

Concordia Theological Monthly

Volume 20

Article 12

2-1-1949

Miscellanea

John Theodore Mueller
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm>



Part of the [Practical Theology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Mueller, John Theodore (1949) "Miscellanea," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 20, Article 12.
Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol20/iss1/12>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Print Publications at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Concordia Theological Monthly by an authorized editor of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

Miscellanea

Symbolistic Theology?

By GEORG MERZ

Dr. G. Merz, Rector of the Augustana Kollegium at Neuendettelsau and one of the co-essayists at the Bad Boll meeting, presents his analysis and evaluation of Bad Boll under the above title in the *Evangelisch-lutherische Kirchenzeitung* (Sept. 30, 1948), published by *Rat der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche Deutschlands*, Ernst Kinder, Editor. This is the third article on the Bad Boll meetings published in this religious periodical. The heading "Symbolistische Theologie?" suggests to the reader to examine the charge preferred against the Missouri Synod since 1875 that its theology is repristination theology, a theology which is bound to the phraseology of the sixteenth-and-seventeenth-century theologians and completely removed from the theological problems of the present. No doubt, quite a few came to Bad Boll with the suspicion that they would meet theologians who were guilty of symbolatry and repristination. The footnotes are the translator's.—F. E. M.

"No, you had better not go to Bad Boll; the Missourians will only take you to task and call you to order." I for one did not heed this categorical command of a leading theologian. If I had experienced no more in Bad Boll than that my decision was correct, that would have made Bad Boll worth while for me. The mere fact that theologians can meet on a fraternal basis is for us Germans a great gift. But the fact that the "intransigent and exclusivistic" Missourians would invite us university professors as well as mission directors, the executives of the diaspora work as well as leading men of the ecumenical movement—this is an event of extraordinary significance. With unusual breadth Missouri invited for theological discussions all who accept the Augsburg Confession as normative for doctrine and practice; the bishop of the Union Church of Baden no less than the leading theologians of the Free Church, the faculty at Heidelberg as well as at Oberursel. Thus probably for the first time German Lutheranism in its variegated form met at one place and was "called to order" and asked to examine itself in the light of its Confession, not, however, by a Church assuming a spirit of superiority, but actually by the Confession of the Church.

This gave us the opportunity to gain an overview of the doctrines held in common by all, the joint antitheses, the common desires and ideals. The senior of the American delegation, Dr. Th. Graebner, whose capacity to size up a situation, stamina, and breadth of knowledge marked him as a master of repartee, expressed his surprise in the second *Tagung* how frequently Loehe's name was mentioned. Similarly the other Americans expressed their surprise when unexpectedly this or another point in doctrine was presented. They were fairly well acquainted with German theology before 1920 and therefore thought that modern German theology, because of the attitude which it took toward the historico-critical questions in the field of Biblical research, was still divided

into a positive and a liberal camp.¹ They now saw that this characterization was no longer applicable. Nevertheless they could sense that a true unity among German theologians had not been achieved.

The lack of real unity became quite apparent also to the German participants, especially to such as had experienced a unity in essentials during the *Kirchenkampf*. No doubt all speakers accepted the authority of the Bible and wished to view their theological labors as being conducted in the framework of the Church, and the majority no doubt also thought and spoke more or less "dialectically." But according to appearance they were not united. If I have observed correctly, then the differences among the German Lutherans came to the surface at the mention of three names: Barth, Barmen, Berneuchen. These three names received particular significance because they epitomize those theological, spiritual, and ecclesiastical decisions in which also the Missourians are vitally interested. But the Missourians approved the decisions of the Barthians, Barmensians, and Berneucheners in such a way that they at the same time registered a protest. It was stimulating not only to observe this peculiar "dialectics," but also to consider the benefits which a search for the reasons of such a unique "yes and no" may have for our own theology.²

"Berneuchen" was the least familiar to the Americans, and for that reason they could not fully appreciate how deeply the generation of pastors between thirty and forty years had been touched by the liturgical renewal nor how in some sections of Northern Germany this question is really *the* question. And we Germans were surprised to see how passionately the various parties clashed. The men from this group made positive contributions when we discussed the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. True, at first the definitions of the term "*Repraesentation*"³ reminded some of us too much of Trent. However, the calm and clear interpretation of Article X given by Dr. Peter Brunner finally led to a unified viewpoint. Without a doubt this was made possible inasmuch as we did not discuss theories, but kept the actuality of life before us, as will be the case when the congregation celebrates the Lord's Supper. One of the most significant results of this discussion was the emphasis on the Real Presence, which was so definitely presented

¹ This is an overstatement. Though the American theologians had not gained a full insight into the theological changes of the past fifteen years, they were aware that the yardstick of 1900—1920 was no longer applicable.

² Dr. Merz has reference to the approval which the Missourians gave to these three movements for the good which they accomplished, and also to the disapproval where these three movements deviated from Scriptures. This tension between yes and no he describes as the "peculiar dialectic of Missouri."

³ The physical rather than the sacramental presence of Christ seemingly was in the mind of some delegates.

both in the lectures and in the subsequent discussion. Nevertheless there is food for thought in the fact that the question of altar fellowship or church discipline in relation to the Lord's Supper was not uniformly answered. This divergence of opinion lies in the fact that in spite of a certain unity in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, no unity was achieved in the answer to the question "What is today, and in history, the Church?" At this point Missouri took a definite position against Berneuchen, in fact, against all episcopal-hierarchical ideals. On the other hand, the Missourians strenuously rejected the implication that their doctrine of the sovereignty of the local congregation was closely related to Karl Barth's doctrine of the independency of the individual congregation.⁴ The Missourians repeatedly showed that they have no delight in Barthianism. They see in his doctrine of the *hic et nunc*, of that actuality which sees the Church only as an "event," but not as a historical reality, in this they see the philosophical and Reformed unscriptural thinking which robs the congregation of the assurance that the Word and the Sacraments belong to her, and of the certainty that Christ is present at all times and not only now and then (*je und je*). But do the Missourians not undermine the doctrine of the sovereignty of the local congregation when they reject, as a pseudo-sacrament, the Sacrament of a congregation in a denomination saturated by error? when they declare a baptism in such a congregation null and void, even though it is liturgically correctly performed?⁵ This charge against Missouri was advanced especially from those circles whose views on the ministry and the liturgy lean toward the Anglican episcopal system. In quick repartee the Missourians asked whether such charges will not lead into the realm of magic formula, and unhesitatingly declared their agreement with those decisions of Barmen which deny to such churches the right of an evangelical Church as maintain the Confession juridically and liturgically, while in the practical application of the doctrine and in the hour of the actual confession they renounce their Confession. In one stroke, therefore, the undialectical Missourians became even more "dialectical" than dialectical theology.

