

8-1-1943

Μετάνοια

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Recommended Citation

Koehler, E. W. (1943) "Μετάνοια," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 14 , Article 46.

Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol14/iss1/46>

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Concordia Theological Monthly

Vol. XIV

AUGUST, 1943

No. 8

Μετάνοια

The Greek word μετάνοια, *metanoia*, occurs in the New Testament some 24 times, and is rendered in our English version with "repentance." The verb μετανοέω, *metanoëo*, which occurs some 31 times, is translated with "repent." Luther uses the word *Busse*, except in 2 Cor. 7:9, 10, where he renders μετάνοια with *Reue*, and the verb he translates with *Busse tun*, except in Luke 13:3, 5 and 17:3, where he has *sich bessern*, and in Luke 17:4, where he has *reuen*.

None of these translations expresses adequately the basic meaning of the Greek terms. *Repentance*, like the Latin *poenitentia*, has a strong connotation of *sorrow*, German *Reue*. And the German word *Busse* carries with it the idea of making amends by paying or suffering a penalty. *Sich bessern* is an inevitable result of μετανοεῖν, but this idea is not contained in the original concept of the verb.

Christ came to call sinners εἰς μετάνοιαν, Luke 5:32, and in Luke 24:47 He tells us that μετάνοια εἰς (καί) ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν should be preached in His name among all nations. As the immediate purpose our preaching, then, is to bring about a μετάνοια in them that hear us, it must be of interest and practical importance to us to understand what this *metanoia* really implies.

I

Etymology.—The word μετάνοια is derived from the verb μετανοέω, a compound of μετά, *after*, and νοέω, *I see, recognize*, also *think, ponder*. As distinguished from the idea, knowledge, sentiment, before one acts, it denotes the idea, knowledge, sentiment, one has after an act, occurrence, or experience. And as this "after-knowledge" is often quite different from the "fore-knowledge," the verb means to change one's mind. Schenkl, *Woerterbuch*, gives this definition: "Eigentlich hinterdrein einsehen, er-

kennen, d. h., danach seine Meinung, seinen Sinn oder Entschluss aendern." Vincent, *Word Studies*, Vol. I, p. 23, has this under *metanoieite*: "A word compounded of the preposition *meta*, after, with, and the verb *noeo*, to perceive and to think, as the result of perceiving and observing. In this compound the preposition combines the two meanings of time and change, which may be denoted by after and different; the whole compound means to *think differently after*. *Metanoia* (repentance) is therefore primarily an *after-thought*, different from the former thought; then a change of mind, which issues in regret and in a change of conduct. The latter ideas, however, have been imported into the word by Scriptural usage, and do not lie in it etymologically nor by primary usage. . . . Sorrow is not, as is popularly conceived, the primary nor the prominent notion of the word. Paul distinguishes between sorrow (*lype*) and repentance (*metanoia*), and puts the one as the outcome of the other. 'Godly sorrow worketh repentance,' 2 Cor. 7:10."

Μετάνοια, then, means a change of mind, and when Christ exhorts us, μετανοείτε, Mark 1:15, He wants us to change our mind.

II

The Common *Metanoia*.—Men frequently change their minds in life. Before we, therefore, discuss the implications of the term μετάνοια as used in the Scriptures, it may be helpful to our understanding if first we speak of the change of mind in general and examine wherein it consists, and whereby it is brought about.

The *mind* of man denotes, in the first place, those psychic powers with which God endowed His rational creatures. In its wider sense it includes man's intellectual, emotional, and volitional faculties. This mind of man, though weakened by the fall of Adam into sin, is nevertheless a precious gift of God, who has given me "my reason and all my senses and still preserves them"; it is the psychic instrument with which man does his thinking, feeling, and willing. It is true, there is a difference in men as to the responsiveness of these mental powers to external stimuli and as to the precision of their functioning. By proper exercise they may be developed and strengthened; but they may also become weak, atrophied, and deranged. Yet their fundamental functions are alike in all rational beings and cannot be changed. When, therefore, we read, Ezek. 18:31: "Make you a new heart and a new spirit," and in Ps. 51:10: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me," the meaning is not that there should be a replacement of man's psychic equipment with an entirely new set of mental powers.

In the second place, the word *mind* may also refer to the things

with which the mind occupies itself, the things that are in the mind, the thoughts, ideas, and opinions, the emotions and feelings, the inclinations, desires, and intentions. And here, indeed, changes are possible and frequent. In fact, as we acquire new knowledge, have new experiences, and receive new impressions, as we meditate on what we know, remember what we had forgotten, and become conscious of what slumbered in us, there is a continuous change going on in our mind. Our consciousness is not a stagnant pool, but a running stream. There is no rational being whose mind is absolutely static, and no sane person is so set in his views and ways that new information and experience will not more or less change his mind. Yet this change does by no means denote a change in the mental structure of man, but rather a change in his views, his disposition and attitude; it is a change in his *Gesinnung*. This is also the meaning of the texts quoted above (Ezek. 18:31; Ps. 51:10); the mind (heart and spirit), viewed as a faculty of the soul, *seelisches Vermoegen*, is not renewed and changed, but what occupies this mind, the attitude it assumes, and the direction in which it tends, therein is the change. To put it very bluntly, the change is not in the psychic machinery, but in the material with which it works and the effects resulting therefrom.

This change of mind may be partial, modifying in part only the previous opinion and attitude of man; but it may also be so radical as to reverse his judgment and feeling. When the barbarians saw that Paul was bitten by a poisonous viper, they were convinced that he must be a murderer, "whom, though he had escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffered not to live." But when they saw that no harm came to him, they "changed their minds" (*μεταβαλλόμενοι*) and said that he was a god. Acts 28:2-6. Here we have a complete change of mind, a change in what they thought of Paul and how they felt towards him.

A change implies that a thing becomes what it was not before. While a thing may be changeable, there is no thing that possesses inherent power to change itself; there must be some influence originating in something else that causes the change. The changes we observe in the physical world, in nature, in botany, in biology, and in chemistry, are all due to the action of one thing upon the other. We may not always be able to discover the immediate or remote causes of the changes we observe; yet there is, no doubt, a cause for every effect. If it were possible to isolate an element completely, absolutely eliminating every possible influence that might work upon it, there could be no change.

It is even so with the mind of man. The things that are in the mind do not change, unless acted upon by something that enters our consciousness. There can be no change in our thoughts and

ideas, our emotions and feelings, and the consequent direction of our will, unless something new and different enters our mind. This new material may be obtained from outside sources, or it may by cogitation be developed and deduced from such knowledge as we already possess, or it may be that an idea or thought that was forgotten or repressed is remembered and receives new attention; at all events, if there is to be a change of mind, some new element must enter our consciousness to bring it about. And while our mental faculties apperceive this new knowledge, and may on the basis thereof develop new ideas, it is not these mental faculties that really cause the change of mind, but rather the new things we have learned and found.

