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Miscellanea

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Wir wissen: Matth. 11, 28; Joh. 6, 37; Ps. 22, 27; Jes. 42, 8. Wir halten dem Heilande diese seine tröstlichen Worte vor und sprechen nun: „Erquide mich nach deinem Wort“, nach dieser deiner Zusage. Gib meiner Seele Ruhe und Frieden! Ps. 51, 9—11.

D. Jesus erhört unsere Bitte durch die tröstliche Versicherung, daß er alle unsere Schulden völlig bezahlt und alle unsere Strafen gelöst habe. Um uns seiner Gnade und Vergebung gewiß zu machen, ladet er uns heute zu seinem Gnadenmahl ein, damit wir aufs neue in dem Glauben gestärkt werden, daß wir teilhaben an seiner vollkommenen Erlösung. So laßt uns alle einstimmen in das Bekenntnis und in die Bitte unsers Textes: „Meine Seele“ usw. F. S. Eggers.

Miscellanea.

Das Luthersche Trauformular und seine Bedeutung in unserer Zeit.

Bekannt ist, daß Luthers reformatorische Arbeit auf dem Gebiet der Liturgik und des kirchlichen Gottesdienstes streng konservativ war. Aber bei der Betonung dieser Tatsache vergessen manche Forscher etwas, was für Luthers Arbeit auf diesem Gebiet ausschlaggebend war, nämlich daß der große Reformator immer darauf bedacht war, bei seinen Bemühungen um die historische Kontinuität auch die einschlägigen Schriftlehren zur Geltung zu bringen. Dies tritt besonders deutlich hervor in seinen klassischen Ausführungen in seiner Formula Missae von 1523 und in seiner „Deutschen Messe“ von 1525/6. Die Grundsätze, die Luther in diesen und andern Schriften ausgesprochen hat, müssen unbedingt von jedem Liturgiologen studiert werden, der vorgibt, in Luthers Fußstapfen einhergehen zu wollen.

Dies gilt aber auch besonders von dem Lutherschen Trauformular vom April 1529. (St. Louiser Ausg. X, 720—725.) Da führt Luther in seiner Einleitung aus, daß, wie der Ehestand selbst, so auch die Hochzeitsgebräuche „ein weltlich Geschäft“ sind, worinnen er „einer jeden Stadt und Land“ ihren Brauch und Gewohnheit lassen wolle. Es lag ihm aber daran, eine einträchtige Weise zu schaffen für solche, die ihren Ehestand von der Kirche eingesegnet haben wollten, die es begehrten, vor der Kirche oder in der Kirche gesegnet zu werden, besonders wenn sie die ganze Trauung von der Kirche durch den berufenen Diener am Wort vollzogen haben wollten.

Luther hat sich bei der Ausarbeitung seines Trauformulars an die herkömmliche Liturgie gehalten, und zwar mit gutem Bedacht. Denn die Praxis der alten Kirche hinsichtlich der Trauungen hielt sich streng an den biblischen Begriff von der Verlobung und von der Ehe. Man unterscheidet die Ehescheidung, die conciliatio der Ehe, von der obsignatio, der confirmatio, der Einsegnung derselben. Jene vollzog sich durch die Erklärung der Verlobten vor dem Bischof; diese aber geschah dadurch, daß die vom Bischof Zusammengegebenen als Eheleute im öffentlichen Gemeindegottesdienst priesterlich fungierten und das Sakrament empfangen. (Vgl. Kiefoth, Liturgische Abhandlungen I, 79; Höfking, Die Lehre der ältesten Kirche vom Opfer, 217.) Trotz der späteren Ausartung des Rituals blieb

doch der wesentliche Punkt, nämlich die Unterscheidung zwischen der eigentlichen Trauung als der Anerkennung der schon bestehenden Verlobung und der Einsegnung durch den Priester als Vertreter der Kirche. Luther machte aus der Einsegnung der Ehe einen wirklich selbständigen Akt. Sein Trauformular hat, streng genommen, drei Abschnitte, nämlich die Zusammensprechung durch die Fragen an die Kopulanden und das Zusammenfügen der Hände, die Verlesung der Schriftworte und endlich das Einsegnungsgebet unter Handauflegung. Diese drei Abschnitte werden in zwei Teilen vorgeführt, nämlich so, daß der Geistliche die Brautleute an der Kirchentür empfängt und da am Eingang der Kirche („vor der Kirche“) die Zusammenfügung vornimmt, dann aber die nunmehr Getrauten vor den Altar führt, wo er („vor dem Altar“) die Lektionen über sie verliest und ihnen den Segen der Kirche erteilt.

