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Rejection of Eutychianism and Nestorianism in the "Genus Apotelesmaticum" and a Short Review of Reformed Christology

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Evangeliūms, heraus entstanden ist, ist die beste Widerlegung alle der Bestrebungen unserer Zeit, wonach es Aufgabe der Kirche sein soll, die äußere Lage der Menschen auf Erden zu verbessern, auf das Verhältnis der Völker zueinander einzuwirken und die Christenheit als ein mächtvolles sichtbares Reich nach Art der Reiche dieser Welt darzustellen. Nicht auf sozialem, nicht auf politischem Gebiet liegt die Aufgabe der Kirche, sondern ihre Aufgabe ist es, den Menschen schon jetzt in der Zeit die ewigen himmlischen Güter zu vermitteln, durch die sie hier und dort wahrhaft glücklich und ewig selig werden.]

So ist in der Tat die rechte Unterscheidung und Handhabung von Gesetz und Evangelium die höchste Theologenkunst, durch die allein man geschickt wird, die Theologie recht zu treiben und der Kirche und der Welt nutzbringend zu dienen. Gelernt wird diese Kunst allein in der Schule des Heiligen Geistes. Der mache auch uns alle tüchtig, diese rechte Theologie zu lehren, zu lernen und zu treiben!

Behlendorf, Deutschland.

M. W i l l k o m m.

Rejection of Eutychianism and Nestorianism in the "Genus Apotelesmaticum" and a Short Review of Reformed Christology.*

The incarnation of the Son of God for the salvation of the world is the central truth of the Gospel, and since the Church of the living God is the "pillar and ground of the truth," it has the duty to maintain this truth, to defend it against the assaults of error, and to transmit it to future generations. This we must keep in mind when considering the two natures in Christ; for at first we, too, might be inclined to agree with Hodge when he says: "Not content with admitting the fact that the two natures are united in one person, the Lutheran theologians insist on explaining that fact. They are willing to acknowledge that two natures, or substances, soul and body, are united in the one person in man without pretending to explain the essential nature of the union. Why, then, can they not receive the fact that the two natures are united in Christ without philosophizing about it? The first objection therefore is that the Lutheran doctrine is an attempt to explain the inscrutable." (*Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, p. 14.)

In his epistle the Apostle John strikes at the root of all heresy when he gives as its distinctive mark the denial of the incarnation of the Son of God. "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ

* Cf. Pieper's *Dogmatik*, pp. 296—309.

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is come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world," 1 John 4, 2. 3.

"The Word was made flesh," John 1, 14. With this truth Christianity conquered the ancient world; but unbelieving Judaism and crass paganism, though vanquished, sought vengeance by sowing the seed of heresy within the Christian Church, the former by denying the deity, the latter by denying the humanity of Christ. Thereby divine truth was undermined and rejected; for if Christ is not the God-man in the full sense of the term, He is not the Mediator and Reconciler between God and man. The Christian doctrine of redemption demands a Redeemer who possesses all divine attributes and at the same time enters into all the conditions and relations of mankind. It is therefore easy to understand how everything turns to that fundamental question "What think ye of Christ?" And the correct and complete answer to that question is the best refutation of all error.

The Christian Church has always known in whom it has believed; but from time to time, in its many conflicts, it has defined this faith more distinctly, without adding to, or subtracting from, its original belief: the Word was made flesh. If we study the history of the Christian Church, we see a continual conflict with the twofold error: the denial of the deity, the denial of the humanity of Christ. With their carnal ideas of a Messiah, the Ebionites taught that the Messianic prophecies were indeed fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth and that He would found an earthly kingdom at His second coming; but to them Jesus was a mere man anointed of God, but not the Son of God. In contrast to this pseudo-Christian Judaism stood a pseudo-Christian paganism. The Gnostics despised matter as the source of all evil and contended that Christ was an ideal spirit or aeon coming from the *pleroma* to reveal to mankind the superior wisdom, or gnosis, of freeing oneself from the bonds of matter. Gnosticism denied the humanity of Christ and made Him a mere superhuman phantom. Both heresies of course denied the Christian doctrine of redemption.

