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The Imprecatory Psalms as Means of Mercy and Wellness

Geoffrey R. Boyle

Ministering with Hands Tied behind the Back: A Matter of Pastoral Care under the Cross

I was a pastor for only a month or so when a member asked if she could tell me about a friend's suffering. She had lost two children in back-to-back, but unrelated incidents. It was not a disease (as if that makes it any easier), but each was sudden and unexpected. Each son was in his twenties and left his family behind. While this poor mother was still mourning for the first, the second was taken just like that—and with him, her strength and hope. She was broken, then angry—at life, at her family, at God. But what did she hear from her pastor? "*This is the result of a sinful world. Do not blame God. He did not have anything to do with it.*"

He did not have anything to do with it? What sort of God is that? If he was not there with her sons, why not and where was he? And if she could not be angry with God, where should her anger go? Toward her husband? Against the remaining two sons? Does she take it out at work? Or does she just quit—quit work, quit family, quit church, quit life? With nowhere to vent properly, her rage will consume her. This poor, pious woman chose the last option. Thankfully, her good friend (my member who shared the story with me) knew the gospel. Somehow, she knew that it is okay to be angry with God—he can take it. What could've been a predictable formula for divorce or suicide, ended in neither—at least not yet.

As pastors, we fill an office that demands life-and-death responses. We come armed with words. We do not prescribe medicines—except, of course, the medicine of immortality, the Holy Supper. We do not operate on broken limbs but broken hearts. We cannot free people from their prison cells, but we loosen their chains of despair. We come with words, *divine* words. But what words do you bring to the one angry with God? What comfort do you offer to the one who has God as his enemy? What do you say to the rape victim, the abused, or the family whose child was gunned down in school? There are real enemies out there; we cannot deny that. But where is God?

The Scriptures provide words for just such occasions. They fit us with the missing armor, the comfort that has been deprived to those who need it most. These

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words are the psalms of vengeance, the *imprecatory psalms*. In the midst of a very broken and violent world, they reveal a God who is not absent, but smack-dab in the middle. They give us words to cry out against our enemy—even God himself!—and vent our anger, sadness, fear, and near despair. They offer a remedy against taking violence into our own hands, or letting that violence destroy us from the inside, and they allow us to address God as God—the one *who neither slumbers nor sleeps* (Ps 121:4).

Divine Ammunition

Now, unlike our hymnal, the Psalter is not exactly ordered by category. While some are grouped together—Royal Psalms (93–100), Psalms of Ascent (120–134), Hallelujah Psalms (146–150)—the Psalter has, so far, resisted any consensus in structural logic. Furthermore, there is no section or subtitle called the Imprecatory Psalms. Therefore, defining the *imprecatory* genre is challenging.[1] For example, should we consider Psalm 149 *imprecatory*—a psalm of praise within the climactic doxology of praise (Pss 146–150)—just because it ends with vengeance?

> Let the high praises of God be in their throats
> and two-edged swords in their hands,
> to execute vengeance on the nations
> and punishments on the peoples,
> to bind their kings with chains
> and their nobles with fetters of iron,
> to execute on them the judgment written!

[1] Hence the chink in the armor of Hermann Gunkel's form-critical categorization of genres: the Psalms do not always fit so neatly into one form or another, and often contain multiple forms in the same psalm. John Wenham (*The Goodness of God* [Downers Grove: IVP, 1974]) notes seven imprecatory psalms: 58, 68, 69, 79, 109, 137, 139. Carl Laney ("A Fresh Look at the Imprecatory Psalms," *BS* [1981]: 35–45) says there are at least nine, adding 7, 35, 59, and 83, but dropping 68 and 79. Jacob L. Goodson ("The Psalms of Vengeance: Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Theological Interpretation of the Psalms," *The Journal of Scriptural Reasoning* 13, no. 1 [2014]) says there are twenty-four psalms of vengeance in Christian tradition. Though it may simply be an oversight, it is interesting that he does not list Psalm 109. Raymond Surburg ("The Interpretation of the Imprecatory Psalms," *The Springfielder* 39, no. 3 [1975]: 88–102) says there are at least twenty-eight containing imprecations. And R. M. Benson (*Manual for Intercessory Prayer* [London: J. T. Hayes, 1889]) lists as many as thirty-nine psalms with "*comminatory*" passages. Erich Zenger (*A God of Vengeance? Understanding the Psalms of Divine Wrath,* trans. Linda M. Maloney [Freiburg: Verlag Herder, 1994; Louisville: WJK Press, 1996]) looked at seven, though for unique reasons. He took the three that had been entirely omitted from the Roman Catholic Church's Liturgy of the Hours (Pss 58, 83, and 109). Then, of the nineteen psalms that suffered ecclesiastical censorship, dropping individual verses, he chose two: 137 and 139. Finally, he added two more—Psalms 12 and 44—showing how Israel dealt with the violence of earlier traditions.

This is honor for all his godly ones.
Praise the Lord! (Ps 149:6–9)[2]

Broadly speaking, two factors make an *imprecatory psalm*: (1) the cry to God; and (2) that he take vengeance upon an enemy.[3] How lengthy or predominant the imprecation is not determined. For example, few include Psalm 149 in the list of imprecatory psalms, even though both elements are contained. Similar is Psalm 139, that beautiful meditation on God's providential care for man. At the end, we find an imprecation (more on that below).

Nevertheless, six psalms singularly capture the spirit of imprecation: 139, 137, 109, and the series 57–59. We will consider the role of the imprecation within the psalm itself, how it affects our interpretation of the psalm, and how the psalm affects our understanding of the imprecation.[4]

Psalm 139: Perfect Hatred

Luther introduces Psalm 139 by calling it "a psalm of thanks that praises God that He has provided for them so wonderfully and still reigns in all of His works, words, and thoughts."[5] Most of us simply say, "Amen!" It is our go-to for confessing the sanctity of life in the womb: "For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb" (139:13). It also clearly confesses God's foreknowledge of us and *for* us: "Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there were none of them" (139:16). The psalm beautifully conveys God's omnipresence, knowing every bit about us—even more than we know ourselves!

O Lord, you have searched me and known me!
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from afar.
You search out my path and my lying down
and are acquainted with all my ways. . . .
Where shall I go from your Spirit?
Or where shall I flee from your presence?
If I ascend to heaven, you are there!

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[2] All Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

[3] Laney defines imprecation as "an invocation of judgment, calamity, or curse uttered against one's enemies, or the enemies of God." Laney, "A Fresh Look," 35.

[4] Only one of these appears in the Sunday liturgical calendar and is thus included in *LSB* (Ps 139).

[5] *Reading the Psalms with Luther* (St. Louis: CPH, 2007), 330.

> If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!
> If I take the wings of the morning
> and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
> even there your hand shall lead me,
> and your right hand shall hold me. (139:1–3, 7–10)

This psalm meditates on God's knowledge and care for us. It is a prayer of thanks, praise, and ultimately, comfort. But then comes an abrupt halt:

> How precious to me are your thoughts, O God!
> How vast is the sum of them!
> If I would count them, they are more than the sand.
> I awake, and I am still with you.
> Oh that you would slay the wicked, O God!
> O men of blood, depart from me!
> They speak against you with malicious intent;
> your enemies take your name in vain.
> Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord?
> And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?
> I hate them with complete hatred;
> I count them my enemies.
> Search me, O God, and know my heart!
> Try me and know my thoughts!
> And see if there be any grievous way in me,
> and lead me in the way everlasting! (139:17–24)

The KJV's "perfect hatred" is even more an offense to piety. So we take what we want and leave the rest. Even the Roman Liturgy of the Hours omits verses 19–22. Hermann Gunkel noted, "It is a remarkable phenomenon that a man who can sink so ardently into the intimacy of God can suddenly re-emerge with such ferocity when he remembers the wicked."[6]

But is the shift so remarkable? Are these words so unpalatable as to censor them from the liturgical gathering? Erich Zenger asserts, "Those who strike out verses 19–22 because of an excess of 'Christian' zeal must be aware that in doing so they are destroying the whole intention of the psalm, both from the poetic and the theological point of view!"[7] In fact, he calls it "artistic and theological barbarity!"[8] What does this mean?

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[6] Hermann Gunkel, *Die Psalmen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), 586.
[7] Zenger, *A God of Vengeance?,* 31.
[8] Zenger, *A God of Vengeance?,* 32.

First, the psalm begins and ends with a plea for searching and testing (139:1, 23–24). This forms an *inclusio,* which invites us to see an intentional structure to the psalm. Second, the drastic shift in subject, especially in the first thirteen verses, powerfully governs how we hear the psalm. At first, all we hear is "you, you, you" (139:1–5):

> You have searched me . . .
> You know when I sit . . .
> You discern my thoughts . . .
> You search out . . .
> You know it altogether.
> You hem me in.

Then appears the "I" of the psalmist (139:6–12):

> Too wonderful for me . . .
> I cannot attain it . . .
> Where shall I go . . .
> Where shall I flee . . .
> If I ascend . . .
> If I make my bed in Sheol . . .
> If I take . . .
> If I say . . .

Verse 13 draws the two together: "For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb." The psalm turns to praise God for his union with man, leading us to see the interchange between the I's and you's throughout, culminating in verse 18: "I awake, and I am still with you."

But then enter the wicked. What makes the wicked is their assault on both God and man. The psalmist cries: "O men of blood, depart from me!" (v. 19). With violence in their hearts, the wicked seek to sever man from God: "They speak against you with malicious intent" (v. 20). What follows is the continued, faithful confession of unity between God and man: "Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD? And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?" (v. 21). The Lord's enemies are the psalmist's enemies because the Lord unites himself with the psalmist. The knowledge of this mystery is what is "too wonderful for me" (v. 6).

Psalm 139 offers no discernible historical situation, not even in the superscription. The enemy is not named, and the only offense listed is their breaking of the second commandment—though, they are *men of blood*. Certainly, these enemies could be any foreign nation set against Israel, whether the Philistines or the oft-cited *Edomites*. But such speculation misses the goal of the psalm: the enemy is

anyone set against the Lord and his name. We find no personal vindictiveness in this psalm, simply a unity of will against the enemy of the Lord's name. Therefore, the psalmist prays, "Oh that you would slay the wicked, O God!" (v. 19).

Finally, note the christological thrust. The unity of God and man, Lord and pray-er, reaches fulfillment in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. He is the proper and primary pray-er of the Psalms as a whole—even those requesting vengeance on the enemies.

Psalm 137: Total Annihilation

Psalm 137 is the psalm of violence *par excellence*. *If* it appears in hymnals or lectionaries (which it does not in our own), then it tends to appear without the last three verses. The most disturbing of the psalms, at least at first glance, fully captures the prayer of imprecation.

> By the waters of Babylon,
> there we sat down and wept,
> when we remembered Zion.
> On the willows there
> we hung up our lyres.
> For there our captors
> required of us songs,
> and our tormentors, mirth, saying,
> "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"
> How shall we sing the Lord's song
> in a foreign land?
> If I forget you, O Jerusalem,
> let my right hand forget its skill!
> Let my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth,
> if I do not remember you,
> if I do not set Jerusalem
> above my highest joy!
> Remember, O Lord, against the Edomites
> the day of Jerusalem,
> how they said, "Lay it bare, lay it bare,
> down to its foundations!"
> O daughter of Babylon, doomed to be destroyed,
> blessed shall he be who repays you
> with what you have done to us!
> Blessed shall he be who takes your little ones
> and dashes them against the rock! (137)

Rarely shy of allegory, Origen comments: "the just give up to destruction all their enemies, *which are their vices*, so that they do not spare even the children, that is, the early beginnings and promptings of evil."[9] St. Ambrose defines these "enemy children" as "all corrupt and filthy thoughts against Christ."[10] Changing the object of the violence offers one helpful way around the affront to piety—the more abstract, spiritual, and impersonal, the easier.

Another option to lessen the offense is to remove God's blessing of such a sentiment. That is the move of *The Lutheran Study Bible*: "The term translated 'blessed' in 137:8–9 does not invoke God's blessing on the violence. The Hebrew term describes the glee of the one who brings punishment."[11] This strips the psalm from Christian prayer, as just an episode in the history of God's people, and an unfortunate one at that.

The text itself makes clear the context for such violent prophecy: the taunt of Babylon (137:1). Israel truly found Babylon as an enemy, yet also iconic of all enemies (similarly, Edom and Egypt). This psalm, though located "by the waters of Babylon," gives itself to be prayed in and under the suffering from any Babylon. Whether this song is exilic or prophetic of the exile, the suffering is real, and the prayer is real, and so is the desire that enemy and enemy child be dashed to pieces, never rising again. In this way, both Origen and Ambrose rightly see our vices and unfaithful speech as "the daughter of Babylon doomed to destruction." Yet, we also recognize a real Babylon. Thankfully, Kretzmann nails it with this one: "Naturally, this psalm finds its application in the Christian Church of all times, for it is equivalent to a prayer that God would deliver us from every evil work and preserve us unto His heavenly kingdom."[12]

Psalm 109: Cursing and Not Blessing

Psalm 109 approximates a prayer for biblical karma. It is long and tortuous to the pious. Episcopalians today mark at least half this psalm as "optional."[13] They are likely not alone in skipping large portions. However, "the real problem," Patrick

[9] Origen, "*Against Celsus*" 7.22, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: The Writings of the Fathers Down to AD 325*, 10 vols., ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), vol. 4, p. 619.

[10] Ambrose, "*Concerning Repentance*" 2.11.106, in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Second Series, 14 vols., ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1952–1957), 10:358.

[11] *The Lutheran Study Bible* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2009), 879, hereafter *TLSB*.

[12] Paul E. Kretzmann, *Popular Commentary of the Bible—The Old Testament: Volume II—The Poetical and the Prophetical Books* (St. Louis: CPH, 1924), 202.

[13] See Patrick Henry Reardon, *Christ in the Psalms* (Chesterton, Ind.: Conciliar Press, 2000), 215.

Henry Reardon notes, "is not with the psalm, but with ourselves." Sounding a bit like Bonhoeffer, he goes on:

> We modern Christians are far too disposed to establish our personal sentiments, our own spontaneous feelings, as the standard for our prayer. Thus, if the words of a particular prayer (in this case, a psalm inspired by the Holy Spirit) express emotions and responses with which we do not 'feel' comfortable, we tend to think that we are being insincere in praying it. Contemporary Christians have made a virtual fetish of spontaneity in worship, and sincerity nowadays is measured by pulse rhythm. One would think that our Lord had said: "I have come that you may have sincere and heartfelt emotions, and have them more abundantly."[14]

I think he is right. This psalm discomforts us.

> Appoint a wicked man against him;
> let an accuser stand at his right hand.
> When he is tried, let him come forth guilty;
> let his prayer be counted as sin!
> May his days be few;
> may another take his office!
> May his children be fatherless
> and his wife a widow!
> May his children wander about and beg,
> seeking food far from the ruins they inhabit!
> May the creditor seize all that he has;
> may strangers plunder the fruits of his toil!
> Let there be none to extend kindness to him,
> nor any to pity his fatherless children!
> May his posterity be cut off;
> may his name be blotted out in the second generation!
> May the iniquity of his fathers be remembered before the Lord,
> and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out!
> Let them be before the Lord continually,
> that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth! (109:6–15)

On account of verse 8, and its citation in Acts 1:20, this psalm came to be known as *Psalmus Ischarioticus*. Luther upholds the tradition of understanding this psalm

[14] Reardon, *Christ in the Psalms*, 215. For a thorough discussion of the hyper-psychologization of our modern culture, see Carl R. Trueman, *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self: Cultural Amnesia, Expressive Individualism, and the Road to Sexual Revolution* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020).

as Christ's prayer against Judas, and then, more broadly, against every instinct of betrayal.[15]

There is also an interesting reception history to this psalm. It appears that Psalm 109 held a sort of *magical* sense as an incantation against an enemy. As late as the early eighteenth century, we come across the following:

> Many believe that this psalm must be prayed without interruption for a whole year and nine days, morning and evening. . . . But if this enchantment is neglected even one time, it is thought that it will not fall upon the head of the enemy, and instead will turn back upon the one who prays it. The enemy must know nothing of the reading of the psalm; in addition, one must not greet him in the street or accept a greeting, and all sorts of other absurd customs derived from pagan superstition are in circulation.[16]

It appears that Luther also urged people to pray Count Moritz to death; and that this practice continued into the nineteenth century, at least in Bavaria, Swabia, and Switzerland.[17] For the obvious reason that the Scriptures, though "living and active" (Heb 4:12), are not magical incantations, such use is discouraged. But praying this against an enemy—*your* enemy—is not.

Again, we are not certain of the historical setting here. It may be that David has in mind Ahithophel (2 Sam 15:31; 16:20–17:23) or Doeg (1 Sam 22:6–23). The NT applies it to Judas (Acts 1:20; cf. Matt 27:39). Paul appears to cite it more broadly in light of the Christian suffering persecution (1 Cor 4:12). That no enemy is named suggests that this psalm includes many contexts and many enemies. Ultimately, it is a prayer for salvation: "Help me, O LORD my God! Save me according to your steadfast love!" (109:26). And as it ends, it offers a robust prayer of *faith* that the Lord does hear and will answer:

> With my mouth I will give great thanks to the Lord;
> I will praise him in the midst of the throng.
> For he stands at the right hand of the needy one,
> to save him from those who condemn his soul to death. (109:30–31)

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[15] See Martin Luther, *Commentary on the Four Psalms of Comfort* (1526): vol. 14, p. 257, in *Luther's Works, American Edition*, vols. 1–30, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955–76); vols. 31–55, ed. Helmut Lehmann (Philadelphia/Minneapolis: Muhlenberg/Fortress, 1957–86); vols. 56–82, ed. Christopher Boyd Brown and Benjamin T. G. Mayes (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2009–).

[16] Johann Friedrich Heine (*dissertation,* University of Helmstedt, 1708), cited in Walter Dürig, "Die Verwendung des sogenannten Fluchpsalms 108 (109) im Volksglauben und in der Liturgie," *Münchener Theologische Zeitschrift* 27 (1976): 71–84, 77.

[17] See Zenger, *A God of Vengeance?,* 58.

Psalms 57–59: Do Not Destroy

So far, all the psalms we have discussed are found in Book V of the Psalter. Amid much scholarly debate over the meaning of ordering and editing of the Psalter, I am not sure what to make of this.[18] Turning to Psalms 57–59, we leave Book V and jump back to Book II.

In the very persuasive article by Gary Anderson, the common superscriptions and the historical scenarios described in 1 Samuel 26 provide the key to the meaning of these psalms.[19] First notice the superscriptions:

> Psalm 57: To the choirmaster: according to Do Not Destroy.
>
> A Miktam of David, when he fled from Saul, in the cave.
>
> Psalm 58: To the choirmaster: according to Do Not Destroy.
>
> A Miktam of David.
>
> Psalm 59: To the choirmaster: according to Do Not Destroy.
>
> A Miktam of David, when Saul sent men to watch his house in order to kill him.

These three psalms form their own unit based on the superscriptions. Psalm 60 is likewise to the choirmaster as well as a Miktam of David, but the tune is different: "according to Shushan Eduth." And the same goes for Psalm 56: "To the choirmaster: according to The Dove on Far-off Terebinths. A Miktam of David." This leaves these three psalms (57–59) in the curious position of bearing the same tune: "Do Not Destroy."

