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## Two New Series of Articles (Editorial Comment)

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# CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY

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## Two New Series of Articles

Ever since the publication in 1932 of Part 1, Volume I, of Karl Barth's *Kirchliche Dogmatik*, in which the author discusses at great length the meaning of "the Word of God," a massive amount of literature has appeared dealing with this subject. Though within recent years other theological issues have moved into the forefront of theological thinking, "the theology of the Word" is still a vital issue since whatever interpretation of this term a theologian adopts will largely determine his views regarding other crucial theological matters. Therefore the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, under whose direction this journal is edited, resolved to publish in this journal a series of articles on "the theology of the Word" which were prepared by staff members and discussed by the faculty in the season 1958—1959. Dr. Walter R. Roehrs, managing editor, submits in this issue his article on "The Theology of the Word of God in the Old Testament."

The past three decades have also witnessed a significant revival of interest in the Lutheran Symbols (Edmund Schlink, F. Brunsted, the publication in 1930 of the *Jubiläumsausgabe* of the Lutheran Symbols and, in 1959, of a new English translation of these symbols under the editorship of Dr. Theo. Tappert). Yet this revival of interest in the sixteenth-century Lutheran symbols has not inhibited Lutheran bodies in our country from adopting additional doctrinal statements, the latest one bearing the title *The Sacrament of the Altar and Its Implications*, a statement "adopted by the 1960 convention of the United Lutheran Church in America as a guide to its congregations."

The question seems therefore inescap-

able: "What is the relation of these doctrinal statements to the Lutheran Symbols to which Lutheran pastors and congregations are officially pledged by their church?"

In The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod a doctrinal statement known since its adoption in 1932 as *A Brief Statement* has, over the years, achieved prominent status in this synod. Therefore the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in the season 1960—1961, discussed a select number of articles in this statement on the basis of studies submitted by staff members. Thereupon the faculty authorized the editors of this journal to publish these studies in the hope that they would help objectively to appraise *A Brief Statement* in terms of its relation to the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Symbols, to the *Sitz im Leben* which produced this statement, and to critical theological issues confronting the church of Jesus Christ at the present time. Dr. Erwin L. Lueker's "Functions of Symbols and of Doctrinal Statements" serves as a fitting introduction to this series.

It seemed to the editors that Dr. Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther, the truly great leader of the Missouri Synod in the past century, would have been pleased in this 150th anniversary year of his birth to note that our journal, which is in a large degree the continuation of *Lehre und Wehre* (a monthly theological journal founded by Walther in 1855), is devoting considerable space to studies dealing with the meaning of "the Word of God" and with the significance of doctrinal statements, in particular with that of *A Brief Statement*.

PAUL M. BRETSCHER