Let us again refer to the case mentioned in Acts 28:2-6. What the barbarians thought of Paul and how they felt towards him, we learn from v. 4: "No doubt this man must be a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffered not to live." They expected that he should have swollen from the bite of the venomous viper or fallen down dead suddenly, v. 6. Now, what made them change their minds, saying that he was a god? They saw that no harm came to him. This was something new to them, something unheard of. And it was this new knowledge entering their minds that changed their opinion and attitude concerning Paul. Also in the fall of man, Gen. 3:1-6, we observe in Eve a change of mind brought on by the deceitful lies of Satan. Thus it is in every μετάνοια, or change of mind. It is never brought about by the mind itself, *i. e.*, by the reason, the heart, and the will of man, for these are only the psychic instruments that apperceive what enters the mind and are affected and directed thereby. Whenever there is a change of mind, it is superinduced by new elements of knowledge, new impressions and experiences, or by greater attention and emphasis being given to such things as we knew and experienced before, but ignored or did not fully understand. This is true also of fickle persons, who frequently change their minds without apparent good reason; yet behind every whimsical change there is an idea or impression which momentarily engaged their consciousness.

Because these observations on the functions of the mind have some bearing also on the spiritual μετάνοια, discussed below, it may be profitable to examine this matter more in detail.

The intellect and the reason of man, though weakened by the Fall, are, nevertheless, precious gifts of God. But what is their function? They are the instruments by which we obtain knowledge. Aside from the knowledge of the Law which men have by nature, Rom. 2:15, and, perhaps, some general ideas, all knowledge comes to man through his senses by observation, experience, and

information. The intellect receives these impressions and converts them into ideas. Reason apperceives, interprets, and judges these new ideas in terms of the old or corrects and modifies the old on the basis of the new. By analyzing, comparing, combining certain elements of knowledge we also arrive at new judgments and conclusions. Even our imaginations are but the result of our putting together in a novel way materials that somehow are present in our mind. In all these operations, reason, and we here take the word in a wider sense as including *Verstand* and *Vernunft*, acts only as a psychic function, *seelisches Vermoegen*, an instrument that works on and with such material as entered the mind through the senses. Wonderful as the function of reason may be, it is not infallible, it may err in what it learns and in the conclusions it draws. But in no case has it the power to create knowledge *ex nihilo*. Neither can it, of itself, change the knowledge it has acquired without additional knowledge or deeper insight into what it already knows. Furthermore, it is not reason as such that makes an impression on the heart to produce an emotional response, for this is done by what is in the mind.

The heart or the emotional faculty of the soul is also a precious gift of God. When God created man, He made him not merely an intelligent being, which is able to acquire and to retain knowledge; but He made him an emotional being, that is, a being which can be affected by such knowledge, and is therefore capable of impressions, feelings, and emotions. These emotions are the innermost reaction of the human soul to the knowledge of the mind; they show, not what we know, but how we feel about what we know. It is therefore not our knowledge, but rather the impression this knowledge makes on our hearts that determines our personal attitude. It is for this reason that we ask a person how he *feels* about what he has read or heard. Without this emotional responsiveness of his soul, man would be incapable of sorrow and joy, of fear and love, of despair and trust and hope, etc., and would remain absolutely impassive to whatever he learns or experiences.

Ideational emotions — it is of these we speak — do not simply happen without any cause whatsoever, but they are superinduced by an idea or thought in our minds. And the idea that is strongest and uppermost in our consciousness will for the time being determine the feeling we experience in the heart. We may compare the heart to the sounding board of a violin, which sympathetically vibrates at the tones produced on the strings. Yet the sounding board neither produces nor changes the vibrations; this is done on the strings of the instrument. Thus a change in the emotional attitude of man is not brought about by the heart itself, but by the thoughts and ideas that dominate the conscious-

ness of man and act upon his emotional susceptibility. The heart is capable of many and even of conflicting impressions and emotions, but of itself it can neither create nor change them. Nor does the heart as such initiate volition, but this is done by the emotions and feelings that sway and control the heart.

Nor can anyone change his mind by a mere act of his will. For the will is not a specific mental element that acts independently and of its own accord, but every case of conscious volition includes the entire mental activity, intellectual and emotional, inasmuch as it tends toward expression and action. Behind every instance of conscious volition lies an emotion, and behind every emotion lies a thought or an idea. For this reason we sometimes ask a person, why he did a certain thing, what was the idea behind the act. Even when a person tells us that he changed his mind and conduct of his own free will, there still lies behind this "free will" of his some thought-engendered and thought-controlled emotion. It is, therefore, not the will as such that determines and changes its own direction, but this is in all cases done by some idea and emotion which acts upon the will. Since the will acts only when acted upon, and never acts on its own impulse and initiative, it is evident that it cannot of itself bring about a change of mind. In fact, a change of mind includes a change in will, and for this reason such change cannot be initiated by the will, nor can it take place against the will.

We would not be understood as though we regarded the intellect, the heart, and the will as three distinct compartments of the soul; for in every case the entire soul is active. We are merely differentiating between the principal functions or actions of this one soul. The intellectual or rational faculty of the soul is that function by which it acquires and retains knowledge; the emotional faculty is that function whereby the soul shows how it inwardly feels about what it has learned; the volitional faculty is the tendency of the soul to express in some manner what it feels. While for a better understanding of the activity of the soul it is convenient to make this distinction, we must bear in mind that in each of these functions the entire soul is active.

These psychic faculties are engaged in every change of mind man may experience; yet they neither bring it about, nor can they hinder or prevent it. They are merely the mental instruments with which the Creator has equipped the rational soul of man and by means of which man apprehends, evaluates, and reacts to, those things with which he comes in contact. It is because of these mental faculties that man is not like a senseless block or stone, but is indeed capable of a μετένοια. Yet it is perfectly proper to say that even in the ordinary affairs of life man does not change his mind by "his own reason, strength, and will."

What, then, brings about a change of mind? The gateways to the mind of man are his senses. If from his infancy these were completely shut off, his mind would, as far as we can see, remain almost absolutely blank; he could acquire no knowledge nor experience emotions and conscious volitions. His mental powers, no matter how keen they might otherwise be, would remain inactive, because they would have nothing to occupy them and to work on. It is through the senses that the soul has contact with the outside world, and what through the senses enters the mind is the stimulus that quickens the mental powers and starts them working. His intellect apperceives what his senses bring to him, his emotions show how he personally feels about it, and his will indicates what he intends to do about it. Thus the "mindedness" of man, as it develops and is changed, is superinduced by those things that, in the last analysis, come to him from without through his senses.

However, there is another contributing factor. For if the "mind," or the mental attitude of man, depended solely upon what comes to him through his senses, then all men having the same sense impressions would be of one mind, which is not the case. Why, then, do men react differently to what they experience? — In the first place, this is due to the fact that the mental powers are not equally alert and responsive in all men; the intelligence quotient is not the same; the entire mind works more slowly in some than in others; before one experience has run its course, another impinges upon them. The various degrees of mental alertness or mental sluggishness account in a measure for the different reaction of men to the same stimuli. — In the second place, this is due to the previous state of mind. The new is always interpreted in terms of the old. Established ideas and attitudes will strongly affect the reception of, and reaction to, new ideas and experiences. Pour the same ingredients into a glass of water and a glass of oil, and the reaction will be different because of the different content in the glasses. — In the third place, this is due to inherited predispositions, which may be a temperamental bias or an inborn inclination or a natural gift. Whatever it may be, this also accounts for a different reaction to external stimuli. For no sooner does the mind work on the material brought in by the senses than these native traits quietly exert their influence and thus help to shape the ultimate result. Like the psychic powers themselves, mental alertness or sluggishness, established ideas and attitudes, and inherited predisposition are quiescent until something new enters the mind, when at once they exert their influence. But since in all these things, as also in others, there is a great difference among men — there are hardly two people in the world that are physically and

mentally alike—we can understand why they do not react alike to the same ideas and experiences.