Das ganze Trauformular, und auch die Einteilung, ist von Luther mit gutem Bedacht beibehalten worden, eben auch um der Stellung der Schrift willen. Denn nach Gottes Wort ist ein rechtmäßiges Verlöbniß eine geschlossene, nur noch nicht vollzogene Ehe. Nur durch diese Stellung werden wir den verschiedenen Schriftstellen Alten und Neuen Testaments gerecht, die von der Verbindlichkeit des Eheversprechens mit der elterlichen Einwilligung handeln. Dies war ganz und gar Luthers Stellung, wie das seine vielen Aussprachen im Ehebüchlein und sonst zeigen. Wenn er darum schreibt, daß „man Braut und Bräutigam zur Kirche führen soll“, so setzt er ein rechtmäßiges Verlöbniß voraus und sieht die Brautleute an als solche, die einander mit Einwilligung der Eltern bereits das Eheversprechen gegeben haben. Zusammen kamen die Brautleute nach Luthers Weisung zur Kirche, wo die Zusammensprechung an der Tür geschah. Zusammen gingen die Neugesetzten hinter dem Geistlichen zum Altar, *vir a dextris mulieris et mulier a sinistris viri*, wo der Traubund dann von der Kirche eingesegnet wurde. (Vgl. CONCORDIA THEOL. MONTHLY, IV, 695.) Das spätere englische Trauformular, in dem das Moment des schon vorher vorhandenen elterlichen Konsensus durch die Symbolik negiert wird (das Begleiten der Braut vor dem Altar), hätte gewiß die Billigung Luthers nicht gefunden.

Wollen wir die Bedeutung des Lutherschen Trauformulars beibehalten, so sollten die Brautleute zusammen zum Altarraum kommen, wo der Pastor von den Stufen aus die Zusammensprechung vollzieht, worauf das getraute Paar ihm zum Altar folgt, wo das Einsegnungsgebet mit Handauflegung gesprochen wird. Dies ist in genauem Einklang mit der Stellung von Schrift und Bekenntnissen betreffs der Verbindlichkeit eines rechtmäßigen Verlöbnißes.

R. E. S.

An Explanation of Eccl. 12, 4. 5.

The following explanation from the *Moody Monthly* may be helpful:—

“In its appeal to youth to remember the Creator before the coming of evil days and the years which afford no pleasure, the first verse of the chapter gives us our clew. ‘Evil days’ are not necessarily the punishment of bodily sins, but suggest the inevitable limitations and weaknesses which accompany old age. The language which follows is highly imaginative, yet plainly descriptive of declining years and the impairing of one’s faculties. As v. 3 indicates the decay of bodily organs, so vv. 4 and 5 are

thought by some to refer particularly to the decay of bodily functions. Keeping in mind the suggested storm of v. 2, the phrase in v. 4 'and the doors shall be shut in the street' seems to refer to apertures by which the life processes of the body are carried on and which in old age sometimes do not properly function and hence are 'shut.' The phrase when 'the sound of the grinding is low' seems to refer back to the grinders (teeth) of v. 2 and may refer either to the fewness of the teeth or to the inability to vocalize as clearly as in youth because of their loss. 'Shall rise up at the voice of a bird' seems to describe the early wakefulness of old age. 'The daughters of music shall be brought low' may symbolize either the loss of the ability longer to sing or of the power to enjoy the songs of others. The first suggestion would have reference to the impairment of the vocal cords and the second to the dulness or loss of hearing. Coming now to v. 5, 'afraid of that which is high,'—hill-climbing is no longer easy. And 'fears shall be in the way'—loss of physical and mental powers is often accompanied by dread of the future and its imaginary terrors. 'And the almond-tree shall flourish'—the Hebrew word for this tree suggests sleeplessness, insomnia, or wakefulness. 'And the grasshopper shall be a burden,' or 'shall drag himself along' (R. V.); that is, the decrepit old man is allegorically likened to the awkwardly walking grasshopper and is a burden to himself. 'And desire shall fail'—this noun occurs only here. It may be rendered 'the caper-berry' (R. V., margin), which was used as a restorative and stimulant. There comes a time in old age when such means fail in their medicinal virtues. Hence 'man goeth to his long home, and mourners go about the streets.'