Where does "Do Not Destroy" come from? And how does this tie into the account of David recorded in 1 Samuel? The superscription for Psalm 57 locates the story: "when he fled from Saul, in the cave." This cave incident first appears in 1 Samuel 24, where David cut a corner of Saul's robe while he was "relieving himself" (see 1 Sam 24:3). Though David's men see this as the occasion by which the Lord delivers Saul into David's hand (1 Sam 24:4), David responds: "The LORD forbid that

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[18] Cf. David Howard, "Editorial Activity in the Psalter: A State-of-the-Field Survey," *Word and World* IX, no. 3 (1989): 274–285; J. Clinton McCann, *The Shape and Shaping of the Psalter,* JSOTSS 159 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993); Gerald Wilson, *The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter* (Chico: Scholars Press, 1985); Norman Whybray, *Reading the Psalms as a Book,* JSOTSS 222 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996).

[19] Gary A. Anderson, "King David and the Psalms of Imprecation," *Pro Ecclesia* XV, no. 3 (2006): 267–280. Regarding the function of the superscriptions in general, see the helpful article by Brevard Childs, "Psalm Titles and Midrashic Exegesis," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 16 (1971): 137–150. As an aside, it is lamentable that the otherwise wonderful resource—*Reading the Psalms with Luther*—omits in every occasion the superscriptions to the Psalms.

I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD's anointed, to put out my hand against him, seeing he is the LORD's anointed" (1 Sam 24:6). Again, two chapters later, Saul pursued David into the wilderness of Ziph (1 Sam 26:2). While he slept, David and Abishai entered the camp. Abishai again said to David, "God has given your enemy into your hand this day. Now please let me pin him to the earth with one stroke of the spear, and I will not strike him twice" (1 Sam 26:8). Here is the kicker: "But David said to Abishai, 'Do not destroy him, for who can put out his hand against the LORD's anointed and be guiltless?'" (1 Sam 26:9).

These two occasions locate these psalms in David's flight from Saul's attacks. But there is some difficulty matching the tenor of these psalms with the actions of David. The second episode more than the first shows David's total self-emptying for the sake of Saul. In fact, he reproves Saul's guard for failing to protect their master (26:16). However, the psalm itself is loaded with a bloodthirsty quest for vengeance:

> O God, break the teeth in their mouths;
> tear out the fangs of the young lions, O Lord!
> Let them vanish like water that runs away;
> when he aims his arrows, let them be blunted.
> Let them be like the snail that dissolves into slime,
> like the stillborn child who never sees the sun.
> Sooner than your pots can feel the heat of thorns,
> whether green or ablaze, may he sweep them away!
> The righteous will rejoice when he sees the vengeance;
> he will bathe his feet in the blood of the wicked. (Ps 58:6–10)

Especially disturbing is that last part: "the righteous will rejoice when he sees the vengeance; he will bathe his feet in the blood of the wicked." But what makes this most disturbing is the way in which David *does not* rejoice when the Lord finally has vengeance on Saul five chapters later (1 Sam 31).[20] Anderson solves this by seeing in these psalms the very solution to what they seek: "the bloodthirsty desire for vengeance is overcome" by way of the psalms themselves.[21] In fact, the psalms give the self-control needed in each of these encounters, and they continue to bestow

[20] In fact, the story continues in 2 Samuel with David's mourning: "Then David took hold of his clothes and tore them, and so did all the men who were with him. And they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son and for the people of the LORD and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword. And David said to the young man who told him, 'Where do you come from?' And he answered, 'I am the son of a sojourner, an Amalekite.' David said to him, 'How is it you were not afraid to put out your hand to destroy the LORD's anointed?' Then David called one of the young men and said, 'Go, execute him.' And he struck him down so that he died. And David said to him, 'Your blood be on your head, for your own mouth has testified against you, saying, "I have killed the LORD's anointed"'" (2 Sam 1:11–16).

[21] Anderson, "King David and the Psalms of Imprecation," 276.

self-control on countless generations of Christians who pray them when fear and rage are at their highest.

Erich Zenger rightly describes Psalm 58 as "a cry for help coming from those who are terrified to the point of death."[22] This "terrified to the point of death" is not an experience we go through daily, but perhaps occasionally—and, no doubt, our members too! It is the symptom of deep depression. It is the working of a guilty conscience. It is the actual fear of a terrible enemy. Yet, this is an experience in which, no matter how much it seems to be the case, we are not alone. Christ himself, alike us in all things except sin, experiences terror to the point of death in Gethsemane. Psalm 58 may just have been on his lips. The cup he prayed to be taken from him was to be drunk. Perhaps he prayed the enemies to drink it down to its dregs. That is what happened, but it all happened in Christ, who became sin who knew no sin (2 Cor 5:21). Dietrich Bonhoeffer well displays this christological interpretation:

> God's righteous vengeance on the wicked has already been achieved. The blood of the wicked has already flowed. God's judgment on death upon godless humanity has been spoken. God's righteousness is fulfilled on the cross of Christ. . . . Jesus Christ died the death of the godless; he was stricken by God's wrath and vengeance. His blood is the blood which God's righteousness required for the transgression of his commandments. God's vengeance has been carried out in the midst of the earth in a manner more fearful than even this psalm knows about. Christ, the innocent, died the death of the wicked, so that we need not die. . . . Christ bore the whole vengeance of God for all.[23]

Can We Pray the Imprecatory Psalms Today?

But can we even talk this way? Can we pray these prayers? That is a question that has troubled the church in recent years. We are not alone in asking this. One more brief anecdote: I have a friend from high school who is a devout Muslim. A few years back he posted the following on Facebook:

> Muslims: why do we tolerate supplications that beckon that God bring calamity upon 'enemies'? The concept of an 'enemy' is far too flimsy, too arbitrary to be imposed as a guideline to call upon God's wrath. It stinks of a certain 'us vs them' mentality that underlies too much of our collective approach to the global challenges we face. We should oppose injustice, hate, greed for their evil, regardless the purveyors or victims thereof. We should be as harsh on our own

[22] Zenger, *A God of Vengeance?,* 37.

[23] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "On Psalm 58: A Sermon on a Psalm of Vengeance," in *Meditating on the Word* (Cambridge, MA: Cowley Publications, 1986), 82–84.

> transgressions as we are on those of others. Why not, then, ask God to guide us all to what He loves and what is good, just, and righteous?

I do not normally respond to his posts, but this one struck me particularly. So I said:

> Abdul, Christians have a whole category of Psalms termed 'imprecatory.' These are Psalms (prayers, even hymns) specifically asking for God's wrath against our enemies. I believe it's healthy to pray these—not least because we are thereby entrusting wrath to God, who alone has the right to judge, and not taking any such wrath up into our own hands. It's also important to pray these because often the chief target (as someone mentioned above) is the enemy within us: our hate, our anger, and our murderous thoughts. Sorry to butt in—I hope it's received in a helpful way. Also, it's noteworthy that we have similar questions to wrestle with. Peace.

I am not sure what exactly this indicates, but it received seven "likes"—only one of which bore an Anglo name.[24] Perhaps, if nothing else, it shows that there is a true violence toward our enemies that demands justice, but also a desire for mercy that we struggle to balance.

This balance of justice and mercy often rubs us wrong. Gemma Hinricher, prioress of the Carmelite convent at Dachau, offers an example of this struggle in a unique context:

> As early as 1965 we received permission to pray the Office in the vernacular. However, this vernacular prayer, which had become necessary and requisite for the sake of the tourists, also brought with it serious problems for our recitation of prayer in choir, because of the so-called imprecatory or vengeance psalms, and the cursing passages in a number of psalms. We were soon tempted to return to Latin, for no matter how much the vernacular brought home to us the riches of the psalms, the Latin had at least covered up the weaknesses of the psalms as prayer. In the immediate vicinity of the concentration camp, we felt ourselves unable to say out loud psalms that spoke of a punishing, angry God and of the destruction of enemies, often in hideous images, and whose content was the desire for destruction and vengeance, in the presence of people who came into our church agitated and mentally distressed by their visit to the camp. . . . It is probably understandable that neither verses nor whole psalms of cursing, neither desires for destruction nor for vengeance can be uttered in the midst of such a stillness.[25]

[24] The interaction took place July 18, 2014.

[25] Gemma Hinricher, "Die Fluch- und Vergeltungspsalmen im Stundengebet," *Bibel und Kirche* 35 (1980): 55.

Notice what she said: "*we felt ourselves unable to say out loud psalms that spoke of a punishing, angry God and of the destruction of enemies . . . neither verses nor whole psalms of cursing, neither desires for destruction nor for vengeance can be uttered in the midst of such a stillness*." There was, for Gemma, an inability to even utter these words of God. Why is that?

Perhaps Gemma could be applauded for discerning law and gospel. Perhaps she was censoring God's word out of fear. I understand her response, particularly in that context. However, such sympathies are not unilateral. This sort of censorship is sadly all too common in the church—even apart from such horrific and painful contexts. It has become a cliché in the church to pit the New Testament's love against the Old Testament's wrath. The prominent biblical scholar Claus Westermann puts it this way:

> In the Old Testament period . . . whatever happened between God and man or between God and His people had to take place this side of death. . . . Jesus' mission to suffer for others includes his enemies as well. *So the petition against enemies is thereby eradicated from the prayers of God's people . . . Although petition against enemies is out of the question for Christians,* the passages in the psalms where we meet such petitions remind us what had to happen before God's congregation could cease to be a group ranged against other groups and become a community for all humanity.[26]

C. S. Lewis also saw these psalms as *beneath* the dignity and morality of Christians. In fact, he even goes so far as to say that these psalms are *sinful*, but they at least reveal the true humanity of the people of God. He adds that the only way a Christian may pray these today is allegorically.[27] Again, considering Psalm 137, an early twentieth-century cardinal of the Roman Church said:

> The Psalm ends in imprecations: but we do not allow ourselves to repeat them; *we are not of the Old Testament*, tolerating the laws of retaliation. An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. Our lips are purified by the fire of Christian charity and utter no words of hate.[28]

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[26] Claus Westermann, *The Living Psalms,* trans. J. R. Porter (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 299–300, emphasis added.

[27] C. S. Lewis, *Reflections on the Psalms* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1958), 136.

[28] Cardinal Mercier of Belgium, "Coronation-Day Sermon" (1916). Cited in Surburg, "The Interpretation of the Imprecatory Psalms," 89, emphasis added. Cf. T. K. Cheyne, *The Christian Use of the Psalms* (London: Isbister and Company, 1899), "I fear that our unmitigated adoption of the Psalter as it stands may counteract that spirit of love which is one half of Christianity" (26–27).

The only hate going on in that sermon is a hatred for the Jews—those *Old Testament* folk. The situation is such that today's monastics are not even required to pray the imprecatory psalms at all.[29] What would St. Benedict say?

Notice how the impulse against these psalms reveals a deeper theological infection within the church. In the second century, Marcion argued that the god of the Old Testament was not the same as that of the New. Israel's god was lesser, weaker, and ultimately inferior to the Christian God. Though rightly declared a heretic, this heresy never quite died out. It received a gust of energy with the famous historian Adolf von Harnack.[30] Today it plagues our members all too frequently. We speak in terms of "that was then, this is now." Or, "that's just not what a *Christian* would say." One modern commentator says, "They belong to an age of religion which has been *displaced* by Christianity."[31] And regarding Psalm 129, Malcolm Guite ponders poetically,

> I understand this psalmist, and I'd rather
> Complain to God than not, but still I wonder
> If he was right to call on God to smite
> His enemies. As though that holy thunder
> Were just a private weapon, and the fight
> Were always just, and God was on our side
> And we were always only in the right.
> Better to ask for mercy, mercy wide
> As the wide ocean. If my enemy
> And I both ask, we will not be denied.[32]

Such sentiments are certainly pious, but they assume the Psalms to be those exclusively of men, rather than of God. If of men alone, then they surely can err. If of God, then let us not possess piety greater than his.

Now, the question is this: Can a Christian pray these psalms? Jesus said, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matt 5:44). Are these psalms the sort of *prayer* Jesus had in mind? *The Lutheran Study Bible* notes:

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[29] Anderson, "King David and the Psalms of Imprecation," 267.

[30] Adolf von Harnack, *Marcion: Das Evangelium vom fremden Gott*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1924); trans. J. E. Steely and L. D. Bierma, *Marcion: The Gospel of an Alien God* (Durham: Labyrinth Press, 1990). Cf. John Behr, *The Way to Nicaea—The Formation of Christian Theology: Volume I* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001), 18.

[31] C. A. Briggs, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, 2 vols. (1906–1907).

[32] Malcolm Guite, *David's Crown: Sounding the Psalms* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2021), 129.

> Christians should understand that the violent outbursts in these psalms are not prescriptions for the behavior of God's people but illustrations of emotions that God's people will indeed experience. Christians today who lose loved ones to war or to violent criminals will have these same feelings of anger and revenge. Praying the imprecatory psalms can help God's people express their anguish before God rather than act out their feelings in an unjust way.[33]

Absolutely, the *actions* of vengeance are not "prescriptions" that we are given to carry out. Perhaps, however, the *prayers* are. These prayers allow us to entrust our anger and revenge to God, with the very words of God, rather than taking matters into our own hands.[34]

To What End? Letting Vengeance Be God's

Commenting on Deuteronomy, St. Paul urges: "Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord'" (Rom 12:19; cf. Deut 32:35). The Lord is the God of vengeance. He is the judge: God Almighty. This God of wrath troubles us, scares us. However, as one scholar noted, "A God who knows no wrath requires no cult: *religio esse non potest, ubi metus nullus est* [there can be no religion where there is no fear]."[35] Luther also orients us toward this God in the Small Catechism, as each of the commandments rehearses the refrain: "*we should fear and love God.*" We fear him because of his justice, his making wrongs right, his power. As Jesus says, "Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt 10:28). And yet, in all of this, we recognize that *he* is God, and not we ourselves. Ultimately, these psalms of vengeance are prayers for justice, for God to be God. It is akin to praying: "Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt 6:10). The punishment of sin, the destruction of evil, the justification of the world—this is God's work, and not ours. That is what we ask with these imprecatory psalms. That is how we pray and why.

We pray these psalms so that God would do the justifying. Like David, who fled from Saul, we pray and *do not destroy*. These psalms, then, are for us and for our

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[33] *TLSB*, 879.

[34] It might be interesting here to note that this sort of language is not confined to the Psalter. You will also see the desire for vengeance in the Pentateuch (Cf. Num 10:35), the Prophets (Cf. Jer 11:20; 15:15; 17:18; 18:21–23; 20:12), and even the New Testament (Cf. Rev 6:9–10). Statistically, the imprecatory psalms are quoted with greater frequency than any other psalm grouping. Cf. Wenham, *The Goodness of God*, 157–158. So the idea of these prayers being sub-Christian is not only a denial of the inspiration of the Scriptures, but also a false conception of who God is as presented therein.

[35] Jan Assmann, *Politische Theologie zwischen Ägypten und Israel* (Munich: Carl Friedrich von Siemens Stiftung, 1992), 87. He cites Lactantius (c. 250–c. 325), "*De Ira Dei*," in *Patrologia cursus completus: Series latina*, 217 vols., ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris: Migne, 1844–1864), 7:113.

neighbor. They flow from faith, not anger.[36] They confront the reality of sin and shame and evil and suffering—and then trust all to the Lord, who does all things well (see Mark 7:37), to cause his good and gracious will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.[37] These are the prayers of victims and an awareness that God stands with the victimized. And when we pray these we also stand with the victimized. They are prayers for peace, when there is no peace (Jer 6:14).[38]

There is no point in praying these psalms if there is no violence, no suffering, no sin, and no shame. But if there is—for you, for your member, for your community, or for your world—then these psalms cannot be avoided. St. John says, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8). With sin comes anger and bitterness and wrath. Though baptized and redeemed, we are still human. And part of our human*ness* is the reality of pain and suffering attendant to the fall. And when we suffer, we cry out. These psalms give us the "earthy" words that match every passion of humanity, while remaining words of God.[39]

It is important to realize that these imprecatory psalms are what we call *primary theology*, as opposed to *secondary theology*.[40] That is, they are the actual *doing* of theology, not a systematic discussion *about* theology. They are actual prayers, not discussions *about* prayer. This is not to say theoretical discussion is bad (that is what we are doing now!)—it is just not primary. When someone is crushed under the weight of his sin, he is not looking for a discussion about concupiscence, or the distinction between actual and original sin. What he needs is the forgiveness of sins. So it is with these psalms: when our enemy has us surrounded and defeated, we do not want a discussion of whether enemies really exist, we want our enemies to be judged and thrown back! In a different context, we may reflect on what an enemy is; during an assault, however, we want God to get up and do something! That is what these psalms are all about: they are "go-get-'em" psalms.

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[36] John Wenham notes that cursing in the Scriptures cannot be read in terms of the way cursing works today, which is often reactionary and directed against our enemy. Rather, "the cursings of the psalmist . . . are serious, premeditated, religious." And further, "they are not utterances to the people concerned." He concludes, "The imprecations are therefore fundamentally expressions of trust in God, rather than of hate for man." *The Goodness of God*, 161.

[37] Hans-Joachim Kraus (*Theology of the Psalms,* trans. Keith Crim [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992]) summarizes this point well: "To set up a polarity of love and vengeance would involve a total misunderstanding of biblical truth. . . . In this perspective it is inappropriate to polarize the issue and appeal to New Testament love" (67).

[38] Cf. J. Clinton McCann Jr., "Psalms," *Theological Interpretation of the Old Testament: A Book-by-Book Survey*, ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 163.

[39] See Bernhard Anderson, *Out of the Depths: The Psalms Speak for Us Today* (Louisville: WJK Press, 2000), 88.

[40] For the terminology, see Aidan Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1992).

Now, there are two important distinctions to be made before we send God with his angel armies. First, in each of these imprecatory psalms, it should be clear that the psalmist's enemy is God's enemy: "Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD? . . . I count them my enemies" (Ps 139:21, 22). These enemies are not made on a whim. They are not subjectively enemies, as if it was simply a personal matter, or dislike. The enemies are marked by their violent hatred of God's name and persecution thereof.

Second, because the nature of an enemy is one who opposes God's name, we often find such an enemy within our own heart. We may find that we pray these imprecatory psalms against ourselves—that is the reality of what it means to be *simul iustus et peccator*.[41] So, when we pray "Thy will be done," we pray that God "breaks and hinders every evil plan and purpose of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature, which do not want us to hallow God's name or let His kingdom come" (SC, Third Petition).[42]

Therefore, the goal of praying these imprecatory psalms is to trust the justifying work to God alone. He alone sets the world aright, and he does it on the cross of Calvary. This is the *crux*, literally, that turns the prayer of vengeance into the prayer of forgiveness. It is on the cross that anger and mercy, justice and forgiveness hang together. Sinner and saint are set before our eyes in the body of Christ crucified—there, law and gospel meet.[43] Ultimately, these psalms find their fulfillment and recapitulation in Christ. Bonhoeffer puts it elegantly:

> God's vengeance did not fall on the sinners, but on the only sinless one, the Son of God, who stood in the place of sinners. Jesus Christ bore the vengeance of God, which the psalm asks to be carried out. Christ calmed God's anger against sin and prayed in the hour of the carrying out of the divine judgment: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they are doing!" No one other than he, who himself bore the wrath of God, could pray like this. That was the end of all false thoughts about the love of a God who does not take sin very seriously. God hates and judges the enemies of God in the only righteous one, the one

[41] Cf. Horace D. Hummel, *The Word Becoming Flesh (*St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1979), 434: "The real subject of these psalms is not individuals or nations whom one should love or pray for as an absolute alternative, but (of a piece with the stylized, typical language of the Psalter in general) archetypes of the 'demonic,' of that primal evil which always and everywhere opposes God, His work, and His people, ultimately of course, the Antichrist or Satan who indwells the wicked instead of Christ (and since we remain *simul peccator*, indwells also us)."

