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Miscellanea

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Miscellanea

Theses on Unionism

(Submitted to, and approved by, the Convention of the North Dakota and Montana District of the Missouri Synod, June, 1940)

1. Through the preaching of the Gospel and through Holy Baptism God makes people believers. By making them believers, He not only unites them closely with Christ, but He unites them with each other that they form one body, the holy Christian Church.
2. This body we call an invisible one because the bond uniting the Christians is not one that can be seen, something outward, but it is altogether inward, faith in the Redeemer.
3. This inward unity, however, is to find expression in the attitude of Christians toward each other. They are not to ignore one another. There is not to be strife and conflict between them. They are to be brethren jointly traveling to the home above. They are to assist each other as members of one and the same body.
4. If it were not for sin, all believers in Jesus Christ would be united and living in harmony and peace, all believing the same Gospel, all having and cherishing the same Sacraments, all following the precepts of the divine Word. Sin has made this happy state impossible.
5. The Word of God tells us a great deal about the attitude of Christians toward each other. It inculcates love, sympathy, and helpfulness.
6. Through their evil nature or the wiles of Satan, Christians may be cast into a life of service of sin, losing their faith, ceasing to be Christians. In such a situation their former fellow-Christians must cease to regard them as brethren, 1 Cor. 5:11-13. In this case it is gross sin which cuts the bond between people who before recognized each other as belonging together. Cf. also Matt. 18:15-18.
7. A life of sin is not the only thing that can disrupt the pleasant relations that should prevail among people calling themselves Christians. Persistent, stubborn adherence to false doctrines likewise must disrupt the fraternal relationship in which Christians are to stand toward each other.
8. That false doctrine is dangerous and a thing which Christians must oppose can be shown from the warnings of the Scriptures against false teaching. Cf., for instance, Gal. 5:9; 1:8.
9. The Bible speaks of division-makers, Rom. 16:17; Titus 3:10. Division-makers are people that create dissension in the Church, or factionalism; where there is unity, they bring in disunity.
10. Such division-makers may do their mischievous work through fomenting a party spirit, seeking to become prominent or to obtain a leading position in a church.
11. Quite commonly, however, such divisions are caused by men who advocate false teaching, presenting doctrines which are contrary

to what the Gospel teaches. By seeking to draw the members of the Church over to their views, they cause strife and dissension and destroy the unity of the Church.

12. The motive leading these division-makers to split the Church is pride, vanity, and unwillingness to subject themselves to the Word of God.

13. The Bible definitely tells us that these division-makers are dangerous and that, if they will not listen, we shall have to separate from them. This applies not only to the division-makers themselves but likewise to their followers.

14. Unionism is the attitude which condones the work of those causing divisions through false doctrine and is willing to overlook their wrong course. According to unionism we may have fellowship with division-makers.

15. The arguments of the supporters of unionism are various.

a. Some unionists declare that on certain doctrines the Bible is not clear enough to justify us in opposing those who reject these doctrines. For instance, some of them hold that concerning the Lord's Supper the Bible does not speak with so much clearness that we can definitely say that the Lutheran doctrine is the doctrine of the Bible and whoever refuses to teach it is disobedient to the Scriptures.

b. Other unionists deny the full authority of the Scriptures. While they are willing to grant in a general way that the Bible possesses authority, that we must follow its teachings, they refuse to extend this authority to the points of difference between Christian denominations. The thoroughgoing unionists deny both the authority and the clarity of the Scriptures.

c. Quite commonly it is maintained that love for our fellow-men must compel us to take a unionistic course.

16. We say that the course of the unionists is anti-Scriptural for the following reasons:

a. The Bible definitely forbids us to sanction or condone false doctrine; unionism sponsors indifference toward false doctrine.

b. The Bible furthermore definitely demands that we part company with the division-makers and do not recognize them as our brethren; unionism ignores this divine injunction.

c. The Bible definitely tells us we must love our brethren. But love demands that we oppose an error when we find a brother afflicted with it, while unionism ignores such an error.

d. The Word of God and our conscience prescribe love of the truth; unionism is lukewarm, at least with respect to some truths, a lukewarmness which may soon gain control of one's attitude toward all revealed truth.

e. Ordinary every-day honesty and uprightness should compel us not to appear as brethren of those who are not our brethren; unionism pretends that there is unity where in reality it is absent.