Wanted—A New Dogmatic.

Two articles with this caption have been published by Dr. J. A. W. Haas in the *Lutheran Church Quarterly*, the first in the January, 1932, the second in the October, 1933, issue. Dr. Haas stresses, in the main, two requisites which, in his opinion, are lacking in the dogmatic of the Lutheran Church of America. We fully agree with him as to the need of these two features. The first is, to put it in general terms, that the dogmatician must use the language of his generation. He must not use, in the language of Dr. Haas, the philosophical terms that are no longer intelligible to men of the present age. And if and when the philosophical thought of to-day succeeds in finding a term that expresses the truth of Scripture more adequately than the medieval terms, we must and shall appropriate it. Dr. Haas is not demanding that our dogmatic shape itself to conform with the teaching of present-day philosophy. The editors of the *Lutheran Church Quarterly* make that demand. They say in the introductory note: "Was there ever a theology that was not influenced both in form and content" (italics by the *Quarterly*) "by the philosophy of the age in which it emerged?" Dr. Haas, however, insists: "The whole substance and content of dogmatic must be derived from the Scripture." (His further statement: "A variety of dogmatic statements will lead to the awakening of the Church from a complacent, dogmatic slumber," would not be in agreement with the first statement if it were meant to advocate differences in doctrine.)—We do not, however, agree with

Dr. Haas when he raises the charge that the American Lutheran dogmatic fails to meet this first requirement. He says: "In the dogmaticians of the seventeenth century there is much medieval philosophy. . . . Some of the terminology, especially in the *communicatio idiomatum*, is Greek and harks back to John Damascenus and beyond him. . . . The result is that we, adhering so closely to the old dogmaticians here in America, have produced no outstanding dogmaticians, but only repeaters of the old shibboleths. . . . Our theological thought stated in fresh and modern forms would gain us a hearing in the American theological world. . . . Until now we have buried our talents in the napkin of seventeenth-century conformity." We do not find that *A Summary of the Christian Faith*, by Dr. H. E. Jacobs, speaks an unintelligible language. We have always been able to understand it. While we disavow some of its teachings, we have profited greatly by the study of this dogmatic. We do not know what fresher and more modern forms would open wider circles to it. The sectarian American theological world does not like it, not because of its obscurity, but because of its Lutheran character. But we certainly will not cast away the "old shibboleths" in order to meet the approval of the "American theological world." What we need to do, wherever necessary, is to translate them into modern language in order to drive them home, though in the great majority of cases the "old shibboleths" are so clear, so free of technicalities, that all the world knows what the Lutheran Church stands for. *Sola Scriptura, sola gratia*—does anything need to be added?