This unusual joggling (*Verschraenkung*, combining two opposites) did not surprise the church historian who has followed the theological controversies in the Lutheran Church during the nine-

⁴ Barth has advocated an extreme type of congregationalism. In opposing the *Volkskirchentum*, which recognizes as members such as give no evidence that an "encounter" and an "event" has taken place, Barth would do away with all forms which foster that sort of church life.

⁵ The American theologians stressed: 1) The sovereignty of the congregation implies that the Sacraments belong to, and are administered by, the congregation, not by the denomination (so in U.S.A.) or the *Landeskirche* (so in Europe); 2) The validity of the words of institution (which constitutes the essence of the Sacrament) depends on the *usus loquendi*. Cp. *Trigl.*, 983, 32.33; also p.19. Congregational membership in a denomination determines the *usus loquendi*.

teenth century. He is reminded that when Walther insisted on presenting the genuine Lutheran doctrine, his opponents pointed to one or the other "Calvinistic" trend in his doctrines of the congregation and of predestination. But such historical reflections are no solution. One finds the real solution of Missouri's theology when they describe their church life. For that reason their discourses, particularly those which were not essentially of a theological nature, were as important as the theological discussions in the narrow sense. Here the peculiar methodological distinction between the American theology and our theology with its historical tradition came to the surface.

Missouri's theology—to use a word which they themselves are loath to use because of its modern connotation—has an "existential" foundation. The existence of their congregations was in the center of their thinking, and they thought, taught, polemicalized, anathematized, and canonized accordingly. There is an intimate relation between their theology and their own church history, the history of their congregations in "Missouri, Ohio, and Other States." In Germany, however, the development of theology is closely related to the history of thought in general. In Germany the academic discussions determined to a large degree the theological thinking; in America the necessity of gathering congregations and of giving them a solid foundation was of paramount significance. This explains that the Americans learned at Bad Boll the real meaning of "Barmen." They sensed that the arrogance of Ludwig Mueller and his counselors and patrons reminded one of Martin Stephan's *Fuehrerprinzip*. The founders of the Missouri Synod were compelled to gather and organize, teach and systematize their theology amid the ruins caused by a mingling of saving doctrine and *Fuehrer* ideology. With this background one can understand why F. E. Mayer would insert the doctrine of verbal inspiration in his discourse on the doctrine of the means of grace (CA V). If one asks what the Word is which God has given us to engender the saving faith [described in CA IV], one is compelled to ask the further question whether the testimony of this Word is inviolable and sure, so that we must speak of Scripture at the same time when we speak of Word and Sacrament. The same holds true of every theological doctrine which is of particular importance to the Missourians. Their theology is *Gemeinde-theologie* and not *akademische Theologie*. And must we not ask ourselves whether theology can ever be anything else than congregational theology? For that reason it was certainly not without significance that the theologians who today at Tuebingen and Heidelberg occupy the theological chairs which at one time Ernst Troeltsch and his school occupied were compelled to confront such "unacademic" theologians [the Missourians] in the same way in which they must meet [the philosophers] Jaspers or Spranger. Of course, one can say that Missouri's theology is the theology of the seventeenth century, a symbolistic theology, as Karl Heussi and Horst Stephan used to tell their students when they described

the American theology. It is, of course, of secondary importance that the prognosis of our historians has proved a failure. In all the Lutheran churches of America the theology is closer to the confessional writings than fifty or one hundred years ago, and in this connection it would be interesting to trace the theological development of a theological faculty such as the one at Gettysburg. Today no theology dare resent the charge that it is more "symbolistic" than "modern." The important thing is to investigate what the Church is willing to learn from its symbols. I for one felt constrained at Bad Boll to show very definitely that I did not consider the condemnation (*Infernalisierung*), which made of Karl Barth a bogeyman (*Popanz*), as being neither original nor courageous, as little as the apotheosis to a mythological hero. In the well-known antithesis between Loehe and Walther I had to accept Loehe's position concerning Scripture and the Confessions. And just because of this I was compelled to emphasize the factors which impressed me as being significant concerning Missouri's view of the symbolical writings.

If I heard correctly at Bad Boll, and if I fully understood, then the significance of the "Missouri theology" consists in this, that this theology has conscientiously comprehended the great antitheses which gave rise to our Confessions and has developed them in beautiful harmony with its ecclesiastical action and theological doctrine. The anti-Roman contrast constituted no more than an overtone in our theological discussions. We did not debate whether the Antichrist has appeared in the Papacy and whether our attacks against Rome must center about this point. But in the discussion of the doctrine of the means of grace it was pointed out that this doctrine is of significance today because of the propaganda of the Papacy. The antitheses to all forms of enthusiasm were presented in an impressive way as we have never experienced it before. In America the anti-enthusiastic expressions of the symbols became significant in the antithesis to Freemasonry and a secularized pietism.⁶ Tendencies which in Europe are viewed merely as concomitant trends of the general intellectual development are viewed entirely differently on American soil, where the historical premises which have shaped the Occidental culture from Charlemagne to the English Reformation are lacking. Trends and tendencies which in the perspective of our antecedent culture we consider transitory ("*aufloesende Tendenzen*") were viewed by the Americans as claiming to be foundational and not as being subject to dissolution, because there was no antecedent trend to "be dissolved." This explains in part the irreconcilable attitude of the Missourians toward the lodges; its almost inquisitorial search for enthusiasm in those movements which because of their religious and moral influence are frequently highly evaluated by the general public. Undisturbed by changes and innovations, by the *Ersatz*

⁶ The reference is no doubt to the blue laws, the social gospel, Pentecostalism.

religion of modern man, who gladly follows certain cultural forms as long as he is not disturbed in his thinking (or non-thinking), the Missouri Synod charted a straight course and refused to relinquish its instruction in the Catechism and Bible History and integrated this instruction with a virile congregational life and discipline. Our intellectual-historical clashes with Pietism, Rationalism, and Idealism has its counterpart in America in the decisive position toward the lodges and all religious movements which ignore clear doctrine and appeal only to the emotions. This became quite evident in the reports concerning congregational activities, which showed that alongside the "militant" church discipline and a determined polemic there is also a wonderful mission activity and a great educational program. To see the merging of these two sides of Missouri was of interest not only from the historical viewpoint, but also because it sets forth so clearly that this theology is much closer to ours than we thought at first. It was a real joy to experience in our spiritual, intellectual, and social contacts with the "Maenner von drueben" that the Missourians have not solved all the problems as easily as one might gain from some of the literary statements.