17. When false teaching leads Christians to separate from those who propound false teaching and thus a division is caused, the blame does

not lie with the Christians who adhere to the truth, but with those who have set the divine revelation aside.

18. The fact that some people have gone too far in their opposition to unionism and have become separatists must not lead us to adopt the opposite extreme and to become lax and indifferent in upholding purity of doctrine.

W. ARNDT

The Federal Theory of Imputation

The following paragraphs on the Federal Theory of Imputation, or, as Dr. Augustus Strong also calls it, the Theory of Condemnation by Covenant, owe their origin to a request for a brief presentation of the subject in simple, popular language. In the letter occur, among others, the questions: "Why does Dr. F. Pieper in his *Christliche Dogmatik*, which, after all, is a fairly exhaustive work, not explain the theory at any greater length? Has it no worth-while historic significance?"

Dr. Strong, in his comprehensive *Systematic Theology* (Vol. II, pp. 612 ff.), treats Federalism among the "theories of imputation" of which he mentions the *Pelagian* ("The sin of Adam is imputed only to Adam, not to his descendants"); the *Arminian* ("God imputes to each man his inborn tendencies to evil only when he consciously and voluntarily appropriates and ratifies these, in spite of the power to the contrary, which, in justice to man, God has specially communicated"); the *New School Theory* of Hopkins, Emmons, Dwight, Taylor, Finney, etc., who rejected the Puritan anthropology of Edwards and Bellamy ("God imputes to men their own acts of personal transgression; He does not impute to them Adam's sin; neither original vitiosity nor physical death are penal inflictions but simply consequences which God in His sovereignty ordained to mark His displeasure at Adam's transgression and subject to which evils God immediately creates each human soul"); the *Theory of Mediate Imputation*, or *Theory of Condemnation for Depravity*, defended by Placeus (de la Place) at Saumur (1606—1655) in France ("All men are born physically and morally depraved, which native depravity is the source of all actual sins and is itself sin; it is this native depravity only which God imputes to men"); the *Augustinian Theory*, or *Theory of Adam's Headship*, set forth in detail by St. Augustine, though held also in its essential features by Tertullian, Hilary, Ambrose, the chief Calvinistic theologians of the Reformation period, Zwingli excepted, in modern times by Drs. Shedd and Baird, and so quite generally in orthodox Reformed circles ("God imputes the sin of Adam immediately to all his posterity in virtue of that organic unity of mankind by which the whole race at the time of Adam's transgression existed, not individually, but *seminally*, in him as its head"); and immediately before this, the *Federal Theory*, or the *Theory of Condemnation by Covenant*, which was developed chiefly by John Koch, more generally known as Cocceius, and after his death by Francis Burman and Hermann Witsius (University of Utrecht), in modern times especially by the old Princeton school (Dr. Chas. Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, II, pp. 197 ff.), after the theory had been integrated more definitely into the general scheme of Calvinistic determinism by Francis Turretin (1623—1687). Cocceius himself laid down his views chiefly in his *Summa Doctrinae*

de Foedere et Testamento Dei (1648) and *Summa Theologiae*, as also in his *Ultima Mosis*. He was professor of exegetical and doctrinal theology at Leyden (1650—1669), a voluminous, though not always sound and dependable writer in the fields of exegesis, Biblical theology, dogmatics, and ethics. For those who cannot study more detailed works on the subject the doctrinal compends of Strong and Hodge (also of Shedd), Meusel's *Kirchliches Handlexikon*, the *New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia*, and, above all, the scholarly *Cyclopaedia of McClintock and Strong* will furnish adequate and dependable information. In its brief, pithy way the *Concordia Cyclopaedia* says sub Cocceius: ". . . founder of Federal Theology (covenant of works before man's fall, of grace after man's fall, latter subdivided into the antelegal, the legal, and the post-legal dispensation)."

