ordered it: His servants are always dependent upon his help. As long as they know this and act accordingly, they need not fear, not even any resistance or enemies. Even the youngest of his servants can go forward with confidence and hear the Word of the Lord to Jeremiah ringing in his own ears: "Do not say: 'I am too young,' rather go wherever I send you, and speak whatever I command you. Do not fear anyone, for I am with you and wish to help you, says the Lord."

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<sup>185</sup> Or "preacher."

And finally, the most solid foundation for fearlessness and joy in this work: “I uphold you with my right hand of righteousness.” When a Christian hears these words, he immediately thinks of the righteousness from God, that which is revealed in Christ, for all those who believe and who are justified<sup>186</sup> without any merit of their own by his grace, through the redemption in Christ Jesus. Here is the rock upon which the true pastor<sup>187</sup> stands; the rock which he knows never gives way. *That* God, who gave his own Son for us all, never tires of showing mercy to his servants and of forgiving them yet again. And when he forgives yet again, I become certain that he is there and that he does really want to use me. I become willing yet again, willing to work without complaint and without comparing my workday with that of others; I become fearless yet again, happy that I may serve such a Lord.

And so I say it again: to each and every one who now stands here in order to be ordained into perhaps the hardest and yet the most wonderful of all of life’s occupations; I say it as a word from Him, who has called you to your service:

Do not fear, for I am with you. Be not discouraged, for I am your God. I strengthen you and help you, I uphold you with my right hand of righteousness. Amen.

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<sup>186</sup> The word “justified” (*rättfärdiggjorda*) in Swedish has the same root as “righteousness” (*rättfärdighet*).

<sup>187</sup> Or “right pastor:” this is a key phrase in Giertz. According to Olofsson, a “*rätt präst*” for Giertz is one who is a believer himself, preaches the Gospel in its purity, and administers the holy sacraments according to the Lord’s word (Augsburg Confession VII). “A true [or, “real,” *riktig*] pastor is a ‘true [or, “right,” *rätt*] pastor, himself saved for Christ’s sake, rooted in the ancient message and equipped to care for souls with the pure and rightly handled [divided] Word of God.’ To be such a pastor— that is associate pastor Torvik’s prayer for himself [in *Hammer*] when he begins his new life and has anew dedicated himself to the Church’s service” (Olofsson, “Kyrkan återupptäckt,” 298, this writer’s translation). See Giertz, *Stengrunden*, 271; Giertz, *Hammer*, 335. See also Appendix III, 74-75 below.

2. “We have received this ministry through God’s mercy”<sup>188</sup>

Ordination, 28 December 1961

“Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart.”

2 Corinthians 4:1

[The] Word and [the] sacraments bestow pure forgiveness, and where these are received in faith, there everything is forgiven. And in order for this to occur, God has instituted the ministry<sup>189</sup> of reconciliation, the office of the ministry. And it is regarding this about which Paul says: “We have this ministry.”

Therefore Paul also says that he holds his ministry high. He knows that he has been given it from God. He knows that God has given this commission specifically to him. This forms and shapes his entire life. He is not only a Christian like all others. He also has this special commission, this ministry. And the pastor should also be aware of this. The world already knows it. It feels it, maybe with a certain uneasiness. Perhaps it ridicules, even despises, the ministry. It looks upon the pastor as something pompous and strange, before which one feels a little unsure or artificial. All this the pastor shall take with great composure. He shall not try to convince people that he “is just an ordinary person.” He is not. He has this ministry.

But if the pastor has this commission from God, for which there are many and great reasons to hold it high, it does not mean that he in and of himself is something higher or more noteworthy than a typical sinner. Even about this Paul reminds us here. He says that we have this ministry<sup>190</sup> which “we have received [through God’s] mercy.” It is not for the sake of our merits that we have been given it. It is because of God’s mercy. It is already because of God’s mercy that we are Christian, that we have had the privilege of being born in a Christian country and

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<sup>188</sup> Giertz, *Då föll Herrens eld*, 64-65. This is not the ordination address in its entirety, but an abbreviated excerpt.

<sup>189</sup> *Ämbete*: also “office.”

<sup>190</sup> *Tjänst*: also “service.”

have been baptized. It is God's mercy that we have the privilege of living in the forgiveness of sins, which we every day need. And it is through God's mercy, that we have been called and ordained to this ministry.

3. "According to your Word I will cast the net"<sup>191</sup>

Ordination, 28 December 1966

"Master, the whole night we have toiled and caught nothing. But according to your word I will cast the net."