Over against this gross and radical Judaizing and paganizing heresy the Christian Church of the first centuries faithfully held fast to the deity and humanity of Christ, and nobody dared to deny either one without thereby placing himself outside of the pale of Christianity. But error was not satisfied and would not concede victory to the truth. It now sought to weaken the deity of Christ. Arius subordinated the Second Person of the Trinity. He taught that Christ, while indeed the Creator of the world, was Himself a creature of God and not equal to the Father. This heresy was rejected by the Council of Nicaea in 325, which declared that Jesus Christ was

"one in substance with the Father." But still error did not cease its cunning. It now sought to weaken the humanity of Christ. Apollinaris, adopting the psychological trichotomy, attributed to Christ a human body and a human soul, but not a human spirit. He denied that Jesus was a complete man. This error was rejected at the Council at Alexandria in 362. And yet error would not acknowledge defeat. It now sought to undermine and void the mystery of the Incarnation by separating or dividing the two natures in Christ, and thus weakening the deity, or by commingling and confusing the two natures, and thus weakening the humanity of Christ. The former is the heresy of Nestorianism and the latter is Eutychianism.

During the Arian controversy the Antiochian, or Syrian, school of theology had inclined towards a separation of the human and the divine nature in Christ. This theology begat Nestorianism, which stretched the distinction of the human and the divine nature into a double personality. Thus the incarnation became a mere indwelling of the Logos in man or, rather, the union of two persons, the divine ego and the human ego. The Alexandrian school of theology, on the other hand, favored a connection so close that it was in danger of losing the human in the divine or, at least, of mixing it with the divine. This theology begat Eutychianism, which urged the personal unity of Christ at the expense of the distinction of natures and made the divine Logos absorb the human nature. Thus the incarnation became a transmutation or mixture of the divine and the human.

The question at issue at that time was, How are the two natures in Christ united? This question is therefore not something "peculiar" to the Lutheran Church, as Hodge contends, but was a matter of dispute already in the early Christian Church; and if the Lutheran theologians "philosophize" about this question, they are only following in the footsteps of those early Church Fathers. That controversy was finally settled at the Council of Chalcedon, and the controversy between the Lutherans and the Reformed concerning the person of Christ is merely a renewal of that same controversy, with the Lutherans contending that the doctrine as promulgated at Chalcedon is Scriptural.

In 428 the see of Constantinople became vacant. Because of local factions no local candidate could be elected harmoniously. The emperor, Theodosius II, therefore summoned Nestorius from Antioch. Nestorius was originally a monk, then a presbyter at Antioch, and after 428 he became Patriarch of Constantinople. He had established quite a reputation as an eloquent preacher and was a zealot for orthodoxy.

But soon Nestorius himself fell out with the prevailing faith

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of the Church. The occasion was his opposition to the expression *mother of God*, which had been applied to the Virgin Mary by some of the Church Fathers (Origen, Athanasius, etc.) to denote the indissoluble union of the divine and the human nature in Christ. Taking His human nature from the body of Mary, He came forth from her womb as the God-man, and as God-man He suffered and died on the cross. The Antiochian school, as said before, was inclined towards separating the two natures and therefore opposed this term. Theodore of Mopsuestia (died 428) declared: "Mary bore Jesus, not the Logos, for the Logos was, and continues to be, omnipresent, though He dwelt in Jesus in a special manner from the beginning. Therefore Mary is strictly the mother of Christ, not the mother of God. . . . Properly speaking, she gave birth to a man in whom the union with the Logos had begun, but was still so incomplete that He could not yet (till after His baptism) be called the Son of God. . . . Not God, but the temple in which God dwelt, was born of Mary."

Following in the footsteps of his teacher, Nestorius argued against this term *θεοτόκος*, mother of God. He saw in it a relapse into heathen mythology and preferred the expression *χριστοτόκος*, mother of Christ. His object was undoubtedly to counteract the growing worship of Mary. "In the first three centuries the veneration of martyrs in general restricted itself to the thankful remembrance of their virtues and a celebration of the day of their death as the day of their heavenly birth. But in the Nicene age it advanced to a formal invocation of the saints as patrons and intercessors before the Throne of Grace and had degenerated into a form of refined polytheism and idolatry." (Schaff.) The worship of Mary as distinct from the worship of saints does not appear until after the Nestorian controversy, which gave a new impetus to Mariolatry.