In the second place Dr. Haas demands that the new dogmatic be not made up of a collection of unrelated *loci* and dissertations, but that it present a homogeneous, living system of doctrine. We certainly want a dogmatic of that kind—and we have it. Here is what Dr. Haas wants: "Our European theologians have demonstrated that the old method of consecutive *loci* must give place to a real system, in which the various doctrines are arranged in their interrelation. A system brings to light the inner unity of Christian truth. Systems may be formed from different centers. . . . No sound dogmatic will ever be developed unless these living interdependencies of the doctrines of the Bible are realized. . . . The denial of one doctrine invalidates other doctrines." It must be indicated "to the students how a dogmatic is built up in detail and how the different truths of the Word can dovetail into each other. . . . Until now we have buried our talents in the napkin of seventeenth-century conformity." And it is mainly in the interest of this requisite that Dr. Haas insists on the study of philosophy. "What the theologian teaching dogmatic ought to learn from the history of philosophy, and from any one system, is how an interrelated, unified body of truth can be stated in clear, logical, and mutually explanatory form." Dr. Haas is not, we think, asking that the doctrines revealed in Scripture should be modified and changed in order to fit into some preconceived system. He is asking for a dogmatic which presents the truths of Scripture in their interrelation, in a systematic form. Well, what is wrong with the *Summary* of Dr. Jacobs? It does present the teaching of Scripture in the form of the well-known *loci*. In this respect it conforms to the seventeenth-century form. What is wrong with that? The ancient and modern

Lutheran dogmaticians, who employ the customary sequence of *loci*, did not construct the *loci* haphazardly nor throw the various sections together in a formless jumble. They knew what belonged to each *locus* and showed how each *locus* naturally follows the other. Dr. Jacobs points out why the doctrine of the means of grace occupies just that place in Soteriology and does not need to point out why Soteriology follows Christology and why Eschatology comes at the end. The attention of the student is held from *locus* to *locus*. The sequence of *loci* employed does not jar the logical mind.

Dr. Haas exemplifies what he has in mind thus: "If I were to recast my book *The Christian Way of Liberty* into a dogmatic and omit the philosophic cast, I would begin with a prolegomenon on authority and freedom, showing the liberty of the Christian through divine truth. Then I would follow the outline and system of my book under the caption, *The Christian Truth as Liberty*, Part I, The Author of Liberty. Chapter 1, The Free God; Chapter 2, The Free Creator; Chapter 3, The Free Sustainer. Part II, Man's Loss of Liberty. Chapter 4, Man's State before the Loss; Chapter 5, The Cause of the Loss; Chapter 6, the Consequence of the Loss. Part III, The Restoration of Liberty. Chapter 7, The Restorer; Chapter 8, The Work of Restoration; Chapter 9, the Results of Restoration; Chapter 11, The Fellowship of Freedom; Chapter 12, The Fulfilment of Freedom." There is no doubt that under this arrangement the matter could be presented profitably. But this new dogmatic would not differ materially from the old. We would retain the old *loci* under the name of chapters.

Dr. Haas exemplifies further: "Another system is suggested with salvation as the central idea. After defining it, the following main division could be used: The Necessity of Salvation; The Establishment of Salvation; The Offer of Salvation; and The Completion of Salvation. Under The Necessity of Salvation the fact of sin, its various forms, its actuality and inheritance, would be discussed. In The Establishment of Salvation the beginning would be made with predestination; then would follow the person of Christ and the work of Christ with its redemption. The Offer of Salvation would start with the Holy Spirit and continue with the means of grace, the Word of God, Baptism, regeneration, the Lord's Supper, and the ministry. The appropriation of salvation would contain faith and justification by faith and not by works. The maintenance of salvation would treat of conversion* and sanctification, fully stated and developed. The Completion of Salvation would include the last things, the state after death, the signs before the return of Christ, Christ's second coming, the resurrection of the dead, the Last Judgment, heaven and hell. This effort strikes closer to the central idea of Christianity than the system built upon liberty. Its prolegomena could contain the difference between Christianity and other religions claiming to save. The distinction between man-made religions and real revelation could also be included. This scheme is also submitted for discussion and criticism."