We quote this brief characterization of Koch's Federalism because it is a rather adequate summary of his teaching on the subject. In other words: Originally God made with Adam a covenant of *nature* or of *works*, and had Adam not sinned, he and his descendants would have continued in, and been saved by, that original covenant of works. However, when Adam fell into sin, God, in His infinite mercy, established a new covenant with Adam, and in him with his descendants, namely, the covenant of grace, including the whole *ordo salutis*—redemption by Christ, the effectual vocation, the final preservation, and the eternal glorification of the elect. The antelegal, legal, and postlegal dispensations of Koch need not concern us, since, after all, they are non-essential; but what does concern us as we study the Federal Theory is that it endeavors to offer a more reasonable explanation of the imputation of Adam's sin to his descendants, supplementary to, and rationally more acceptable than, the old Augustinian doctrine, which presumes that in Adam all his descendants were "seminally" as in their head. ("The total life of humanity was then in Adam"; Strong.) With this doctrine the theory of Koch is really not substantially at variance; it rather expands and more reasonably motivates Augustinianism, so that some Reformed divines (*e.g.*, Turretin) could embrace in their views the elements of both systems. With Adam as their representative, God entered into a covenant with all men, agreeing to bestow upon them eternal life on condition of his obedience, but making the penalty of his disobedience to be the corruption and death of all his posterity. (Cf. Strong, II, p. 612.) Federalism thus offers a supposed legal ground or justifying cause of the imputation; it makes the imputation a matter of the breach of the first covenant, of which the first man became guilty. Both systems therefore declare that God imputes Adam's sin to his descendants as their head; but while Augustinianism regards Adam as the *natural* head, Federalism specifies him as the *covenant* head. The great body of Calvinistic theologians in the 17th century could therefore, as Strong correctly points out, be Augustinians as well as Federalists, as Owen, the Westminster Confession, etc. Calvin guardedly expressed himself on the point in the two propositions: 1. We are not condemned for Adam's sin apart from our own inherent depravity, which is derived from him, the sin for which we are condemned

being our own. 2. This sin is ours because our nature is vitiated in Adam, and we receive it in the condition in which it was put by the first transgression. (Cf. Strong, II, p. 613.) In these propositions we miss the Scriptural doctrine of the imputation of Adam's guilt, as our own Lutheran divines so clearly teach this on the basis of Scripture.

Some of Strong's objections to the Federal Theory (he himself favored undiluted Augustinianism) are well taken. He shows, for example, that the Federal Theory is extra-Scriptural, there being no mention of such a covenant with Adam in the account of man's trial and all Scripture-passages adduced in support of Federalism being without proof value (cf. Hos. 6:7; 8:1, 2; Heb. 8:9), since they treat of other matters. The theory thus goes beyond Scripture and is a human speculation. We must, however, condemn Federalism for another reason (for which we condemn also many another Calvinistic speculation), namely, because it seeks to supply a rational ground for the (humanly speaking) grossly unjust divine act of the imputation. Federalism was meant to serve the cause of doctrinal apologetics.

In contradistinction to the Reformed divines the orthodox Lutheran teachers in general do not try rationally to explain the imputation of Adam's guilt and sin to his descendants but simply declare it to be a "stubborn fact," taught in Holy Scripture. To Lutherans it is sufficient that God's Word affirms this fact, even though human reason cannot comprehend the justice of it. This believing Lutheran "Scripture attitude" is brought to view very clearly in Dr. Pieper's *Christliche Dogmatik* (I, p. 645 ff.), where he treats the subject at sufficient length, without considering a single "Imputationstheorie." He first shows that the consequences of Adam's fall are the *culpa hereditaria* and the *corruptio hereditaria*. Because rebellious human reason objects mostly to the imputed guilt (as an act of injustice), Dr. Pieper emphatically points out both that God *does* impute that guilt (Rom. 5:12 ff.), and this despite all objections of men, and that God is and remains just while doing so. Lutheran theologians, following the clear testimony of Scripture, therefore accept both truths: 1. the imputed guilt, 2. the inviolate divine justice, without attempting a theodicy on this point. It is true, Dr. Pieper recognizes also the apologetic explanations which some Lutheran dogmatists at times have attempted on this score (Quenstedt, p. 648; Meisner, p. 647); but he continues that the fact of the imputation belongs to the "stubborn facts" asserted by God's Word, to argue against which is vain, foolish, and vicious. He writes: "God always acts justly, even in such cases in which we cannot comprehend Him." Approvingly he quotes Baier (II, 290), who closes his admonition that it is not necessary for us to know *how* (*quomodo*) God could impute Adam's guilt and yet remain just, with the words: "It suffices that the *fact* is revealed, even if the *manner* is not explained." (*Sufficit enim τὸ ὄντι esse revelatum, etsi τὸ πῶς ignoretur.*)