To be sure, we have experienced "Missouri at Bad Boll." Whether Missouri is the same in the States as it appeared to us must be determined by him who makes contacts with Missouri in the States. Many of us have indeed gained important lessons. In response to the gracious invitation to participate in a "*bruederliche Begegnung*," each one of us took with him not only the uplifting [*wohltuend*] effects of a truly fraternal humanitarianism, but also some specific sentences, such as the sentence of Dr. Graebner: "A Church which ceases to be concerned about doctrinal theology must deteriorate." This high respect for theology, the spiritual food to supplement the theological discussions provided by our fatherly friend Praeses Behnken, and the visual education in reports and films concerning the church activities, whatever their ultimate effect, were a fruitful contribution in the meeting of German and American theologians.

Will the Jubilee Year 1950 Open the Era of a New Civil and Religious Calendar?

This is the question which the Rev. Father C. M. Morin, O. F. M., professor of church history at the University of Montreal's Institute of History, discusses in the latest publication of the World Calendar Association, Inc. (*Journal of Calendar Reform*, First Quarter, 1948). Professor Morin traces the whole history of the calendar reform movement from 1834, when an Italian Catholic priest, Marco Mastrofina, published with three *nihil obstat*s and two *imprimatur*s his famous *Amplissimi frutti da raccogliersi ancora sul calendario gregoriano perpetuo* ("Ample Fruits to be Gathered on the Perpetual Gregorian Calendar"), to the present day, when the advocates of

the calendar reform movement hope that by 1950 the new calendar will be universally adopted. The World Calendar Association is now spread over the five continents through affiliated or associated committees established in over 30 countries. At its last international meeting on Jan. 15, 1948, fourteen nations were represented either in person or by proxy. It resolved that all representatives "stimulate their respective governments so that the date of actual operation be made possible on Sunday, January 1, 1950." The movement has as many supporters among the Roman Catholic clergy as among Protestants.

The new world calendar certainly deserves the support of all who recognize the business hardships, economic difficulties, social inconveniences, and the general expense and waste that the present Gregorian calendar imposes upon men the world over. Its simplicity and clarity are almost phenomenal. Four months, January, April, July, and October have thirty-one days. All the other months have thirty days. The months having thirty-one days begin on Sunday. February, May, August, and November begin on Wednesday. March, June, September, and December begin on Friday. This sounds more difficult than it really is. If taken by quarters, the months begin thus: January begins on Sunday, February on Wednesday, March on Friday. Again, April begins on Sunday, May on Wednesday, and June on Friday. So also July begins on Sunday, August on Wednesday, and September on Friday. Lastly October begins on Sunday, November on Wednesday, and December on Friday. The month opening a quarter always has thirty-one days; the other two, thirty. There is no exception to the rule.

February, according to the world calendar, has thirty days. But when a leap year occurs, there is a "leap-year world holiday" (the 366th day), which is outside the week and will be observed as a special day of rest.

December has thirty days, but the 365th day of the year is observed as the "year-end world holiday," which also is outside the week and is observed as a special day of rest. The sheer simplicity of the calendar is astounding.

The Feast of Circumcision (New Year) will always fall on Sunday, Jan. 1. Ash Wednesday will always fall on Wednesday, Feb. 22; Palm Sunday on Sunday, April 1; and Good Friday, on Friday, April 6. Easter will always be celebrated on Sunday, April 8; Pentecost, on Sunday, May 26; Trinity Sunday, on Sunday, June 3; the first Sunday in Advent, on Sunday, Nov. 26; Christmas Eve, on Sunday, Dec. 24, and Christmas Day on Monday, Dec. 25.

The year-end world holiday is "to stand apart as a special holy day or holiday of friendship and good will, uniting all nations." May the hopes of the World Calendar Association be realized. As yet, Lutheran support of the venture seems to be very weak, and yet Lutheranism has as much to gain by it as have other religious groups.

J. T. M.

One Hundred Twelve Million Displaced Persons

Christ und Welt (Stuttgart, July 24, 1948) carried the following article: "Twelve million Germans, twelve and a half million people in India, eighty million Chinese, seven million Japanese, 500,000 Greeks! the total, 112 million. This signifies that there are 112 million refugees in the world of today. We are here merely stating the most important statistical figures. There are many minor ones, and the figures are not always accurate. But smaller figures have for a long time no longer aroused special interest.

"Formerly you could find sympathy in the world, for instance, when an earthquake killed five thousand people or robbed them of their homes; today five thousand killed or homeless cause sleepless nights only for those in the immediate proximity. Even the 500,000 Greeks who through the civil war lost their homes are a fact which only with difficulty arouses a speaker in one of the U. N. sessions to make comments. To make an impression you have to point to millions. But even then, among those in the world that carry the burden of responsibility, there are many in whose hand whole peoples and races are nothing but clay which the potter without any consideration molds according to his own peculiar interests or his ideological views of the future. For the fight, the death, and the displacement of millions they have nothing but a smile of superiority or a cold shrug of the shoulders, and the others who still possess a conscience, feeling, or scruples frequently capitulate before the pressure and the unwritten laws of power and interest politics of their own countries and parties. But you cannot get rid of things in this fashion: the phenomenon of the displaced persons is not explained by the one word Hitler; for that it is too deep and world-embracing. It may be that twelve or fifteen million can directly be assigned to the account of Hitler, indirectly certainly several more millions. But 112 millions?

"For refugees it signifies terribly little to know the number 112 million. The mere knowledge of like troubles for others contains little consolation if one has to live in rooms, bunkers, or camps in Germany granted more or less unwillingly by strangers, in huts along the streets of India, in caves along the Yangtze, or under the open sky on the fringe of Japanese cities. Such knowledge amounts to less than a piece of bread or a handful of rice. But by and large there is no possibility to stir up all those who are responsible for world politics and who still possess something like a conscience except through the constant repetition of the frightful superhigh figures of such refugees in the whole world. It has to be done through the gigantic numbers of those suffering misery who today cannot be disregarded and whose fate cannot be wiped out by speeches. It has to be done through facts which simply have to direct the eye to the dark forces which are lined up behind the most cruel and bloody decade of history, as it began in 1939 and begat wars and civil strife, in or after which the great

expulsions of peoples, races, and religious communities ensued or still are in progress. We are here dealing with the forces of nationalistic, racial, religious, and ideological presumptuousness and political intolerance which never before in like manner as now revealed the fateful power contained in them — naked, cruel, and brutal. It has come to be a law of the twentieth century to expel, as a consequence of military or political decisions, whole nations and parts of nations from their generally long-inhabited ancestral home. This law of total contempt of humanity, unique in the entire history of the world in its cruelty and utter coldness, which in frightening consequence begets new trouble, is the heaviest stone on the grave of true human feeling." [The heart-rending words of the above article should receive our most careful and prayerful consideration. The world view expressed in them overlooks the fact that what is happening in the world is the punishment of the great sovereign God who shows mankind in this effective way what materialism, the flouting of the divine Word, and the haughty presumptuousness of man have to lead to. A.]

