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The Wrath of God and the Grace of God in Lutheran Theology

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I

Every Lutheran theologian, at hearing these terms, will admit, I think, that in discussing them we deal with the very heart of theology, and not only of theology, but of religion itself. Wherever religion has not developed into a mere caricature, but is live, spontaneous, heartfelt, real, it occupies itself, among other things, with these concepts. The statements that an individual or whole groups make about them may be entirely erroneous and objectionable or highly unsatisfactory, but, at any rate, occupying one's self with them is unavoidable — the human heart simply has to come to grips with these matters. The explanation is that we are moral beings, having a sense of right and wrong, and that, moreover, we have implanted in us a certain knowledge of God which compels us to ask, How about the wrath of God and the grace of God?

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* No topic of Lutheran theology is currently so relevant in European Lutheranism as the relation of divine wrath and divine grace, the distinction between Law and Gospel, *Gericht und Gnade*. Several factors account for this interest, especially the terrifying experiences under the Nazi regime and the final collapse in 1945. In part the renewed interest in this topic is due to the rise of Dialectical Theology after the First World War, which in its attack upon the false optimism of Liberalism proclaimed the wrath of God in unmistakable terms but at the same time fell into a peculiar mingling of Law and Gospel. More recently the Lundensian theology in its "classical" theory of the Atonement has compelled Lutherans to re-study the reality of the wrath of God. Because of the primacy of divine wrath and divine grace in contemporary Lutheran theology the participants at the Free Conference to be held at Berlin-Spandau will devote six sessions to a discussion of this topic. (Cf. C. T. M., 1952, 288 ff.) Undoubtedly one or two essays will be submitted to this conference in which "the wrath of God and the grace of God in the modern proclamation" will be set forth in great detail. In the hope that one of these essays will be available for publication in our journal, Dr. Arndt has terminated his historico-dogmatical study with the situation as it obtained immediately prior to World War I. F. E. M.

II

When we go to our Lutheran Confessions to see what our Church in the sixteenth century taught on these matters, we are struck by the noteworthy fact that the approach used by the founding fathers to these concepts was altogether a practical one. They were driven to discuss these matters by their personal needs and experiences, by the conviction of their sinfulness, by the joyful discovery they had made that there is a Savior, and by the triumphant assurance that the forgiveness of sins is not merely spoken of in the Creed, but is actually granted by God for Christ's sake. To put it differently, for the fathers the wrath of God was a great reality about which they had not merely read in books, but the withering blasts of which they had felt in their own hearts. Likewise the grace of God was to them not a mere *titulus*, but a boon which had come to them like the dawn of a bright morning after a night of harrowing gloom and destructive storms. In the Confessions of our Church the heart, and not merely the head, speaks. That is one reason why, for instance, the Augsburg Confession and the Smalcald Articles never lose their charm and freshness, but every time we open them, grip us with new power and edify us with treasures which we perceive are inexhaustible. In up-to-date parlance, what the Lutheran Confessions submit on the wrath of God and the grace of God can truly be called existential teaching, as opposed to teaching that is considered merely logically or scientifically satisfying.

III

Perhaps a word of caution is in place here. What I have spoken of is the *approach* of the Confessions. The approach to a doctrine must not be confused with the source of the doctrine. The confessors were absolutely Bible Christians and took their theology from the Holy Scriptures. It is true that they did not refuse to read in the book of nature and to listen to the voice of conscience; they recognized those religious truths which, I think, St. Paul has in mind, at least in part, when he speaks of the "elements of the world" in Gal. 4:3, the ABC of religion, that is, those religious notions which are found with all people and among which we may number the knowledge of the Law inscribed in the hearts of men.

But apart from such matters the confessors base their theology solely on the Scriptures. They were *sola Scriptura* theologians; they desired to follow not the Church, not the Pope, not human reason, but divine revelation.

IV

We first ask, What do the Confessions teach about the wrath of God? And since there has been a good deal of controversy connected with this concept, the major part of my paper will deal with it. All of us know the words of Dr. Luther found in his Small Catechism. When explaining the stern statement of God about Himself as the jealous God, Luther says: "God threatens to punish all that transgress these Commandments. Therefore we should fear His wrath and not act contrary to them." The wrath of God is taught as a reality and as something to be feared.