In the end, this believing "Scripture attitude" is the only reasonable one to take since not a single "theory of imputation" furnishes a really satisfactory apologetic for that divine act. Dr. Strong ultimately admits this when he writes: "We are to remember, however, that, while this theory [the Augustinian] of the method of our union with Adam is

merely a valuable [?] *hypothesis* [italics our own], the problem [rather, doctrine] which it seeks to explain is, in both its terms, presented to us both by conscience and by Scripture [italics our own]. In connection with this problem a central fact is announced in Scripture, which we feel compelled to believe upon divine testimony [italics our own], even though every attempted explanation should prove unsatisfactory. That central fact, which constitutes the substance of the Scripture doctrine of original sin, is simply this: that the sin [fall] of Adam is the immediate cause and ground of inborn depravity, guilt, and condemnation to the whole human race." (II, p. 625.) The truth here emphasized by Strong, namely, that all "theories of imputation" in the final analysis are only *hypotheses*, suggests an explanation of the fact that Dr. Pieper and most other Lutheran dogmaticians in their doctrinal treatises on this point do not argue the imputation on the basis of any "theory of imputation" but solely on that of Holy Scripture. *The short and long of it is that such theories do not get us anywhere.* The fact of the imputation of Adam's sin belongs, after all, to God's unsearchable judgments and His ways past finding out, Rom. 11:33.

J. THEODORE MUELLER

A Comforting Doctrine

It is a chain of four links that the apostle welds in treating the doctrine of predestination in Romans, chap. 8, v. 30: "Whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified." The four links are: predestination, the call, the justification, glorification.

That He predestinated them means that He determined beforehand, even before the foundation of the world, to save those whom He chose for His own. These, then, He in time calls through the Gospel into the fellowship of His Son; and they heed His call. It was not that they were any better than others by nature, for all are equally lost in sin. Neither was their acceptance of the call their own work but the gracious work of the Spirit within them. And these that were called He justified, i. e., He forgave them their sins for Jesus' sake. And these who were justified He finally glorified—He brings them into the glory of heaven at last.

We may perhaps make this a little more clear by an illustration. There is a millionaire who decides upon a certain poor boy whom he is going to make his heir. That is predestination. Then he invites the boy to accept this, and the boy does accept it. That is the call. Next, he dresses the boy in nice clothing. That is justification—God dresses us in the garment of Jesus' righteousness. (And we might add to the illustration that the millionaire sends the boy to school in order to educate him for the life that is in store for him. So God deals with His children: He finds it necessary to send them tribulations, sufferings, and such like, as a schooling through which to conform them to the image of His Son.) And finally, the boy, having now attained to manhood, enters upon the full enjoyment of the inheritance. That is the glorification in heaven.

The first and the last link in the chain we do not see here in time, namely, the predestination and the glorification. But the two middle links are such that we may be aware of them. And the chain is unbroken. Therefore, if the two middle links are present, we have a right to conclude, and God would have us conclude, that the other two links are also present. For He has promised to continue the blessed work that He has begun in us. We shall comfort ourselves with our eternal predestination unto glory.

If the boy spoken of in the illustration should begin to wonder whether he really is to be the heir, how could he put his mind at rest? He should look at the invitation that was extended to him and at what the millionaire has already done for him; and he may say: "See, he is preparing me to become his heir, he has invited me, he has taken care of my needs, and he is training me for my future position. Therefore I must know assuredly that I shall once come into full enjoyment of the inheritance."

This doctrine of predestination is full of comfort to us Christians, especially if it happens to be a rigorous schooling through which the Lord is putting us. We may trustingly give ourselves wholly over into the arms of God's grace with the prayer: "Continue what Thou hast begun; take Thou my hand and lead me through the whole journey of my life; and I shall once praise Thee in glory above. 'For I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor powers nor things present nor things to come nor height nor depth nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord.'"—A. M. H., in *Lutheran Sentinel*.