[42] Quotations from the Small Catechism are from *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2017).

[43] Cf. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Psalms: The Prayerbook of the Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1970), 57–59: "It is therefore nowhere a matter of personal conflict. Nowhere does the one who prays these psalms want to take revenge into his own hands. He calls for the wrath of God alone. . . . Thus the imprecatory psalm leads to the cross of Jesus and to the love of God which forgives enemies."

> who prays for forgiveness for God's enemies. Only in the cross of Jesus Christ is the love of God to be found.
>
> So the psalm of vengeance leads to the cross of Jesus and to the love of God that forgives enemies. I cannot forgive the enemies of God by myself, only the crucified Christ can; and I can forgive through him. So the carrying out of vengeance becomes grace for all in Jesus Christ.[44]

A Healthy Recovery

"*So the carrying out of vengeance becomes grace for all in Jesus Christ,*" Bonhoeffer asserts. That is where we are to find our *healthy* recovery as a church and the people of God. The recovery of these imprecatory psalms is good for our *health,* our pastoral care, and the spiritual health of our members. John Kleinig profoundly notes that "much more is accomplished by prayer than by anything else I do."[45] He is right, and I think these psalms have a role to play.

One goal of these prayers is self-realization. When fear overwhelms us, we lose sight of who we are. We panic. We forget the basics and think the worst. These prayers allow us to make the abstract real. They give form to our pain, voice to our silence, and legitimacy to the injustice we have born. By giving us the words that echo our feelings, and placing them entirely on God, we trust not only our enemies to him, but also our fears and pain and despair. But without these psalms, without these words to God, our fear might run full course through us, without ever slowing down until it destroys us from the inside out.

Another health benefit is the reality of pent-up aggression. When anger festers without a proper outlet, no amount of self-control can contain its rage. Trying to keep our anger down does not minimize the violence, but multiplies it! The proper and healthy way to manage anger is through prayer and repentance—recognizing that anger is murder (Matt 5:21–26), and that we have no right to be angry for our own sake. The only one who has any right to anger is the sinless One, and at the peak of the injustice raised against him, he said, "Father, forgive them" (Luke 23:34). By making our anger conscious and confessing it before God, we remove its power and destructiveness.

On another note, while certainly beneficial to the one praying, there is also a health benefit for others. By praying these psalms—perhaps even when we are not under the distress of enemies—we unite our voice with those who do suffer. We gain sympathy for others and share their suffering, fulfilling the command to "bear one

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[44] Bonhoeffer, *Prayerbook of the Bible*, 175.

[45] John W. Kleinig, *Grace upon Grace* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2008), 151.

another's burdens" (Gal 6:2). These prayers make us aware of the real violence and shame and guilt and despair that plague our people.

Finally, and certainly the greatest health benefit to praying these psalms, is that by praying for vengeance you are not taking vengeance into your own hands. I suppose that makes for healthy living, at least for your enemy!

So how should we recover these psalms? I noted previously that only one of the psalms we have studied appears in *Lutheran Service Book:* Psalm 139. That being the case, a liturgical revival of the imprecatory psalms will be difficult. Perhaps they could find their way into Advent or Lent midweek services—connecting the prayers of violence with the prayers of repentance. Another way is through our hymnody. While some imprecation has been cut from our hymnody, there is hope yet![46] Consider some of these imprecatory hymn stanzas: "Lord, put to shame Thy foes who breathe defiance And vainly make their might their sole reliance" (*TLH* 269:2). Or, "Our foes repel, our wrongs redress" (*TLH* 64:3). And then one of my personal favorites:

> Be of good cheer; your cause belongs
> To Him who can avenge your wrongs;
> Leave it to Him, our Lord.
> Though hidden yet from mortal eyes,
> His Gideon shall for you arise,
> Uphold you and His Word. (LSB 666:2)

While there are a number of hymns containing imprecations, none of them names names.[47] Meanwhile, the Psalms often list names—typically in the superscription. Names make concrete the abstract. This is good because then the enemy can be located and described and heard and cast out. For this reason, we should take up the imprecatory psalms into our hymnody in specific contexts. Giving names and faces to our enemies—whether it be those espousing false doctrine or demanding a life of fleshly desires—will help turn our anger into joyous trust in God alone.

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[46] Consider Luther's "Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word" (*LSB* 655). In 1541, the Turkish army threatened to take Vienna. The German rulers called for prayers for safety from these Islamic forces. Luther responded by writing the original German (*Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort*) for a prayer service in Wittenberg. Convinced that the church was threatened not only by the Turkish army of Sultan Suleiman but also by the pope, Luther began his text as follows: *"Lord, keep us in thy Word and work, Restrain the murderous Pope and Turk, Who fain would tear from off thy throne Christ Jesus, thy beloved Son."* Our version today has no imprecation against pope or Turk *specifically*. We now sing in stanza 1: "Curb those who by deceit or sword Would wrest the kingdom from Your Son And bring to naught all He has done."

[47] See Chad L. Bird, "Singing against Our Enemies," *Gottesdienst* (Trinity, 2006).

The greatest need we have for a proper recovery of these psalms is in our pastoral care of those who suffer. A proper theology of the cross will aid our ability to diagnose and apply these psalms, but more than anything else, we need to let our suffering members know that they can cry out to God with their pain. The victims do not need to be silenced. They do not need piously to keep it to themselves. They can scream in anger to God, against God, and—ultimately—with God.

Consider the story I began with of the woman who lost two sons in unrelated incidents. She needed to mourn and grieve and be angry with God, but was never given permission to do so. In fact, she was burdened by the thought that God *had nothing to do with it*! These psalms allow us to say otherwise, and in so doing, apply a real dosage of the gospel in a most unexpected way with the confidence that these words—*God's* words—are well-pleasing to him.

Conclusion

Finally, when it comes to the Psalms, Rick Stuckwisch is right on: "It's not so much a question of what *we* should do with the psalms, but what the psalms shall do with us."[48] We must remember that these are God's words we take up onto our lips. Christ prays these psalms vicariously as our representative and as representative of humanity. As Bonhoeffer notes, "*He* accuses the godless, *He* calls down upon them God's vengeance and justice, and *He* gives Himself for all the godless with His innocent suffering on the cross."[49]

I urge, then, that you pick up the psalms of vengeance and pray them. In doing so, you are praying for my member whose sons were killed, one after the other. You are praying for the broken, the depressed, the persecuted, and all the victims of unjust violence. You are begging God to be God as he has promised to be, to set the world aright. With these psalms, you hold God to his word, trusting Christ's death and resurrection to be what it is—an end to suffering, the final verdict of justice and life, and the ultimate mercy of God. This is what is desperately needed today: hope for the despairing and comfort for the broken-hearted. "Where *everything* speaks *against* God, those who pray them attribute *everything to* God."[50]

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[48] D. Richard Stuckwisch, "Praying the Psalms at Home: A Prayer Book for the Laity Coming in 2006," *Day by Day We Magnify Thee: Psalms in the Life of the Church, The Good Shepherd Institute: Pastoral Theology and Sacred Music for the Church. Journal for the Third Annual Conference* (November 3–5, 2002): 97–114, 109.

[49] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "Sermon on a Psalm of Wrath: Psalm 58 (July 11, 1937)," in *Meditating on the Word*, ed. and trans. David McI. Gracie (Cambridge: Cowley Publications, 1987), 96.

[50] Zenger, *A God of Vengeance?,* 88.

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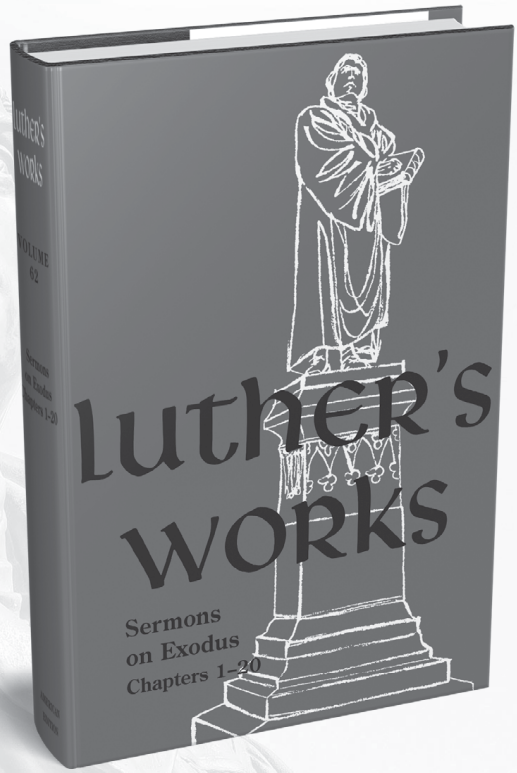

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The Liturgy of the Old Testament: Its Festivals, Order, Purpose, and Typology

Robert D. Macina

I. Introduction

The New Testament Scriptures bear witness to the liturgy[1] of the Old Testament, including ancient Israel's festivals. Luke 1:5–23 portrays one of the parts of the daily service at which Zechariah the priest entered the holy place to burn incense in the temple. Hebrews 9:6 and 10:11 testify to the liturgy that the priests conducted every morning and evening. The New Testament references the Sabbath dozens of times, with one of the clearest examples in Colossians 2:16. This same passage also speaks of the festivals at the first of every month and the ones that occurred at specific times once per year. Each of the four Gospels mentions the Passover (Matt 26:2, 17–19; Mark 14:1, 12, 14, 16; Luke 2:41; 22:1, 7, 8, 11, 13, 15; John 2:13, 23; 6:4; 11:55; 12:1; 13:1; 18:28, 39; 19:14), while Matthew 26:17, Mark 14:1, and Luke 22:1, 7 relate the Festival of Unleavened Bread to the Passover. Romans 11:16 makes mention of the Firstfruits in the Old Testament. The Festival of Harvest, also called the Festival of Weeks, became known as Pentecost in Acts 2:1; 20:16; and 1 Corinthians 16:8. Revelation 8:2, 6, 13 could be understood as a fulfillment of ancient Israel's Festival of Trumpets. Hebrews 9:7 and 13:11 speak of the Day of Atonement. John 7:2 exclusively refers to the Festival of Tabernacles.

Christians study these readings, yet are often unaware of their greater significance and background in the Old Testament. Those who focus almost exclusively on the New Testament may fail to comprehend the broader biblical context of these passages, especially with regard to the liturgy of the Old Testament.

[1] This article uses *liturgy* interchangeably with *divine service*. In the church today, people sometimes limit the definition of liturgy to the written order of service. However, in the Greek version of both the Old Testament and the New Testament the term *liturgy* frequently refers to the ritual acts that comprise the divine service. Moreover, the liturgy in the Old Testament is different from that of the New Testament. While the ritual acts in the divine service today always consist of spoken words, in the Old Testament the priests enacted most of the liturgy without speaking anything. For a thorough analysis of the meaning of *liturgy* in the Scriptures, see Klaus Hess, "*latreuo, leitourgeo*," in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, ed. Colin Brown, 4 vols. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), 3:459–553; and H. Strathmann, "*latreuo, latreia*," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976), 4:58–65.

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Christians can have a greater appreciation of the divine service in ancient Israel by more closely examining the ritual sections in the Pentateuch. This study aims to help the reader achieve a deeper comprehension of how God served his Old Testament people through the liturgy and festivals that he instituted for them.

It is not uncommon for students of the Bible to be perplexed as they study the ritual portions of the Old Testament. To overcome this challenge, a means of interpretation should be employed that takes into consideration the ritual nature of what the Scripture portrays. Although good exegesis ascertains the sense of the biblical text by employing grammatical and linguistic analyses, a hermeneutic that focuses only on the meaning of words and grammatical construction may be insufficient to determine how the rituals in ancient Israel functioned and what God accomplished through them. When studying ritual texts, the reader can build on the foundation of sound exegesis while also utilizing ritual analysis[2] to comprehend the order and purpose of the acts portrayed therein. Moreover, this approach helps the reader to view the divine service in the Old Testament from a systemic perspective which comprehends every component as part of an organic unit. This mode of interpreting the ritual texts in the Old Testament will produce a more satisfying result for students of the Bible. Thus, the current study employs this approach.

II. The Daily Divine Service

Divine Institution of the Daily Divine Service

The daily rites that the LORD[3] instituted through Moses on Mount Sinai form the basis for the entire divine service in the Pentateuch (Exod 29:38–46). The priests in ancient Israel performed the daily liturgy each morning and evening with all the other occasional services added to it. The weekly, monthly, and several yearly services were never enacted apart from the daily rites. Therefore, the LORD

[2] For a broader explanation of ritual analysis and its use for interpreting ritual texts in the Scriptures, see John Kleinig, *Leviticus*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2003), 20–24; and Robert D. Macina, *The LORD's Service: A Ritual Analysis of the Order, Function, and Purpose of the Daily Divine Service in the Pentateuch* (Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick Publications, 2019), 19–21. Anthropological perspectives of ritual analysis are found in Catherine Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966); Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage,* trans. Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960); Ronald L. Grimes, *Ritual Criticism: Case Studies in Its Practice, Essays on Its Theory* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1990); and Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1969).

[3] In this study, "LORD" and "YHWH" designate the divine name, יְהוָה.

instituted the daily divine service as the foundation upon which all the other periodic services were built and into which they were incorporated.[4]

Practical Order of the Daily Liturgy

The daily liturgy consisted of seven basic rites enacted each morning as the sun was rising and each evening at twilight after the sun had gone over the horizon before dark. Though the various ritual activities within each rite slightly varied between the morning and the evening, they were essentially the same. The service includes seven rites: the maintenance of the altar fire, the presentation of materials, the manipulation of blood, the offering of incense, the burning of offerings on the outer altar, the blessing announced by the priest, and eating the most holy food.

The fire rite in the morning consisted of five ritual activities. First, the priests washed their hands and feet with water from the font in the courtyard (Exod 30:17–21). Second, they vested with their sacred vestments (Exod 28:1–43). Third, the priests removed the previous day's ashes from the altar for burnt offering in the courtyard and collected some of the remaining live coals for later use on the altar for incense in the holy place. Fourth, they added new wood to the burning coals on the altar for burnt offering. Finally, the priests took off their vestments, put on common clothes, and carried the ashes outside the camp (Lev 6:8–15).

The morning presentation rite involved another five ritual acts. The priests washed their hands and feet again with water from the font; then they donned their sacred vestments again. Next, they inspected a yearling male lamb to make sure it did not have any deformities or blemishes, presented it before the outer altar, and placed a hand on the head of the lamb. After this, the priests presented flour mixed with olive oil, dashed with salt, with a small pile of frankincense on top, as well as wine for the drink offering. Lastly, the high priest presented half of his daily bread offering (Exod 29:4, 10–11; Lev 1:3; 8:1–4; 9:5).

The blood rite began with the slaying of the lamb on the north side of the outer altar, catching its blood in bowls, and presenting the blood in front of the altar. Next, the priests splashed the blood on the four sides of the altar for burnt offering. They flayed the lamb and slaughtered it into its sections. They then washed the lamb's entrails and legs, placing them with the head, fat, and other pieces of the lamb. The final act of the blood rite was the priests' salting all of the parts of the lamb (Exod 29:16; Lev 1:5, 11; 3:2, 8, 13; 8:19; 9:18).

The centermost rite during the daily service was the incense rite. The priests washed their hands and feet with water from the font, and the high priest put on the ornate vestments to enter the holy place. Then, the priests removed the ashes from

[4] For a detailed analysis of ancient Israel's daily service, see Macina, *LORD's Service*.

the altar for incense and added the new burning coals that had been previously removed from the outer altar during the fire rite. They tended the lamps, adding oil, trimming wicks, and preparing them to be lit in the evening service. The high priest burned the spiced, finely ground incense on the inner altar (Exod 27:20–21; 30:1–10, 34–38; Lev 24:1–4). After the priests completed the incense rite, they exited the enclosed sanctuary.[5]

The burning rite consisted of four ritual activities. The priests washed their hands and feet again from the font. The high priest continued to wear his ornate vestments at the altar for burnt offering. The priests burned the lamb on the outer altar together with a handful of the cereal offering of flour mixed with oil, salt, and all of the frankincense, as well as half of the high priest's bread offering in the morning and the other half in the evening. Finally, they poured out the wine as a drink offering on the outside base of the altar in the courtyard (Exod 29:38–41; Lev 6:8–15; Num 28:3–8).[6]

The blessing rite involved two acts. The regular priests sounded silver trumpets over the burnt offering. At the same time, the high priest announced the Aaronic benediction at the front of the altar (Lev 23:23–25; Num 6:22–27; 10:1–10).

The service concluded with the meal rite and its two ritual activities. First, the priests baked the most holy bread from the cereal offering and ate it in the courtyard of the sanctuary (Lev 6:14–18). Finally, they unvested.

The liturgy in the evening was essentially the same as the morning, but there are a few noteworthy alterations. In the fire rite, the ashes were not removed, so the priests did not need to divest so as to carry the ashes outside the camp (Lev 6:9). They simply added more wood to the fire on the outer altar. At the presentation rite for the evening, the priests were still washed and vested from the fire rite, so they did not do these again. The evening incense rite was different from the morning, only in that the lamps were lit instead of tended (Exod 27:21; 30:7–8; Lev 24:1–4). Everything else was the same as in the morning liturgy.

Theological Purpose of the Daily Divine Service

YHWH established these seven rites with all of their ritual activities so that he could accomplish his purposes through them. It is inaccurate to interpret these acts as something that the Israelites were doing for the benefit of God. On the contrary,

[5] See Menahem Haran, *Temples and Temple Service in Ancient Israel* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1985; repr., 1995) for a general analysis of the furnishings and rites performed inside the tabernacle.

[6] See Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary,* Anchor Bible 3 (New York: Doubleday, 1991); and *Numbers,* JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1990) for overviews of the ritual activities related to the altar for burnt offerings in the courtyard.

God served his people through all of the enactments of the liturgy that he instituted for their benefit.[7]

In the fire rite, the LORD was preventing the divine fire from being extinguished. At the inaugural service, the fire of God came out from the holy of holies and consumed the offerings on the altar for burnt offering (Lev 9:24). The LORD commanded the priests never to let this divine fire go out so that his presence in it would not depart from the sanctuary. Thus, the offerings burned up with this fire would continue to be acceptable to God (Lev 6:13).[8]

In the presentation rite, as with the fire rite, the LORD washed the hands and feet of the priests with holy water to purify their hands to touch holy and most holy things, as well as for them to walk on holy ground. The LORD vested the priests with the sacred vestments to cover them with his own holiness as they served in his presence. Most important, the LORD both supplied the materials and accepted the Israelites and priests as they presented the offerings before him.[9]

In the blood rite, the LORD made atonement for the sins and defilement of the entire community of Israel as the blood splashed against the sides of the altar. Through the atonement with blood, God purified his people.[10]

During the incense rite, the LORD washed and vested the high priest to bear Israel into the presence of God both on his shoulders and upon his heart, as well as to bear their judgment both upon his heart and upon his head through the ornate vestments. By the lighting of the lamps, YHWH's divine light shone in the midst of Israel throughout the night. In the burning of fragrant incense in the holy place, the LORD accepted the Israelites borne into his presence by the high priest while also sanctifying the high priest and all Israel with him through the most holy incense burned on the inner altar.[11]

During the burning rite, the LORD was set at rest to accept the offerings of the community of Israel as they burned on the altar. He sanctified them with the fragrant incense that followed the high priest out of the holy place and that intermingled with the most holy smoke of the burnt offering. He revealed his divine presence among the Israelites in the smoke wafting from the altar in the courtyard.[12]

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[7] See Baruch A. Levine, *In the Presence of the Lord: A Study of Cult and Some Cultic Terms in Ancient Israel* (Leiden: Brill, 1974) for a discussion of the effectiveness of ritual acts in the Old Testament.