Luke 5:5

We remember the words. Peter said them while on a fishing expedition, a time which became his call into the ministry of the Word. That fishing expedition was itself a picture of that ministry. Therefore that story has always had so much to say to those who are God's servants in the pastoral office. These words tell us something essential both about the beginning in that office and about continuing in it through the years.

According to your Word.... It is on this foundation that we dare enter the office. What Peter was saying is that he never would have done this on his own initiative. If the Lord had not stood there and directly commanded him, then he would not have cast the net. It is the same with the right attitude toward the pastoral office. When one enters it, one says: According to your Word, Lord. This is not something that a person thinks of or decides for himself. If we were to look at it from a purely human perspective, it would appear just as preposterous and hopeless as Peter thought it was to cast the net yet once more. It is not compatible with this calculating reason to consecrate one's life to the proclamation that a man who was executed almost two thousand years ago, rose from the dead and lives and is the Lord of us all. It is just as unreasonable today as during the time of the apostles. In order to commit oneself to such a thing, one must be able to say: According to your Word, Lord. Only if I know that Lord and have been given his command, do I dare take on such an adventure. But, if so, then I cannot avoid it. I

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<sup>191</sup> Giertz, *Då föll Herrens eld*, 100-102.

cannot escape. I know that it is he who decides and not I. I understand the words of the apostle: “Woe to me, if I do not proclaim the Gospel!”

According to your Word.... This contains even another reminder for the one who enters the pastoral office. His Word commands me not just to go out; His Word follows me. It tells me what to preach. With every new task I can say, “According to your Word, Lord. After all, it is not I who am to speak here. It is you. It is not I who am to figure out what needs to be said now. I will find it in your word.” I distort the entire pastoral office, I make it preposterously difficult for myself, and I lead my hearers astray about the essentials if I do not let my Lord’s Word be that which decides everything, answers all questions and gives me that message which I carry forth without shame and without fear of the consequences. Therefore we must not exchange this password, this standard—“According to your word”—for some modern surrogate. We must not reinterpret and erase and say that we must offer the people Christianity in a more modern form. Let us instead simply and faithfully listen to our Lord and then say: Yes, according to your Word, Lord...

But in these words of Peter there is something more, which he hardly could have suspected himself at that moment but perhaps thought of later. There is so much of the Lord’s Word that sinks in deeper and is given perspective, when one has stood for one or more decades in the Lord’s service. This is one of them. This day will be the first one in the pastoral office for some of us gathered around God’s altar this evening. For one, the days in this service have already added up to more than sixty years. But this Word applies to us all: According to your Word.... Maybe we learned best the depth of these words, when we could say as Peter: “Master, the whole night we have toiled and caught nothing.” This experience is also a part of the pastoral

office. One sows, and some falls on the path, some on the rocky places,<sup>192</sup> and some among the thorns. There are times when one thinks as the prophet: In vain have I toiled. Fruitlessly and uselessly has my strength been consumed. I was to be a fisher of men, but what kind of catch have I had? How many times have I stayed up and worked late into the night in order to have a sterling and solid message to deliver? And the result? I have caught nothing, no one.

*Nevertheless*—here is a huge “nevertheless” that every pastor needs to learn in his Lord’s service. *Nevertheless*, according to your Word, I want to cast the net.

Nevertheless according to your Word.... Despite everything, without questioning the setbacks in the past and the surprises right now, according to your Word, only according to Your Word, Lord. This is enough of a foundation to dare take the first unfamiliar steps in the office, to continue through the years, and to persevere when faithfulness is tested to the limit.

According to your Word, Lord.... This can be written as the heading and the directions for use on the Office of the Holy Ministry, that which today shall be given to new incumbents. Whether we stand at the beginning of the ministry or closer to the end, we bow humbly before Him who is Lord of the office, the one who calls to and fills the office, and the one who works in it, and say: Lord, we are not worthy; Lord, we are not good enough; Lord, we are miserable tools. But according to your Word we want to do it anyway, go out anyway, sow on the rocky places anyway, and cast the net anyway. If you can use us, do it. If you want to fill the nets, we praise you for your undeserved grace. If you want to let us work without seeing results, it is grace anyway that we may stand in your service. We want to seize the task at hand. We want to work further. According to your Word, Lord. Amen.