Appropriating Creation to the Father

From inquiries submitted on this point it appears that Question 106 in our Synodical Catechism is causing catechists no little trouble. A brother who was to present the matter to a pastoral conference writes among other things: "If the second part of the answer to Question 106 is Bible doctrine, why is no proof offered? Which are the proofs from Scripture? Scripture is full of statements ascribing creation to God, but have we sufficient proof to ascribe it to the *Father* as we ascribe redemption to the Son and sanctification to the Holy Ghost?" In another letter the request is expressed that the matter be briefly explained in one of our periodicals.

We understand that in the new, revised Catechism the question and the answer will be amended; but the matter is nevertheless important enough for us to consider it here in a few simple paragraphs. The question "How are these divine Persons distinguished from each other?" properly and primarily calls for the distinguishing divine internal works (*opera ad intra*), which indeed are correctly stated in the Catechism answer (first part, before the dash). No doubt this was considered to be the complete answer to the question, for not only was a dash placed after it, but also Scripture-proof was supplied only for the *opera ad intra*: generation and spiration. Unfortunately, however (perhaps as a sort of afterthought), also the *opera ad extra* or the divine

external works (*creation, redemption, sanctification*) were added, though they were separated from the *opera ad intra* by a dash. The addition cannot be condemned as fundamentally wrong, because, after all, the question as stated in the Catechism is broad enough to include both the *opera ad intra* and the *opera ad extra*, the former distinguishing the three Persons in a proper, the latter in a more general way. Scripture itself distinguishes the divine external works by appropriating creation to the Father, redemption to the Son, and sanctification to the Holy Ghost. Nevertheless the supplement is *confusing*, inasmuch as it obscures the fundamental distinction between the divine internal and the divine external works. To clarify the supplement, Scripture-proof should have been appended; for whatever is Christian doctrine must be proved to be such from God's Word.

The fact that in the divine internal works we have *real distinctions*, caused by their very nature, requires no further proof. Generation is the work of the Father, while spiration that of the Father and the Son, as the given Scripture-passages clearly show. However, in the divine external works (e. g., creation, sanctification, inspiration, etc.) we do not have real distinctions, since these are "concurrent acts of the three Persons in the Trinity." (Cf. A. L. Graebner, *Outlines of Doctrinal Theology*, § 53.) The so-called *opus mixtum* (Christ's redeeming work) is a doctrinal *unicum*, since the Son, while accomplishing it alone (Eph. 2:13; Col. 1:20; 1 John 1:7; etc.), was not without the Father and the Holy Ghost in performing it. In other words, Christ was sent and sustained by the Father (John 3:16; Matt. 26:38 ff.) and anointed with the Holy Ghost to accomplish His work (Ps. 45:7; Heb. 1:9; Acts 10:38). The fact of the *opus mixtum*, however, does not abrogate the rule that the divine external works are undivided (*Opera ad extra indivisa sunt*), the three Persons of the Trinity concurring in them. (Cf. *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 152 f.; 156 f.; *Christliche Dogmatik*, I, p. 514 ff.) Since the divine omnipotent action is numerically one (*una numero potentia*), it is the *totus Deus*, or the Triune God, who created the world, redeemed fallen mankind, and sanctifies the elect (Gen. 1:1, 2; 2 Cor. 5:18 ff.; 1 Pet. 1:3, 4; Jer. 31:18; Ps. 51:5; Ezek. 36:22 ff.; 2 Cor. 4:6; etc.). The clear and unmistakable Scripture doctrine therefore is: *Opera externa tribus personis communia sunt*. Just because there is only one God, we owe all that we are and have to this one God, in the realms both of nature and of grace. (*Creatio est actio Dei unitrini externa.*)

However, just as Scripture ascribes the *opera ad extra* to the one God, so also it *appropriates* them to the individual persons in the one undivided Godhead, as our Catechism in the appendix to Question 106 correctly states. This it does from the viewpoint of the *three Persons*, the distinction making for greater clearness and emphasis of both the divine persons and their works. Thus the Father is represented in a special sense as the *Creator* (First Article of the Creed). In Heb. 1:1, 2 Scripture, for example, tells us that *God* made the worlds by His Son. So also in Ps. 33:6, where it is said that the heavens were made by the Word (the "Personal Word," the *Logos*) of the *Lord*. In 1 Cor. 8:6 St. Paul writes that to Christians there is but one God, the *Father*, of

whom are all things. In a similar manner the Son is represented in a special sense as the Redeemer of fallen mankind (Second Article of the Creed). The passages in which redemption is ascribed to the Son are more numerous than those in which creation is ascribed to the Father and, besides, much clearer (John 1:14; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6; Gal. 3:13; 4:4, 5; etc.). Lastly, in a special sense the Holy Ghost in Scripture is said to be the Sanctifier (Third Article of the Creed). It is the Holy Spirit who reproves the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8), guides men into all truth (v.13), glorifies Christ (v.14), leads sinners to be God's sons (Rom. 8:14), bears witness that believers are God's children (v.16), and is Himself "the Spirit of adoption" (the Holy Spirit through whom our adoption as God's children is secured), through whom we cry, "Abba, Father" (v.15).