[8] Macina, *LORD's Service*, 82–84.

[9] Macina, *LORD's Service*, 100–101.

[10] Macina, *LORD's Service*, 113–120. See also Angel Manuel Rodriguez, *Substitution in the Hebrew Cultus* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1979).

[11] Macina, *LORD's Service*, 137–141.

[12] Macina, *LORD's Service*, 153–158.

In the blessing rite, the presence of the royal king was announced through the sounding of the silver trumpets. The Israelites were blessed by God's presence as his name, YHWH, was both seen on the diadem of the high priest's head and spoken upon the people through the Aaronic benediction.[13]

During the meal rite, the LORD fed his priests like courtiers in a royal palace eating from the table of their king. However, this meal was far better than that of an earthly king, for in it YHWH reconsecrated his priests as they ate the most holy food from the cereal offering so that they could continue to serve in his presence at the sanctuary.[14]

Typology of the Daily Divine Service

The ritual acts of the daily service and all of the liturgy in the Old Testament pointed to the coming Messiah and were fulfilled by his incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension. The washing and vesting typified Christ's Baptism, in which he was washed to fulfill righteousness and clothed with the Holy Spirit (Matt 3:13–17). The divine fire foreshadowed Christ's Baptism of us with the Holy Spirit and fire (Matt 3:11). The presentation of the lamb together with bread and wine indicated that Jesus was revealed as the Lamb of God (John 1:29), who gives his body in bread and his blood in wine for us Christians to eat and drink (Matt 26:26–28). The blood shed from the lamb and splashed on the altar pointed to Christ's sacrifice of atonement by which he paid God the Father for the sins of the world (1 John 2:1–2). The high priest in his ornate vestments prefigured the resurrected Christ who has entered into the heavenly sanctuary to intercede on our behalf (Heb 4:14–16). The burning lamps in the holy place foreshadowed Christ's presence by faith in the hearts of the redeemed. The smoke of fragrant incense denoted Christ's works of prayer to and love for God within his people (2 Cor 2:14–16). The smoke of the lamb, the cereal/bread with salt and frankincense, and the wine typified Christ's transfiguration and ascension into heaven to prepare a place for God's holy people at the eternal marriage feast (Matt 17:1–5; John 14:2–3; 17:24; Rev 19:7–9). The sounding of the trumpets and the proclamation of the benediction point to God's acceptance of Christ's work of redemption by his life, death, resurrection, and

[13] Macina, *LORD's Service*, 164–167. See also Christopher W. Mitchell, *The Meaning of brk "To Bless" in the Old Testament* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1987). With the exception of the spoken Aaronic benediction and the sound of the bells on the robe of the high priest, the divine service that the LORD first instituted in the Pentateuch was mostly silent. It was primarily a series of ritual acts. The Levitical choir was later added to sing God's word in the form of psalms. See John W. Kleinig, *The Lord's Song: The Basis, Function, and Significance of Choral Music in Chronicles* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993). See also Israel Knohl, *The Sanctuary of Silence* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995). A service mostly consisting of unspoken ritual acts seems strange for New Testament Christians.

[14] Macina, *LORD's Service*, 174–176.

ascension as well as his blessing of all who have faith in Christ (Eph 2:6–10). The eating of the most holy food by the priests in the sanctuary foreshadows the resurrection and ascension of Christians to feast at Christ's eternal banquet in the presence of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit together with angels, archangels, and all the company of heaven (Rev 4–5; 19:1–9). With the coming of Christ two millennia ago, all of the rites and ritual activities of the Old Testament were fulfilled and no longer needed. Now, the sacrificed body and the poured-out blood of the incarnate Christ are received in the liturgy of the New Testament (Luke 22:20).[15]

III. The Sabbath Day

Divine Institution of the Sabbath Day Liturgy

The LORD instituted the divine service to be performed once per week on the Sabbath day (Lev 23:3; Num 28:9–10). It differed from the weekday divine service in only two ways. First, the priests offered two additional lambs together with a double amount of cereal offering and drink offering. They most likely offered these additional materials only during the morning rites of the daily divine service on the Sabbath, rather than doubling the burnt, cereal, and drink offerings for the morning and evening rites (Lev 23:3; Num 28:9–10). Second, every Sabbath the priests replaced the bread of the presence together with the pure frankincense that is on each of the two piles of six loaves. They ate the bread in the holy courtyard while the frankincense was burned on the altar (Exod 25:23–30; Lev 24:5–9). These two additional elements of the divine service on the Sabbath affected several of the main rites.

Practical Order of the Sabbath Liturgy

In the presentation rite, the priests inspected and presented the additional lambs and accompanying materials for the burnt offerings, as well as the twelve loaves for the bread of the presence. In the blood rite, they slew both lambs, splashed their blood on the altar, flayed and slaughtered the lambs, and washed and salted the parts of the animal. In the incense rite, the priests replaced the twelve loaves for the bread of the presence and pure frankincense. There is evidence that the wine for the drink offering was stored at the table for the bread of the presence and, thus, the priests likely replenished the wine at this time (Exod 25:29; Num 4:7). During the burning rite, the priests burned on the altar the extra portions of the lambs and cereal offerings, and they poured out the additional amount of wine on the outside

[15] Arthur A. Just Jr., *Luke 9:51–24:53*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1997), 835–838.

of the altar at its base. Furthermore, they smoked up the pure frankincense on the altar for burnt offering during the morning service. The priests ate an extra portion of the most holy food from the cereal offerings and consumed the bread of the presence in the meal rite of the morning service (Lev 24:9).

Theological Purpose of the Sabbath

The command in the Decalogue to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy (see Exod 20:8) chiefly involved the laypeople of Israel not doing any work (Lev 23:3). The Sabbath day for the priests, though, involved an extra amount of labor. Although the priests' work at the sanctuary increased on the Sabbath, the LORD blessed them with an abundance of most holy food on this day of the week. YHWH served them a double portion of his food on the Sabbath day to keep them holy. Moreover, the twofold amount of offerings that the priests enacted on the Sabbath affected the entire community in both the blood rite and the burning rite. The extra amount of blood likely served to atone for the sins of the people more extensively once per week. The additional lambs and accompanying offerings produced more smoke from the altar to sanctify more comprehensively the Israelites, as well as to reveal more fully the presence of the LORD among his people.

Typology of the Sabbath

Christ perfected the Sabbath day so that Christians would enter into his eternal Sabbath rest by faith in him now and hereafter in the body for eternity (Heb 3–4). Since Christ has fulfilled the Sabbath on our behalf by his rest in the tomb, Christians no longer observe the Sabbath under the Old Testament regulations (Matt 27:57–66; Luke 23:50–56). Rather, our "Sabbath" occurs normally on Sunday—the day of Christ's resurrection—or any time that Christians gather for the liturgy of God's word and mysteries of his kingdom (John 20:19).[16] The bread of the presence and the wine foreshadowed the true bread of Christ's presence and his royal wine in the Lord's Supper set before God's saints each "Sabbath." In the church, the new Israel, God's holy people rest from their own works to receive Christ's service to us through the liturgy of the New Testament.

[16] See also John Kleinig, *Hebrews*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2017), 216–218, 508.

IV. The First Day of the Month

Divine Institution of the Service for the First of the Month

YHWH instituted the liturgy to be performed on the first day of each month (Num 28:11–15). The divine service on this occasion consisted of additional offerings that the priests burned on the altar for burnt offering during the morning rites. These offerings were as follows: two young bulls with their accompanying cereal offering of three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil and a drink offering of half a hin of wine; one ram with two-tenths of an ephah for its cereal offering and a third of a hin of wine; and seven yearling male lambs each with a cereal offering of one-tenth of an ephah and one-quarter of a hin of wine. Additionally, the priests offered one male goat as a sin offering. These monthly offerings were over and above the ritual materials for the daily divine service and were only offered during the morning rites on the first day of every month.

Practical Order of the Liturgy for the First of the Month

The service on the first of the month affected the presentation rite, the blood rite, the burning rite, and the meal rite of the morning service. In the presentation rite, the priests inspected and presented the extra animals and all of the ritual materials before the altar for burnt offering. In the blood rite, they prepared in the prescribed way the animals for the burnt offering and splashed their blood against the sides of the altar in the courtyard. However, the monthly sin offering was different. Blood from sin offerings was not splashed against all the sides of the altar. Instead, the priest dipped his finger in the blood and daubed it on the four horns of the altar; the rest of the blood was poured out on the side of the altar where the wine of the drink offering was poured (Lev 4:7, 18, 25, 30, 34). Additionally, instead of the entire animal being sectioned and salted in preparation for burning on the altar, the goat for the sin offering was prepared for the priests to eat during the meal rite (Lev 6:24–30). In the burning rite, the priests burned the entire animal for the burnt offering on the altar and poured out all of the wine at its base. However, for the sin offering, they did not smoke up the entire animal but only the fat and perhaps a few parts of the goat's entrails (Lev 7:1–8). In the morning meal rite, the priests cooked and ate the meat from the goat for the sin offering in addition to the bread from the cereal offerings as their most holy food from the LORD (Lev 6:16–18; 7:6–10). These additional offerings significantly enhanced the morning rites for the liturgy on the first day of every month.

Theological Purpose of the Service on the First of the Month

The monthly divine service was an occasion for rejoicing in the presence of YHWH at the sanctuary. The inclusion of the sin offering heightened the atonement and functioned as a monthly means of forgiveness and purification from sins for the community of Israel. The abundance of additional burnt offerings produced an extraordinary amount of smoke from the altar, which sanctified the community and enhanced the manifestation of God's presence among his people. The meat that the priests ate from the sin offering increased the LORD's provision for his servants at the sanctuary.

Typology of the Divine Service on the First Day of the Month

The priests ate the bread from the cereal offerings together with the body of the sin offering, thereby foreshadowing the body of Christ that is eaten with the bread of the Lord's Supper (Matt 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19; 1 Cor 11:23–24). They poured out the blood of the sin offering in the same place as the wine from the drink offering, typifying the blood of Christ that is in the wine of Holy Communion (Matt 26:28–29; Mark 14:23–25; Luke 22:20; 1 Cor 11:24). The sin offering prefigured Christ offering his body and blood to pay for the sins of the world. Through these, his people receive forgiveness and sanctification in his most holy meal in the liturgy of the church. Christians do not usually celebrate a special service once per month, as did the ancient Israelites. Still, we rejoice in God's abundant provision and recognize his presence among us through Holy Communion, which historically takes place more than once per month (Acts 20:7).[17]

V. The Passover

Divine Institution of the Passover

The LORD established the Passover before the exodus of ancient Israel from Egypt (Exod 12:1–28; Lev 23:4–8; Num 28:16–25). Therefore, the Passover predates its observance in connection with the sanctuary. However, once the tabernacle was constructed and Israel's divine service was instituted, YHWH required its celebration each year at the sanctuary (Deut 16:1–8; 2 Chron 35:11). On the tenth day of the first month, each family selected a lamb to be later offered as a Passover offering. On the fourteenth day, they brought their lamb to the sanctuary to fulfill

[17] For example, Ap XXIV (XII) 1, in W. H. T. Dau and F. Bente, eds., *Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church, German-Latin-English* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), 383.

the required ritual activities that the LORD had established at the first Passover in Egypt (Lev 23:4–5; Num 28:16).

Practical Order of the Passover Liturgy

The Israelites brought their Passover offerings to the sanctuary during the evening service at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. It was enacted at the presentation rite, the blood rite, and as an extension of the meal rite. Each family presented a lamb before the altar at the sanctuary, and the priests inspected it to make sure it had no blemishes. Next, a Levite, acting on behalf of the family, severed the main neck artery so that its blood would drain into special basins (Num 8:15–19). Then, the priests splashed the blood against the sides of the altar for burnt offering. After doing the ritual acts at the altar,[18] the people took the lamb outside the sanctuary—but not outside the camp/city—to be roasted and eaten. Any leftover part of the animal was incinerated, and none of its bones were broken (Deut 16:1–7). The Passover appears to be a unique sacrifice in contrast to the other offerings that have been mentioned at this point because it was offered in the evening instead of the morning liturgy.

Theological Purpose of the Passover

The Israelites' yearly commemoration of the Passover celebrated the preservation of their children and livestock when the LORD struck down all the firstborn from the people and animals of Egypt. The blood of the lamb that was first put on the doorframes of Israelite homes was thereafter dashed on the sides of the altar for burnt offering at the sanctuary. Just as the blood on the doorframes protected Israel from death, the blood on the altar atoned for sin and preserved their lives from God's wrath due to their ritual impurity (Lev 17). Eating the Passover meal in Egypt strengthened the Israelites for their exodus, while eating the meat of the Passover each year empowered them with holy food from the table of the LORD. Every year through the Passover, the LORD purified and sustained the lives of the Israelites. God delivered them from slavery in Egypt so that they would live in freedom and have access to him in the divine service.[19]

Typology of the Passover

The Old Testament Passover lamb prefigured Christ as the Lamb of God (John 1:29). Just as the Passover lamb in the Old Testament had none of its bones broken,

[18] The Pentateuch does not explicitly state that any part of the Passover lamb was burned on the altar.

[19] Kleinig, *Hebrews*, 502.

so also the Lamb of God suffered no bone fractures when he was flogged and crucified. The blood of the lamb foreshadows the blood of Christ that was shed on the cross to pay for the sins of all people (John 19:34). The blood on the doorposts of the Israelites protected them from physical death; Christ's blood marks our Christian lives to protect us from spiritual death (Exod 12:13). The blood of the Passover lamb that was splashed on the altar pointed ahead to the blood of Christ that makes payment for our sins in the heavenly sanctuary (Heb 9:11–14). Christ instituted the Lord's Supper during the Passover meal in order to offer Christians the body of the Lamb of God (1 Pet 1:19; Rev 5:6). He gives his body to us Christians to eat in the unleavened bread and his blood to drink in the wine as the new Passover (Luke 22:14–20). In it, we celebrate our deliverance from the ultimate Pharaoh, the devil, and his slavery. We rejoice in our exodus from the ultimate Egypt, the fallen world. We follow Christ through the desert wilderness of this life, looking forward to entering the eternal promised land. The Old Testament Passover, the deliverance from slavery, and the exodus from Egypt anticipated the time when the Messiah would fulfill the promises. Now that he has come, we Christians participate in the eschatological kingdom that Jesus inaugurated by his incarnation.[20]

VI. The Festival of Unleavened Bread

Divine Institution of the Festival of Unleavened Bread

Before the exodus from slavery in Egypt, the LORD instituted the Festival of Unleavened Bread to be observed each year in coordination with the Passover. After the exodus from Egypt, the ancient Israelites were required to eat unleavened bread during the Passover meal on the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month, as well as over the next seven days to keep the Festival of Unleavened Bread (Exod 12:1–30; 23:15; Lev 23:6–8; Num 28:17–25; Deut 16:3–4, 8).

Practical Order of the Liturgy for the Festival of Unleavened Bread

During each day of the seven-day Festival of Unleavened Bread, the priests presented burnt offerings and a sin offering in the presence of the LORD at the sanctuary. These offerings were identical to the ones presented on the first day of every month; and the priests offered them every day of the feast for seven consecutive days. The order of the ritual acts for these offerings followed the same procedure as the ones for the divine service on the first day of the month. The offerings each day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread were incorporated into the morning rites of the daily divine service (Num 28:19–24).

[20] Just, *Luke 9:51–24:53*, 817–838.

Two of the seven days during the festival were more significant than the others. The LORD summoned the Israelites to appear before him at the sanctuary on the first and last days of the Festival of Unleavened Bread as holy convocations. Since the people performed no work on either of these two days, each was viewed as a kind of Sabbath day of rest. Thus, the lay Israelites refrained from work on the first and last days of the Festival of Unleavened Bread (Lev 23:7–8; Num 28:18, 25).

Theological Purpose of the Festival of Unleavened Bread

The Israelites commemorated their exodus from Egypt by celebrating the Festival of Unleavened Bread (Exod 13:3–10; Deut 16:1). Following the devastating plagues, the Egyptians practically drove out the Israelites from their land. Yet, God's people did not leave without provisions, possessions, and a large number of livestock. The LORD made the Egyptians willing to give the Israelites anything for which they asked. Thus, the people of Israel plundered Egypt as they left that country, taking large quantities of silver, gold, and clothing. They also took the Egyptians' dough, with which they made unleavened bread. The Festival of Unleavened Bread was a celebration of both their exodus and their plundering of the Egyptians' possessions and food (Exod 12:31–36). More important, YHWH provided for his people by purifying, sanctifying, and blessing them with his gracious presence during this seven-day festival. Since the LORD instituted this festival, the bread was no longer common; the instituting word of God made it holy (Lev 23:6–8; Num 28:17–25). Therefore, the Israelites ate holy food provided by their gracious God at the Festival of Unleavened Bread in joyful celebration (Exod 12:37–42).

Typology of the Festival of Unleavened Bread

Christ fulfilled the Festival of Unleavened Bread. The transfiguration narrative in Luke's Gospel (9:28–36) says that Moses and Elijah were talking with Jesus about his exodus, which he was going to fulfill in Jerusalem. There, Christ bled and died on the cross as the perfect Lamb of God who bears the sins of the world, and he rose from the dead to conquer the supreme pharaoh, Satan, and plunder his domain. Furthermore, the exodus at Jerusalem entails Christ's institution of the Lord's Supper to feed us his body in the holy unleavened bread (Luke 22:1). By faith, Christians have been delivered from the slavery of the devil, participate in Christ's exodus, and eat his holy bread. Our wilderness journey anticipates our own exodus from this life and arrival in heaven to feast with Christ in the new Jerusalem and enjoy eternal Sabbath rest (Rev 19:6–9; 21).

VII. The Firstfruits and Festival of Weeks

Divine Institution of Firstfruits and the Festival of Weeks

YHWH instituted the presentation of Firstfruits and the Festival of Weeks[21] (Lev 23:9–21; Num 28:26–31; Deut 16:9–12). He commanded the Israelites to offer the first heads of grain on the first Sunday after they were cut.[22] Firstfruits consisted of the Israelites bringing to the sanctuary and elevating before the LORD a cut head of the first grain that was harvested from the barley crop,[23] as well as an offering of a yearling male lamb with its prescribed cereal and drink offerings. This took place in the first month of Abib, which is March/April in our calendar. The LORD instructed his people to count seven weeks up to the day after the seventh Sabbath on the fiftieth day, which is the third month of Sivan or May/June. On that day, the people of Israel presented and elevated before the LORD wheat bread made with yeast (Exod 34:22). The LORD required the priests to offer seven yearling male lambs, one young bull, and two rams as burnt offerings together with each one's prescribed cereal and drink offerings. Additionally, he ordered them to present a male goat as a sin offering and to elevate two yearling lambs as public peace offerings, which was unique to the Festival of Weeks.[24] Thus, the priests elevated offerings before the LORD at the beginning of the barley harvest with the cut heads of the first grain as well as at the beginning of the wheat harvest with the first bread.