In the Large Catechism (I, 330), in the section in which Luther treated of the Conclusion of the Ten Commandments, he says: "This, I say, is profitable and necessary always to teach to the young people, to admonish them and to remind them of it, that they may be brought up not only with blows and compulsion like cattle, but in the fear and reverence of God. For where this is considered and laid to heart that these things are not human trifles, but the commandments of the divine majesty who insists upon them with such insistence, is angry with and punishes those who despise them, and on the other hand abundantly rewards those who keep them, there will be a spontaneous impulse and a desire gladly to do the will of God." In I, 333, Luther reiterates this thought and says that God enjoins the commandments with His greatest wrath and punishment.

The Catechisms of Luther appeared in 1529. The next year came the Diet at Augsburg, at which our chief confession, the Augsburg Confession, was presented. It is in keeping with the whole character of this Confession that it does not present long metaphysical arguments for its various teachings, but in simple, straightforward manner sets forth the faith of the men that submitted the document. See how the wrath of God is spoken of in Article II, which treats of Original Sin. According to the Latin text Melanchthon says of the Lutheran churches:

> Also they teach that since the fall of Adam all men begotten

> in the natural way are born with sin, that is, without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with concupiscence, and that this disease, or vice of origin, is fully sin, even now condemning and bringing eternal death upon those not born again through Baptism and the Holy Ghost.

It will be noted that the word "wrath" does not occur here. The German version, however, which, as we know, was read on June 25, 1530, in Augsburg, speaks of the "ewige Gotteszorn," the eternal wrath of God, to which we on account of original sin have become subject.

In Article III we have the same interesting difference between the German and Latin texts. The German text says that Christ became a sacrifice, "dass er . . . *Gottes Zorn versoehnte,*" while the Latin says that the purpose of His work was to reconcile the Father to us. I have no explanation to offer for avoidance of the word "wrath" *(ira)* in the Latin. It must be remembered that the Latin was written first and that the translation into German was not made by Melanchthon himself, the author of the Latin text, but by Justus Jonas, who undoubtedly chose the phraseology which appeared to him most idiomatic and virile. It is evident that there is no difference in meaning between the two versions.

How seriously the reforming fathers took the wrath of God we see furthermore from some passages in the Apology. In III, 7 Melanchthon writes: "Then, too, how can the human heart love God while it knows that He is terribly angry and is oppressing us with temporal and perpetual calamities?"

In Apology IV (II), 37, where Melanchthon speaks of the love we owe God, he says:

> It is easy for idle *(otiosi)* men to feign such terms concerning love, as that a person guilty of moral sin can love God above all things, because they do not feel what the wrath or judgment of God is. But in agony of conscience and in conflicts with Satan, conscience experiences the emptiness of these philosophical speculations.

We see, Melanchthon considers the matter not merely from the professor's chair, in academic isolation, but gives it a very practical turn and relates it to the needs of the Christian.

In the Formula of Concord, to settle the controversy that had

arisen on the subjects "Law" and "Gospel," Article V definitely speaks of the wrath of God. In Par. 17 the confessors say, "The Law threatens its transgressors with God's wrath and temporal and eternal punishment." No language could be plainer.

The teaching of God's wrath was not elaborated in the Confessions to any great extent because it was simply considered to be universally accepted, and apparently there were no special attacks made on it in the controversies in which the Confessions have their origin.

One more word on the attitude of the authors of our Confessions. The intellectual difficulty which later generations of theologians profess to find in the concept "wrath of God" they evidently did not consider formidable enough to let it influence their thinking in dealing with the simple teaching of Scripture on this subject. That the apparent clash between the wrath of God and the love of God was not noticed by them we surely do not wish to aver. Everybody who gives the subject any thought at all will instinctively ask himself when he reads the Scriptures how wrath and grace can exist simultaneously in the all-wise, the perfect God; one seems to exclude the other. The attitude of the Lutheran confessors was that sin is a reality which cannot be denied by anybody; and if sin exists, God's wrath has to exist, too, because God is holy and just. And they found their comfort not in the denial of divine anger, but in the grace of God and the work of Christ.