A dogmatic constructed along these lines should not be introduced

* We hope the new dogmatic will not perpetuate the confusion resulting from the unscriptural differentiation between regeneration and conversion.

to us as a new dogmatic. Some of us recognize in it the voice of an old friend. These ideas are very familiar to us who have studied Dr. F. Pieper's *Christliche Dogmatik*. If Dr. Pieper had been asked what the central, dominant truth of Lutheranism, of Christianity, is, he would have answered: *The grace of God in Christ*. And he built his *Christliche Dogmatik* upon and around this great truth. Never did he lose sight of it. He did exactly what Dr. Haas is asking for, showing that the grace of God in Christ constitutes the specific difference between the Christian religion and other so-called religions. Bibliology: the central theme of the Bible is the grace of God in Christ, and the importance of Inspiration is measured by the importance of the grace of God in Christ. Theology: the doctrine of God, of the Trinity, derives its importance from the doctrine of God's grace in Christ. Anthropology: the lost and condemned sinner is in absolute need of the grace of God in Christ. Christology: the wonderful person of Christ would have no appeal to us but for the grace of God in Christ. Soteriology: it deals throughout and exclusively with the appropriation to the sinner of the grace of God in Christ. And man owes his damnation to the rejection of the grace of God in Christ; man owes his eternal bliss solely and entirely to the grace of God in Christ. Then why did Dr. Pieper not designate his dogmatic by that name? He did. He called it "*Christliche Dogmatik*." Why did he not indicate the parts of his "system" in the manner Dr. Haas proposes? Why, he did, essentially. Whether it serves a good purpose to bring that out in the most *formal* manner is subject to discussion. The living man does not like to exhibit his skeleton. We see him move and talk, and know his skeleton and heart are in the right place. The Lutheran dogmatic, the dogmatic built on the doctrine of the grace of God in Christ, is a living thing, its life the grace of God in Christ, its speech naught but salvation through the vicarious satisfaction. But Dr. Pieper, too, has the old arrangement of *loci*? It seems you cannot get along without that. It seems you cannot treat of sin without having a *locus* (or chapter) on sin. If some future dogmatician invents a more adequate mode of presentation, we shall adopt it.

As to the *desideratum* stressed by Dr. Haas — "a real system in which the various doctrines are arranged in their interrelation" — Dr. Pieper is in full accord with him. "*Verstehen wir unter System ein IN SICH ZUSAMMENHÄNGENDES GANZES, so ist die christliche Lehre ein System. Die christliche Lehre naemlich, die lediglich aus der Heiligen Schrift genommen wird, bildet ein in sich zusammenhaengendes Ganzes in doppelter Hinsicht: 1. insofern als die Schrift ihrem Inhalt nach nicht differierende Lehrbegriffe (cinen mosaischen, johanneischen, petrinischen, paulinischen usw. Lehrbegriff) vorlegt, sondern den einheitlichen Lehrbegriff GOTTES (doctrinam DIVINAM) darbietet, weil alle Schrift von Gott eingegeben und voellig irrtumslos ist; 2. insofern als bei der lediglich aus der Heiligen Schrift geschoeepften christlichen Lehre die Lehre von der Rechtfertigung δια της πίστεως χωρίς έργων νόμου so im ZENTRUM steht, dass alle andern Lehren entweder Voraussetzungen (articuli antecedentes) oder Folgen (articuli consequentes) der Lehre von der Rechtfertigung sind.*" "Der Lehre von der Heilsanagnung, sofern sie nicht konstruiert, sondern aus

der Schrift genommen wird, ist ein fester, innerer — wir moechten sagen mathematisch-genauer — Zusammenhang eigen. "Die Offenbarung dieses Attributs Gottes (der Gnade in Christo) ist der eigentliche Skopus der ganzen Offenbarung Gottes in der Schrift." (*Christliche Dogmatik*, I, 158; II, 474; I, 568, etc., etc.)

We need a new dogmatic, surely. Every generation needs its own dogmatic. The language (we are using the term in a very wide sense) changes, and error continually assumes new forms. But the new dogmatic must breathe the spirit of the old: it must take all of its doctrines from Scripture, from Scripture alone, and must place the doctrine of the grace of God in Christ in the center. And it cannot get along without the "old shibboleths." For error, though it assumes new forms, always remains the same.

TII. ENGELDER.

Ad Birth Control.

Voluntary sterility or birth control is a subject fraught with momentous consequences to our country and our Church. Limitation of fecundity is one of the precursors of the extinction of a civilization or the subjugation of our people by a more virile and prolific race. The United States has already gone some distance on this road and the Missouri Synod, too. In 1915 the birth-rate in the United States was twenty-five per thousand, in 1931 eighteen, and according to available figures it probably shrank to sixteen in 1932. That means a decrease of 36 per cent. since 1915. The average size of the American family shrank to 3.57 in 1930.