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[21] In the New Testament Scriptures, the Festival of Weeks is known as Pentecost (fifty), which refers to the fiftieth day after the presentation of heads of grain as the firstfruits of the harvest (Acts 2:1; 20:16; 1 Cor 16:8).

[22] There has been much debate about exactly when the first grain of the barley harvest was offered. For a thorough analysis of the varying positions, see Kleinig, *Leviticus*, 489, and Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible 3B (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 2056–2063. The elevation of the first grain most likely took place on the Sunday after it was cut and not always in coordination with the Festival of Unleavened Bread every year. Obviously, in the year that Christ was raised from the dead the first grain corresponded with the day after the Sabbath during the Festival of Unleavened Bread. This happened to be the very day that Christ was resurrected. However, since grain ripens according to the weather patterns of each year, it may be that the Firstfruits of the barley harvest did not always happen at the time of the Festival of Unleavened Bread. Thus, the Festival of Weeks in the Old Testament was not always fifty days after the first Sunday following Passover, but after the barley harvest was ripe enough to cut heads of grain.

[23] Some translations (NAS, NIV, ESV) designate it the "sheaf" of Firstfruits, but it may not have been the entire stalk with the heads of grain on them. Since the Hebrew term often refers to a measure of grain, it likely means "head of grain." See William L Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 277.

[24] Kleinig, *Leviticus*, 501.

Practical Order of the Liturgy for Firstfruits and the Festival of Weeks

The priests enacted these rites during the morning part of the daily divine service. The presentation and elevation of the additional offerings affected the presentation rite. The priests manipulated the blood from the animal offerings during the morning blood rite. They incinerated the burnt offerings and fat portions from the sin and peace offerings together with the token portion of the accompanying cereal offerings. They poured out the wine for the drink offerings at the base of the altar. The priests feasted on the abundance of food from the added cereal offerings and the meat from the sin and peace offerings during the morning meal rite at the Festival of Weeks (Lev 23:9–21).

The Israelites presented other offerings at the Festival of Weeks in addition to the ones that accompanied the wheat bread offering. Whereas the offerings discussed above were enacted in coordination with the grain *harvest*, these offerings were required in correlation with the fiftieth *day* at the Festival of Weeks.[25] These extra offerings were the same number and kind as the ones for the first day of every month. Therefore, the priests enacted them in the daily morning liturgy the same way as the offerings on the first day of each month, still taking into account the daily and other specific offerings that were conducted on that fiftieth day (Num 28:26–31).

The LORD forbade the Israelites from working on the day they celebrated the Festival of Weeks. Since it was a day of sacred assembly, the Sunday of the Festival of Weeks functioned as a Sabbath day of rest. Significantly, it was the seventh week after the Israelites presented their first grain at the sanctuary. Because they presented the Firstfruits on Sunday, the Festival of Weeks equals a Sabbath of Sundays. Therefore, like the Sabbath of days, the LORD established the Sabbath of weeks as a day of sacred assembly (Lev 23:21; Num 28:26).

[25] At first, there appears to be a contradiction between Leviticus and Numbers concerning the specific offerings that are listed for the fiftieth day of the Festival of Weeks. Leviticus 23:18 says there were seven yearling male lambs, *one* young bull, and *two* rams, whereas Numbers 28:27 states that the offerings were *two* young bulls, *one* ram, and seven yearling male lambs. Furthermore, Leviticus 23:20 prescribes that two yearling lambs be offered as peace offerings on the fiftieth day of the Festival of Weeks, while Numbers 28 makes no mention of the peace offerings. Upon closer examination, however, there is no contradiction. The offerings in Leviticus 23 are prescribed in relation to the first bread offering of the wheat *harvest* while the ones in Numbers 28 are for the fiftieth *day* of the Festival of Weeks. The offerings mentioned in Leviticus 23 accompany the offering of first bread, whereas the offerings in Numbers 28 are additional offerings that are required for the divine service on that day of the year. Therefore, Leviticus 23 and Numbers 28 refer to different offerings.

Theological Purpose of Firstfruits and the Festival of Weeks

During the Festival of Weeks, YHWH blessed the Israelites by sanctifying their harvest and the food made from it. The LORD sanctified the first grain and the rest of the harvest that came after it (Lev 23:10–14). Later, at the beginning of the wheat harvest, the Israelites offered first bread made with yeast through which the LORD sanctified all of their food (Lev 23:15–20). In this way, the LORD provided holy food for their regular meals at home from his holy table, the altar at the sanctuary.[26]

Typology of Firstfruits and the Festival of Weeks

Christ fulfilled the Firstfruits and Festival of Weeks as the New Testament testifies. The elevation of the new grain at the beginning of the harvest signified Christ's resurrection from death. He is the "Firstfruits" from among the dead so that we Christians may also share in his resurrection now by faith as we wait for our own resurrection in the flesh on the Last Day (1 Cor 15:20–23; Jas 1:18; Rev 14:4). Just as the Israelites elevated the first grain at the beginning of the barley harvest and the first bread at the beginning of the wheat harvest on Sunday, so now the New Testament Sabbath is Sunday. Each Sunday Christ pours out the Holy Spirit on his people through his word and sacraments to keep us in the firstfruits of his resurrection life. Each Sunday he gives to us the firstfruits of the Holy Spirit through the new bread of his harvest (Rom 8:23). On Pentecost, the fulfilled Festival of Weeks, Christ poured out his Holy Spirit to establish the Christian church. Each Sunday our Lord continues to give us the Holy Spirit (Acts 2). The Firstfruits of the barley harvest looked forward to the messianic fulfillment. The Firstfruits of the wheat harvest anticipated the coming of the Holy Spirit and the spread of the gospel throughout the world. The Festival of Weeks indicated the church age and the harvest of Christ's people in the New Testament era until the last day. The bread made with yeast each year at the Festival of Weeks (Lev 23:17) signified the growth of the church (Acts 2:38–47). The resurrection of Christ and sending of the Holy Spirit fulfilled the Old Testament Firstfruits and Festival of Weeks.[27]

VIII. The Day of Acclamation

Divine Institution of the Day of Acclamation

YHWH founded the Day of Acclamation, which took place on the first day of the seventh month (Lev 23:23–25; Num 10:1–10; 29:1–6). This was one of the most

[26] Kleinig, *Leviticus*, 500–502.
[27] Kleinig, *Leviticus*, 506, 508–509.

significant months in the ancient Israelite ritual calendar and involved four major occurrences: the Day of Acclamation, the Day of Atonement, the Festival of Tabernacles, and the Final Assembly. The Day of Acclamation marked the beginning of this important seventh month as a day of rest and sacred assembly with joyful shouts of exultation to the LORD and with the sounding of the silver trumpets and rams' horns.

Practical Order of the Liturgy for the Day of Acclamation

Due to the magnitude of this month as the Sabbath month, the priests performed ritual acts in addition to the ones for the first of the month and the daily liturgy. During the morning service, they presented other animals including one young bull, one ram, and seven male lambs as burnt offerings with their prescribed cereal and drink offerings. The priests also offered a male goat as a sin offering. These would have affected the presentation, blood, burning, and meal rites in the morning service similar to the offerings for the Festival of Weeks. Furthermore, they conducted ritual acts during the blessing rite in which they sounded the silver trumpets over the burnt offerings on the altar. The priests likely sounded the silver trumpets more than once, after which the congregation would shout for joy before the LORD. Once the Israelites had settled in the promised land, most likely specific agents were responsible for blowing rams' horns to signal this first day of the Sabbath month throughout the nation. It is imaginable that not only the gathered congregants at the sanctuary but also people in their own territories joined in a joyful shout to YHWH in response to the sounding of the rams' horns. All of the daily, monthly, and additional Sabbath month ritual acts comprised the liturgy on the Day of Acclamation (Lev 23:23–25; Num 10:1–10; 29:1–6).

Theological Purpose of the Day of Acclamation

The Day of Acclamation functioned as a day of rest and acclamation to YHWH for his blessings upon the Israelites. The main harvest was completed, and they expressed their joy and thankfulness to the LORD for his bountiful provision of its produce. Moreover, as with the Sabbath of days and the Sabbath of weeks, so this Sabbath of months constituted a day of rest and sacred convocation in which the LORD served his people. Initially, the Israelites heard the sound of heavenly trumpets and horns signaling the presence of God at Mount Sinai (Exod 19:16–19; Heb 12:18–21). In like manner, the sound of trumpets and rams' horns on the Day of Acclamation manifested the presence of God among the Israelites. At this

celebration, the people rested from their harvest labors to be served by the LORD. In response, they joyfully acclaimed YHWH as their God.[28]

Typology of the Day of Acclamation

The Day of Acclamation will be fulfilled with the advent of Christ to judge the world on the last day. On that day, the entire world and all who have ever lived will hear the sound of the great trumpet call of God announcing the presence of Christ. He will send forth his angels to gather his people from all over the earth (Matt 24:30–31). At the last trumpet, in a flash, in the blink of an eye, we Christians will be changed; for the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised imperishable (1 Cor 15:51–57). Christ will come down from heaven with resounding acclamation, with the voice of the archangel, with the trumpet call of God; and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then, we who remain alive will ascend together with them in the clouds to meet Christ in the air to live and reign with him for all eternity (1 Thess 4:13–17). On the final Day of Acclamation, we will obtain our eternal Sabbath rest and shout for joy in the celestial liturgy without end.

IX. The Day of Atonement

Divine Institution of the Day of Atonement

YHWH founded the Day of Atonement for the high priest to enact on the tenth day of the seventh month (Lev 16; 23:26–32; Num 29:7–11). It was one of the most complex of all of the divine services performed in ancient Israel. The Day of Atonement was the only day out of the entire year in which the LORD atoned for all of the sins of the Israelites and ritually cleansed and reconsecrated the sanctuary. As the utmost day of Sabbath rest in the Sabbath month, YHWH forbade the entire community of Israel from working, eating, drinking, copulating, bathing, and anointing. Only on this day in the entire year, the high priest entered into the most holy place in the sanctuary to carry out the specific rituals at the ark of the testimony.

Practical Order of the Liturgy on the Day of Atonement

The priests performed the explicit enactments on the Day of Atonement in addition to the ones that the priests performed in the morning liturgy. The offerings for the day itself added one young bull, one ram, and seven yearling male lambs as a burnt offering together with their prescribed cereal offerings and drink offerings, as well as a male goat for a sin offering that was distinct from the one presented for

[28] Kleinig, *Leviticus*, 503.

the people's atonement (Num 29:7–11). Over and above these, the high priest offered a young bull for his own sin offering and a ram for his burnt offering. From the Israelites, he took two male goats for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. The priest presented one of the goats for the people as an offering to the LORD. The other was the scapegoat to be released in the wilderness (Lev 16). Thus, in addition to the two yearling male lambs with their cereal offerings and drink offerings for the daily service, the priests offered fifteen extra animals as well as numerous cereal and drink offerings.

Five of the morning rites were affected by the additional ritual acts prescribed for the Day of Atonement. In the presentation rite, instead of the high priest washing his hands and feet before putting on the ornate vestments, he stripped naked and washed his entire body probably at the font or possibly with water from the font taken inside the holy place. Then he put on linen undergarments, the sacred linen tunic tied with the linen sash, and the linen turban. These plain white linen vestments were distinct from the ornate colorful garments that the high priest wore every day during the liturgy (Lev 16:4). Instead of royal ornate vestments representing the heavenly king, the high priest wore these plain vestments like an angelic representative before the LORD.[29] After donning the linen vestments, the high priest performed the inspection and presentation of all of the animals and materials that the priests offered on the Day of Atonement.

The distinct ritual acts for this unique day affected the blood rite. As usual, the high priest slew all of the animals by slitting their main neck artery so that the regular priests could catch their blood in bowls. The high priest splashed the blood from the burnt offerings on all the sides of the altar and disposed of the blood from that day's sin offering, which involved daubing the horns of the altar and pouring the rest out at its base. After the priests had flayed, slaughtered, and prepared these animals for incineration, they carried out additional ritual activities leading to a comprehensive atonement. First, the high priest slew the bull for his sin offering and the regular priests caught its blood in a bowl (Lev 16:11). Second, on a censer, the high priest took burning coals from the altar and carried finely ground fragrant incense into the most holy place. He put the incense on the coals and produced smoke to conceal the atonement seat above the ark of the testimony so that he would not die in the presence of God (Lev 16:12–13). Third, the high priest came out of the enclosed sanctuary to retrieve the blood from his sin offering. He reentered the most holy place to sprinkle the blood on the front of the atonement seat in addition to seven times in front of it. After this, the high priest came out to the altar of incense, daubed

[29] See Kleinig, *Leviticus*, 339, as well as Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16*, 1016, and Gordon J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament 3 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1979), 230.

the blood on its four horns, and sprinkled it seven times in front of the veil that separates the most holy place from the outer room (Exod 30:10; Lev 4:3–7; 16:14). Fourth, the high priest came out again to the courtyard and slew the sin offering for the people. He returned to the most holy place the third and final time to sprinkle the blood in the same way as he did with his own sin offering. As with his sin offering, the high priest daubed blood on the horns of the altar of incense and sprinkled blood seven times in front of the veil in the holy place (Lev 16:15; see 4:13–18). Fifth, the high priest emerged from the holy place unto the altar for burnt offering in the courtyard. He mixed the blood from both his and the people's sin offerings that had been taken into the most holy place. The high priest smeared the blood on the four horns of the altar for burnt offering and sprinkled blood on it seven times before pouring out the rest on its base (Lev 16:18–19). Sixth, the high priest brought the scapegoat to the altar, placed both hands on its head, and confessed over it all of the wickedness, rebellion, and sins of the Israelites. In the care of a man appointed for the task, he sent the scapegoat into the wilderness and abandoned it there (Lev 16:20–22). Finally, the high priest entered the holy place, took off the linen vestments, washed his entire body with water again, and put on his ornate vestments (Lev 16:23–24). This concluded the blood rite that the high priest performed in the morning service on the Day of Atonement.[30]

The Day of Atonement affected the incense rite in one way. Since he had just washed his entire body with water after taking off the plain linen garments, the high priest did not need to wash his hands and feet before donning the ornate vestments. After putting on the ornate vestments, the high priest performed the regular incense rite (Lev 16:24–25).

In the burning rite, the high priest smoked up all of the animal offerings on the altar for burnt offering. Most likely, the priests placed the offerings on the altar in this order: the lamb for the daily burnt offering, the burnt offerings for the Day of Atonement, the fat from the sin offering, the burnt offerings for the priests and for the people, the fat from the sin offering of atonement, the cereal offerings, and the drink offerings poured out at the base on the side of the altar. Since the priests fasted on the Day of Atonement, they did not eat any of the cereal offerings. Instead, the priests burned them on the altar (Lev 23:27, 29, 32). Likewise, they did not eat the sin offerings but burned them outside the camp with their meat, hide, and offal (Lev 4:11–12, 21; 6:30). The priests entirely incinerated all of the animals and cereal offerings either on the altar or outside the camp at the ash heap on the Day of Atonement.

[30] Kleinig, *Leviticus*, 342–345.

Since the priests fasted on the Day of Atonement, they did not cook or eat any of the most holy food from the cereal and sin offerings. Thus, after announcing the benediction, the priests took off their vestments at the conclusion of the morning liturgy.

Theological Purpose of the Day of Atonement

The Day of Atonement was significant for ancient Israel in several ways. The LORD initially instituted its ritual activities to make atonement for the priests and people after the two sons of Aaron offered incense with unauthorized fire. The fire of the LORD emanated from the most holy place and destroyed Nadab and Abihu (Lev 10; 16:1–2). In his grace, YHWH provided a safe way for the high priest to enter behind the veil once per year to make atonement for the most holy place, the entire enclosed sanctuary, the altars, the priests, and the people of Israel (Lev 16:3). He instituted the Day of Atonement as a comprehensive purification of the sanctuary and complete forgiveness of all of the sins of the Israelites, since the more frequent offerings only atoned for unintentional sins (Lev 4:13, 22, 27; 5:15, 17–18). The scapegoat comprised an extraordinary function because the priests did not slay it in the presence of the LORD. Rather, the scapegoat carried all of the sins of the Israelites to the wilderness, the place of demons, as a return of sins to their source (Lev 16:20–22, 26–28). Most astounding, the blood that the high priest brought out from the most holy place sanctified everything it contacted. With the exception of the blood mixed with the anointing oil at the priests' ordination and the initial consecration of the sanctuary with its furnishings, blood normally functioned as a means of purification—not sanctification (Exod 29:21; Lev 8:30). Yet, on the Day of Atonement, the blood that the high priest brought into the most holy place served a dual purpose. He brought the blood into the innermost sanctum to purify, to make atonement on the ark of the testimony (Lev 16:16–17). Having come into contact with the holiness of God himself, the high priest brought out the most holy blood with the power to re-sanctify the sanctuary and its furnishings (Lev 16:18–19). Furthermore, just as the LORD sanctified the weekly Sabbath, so he sanctified the entire community of Israel on the Day of Atonement as an extraordinary Sabbath day in the Sabbath month (Lev 16:31). This is heightened by the fact that the morning liturgy on the Day of Atonement did not end with a meal, but with the benediction and the placing of the sanctifying name of YHWH upon the people of Israel (Num 6:22–27). Moreover, the extreme fasting likely commemorates Aaron's refusal to eat the most holy food on the day that the LORD killed his two sons for using unauthorized fire (Lev 10:16–20). On the Day of Atonement, the LORD reminded the Israelites of his judgment against sin and ritual impurity. Yet, at the

same time he provided for their purification and sanctification so that he would continue to reveal his presence among his people and bless them (Lev 16:34).[31]

Typology of the Day of Atonement

Imagine the high priest enacting the liturgy on the Day of Atonement, *then* going back into the most holy place to enthrone himself on the ark of the testimony between the angels. Effectively, that is what Christ did! In the Old Testament, the high priest daily served as a mediator between God and the people of Israel, but on the Day of Atonement he mediated in a more extensive way than every other day of the year. Similarly, Christ atoned for the sins of the world by his own blood, which he carried through the veil of his body into the heavenly holy of holies to make permanent and perfect mediation between God and men. Just as the high priest most comprehensively interceded for Israel by entering the most holy place behind the veil with the blood of animals, so also Christ entered into the heavenly holy of holies through his body and with his blood to take his rightful place at the right hand of the Father and intercede for us (Heb 8; 9:1–15; 10:11–12). Furthermore, imagine that the high priest came back out of the most holy place one last time in order to lead his faithful people into the holy of holies in the glorious presence of God. That is what Christ will do for us on the last day! Yet, even now by faith, we have access to the most holy place in the heavenly sanctuary through Christ's body and blood (Eph 2:6–7; Heb 12:22–24).

The Day of Atonement in the Old Testament functioned as a day of judgment to pay the penalty for sin and appease God's wrath. As a result, God reckoned the Israelites righteous. Christ fulfilled the Day of Atonement by his payment for all sins on the cross. Christians receive by faith God's pardon and righteousness because Christ endured God's judgment. On the last day, Christ will judge the world and physically lead his people into the glorious presence of God. The death and resurrection of Christ as well as his glorious return are judgments. This is indicated by the similarities between the cosmic events at Christ's death and resurrection and the universal signs that will occur at the end of this world (Matt 27:50–53). The Day of Atonement in the Old Testament typified the judgment of Christ on the cross, the justification of his people, and the final judgment on the last day (Eph 2:6–7; Heb 2:17–18; 4:14–16; 7:23–28; 8:1–6; 9; 10:1–25).[32]

[31] Kleinig, *Leviticus*, 345–347.