In his first sermon on this subject Nestorius declared: "You ask whether Mary may be called *mother of God*. Has God then a mother? If so, heathenism itself is excusable in assigning mothers to its gods. . . . No, my dear sirs, Mary did not bear God . . . ; the creature bore not the uncreated Godhead, but the man, who is the instrument of the Godhead; the Holy Ghost conceived not the Logos, but formed for Him, out of the Virgin, a temple which He might inhabit. . . . The incarnate God did not die, but quickened Him in whom He was made flesh. . . . This garment which He used I honor on account of the God which was covered therein and inseparable therefrom. . . . I separate the natures, but I unite the worship. Consider what this means. He who was formed in the womb of Mary was not himself God, but God assumed him, and on account of Him who assumed, he who was assumed, is also called God." In his second homily he declared: "I cannot worship a born, dead, and buried God." In another sermon he said: "Pilate did

not crucify the Godhead, but the clothing of the Godhead, and Joseph of Arimethea did not shroud and bury the Logos."

Thereby Nestorius pressed the distinction of the two natures into a double personality and in reality denied the personal unity of Christ. For the *σάρξ ἐγένετο* he substituted an indwelling, *ἐνοίκησις*, of the Godhead in Christ. Instead of the God-man we therefore have the idea of a God-bearing man, and the person of Jesus of Nazareth is only the garment or temple in which the divine Logos dwells. According to Cyril of Alexandria, Nestorius taught a *συνάφεια*, an affinity or conjunction of the two natures. They maintain an outward mechanical relationship to each other, but each one retains its own peculiar attributes. Since Nestorius denied the personal union, the *ἔνωσις ὑποστατικῆ*, it is self-evident that he also denied the *communicatio idiomatum*, especially the *genus apotelesmaticum*, according to which both natures operate in communion with each other, thus performing a theanthropic act. Nestorius claimed that he could not worship a born, dead, and buried God, the divine nature could not take part in these acts. Thereby he rejected the Christian doctrine of redemption; for, if the death of Christ was merely that of man, if it was not God Himself who died on Calvary, then man has not been redeemed. The death of a mere man cannot save us. Our Redeemer must be true God.

In 431 the Ecumenical Council of Ephesus condemned Nestorius and deposed him from office. But this did not restore peace, for the council had only defined the faith against one extreme and not against the other extreme, which denied the two natures in Christ.

The chief opponent of Nestorius was Cyril of Alexandria (died 444), but he by his misleading and faulty expression "one incarnate nature of the Logos" had opened the door to the monophysite heresy. Philippi says: "*Den staerksten Schein des Monophysitismus hat Cyrill allerdings durch seine Behauptung der μία φύσις λόγου σεσαρκωμένη auf sich geladen. Indes, im Gesamtzusammenhange seiner Lehre betrachtet, kann die μία φύσις nur im spaeteren Sinne der μία ὑπόστασις des ἐν πρόσωπον gefasst werden.*" (Dogmatik, IV, 209.)

The theological representative of this monophysite heresy was Eutyches, an aged presbyter and archimandrite (head of a cloister of three hundred monks) in Constantinople. "Eutyches laid chief stress on the divine in Christ and denied that two natures could be spoken of after the incarnation. The impersonal human nature is assimilated and, as it were, deified by the personal Logos, so that His body is not of the same substance with ours, but a divine body. Hence it must be said: God is born, God was crucified and died." (Schaff.) Thus the essential humanity of Christ was rejected and the Christian doctrine of redemption again denied. Our Redeemer must be a true man so as to be capable of suffering and dying as man's substitute.

At a local synod in Constantinople in 448 this error was rejected. Then came the "Council of Robbers" in 449, which affirmed the orthodoxy of Eutyches and condemned the doctrine of the two natures in Christ and deposed and excommunicated its advocates, including Flavian, the Patriarch of Constantinople, and Pope Leo I of Rome. Pope Leo, who occupied the papal chair from 440 to 461 and who on this occasion represented the whole Occidental Church, saw in it an opportunity to enhance the authority of the papal see and therefore urged the calling of a new council. Theodosius II, having died in 450, was succeeded by Marcian, who favored Pope Leo and the dyophysite doctrine. To restore peace, he in his own name and in the name of Valentinian III called a general council, to be convened in Nicaea in September, 451. Because of the fanatical and violent outbreaks of both parties this council was soon summoned to Chalcedon. On October 22, 451, the positive confession of faith was adopted as follows:—

"Following the holy Fathers, we unanimously teach one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, complete as to His Godhead and complete as to His manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting; consubstantial with the Father as to His Godhead and consubstantial also with us as to His manhood; like unto us in all things, yet without sin; as to His Godhead begotten of the Father before all the worlds, but as to His manhood in these last days born of us men and for our salvation of the Virgin Mary, the mother of God; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, the Only-begotten, known in (of) two natures, without confusion, without conversion (*ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως*), without severance and without division (*ἀδιακρίτως, ἀχωρίστως*), the distinction of the natures being in no wise abolished by their union, but the peculiarity of each nature being maintained and both concurring in one person and hypostasis."