Nevertheless, while Scripture thus appropriates the divine external works to the three persons of the Holy Trinity in this individualizing way, it at the same time represents these works as being those of the *totus Deus*, and this in so absolute a manner that it ascribes creation in a special sense also to the Son (John 1:1 ff.; 1 Cor. 8:6: "*one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things*"), redemption to the Father and the Holy Ghost (2 Cor. 5:18 ff.; Is. 61:1, 2; etc., since the Redeemer was sent and sustained by the Father and was anointed and equipped for His office with the Holy Ghost), and sanctification to the Father and the Son (1 Thess. 2:12, 13; 2 Thess. 2:13-17; 1 Cor. 1:2, 28-30; etc.). The divine external works are thus ascribed to individual persons in the Holy Trinity as well as to the *totus Deus*, so that they appear in Scripture both as appropriated works (*opera appropriativa*) and joint works (*opera communia*). The explanation of this seemingly contradictory *modus loquendi* is to be found in the fact that the one true God (*una numero essentia*) is the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, so that the divine external operation (*una numero potentia*) can be ascribed either essentially to the Triune God or personally to individual persons in the Trinity. Dr. Pieper calls attention to the fact that this is not a distribution ("*Verteilung*") of the divine external works among the three Persons, as errorists have charged, but rather an attribution (*attributio*) or an appropriation (*appropriatio*), as the orthodox teachers of the Church have always expressed themselves. (Cf. *Christliche Dogmatik*, I, p. 514 f.)

Heinrich Schmid quotes Gerhard on this point as follows: "But that one true God is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; therefore in Scripture the work of creation is ascribed to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. Of the Father it is affirmed in 1 Cor. 8:6; of the Son in John 1:3; Col. 1:16; of the Holy Ghost in Job 26:13; 33:4; Ps. 104:30. We conclude therefore that creation is an undivided act of the one and true God alone, namely, of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." To this Dr. Schmid adds: "If nevertheless creation in a special sense is called the work *ad extra* of God the Father, this is done only by way of appropriation." Hollaz is quoted on the matter thus: "In Holy Scripture and the Apostles' Creed the work of creation is ascribed in a peculiar manner to God the Father: a) because of the order of working, since what the

Father has of Himself to do and to create the Son of God and the Holy Ghost have of the Father; b) because in the work of creation God the Father, by His most efficacious word of command, manifested His own omnipotence, Gen. 1:3; c) creation is the first divine work *ad extra* and therefore by appropriation is affirmed of the First Person of the Godhead." (Cf. *Doctrinal Theology*; tr. by Hay and Jacobs, p. 162.)

To the objection that by such appropriation of the divine external works to individual persons in the Trinity confusion may be caused among simple Christians we may reply that the difficulty involved in this matter is not a whit greater than that which inheres in the doctrine of the Trinity itself. As little as we can understand God's divine *being*, so little also can we understand His *works*. Luther therefore aptly suggests that, if the doctrine should be too difficult ("*scharf*") for simple Christians, they should adhere to their simple faith that God: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is one God. (Cf. *Christliche Dogmatik*, 1:516; St. Louis Ed., III:1923.) Luther, however, adds that, since all doors are open to the devil to lead astray whom he desires, it is profitable and necessary that some, laymen no less than scholars, but especially pastors, preachers, and teachers, should learn to meditate and speak clearly ("*deutsch reden*") on such necessary articles of our faith. (*Christliche Dogmatik*, I:513; St. Louis Ed., III:1884 ff.) In his excellent exposition of 2 Sam. 23:1-7, in which Luther treats the doctrine of the Trinity at great length, he points out that, as Scripture ascribes certain works to individual persons in the Godhead, so also certain *illustrations*. The Holy Ghost, for example, is distinguished by the symbol of a *dove*, which is never applied to the Father or to the Son; the Father, by the *voice from heaven*; the Son, by the *form of a servant*. As Luther says, Scripture, speaking in these terms, means to impress upon us the real distinction between the three Persons in the Godhead, just as do the *opera ad intra* (generation and spiration), and, in a special sense, also the appropriated *opera ad extra*. (We cordially recommend for conference study Luther's excellent *Auslegung der letzten Worte Davids*, 2 Sam. 23:1-7; St. Louis Ed., III:1185 ff.)