[32] The Hebrew term for the Day of Atonement is actually plural, literally "Day of Atonements." In contrast to the multiple actions of the High Priest on the Day of Atonement, the death of Jesus is the once and for all atoning action for all sin.

X. The Festival of Tabernacles and the Final Assembly

Divine Institution of the Festival of Tabernacles and the Final Assembly

The LORD instituted the Festival of Tabernacles with the Final Assembly (Lev 23:33–43; Num 29:12–38; Deut 16:13–15). Tabernacles began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month and lasted until the twenty-first, each day of which the native-born Israelite men resided in tents/tabernacles. During this time, the Israelites celebrated the final ingathering of the crops. They had great joy and gave thanks for YHWH's bountiful provision. The first day of Tabernacles was a sacred convocation on which no one was allowed to work. On this special day of Sabbath rest, the Israelites took choice fruit from trees, palm fronds, leafy branches, and poplars to rejoice before the LORD. Every day from the fifteenth through the twenty-first, they brought offerings that were specific for each day before YHWH at the sanctuary.

Practical Order of the Liturgy for the Festival of Tabernacles and the Final Assembly

In addition to the offerings that the priests presented each day, they brought offerings that were required for the Festival of Tabernacles. On the first day, the priests presented a burnt offering of thirteen young bulls, two rams, and fourteen yearling male lambs, all without defect, with their cereal and drink offerings, as well as a male goat for a sin offering. They offered the same on the second through the seventh days, except each day the number of young bulls decreased. Thus, on the second day the priests offered twelve bulls, the third day eleven, the fourth day ten, the fifth day nine, the sixth day eight, and the seventh day seven bulls (Num 29:13–34). These offerings affected several of the regular morning rites. The priests inspected and presented the offerings for the Festival of Tabernacles during the presentation rite. They splashed the blood of the burnt offerings against the altar, daubed the blood of the sin offerings on the horns of the altar, and poured out the rest of it at the base of the altar during the blood rite. They smoked up the carcass from the burnt offerings, the token portion of the cereal offerings, and the fat from the sin offerings during the burning rite. The priests cooked and ate the remaining portion of the cereal offerings and the meat from the sin offerings in the meal rite. In the context of the morning liturgy, they enacted these additional rituals for the seven-day Festival of Tabernacles.

Theological Purpose of the Festival of Tabernacles and the Final Assembly

In ancient Israel, the Festival of Tabernacles composed a joyful celebration for the final ingathering of the crops and the LORD's provision of them. After the temple was built in Jerusalem, the Israelites assembled for the festival there and lived

in temporary booths near the sanctuary for seven days. YHWH commanded the Israelites to be joyful at this festival because he blessed their harvest and all their labors. The Israelites presented the first grain at the beginning then completed the harvest by gathering the crops into their storehouses/tabernacles. They joyfully celebrated the blessings of the LORD (Num 29:12; Deut 16:13–15).

The Festival of Tabernacles lasted only seven days, the fifteenth through the twenty-first. Yet, the LORD added another day to the end of the festival: a sacred convocation, a Sabbath rest, the Final Assembly. On this day, the Israelites offered one bull, one ram, and seven yearling male lambs together with their cereal and drink offerings, as well as a male goat as a sin offering. They offered these in addition to the regular offerings for the morning rites in the daily divine service. Strictly speaking, this eighth day and its offerings were not part of the Festival of Tabernacles. Instead, it was the final sacred convocation, the last of the special Sabbath days of rest, and the Final Assembly of the ritual calendar (Lev 23:36; Num 29:35–38).

Typology of the Festival of Tabernacles and the Final Assembly

The Festival of Tabernacles in ancient Israel points to Christ gathering his holy people into paradise on the last day. The choice fruit, palm fronds, leafy branches, and poplars that the Israelites picked in the Old Testament anticipated the restoration of man to paradise, which he lost with the fall into sin in the garden of Eden.[33] Christ gathers his saints into the heavenly tabernacle now by faith, and he will physically gather us there on the last day to dwell together with him for all eternity (Matt 25:31–46; John 14:3; Col 3:1–4; 1 Thess 4:13–18; Rev 3:21; 4–5; 7; 19:1–9).

The eighth day and Final Assembly in the Old Testament typified the eternal day of heaven (John 11:23–26; Rom 6:1–11; Eph 2:6–7; Heb 12:22–24; Rev 21). In the New Testament, the eighth day signifies resurrection, new creation, and eternal life with the triune God. It is the day of Christ's resurrection from the dead and the inauguration of the eschatological eternal day (John 20:1, 19, 26). On that day, Christ's resurrected body became the new creation with which he renews the cosmos to endure eternally (Rom 8:18–22; 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15; 2 Pet 3:13; Rev 21:1). We Christians come to the divine service most regularly on Sunday, the eighth day, as our sacred convocation, our special Sabbath rest, and our participation in the heavenly assembly of angels, saints, and the triune God (Heb 4:1–11; Rev 4–5). The Final Assembly in ancient Israel foreshadowed the eternal day of heaven and our

[33] Access to the tree of life was denied to Adam and Eve after they fell into sin (Gen 3:22–24). In eternal paradise, Christians will regain access to and eat from the tree of life (Rev 2:7; 22:2).

joyful celebration as royal sons of our heavenly Father in his beloved Son through the eternal Spirit (Matt 5:9; Luke 6:35; John 12:36; Rom 8:14–15; 9:26; 2 Cor 6:18; Gal 3:26; 4:4–7; Heb 12:5–10; Rev 21:23–25).[34]

XI. Conclusion

YHWH instituted his divine liturgy for the ancient Israelites after he delivered them from slavery. He brought them out of Egypt so that he would be their gracious God and dwell among them at his sanctuary. Although the Israelites were his covenant people as descendants of Abraham, nonetheless they were sinful and unclean. So how did the holy God live in the midst of people contaminated with ritual impurity without destroying them? He instituted his liturgy for them. Through the daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly services, the LORD provided the means to purify the Israelites from their uncleanness and sanctify them to share in his holiness. Through the liturgy, YHWH revealed his gracious presence to his people and blessed them with his divine name. Thus, the LORD established ancient Israel's divine service with a fourfold purpose: to purify them, sanctify them, manifest his presence among them, and bless them. He accomplished these things through the liturgical calendar that he instituted, not for himself but for the benefit of his people in the Old Testament.[35]

Is the liturgy of the Old Testament relevant for the New Testament church? Yes, and no. The liturgy in the New Testament comprises both a discontinuity and a continuance of the service that Christ established for ancient Israel. The priesthood, sanctuary, offerings, and ritual acts in the Old Testament have all been fulfilled with the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, as well as the sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. From that perspective, the ritual activities performed by the priests and people in the liturgy of the Old Testament have been discontinued. However, the service that Christ instituted in ancient Israel continues in the New Israel—the church—but with a different ministry, rituals, and sanctuary.[36] Just as he had instituted the priesthood in the Old Testament to enact the liturgy among the Israelites, so also he instituted the holy ministry as stated in the New Testament to conduct the liturgy of the Christian church. On the one hand, Christ fulfilled the divine service that he instituted for ancient Israel. On the other hand, Christ enhanced the liturgy of the church by instituting his word, Baptism, Absolution, and Holy Communion for our purification, sanctification, epiphany of the divine presence, and blessing from the Father, in the Son, by the Holy Spirit.

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[34] See Kleinig, *Leviticus*, 492, 504, 509–511; and Arthur A. Just Jr., *Luke 1:1–9:50* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1996), 399, 401–405.

[35] Macina, *LORD's Service*, 178, 198–200.

[36] Macina, *LORD's Service*, xvi–xvii.

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The Women's "Speaking" at Corinth (1 Cor 14:34): Does Paul Limit Disruptive Speech or Wrongful Teaching of the Word of God?

John G. Nordling

Paul states that the women at Corinth "are not permitted to speak [οὐ . . . ἐπιτρέπεται λαλεῖν], but should be in submission" (1 Cor 14:34, ESV).[1] But what is the context surrounding the statement?[2]

Disruptive Speech?

Here a wide range of possibilities exist, extending from the plausible to the more speculative. For example, the apostle could be barring the women from mimicking the ecstatic frenzy of certain pagan cults.[3] Or Paul could be trying to prevent some form of disruptive speech: "The Corinthian women were publicly contradicting or embarrassing their husbands by asking questions about a particular prophecy or tongue."[4] Or the apostle could have been thinking about the tendency of women to

[1] Scripture quotations marked ESV are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Unless otherwise indicated, all biblical texts are translated by the author.

[2] The present study was undertaken at the request of a Lutheran pastor in our sister church in Brazil (the Igreja Evangélica Luterana do Brasil, IELB), which recently addressed this topic: "CTRE –Documento de Estudo Ordenação de Mulheres para o Ministério Pastoral?" The initials CTRE refer to Comissão de Teologia e Relações Eclesiais, that commission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil which produces official documents on different topics in theology—roughly equivalent to the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR) in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

[3] Richard and Catherine Kroeger, "Pandemonium and Silence at Corinth," in *Women and the Ministries of Christ*, ed. R. Hestenes and L. Curley (Pasadena: Fuller Theological Seminary, 1979), 49–55; Catherine Kroeger, "Strange Tongues or Plain Talk," *Daughters of Sarah* 12 (1986): 10–13. "As the law says" (1 Cor 14:34) would then refer to *Roman* law since, as the Kroegers point out, there were a number of legislative attempts to regulate religious frenzy generated by the cults of Dionysus/Bacchus. See Linda L. Belleville, *Women Leaders and the Church: Three Crucial Questions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), 198 n. 25.

[4] Belleville, *Women Leaders and the Church*, 160. See also C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 2nd ed., Harper's New Testament Commentaries (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 332; W. F. Orr and J. A. Walther, *I Corinthians*, Anchor Bible (Garden City: Doubleday, 1976), 312–313; Daniel C. Arichea, "The Silence of Women in the Church: Theology and Translation in 1 Corinthians 14.33b–36," *The Bible Translator* 46, no. 1 (January 1995): 105; Ann Jervis, "1 Corinthians 14:34–35: A Reconsideration of Paul's Limitation of the Free Speech of

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chatter (or gossip) during worship, and thus disturb those around them.[5] Or a possibility increasingly making the rounds in some circles is that certain *male* members of the Corinthian congregation were preventing women from more active participation in the speaking ministries of the church by appealing to a biblical (or cultural) tradition of female submission.[6] This possibility has proven attractive to critics who suppose Paul cites in 1 Corinthians 14:34–35 the (hostile) Corinthian view that women were not to speak in the assemblies—countered in 1 Corinthians 14:36 by the apostle's own more egalitarian stance toward women exhibited elsewhere (e.g., Gal 3:28; 1 Cor 11:5, 13).[7]

These featured views—and possibly more could be added—have to do with Paul's attempt to limit the women's disruptive "speaking" at Corinth. And that possibility has injected all kinds of plausible-sounding nonsense into the interpretation of verse 34—such as the possibility that Paul was responding to disrespectful women learners who may have been whispering (or at least talking out of turn) during the public instruction, a not unlikely scenario even today.[8] However,

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Some Corinthian Women," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 58 (1995): 60–73; Craig S. Keener, "Learning in the Assemblies: 1 Corinthians 14:34–35," in *Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity without Hierarchy*, ed. Ronald W. Pierce, Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, and Gordon D. Fee (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 164–170.

[5] G. Engel, "Let the Woman Learn in Silence, II," *Expository Times* 16 (1904–1905): 189–190; S. Scott Bartchy, "Power, Submission and Sexual Identity among the Early Christians," in *Essays on New Testament Christianity: A Festschrift in Honor of Dean E. Walker*, ed. C. Robert Wetzel (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Company, 1978), 68–70; Keener, "Learning in the Assemblies," 166–167.

[6] E.g., Neal Flanagan and Edwina Snyder, "Did Paul Put Down Women in 1 Cor. 14:34–36?," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 11 (1981): 10–12; Chris U. Manus, "The Subordination of the Women in the Church: 1 Cor. 14:33b–36 Reconsidered," *Revue africaine de théologie* 8 (1984): 183–195; David Odell-Scott, "Let the Women Speak in Church: An Egalitarian Interpretation of 1 Cor 14:33b–36," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 13 (1983): 90–93; David Odell-Scott, "In Defense of an Egalitarian Interpretation of 1 Cor 14:34–36: A Reply to Murphy-O'Connor's Critique," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 17 (1987): 100–103; Linda M. Bridges, "Silencing the Corinthian Men, Not the Women," in *The New Has Come*, ed. A. T. Neil and V. G. Neely (Washington, D.C.: Southern Baptist Alliance, 1989), 40–50.

[7] Thus, Charles H. Talbert, "Biblical Criticism's Role: The Pauline View of Women as a Case in Point," in *The Unfettered Word: Southern Baptists Confront the Authority-Inerrancy Question*, ed. Robison B. James (Waco: Word Books, 1987), 62–68.

[8] E.g., "While the worship service tends to be a fairly staid affair in more traditional churches (and so an unlikely context for talking), as an instructor I inevitably encounter one or two people in Sunday school classes who constantly whisper to their spouse or friend the entire time. I also have students (both male and female) who do this during class. Most are simply asking questions of the person sitting next to them and are totally unaware of how disruptive their activity is to the instructor and to those around them. When the volume gets above a whisper, it is hard not to attach the label *disrespectful* to the talking—even though the whisperers involved may be oblivious to the impact on those around them. So it is easy for me to see why Paul would use the term *disgraceful* [cf. αἰσχρόν, 1 Cor 14:35] of this kind of activity. It is not appropriate today, and it was not acceptable back then" (Belleville, *Women Leaders and the Church*, 161, original emphases).

I posit that the possibility of Paul's trying to limit the women's disruptive speech at Corinth pushes our understanding off in directions that are speculative at best, and harmful at worst. For example, it should be highly *offensive* to women nowadays that the apostle apparently pillories them for being "chatty" at church—when Paul is concerned throughout the chapter with order (see especially 14:33, 40). It plainly is *not* the case that the apostle singled out women for special censure (14:34)—when he also enjoins "silence" upon any would-be tongue-speaker (if there is no one to interpret, 14:27–28), or prophet (that if a revelation is made to another sitting there, the first should keep silent, 14:30). There was something about these situations that Paul found harmful to the orderly transmission of the word of God in a Christian assembly—which apparently had applicability not only in the original situation but for the well-being of the church in every time and place, including our own. What only a few have realized is that the apostle set himself against the Corinthians' exaggerated estimation of their own theological maturity and spiritual gifts.[9] This in turn would lead to the most fatal of consequences:

> The exaggerated esteem of glossolalia, of prophesying, and of *gnosis* had le[d] to the neglect of *agape*, of Christ Himself, of the direct revelation of God in Him. If Christ and His commands were neglected one could not count on belonging [to] those who had been saved when the day of judgment would come. Among the *paradoseis* [traditions] which the apostle himself had received and delivered to the churches [cf. 1 Cor 11:23] there was more than one *logion* which proved that those who acted in this way would hear these words from the mouth of the Lord, "I do not know (recognize) you; depart from me, you transgressors of the law" [Matt 7:23; Luke 13:27].[10]

What Does Λαλέω Mean?

Much of the confusion stems from substandard understandings of the verb "speak" (λαλέω) in Paul's statement that the women are "not permitted to speak [λαλεῖν]" in verse 34. The meaning "talk, chat, prattle" is apparently possible for λαλέω in older Greek,[11] and an influential lexicon opines that Paul was attempting

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[9] "He [Paul] saw that in Corinth men had begun to wander on the path which, in our terminology, we would call the way of the gnostics and fanatics." Nils Johansson, *Women and the Church's Ministry: An Exegetical Study of 1 Corinthians 11–14* (Ottawa: St. Barnabas, 1972), 56.

[10] Johansson, *Women and the Church's Ministry*, 56.

[11] So, H. G. Liddell, R. Scott, and H. S. Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th ed. With revised supplement (Oxford: Clarendon, 1966), 1025, on the basis of Aristophanes *Ecclesiazusae* 1058 (cf. *Vespae* 1135); Philemo 208; Plato *Euthydemus* 287d. Also, "they prattle, indeed, but they do not communicate [λαλοῦσι μέν . . ., οὐ φράζουσι δέ]" (Pseudo Plutarch *Placita philosophorum* 909A, line 5 [of dogs and apes], my translation). See also Joseph H. Thayer, ed. and trans., *A Greek-*

to limit the women from "expressing themselves" since a congregational assembly would engage not only in worship but in discussion of congregational affairs: "it was contrary to custom for Hellenic women . . . to participate in public deliberations."[12] However, the view that the apostle was attempting to curtail female prophets' business proceedings[13] (but *not* their preaching activities![14]) does not ring true; the latter possibility rests upon a rather obscure instruction about speech-making in an inscription dating to before 178 BC.[15] It requires special pleading to link the obscure instruction to the supposed likelihood of women's preaching at Corinth—even if Paul's approach reflects "the secondary position" accorded to priestesses in relation to their priest-husbands in Greco-Roman cults.[16] To be sure, it appears that *some* of the women speaking at Corinth were married, and that Paul expected them to ask "their own husbands" at home in case they wanted to learn something (14:35a). However, it requires a huge leap to imagine that these same women were preaching prophets, as were their husbands.[17] There is nothing about the text as it stands to suggest such a thing—and in fact the apostle states quite clearly that the women are not permitted "to *keep* speaking [λαλεῖν]" at Corinth (14:34a).[18] In case there is any doubt, Paul repeats the infinitive a verse later, stipulating that it is shameful for a woman "to keep speaking [λαλεῖν] *at church* [ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ]" (14:35b, added emphasis). It is this speaking *at church* in particular that

English Lexicon of the New Testament (New York, Cincinnati, Chicago: American Book Company, 1886 and 1889), 368.

[12] So, W. Bauer, F. W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000; hereafter cited as BDAG), 582, on the basis of insights presented in Frederick W. Danker, *Benefactor: Epigraphic Study of a Graeco-Roman and New Testament Semantic Field* (St. Louis: Clayton Publishing House, 1982), 164.

[13] Such as expulsion from the assembly (cf. 1 Cor 5:1–8) or conflicts between members (1 Cor 6:1–6).

[14] So Danker (*Benefactor*, 164), who describes an "affirmation" of the women's "right to preach."

[15] "No one shall deliver a speech [μηδείς . . . ἔπος φωνείτω] without recognition by the priest or the vice-priest. Violation of this statute shall result in a fine of 30 light drachmai" (*Inscriptiones Graecae* II^2 1368.107–9, trans. By Danker in *Benefactor*, 159).

[16] Danker, *Benefactor*, 164. Apparently, a kind of "priority" was given to the husband of a priestess in these cultic assemblies. See Franz Poland, *Geschichte des Griechischen Vereinswesens* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1909), 345–346, 352.

[17] John Reumann mentions the possibility ("What in Scripture Speaks to the Ordination of Women?," *Concordia Theological Monthly* 44, no. 1 [January 1973]: 16 n. 39) that Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 11:2–6 involved "possibly ordained" married prophetesses who spoke under the Spirit at cultic gatherings and so constituted a part of the ministry at Corinth.