While we make due allowances for this, we still maintain that every change of mind is brought on by some new thought or idea that enters our consciousness, even as the composition of a mixture is changed by adding some new ingredient. Thus on the basis of new sense perception the intellect acquires new knowledge, on the basis of this new or changed knowledge the heart feels, and on the basis of such thought-controlled emotions the will acts. Let evil thoughts enter the mind, and, if they take effect, they will corrupt the heart and mislead the will. Teach man to think good and noble thoughts, and you will change his attitude and life for the better. "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he," Prov. 23:7. If, then, there is to be a μετάνοια, there must first be a change in the things that engage the attention.

How do new thoughts and ideas bring about a change of mind?—In any change there is a *terminus a quo* and a *terminus ad quem*, a point from which it starts and a point to which it leads. Before the change of mind takes place, there is in man a certain *Gesinnung*, a mindedness, which consists in his attitude toward what he knows, and which directs his volition and, hence, also his conduct.

As new ideas, then, enter the mind, they modify and perhaps radically change the view and opinion held before. Because of the new information received man thinks differently about a certain matter, and because he thinks differently, he also feels differently. This change in feeling and sentiment is the cardinal point in any μετάνοια, for it is not what a man knows, but how he feels about what he knows that determines his real attitude, *animus*, *Gesinnung*. This feeling at once changes also the direction of the will. Thus the idea arouses an emotion, and this initiates volition. Yet such acts of volition do not simply run wild in any unpredictable direction, but the idea which controls our attention determines not only the type of emotion the heart experiences, but also the direction of the will. "To say that an emotion or a feeling or sentiment may determine a voluntary act, is only to say that a certain form of perception or idea may do so." Angell, *Psychology*. Moreover, there is a delicate interplay between the things that occupy our mind. One thought and its resultant emotion modifies, checks, or furthers the other, so that the ultimate attitude is the composite result of various ideational elements. But whatever change of mind may take place, in the last analysis it is due to something new that has entered the mind and holds the interest and attention. We all have frequently experienced a change of mind, and as we analyze the mental processes involved, we find it happened just this way:

thought material, either newly learned or remembered, occupied our attention, and as we meditated thereon, there followed a change of heart and will.

Yet, not every thought that enters the mind will automatically bring about also a change of mind. This "is due simply and solely to the inhibiting effect of some other sensational or ideational process which is also struggling for motor expression," Angell. This statement is borne out by our own experience and by our observation in others. There were other ideas and thoughts in our mind, which for some reason or other were more important to us, and as long as they held our interest and dominated our consciousness, the new idea was repressed and sidetracked and could not exert its influence. But as we continued to meditate upon the new matter we had heard, it not only became clearer to us, but also its motor power increased until it finally became strong enough to exert itself against the inhibiting effect of other considerations. Thoughts that engage our attention to the exclusion of others will impress the heart and turn the will. If, then, we can get people to give us their undivided attention, to see things our way, and to forget everything else, we are likely to bring about a change of mind in them.

Important as this observation may be in our dealing with men, it does not fully explain why a certain thought or truth, forcibly presented to a group of men, should result in a change of mind with some and not with others. Here we encounter an intangible something in the nature of man; it may be an established attitude, it may be a temperamental trait, it may be a native predisposition, or something else, over which we have no direct control, that accounts for the difference in interest men display, and that also affects their mental activities and movements.

It must be evident that a genuine μετάνοια, even in worldly and everyday affairs, is by no means a superficial matter, but it engages the entire soul life of man. Beginning with a change in knowledge, it changes the emotional attitude of the heart, turns the will, and is reflected in our actions. To understand the mental processes involved and the possible hindrances we may encounter, will help us to plan our approach and procedure in trying to bring about a change of mind.

III

The Spiritual Metanoia. — *Its Essence.* — As used in the New Testament, the term μετάνοια is not broadly used of any change of mind in the common affairs of life, but is restricted to a change of mind with respect to moral and spiritual things, a change of mind with respect to God. Its *terminus a quo* and *terminus ad quem* are definitely fixed. It is not merely a change in the intel-

lectual knowledge and understanding of God's Word, but rather a change in the heart's attitude and relation to God; it is a change from enmity against God to faith in, and love of, God, followed by a change from love of sin to sorrow over sin.

That we might better understand wherein this μετάνοια consists, it may be profitable to examine what has just been mentioned, that is, *from* what and *to* what the mind changes, in other words, the *terminus a quo* and the *terminus ad quem* of this change.

The terminus a quo. — The point from which this μετάνοια starts is the attitude of natural man toward God. Before the Fall the heart of man revered, loved, and trusted in God. But when the suggestions of the Serpent took effect, there was a change for the worse: his heart departed from the Lord, and he ate of the forbidden fruit, the outward act being a result of the inward change. Man had ceased to fear and love and trust in God. He now selfishly desired benefits for himself which, he thought, God had denied him, Gen. 3:5, 6. When called to an account, he tried to shield himself by lying to God, v. 10, and by blaming the woman, v. 12. It was no longer love of God, but love of self that dominated him and dictated his actions. And this selfishness was not a momentary whim and weakness, soon again cast off, but it became a permanent attitude. That drop of poison had so thoroughly corrupted his entire nature that it continued to work in him and was passed on to his children, who were begotten "in his own likeness," Gen. 3:3. Ever since then man is controlled by stark selfishness, seeking his own advantage and serving his own interests. While he still knows that there is a God, Rom. 1:19, 20, from whom he receives many blessings in life, Acts 14:17, he is not disposed to love Him, but he is afraid of Him, and whatever service he renders is dictated by fear of punishment or expectation of reward. This selfishness of man is reflected also in his dealings with his neighbor; Adam did not hesitate to blame his wife, and Cain killed his brother Abel. So men, as they are by nature, do to this day seek their own advantage, glory, and safety, even though thereby they destroy and ruin their neighbor. Departing in his heart from the God that made him, man has become his own god; he loves himself, lives to himself, and serves himself. The dominant power in the lives of individuals and of nations is pure and unadulterated selfishness.

This egocentric attitude of man the Bible describes with but one word, "flesh." Because man is "flesh," he is constantly at variance with the Spirit of God, Gen. 6:3. The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, Gal. 5:17. The carnal mind does not seek to please God, but is set on the things of the flesh, Rom. 8:5, things which God abhors and forbids, Gal. 5:19-21. And all this is not an attitude

which man gradually develops as he grows older, but "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth," Gen. 8:21; he is flesh because he is born of flesh, John 3:6. Thus man is by nature carnally minded and sold under sin, Rom. 7:14. There is in him no innate latent predisposition toward God, which, like a germ in the seed, would under favorable conditions sprout and turn the heart and will toward God; no, man is by nature opposed to God and inclined to evil. While fallen man still has a mind, that is, those psychic powers wherewith God equipped him, there is absolutely nothing in his mind and make-up that could possibly induce him to change his attitude toward God.

This description of the natural state of man does by no means flatter his vanity, and he will deny that it applies to him. Yet that is the portrait the Bible paints of him, and an honest and searching self-examination will convince us that the Bible does not overstate the case. For works of the flesh are not only those vile and black vices we abhor in sinners and publicans, but also the bright and glamorous virtues of the self-righteous Pharisees. The selfishness of man manifests itself not only in his love for sin and pleasure, but also in his efforts to build up for himself a righteousness before God and man, Luke 18:11, 12.