In our own Missouri Synod the number of infant baptisms has decreased twenty-three per cent. from 1920 to 1931. In 1920 we baptized thirty-four children per thousand members, in 1931 only twenty-six. If we bear in mind that these figures include the children of parents outside the pale of our Church who were baptized by our pastors and included in the statistics, the actual figure will be much lower.

These figures ought to incite us to productive thought and action. A continuance of conditions as they now exist will inevitably end in decay and in an outpouring of the vials of God's wrath in even greater measure than is now the case.

The arguments in reference to birth control are well stated by Prof. T. Laetsch in Dr. Fritz's *Pastoral Theology*. However, to his quotation from *Lehre und Wehre*, 1914, on the relation of birth control to health some recent findings of medical authorities might be added, which may benefit pastors who must cope with these problems. While these matters have received little attention here, in Germany the effect of chemical contraceptives upon the embryo and the relation of contraception to ectopic pregnancy have been studied very extensively in recent years. Dr. Schwartz and Professor Goett of Bonn report cases of malformed children whose defects of development they attribute to chemical contraceptives that did not destroy, but injured the spermatozoa, with the consequent formation of an imperfect product of conception. Professor Labhardt attributes a fourfold increase of tubal pregnancy in his clinic to the various contraceptive measures employed in Basel. Professor Guggisberd of Bern finds the same situation there. Dr. Hirst of Phila-

delphia finds, according to a statement in the *American Medical Journal*, that acute suppurative vaginitis is often due to the use of the pessary. Most experienced medical observers agree that the long practise of contraception is one of the causes of sterility when the couple eventually desire children. What a terrible harvest the utter disregard of the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" is reaping! — *E. J. A. Marxhausen.*

Selective Enrolment.

The following quotations from a recent book (Valentine, *The Art of the Teacher*, 136 ff.) should prove of interest at this time: —

"Instead of striving for a large student-body, it [the college] would hold its numbers down to the minimum warranted by the market, and it would select these at the beginning by a careful scrutiny of each candidate's qualifications. Among these qualifications would be included records of scholarship; but even more important would be the evidences of temperamental fitness, qualities of leadership, social interests, and alertness. The college would be free to organize its policies and practises with no obligation whatever to tradition and scholastic convention. It would accept the principle that a thoroughly adequate culture and education are possible of attainment through procedures that differ radically from the standard academic ones. There would consequently be permitted a thorough reconstruction of the liberal-arts work in two essential ways: 1. its contents adapted to the requirements of the teaching profession, 2. its methods revised to exemplify upon a mature plane the most progressive practises in the field for which the student is preparing. . . . There is no reason, for example, why the science work, both in laboratory and classroom, should not be ordered so as to contribute not only to the intellectual growth of the student through its training in careful thinking, but to her professional enlightenment through its selection of materials and use of instructional devices. . . . But perhaps more important would be the constant relevancy of the studies to the occupation of teaching, thus building continuously a consciousness that is won to the art."—"If we fail to relate knowledge and practise functionally throughout, we fail also to achieve the integration and relevancy of interests that would make of them a moving purpose in teaching. . . . The problem and project, the laboratory plan, the contract, the socialized recitation, committee organization of classes, student conferences, independent research, and other forms of activity or creative undertaking are quite conceivable as substitutes for the formal lecture-textbook-examination procedures. . . . In the professional studies it has long been regarded as desirable and practicable to effect a correlation with the working situation. The most fundamental principles of learning justify this. To study the theories, the methods, the psychology of teaching while engaged in the activity adds immeasurably both in significance and motivation. We preach this doctrine as a basic principle for the guidance of our future teachers, and in rare instances we exemplify it. . . . To teach by dictation is the lowest and easiest form of teaching, but to teach by the strategy of creative motivation and self-direction is the consummation of art."

P. E. K.