Illustrations of the Holy Trinity taken from the realm of human life and experience are of course altogether inadequate; nevertheless, when we attribute to the one mind of man the threefold function of thinking, willing, and feeling and ascribe to the intellect the act of, let us say, memorizing, though in memorizing also willing and feeling come into play and thus the whole mind of man, we have a faint reflection of what it means to ascribe the act of creation personally to the Father (or to the Son or the Holy Ghost) or essentially to the *totus Deus*. Because the living God is the great One in Three, we can say: God created; God redeemed; God sanctifies; and: The Father created; the Son redeemed; the Holy Ghost sanctifies. Those who shrink from teaching such an appropriation of the divine works must in the end also shrink from teaching the very doctrine of the Holy Trinity itself, of which this is only a part.

We suggest, not that the matter be omitted from our Catechism, but that it be presented under a new question, at least in a Catechism which is intended for advanced Bible students. J. THEODORE MUELLER

Where Shall We Stand?

In the September, 1940, number of the *Kirchliche Zeitschrift* Dr. John C. Mattes of Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, publishes a sturdy essay having the heading "Where do We Stand?" The last section of it speaks of the future and is given the subheading "Where shall we stand?" Since what is stated there is always timely, we reprint this last section:

The Church is at the crossroads in her inner relationships. Shall we present a united front to the world? Shall she know of only one doctrine, and shall she preserve the integrity of the Word? There is no question about the answer here. Neither is there any question about the fact that unnecessary divisions are not only a sin against the unity of the Church of the Word but that they are also one way in which men make themselves guilty of the sins of obstructing the work of the Church.

Where does the guilt rest, and who is responsible? We answer all those who have lost the vision of the *Una Sancta* and who place any human relationship above their fidelity to the Word and its integrity. It rests on the shoulders of those who are encased in the sectarianism of the Pharisee and on the shoulders of those who are dissolved into the sectarianism of Liberalism. Practically the latter are the greatest offenders, and it is they who are the great obstructionists today. When men prefer the company of errorists to that of the faithful, they have lost their sense of the value of their birthright.

Here it is that we challenge all the Lutherans of America. Do you or do you not want to realize the unity of the Church and assure her a united front in the battle against the powers of darkness and error? If you believe in the Holy and Apostolic Church, then you pastors must be the leaders who hold themselves clear of all official associations with error in the field of religion and keep themselves free from all entangling alliances with worldly associations that teach religious errors. Unless that is the case, the finest professions are not worth the paper they are written on. Mark you this: the chief obstructionists are the so-called "liberals," and those who are doing the most to destroy the unity of the Church are the unionists. On such the guilt for the sin of division must lie.

We are standing at the crossroads! There is only one duty for the Church. If she is to be faithful to her mission, if she is to do the work of the Lord effectually, if she is to preserve the integrity of God's Word, if she is to guide the world on the right road, she must not be divided against herself, she dare not dissipate her energies, she must think and move and live as the *Una Sancta*. A.

An Interesting Reference to Luther on Galatians

In John Wesley's *Journal* we read: "William Holland tells how he went round to Charles Wesley's with Martin Luther's Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians. I carried it round to Charles Wesley, who was sick at Mr. Bray's, as a very precious treasure that I had found, and we three sat down together, Mr. Charles Wesley reading the Preface

aloud. At the words "What, have we, then, nothing to do? No; nothing! but only accept Him who of God is made unto us Wisdom and Righteousness and Sanctification and Redemption," there came such a power over me as I cannot well describe; my great burden fell off in an instant; my heart was so filled with peace and love that I burst into tears. I almost thought I saw our Savior. My companions, seeing me so affected, fell on their knees and prayed. When I afterwards went into the street, I could scarcely feel the ground I trod upon.'" Is it surprising that on May 23, 1738, only two days after this experience, Charles Wesley should write this hymn?