This is the natural state of man from which the μετάνοια must start; this carnal mind must be changed.

Terminus ad quem primus.—In a number of Bible texts the words μετάνοια and μετανοεῖν refer to a change of mind with respect to sin, without necessarily including that the mind is also turned toward God and His grace. Thus in Heb. 6:1 we read "of repentance, μετάνοια, from dead works and of faith towards God." The change of mind toward God is indicated by the word "faith," and the term μετάνοια refers only to a difference in attitude toward "dead works," sins. In a similar way Christ differentiates between μετανοεῖτε and πιστεύετε, Mark 1:15. In each of these cases there has taken place a change of mind with respect to the sins mentioned. Now, what may this change be? The previous position of man was that he was inclined toward sin and found pleasure therein. And though he may have heard that such things are forbidden and will bring him misery and woe, he did not take it to heart. But when he begins to realize what the consequences of his sin may be, or perhaps already experiences them in his life, and fears further punishments, a change of mind is likely to occur. He now sees the other side of sin; it is no longer beautiful and tempting, bright and innocent, but ugly and hideous, black and frightening. While before there was joy and pleasure in its service, there is now heartache and sorrow and despair for having lived in sin. Think of Judas. Evidently a real change

of mind has taken place, but it is a change merely with respect to sin. Before this, man lightheartedly indulged in its service; now he is ashamed and sorry and terrified for having done so. It is a change from delight in sin to sorrow over sin. This is the first meaning of *repent* and *repentance*. (We know, of course, that, though there is sorrow over one particular sin on account of its results, the love of sin remains till faith is created.)

Terminus ad quem secundus. — The term μετάνοια is also used in a wider sense, which includes what has been said above, but reaches farther, the *terminus ad quem* being faith in the forgiving grace of God. Paul speaks of a repentance toward God, Acts 20:21, and of a repentance unto life, Acts 11:18, and tells us that a godly sorrow worketh a μετάνοια to salvation, 2 Cor. 7:10. We might also quote the words of Christ, Luke 24:47: μετάνοιαν εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, repentance unto the forgiveness of sins (there are variant readings of this text, K and B have εἰς, unto, while A, B, D have καί, and). In these texts the term μετάνοια evidently has a wider reach; it does not stop at sorrow over sin, but it includes faith in the forgiveness of sins, love of God, and hope of eternal life.

Before this, man was sorry, deeply sorry, for his sin, because he feared or suffered its consequences. Yet he did not dare to look to God for help in his trouble, his heart was rather filled with hatred against Him whose judgment he feared. But now he learns something new about God, something he has never heard before. He is told that "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life," John 3:16. Of all this, natural man knows nothing, nor can he learn of it from books of human wisdom, nor is it possible for any man to arrive at such a conclusion by rationalizing on facts known to him. This thing has never entered the heart of man; it is a mystery, hid in the heart of God, but revealed to us by the Spirit in the Gospel, 1 Cor. 2:6-10. In the Gospel, God opens His heart to us, reveals His love, and offers grace and forgiveness to lost sinners. Now, all this is so strange, so foreign, to the thinking of man that at first it seems unbelievable and foolish to him. Yet his doubts do not disprove the fact of this truth; it is plainly stated in many texts of the Bible. As this new knowledge enters the mind of man, his ideas of God are changed; and as it touches his heart, his attitude toward God is radically changed. For as the darkness of night vanishes before the rising sun, so gloom and despair, fear and hatred, are dispelled when the radiant light of this heavenly truth illumines the heart, filling it with faith and love, with joy and hope. The heart has now completely turned to God. This is the spiritual μετάνοια in its fullest sense.

"The term 'repentance' is not employed in the Holy Scriptures in one and the same sense. For in some passages of Holy Scriptures it is employed and taken for the entire conversion of man, as Luke 13:5: 'Except ye repent, ye shall likewise perish.' And in chap. 15:7: 'Likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.' But in this passage, Mark 1:15, as also elsewhere, where repentance and faith in Christ, Acts 20:21, or repentance and remission of sins, Luke 24:46, 47, are mentioned as distinct, to repent means nothing else than truly to acknowledge sins, to be heartily sorry for them, and to desist from them." *Trigl.*, p. 958.

And the Augsburg Confession, Art. XIII, describes repentance in its wider sense as consisting of two parts: "One is contrition, that is, terrors smiting the conscience through the knowledge of sin; the other is faith, which is born of the Gospel, or of absolution, and believes that for Christ's sake sins are forgiven, comforts the conscience, and delivers it from terrors." *Trigl.*, p. 49.

Taking the term μετάνοια in its wider sense, it denotes that change of mind which we commonly call conversion or regeneration. But as this μετάνοια consists of two parts, we inquire: At which point does conversion take place? Is it a process extending over a shorter or longer period of time? Is a person converted halfway when he experiences contrition over his sins, and fully converted when faith in Christ is added? Answering the second question first, let us say that a person, deeply distressed because of his sins, is not converted, not even in part. There is indeed a change of mind with respect to his sins, but none with respect to God. Thinking of God, his heart is still full of fear, despair, and hatred. Sorrow over sin is a necessary prerequisite of conversion, but, by itself, it is not conversion. The μετάνοια which is identical with conversion is the change of mind with respect to God and consists in this, that because of the promise of grace and forgiveness the heart turns to God in confidence and faith. And such change from despair to faith is not a gradual process, but an instantaneous act. For the very moment that the faintest longing for this grace and forgiveness springs up in the heart, a change, a real change, takes place in the mind of man, and this change we call conversion. Waves of fear and despair may still surge through the heart; yet there is that undertow of confidence in the grace of God.

When, therefore, in the following paragraphs we shall speak of mental processes in connection with this μετάνοια, we do not mean that the change of mind itself is an extended process, but we refer to those mental experiences that precede this change and finally culminate in this change. For the μετάνοια takes place in the mind and engages the mental faculties; but whenever the change comes, it comes instantaneously.

How is this "μετάνοια" brought about? — In a number of Bible texts men are asked and commanded to repent, to change their mind, Matt. 3:2; Acts 17:30, and we also learn that men have repented, Matt. 12:41. Because of such and similar statements some maintain that it is within the power of man to effect such a change. This, however, is impossible. We say a ship turns, and so it does. Yet it cannot do so of itself; there is some other power that changes the course of the ship. It is even so here. Conversion is essentially a change of mind, the mind turns from despair in sin to faith in the Savior. In this change all the mental faculties of man are engaged and active, yet they do not produce it, they merely experience it. We have pointed out above that by nature man is carnal-minded and inclined to evil. Conscious of his guilt, he fears and hates God. Hence, there is in him no innate predisposition toward God. And as the saving grace of God is by nature absolutely unknown to him, 1 Cor. 2:9, there is nothing in his natural experience that could possibly incline his heart toward God. Man, then, as he is naturally constituted, does not and cannot initiate and bring about a change of his mind with respect to God. A heart that is inclined to sin can, of itself, never change to a heart that abhors sin, and a heart that fears and hates God can, of itself, never change to a heart that loves and trusts in God. Some new element of knowledge must enter the mind and hold the attention of man, new thoughts and truths must exert their influence on his heart, if a μετάνοια is to result. Thus man turns because he is being turned, Jer. 31:18; he changes his mind because of some influence from without that produces this change.