Henceforth the term "two natures in one person" was the shibboleth of Christian orthodoxy. Over against Nestorianism it was taught that there was one person without severance and without division, and over against Eutychianism there were held to be two natures, without confusion and without conversion. The natures were not to be confounded, and the person was not to be divided.

A further controversy, or rather the same controversy, was occasioned by the controversy concerning the Lord's Supper. At Chalcedon the question at issue concerned the priestly office of Christ. During the Reformation it concerned the royal office of Christ.

Zwingli, the *Nestorius Redivivus*, denied the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament. He declared that Christ according to His human nature was not now on earth, but in heaven, sitting at the right hand of God. With his *alloeosis* he taught that,

whenever the predicate referred to the suffering and death, then the subject Christ, Son of Man, Son of God, must be referred to the human nature. For example: Rom. 5, 10: "We are reconciled to God by the death of His Son," refers to His human nature. On the other hand, when the predicate speaks of "life-giving," it refers to the divine nature. John 6, 55: "My flesh is meat indeed," the "flesh" refers to the divine nature. (Cyril of Alexandria tells us that the eleventh canon of the Council of Ephesus, which condemns those who do not confess that the flesh of the Lord is quickening, was directed against Nestorius, who was unwilling to ascribe quickening to the flesh of Christ, but explained the passage in John 6 as referring to the divinity alone.) All this occasioned the controversy concerning the *communicatio idiomatum*, the communication of attributes.

Before we consider this doctrine, we must define what Lutherans understand under the term *idiomata*. The Formula of Concord declares: "We believe, teach, and confess that to be almighty, eternal, infinite, to be of itself everywhere present at once naturally, that is, according to the property of its nature and its essential essence, and to know all things are essential attributes of the divine nature, which never to eternity become essential properties of the human nature. On the other hand, to be a corporeal creature, to be flesh and blood, to be finite and circumscribed, to suffer and die, to ascend and descend, to move from one place to another, to suffer hunger, thirst, cold, heat, and the like are properties of the human nature, which never become properties of the divine nature." (*Trigl.*, p. 1017.)

The Lutheran Church teaches three *genera communicationis*. The first is called the *genus idiomaticum*. It is defined by Dr. Pieper as follows: "Since the divine and the human nature in Christ form one person, therefore those attributes which are the essential property of one nature belong to the entire person, the divine attributes according to the divine nature, the human attributes according to the human nature." For example: Christ is begotten of the Father from eternity; Christ is born in time of the Virgin Mary; both births belong to the person of Jesus, the former according to the divine nature, the latter according to the human nature.

Hodge rejects Zwingli's *alloeosis* and upholds the first *genus* in the words: "Whatever may be affirmed of either nature may be affirmed of the person." (*Systematic Theology*, II, 392.) Again he says: "Christ was not a mere man, but God and man in one person. His obedience and sufferings were therefore the obedience and suffering of a divine person. . . . Christ is but one person with two distinct natures, and therefore whatever can be predicated of either nature may be predicated of the person." (*Sys. Theol.*, II, 483.) But Hodge and all Reformed theologians most emphatically reject the second *genus*, the *genus maiestaticum*.

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The *genus maiestaticum* is defined by Dr. Pieper as follows: "Divine attributes are ascribed to the person of Christ also according to His human nature, not as belonging essentially to, but as being in time communicated to, the human nature."

This is the doctrine of Scripture. According to Scripture "all things" were given to Jesus according to His human nature. "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands," John 13, 3. "The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into His hands," John 3, 35. "All things were delivered unto Me of My Father," Matt. 9, 27. According to His divine nature, God can give Him nothing, for that divine nature in its own essence has all things absolutely. Hence, here and everywhere where God is said to give Christ anything or Christ is said to receive anything it is given to Him according to His human nature. The Formula of Concord reads: "There is a unanimously received rule of the entire ancient orthodox Church that what Holy Scripture testifies that Christ received in time He received not according to His divine nature (according to which He has everything from eternity), but the person has received it in time *ratione et respectu humanae naturae*, that is, as referring, and with respect to, according to, the assumed human nature." (*Trigl.*, p. 1035.) Leo I writes: "Let the adversaries of the truth declare when or according to what nature the almighty Father raised His Son above all things or to what substance He subjected all things. For to Deity, as to the Creator, all things have always been subjected. If power was added to Him, if Sublimity was exalted, it was inferior to Him who exalted and did not have the riches of that nature of whose liberality it stood in need. But a person holding such views Arius receives into his fellowship."