Oh, how shall I the goodness tell,
 Father, which Thou to me hast showed?
 That I, a child of wrath and hell,
 I should be called a child of God,
 Should know, should feel, my sins forgiven,
 Blest with the antepast of heaven.

The Riches of His Grace, by John Schmidt, p. 30

Abaddon — Apollyon

In Rev. 9:11 we find the peculiar term 'Αβαδδών, which is translated by another unusual term, at least as far as the New Testament is concerned. The passage reads: "Ἐχουσιν ἐπ' αὐτῶν βασιλέα τὸν ἄγγελον τῆς ἀβύσσου, ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἐβραϊστὶ Ἀβαδδών, καὶ ἐν τῇ Ἑλληνικῇ ὄνομα ἔχει Ἀπολλύων. The word 'Αβαδδών is a transliteration of the word אַבְדּוֹן. The Greek word Ἀπολλύων is derived from the verb ἀπολλύω (ἀπόλλυμι). The fundamental meaning of both is "to destroy." The Hebrew word אַבְדּוֹן is found in Job 26:6; 28:22; Ps. 88:12; Prov. 15:11. In each of these instances it is translated in the LXX by the Greek word ἀπόλεια, destruction. The Hebrew word אַבְדּוֹן may be translated by "the place of destruction or the sphere of death." The Greek word used in the LXX, ἀπόλεια, may be translated destruction. In Revelation the angel of the abyss is called 'Αβαδδών or Ἀπολλύων. A weird comment on this word is found in one of the Coptic Apocrypha, in the "Book of the Resurrection of Christ," ascribed to Bartholomew, the Apostle, edited with English translation by E. A. Wallis Budge, M. A., Litt. D., Keeper of the Egyptian and Assyrian antiquities in the British Museum. We read there on pages 179—180 the following words:

"Now, when they crucified the Savior, they laid Him in a tomb, and He rose from the dead on the third day, and He carried the soul of the holy man Apa Anania with Him into heaven forthwith, and he ate and drank with our Savior at the table of His kingdom. And Joseph of Arimathea made ready for burial the body of the Son of God, and when large quantities of most precious scents and unguents had been poured out upon it, he laid it in a new sepulcher. Then death came into Amente,¹⁾ saying, 'Where is this soul which hath come forth from the body newly? It hath not been brought unto me to Amente. For,

1) Amente, the old Egyptian word "Amentet," which was originally the great Other World on the left bank of the Nile. Here, however, it includes the Other World of Palestine.

behold, I have sought for it for two days, but have not found it. What, then, is the meaning of this mighty and wonderful thing? I know not, neither do I know what is the meaning of this terrible disturbance which taketh place this day. The whole world and everything which is therein is in a state of violent commotion. Never before have I known anything like unto this.' And Death called his minister and said unto him, 'Let us go unto every place and see if we can find this newly dead body and this new soul which hath hidden itself; for I know not whither it hath departed.'

"Then Death came into the tomb of the Savior, and he found it lighted up with the light of life, and he went into the back of the tomb, and seated himself there with his ministers. Now Abbaton,²⁾ who is Death, and Gaïos and Tryphon and Ophiath and Phthinon and Sotomis and Komphion, who are the six sons of Death, wriggled into the tomb of the Son of God on their faces in the form of serpents, wriggling in with their great thief in very truth. These robbers and evil-doers were lying in wait for the moment wherein the Savior would go down into Amente, so that they might enter with Him and know what it was that He would do. And the Savior made Himself manifest unto them in the form of a dead body, in the hinder part of the tomb; He was lying upon the ground in their midst,—now it was the second day that He was in the heart of the earth,—and there was a napkin bound round His face and another one bound round His head. Gaze thou thyself, O my son, at what His eye doth gaze at, how that the sun doth stand still and doth not rise upon the earth, for He hath covered His face with a napkin." Incidentally, does not this excerpt remind one of the inferiority of the Apocrypha, even when considered merely from the literary point of view? K. G. M.

2) Abbaton, Hebrew: אַבְּאָטוֹן. Greek transliteration: 'Αβαδδών. Greek translation: 'Απολλύων.