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<sup>192</sup> *Stengrunden*: this Swedish word is, as indicated earlier (footnote 3 above), the title of Giertz’s book which has been translated into English as *The Hammer of God* (Matthew 13:5). Of course, the Lord is also the unique “*stengrund*,” the rock, the foundation upon which we stand (Giertz, *Stengrunden*, 227ff.; Giertz, *Hammer*, 280ff.). See 65 above.

C. Appendix II: Twenty-three Theses on the Scriptures, Women, and the Pastoral Office<sup>193</sup>

1. The Bible is the Word of God.
2. Therefore, God's Church shall in all times go to the Scriptures for light and guidance.
3. Only the one who submits to the Word can understand the Word rightly.
4. The center of the Scriptures is Jesus Christ.
5. Loyalty to the Scriptures means that one truly seeks the message and meaning of the Scriptures with the honest desire to have the Word as a light to one's path.
6. The corrective against a legalistic misuse of the Scriptures lies in the Scriptures themselves.
7. There are such things in the Scriptures, which according to the Scriptures' own witness, are not intended to be binding for all times and all peoples.
8. The fact that there is much in the Word of God which is valid only for a specific situation, and much of which we fall short, gives us no right to change God's command.
9. It will not do to make a general distinction between matters of salvation and matters of church order in the Bible.
10. When it comes to determining the content of a Biblical statement and discovering what it means today, we must in every specific case examine the matter from the Bible itself.
11. The issue of women and the pastoral office must be answered through a conscientious study of the Biblical material in its entirety.
12. Paul, appealing to the Lord's command and his apostolic authority, teaches that a woman is not called to hold any teaching office<sup>194</sup> in the congregation.

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<sup>193</sup> Giertz, *23 Teser om Skriften kvinnan och prästämbetet* (Uppsala: Bokförlaget Pro Veritate, 1958), this writer's translation. Only the theses themselves, not their explanations, are here provided.

<sup>194</sup> *Läroämbete*.

13. All of this is presented in the New Testament not as a matter of church order but rather as a necessary result of the command of the law and the will of Christ, founded on that order which God established already at creation and which is realized in Christ.

14. This order has an inner, organic relationship with the New Testament's characteristic view of the church:<sup>195</sup> On the one hand, its members are united as one in Christ, but on the other hand they are different from one another, equipped with different gifts and entrusted with different responsibilities.

15. The difference between man and woman is a gift from God, and it is according to God's will that man and woman have different functions both in the home and in the church.

16. In this difference there is no disparagement of the woman.

17. The command regarding submission<sup>196</sup> cannot be made a norm for society's<sup>197</sup> laws.

18. The Church's office must, on the other hand, be formed in such a way that it is conditioned by Christianity's own considerations.

19. It is Christ's own actions and his directions which have been decisive for the church in this matter.

20. Tradition cannot be allotted any decisive meaning.

21. If faithfulness to the Scriptures requires a "no" to female pastors, it requires a "yes" to the involvement of women in the church which goes beyond what current practice has made possible.

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<sup>195</sup> *Församlingen*.

<sup>196</sup> *Underordning*.

<sup>197</sup> *Samhällets, not kyrkans* or "church's" as it says in *The Springfielder's* English translation (Giertz, "Twenty-Three Theses on the Holy Scriptures, The Woman, and The Office of the Ministry," *The Springfielder* 33 1970:10). The *Springfielder's* translation is not from the original Swedish, but from a German rendering. The correct translation provided here changes the entire meaning of Giertz's thesis number 17.

22. When it comes to preparing the way for a widened role of women in the congregation today, it must happen with awareness of the differences [between man and woman] and not with the idea of making them the same.

23. When the Church is confronted by serious disagreement about how to proceed, the Scriptures call us above all to preserve two things inviolate: one is the unity of the Church; the other is loving regard for all serious qualms of conscience.

#### D. Appendix III: *The Hammer of God*

[N.B.: This appendix does not serve as a comprehensive essay on *The Hammer of God*. Rather, in brief form, it helpfully reviews the novel, which is, as stated, Giertz's most important and best known work. As such, its relevance has been referenced continually and explicitly throughout this thesis. *The Order of Grace*, *ordo salutis*, is the foundation of the book and is depicted therein. The novel illustrates, in belletristic form, how God breaks down the obstacles to salvation and leads a person to faith in Christ: the call, law and gospel, justification and rebirth, and sanctification. This is especially transparent in its first novella, as the chapters are entitled: "The Call," "Awakened by the Law," and "Poverty of the Spirit and the Light of the Gospel." (See also footnote 3 above.)]