Leo argues correctly: If "all power," "all things," were given to Christ according to His divine nature, then we no longer have a Christ who is "one in substance with the Father," but a *Deus creatus*, and thereby the truth of redemption is again rejected.

In Matt. 28, 18 Christ tells us: "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." Supreme power was therefore conferred on the Mediator according to His human nature. This "all power" is comprehensive and implies also the power to be everywhere. Therefore He adds in the next verse: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Christ is present with His Church not only according to His divine nature (as all Reformed contend), but also according to His human nature. This mode of presence is not visible, sensible, local, or circumscribed, according to the condition and mode of his earthly life before His exaltation, but it is a true, illocal presence "after the manner in which an infinite Spirit renders present a human nature which is one person with it—a manner incomprehensible to us." (Krauth.)

The third *genus* is called *genus apotelesmaticum* and is defined by Dr. Pieper as follows: "All acts which Christ performed as Prophet, Priest, and King for the salvation of man and still performs are consummated by both natures, inasmuch as each nature does not act independently that which is peculiar to it, but both natures, each performing in communion with the other, concur in such a theanthropic act." The Formula of Concord reads: "As to the execution of the office of Christ, the person does not act and work in, with, and through, or according to only one nature, but in, according to, with, and through both natures, or, as the Council of Chalcedon expresses it, one nature operates in communion with the other what is a property of each. Therefore Christ is our Mediator, Redeemer, King, High Priest, Head, Shepherd, etc., not according to one nature only, whether it be the divine or the human, but according to both natures." (*Trigl.*, p. 1031.) The *Epistle of Leo*, which the Council of Chalcedon embodied in its decree, reads: "He who is true God, the same is true man, since both the humility of man and the loftiness of God exist together in one person. For just as God does not change by pity when from pity for us He assumes the human nature, so man is not consumed by divine glory; for each form does what is peculiar to it in communion with the other, namely, the Word working what belongs to the Word and the flesh executing what belongs to the flesh" (*agil enim utraque forma cum alterius communione, quod proprium est*).

Since the Reformed theologians do not accept the *genus maiestaticum*, it is but natural for them to deny also the *genus apotelesmaticum*. Their argument is based on the axiom: *Finitum non est capax infiniti*, the finite is not capable of the infinite.

Let us return to the royal office of Christ. In this office Christ is present everywhere with His Church on earth and rules, governs, and protects it against the gates of hell. But according to Reformed doctrine the human nature does not and cannot take part in this act. Hodge declares: "Omnipresence and omniscience are not attributes of which a creature can be made the organ." (*Sys. Theol.*, II, 417.) The Heidelberg Catechism reads, Question 47: "Is not, then, Christ with us, as He has promised, unto the end of the world?" Krauth remarks: "It seems as if it were felt that the Reformed position was open to the suspicion of seeming to empty Christ's promise of its fulness. Nor does the answer of the Catechism relieve the suspicion. Its answer is: 'Christ is true man and true God. According to His human nature He is not now upon earth; but according to His Godhead, majesty, grace, and Spirit He at no time departs from us.' The reply wears to us the air of a certain evasiveness, as if it parried the question rather than answered it. It seems to answer a certain question, but really answers another; or rather it seems to answer

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affirmatively, but actually answers negatively. If Christ be true man and true God, then humanity and divinity are inseparable elements of His essence; where either is wanting, Christ is wanting. If the question be, Is the divine nature of Christ present? the Heidelberg Catechism answers it affirming that it is. If the question be, Is the human nature of Christ present? the Heidelberg Catechism answers and says, It is not. But if the question be, as it is, Is Christ present? the Heidelberg Catechism does not answer it, for it leaves the very heart of the query untouched: Can Christ in the absence of an integral part of His person really be said to be present? As far as the Heidelberg Catechism implies an answer to this question, that answer seems to us to be, Christ is *not* present. Ursinus in his explanation of the Catechism is compelled virtually to concede this; for on the thirty-sixth question, in reply to the objection that on his theory, as 'the divinity is but half Christ, therefore only half Christ is present with the Church,' he replies, 'If by half Christ they understand one nature which is united to the other in the same person, the whole reason may be granted, namely, that not both, but one nature only of Christ, though united to the other, that is, His Godhead, is present with us.' (*Conservative Reformation*, p. 487.)