Karl Barth and the Christian Concept of Revelation

The concept of revelation plays a prominent part in Barth's theological system. It was his opposition to the empirical method and the divine immanence theory of modern theology which first projected him into prominence. His emphasis on the "wholly-otherness" of God was diametrically opposed to the "frommes Gottesbewusstsein" theory, which had played such havoc in Christian theology. Barth has been hailed as a follower of Luther in his view concerning the necessity of divine revelation, and there is no doubt that Barth has led many back to Luther. In the course of his theological development it has, however, become increasingly evident that his concept of revelation differs on many essential points from Lutheran theology. This is quite clear from his recent "lecture" *Das christliche Verstaendnis der Offenbarung*.^{*} This monograph is typically Barthian, dialectical, problematical. There is much in it which is arresting and, viewed outside of its context, Scriptural. But the over-all picture is in line with the central thoughts of his theology. In presenting a synopsis of Barth's essay we are conscious of the semantic and the philosophical problem confronting the reader and translator of Barth's writings. His thought-patterns and his terminology are foreign to the American Lutheran theologian.

Barth first defines revelation as a *phanerosis* or *apokalypsis*, the unveiling of the veiled, and points out that there are many revelations which differ essentially from the Christian concept of revelation. He lists ten characteristics of such revelations, each of which suggests a dialectical question and answer: 1) Life-

* *Theologische Existenz Heute*, No. 12, Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1948, 34 pages.

enriching, but not essential; is there an indispensable revelation? 2) interesting, challenging, but also dangerous, e. g., atomic energy; is there a purely salutary revelation? 3) relative vs. absolute; 4) esoteric vs. universal; 5) contingent vs. unconditioned; 6) demonstrable by human deductions; is there a revelation entirely outside of man? 7) subject to man's use, *kapitalisierbare Offenbarungen* vs. free, outside of man's reach; 8) progressive vs. original and final; 9) speculative vs. practical; 10) immanent in man vs. transcendent. Barth's "dialectical" propositions have one serious defect. He is not contrasting two revelations at all. His one set of revelations is nothing more than inductive knowledge.

In line with his ten propositions he proceeds to summarize his views of the *Christian* concept of revelation in three series of ten propositions. Christian revelation must be such as is: 1) Not only relatively important, but absolutely essential for man, without which man would not be man; 2) a salutary event (*ein den Menschen bejahendes Ereignis*), even in the revelation of judgment; 3) absolute, never relative, always new, whether given to the man of a thousand or two thousand years ago, entirely new to me today and again tomorrow; 4) never individual and particular, for it is equally foreign to all men and equally relevant for all men; 5) the unveiling of something which is essentially hidden to man; 6) deals with the uncovering of something completely outside of man; 7) independent of, free from, and superior to man (*nicht kapitalisierbar*); 8) always complete, whether the revelation occurs in the events of the past, the present, or the future, since it fills the past, the present, and the future; 9) demands man's reaction and decision, not his speculation; 10) in short, the transcendent self-revelation of Him who in relation to the existing (man and the cosmos) is the Non-existing.

From this concept of Christian revelation Barth gives the following ten definitions of God in the Christian sense. 1. God is He who for man is the essential necessary One, who determines the being, the essence, or the non-essence of man. 2. The One who addresses man with the final word of earnestness and love, a Savior. 3. He who for man was, is, and always will be new, that is, the Absolute. 4. He who is above and for all. 5. He who meets man as the necessary and essentially hidden reality. 6. He who, though He is distant from man, is able to approach him and as the Unknown become intimately known. 7. He who in approaching man is and remains absolutely free. 8. He who was, is, and will be. 9. The Lord and Master of man, who makes His claim upon man. 10. The Creator and, as such, He who acts upon man and without whom nothing would be, including man.

Barth raises such questions as: Is there an epistemological approach to the problem of the difference between the event and the subject of revelation? Is there a world-view in which God, as described in the ten propositions, can be included? Is He the subject of revelation? and if so, is our speaking of Him the speaking of a nonsense or a *non-ens*? Barth wishes to show the utter hope-

lessness of human philosophers from Thales to Heidegger to develop a world-view which can include a correct concept of God, the "unknowable." But Barth has "chosen the hard way," the dialectical, the philosophical way, instead of the Scriptural way.

He continues to point out that the Christian concept of revelation centers in one "fact" — Jesus Christ. The Church speaks of God only on the basis of this fact, and Christian revelation is concerned only with the message of His existence, with a "small cluster" of reports concerning this person. God's being is revealed in the message of Christ's life, death, and resurrection. This prompts Barth to submit ten further theses: 1. On the basis of Acts 17:30f. we have the original and final revelation in the judgment of Christ, for He who judges in Christ is God. 2. According to 1 John 2:1f. God affirms that in the sacrifice of Christ there is a final and absolute revelation for man's salvation; but it is God who acts in this revelation. 3. John 8:12 and 1:5 teach that Christ is the absolutely new One, giving us an absolute revelation, but again He who is reflected in Christ is God. 4. In Rom. 3:22f. we find the message that in Christ we have redemption, a universal revelation for all, but again in this revelation the agent is God. 5. According to John 1:18 revelation is exclusive, that is, that which is hidden to all is made known by One, and again He who reveals Himself in this One is God. 6. The One calls the others, John 15:16, and this is a "given" and free revelation, for God is the free agent to choose whom He will. 7. According to John 15:5 Jesus exercises complete sovereignty over His own, and this is revelation, a free and unhampered revelation, the source and essence of this sovereignty. 8. Heb. 13:8 teaches that in Jesus there is revelation as a past, present, and future event, filling all three moments, and therefore not an approximative, but a complete and final revelation; and again, the Lord of time is the eternal God. 9. From Eph. 2:10 we learn that in Christ there must of necessity be a change in us, and therein we find a practical revelation, and again in this fact we have a revelation of God, for He who so directs the life of man is God. 10. According to John 1:1, in Christ the creative and sovereign Word is spoken and heard and that constitutes a transcendent revelation of the cause of all being, that is, God. It follows that the Christian concept of revelation and of God coincide in our view of Christ and in Him both, revelation and Christ, have relevant significance. His revelation is His action and speaking and not a blind fate nor an inarticulate sound.