External Means. — In order to bring about a μετάνοια in man, there must needs be, in the first place, an outside influence and power that works on his mind. And what is this power? It is the power of God as it operates through the Law and the Gospel.

It is true that by nature man has some knowledge of God's Law and that his conscience convicts him of his transgressions and holds him responsible to God, Rom. 2:14, 15; 1:32. What this knowledge of the Law and conscience do but imperfectly and feebly, being often overshadowed and suppressed by the carnal appetites of man, the revealed Law stresses and deepens. "It was added because of transgression," says Paul, Gal. 3:19. Its chief purpose was not to put an end to transgressions, but rather to bring them to the knowledge of man. It entered that the offense might abound, Rom. 5:20, that the innate sinfulness of man, taking occasion by the commandment and working all manner of concupiscence, Rom. 7:8, should be brought into the open, to the consciousness of man. Thus "by the Law is the knowledge of sin," Rom. 3:20; 7:7. Before a person can experience a change of mind with respect to his com-

placent self-righteousness, he must learn to know how corrupt and sinful he is both by nature and by his own deeds. "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick," Matt. 9:12. From the Law, men must learn to know their spiritual ailment.

Hence, we must teach the Law clearly and apply it to our hearers. In a general, and often very superficial, way almost everybody will admit that he is a sinner; but he is not so ready to plead guilty of specific sins. Therefore in teaching the Law let us not talk about the sins of the heathen in darkest Africa or inveigh against the wickedness of the children of the world, but let us rather speak of those temptations that beset our hearers, and point out those sins of which we, of which they, may be guilty. Witness the preaching of John the Baptist, Matt. 3:7. — Yet in order that no one may pass lightly over these things, we must furthermore call attention to the consequences of sin. "The wages of sin is death," Rom. 6:23; Deut. 27:26. Men must realize that sin, even the smallest sin, is a grievous offense against the holy and almighty God, who has no pleasure in wickedness and hates the workers of iniquity, Ps. 5:4, 5. We are so apt to lose the sense and feeling for the heinousness of our own sins and to regard them as mere trifles, as weaknesses or failings, nothing to worry about. Yet in the same ratio in which we fail to realize the dire consequences of our transgressions, we shall fail to be truly sorry of them. If, then, there is to be contrition of heart, there must first be a clear knowledge of one's sins and a live sense of the curse they merit. — It is in vain to tell a man again and again that he must repent if he does not know of what and why he should repent. It is not even necessary to mention the word repentance to him, for if we convince him of his wrongdoing and he realizes what this will mean for him, contrition will follow as a matter of course. And the Law of God is the very means that will accomplish this. Let us, therefore, not merely demand repentance, but *let us rather so preach the Law that repentance results.* — Thus it is that by the preaching of the Law new ideas and thoughts concerning sin are put into the mind of man; and as these impress the heart, there will be "contrition, that is, terrors smiting the conscience through the knowledge of sin," which, according to our Confession, is the first part of repentance.

"The other [part] is faith, which is born of the Gospel, or of absolution, and believes that for Christ's sake sins are forgiven, comforts the conscience, and delivers it from terrors." The Gospel is not another law, making new demands on man, and it must not be preached as though its promises depended on something man must do; but it is the proclamation of God's free grace and pardon to a sin-cursed world, the unconditional promise of forgiveness

of sins to the lost sons of man. It tells us that God loved the world, John 3:16, that Christ came to save sinners, 1 Tim. 1:15, that He atoned for the sins of all men, 1 John 2:2, and reconciled the world unto God, 2 Cor. 5:19. All this is revealed in the Gospel not as a possibility which becomes actual only if we do our part, but it is revealed as an accomplished fact, and full salvation is offered to all without money and without price. Lovingly the Father calls the lost and oppressed: "Return unto Me, for I have redeemed thee," Is. 44:22, and earnestly the Savior invites: "Come, for all things are now ready," Luke 14:17.

Now, all this is something new, unheard of, almost unbelievable, and yet most certainly true. As these blessed truths enter the mind of man, his ideas of God certainly change; and as these ideas touch his heart, his attitude toward God changes, he feels different toward God than he did before, fear and hatred melt away, and there springs up a longing for that promised grace and forgiveness, which under the repeated assurances of the Gospel grows into a joyous confident faith. Also here let us bear in mind that, in dealing with our people, we do not merely ask them to believe in God; but let us tell them what to believe about Him; let us assure them that, while He hates sin, He loves the sinner and would have him saved; let us make clear to them the meaning of Christ's redemption, and apply to them personally the promises of God's grace and forgiveness. *Let us so preach the Gospel that faith results.* For that is the purpose of all our teaching and preaching that the hearts of men turn to God in faith, that there be a μετάνοια εις ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, Luke 24:47.

The Law and the Gospel are the means to bring about a change of mind in man; however, they are not dead instruments. Because they are the Word of God, the power of God operates through both of them. Therefore says Christ: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life," John 6:63. And Heb. 4:12 we read: "The Word of God is quick and powerful." This power to touch and turn the heart is not a natural one, such as inheres also in words spoken by men; but since it is God's Word, and since the Holy Ghost is inseparably connected therewith, there is inherent in this Word at all times and under all conditions a supernatural power and divine efficacy.

Internal means and method. — As the conversion of man takes place in the soul, the powers or functions with which God has equipped the soul are engaged and set into motion by the Word of God. The Word of God does not work in a magical way, so that a mere external contact therewith is able to produce a true μετάνοια in man. Such superstitious ideas do not lie dead and buried in the Dark Ages of the past, but we find a type of them in those people

who believe that, because they are externally affiliated with a church and have physically exposed themselves to a few sermons, they are fairly good Christians. As God revealed His Law and His Gospel in terms intelligible to human beings, it follows that He would deal with man as with a rational creature, which, having intellectual, emotional, and volitional abilities, can be taught in his mind, touched in his heart, and turned in his will. "Er ist kein Stein oder Block, insofern der Mensch auch nach dem Fall noch eine vernuenftige Kreatur ist, die Verstand und Willen hat und in seinem Verstand und Willen Gottes Wirkung erfahrt." Pieper, *Christliche Dogmatik*, Vol. II, p. 548. In bringing about a change of mind in man, God does not simply ignore and pass by these psychic abilities, with which He Himself has endowed man, but He makes use of them. He teaches man to know the Law and the Gospel; by this knowledge He impresses and moves the heart and turns the will. While, therefore, the Law and the Gospel may be regarded as the external means through which God works on man from without, these mental faculties are the internal means He employs within. To make this point clear, we might think of the fact that God in nourishing our bodies uses food as the external means, but he also employs the functions of the various alimentary organs of our bodies in order that the food may accomplish its purpose. In a similar manner God works on man from without through His Law and His Gospel, but within man He employs the functions of his soul to bring about a change of mind.

Food will not nourish us unless it is eaten and assimilated; even so the Word of God remains powerless and ineffective if it is not learned. The Word of God we have in our Bibles will never bring about a change of mind unless it first enters the mind. Without a knowledge of the Law a person would know neither his sin, Rom. 7:7, nor the wrath of God because of this sin. And whoever does not know the Gospel can thereby never be made wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus, 2 Tim. 3:15; Rom. 10:14. Thus God makes use of the intellectual ability of the soul, by means of which we acquire knowledge of His Word.