The forty-eighth question of the Heidelberg Catechism reads: "But if his human nature is not present wherever His Godhead is, are not the two natures in Christ separated from one another?" It answers: "By no means; for, since the Godhead is incomprehensible and everywhere present, it must follow that the same is both beyond the limits of the human nature He assumed and yet none the less in it and remains personally united to it." To this Krauth remarks: "This reply, as we understand it, runs out logically into this: The Godhead is inseparably connected with the humanity, but the humanity is not inseparably connected with the Godhead; that is, one part of the person is inseparably connected with the other, but the other is not inseparably connected with that part; the whole Second Person of the Trinity is one person with the humanity in one point of space, but everywhere else it is not one person with it. There is apparently no personal union whatever, but a mere local connection — not a dwelling of the fulness of the Godhead bodily, but simply an operative manifestation; two persons separable and in every place, but one separated, not one inseparable person — inseparable in space as well as in time." (*Ibid*, p. 488.)

According to Reformed doctrine, Christ is according to His human nature "located at the right hand of God and nowhere else, being excluded from the earth and limited to the place of exaltation in heaven." (Gerhard.) At this place the human nature is in union with the divine nature, but everywhere else the divine nature, without the human nature, is present on earth. If that is true, then

we no longer have in Christ two natures in one person, but in two persons, — the one Christ, both human and divine, in heaven at the right hand of God, withdrawn from the world; the other Christ, the divine Christ, present everywhere on this earth. This is the heresy of Nestorianism.

The Reformed theologians claim to adhere to the Council of Chalcedon; but, as we have seen, they sever and divide the person of Christ in the royal office of Christ. They reject that portion of Leo's epistle to Flavian which says: "One nature operates in communion with the other what is the property of each." In the royal office of Christ they accept merely the words "One nature operates what is the property of each." But thank God! they are inconsistent. They do not follow in the footsteps of Unitarianism, which is consistent and thereby places itself outside of the pale of Christianity; for what they reject in the royal office they believe and teach in the priestly office of Christ.

Christ did not suffer according to His divine nature, but by virtue of His human nature. Nevertheless the divine nature is also connected with, and is active in, this suffering, inasmuch as the divine nature, personally united with the human nature in the one person of Jesus, supports the human nature and thus gives to the suffering its intrinsic worth, so that as a result of both natures' operating in communion with each other the salvation of mankind is accomplished. The suffering and death of Christ is not that of a mere man, but of the God-man. It is a theanthropic act, in which both natures concur and act together.

Let us quote Hodge. "The satisfaction of Christ is not due to His having suffered either in kind or in degree what the sinner would have been required to endure, but principally to the infinite dignity of His person. He was not a mere man, but God and man in one person. His obedience and sufferings were therefore the obedience and sufferings of a divine person. . . . Christ is but one person with two distinct natures, and therefore whatever can be predicated of either nature may be predicated of the person. An indignity offered to a man's body is offered to himself. If this principle be not correct, there was no greater crime in the crucifixion of Christ than in unjustly inflicting death on an ordinary man. The principle in question, however, is clearly recognized in Scripture, and therefore the sacred writers do not hesitate to say that God purchased the Church with His blood and that the Lord of Glory was crucified. Hence such expressions as *Dei mors*, *Dei sanguis*, *Dei passio*, have the sanction of Scriptural as well as of Church usage. It follows from this that the satisfaction of Christ has all the value which belongs to the obedience and sufferings of the eternal Son of God and His righteousness, as well active as passive, is infinitely meritorious. . . .

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The superior efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ is thus referred to the infinitely superior dignity of His person." (*Sys. Theol.*, II, 484.) Thus the Heidelberg Catechism is also inconsistent and declares, Question 40: "Why was it necessary for Christ to humble Himself unto death? Because with respect to the justice and truth of God, satisfaction for our sins could be made no other wise than by the *death of the Son of God.*" Question 17: "Why must He in one person be also very God? That He might by the *power of His Godhead* sustain in His human nature the burden of God's wrath and might obtain for, and restore to, us righteousness and life."