It appears to us that we have here the crux of Barth's view concerning the Word of God. Is the Word of God an event? Does he still — as he did formerly — distinguish between the Word of God spoken in eternity and that spoken in Jesus and that spoken in the Church today? How relevant is the Christological problem for Barth? Yes, what is the Word of God? Barth answers some of these questions.

When, says Barth, the ecclesiastical terminology calls God's revelation the Word of God, it has in mind Christ Jesus. There

is a distinction between a sound and a word, the latter denoting a sound with the definite purpose to persuade the hearer to make common cause with us. The simple word "behold" is an invitation to the addressee to see what I have seen. God's revelation, therefore, must be called the Word of God, because God wants us to make a decision, He wants our obedience as a correlative of His Word. Revelation, therefore, is the Word of God spoken to man in divine majesty to make common cause with Him to whom man belongs. No man can remain neutral toward this sovereign Word (*man kann nicht Ja und Nein und also "Jain" sagen*), for there is only one possibility, the possibility of obedience. True liberty does not consist in this, that man can ignore the Word, for in ignoring it he chooses the impossible possibility, the *nihil*. We shall pass by for the moment an analysis of the content of this revelation (God's sovereignty) and man's relation to it (obedience; Calvin: *Omnis recta cognitio ab obedientia nascitur*). We call attention to Barth's emphasis that the Word of God is always an activity of God, and in this he is correct.

The immediate question, however, is, where Barth finds the revelation of God. He answers that God's revelation can be had only in words, in a literal (*buchstaeblich*), written report of God's act of revelation. The message that God revealed Himself in Christ is found in Holy Scripture, in a book, the book of the Old and New Testament. God and His existence is written in this book, and all our thoughts concerning this matter must be predicated on the premise: It is written. Thus Barth apparently brings the concept of revelation and of the Bible into intimate relation. But he also immediately limits this definition by two qualifications.

1. The fact that God's revelation is contained in this book does not mean that the texts of this book as such are revelation. That would be the Roman Catholic view, which equates revelation and Scripture, or the view of high orthodoxy of the second half of the seventeenth century with its verbal inspiration theory, according to which we deal not with the Word, but with words. The equation of Scripture and revelation is untenable, because on the one hand Biblical authors know nothing of it and, secondly, it is contrary to the conclusions arrived at in the first part of this treatise.

2. We dare not say that the Bible only contains revelation, as though some books contain it and others do not. This would be in line with the principles of religious empiricists and modern Protestantism, which arrogates the prerogative to determine in which sections we shall find God's revelatory activity.

The Biblical texts are the human and determinative documents concerning the fact, the history, and the person of Christ. The center of the Scriptures is the simple fact: Jesus Christ was made flesh. The time before Christ has meaning only as it is the history of God's faithfulness to His covenant people in spite of Israel's constant unfaithfulness, and the New Testament has purpose only as it presents the goal of Israel's history and lays the founda-

tion for the New Covenant people of God. According to Barth, only the Life of Christ is in the true sense revelation, and only in so far as the Bible leads up to the incarnation of Christ and continues this revelation is the Bible in a singular way a testimony of this revelation. He says that the Bible is a *normative* document, the *holy* Scriptures, because the Biblical authors are the only known *direct* witnesses of revelation in the Christian concept (as described by him in the ten propositions). There are also *indirect* witnesses of God's revelation, but only the sacred writers are heralds of this revelation. The Biblical writings are *kerygmatic* writings of the new, the absolute, and the singular event of which the Old Testament is the goal and the New Testament the beginning. The Church accepted as canonical all such writings as contained a witness to God's revelation. In these writings the Church found its canon, its rule, its rule of life. Though this Book testifies of God's revelation, it does not offer a direct way to revelation, for many linguistic, philological, and historical problems confront us. This Book leads us only *mediately*, not immediately to God's revelation. The words of the Prophets and Apostles are *kerygmatic*, and therefore *the Word* can meet us there to be heard by us. In this sense alone the Bible is the source and norm of truth for the Church, which is a Church only if it in turn is nothing but a *kerygma*. (It is not clear whether Barth uses *kerygma* as a verbal noun, the act of proclaiming, or as denoting the content, the message.)

Since the Scriptures are a collection of human documents, they are, as Barth continues, subject to human relativity and limitations. The Bible is a part of the literature of the Semitic and Hellenistic world, and the authors moved within the limitations of the language, the science, and the history of their day. It is furthermore evident that in the Bible we do not have a consistent development of a world view nor a unified theology; and, finally, there is not one verse in the Bible of which we can say with absolute certainty that it was in the original text or that we have it in its original form. Furthermore, viewing the human weakness of the various authors of the Bible, how can we assume that they spoke authoritatively? Here we are confronted by a dilemma. Either we must ascribe to the Bible inerrancy, view the Bible as a divine document, each of its many words spoken by God, and thus eliminate all problematics and relativity. This would destroy its revelatory character, for it is essential to revelation that it confronts us in this relativity and problematics. (Sic!) On the other hand, if the Bible is only a collection of human documents, how can they be authoritative? Thus the real problem is: When are men equipped to speak authoritatively and, assuming that they do speak thus, how do we become sure of their authority? Barth answers that the writers, creatures of their day with its relativity, *experienced* the revelation, and *their writings are the response to God's revelation*. This is the decisive factor that their response was not *was aus ihnen*, but *was zu ihnen kam*. Thus holy men spake moved by the Holy

Ghost, that is, the Reality which came to them authorized them to make a *response* to this Reality. We likewise obtain the liberty and ability to hear a revelation in their texts. Unexpectedly and as a complete surprise the door to this revelation opened itself. We hear, when and because the Holy Spirit uses these texts as His witnesses to speak to us, and thus the Holy Scriptures are the source of revelation, as God's self-revelation, that is, as a revelation in Christ Jesus, the Word spoken to us in the testimony of the Scriptures.

He concludes his monograph by drawing lessons for the Church and the individual. Some of the points are good, for example, his appeal to study and to restudy the Bible; his warning against a dead orthodoxy. He also deflates the ego-centric philosophy of modern man who has spurned the need of a revelation, since he believed himself to be a "little god." Revelation means the unveiling of the Veiled One, and thus places a definite limitation on man. But revelation also makes life meaningful and hopeful.