But also the emotional function of the soul is called into service. For if this new knowledge holds the attention of man, if there is real attention, if he seriously thinks and meditates on what he has learned, and understands what it means to him personally, then it is likely that this knowledge will impress and move the heart, creating therein *motus novos*, new feelings. Thus the heart of Lydia was opened because she heard Paul preach, Acts 16:14. The type of this emotional response depends upon the content of the new thought that entered the mind. Thus the con-

tent of the Law is quite different from that of the Gospel; hence also the effect of the Law on the heart differs from that of the Gospel. The heart's response to the Law is remorse and sorrow over sin, terrors of conscience and despair; but the heart's response to the glad tidings of the Gospel is faith and love, joy and hope, a new life of spiritual power.

Thus we see, in bringing about a μετάνοια in man God deals with him as with a rational creature. He makes use of his mental equipment, his intellectual, emotional, and volitional powers, and follows the ordinary psychic procedure and method, namely, He teaches man to know His Word, by this knowledge He opens his heart, and through all this He turns his will. As far, then, as the purely psychic processes in the spiritual μετάνοια are concerned, they are the same as the psychic processes in any other change of mind man may experience.

However, we would note some differences between the common and the spiritual μετάνοια. — The material which produces in man a change of mind with respect to the ordinary affairs of life is diversified and distributed over a wide range of human interests and experiences. But the ideas and thoughts that bring about the spiritual μετάνοια are limited to those things which man learns from the Law and the Gospel, and pertain to his relation to his God. And this μετάνοια, which covers a narrow and specific field, consists, as has been pointed out, in a change of heart from love of sin to sorrow over sin, and from fear and hatred of God to love and trust in God.

Furthermore, while God, indeed, uses the Law and the Gospel, through which He works on man from without, and the mental capabilities of the soul, on which He works within man, it is He that gives knowledge and understanding, 2 Cor. 4:6; it is He who through such knowledge moves and opens the heart, Acts 16:14; it is He who turns the will, Jer. 31:18; Phil. 2:13. Hence we read Rom. 2:4: "that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance," and Acts 11:18: "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." Whenever a μετάνοια results, then it is not an achievement of man but a work and a gift of God, it is due not to human powers but to the monergism of God's grace.

In this connection we would call attention also to 1 Cor. 2:14: "Natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Paul certainly does not mean to say that natural man lacks the organic, constitutional capacity for learning and knowing the truths which God has revealed to us by His Spirit; for if anyone regards them as foolishness, he must have acquired at least an intellectual knowledge of them. But

while his mind may know them, his heart does not receive them, and no μετάνοια results. Then Paul adds: "Neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The knowledge here denied to natural man is not an intellectual cognition (*Verstandeserkenntnis*), but rather an inward realization and appreciation of what the things of the Spirit mean to him personally (*Herzenerkenntnis*). The reason: "because they are spiritually discerned." What does this mean?

"Discerned" hardly conveys the concept of the Greek ἀνακρίνεται (*anakrinetai*), which, being a juridic term, means to examine and question closely with a view of arriving at a judgment. Luther, therefore, translated "denn es muss geistlich gerichtet sein." For the meaning of the word see 1 Cor. 9:3; 10:25, 27; 4:3, 4; 2:15. We may here call attention to the distinction between *Verstand* and *Vernunft*, understanding, or intellect, and reason. Our intellect concerns itself with the things that come to us from without through our senses; it grasps and understands them. As a result there is an intellectual knowledge. However, "nicht alles, was wir verstehen, ist uns auch vernuenftig," not all we have learned to know seems also rational to us. For as soon as the intellect (*Verstand*) has grasped a thing, reason (*Vernunft*) sets in to judge and evaluate what we have learned. This presupposes something according to which reason judges or evaluates the new matter. This something may be past experiences, established views, recognized laws and principles, or personal interests. Ordinarily man does not accept anything without thoroughly scrutinizing and judging it. And this is the function of reason (*Vernunft*) as distinguished from understanding (*Verstand*). When natural man has learned to know the things of the Spirit, has acquired a *Verstandeserkenntnis*, his reason will at once examine and judge them, and it can do this only in the light of such knowledge and views as man has held before. But as the things of the Spirit have "never entered the heart of man," 1 Cor. 2:9, and are therefore entirely new to him, there is nothing in his past experience by which he can properly evaluate and judge them. In fact, they seem so contrary to his former way of thinking that he regards them as foolishness. For this reason Paul adds "for they must be probed and judged *spiritually*."

By the use of the adjective ψυχικός (*natural*, in our version) and the adverb πνευματικῶς (*spiritual*) Paul in our text contrasts the ψυχή (*soul*) and the πνεῦμα (*spirit*) of man. Now, these are not two different elements in man, but rather the two sides of the one immaterial nature which stands in contrast to the material body. The soul is the active life principle in man, which manifests itself in his rational, emotional, and volitional activities, and views

the individual chiefly in relation and reaction to earthly environments and experiences. The spirit is the same essence as the soul, but viewed in its relation to God and divine things. When, therefore, we say that by nature man is spiritually dead, we do not mean to say that his rational soul has ceased to function with respect to those things with which he comes into contact; but we mean that its contact with, and relation to, God has been completely cut off. In relation to earthly things the soul of the ψυχικός ἄνθρωπος, natural man, is very much alive; but with respect to God and divine things it is dead. The spirit of man, then, is the soul of man viewed in its relation to God. While this distinction is not strictly observed throughout, it will help us in the understanding of our text. The things of the Spirit must be examined and probed, not ψυχικῶς, in man's relation to earthly things, but πνευματικῶς, in his relation to God, and that is possible only after man is born again by the power of the Gospel.

In the first place, it must be remembered that the truths of the Bible are not of this earth, 1 Cor. 2:6, 7, and may therefore not be measured and judged by standards of human wisdom and reasoning. But being revealed by the Spirit of God, v. 10, they are divine truths, are in a class by themselves, and must therefore be examined and judged objectively on the basis of their essence and merit. For this reason Paul tells us that we must bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. 10:5.

Next, we must understand that these things of the Spirit do not pertain to our earthly relations, to our psychic connection with, and reaction to, earthly things, but they pertain to our spirit, our relation to God. The purpose of the things of the Spirit is to assure to penitent sinners grace and forgiveness from God, and to create in their hearts faith and love and hope in God, in short, to re-establish that spiritual relation with God that was disrupted by man's sin. It is from this point of view that we must examine and judge the things of the Spirit and ask ourselves whether they really satisfy the spiritual needs of man. The teachings of the Bible will be foolishness to him who does not understand their spiritual purpose.

Natural man, whose imagination is evil from his youth, does not appreciate the spiritual purpose of the "things of the Spirit," and therefore he cannot and does not receive them into his heart. It is not he that opens his heart to them, but it is rather they that touch and open his heart. As natural man hears and learns the truths of God's Word, it is the Holy Spirit that illumines his mind to understand their spiritual purpose, it is He that impresses and opens the heart and turns the will, so that the very things that were foolishness to man before are now precious, saving wisdom. Thus

God makes use of the psychic functions of man to effect in him a spiritual μετάνοια.

In this connection we may ask about the μετάνοια of our baptized infants.