[18] The present tense denotes imperfect aspect—that is, an ongoing unfolding of an event or state, such as that of a parade passing directly in front of a reporter. So Constantine R. Campbell, *Basics of Verbal Aspect in Biblical Greek* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 42.

connects it to public preaching or proclamation.[19] The clarity of the prohibition is not in doubt to most readers as it stands—although many interpreters nowadays have done their utmost to make it seem that the plain words of Scripture must mean something else.[20]

Moreover, the lexical explanation in BDAG overlooks the fact that λαλέω can be synonymous with authoritative teaching—for example,

> The high priest then questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. Jesus answered him, "*I have spoken* [λελάληκα] openly to the world. I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all Jews come together. *I have said* [ἐλάλησα] nothing in secret." (John 18:19–20, ESV, added emphases)

Λαλέω works similarly in a good many other passages as well, and each repays careful study: Matthew 9:18; 28:18; Acts 4:1; 18:25; 1 Corinthians 2:6–7; 2 Corinthians 2:17; Hebrews 13:7.[21] The point is that while BDAG accounts for quite a number of these passages in other connections, it fails to account for the authoritative nature of λαλέω in the abundance of passages specified in the preceding sentence and footnote—leaving the impression that the word's meaning is exhausted by the mere sound of words: "the actual 'speaking,' as it were."[22] However, there must have been much more to λαλέω in the original situation than mere "noise production," to put the matter baldly.[23] Scholars opposed to women's ordination point out that the absolute form for "speaking" in 1 Corinthians 14:34 is nothing less than a technical term for someone authorized to speak in an official

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[19] Johansson, *Women and the Church's Ministry*, 53.

[20] I shall grapple with this disconnect below, pp. 250–251.

[21] These are the examples John W. Kleinig identifies as authoritative in "Scripture and the Exclusion of Women from the Pastorate (I)," *Lutheran Theological Journal* 29, no. 2 (August 1995): 79. Bo Giertz adds Ephesians 5:19; Philippians 1:14; and Titus 2:15, in "Twenty-Three Theses on the Holy Scriptures, the Woman, and the Office of the Ministry," *Women Pastors? The Ordination of Women in Biblical Lutheran Perspective*, 3rd ed., ed. Matthew C. Harrison and John T. Pless (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2012), 254. William Weinrich adds Matthew 12:46; Mark 2:2; Luke 9:11; John 8:12; Acts 8:25; 13:43; 2 Corinthians 12:19; and Ephesians 6:20, in "'It Is Not Given to Women to Teach': A *Lex* in Search of a *Ratio*," in Harrison and Pless, *Women Pastors?,* 475.

[22] So Paul D. Gardner, *I Corinthians*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 635—the idea being that whereas λέγω ("to say") refers to the *content* of what is spoken, λαλέω supposedly refers to *the sound of the words*. Thus, Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 368. However, the two words occur (with no appreciable difference) in Romans 3:19.

[23] Another big problem with BDAG is that it fails to list several of the passages most demonstrative of the authoritative nature of λαλέω (see note 21 above). Thus, it fails to account for the authoritative nature of λαλέω in Matthew 9:18; John 18:19–20; Acts 13:43; 18:25; 2 Corinthians 2:17; 12:19; Ephesians 5:19; 6:20; Titus 2:15; and Hebrews 13:7—a considerable oversight, in my opinion.

capacity.[24] To be sure, context demonstrates that Paul insisted upon relative (as opposed to absolute) silence from the women at Corinth since the latter were part of the "all" who spoke in tongues (1 Cor 14:5, 23), engaged in prophecy (1 Cor 11:5; 14:5, 23, 31), and participated in liturgical prayer (1 Cor 11:5; cf. 1 Tim 2:1–10). Still, women's participation in these activities would not have violated the clear Pauline prohibitions (1 Cor 14:33b–35; 1 Tim 2:11–12), but rather resembled the praying, praising, and giving thanks of the entire body of Christ at the Divine Service still today where only the suitably prepared, called, ordained, and male pastor should preach publicly.

Godly Women *Can* Prophesy![25]

Of course, biblically speaking (e.g., Joel 2:28–29; Acts 2:17–18; 21:9) women *can* prophesy.[26] Nevertheless, prophecy differs from preaching in that prophecy was directly received through the Spirit. One either possessed the gift of prophecy or one did not—somewhat akin to healing.[27] It was always the case in the Christian assemblies, however, that prophecy was weighed, evaluated, and thus subjected to various norms.[28] Women with charismatic gifts—like Miriam, Huldah, Deborah, the Virgin Mary, and Philip's daughters—did not yield to any internal impulses to preach (*vocatio interna*). "Keeping silence" must have meant originally (and still now) that gifted women deliberately refrain from activity that could be construed as preaching in the liturgical assembly: "They loved their Lord and knew that they had to obey his command."[29]

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[24] Thus, Johansson, *Women and the Church's Ministry*, 53–54; Kleinig, "Scripture and the Exclusion of Women from the Pastorate (I)," 80; Gregory J. Lockwood, *1 Corinthians*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2000), 533; John W. Kleinig, "Disciples But Not Teachers: 1 Corinthians 14:33b–38 and 1 Timothy 2:11–15," in Harrison and Pless, *Women Pastors?,* 54.

[25] My comments in this section are based in large part upon my review of the first edition of Matthew C. Harrison and John T. Pless, eds., *Women Pastors? The Ordination of Women in Biblical Lutheran Perspective* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2008), in *Concordia Theological Quarterly* [hereinafter cited as *CTQ*] 72 (2008): 377–380.

[26] Peter Kriewaldt, "1 Corinthians 14:33b–38, 1 Timothy 2:11–14, and the Ordination of Women," in Harrison and Pless, *Women Pastors?,* 64; Giertz, "Twenty-Three Theses," 259–260; Peter Brunner, "The Ministry and the Ministry of Women," in Harrison and Pless, *Women Pastors?,* 277; David P. Scaer, "May Women Be Ordained as Pastors?," in Harrison and Pless, *Women Pastors?,* 316–317 n. 40; Hermann Sasse, "Ordination of Women?," in Harrison and Pless, *Women Pastors?,* 346–347; Weinrich, "It Is Not Given to Women to Teach," 467.

[27] Brunner, "The Ministry and the Ministry of Women," 276.

[28] Kriewaldt, "1 Corinthians 14:33b–38, 1 Timothy 2:11–14," 64–65. Also, Kleinig, "Scripture and the Exclusion of Women from the Pastorate (I)," 80; Kleinig, "Disciples But Not Teachers," 54–55; Brunner, "The Ministry and the Ministry of Women," 279–280.

[29] Sasse, "Ordination of Women?," 348.

Again, the Pauline prohibitions need not mean that women cannot speak at all during the worship service,[30] or that Priscilla (Acts 18:2, 18, 26; Rom 16:3; 1 Cor 16:19; 2 Tim 4:19) and other godly women (e.g., Lydia, Acts 16:14–15; Phoebe, Rom 16:1–2; Euodia and Syntyche, Phil 4:2–3) did not instruct their own households in the faith. Nonetheless, Priscilla's teaching was done privately—outside the context of the liturgical assembly[31]—or even exceptionally.[32] And the "servant [διάκονος]" Phoebe (Rom 16:1, ESV), whom the apostle trusted to get one of his most important letters to Rome and receive the congregation's full hospitality there (Rom 16:2), likewise did not herself aspire to the pastoral office but rather upheld and supported it in a serving role (she had been Paul and others' personal patroness!)—providing an example for deaconesses still today in the confessional Lutheran church.[33] At any rate, there is no evidence that prophesying of the sort that Paul seems to countenance in 1 Corinthians 11:5 was the same thing as preaching or leading worship.[34] Rather, the apostle describes there a deportment at worship wherein all Christians engage.

The Wrongful Teaching of the Word of God

I take it, then, that the women's "speaking" at Corinth was not merely disruptive (yet certainly it *was* that, given the overall tendency of the possibilities[35]), but that it represented a *wrongful teaching of the word of God* that Paul recognized as being particularly harmful to the church and to Christian worship everywhere. This could be established, first, by the tone of the apostle's later remarks, which were rather heated (or possibly "ironic,"[36] or even "sarcastic"[37]):

> "For it is *shameful* [αἰσχρόν] for a woman to speak [λαλεῖν] in church!" (14:35c);

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[30] Such as to teach Sunday School or direct the choir. Thus, Scaer, "May Women Be Ordained as Pastors?," 310; Gregory J. Lockwood, "The Women's Ordination Debate in the Lutheran Church of Australia," in Harrison and Pless, *Women Pastors?,* 361.

[31] Sasse, "Ordination of Women?," 347; Lockwood, "The Women's Ordination Debate," 365.

[32] Weinrich, "It Is Not Given to Women to Teach," 462.

[33] Cynthia Lumley, "Phoebe: A Role Model for Deaconesses Today," in Harrison and Pless, *Women Pastors?,* 35–49. For the open-ended hospitality to which Phoebe was entitled by the apostle's endorsement, see Robert Jewett, *Romans*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 945–946; Michael P. Middendorf, *Romans 9–16*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2016), 1554–1555.

[34] Scaer, "May Women Be Ordained as Pastors?," 317.

[35] As presented above in the section "Disruptive Speech?"

[36] "With heavy irony . . . Paul challenges the Corinthians' sense of their own importance" (Lockwood, *1 Corinthians*, 510).

[37] "In contrast to 'all the churches' (v. 33c) Paul sarcastically points out that the Corinthians are ploughing their own furrow, as if God had only spoken to them" (Gardner, *I Corinthians*, 637).

"Or was it *from you* [ἢ ἀφ' ὑμῶν] that the word of God came?!" (14:36a);

"Or are you *the only ones* [ἢ εἰς ὑμᾶς μόνους] it has reached?!" (14:36b).

The translations are those of the ESV; I have added the italicization and exclamation points to highlight what I take to have been Paul's scornful tone over against the Corinthians who thought they were so smart and advanced in the gospel. Well, they *were not* (smart, that is) but rather "puffed up" (φυσιόω, 4:6, 18–19; 5:2; 8:1) by their own spiritual insights and accomplishments, and so were nothing but "infants in Christ" (3:1 ESV). The disjunctive particles ἤ . . . ἤ[38] were part of the rhetorical questions intended to shut discussion down, not seriously to advance it.[39] Hence Paul was more than a little steamed at the Corinthians for allowing (or even encouraging?) the women to speak *shamefully* at worship.[40] If this seems harsh, consider that—in ways both great and small—the apostle was hardly the sort to suffer fools gladly.[41] Paul possessed a kind of white-hot anger against any innovation that wormed its way into his congregational assemblies. So it might be imagined that he would look askance at those churches nowadays that go their own way and ordain women—"as if their own cultural situation somehow justified it or they now possessed superior wisdom to the church of previous generations."[42] Such would not have been the case in the original situation, and such is not the case now.

Second, the apostle writes that the silence of the women involves submission: "For they are not permitted to speak, but *should be in submission* [ὑποτασσέσθωσαν]" (14:34, ESV, added emphasis).[43] Significantly, Paul does not mention here just what

[38] Which some translate "so tell me . . . ? Or tell me . . . ?" Thus, Gardner, *I Corinthians*, 637.

[39] "As in 1 Cor. 12:29–30, he ends the discussion with rhetorical questions . . . and apparently anticipates some opposition to his rulings" (David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003], 673). Paul often uses the particle ἤ to introduce rhetorical questions in the letter: 1:13; 6:2, 9, 16, 19; 9:6; 10:22; 11:22; cf. 2 Cor 3:1; 11:7. Most of these indicate the apostle's perplexity (if not utter incredulity!) at the Corinthians' obtuseness.

[40] "Just as it was 'shameful' for a woman to appear at public worship without a head-covering (αἰσχρόν, 11:6), so it is 'shameful' for her to assume a teaching role on those occasions (αἰσχρόν, 14:35). The formula 'it is shameful' covers what is offensive to God as well as what causes social offense (cf. αἰσχρόν, 'shameful,' also in Eph 5:12)" (Lockwood, *1 Corinthians*, 510). Cf. Kleinig, "Scripture and the Exclusion of Women from the Pastorate (I)," 81; Kleinig, "Disciples But Not Teachers," 55.

[41] For irony "of the sharpest kind" (so F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961], 262, § 495), see 1 Corinthians 4:8 and 2 Corinthians 11:19–20. For similar tirades against dim-witted epistolary recipients, see 2 Corinthians 11:2–4, 7–8; 12:11–13; Galatians 1:8–9; 3:1–3; 4:9–11; 5:2–4, 15, etc.

[42] Lockwood, *1 Corinthians*, 511.

[43] In the New Testament, "submission" means being in an ordered relation to someone else who is above the first. See John G. Nordling, "Does Ephesians 5:21 Support Mutual Submission?,"

the object of their submission was: it could have involved the submission of wives to their husbands in general (Col 3:18; Titus 2:4–5; 1 Pet 3:5) since, after all, the apostle commands the former to ask "their own husbands" at home "if they want to learn something" (14:35a).[44] The latter consideration demonstrates, indeed, that the women could be accomplished *learners* (if not speaking teachers) of the word[45]—although, once again, I wonder if Pauline contempt intrudes even here since, in a not dissimilar situation, Paul had wondered—irascibly—if the Corinthians could not eat or drink (or even get drunk!) *at home* rather than profane the Lord's Supper (11:22). A similar situation obtains in 1 Corinthians 14, at the climax of which the apostle unleashes his notorious prohibition against the women's wrongful speaking. The weighing of prophecy was going on (14:27–33a) amid circumstances that could have tended toward chaos and confusion. Why were the prophecies weighed? Answer: because they did not have the same authoritative status as the Old Testament texts, the commands of Jesus, and the apostolic tradition to which the Corinthian prophets were expected to acquiesce (14:37–38).[46] This, despite the fact that the actual weighing of prophecy was in some sense a group effort (see "the others" mentioned in 14:29), and quite possibly the women—and any other member of the Corinthian congregation—were involved in the process.[47] Nevertheless, there was to be a "submission" on the part of the women (and all others) to those male leaders of the congregation charged with the subordinating of tongues and prophecy to what in fact was edifying to the whole congregation, and in honoring the word of God that had come to them via the apostolic emissaries from Jerusalem (14:36; cf. Acts 1:8; 1 Thess 2:13).[48]

Already at Corinth there was the expectation that everything should be done "decently and in order" (14:40) through what we would call the Office of the Holy

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Logia 24, no. 4 (Reformation 2015): 20. Also, Kriewaldt, "1 Corinthians 14:33b–38, 1 Timothy 2:11–14," 66.

[44] See also the section "What Does Λαλέω Mean?" above.

[45] Which was in itself remarkable since in rabbinic Judaism women were regarded as "second-class members of the community." So Lockwood, *1 Corinthians*, 518. Also, in the Jewish synagogues "women were assigned special places behind a screen" (Faculty of Christ Seminary—Seminex, "For the Ordination of Women," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 6, no. 3 [June 1979]: 134).

[46] Kleinig, "Scripture and the Exclusion of Women from the Pastorate (I)," 80; Kleinig, "Disciples But Not Teachers," 54–55; Kriewaldt, "1 Corinthians 14:33b–38, 1 Timothy 2:11–14," 64–65.

[47] For this possibility, see Johansson, *Women and the Church's Ministry*, 55, 65, 69; Kleinig, "Scripture and the Exclusion of Women from the Pastorate (I)," 79. In the analogous process of letter writing, Paul worked with a "staff"—and so not privately and individualistically. Rather, he was the leader of a team, but also "in charge." Thus, E. Randolph Richards, *Paul and First-Century Letter Writing* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 26, 32–33, 106, 119, 224.

[48] Johansson, *Women and the Church's Ministry*, 55, 69–71; Kleinig, "Scripture and the Exclusion of Women from the Pastorate (I)," 80.

Ministry: "Women are therefore not allowed to be speakers in the liturgical assembly but must be subordinate to those who have been appointed to fulfill that role."[49] This, in marked contrast to proponents of women's ordination who have argued—incorrectly—that there was no such thing as an ordained ministry for pastors during the period of the New Testament.[50] However, the Pauline concern for submission to those who were weighing prophecy at Corinth would suggest quite otherwise. Paul was responding to a chaotic situation, to be sure, yet he was keen to regulate affairs at Corinth so that ministry there resembled the institution of Jesus, who likewise sent men to preach and heal in his name (Luke 10:5, 9, 16), loose and bind sins publicly (John 20:21–23), and make disciples of all nations by baptizing and teaching (Matt 28:19–20). Of course, the entire church is involved in these processes—not just a few male pastors! Nevertheless, something resembling the Office of the Ministry (as Lutherans have traditionally understood it) had been suggested already by the Lord Jesus Christ, not just Paul—and both Jesus and the apostle were in continuity with the Old Testament priesthood.[51]

Third, I would like to grapple with the opinion that women's ordination is apparently permissible (in spite of the prohibitions against it)—while maintaining all the while the orthodox-sounding mantra that the word of God through St. Paul is authoritative for all time.[52] Such is hardly a new opinion. Krister Stendahl argued in the late 1950s that although women's authoritative speaking in the church is disproven by clear texts exegetically (1 Cor 14:33b–38; 1 Tim 2:11–15), a new reality of redemption transcends and replaces the old order of creation, so that the distinction between male and female is rendered obsolete.[53] Stendahl recognized, already as a young doctoral student, that his more conservative professors at

[49] Kleinig, "Scripture and the Exclusion of Women from the Pastorate (I)," 80.

[50] "'Ordination,' it is well to remember, does not appear, full-blown and in our sense of the term, in the Scriptures" (Reumann, "What in Scripture Speaks to the Ordination of Women?," 5). Also (and on the same page): "Paul . . . and John know no rite of ordination"; "A uniform practice . . . akin to what we call ordination is not to be found in early Christianity." The first statement is cited with approval by the Faculty of Christ Seminary—Seminex, "For the Ordination of Women," 133 n. 5.

[51] See in particular Paul L. Schrieber, "Priests among Priests: The Office of the Ministry in Light of the Old Testament Priesthood," *Concordia Journal* 14, no. 3 (July 1988): 215–228.

[52] Linda L. Belleville epitomizes this approach in my opinion. See a listing of her more influential publications at https://www.cbeinternational.org/persons/linda-l-belleville. Accessed December 30, 2021.

[53] Paul achieved an "evangelical breakthrough" in Galatians 3:28 as the distinction between male and female is rendered obsolete. See Krister Stendahl, *The Bible and the Role of Women*, trans. Emile Sander (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), 33. Also, Reumann, "What in Scripture Speaks to the Ordination of Women?," 14 n. 35, 15; Faculty of Christ Seminary—Seminex, "For the Ordination of Women," 134–135.

Uppsala and Lund were exegetically correct in opposing women's ordination[54]—but that, nonetheless, modern theologians should be prepared to move beyond mere exegesis and so explore what the text may mean today. There is a "gap" between what the text meant in its original context and what it might mean in our own time.[55] I think it safe to say that such corrosive thinking sunders ancient text from modern reality: the "then and there" of the original document must ever be "re-contextualized" to suit the "here and now" of whatever modern man/woman may happen to be thinking or experiencing at the moment. Hence, if this "gap" is permitted to exist in the life of the church it would put many things at risk that are constitutive of the Christian religion, such as the ongoing relevance of the virgin birth, our Lord's resurrection from the dead, the forgiveness of sins, and the efficacy of the gospel and sacraments in every Christian congregation. Paul opposed women's speaking in the liturgical assembly then not simply because it was disruptive (for the local situation), but he intended that the prohibitions should apply to all churches everywhere (1 Cor 14:33b) and affirmed that these prohibitions came from God himself.[56] Quite a few interpreters are of the opinion, however, that women's ordination could (at least theoretically) be given a go, even though the practice patently contradicts the plain meaning of Scripture. At the very least, such a disconnect does not represent Lutheran hermeneutics at its best—for example, the clarity of Scripture.[57] At its worst, the prospect of women's ordination injects into the life of a Christian a very great *monstrum incertitudinis* ("horror of uncertainty"): either one must constantly "reinterpret" (or seriously second-guess) those texts that plainly forbid women to speak publicly in the liturgical assembly, or one must

[54] See Stendahl's personal reminiscences in Krister Stendahl, "Dethroning Biblical Imperialism in Theology," in *Reading the Bible in the Global Village*, ed. Heikki Räisänen et al. (Atlanta: Society for Biblical Literature, 2000), 62–63.

