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Miscellanea

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Miscellanea.

Sojakim oder Judi?

Wer hat die Rolle des Propheten Jeremia verbrannt, der König oder der Vorleser? Jer. 36, 21 ff. Langes Kommentar meint, es sei Judi gewesen. Aber die große Mehrzahl der Ausleger (Keil, Orelli in *Strack-Zöckler*, Dächsel, Dummelow usw.) schreiben die böse Tat direkt dem Könige zu. Letzteres ist ohne Zweifel richtig (vgl. S. 491 des laufenden Jahrgangs); denn in V. 25 steht: „Sie baten den König, er wolle das Buch nicht verbrennen“, und in V. 27: „Da der König das Buch . . . verbrannt hatte.“ Es kann hier kaum das Wort angewandt werden: *Quod quis per alios facit, ipse facit*, da der König zweimal als der Missetäter genannt wird.

P. E. K.

Some Principles of Lutheran Liturgics.

1. Those clearly stated in Scripture: "Let all things be done unto edifying. . . . Let all things be done decently and in order," 1 Cor. 14, 26. 40. "God is a spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth," John 4, 24. "That no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way," Rom. 14, 13.

2. The liturgy must always serve as a background and foil for the saving truth of the Word of God. (No part of the Lutheran service may stand out independently or draw the attention of the worshipers from the presentation of the divine truths in hymns, lessons, the sermon, and the Sacraments; everything must point to the means of grace.)

3. The Lutheran liturgy may never bring any *person*, either that of the liturgist or that of any assistant, into the foreground. (It is for this reason that the minister, in officiating in the chancel or before the congregation, wears his official vestment. That is why the regular church service may never become a sacred concert, with the organ most prominent. That is why solos, except as parts of larger movements, are not in place in the Lutheran service.)

4. The Lutheran liturgy should observe historical continuity. (That is why the specific eucharistic vestments were largely discarded as the result of the Leipzig Interim. That is why we do not have the adoration of the elements in the Lord's Supper.)

5. The Lutheran liturgy should observe the sequence of the church-year. (Both the music and the hymns, like the introits, collects, and the lessons themselves, must be in keeping with the character of the respective day or festival.)

6. The Lutheran liturgy may never interrupt the service of the Word by introducing extraneous material. (The service of the Word, from the introduction leading up to the reading of the lessons of the day to the offertory, is a unit which must not be severed by any emotional appeal.)

7. The Lutheran liturgy should not obtrude the element of good works into the sacramental character of its essential features. (For this reason the good works of the Christians are not to be introduced into the service as a dominant feature at any point. If necessary, they may be included in the general prayer.)

P. E. K.

Whither Are We Drifting?

The local congregation is the unit of the so-called visible Church, that is, of the outward organization known by that name. This is clear, not only from the fact that the Church at large (*Gesamtkirche*) never functions as an outward organization in Scriptures, that it is nowhere represented as a governing body, but also from the fact that the highest and most essential activities of a visible church-body, those of establishing the ministry and calling pastors (Acts 14, 23; Titus 1, 5) and of functioning as the final court in excluding from membership in the Christian Church (Matt. 18; 1 Cor. 5) such as will not accept brotherly admonition after a flagrant transgression of the Law of God, are distinctly associated with the local congregation.

In keeping with this Scripture truth, that the local congregation is the unit of any church organization, the organization of our Missouri Synod took place and its government was determined. (Cp. *Constitution, Arts. V, VI, VII.*) It is particularly to be noted that Synod consists and is composed of congregations, not of Districts. The Districts merely represent a convenient form of carrying out the objectives of Synod. The local congregation is the unit of Synod, and the individual member is the unit of the local congregation. Therefore the pastor of each congregation is responsible for the observance of the objectives which Synod has named as purposes governing the common activities of a large organization, or association. Cp. Rev. 2 and 3.

In theory our government has been the *congregational polity*, and is to-day, as a matter of fact. We have been fairly consistent in avoiding a *synodical polity*, a government by Synod as an administrative and executive body. But are we not dangerously near adopting a *bureaucratic polity*, a government by boards and committees and commissions? One who pages through the report of the recent convention in Milwaukee cannot help but notice the constant repetition of resolutions placing important activities into the hands of committees. Were all those matters not studied in the individual congregation? Is it necessary for us to build up more or less elaborate organizations which are, to an extent at least, independent of the local congregation in order to take care of the work of the Kingdom? What about the proper appreciation and use of the laymen's movement as set forth in the Word of God, as practised by the congregations of the apostolic period?

P. E. K.

The Inspiration of the New Testament.

Is the subjective proof for the truth of the New Testament the only one we really can offer? This is the question which was recently put. The *testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum* is undoubtedly the strongest argument for the Christian himself, according to John 7, 17. But we may well employ the argument from the promise of the Savior, John 14, 26; 15, 26 f.; 16, 13, with 17, 20, together with the statements of the writers themselves, as in 1 Cor. 2, 4, 13; Gal. 1, 7 ff.; 1 Thess. 2, 13, and certain bits of evidence, as in 2 Pet. 3, 15, 16. For the whole question see the discussion in *CONCORDIA THEOL. MONTHLY*, II, 655 ff. 754 ff.

P. E. K.