The Lutheran doctrine of the communication of attributes is the doctrine of Scripture and, as Dr. Pieper states, is believed also by every Reformed Christian. The Reformed Christian believes the word "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sins," 1 John 1, 7. He believes three things: 1) That the blood of Christ, which is a property of the human nature, is the blood of the Son of God. This is the *genus idiomaticum*, according to which the essential properties of the one nature (blood is the essential property of the human nature and not of the divine nature) belong to the entire person of Christ. 2) That the attribute "to cleanse from sin," which is a divine prerogative, is ascribed to the blood of Christ, which, as said before, is an essential property of the human nature. In other words, the divine prerogative to cleanse from sin is ascribed to the human nature. This is the *genus maiestaticum*, according to which divine attributes are ascribed to the person of Christ also according to the human nature, not as belonging essentially to that nature, but as being in time communicated to that nature. 3) That both natures operate in communion with each other in the theanthropic act. This is the *genus apotelesmaticum*, according to which in all acts which Christ performs for the salvation of men the natures do not act separately, but always in communion with each other. The blood, which is an essential property of the human nature, and the power to cleanse from sin, which is an essential property of the divine nature, both operate in communion with each other in performing the theanthropic act of cleansing mankind from sin.

Lutheranism rejects Nestorianism by accepting the words of Leo to Flavian, "One nature operates *in communion with the other* what is the property of each." Since the two natures in Christ are "without severance and without division," but united in the one person, therefore the acts (*actiones*) are not separate or divided, but in communion with each other. They are *theanthropic*.

Nestorius claimed that he could not worship a born, dead, and buried God, that Christ according to His divine nature could not and did not cooperate in these actions, His birth, death, and burial being merely that of a man. Now, it is true that to be born, to die,

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and to be buried are the essential properties only of the human nature, never of the divine nature; for God cannot be born, die, and be buried. But since the divine nature is personally united with the human nature in the person of Christ, therefore the divine nature concurred and took part in His birth by the Virgin Mary, His death, and His burial. The virgin birth, the death and the burial were actions of the God-man. They were theanthropic actions. How this is possible is useless to inquire.

This also holds true (which is not conceded by Reformed theologians) of all other works of Christ, *viz.*, the works of omnipotence and omnipresence in His royal office. To be almighty, to be omnipresent, are essential attributes only of the divine nature. Only God is omnipotent and omnipresent. But since the human nature is personally united with the divine nature in Christ, therefore the human nature concurs and takes part in these divine works. Again, how this is possible is useless to inquire.

Owing to its insistence on the communication of attributes, it is not Nestorianism, but rather Eutychianism with which the Lutheran Church is charged. Dr. Gerhart writes in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* of 1863 that the Lutheran view of the person of Christ is in "the line of the ancient Eutychianism."

Eutyches taught that after the incarnation the human nature had been assimilated and deified by the Logos, so that Christ's substance was not of the same substance as ours.

But the Lutheran Church rejects Eutychianism in the words of Leo to Flavian, "One nature operates in communion with the other what is the property of each." Since the two natures are "without confusion, without conversion," but remain distinct, therefore the actions remain distinct. Each nature retains its essential properties, neither losing its own nor receiving those of the other. To suffer and die is the essential property of the human nature, but because of the personal union the divine nature cooperates and concurs in the suffering and death and by virtue of its essential majesty makes it an infinite sacrifice. Thus, too, omnipotence is an essential attribute only of the divine nature. The human nature is not of itself omnipresent. But because of the personal union the human nature partakes of the essential divine property of omnipresence and is rendered omnipresent through the divine majesty communicated to it.

The Formula of Concord reads: "But, as above said, since the two natures in Christ are united in such a manner that they are not mingled with one another or changed one into the other and each retains its natural, essential properties, so that the properties of one nature never become properties of the other nature, this doctrine must also be rightly explained and diligently guarded against all heresies. . . . This communication, or impartation, has not occurred

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through an essential or natural infusion of the properties of the divine nature in the human, so that the humanity of Christ would have these by itself and apart from the divine essence, or as though the human nature in Christ had thereby entirely laid aside its natural, essential properties and were now either transformed into divinity, or had, with such communicated properties, in and by itself become equal to the same, or that there should now be for both natures identical or, at any rate, equal natural, essential properties and operations. For these and similar erroneous doctrines were justly rejected and condemned in the ancient approved councils on the basis of Holy Scripture. For in no way is conversion, confusion, or equalization of the natures in Christ or of their essential properties to be maintained and admitted." (*Trigl.*, p. 1035 f.)

