

10-1-1960

Editorial Comment-Reformation -Radicality

Gilbert A. Thiele

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

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



Part of the [History of Christianity Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Thiele, Gilbert A. (1960) "Editorial Comment-Reformation -Radicality," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 31, Article 68.

Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol31/iss1/68>

This Editorial 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.

CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY

Volume XXXI

October 1960

Number 10

Published by

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

Edited by

**THE FACULTY OF CONCORDIA SEMINARY
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI**

**CONCORDIA PUBLISHING HOUSE
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI**

CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY is published monthly by Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis 18, Mo., to which all business correspondence is to be addressed. \$3.50 per annum, anywhere in the world, payable in advance. Second-class postage paid at St. Louis, Mo.

PRINTED IN U. S. A.

CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY

VOL. XXXI

OCTOBER 1960

No. 10

Editorial Comment	596
Luther and the English Reformation. E. GEORGE PEARCE	597
Studies in Discipleship. MARTIN H. FRANZMANN	607
BRIEF STUDIES	626
HOMILETICS	636
THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER	644
BOOK REVIEW	648

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

VICTOR BARTLING, PAUL M. BRETSCHER
ALFRED O. FUERBRINGER, GEORGE W. HOYER
ARTHUR CARL PIEPKORN, WALTER R. ROEHR
LEWIS W. SPITZ, GILBERT A. THIELE

*Address all communications to the Editorial Committee in care of
Walter R. Roehrs, 801 De Mun Ave., St. Louis 5, Mo.*

Editorial Comment—Reformation—Radicality

The task courageously undertaken by our Anglo-Lutheran brethren and sisters in Britain generally and in England specifically to reverse almost four centuries of British church history by establishing and extending the Evangelical Lutheran Church of England (ELCE) gives rise to the informative and aggressive piece with which this 1960 Reformation issue of our journal opens.

What do we mean by saying "reverse church history"? Simply this: the rush of events resulting elsewhere in Europe from the reformatory impulse of Martin Luther did not bring the church in England to commit herself, by subscription, to the Confessions drawn up by Luther and Melancthon. Certain features of the Gospel, emphasized and believed by continental reformers, of course did not leave English Christendom completely untouched. Yet could one say that the outlook during the middle of the sixteenth century for the Lutheranization of English Christianity and the church was ever fully realized?

Still, current Anglican theological writing consistently accompanies insistence on the strong claim of the Church of England to catholicity with the frank admission that this church is also in the mainstream of sixteenth-century reformatory faith and life. Implicitly and often by direct statement that includes the admission of an English and a British debt to Luther and his work. Also, English freechurchmen of varied traditions produce masterful works on Luther and Lutheranism. The ELCE has its work cut out for some time to come if by her extension she does no more than to reacquaint Britons with the role of Luther and Lutheranism in their history

and to bring this into the broad light of day. As we ourselves thank God for the Reformation and hope for its continued vitality, we wish our English fellow believers the blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ for rich fruits of their faithful labors.

Always and everywhere there is value in the Biblically theological approach to Christian discipleship. If there was a missing ingredient, needed but possibly not sufficiently at work early in the English Reformation, could it be the radicality which is evident in the call and life of the first disciples? The study in this issue of our journal places before us also the terribly pertinent and searching question: Do we as so-called children of the Reformation have this indispensable ingredient in *our* Christianity?

Radicality simply means that the very roots of our being are involved, transformed, and fructified by Christ's call to discipleship. Then, led to place our life before Christ, we render our reasonable service. This was and is and always must be the continuing re-formation of men and of the church. As Christ, coming from the root and stem of Israel, became the Branch that re-formed the root into the new Israel, so, we trust, He still re-forms us, down to the roots. Thus we become His living branches.

We do not need to become political or ecclesiastical Anglophiles to acknowledge that our responsibility for and our shared joy in the work of Lutherans and all Christians in England is at least an index of our own loyalty to what God has given us, as to Christ's disciples, through the Reformation.

GILBERT A. THIELE