Wherever Lutherans have been eager to adhere to the faith of the Confessions this teaching has continued through the centuries. Eduard Preuss in his famous book *Die Rechtfertigung des Suenders vor Gott* (Berlin, 1868) voiced the old Lutheran convictions when he said,

> Who believes that God is wrathful, and who is afraid of His anger? The wicked make it an object of mockery and look upon it as a strawman which is put into the grainfield to scare the birds. But when He in His own appointed time will come and turn everything to dust and ashes, they will have to take notice. For God is indeed angry; and whoever does not observe the breath of His wrath in history, let him learn it from God's infallible Word.

When Walther in *Law and Gospel* (p. 46, German edition) says that the Law must be preached in such a way that the hearers fancy they are visited by a terrifying thunderstorm and see the lightning of divine wrath flash before them — he voices the old Lutheran position. When Luthardt, the famous theologian of Leipzig, in his compend of Dogmatics (p. 129, second edition), says: "As a result of sin the human race is the object of the wrath of the holy God," he gives expression to the old Lutheran teaching on this subject.

V

In the seventeenth century, the age of Lutheran scholasticism, we find the teaching of the wrath of God maintained in full vigor, even though the presentation often veers from the free, natural, simple mode of the reformers to one that is somewhat stiff, circuitous, and artificial. The Socinians had come forward with a definite denial of the teaching that there is wrath in God. As one ponders their objections to the Lutheran doctrine, the words of Ecclesiastes come to mind, "There is nothing new under the sun." The arguments which the Socinians employed are exactly those which are being urged today. It is impossible that God should have become reconciled to us, because that would presuppose the existence of wrath in Him, and that is simply inconceivable. The orthodox Church overlooks, so it was stated, that St. Paul does not say, God was reconciled to the world, but "He reconciled the world to Himself." It is true, of course, that the grand passage 2 Cor. 5:18 ff. reads: "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." God reconciled the world to Himself — so it is written. How the Lutheran scholars of the seventeenth century replied we can see from the words of Abraham Calovius, quoted Baier III, p. 113:

> The Socinians object it is not written that Christ reconciled God to us, but that we through the death of Christ have been reconciled to God. We answer: 1. It amounts to the same thing whether it is stated that Christ is reconciled to us or that we have been reconciled to God, because in either way He removed

the enmity which existed between us and God. For just as man was an enemy to God, so God was to man, having been offended on account of sin, and this enmity had to be removed on both sides in order that a reconciliation between them might take place. 2. However, that the Scriptures rather say that we have been reconciled to God than God to us is due to this, that God is the offended party, but man the offender. But if a person offends somebody, he is said (if reconciliation occurs) to become reconciled to the one whom he offends. Thus we are commanded to become reconciled to the one whom we offended (Matt. 5:23), and a woman is ordered to become reconciled to the husband whom she has vexed (1 Cor. 7:11), and by the same token Christ is said to reconcile us to God, us who offended God and against whose wickedness the wrath of God was revealed from heaven. But whatever may be the case, it all, as I have said, amounts to the same thing; especially if this is established that on both sides, and not merely on one, there was hostility. Then it will be very patent that not only with respect to one, but with respect to both parties involved, a reconciliation was made. The two clashing parties who had to be reconciled are God and man. That man was inimical to God before he was reconciled, no one will dispute; but that God hated man as a sinner *(tamquam peccatorem)* before a reconciliation between them was brought about, we have proved elsewhere from divine holiness and justice as well as from clear testimonies of Holy Scripture. Cf. Ps. 5:6; 45:8; Rom. 1:18, 32; Gal. 3:13. Furthermore, that Christ removed the cause of God's wrath, that is, that He atoned for sins and that He rescued us from wrath, that again is most evident from the Scriptures. Therefore He made reconciliation not only in order to reconcile man to God, but likewise God to man. (*Soc. profl.*, p. 496.)

The method of argumentation employed by Calovius may appear somewhat antiquated, but can we deny that he brings out great truths? It will pay us to look at the passages from the Scriptures which Calovius adduces. He points to Ps. 5:6. We may quote verses 4, 5, 6 here from the English Bible (the Bible verse which Calovius undoubtedly has in mind particularly is v. 5, which in the Hebrew Bible is v. 6).