We read Mark 1:4: "John did baptize in the wilderness and preach the Baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins." The μετάνοια εις ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν was the characteristic of this Baptism; it involved the obligation of a change of mind from sin to the remission of sin. Referring to the Baptism of John, Christ says: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," John 3:5. Even as the Baptism of John, so the Baptism which Christ instituted was a means of regeneration, for by it men are "made disciples" of Christ, Matt. 28:19, and Paul calls it "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost," Titus 3:5. Thus the promises of Baptism not only offer spiritual blessings, but the Holy Ghost, operating through these promises connected with the water, regenerates, and renews the heart, brings about μετάνοιαν εις ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, works faith in the forgiveness of sins.

And this is the effect Baptism has also on our infant children. However, it is impossible to trace the psychic processes normally involved in a change of mind. To us it seems that the infant is altogether unconscious of what is going on. Perhaps he is sleeping or crying during the entire sacramental action and does not understand the meaning and purpose and benefit of Baptism. His mental powers are not yet active. How, then, can there be a change of mind? Paul tells us that faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God, Rom. 10:17. But how can the infant hear and know the Word of God so that faith may result in his heart? These questions we cannot answer. With grown persons faith is a conscious experience, 2 Tim. 1:12, and we can understand the mental processes involved in its creation, but it is utterly futile to attempt to analyze them in infants.

Nevertheless, on the authority of God's Word we believe that also in our baptized infants a real μετάνοια takes place, that they experience a new, a spiritual, birth, John 3:5, that in Baptism they become God's children through faith in Christ Jesus, and put on the merits of their Savior, Gal. 3:26, 27.

Why Different Results. — In the preceding paragraphs we have endeavored to show by what means and in what manner God works in man a μετάνοια from sin to the Savior. However, there remains another question to be answered. Why do not all that hear the Law and the Gospel repent and believe? Why do not all experience a μετάνοια? Christ answers this question Matt. 23:37. He had labored long and earnestly to win the children of Jerusalem

over to Himself. "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and *ye would not!*" and Stephen tells the Jews: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do *always resist the Holy Ghost*; as your fathers did, so do ye," Acts 7:51. On the part of God everything was done to draw these people to Himself, but on the part of man there was a contrary will and resistance.

But what is this perverse will of man that resists the efforts of the Holy Ghost? Viewed as the volitional function of the soul, the will is a precious gift of God, and though weakened by the Fall, it is in itself not a wicked, sinful thing. When God works in us to will of His good pleasure, Phil. 2:13, He employs the same faculty of willing that is active when people will not come to Christ. The perverseness lies not in the will itself, but in the direction in which this will tends. Whether we will what is evil or will what is good, it always is the same will viewed as a psychic function, but the difference lies in the object towards which this willing is directed.

Hence we ask, what determines the direction of our volition? What lies behind the unwillingness and resistance of natural man when Christ calls him and the Holy Spirit works on him? Why did the Jews not yield to the pleadings of Jesus? Why did they resist the Holy Ghost? Why did the divine truths they had learned from the Law and the Gospel not bring about a μετάνοια? Not every thought and idea that enters the mind produces also a change of mind. And the fault lies not in the thought itself, but rather in this, that some other thought or idea has a stronger hold on the attention and interest of man, and thus prevents the former from taking effect. For whatever interests dominate the consciousness of man, determine, for the time being, his attitude and actions. If, then, the Jews "would not" come to Christ and "resisted the Holy Ghost," there evidently was something that motivated their behavior and caused them to act as they did.

Now, what is this something? As we observe the different reaction of men to the same type of stimuli and experiences, we ask, Why should this be? It is said that this is due to previous instruction and training. We admit that previous instruction and training and the convictions and attitudes resulting therefrom strongly affect one's reaction to new ideas and experiences. Whoever has been taught and is convinced that he is just and perfect, is not ready to repent and seek a Savior. Thus, when the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves by not being baptized of John, Luke 7:30, they did so because they trusted in themselves that they were righteous, Luke 18:9, and for the same reason they spurned the services of the Physician

Jesus Christ, Matt. 9:11-13; John 7:48. Again, it may be philosophic pride that others "would not" come to Christ, 1 Cor. 1:26; to men who are wise in their own conceit the Gospel of Christ is indeed foolishness. Still others love the world, 1 John 2:15; 2 Tim. 4:10; it may be this or that phase of worldliness which has so captivated them that they "would not" change their mind. Thus there may be various things that are the *immediate* cause of man's resistance to the Holy Ghost and of his refusal to come to Christ.

However, this does not explain everything. For, as a matter of fact, self-righteous Pharisees, conceited philosophers, and profligate sinners have experienced a change of mind and come to Christ. While at first their self-righteousness, their great learning, their love of sin, may have prompted them to resist the influence of the Spirit of God operating through the Word, they finally yielded. Why should Nicodemus accept Christ and Caiaphas reject Him? Why did the one malefactor turn in faith to Christ, and the other did not? This is due, some aver, to a difference in men. Man comes into the world, so to speak, with a bias, by nature favoring certain experiences in preference to other possible ones. And men differ from one another as regards the special direction of this bias. Call this bias what you will, temperamental or character traits, or natural gifts or weaknesses; at all events, they exert an influence on the whole range of man's mental activity and explain, in a measure, why individuals react differently under like conditions.

While psychology may thus try to explain why men respond differently to the same stimuli in ordinary human affairs, this does not explain the different reaction of men to spiritual things. Indeed, also with regard to spiritual matters man enters this world with a definite bias, but there is *no* difference in men as to the direction of this bias; it is altogether negative. "For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth," Gen. 8:21, and because of this inborn sinfulness he is dead to all spiritual things, Eph. 2:1. And as there are no degrees in this state of spiritual death, there is in no man a predisposition favorable to a μετάνοια toward God; on the contrary, "the carnal mind is enmity against God," Rom. 8:7. Whenever, therefore, in a given case a person will not come to Christ, the *immediate* cause may be his love of sin or his intellectual conceit or his self-righteousness, but the *ultimate* cause is his selfish, sinful, corrupt nature. Man is flesh, hence he minds the things of the flesh, Rom. 8:5; they not only attract him, but he is himself strongly inclined toward them.

We may grant the force of previous training and of a natural bias in so far as the innate sinfulness, as the ultimate cause, manifests itself in one person in his love for this or another sin, in another

in his self-righteousness, in a third in his pride of wisdom, as the immediate causes of their resistance to the Holy Ghost. But the basic attitude of man toward God and His efforts to bring about a μετάνοια is alike in all men. Thus behind the "ye would not" and the "ye do always resist" lies in every case the corrupt nature of man, in which are rooted, and from which proceed, all those forces that oppose the influence of God's Word on the heart of man. As these inhibitions, which prevent the Word from taking effect, exist or *originate in man*, in the individual's own nature, it is he, and he alone, that is responsible if no μετάνοια results. "Thou hast destroyed thyself," Hos. 13:9.

If, on the other hand, a μετάνοια toward God eventuates, then this can in no sense be due to anything in man. While he indeed experiences this change in his mind, his mind does not effect it; while he has some knowledge of God and of His Law, there is nothing in this knowledge that could possibly change the enmity of his heart to love and confidence in God; neither is there a submerged native predisposition which, coming to the surface, would initiate a change in his attitude toward God. Unless some influence from without is brought to bear on the mind of man, there never will be a change of mind. Whenever, therefore, a μετάνοια does take place, it is due exclusively to a power that *originates in God*, operates through the Word, and exerts its influence on the soul of man. Thus it is that man turns to God, but it is God who turns him, Jer. 31:18; man repents and changes his mind, but it is God who works the change, God grants him repentance unto life, Acts 11:18. All honor, credit, and glory is His. "In Me is thine help," Hos. 13:9.