In spite of many challenging and thought-provoking statements Barth's theology is at variance with Lutheran theology. This is quite apparent in his "Christian concept" of revelation. We submit a fourfold critique. 1. Barth's *principium cognoscendi* is not the revelation given in Holy Scriptures, rather it is his dialectical philosophy. In our opinion those critics are correct who say that Barth's theory of super-history is related to Platonic and Kantian Idealism. If we understand him correctly, he teaches that only at the moment when the super-historical fact of the Incarnation impinges on time, the real revelation occurs. We feel justified in saying that Karl Barth would say that the eternal "idea" of the incarnation becomes a "phenomenon" in the historical incarnation of Christ and that at that moment the act of God's revelation takes place. And again when the timeless revelation impinges on my time (in 1948), the incarnation and the reconciliation become a reality for me. To this philosophy of idealism Barth adds the principle of dialectics, a theology of tensions. Since there is a "no," there must be a "yes"; since God is veiled, there must be an unveiling, a revelation; since there are human "revelations" with at least ten finite characteristics, there must be a divine revelation which has diametrically opposite characteristics. We must be grateful to Barth that he made such telling blows against modern theology which had erased the qualitative difference between God and man. Nevertheless his dialectical approach is in many points still the old subjectivism.

2. In the Calvinistic tradition Barth separates spirit and flesh. It is a well-known fact that Calvin moved in Neoplatonic thought patterns. This became quite evident in his denial of the Real Presence, even more so in his whole concept of man. While Calvin nowhere went as far as the monks, who taught that the flesh is the seat of sin, Calvin distinguishes very sharply between the flesh and the spirit and inclines toward a dualistic view of man, whereas Luther always treated the entire person, consisting of body and

soul. For Calvin the means of grace are primarily for the spirit, and hence the determined separation between the Holy Spirit and the tangible and visible means of grace. Barth follows this line of thought and would state that the Spirit must be *added* to the Word. He sharply distinguishes between the word and the Word, going even so far as to denying the necessity of Infant Baptism. In Lutheran theology the Holy Spirit is *always* in the Word, and God has bound Himself to the means of grace. There are few places where Luther speaks more emphatically on this than in the Smalcald Articles, Of Confession, and in this day, when Reformed and dialectical theology are making such an impact on the Protestant world, it is well for Lutheran pastors to reread and restudy Luther's classical words against all forms of enthusiasm, *Trigl.*, p. 493. Barth cannot subscribe the Lutheran doctrine that the Gospel, whether the written, spoken, or "visible" Word, has collative and effective power. His concept is that revelation is an event, but he does not hold that this event is, so to speak, constantly taking place in the Bible, because the Holy Scriptures themselves are the Word, the active, life-giving Word of God.

3. Karl Barth very definitely moves in the Calvinistic concept of the sovereignty of God. This is evident in his complete mingling of Law and Gospel. The Gospel is the continuation of the Law, for the essence of the Gospel is that God makes a claim upon us (that is Gospel) and that we make a response (that is Law). Barth inverts the order: Gospel and Law. Karl Barth defines free grace as God revealing Himself to man, also in His *judgments*, for the mere fact that God condescends to speak to man is grace. In Lutheran theology the grace of God is the love of God in Christ Jesus, whereas according to Barth, God's demands upon us for obedience, yes, even His pronouncement of judgment, is defined as free grace. According to Barth faith is a dare (*Wagnis*), a dare that in the "Gospel and the Law" the veiled God will become unveiled for us, that we recognize Him as sovereign Lord, and trust Him also in His judgments. Is this probably the starting point for an *apokatastasis pantoon*, to which Barth is inclined? In Barthian theology, legalism and its correlative term obedience, constitute the *Leitmotif*. Thus revelation for Karl Barth is not the uncovering of God's grace in Christ Jesus, but in reality God's "imperative" to man, which on the part of man must become the "indicative."

4. Barth follows in the footsteps of Calvin, respectively Nestorianism, in his view concerning Christ. The axiom *Finitum non est capax infiniti* probably will be the point where ultimately the sharp cleavage between dialectical and Lutheran theology must again become apparent, even as was the case between Luther and Zwingli. The Calvinistic theologians have always charged Lutheran theology with Docetism and Eutychianism, which completely ignored the human nature of Christ. But according to the Scriptures the eternal, unknowable God revealed Himself to man in the God-Man, and only if the personal union is maintained will the revelation

have real meaning. Above all, we must maintain with Luther that the incarnation of Christ and the personal union are absolutely essential for our redemption, inasmuch as Christ had to redeem not only our soul, but our body as well. Because of this redemptive work — not because of His sovereignty — Christ is now my Lord.

F. E. MAYER

Hitopadesa *

Some two hundred and more years before the birth of Christ there existed in India a book that is "one of the most celebrated works of Indian literature. It had an influence upon the literature of Asia and mediaeval Europe which is quite without parallel."¹ It is called the *Panchatantra*, which means the *Five Books*. This is a collection of fables long current in the Orient that attributes human characteristics, speech, and action to animals and birds for the purpose of pointing a lesson and frequently stressing an important moral truth. The lesson of the stories is crystallized in the form of an epigram which generally precedes the fable. Off and on the epigrams are quotations from older classical literature, which shows their great age.

The earliest collection of the *Panchatantra* is in Sanskrit. In the course of time the book was translated into most of the Indian languages and into those of the neighboring countries. In the sixth century it was done into the Pahlavi of Persia. Still later it is found in Syriac, Arabic, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and in a large number of European languages. The first English rendering is called *Pilpay's Fables*.² "Over 200 different versions of the *Panchatantra* are known to exist in more than fifty languages."³

A recension and condensation of the *Panchatantra* is called the *Hitopadesa*, also done in Sanskrit. This has only four books. However, all essential features of the original are preserved. An interesting fact may be recorded here, that "the first Sanskrit book ever printed in the Nagari letters was Carey's *Hitopadesa* of Serampore, 1803—1804."⁴

The following paragraphs offer a selection of pithy sayings from the English translation of the *Hitopadesa* by Hale-Worthman.⁵ The translation is not literal. The stories attached to the epigrams

* The venerable author of this article entered eternal rest on Jan. 1, 1949.

¹ Dr. J. Hertel, *The Panchatantra*. Harvard Oriental Classics. Vol. 11, p. XIV.

² *Hitopadesa*, by B. Hale-Worthman, London, p. VIII.

³ Webster's New International Dictionary, 2d edition.

⁴ Hertel, *The Panchatantra*, p. XXII.