> For Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness; neither shall evil dwell with Thee. The foolish shall not stand in Thy sight; Thou hatest all workers of iniquity. Thou shalt destroy

them that speak leasing; the Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.

The statement is made categorically, "Thou hatest all workers of iniquity." What shattering words, which terrify us in our inmost being and which, moreover, find the full approval of our conscience! That our God is a holy God who will not countenace wrongdoing is here stated with paralyzing emphasis. Ps. 45:8 (7 in A. V.) says, "Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." The words are familiar; they are quoted in the New Testament as addressed to the Messiah. Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness — God's wrath is kindled against everything that is wicked. Rom. 1:18 is the well-known passage beginning Paul's excoriation of the pagan world. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness." V. 32 brings the following words of Paul with reference to wicked people: "Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." In Gal. 3:13 we have the well-known words: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." *Curse* is simply an expression of wrath.

It has become quite common to say that God hates sin but loves the sinner. That statement evidently does not set forth the whole truth. It is gloriously true that God *loves* the sinner, but it is true, too, that God *hates* the sinner *qua* sinner, as far as he is a sinner, a transgressor. Sin, we must remember, does not appear in the abstract, but in the concrete, in persons; and in as far as man is addicted to unrighteousness and an enemy of God, he is hated by the just, the holy Creator of heaven and earth.

VI

By and by came the era of Rationalism. Here with other matters the teaching of the wrath of God was shunted aside; and if the subject was still mentioned, it was with apologies or with the assertion that the old teaching had been extreme. That

we must not hold to anthropomorphic or anthropopathic views which are unworthy of God was emphasized — a position with which all of us heartily agree. The insinuation, of course, was that such views had been entertained by the old orthodox Lutheran theologians. "How can God, who is love, be at the same time the God of wrath?" it was asked. We see the Socinians had won many followers and allies. At first Rationalism proceeded cautiously; but soon it blossomed forth in unrestricted vigor. There arose preachers who declared the wrath of God to be non-existent, a mere figment of the mind. How the Rationalists viewed the wrath of God we can see from a writing by J. C. Dippel, who called himself Christianus Democritus. His book was published in 1733, and he called it *Hauptsumma der theologischen Grundlehren des Democriti.* Ritschl *(Justification and Reconciliation,* p. 337 f.) gives this summary of Dippel's views: "In particular, Dippel's assertion that God's purpose is to destroy sin, but not the sinner, corresponds to that relative idea of the State which regards it as the means for the maintenance and well-being of individuals. In accordance with this idea the traditionary attribute of God, which guarantees the destruction of the sinner, His wrath, to wit, had to be partly denied, partly altered. Inasmuch as God is Love, there is, properly speaking, no wrath in Him, or His wrath is nothing but a chastisement which flows from love and which leads men to Him, although it does not take place without great pain. For as sins do no detriment to God's perfection and cannot hurt or injure Him, but only bring disadvantage for man himself in his relation to God, God has no occasion to take heed of sins committed or demand satisfaction for them, but only in love will He direct His attention to them in order that for the future we to our own advantage may lay aside such bad behavior." This means that the teaching of God's wrath, in the real sense of the word, has been put on the scrap pile of outworn ideas.

One naturally is interested in Schleiermacher's teaching on this subject because of his eminence as a theological thinker and leader. According to Ritschl *(Justification and Reconciliation,* p. 474), Schleiermacher follows with some modifications the type of doctrine taught by Abelard (died 1142). This celebrated medieval scholar did not teach that the wrath of God had to be

appeased and that through Christ's atonement this was accomplished; he found such teaching cruel and iniquitous because it taught that an innocent person had to suffer for the guilty. He held that Christ's work has to do with the sinner, and not with God, that its purpose was to move the sinner to manifest love. Schleiermacher similarly, as Ritschl says, rejects the forensically viewed penal justice of God and the divine Law (*op. cit.*, p. 483).