However, this does not answer all questions. For if it is true that there is no difference in men, that all are dead in trespasses and sins, spiritually dead, and that, therefore, while indeed capable of experiencing a μετάνοια, yet are absolutely unable to bring it about or to co-operate in bringing it about, why, then, are some of these dead quickened unto a spiritual life, while others remain dead? Why should the Word of God, which is powerful and efficacious at all times, be effective only in certain cases? If by nature all men are equally incompetent to change their mind, and if the Holy Ghost, operating through the Word, is the only one who can bring about this change of mind in man, and is also willing to do so, why, then, the different result? *Cur alii prae aliis?* We reject the answers both of Synergism, which teaches that there is a difference in the attitude of men toward God, and of Calvinism, which teaches that there is a difference in the attitude of God toward men, because both conflict with the Word of God. And we ourselves have no answer to give, because the Word of God does not give any.

Synonyms.—Such μετάνοια is identical with conversion, enlightenment, regeneration, and spiritual resurrection. All these express figuratively what is more directly expressed in the word μετάνοια. Conversion denotes a turning: because of the new knowledge received the heart now turns from sin to the Savior, Jer. 31:18. Enlightenment tells us that because of this new knowledge, man now sees both his sins and his God in a different light; the gloom and terror has fled, and there is sunshine in the heart, 2 Cor. 4:6. Regeneration means that man is reborn unto a new life. As natural birth was the beginning of his physical life, so the μετάνοια is the beginning of a spiritual life, John 3:6; by the first birth we are the children of our natural parents, by the second we become the children of God, John 1:12, 13. The term resurrection, or quickening, indicates that before, man was spiritually dead, but is now raised unto a new spiritual life, Eph. 2:1-6. The word μετάνοια expresses more directly what actually takes place in the mind of man.

Results of this metanoia.—This change of mind has immediate and far-reaching results, affecting the present and the future life of man. The change consists in this, that the fear of threatened punishment gives way to faith in the forgiveness of sins, procured by the redemption of Christ and freely offered by God in the Gospel. The moment faith, even though it yet be a feeble longing, reaches out for, and lays hold of, this forgiveness, man has complete forgiveness, and stands justified before his God, Rom. 3:28. Being cleansed by the blood of Christ and covered with the garment of His righteousness, the sinner is now a saint in the eyes of God. Thus the change in the attitude of man's heart results immediately in changed relation between God and man.

In the second place, there is love and sanctification of life. Any change of mind results also in a change of life. This holds also with respect to the μετάνοια we have been discussing. Before there was in the heart of man love for sin and hatred of God, which was reflected in his ungodly life. Having experienced a change of heart, he now hates sin, which brought misery upon him, and loves God, who forgives sin. Also this change is reflected in his life, for "faith worketh by love," Gal. 5:6. Speaking of repentance as consisting of contrition and faith, the Aug. Conf., Art. XII, continues: "Then good works are bound to follow, which are the fruits of repentance."

In the third place, there is hope and glorification. Natural man has no valid hope for the future, Eph. 2:12; there remaineth for him only a certain fearful looking for of judgment, which fills his heart with despair. But no sooner has he experienced μετάνοια than there blossoms up in his soul a glorious hope, which sustains

him under the hardship of his earthly pilgrimage, and will be fully consummated in his glorification in heaven, 1 Pet. 1:3-9.

Practical suggestions. — A right understanding of this spiritual μετάνοια: what it is, by what means it is brought about, what are the mental processes involved, and what are its fruits, must be of practical importance to all who are called to preach this μετάνοια, Luke 24:47. We would call attention to but a few points.

1) As repentance consists of two parts, sorrow over sin and faith in Christ, and as these are wrought in the hearts of men through the Law and the Gospel, we must be careful to use none other than these means. It is utterly futile and foolish to substitute other measures and methods, and they who do, simply do not understand their business. Discussions on social, scientific, or political questions, the fireworks of grandiloquence and human wisdom, the display of ceremonial and ritual pomp, or whatever else bankrupt preachers may invent to draw crowds and please their hearers, will never produce a true μετάνοια toward God. Whether we preach to the inmates of asylums and penitentiaries, or to the elite of fashionable society, whether ours is a rural or an urban congregation, whether our hearers are rich or poor, unlearned or college-bred, there simply is no other means to bring about this godly change of mind in them than the Law and the Gospel. Both must be preached in the humble mission chapel and in the proud university cathedral.

2) But they must be preached in their proper order. We must rightly "divide the Word of Truth," 2 Tim. 2:15. A confusion and commingling of the Law and the Gospel will frustrate their purpose. No μετάνοια will result if we proclaim free forgiveness to those who willfully continue in their sins, and the curse of the Law to those who are of a broken and contrite spirit. In the first case there will be no sorrow and contrition of heart, in the second there will be no faith. Each must be taught in its place and for its specific purpose: the Law, that men might know their sins and realize their lost condition; the Gospel, that the penitent may learn to know of, and trust in, the grace of God in Christ Jesus.

3) Knowing that the Word of God can produce a change of mind in our hearers only when it gets into their mind, our aim must be to impart a clear understanding of the Bible truths. To this end we ourselves must be clear in our minds as to what we are going to teach and preach, and we must clearly express what we wish to impart. A rambling talk is of little value. Let us not assume that the intelligence of our hearers will put order and clarity into our confused presentation; on the contrary, it frequently happens that in spite of our clear exposition they misunderstand what we say and confuse themselves by injecting ir-

relevant matters into the picture. Clear and definite ideas have a greater force and a more directive power than a conglomeration of confused knowledge. Both the Law and the Gospel must be taught clearly if they are to be taught effectively.

4) However, our objective in teaching the Law and the Gospel is not merely to impart an intellectual knowledge of divine truths, but rather to effect through such knowledge a μετάνοια, a change of mind. Therefore we should not teach the Word of God in a cold and academic manner, without any intent of producing practical results, but we should explain the demands and the curse of the Law for the express purpose of bringing our hearers to a live knowledge of their sins and a deep realization of their lost condition. And we should proclaim the Gospel of grace, not for the intellectual entertainment of our congregations, but for the express purpose that troubled hearts may be comforted and drawn to God in faith and love. For our teaching is not an end in itself, and the knowledge of Bible truth is not an end in itself, but a means to an end, and this end is μετάνοια. Therefore we should not merely inform our people, but try to convince them, impress them, move them. While we instruct the mind, we must aim to touch the heart. When the Jews compared the teaching of the Scribes with that of Christ, they were astonished, not only at His doctrine, but also at the manner of His teaching, "for His word was with power," Luke 4:32, and He "taught as one having authority," Matt. 7:29. There was evident in His manner of teaching that deep sincerity and that interest in the eternal well-being of His hearers which also made a deep impression on their hearts. We know full well that we cannot add to the power of God's Word; yet there is an intangible something in the manner of our speaking that can hinder or support the efficacy of the Word. Let us, then, teach the truth of God's Word clearly and in all its purity; but let us also teach it as the truth, 1 Pet. 4:11; let us do this not as an *opus operatum*, but with the intent of turning the hearts of our hearers from love of sin to sorrow over sin, and from sorrow and contrition to faith in Christ, the Savior, that thus they might experience a true μετάνοια toward God.

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