But in spite of all this the Reformed theologians maintain that the Lutheran doctrine runs towards Eutychianism. They claim that, if the divine attributes can be communicated to the human nature, if the human nature can partake of essential divine properties, such as omnipresence or omniscience, then we no longer have an essential humanity, but a deified humanity. Hodge writes: "The Lutheran doctrine destroys the integrity of the human nature of Christ. A body which fills immensity is not a human body. A soul which is omniscient, omnipresent, and almighty is not a human soul." (*Sys. Theol.*, II, 416.)

In answer we would say that, if the finite is incapable of the infinite, if the human nature cannot partake of divine omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience without destroying the integrity of the human nature, then it is not capable of and cannot partake of divine personality. If the divine attributes cannot be communicated to the human nature without destroying the human nature, then the personality of the Logos, which certainly is divine, cannot be communicated to the human nature, in other words, there cannot be a union of the divine and human in the person of Jesus Christ without destroying His humanity. Over against Unitarianism the Reformed hold that there is a union of the divine and human in the person of Jesus, but what they uphold against Unitarianism they reject over against Lutheranism. Over against Unitarianism they reject the axiom *Finitum non est capax infiniti*. Thus they contradict themselves.

Let us quote Krauth once more. "The statements of Lutheran doctrine, beyond every other, are guarded with extraordinary care against the Eutychian tendency. We maintain further that no system is more thoroughly antagonistic to Eutychianism than the Lutheran system, properly understood. Even the Reformed doctrine itself has a point of apparent contact with it, which Lutheranism has not. Eutychianism taught that Christ has but one nature. The Lutheran

Church holds 'that the two natures, divine and human, are inseparably conjoined in unity of person, one Christ, true God and true man.' Eutyches taught that the body of Christ was not of the same substance as ours. The Lutheran Church teaches: 'Jesus Christ is man of the same substance of His mother, born into the world, perfect man, of a rational soul and human flesh subsisting. One Christ, not by conversion of divinity into flesh, but by the assumption of humanity to God; one indeed, not by confusion of substances, but by the unity of person; for as the rational soul and flesh is one man, so God and man are one in Christ.' The doctrine of Eutyches is moreover expressly rejected in several passages of the Formula of Concord. But is not the Reformed doctrine that Christ's *personal* presence at the Lord's Supper is only in one nature a concession, logically, so far to Eutyches that it seems to admit that sometimes and somewhere, nay, rather always, almost everywhere, Christ has but one nature?" (*Conservative Reformation*, p. 476.)

Therefore the contention of Hodge that the Lutheran doctrine of the person of Christ is "peculiar" to the Lutheran Church and that it "forms no part of catholic Christianity" is utterly false. The Lutheran Church is in full agreement with the Scriptures, the Council of Chalcedon, and the ancient Fathers.

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„Morphologie des Luthertums.“*)

In diesem großartigen Werk wird nachgewiesen, wie die Rechtfertigungslehre, durchweg „der evangelische Ansaß“ genannt, dem Luthertum und dem lutherischen Wesen zugrunde liegt. Sie bildet das Herz des Luthertums, hat ihm auch seine äußerlichen Züge aufgeprägt. Wie die Lehre der Schrift das ist, was sie ist, eben weil es eine Rechtfertigung durch den Glauben gibt, so steht auch in der lutherischen Theologie die Rechtfertigungslehre im Zentrum, beherrscht auch den Kultus, die Verfassung und das Leben. „Ist mit dem evangelischen Ansaß das Zentrum der Dynamik richtig bestimmt, so entsteht die weitere Aufgabe, die nachweisbaren historischen Wirkungen so darauf zu beziehen, daß ein möglichst vollständiges ‚Bild‘ vom Luthertum sichtbar wird. Dies ist die eigentliche morphologische Aufgabe“ (S. 9). Es wird auch beständig auf solche neuzeitlichen Erscheinungen Bezug genommen, die fremdartige Züge im Bild des Luthertums darstellen. Der

*) Von D. Dr. Werner Eiert, o. ö. Professor an der Universität Erlangen. Erster Band: „Theologie und Weltanschauung des Luthertums hauptsächlich im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert.“ 465 Seiten 6½×9½. Preis: M. 18. C. S. Bedtsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, München. 1931.