VII

In the era which came after the shelving of crude, vulgar Rationalism, F. C. Baur and his colleagues of the Tuebingen School, together with David Friedrich Strauss, naturally rejected the teaching of God's wrath. They were interested in historical speculations, not in promulgating Scripture doctrine. About the same time came the Lutheran awakening, the renaissance or resurgence of Lutheranism in the last century. The Confessions were studied again, so were Luther's writings. It was springtime in our Church, the old trees sprouted, blossoms promising fruit appeared on them.

But then arose Albrecht Ritschl with his peculiar views. One of his critics said: "Led by Ritschl, we find that we have arrived at the delightful position where God's wrath no longer is known" (Boehl, cf. Pieper, *Chr. Dogm.*, II, p. 423 [Transl., II, 356]). Ritschl's position, as we all know, is marked by opposition to metaphysics and Pietism; but he has a good deal to say on the subject before us, and he declares that the teaching pertaining to God's wrath has to be discarded.

In this view he was followed by the most famous theologian of the past generation, Adolf von Harnack, who became the acknowledged leader in the field of what we usually refer to as Liberal theology. According to Harnack, the religion of Jesus can be summarized in three great points: 1. The Kingdom of God and its coming; 2. God the Father and the infinite value of the human soul; 3. The higher righteousness and the commandment of love. Cf. his *Wesen des Christentums*. It is evident that in such a system no room remains for the Biblical doctrine of the wrath of God and of the atonement.

To be a little more specific — how Harnack viewed the wrath of God is indicated by the following paragraph taken from an article of his published in the *Christian World*, a British paper,

in the winter of 1899—1900, and afterwards reprinted in a collection, *The Atonement in Modern Religious Thought:*

> There is an inner law that compels the sinner to look upon God as a wrathful Judge. It is this conception of God which is the hardest and the most real punishment inflicted on sin. It tears the heart of man, transforms his thoughts of God into terror, robs him of peace, and drives him to despair. This conception of God is a false one, and yet not false, for it is the necessary consequence of man's sin — that is to say, of his godlessness. How can this conception of God be overcome? Not by words, but by deeds. When the Holy One descends to sinners, when He lives with them and walks with them, when He does not count them as unworthy, but calls them His brethren, when He serves them and dies for them, then the terror of the awful Judge melts away and they believe that the Holy One is love, and that there is something mightier still than justice — mercy.

One sees what has become of the wrath of God. It has turned out to be an idea that the wretched sinner entertains, buffeted by his accusing conscience, which idea, however, does not correspond to reality and hence has to be changed. The sinner has to be led to the conviction that the wrath of God is non-existent; that God is not a God of anger, but a God of mercy. In other words, the wrath of God has disappeared.

How different is this from the teaching of Philippi, one of the chief leaders in the Lutheran renaissance, who on a certain occasion wrote (Ritschl, *op. cit.,* p. 551):

> He who takes away from me the atoning blood of the Son of God, paid as a ransom to the wrath of God, who takes away the satisfaction of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, vicariously given to the penal justice of God; who hereby takes away justification or forgiveness of sins only by faith in the merits of this my Surety and Mediator, who takes away the imputation of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, takes away Christianity altogether, so far as I am concerned. I might then just as well have adhered to the religion of my ancestors, the seed of Abraham after the flesh.

It will be recalled that Philippi was a converted Jew. His writings as a result are marked by the warmth felt by a person who has come upon a vital discovery.

VIII

Thank God, we do not have to stop with this discussion of the wrath of the almighty God. The divine revelation tells us likewise about the grace of God, about God as the loving, merciful, Father who has pity on us in our unworthiness and provides help for us. Speaking of the grace of God, we refer to a quality, a disposition, or attitude in Him which moves Him to think of us in our sinful state and to send His Son for our redemption and the Holy Spirit for our regeneration and sanctification. This section should really be the major part of my paper. That it is brief is due to the exigencies of time and to the circumstance that the grace of God is hardly ever questioned, although, sad to say, its full glory is often dimmed and obscured.