*The Hammer of God* has been rightly called "the best Law/Gospel narrative ever written."<sup>198</sup> At the young age of 36, and as an associate pastor in rural Småland, Sweden, Bo Harald Giertz (1905-1998) in a span of six weeks wrote a book which battles those forces which would seek to destroy historic and Confessional Lutheranism. Through the stories of three young pastors from different time-periods, he "earnestly contend[s] for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."<sup>199</sup> As such, Giertz fights heterodoxy through three novellas and in three forms: neology,<sup>200</sup> New Evangelicalism/Pietism,<sup>201</sup> and the "Young Church Movement"/Liberalism.<sup>202</sup> and With Henric Schartau's *Order of Grace* as the foundation,<sup>203</sup> and Augsburg Confession IV and V as the backbone, Giertz shows what it is to be a *rätt präst*

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<sup>198</sup> David Mulder (Director of Leadership Development for the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod), telephone interview, 12 January 2000. See also 1 above and footnote 3 above.

<sup>199</sup> Giertz, *Hammer*, 321; cf. Jude 3.

<sup>200</sup> Giertz, *Hammer*, 40.

<sup>201</sup> Giertz, *Hammer*, 147-48.

<sup>202</sup> Giertz, *Hammer*, 267-68.

<sup>203</sup> See the entire first novella in *Hammer*, 3-131, especially 116-17; see also 202ff. 267, 295, 334, etc.

(“true/right pastor”); that is, one who is a believer himself, preaches the Gospel in its purity, and administers the holy sacraments according to the Lord’s Word.<sup>204</sup> A “true pastor,” standing firm in the time-tested Holy Word and Holy Liturgy of the Church,<sup>205</sup> is equipped to care for souls (*själasörjare*), rightly dividing Law and Gospel.<sup>206</sup> To be such a pastor is the prayer of Pastor Torvik in the third novella,<sup>207</sup> and should indeed be the prayer of every pastor. The theology of the book is summarized in a fantastic and powerful sermon<sup>208</sup> that every pastor could fruitfully borrow for some Sunday morning Divine Service (*gudstjänst*). Every pastor and lay person should read this stunning work on a regular basis. It is strange, however, that the last chapter<sup>209</sup> was not translated for the American edition (or the German edition). The original begins and ends with war in Finland.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> Augsburg Confession VII.

<sup>205</sup> Giertz, *Hammer*, 201, 210-11, 332.

<sup>206</sup> Giertz, *Hammer*, 124.

<sup>207</sup> Giertz, *Hammer*, 335. It has been suggested that this is perhaps an autobiographical character. This writer agrees with such an assessment.

<sup>208</sup> Giertz, *Hammer*, 313-20.

<sup>209</sup> *I syndares ställe* (“In the Place of Sinners”).

<sup>210</sup> Hans Andræ, who recently translated the last chapter into English, gives the fuller historical context:

The story begins in the summer of 1808. ...We know that the year is 1808, because the dean suggests ‘a toast to the heroes of Sikajoki and Revolaks’ (Giertz, *Hammer*, 3) in Finland, where the Swedish army had been victorious against the Russian intruders in two battles in April of that year. The shared destiny of Swedes and Finns that had lasted for more than 600 years came to an end through the 1808-1809 war with Russia. In spite of initial battle success, Sweden was forced to cede Finland to Russia. ...The conclusion of the book brings us back to another war in Finland, the so-called Winter War 1939-1940. Following the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in November 1917, Finland declared its independence from that country on 6 December 1917. However, in the beginning of World War II, on 30 November 1939, Finland was attacked by the Soviet Union...that had been established through the Bolshevik Revolution. While almost 20,000 Finnish soldier gave the ultimate sacrifice in defense of their country, the heroic resistance of Finland’s armed forces (admired by the entire world) caused the death of more than 1000,000 invading Soviet soldiers. However, this could not prevent [Josef] Stalin from massing more troops against Finland, which was forced to cede some border territory in the peace agreement of 12 March 1940. Yet, Finland retained her place in the family of independent Western democracies, while the Soviet Union’s all other European neighbors ended up under Communist oppression behind the iron curtain after World War II. Finland’s plight caused thousands of Swedes to volunteer in the Winter War, something that is reflected in the last chapter. (Hans Andræ, “Bo Giertz: The Hammer of God,” unpublished essay, 2000, 1, 4).

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