⁵ *Hitopadesa or The Book of Good Counsel*. Translated from the Sanskrit by the Reverend B. Hale-Worthman, B. A., Trinity College, Oxford. London: George Routledge and Sons, Ltd.; New York: E. F. Dutton and Co. (undated).

in the original Sanskrit are omitted. The reader will find that occasionally the epigrams remind of sections in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. In the maxims of the *Hitopadesa* we have human wisdom, now and then shot through with sinful reflections. The maxims in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, however, are divine counsel written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. — The headings are not in the original, but are added by the undersigned.

Wisdom

"Of all possessions wisdom is declared to be the best, for it cannot be taken away, it cannot be bought, it can never perish." P. 3.

Parental Teaching

"The instruction of a father and mother makes a wise son; merely by being born, he does not become learned." P. 7.

"The father and the mother who have left their son without instruction are his worst enemies." P. 8.

"A king should not even allow his own children to be disobedient." P. 91.

Noble

"A truthful man, when he has made peace, does not change, because he holds his word inviolable. A man of noble mind, even if his life is in danger, will not condescend to an unworthy action." P. 176.

Rare Excellences

"Liberality with kindly words; knowledge without pride; bravery with forbearance; wealth with contempt of possessions; these are four excellences hard to find." P. 47.

Purification

"Thou thyself art a river; self-restraint is thy place of sacred pilgrimage; truth is thy water; morality is thy bank; pity is thy waves. Here perform thy rites of purification — for the outward washing of water alone shall not purify thy inner self." P. 188.

Visionary

"The man who throws away a certainty and pursues an uncertainty loses everything. For we can be sure of nothing till we have got it." P. 62.

Vices

"Passion, wealth, covetousness, envy, pride, rashness: these six vices man should subdue; he should cast them off if he would attain happiness." P. 192.

Meddler

"The man who interferes in other people's business will get into difficulties over it. It is never wise to meddle in other people's business." P. 70.

Relapse

"As a large stone is carried up hill with difficulty but rolls down again in a moment, so it is with the soul of man with regard to virtue and vice." P. 75.

Wife

"The wife who meeting with rough words or angry looks from a husband always looks at him with a smiling countenance — she is truly a virtuous woman." P. 129.

"An ill-tempered wife, a false friend, an imprudent servant, and dwelling in a house infested by serpents, these things are certain death." P. 98.

"Patience is an ornament to a man, modesty to a woman, but there are times when these virtues are becoming to neither." P. 120.

False Confidence

"He who confides in enemies through respect for them, or because they have rendered him assistance, is like a man who has gone to sleep on the top of a tree and fallen through the branches." P. 167.

Hospitality

"Hospitality such as is usual must be shown even to an enemy when he has once entered the house. A tree does not refuse its shade to the man who is cutting it down." P. 25.

"Even a humble man of the lowest caste must be hospitably received. A guest is all the deities in his own person." P. 26.

One Family

"Is this man one of us or is he a stranger? This is what narrow-minded men say. To those of liberal disposition the whole earth is but one family." P. 28.

Friend

"There is no one happier in the world than a man who has a friend to talk with, a friend to live with, and the sympathies of a friend." P. 19.

"Single-minded, liberal, constant, the same whether in prosperity or adversity, kind, straightforward: a man who is all this is a friend." P. 33.

"A loved friend may have his faults, but he is none the less beloved for that; the body is subject to many disorders, but who does not love it?" P. 103.

False Friend

"This is the way of the treacherous man: He flatters you to your face, he takes away your character behind your back. He is overflowing with compliments. But if he discovers a weak point in you, he attacks it without mercy. The treacherous man is like a gnat." P. 30.

"The friend who praises another to his face and abuses him behind his back, should be avoided. He is a jar of poison with milk top." P. 30.

Hypocrite

"If an evil man speak kindly, have no confidence in him; with his tongue he distils honey, but in his heart is deadly poison." P. 30.

"There is a man whose hand is stretched out to greet us; whose eyes are moist with affection, who offers us a seat beside himself, who embraces us with affection, who is full of kind inquiries, who is honey outside, but has poison concealed within his heart — a man of guile. Ah, what a wonderful art of dissimulation is that which the wicked have learned." P. 110.

Contentment

"The man with a contented mind has abundant riches." P. 44.

"What peace can those have who are always running after wealth, impelled by avarice, compared with that which calm souls enjoy, satisfied with the nectar of contentment." P. 44.

"A hundred miles is not far for the man to travel who is greedy after gain; but the contented man cares not overmuch for that which is close at hand." P. 44.

Riches

"The heaping together of riches gives trouble; the loss of them sorrow; abundance of riches leads men to folly. How can riches confer happiness?" P. 51.

"He who passes his life without either giving or using the wealth that he has, does not live though he breathe like a blacksmith's bellows." P. 47.

Avarice

"Even learned men, versed in the deepest science, able to resolve doubts, fall into misfortune when they are blinded by avarice." P. 18.

"Through avarice wrath gains the mastery; through avarice desire comes into being; through avarice is produced confusion and destruction. Avarice is the root of all evil." P. 18.

Divine Providence

"A man should not be overanxious for his livelihood, for that has been provided by the Creator." P. 50.

"A skillful man may carry on his business where he will, the end will be what the Creator has ordained." P. 67.

"He by whom the swans were formed white, by whom the parrots were made green, by whom the varied hues were given to the peacock, He will give thee thy subsistence." P. 189.

Fate

"What will be, will be; what will not be, will not be." P. 164.

"What is protected by fate stands though it be not cared for; what is doomed by fate falls though carefully guarded. One man, though lost in a trackless forest, lives; another safe at home, all the care in the world will not keep alive." P. 68.

"The allotted term of life will save a man from vital injury, even if he be bitten by a deadly serpent, plunged in the sea, or fall from a high mountain." P. 67.

"If his time has not come, a man does not die, even if pierced by a hundred arrows; but if his time has come, he will not live, though pricked only by a blade of grass." P. 68.

Fruit of Sin

"Sickness, sorrow, pain, bonds, affliction: these are the fruits of the tree of man's transgression." P. 19.

Death

"We are clasped to the bosom by mortality." P. 185.

"The existence of living beings is as fleeting as the moonbeams that tremble on the water. Knowing this, a man should always act uprightly." P. 193.

"As we rise each morning, danger is near us; we should reflect: what death, danger, sorrow, may befall us today." P. 11.

"Youth, beauty, riches, power, friends, all pass away. A wise man fixes not his hopes on these." P. 186.

"Where are the great rulers of the earth with their guards, their armies, their chariots? To this day the earth bears witness to their departure." P. 185.

"No man may gain an abiding place in this world for himself: how much less for another." P. 186.