We turn at once to our Confessions to see what they submit on this subject. As every reader of them knows, they are full of references to divine grace. Let me merely quote one passage from the Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, III, 9:

> Concerning the righteousness of faith before God we believe, teach, and confess unanimously, in accordance with the comprehensive summary of our faith and confession presented above, that poor, sinful man is justified before God, that is, absolved and declared free and exempt from all his sins and from the sentence of well-deserved condemnation and adopted into sonship and heirship of eternal life, without any merit or worth of our own, also without any preceding, present, or any subsequent works, out of pure grace, because of the sole merit, complete obedience, bitter suffering, death, and resurrection of our Lord Christ alone, whose obedience is reckoned to us for righteousness.

The statement is comprehensive and absolutely plain. The pure grace of God is definitely taught and exalted.

A few remarks of a general nature I should like to make. The term "grace of God" is not always used in the same sense in the Confessions. At times it refers to the fundamental attitude in God planning and bringing about our salvation; and at other times it has the meaning of forgiveness of sins, pardon. In the former instance, what we might call the *a priori* attitude of God is spoken of, in the latter the *a posteriori* attitude. The latter meaning we find, for instance, in the Apology, III, p. 177, where Melanchthon

says of certain people: "When they see the works of saints, they judge in a human manner that saints have merited the remission of sins and grace through these works." — Another thought that obtrudes itself in me is that the Confessions, while they have many references to the grace of God, do not dwell on this subject as much as we might have expected. The antithesis against Rome took the reformers, even when the debate concerned itself with the area of grace, to different categories of thought, for instance, to the question whether justification is attained through faith or through good works; or the related one, whether Christ obtained for us forgiveness for all our sins or whether our own efforts have to assist in the work of procuring God's pardon. But at the basis of all thinking was the teaching that God is a God of mercy and love, who does not wish to see anybody perish but who desires to see all turn to repentance.

God's grace, it should be emphasized, is represented as free grace, not conditioned by anything we do. The Confessions, for instance, in the passage quoted, use the term "pure grace" to express that there is nothing coming from the outside that has influenced God and made Him gracious. It is the idea which we express by *sola gratia.* God is gracious because He is gracious; He loves because He is Love — that is the position of our Confessions.

But must one not say that it was the Cross of Christ which produced grace in God? No; that is not the way the Confessions look at it. The grace of God produced the saving Cross, and it was not the Cross which created God's grace. The grace of God is the foundation of all salvation, the redemption of Christ included. When the Confessions say that because of Christ's death we have a gracious God, they have in mind grace in the sense of forgiveness of sins, the *a posteriori* significance to which I pointed before.

The teaching of God's grace must not be modified in the interest of removing the gulf between divine wrath and divine grace. Both these concepts must be kept as representing great realities; their absoluteness must not be made doubtful. The Confessions show why the poor sinners who face damnation do not have to despair. It is the work of Christ which without destroying the least particle of the wrath of God and the grace of God has built

a bridge between them, so that both divine justice and divine grace can triumph. The wrath of God is terrible, but the Cross erected by divine Love fully satisfied all the demands of divine justice and thus quenches that consuming fire which threatened us. "He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

IX

The Formula of Concord foreshadowed the vehement conflict which came in the 17th and 18th centuries between the Calvinists and the Lutherans on the grace of God. The Calvinists by their teaching of a double predestination were putting this grace under heavy clouds. At the same time Lutheran theologians had to oppose the Arminians, who, in casting aside Calvinism, went to the other extreme, that of making man a co-author of salvation. In the Lutheran camp itself, too, voices were heard which in order to battle effectively against Calvinism did injury to the teaching of the *sola gratia.* In the age of Rationalism the love of God was spoken of; but how weak a factor it had come to be! How could anyone get excited over it when, after all, man's salvation rested chiefly on his own efforts, and the thing that counted was *Tugend* (virtue). In the speculations of the Tuebingen School, naturally, such things as the teaching of God's grace had merely a historical significance. But in the Lutheran renaissance, while sin was stressed, the grace of God was given its due place at the center of Christian teaching. In the Lutheran Church today, it is my conviction, the grace of God is preached with power. May all of us remain true to the great *sola gratia* teaching of our Confessions, not merely because it is a part of the Confessions for which we stand, but because it is taught in the Holy Scriptures and is the only basis of our hope.

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