"To quit this world is a blessing — a world overwhelmed with the pains of birth, death, old age, and disease." P. 188.

After Death

"Righteousness is the only friend which follows men even after death; everything else goes to destruction with the body." P. 26.

FREDERICK BRAND

Intersynodical Developments in Australia

The *Australian Lutheran* (September 1, 1948) publishes a complete account of the intersynodical developments in Australia between the Ev. Luth. Synod of Australia (Missouri Synod) and the United Ev. Luth. Synod of Australia (American Lutheran Church). While these already have been referred to in our publications, our readers may welcome the complete report up to the present time, since the union problem in Australia is very similar to our own and practically the same issues are involved. We read:

"As was mentioned in the last report on Intersynodical matters (cf. *Australian Lutheran*, May 12, pp. 135—136; *Lutheran Herald*, May 22, pp. 173—174), the Intersynodical Committees were still considering one or two additional statements to be added to the theses published in those issues of the church papers. These statements (Theses 4e, 5, and Thesis 7) have now been unanimously

adopted, and by resolution of the Intersynodical Committees the full theses are published again. They are:

1. We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the infallible Word of God, written by inspiration of God, 2 Tim. 3:16, by the holy men of God, 2 Pet. 1:21, as the Spirit gave them utterance, Acts 2:4.

2. We believe that the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments are the infallible and only source and norm of Christian doctrine and the sure and authoritative guide for life and practice, 2 Tim. 3:15-17; 1 Cor. 14:37; Ps. 119:160, etc.

3. We agree that for church fellowship, the uniting churches must be one in the acceptance of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and as the only true source, norm, rule, and standard of all teaching and practice in the Christian Church.

4 a. We believe that where differences in teaching and practice exist or arise between churches uniting, these differences are to be removed by willingly submitting to the authority of the Word of God. Where a difference in teaching or practice is a departure from the doctrine of the Bible, such difference cannot be tolerated, but must be pointed out as an error, on the basis of clear passages of Holy Writ; and if the error is persisted in, in spite of instruction, warning, and earnest witness, it must at last lead to a separation.

b. We believe that all doctrines of Holy Writ are equally binding; nevertheless, not all things in Scripture are of the same importance when viewed from the center and core of the Scriptures, Christ and justification by Him through faith.

c. We admit that there are some things hard to be understood in Holy Writ, 2 Pet. 3:16; but no doctrine can be based on Scripture passages that are not clear, especially if no light is thrown upon them by clear passages.

d. Differences in exegesis that do not affect doctrine are not church divisive.

e. In case of differences in exegesis that affect doctrine, agreement on the basis of God's Word must be sought by combined, prayerful examination of the passage or passages in question.

If this does not lead to agreement, because no unanimity has been reached on the clarity of the passage or passages in question and hence on the stringency and adequacy of the Scriptural proof, divergent views arising from such differences of interpretation are not divisive of church fellowship, providing that—

- (1) there be the readiness in principle to submit to the authority of the Word of God;
- (2) thereby no clear Word of Scripture is denied, contradicted, or ignored;
- (3) such divergent views in no wise impair, infringe upon, or violate the central doctrine of Holy Scripture, justification by grace through faith in Jesus Christ;
- (4) nothing be taught contrary to the *publica doctrina* of the Lutheran Church as laid down in its Confessions;

- (5) such divergent views are not propagated as the *publica doctrina* of the Church and in no wise impair the doctrine of Holy Writ.

5. We believe that the formal and the material principles must not be brought into opposition to each other, for the Scriptures are the Word of Christ and they testify of Him. Loyalty to Christ requires loyalty to His Word, and loyalty to the Scriptures requires loyalty to Christ, His person, His work, His means of grace. We dare not stress the material principle at the expense of the formal principle, or *vice versa*. Churches uniting should make their pledge of loyalty to both Christ and His Word (cf. Eph. 4:1-16).

6. We believe that it is a solemn obligation of the Church to teach the whole counsel of God, rightly dividing the Word of Truth, feeding milk or meat as the case may demand, but never compromising the truth of Scripture, never permitting reason or feeling to undermine the authority of the Word, or substituting therefor any form of subjectivism.

7. In the application of these principles, particularly in the holding of such divergent views as are mentioned in Thesis 4e, the material principle, agreement in which constitutes the fundamental unity in Christ, is not to be ignored contrary to the law of Christian love, but is to be upheld and applied in full agreement with the formal principle."

"The Intersynodical Committees record their heartfelt gratitude to God that under His divine guidance and blessing the negotiations of the past five years have resulted in full agreement on the principles of church fellowship, stated in the above theses. These principles are now to be applied in the discussion of differences in doctrine and practice. At the joint Intersynodical Committees' meeting, held on August 12, 1948, one of the differences, namely, prayer fellowship, was discussed on the basis of papers read to the Jindera Pastoral Conference (May, 1948) by Dr. H. Hamann on 'Prayer Fellowship'; by Dr. A. Mackenzie on 'Rom. 16:17, 18, An Examination'; and by Dr. J. Darsow, 'A Doctrinal Treatise on Rom. 16:17, 18'; and on the basis of several resolutions of the Jindera Pastoral Conference. The Intersynodical Committees have unanimously adopted the following two statements:

1. We acknowledge that, on the basis of Scripture and of the Confessions, joint prayer cannot under all circumstances be identified with unionistic prayer of church fellowship.

2. We agree that when joint prayer shows the marks or characteristics of unionism, it must be condemned and avoided. Such marks and characteristics of unionism are:

- a. failure to confess the whole truth of the Divine Word (*in statu confessionis*);
- b. failure to reject and denounce every opposing error;
- c. assigning to error equal right with truth;
- d. creating the impression of unity in faith or of church fellowship where they do not exist.

The discussion on prayer fellowship will be continued at the next joint meeting, likewise the discussion on the doctrine of con-

version, which was begun at the last meeting on the basis of Article II of the Formula of Concord. The Committees plan to proceed with the discussion of election, or predestination, and other doctrines and matters that have been mentioned as separating the two church bodies.

Because of this the Intersynodical Committees have decided not to publish at this juncture a joint leaflet on the differences. May all those who are concerned in the cause of Lutheran unity make it a matter of earnest prayer before the throne of grace, and in their dealings with one another supply the law of Christian love in full agreement with and submission to God's inspired Word.—S. Hebart, Secretary, U. E. L. C. A. Intersynodical Committee; F. J. H. Blaess, Secretary, E. L. C. A. Intersynodical Committee, August 12, 1948."

We believe that this report is one of utmost importance and invite our readers to a careful study of all issues involved.

J. T. M.