[55] John T. Pless calls this a "hermeneutic of distance." See "The Ordination of Women: A Test Case for Biblical Authority," in *My Savior's Guest: A Festschrift in Honor of Erling Trygve Teigen*, ed. Thomas Rank (Lake Mills, Iowa: Thomas Rank, 2021), 212. Someone else who addresses this unfortunate "gap" is Lockwood, "The Women's Ordination Debate," 356. Reumann, however, argues ("What in Scripture Speaks to the Ordination of Women?," 28–29) that the entire issue is one of hermeneutics, so some of the texts cited against ordaining women can be excluded (as glosses) or demoted in value (as deutero-Pauline).

[56] Such represent a "command of the Lord" (1 Cor 14:37b) and are meant to "clinch the argument." So Kleinig, "Scripture and the Exclusion of Women from the Pastorate (I)," 81; Kleinig, "Disciples But Not Teachers," 55.

[57] "The clarity of Scripture means that the word of God, its presentation and proclamation, is not obscure or esoteric, but forthright and understandable to the common person who makes a reasonable effort to understand it. In other words, if we apply the same skills of reading and understanding to the Bible that we expect to apply to other books, the average reader will be able to understand its message" (Steven P. Mueller, *Called to Believe: A Brief Introduction to Christian Doctrine* [Eugene, Ore.: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2006], 27).

question the validity of an apparent "pastor" who obviously is a woman: what else about such a ministry is likewise suspect?

Biblical Headship[58]

Today feminism diminishes many of the created differences between men and women. Another view sees sexual differences as a result of the fall into sin. However, God created the two sexes ("male and female he created them," Gen 1:27, ESV), and so distinctions between men and women are part of God's good creation. So-called "headship" is based in part on 1 Corinthians 11:3 ("But I want you to understand that the head of every man [παντὸς ἀνδρός] is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband [γυναικὸς ὁ ἀνήρ], and the head of Christ is God," ESV). The imagery here cannot be dismissed;[59] thus, the ever-increasing insistence for a pervasive unisexuality—which holds, for example, that distinctive differences between man and woman are interchangeable—is contrary to creation and should not be tolerated in the church. Sexuality matters for Christians who confess that God created man and woman as distinct and in a certain order from the beginning (Gen 1:27; cf. 1 Cor 11:3).[60]

The point is that men and women are *different* from each other, and so should occupy *different vocations* at home and in the church.[61] Hence, the rush to ordain theologically articulate women results, sadly, in a diminution of the service that women *can* render legitimately in the church[62] and has had a profoundly negative impact also on hearth and home: "[T]he ordination of women contradicts the spiritual vocation of men as husbands and fathers and empties marriage and family life of much of their spiritual significance."[63] Moreover, the ordination of women in some Lutheran and Anglican communions has prepared the way for the ordination of homosexuals.[64] Of course, as several proponents of women's ordination insist, the

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[58] My comments in this section are based in large part upon my review of the 2008 edition of Harrison and Pless, *Women Pastors?*, in *CTQ* 72 (2008), 377–380, and Nordling, "Does Ephesians 5:21 Support Mutual Submission?," 23.

[59] Scaer, "May Women Be Ordained as Pastors?," 315.

[60] Charles A. Gieschen, "Ordained Proclaimers or Quiet Learners? Women in Worship in Light of 1 Timothy 2," in Harrison and Pless, *Women Pastors?,* 100 n. 56; John W. Kleinig, "The Ordination of Women and the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity," in Harrison and Pless, *Women Pastors?*, 295–302.

[61] Giertz, "Twenty-Three Theses," 256, 260; Lockwood, "The Women's Ordination Debate," 366 n. 27.

[62] Giertz, "Twenty-Three Theses," 260; Brunner, "The Ministry and the Ministry of Women," 292–293; Reinhard Slenczka, "The Ordination of Women into the Office of the Church," in Harrison and Pless, *Women Pastors?*, 391; Louis A. Smith, "How My Mind Has Changed," in Harrison and Pless, *Women Pastors?*," 517.

[63] Kleinig, "The Ordination of Women and the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity," 300.

[64] John T. Pless, "The Ordination of Women and the Ecclesial Endorsement of Homosexuality: Are They Related?," in Harrison and Pless, *Women Pastors?*, 231–245.

ordination of women and the ordination of homosexuals represent two separate categories: "These issues are not of the same order."[65] Nonetheless, the pattern of argumentation for both illicit ordinations follows similar trajectories: first, the appeal to Galatians 3:28 ("no male and female"); and second, the idea that the biblical writers were conditioned by their time and culture, so that "what a text meant" then is not necessarily the same as "what it means" for us today.[66]

However, to take the second point first, it should be pointed out that the argument against meaning often runs counter to Christianity itself, which holds that the word of God is sufficient for believers in every time and place—including our own (2 Tim 3:16–17). Being a Christian involves some sense that texts from hoary antiquity have ultimate meaning for one now, regardless of what one may happen to experience at the moment or with respect to the structures of this world which, in its present form, "is passing away" (1 Cor 7:31, ESV; cf. 2 Cor 5:17; 1 John 2:17; Rev 21:1). Second, the problem with Galatians 3:28 being used to justify women's or homosexual ordination is that one's standing before God through faith in Christ Jesus in no wise abolishes relationships of the created order that are meant to last until the end of the world. Consider Paul's rather ironical questions in 1 Corinthians 12:29: "Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles?" (ESV). The grammatical form of these questions requires a negative answer.[67] Thus, "all are equal before God," as Galatians 3:28 clearly teaches, but "equality hardly suggests interchangeability."[68] Others point out that equality before God through faith in Christ Jesus does not erase created sexual distinctions between male and female: "[T]he gender distinction is a fact since the creation of mankind."[69] Thus, in the life of the redeemed here below, sexuality matters quite a lot, particularly in those relationships shared at home and at church.

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[65] Craig R. Koester, "The Bible and Sexual Boundaries," *Lutheran Quarterly* 7, no. 4 (1993): 388. Similar cases are made by R. T. France, "From Romans to the Real World: Biblical Principles and Cultural Change in Relation to Homosexuality and the Ministry of Women," in Sven K. Soderlund and N. T. Wright, eds., *Romans and the People of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 234–253; and Robert A. J. Gagnon, *The Bible and Homosexual Practice: Texts and Hermeneutics* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001), 441–443.

[66] See Pless, "The Ordination of Women," 241 nn. 38, 40–41, for scholars adopting this position.

[67] Μὴ πάντες ἀπόστολοι; μὴ πάντες προφῆται; μὴ πάντες διδάσκαλοι; μὴ πάντες δυνάμεις; (1 Cor 12:29). The negative particle *μή* in a question requires the answer no. Thus, H. W. Smyth, *A Greek Grammar for Colleges* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1920), § 2651; James W. Voelz, *Fundamental Greek Grammar*, 4th rev. ed. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2019), 261.

[68] Scaer, "May Women Be Ordained as Pastors?," 323.

[69] Christos P. Tsekrekos, "The Eschatological Character of Christian Marriage," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 58, no. 3 (2014): 308.

Conclusion

Scholars who focus overmuch on what may have been the circumstances surrounding Paul's prohibition against women's speaking at Corinth often have the not-so-hidden agenda of allowing them to speak now as female pastors or priestesses in the church—a wrongful teaching of the word of God. Although it cannot be substantiated, it is at least *tempting* to hypothesize that the apostle became angry at some version of the ersatz "gospel" of equality and fairness that is still so prevalent in the church of today—and thus made his rather pointed prohibitions against women speaking in the congregational assemblies.[70] Mere anger is not what prompted Paul's statements against the women's speaking, however, but rather apostolic conformity to the "order of creation,"[71] which might be defined in basic terms as "the right relationship between man and woman."[72] Just this had been violated at Corinth somehow.[73] Obviously, of more significance in this regard was the patience with which Paul dealt with the problem, for the matter of women's speaking illicitly would have seemed indicative of a church "in full decay."[74] Nonetheless, the apostle conducted his ministry becomingly and in the full conviction that—despite the problems—there was still a church at Corinth where Christ was present. For the word of God was present among the Corinthians, and Christ, the Good Shepherd, was still the Christians' righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (1 Cor 1:30). Such an understanding rightly encourages brothers and sisters in Christ to resist women's ordination at present, take God at his word, and walk humbly along the paths God has set for men and women in their respective vocations:

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[70] In addition to 1 Corinthians 14:33b–35, see also the prohibition against women's speaking in 1 Timothy 2:11–12. The latter text actually is a commentary on the former, and both come from St. Paul himself. Thus, Scaer, "May Women Be Ordained as Pastors?," 318. It seems worth noting that some have justified the ordination of women if "occasioned by the Gospel." Thus, Faculty of Christ Seminary—Seminex, "For the Ordination of Women," 136.

[71] For some scholars who mention this order favorably, see Kriewaldt, "1 Corinthians 14:33b–38, 1 Timothy 2:11–14," 69; Giertz, "Twenty-Three Theses," 256; Brunner, "The Ministry and the Ministry of Women," 282; Sasse, "Ordination of Women?," 348; Lockwood, "The Women's Ordination Debate," 354, 369; Robert Schaibley, "Gender Considerations on the Pastoral Office," in Harrison and Pless, *Women Pastors?*, 457–458; Weinrich, "It Is Not Given to Women to Teach," 482–483.

[72] Bertil Gärtner, "*Didaskalos*," in Harrison and Pless, *Women Pastors?*, 27.

[73] See guarded comments in Ben Witherington III, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 287; Kleinig, "Scripture and the Exclusion of Women from the Pastorate (I)," 79; Gärtner, "*Didaskalos*," 21–22; Kriewaldt, "1 Corinthians 14:33b–38, 1 Timothy 2:11–14," 65; Scaer, "May Women Be Ordained as Pastors?," 303 n. 4; Sasse, "Ordination of Women?," 345.

[74] Sasse, "Ordination of Women?," 345.

God is faithful. He does not leave His children alone to suffer through the issues and implications of the two sexes. He sends faithful pastors and strong laymen to illustrate what it means to be men. He raises up pious, humble women to serve as confident examples of what it means to be women. Yes, He remembers what He has created, and He waits with eagerness for the day when He can gather the faithful to Himself. He longs to restore male and female alike to wholeness, and in that day, He will rejoice as they know, for the first time, the perfection—the completeness—that He intended for their unique identities.[75]

[75] Adriane Dorr, "Giver to Receiver: God's Design for the Sexes," in Harrison and Pless, *Women Pastors?*, 429.

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Suing Your Brother: 1 Corinthians 6:1–9 in the Lutheran Exegetical Tradition

Christian Preus

The Lutheran insistence that civil ordinances, including the courts, are divinely ordained and open to Christian use is enshrined in Augsburg Confession XVI, "Concerning Civic Affairs." In a time when all protesters to Roman doctrine were bulked together as heretics and Luther and Lutherans were accused of holding to the destructive and immoral teachings of various sects,[1] the Lutherans were particularly concerned to condemn the radical opinions of the Anabaptists, who claimed that Christians should not take part in secular government or use secular courts. So the Augsburg Confession affirms that Christians are permitted "to hold civil office, to work in law courts, to decide matters by imperial and other existing laws, to impose just punishments, to wage just war, to serve as soldiers, to make legal contracts, to hold property, to take an oath when required by magistrates, to take a wife, to be given in marriage" (AC XVI 2).[2] The Apology likewise clarifies that while the gospel forbids private revenge or redress, "public redress, which is made through the office of the judge, is not forbidden but is commanded and is a work of God according to Paul in Romans 13" (Ap XVI 7).[3] This approval of public redress through the courts, however, which is found consistently throughout the writings of Luther and Lutherans, does not constitute an unqualified approval of redress through the courts. Quite the contrary, a study of the Lutheran treatment of 1 Corinthians 6:1–9, spanning from Luther all the way through the period of Orthodoxy and into the age of Pietism, shows that the Lutheran exegetical tradition is united in cautioning Christians against suing anybody for material things and unanimous in condemning Christians bringing private suits against other Christians in secular courts. The Lutherans' strong emphasis on the divinely ordered good of government and the courts should not overshadow their equally adamant insistence that God orders Christians to behave like Christians, to love reconciliation, to despise worldly riches,

[1] See John Eck's *Four Hundred and Four Articles for the Imperial Diet at Augsburg*, distributed in Augsburg before the diet. See in particular article 386, "All those who contend in court for goods or for reputation are heathen. Luther." Robert Kolb and James A. Nestingen, eds., *Sources and Contexts of the Book of Concord* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 79.

[2] Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, trans. Charles Arand, et al. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), 49.

[3] Kolb and Wengert, *The Book of Concord*, 232. See also FC SD XII 17–21; FC Ep XII 12–15.

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and never to bring shame on the church by bringing trivial suits against fellow Christians.

It should be stressed that the Lutherans were never legalistic about this. The opposite is the case. They were evangelical. The gospel is a gospel of reconciliation, of forgiving faults. Christians bringing lawsuits against other Christians makes a mockery of this reconciliation, scandalizes the faith of those who trust in this reconciliation, and offers the world the opportunity to ridicule this reconciliation. Because the reconciliation they have with God through Christ's blood is their greatest treasure, Christians should value reconciliation with one another above any material benefit.

1 Corinthians 6:1–9 in Luther

Luther, in particular, refused to make the sin of suing a matter of civil or ecclesiastical law. He insisted on keeping it a theological and pastoral issue, one for pastors to preach on, not for judges or magistrates to rule on. So averse was he to being legalistic on this issue that in the same breath as he condemns the sin of suing another Christian, he also advises that this sin should be "tolerated," lest the secular courts themselves, which are God's institution, be overturned.[4] It must be remembered that in Luther's day, though the practice of Christian virtue was often a rarity,[5] virtually everyone was considered a "Christian." Thus, to make a secular law against Christians suing Christians would bring an end to virtually all civil suits, something society could not bear.[6]

But while civil law permitted one Christian to bring a private suit against another, Luther condemned the act in no uncertain terms. Luther's synopsis of 1 Corinthians 6 in his *Preface to the New Testament* is a good summation of his views: "In chapter 6 [St. Paul] rebukes contention and disputing in the courts, especially before heathen and unbelievers. He teaches them that they should settle

[4] Martin Luther, *On Trade and Usury* (1524): vol. 45, p. 278, in *Luther's Works, American Edition*, vols. 1–30, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955–76); vols. 31–55, ed. Helmut Lehmann (Philadelphia/Minneapolis: Muhlenberg/Fortress, 1957–86); vols. 56–82, ed. Christopher Boyd Brown and Benjamin T. G. Mayes (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2009–), hereafter AE.

[5] For the lack of Christian culture in Reformation times, see Rodney Stark, *The Triumph of Christianity: How the Jesus Movement Became the World's Largest Religion* (New York: Harper One, 2011), 255–260. See also Luther's preface to the Small Catechism in Kolb, *Book of Concord*, 347–348.

[6] Luther, *Two Kinds of Righteousness* (1519), AE 31:305, "But yet to avoid a greater evil he tolerates this lesser one lest they should vindicate themselves and one should use force on the other."

their cases among themselves, or suffer wrong."[7] Luther unfortunately never wrote a full commentary on 1 Corinthians, but he cites the sixth chapter frequently and leaves no room for misunderstanding. Already in 1518/1519, Luther wrote in his famous *Sermon on Two Kinds of Righteousness* that those who sue other Christians "will not enter the kingdom of heaven unless they have changed for the better by forsaking things that are merely lawful and pursuing those that are helpful."[8] In his tract *On Trade and Usury*, again citing 1 Corinthians 6, he calls Christians who sue others "weak and immature," while warning that "such conduct is neither Christian nor praiseworthy but human and earthly, more of a hindrance to salvation than a help."[9] He expects Christian preachers to preach this. But he urges against disciplining such people and wholly cutting them off from the church, instead encouraging pastors to hope for their improvement.[10]

Luther, as do most of the Lutheran commentators who follow him, frequently specifies that he is speaking particularly of suing over money or possessions. So, in his *Admonition to Peace* of 1525, he points out that St. Paul condemns the Corinthians "for going to court *for the sake of property* rather than suffering injustice."[11] Likewise, in his lecture on Psalm 70, he condemns the act of going to court "for the sake of food and provisions."[12] And in his *Sermon on Two Kinds of Righteousness*, he insists that mature Christians should be "prepared to lose their other possessions also" rather than bring someone to court.[13]

In fact, Luther spoke much more against suing people *in general* than against Christians suing Christians specifically. Luther disapproved of any suing for material things. He considered it beneath a Christian. "Suing in the courts is condemned neither by pope nor emperor, but it is condemned by Christ and his teaching."[14] Jesus commands his disciples, "And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well" (Matt 5:40).[15] From this passage and its context, Luther maintains that Christians should follow different rules in their

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[7] Luther, *Preface to the New Testament* (1522/1546), AE 35:382. This preface to the New Testament was first published in 1522 and then republished again with revisions in 1546. It therefore represents Luther's mature views.

[8] Luther, *Two Kinds of Righteousness* (1519), AE 31:305.

[9] Luther, *On Trade and Usury* (1524), AE 45:278–279.

[10] Luther, *On Trade and Usury* (1524), AE 45:278.

[11] Luther, *Admonition to Peace* (1525), AE 46:29, emphasis mine.

[12] Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms* (1513–15), AE 10:385.

[13] Luther, *Two Kinds of Righteousness* (1519), AE 31:306.

[14] Luther, *On Trade and Usury* (1524), AE 45:277.

[15] All Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

private lives than what the laws of the secular state allow: "Indeed, our leader, Jesus Christ, says in Mathew 7 [5:44] that we should bless those who insult us, pray for our persecutors, love our enemies, and do good to those who do evil to us. These, dear friends, are our Christian laws."[16]

Luther never changed his position on this point. There is no opposition between "young Luther" and "mature Luther" here. Sometime in the late 1520s or early 1530s, when he was taking over Bugenhagen's duties at the city church in Wittenberg, Luther preached a series of sermons on the Sermon on the Mount.[17] This is perhaps his most thorough treatment of a Christian's obligation regarding the courts. He writes, "Now if someone asks whether a Christian may go to court or defend himself, *the answer is simply no*. A Christian is the kind of person who has nothing to do with this sort of secular existence and law."[18]

Luther makes an important distinction, however. The Christian may not go to court on his own initiative; he may not go willingly, thinking he has something to gain from it. But if he holds a secular position, as magistrate, judge, or even citizen, he must do what the laws command him to do (provided such laws do not contradict God's word). God's word, Luther says, "has confirmed and commended" these offices, and so the Christian is in duty bound to live in them. And these offices require of him what he would not normally do in his private Christian life. Luther speaks of a Christian as "two persons" or as having "two offices," which need to be properly distinguished.[19] So in the example of a court, "it is proper for a judge to punish and execute, and yet he is forbidden to have any hatred or vindictiveness in his heart."[20] As a Christian the judge wants to have mercy, forgive, and not harm anyone, but as a secular judge he is in duty bound to punish.

What about the Christian as citizen? Here we see the first glimpse in Luther of an exception for Christians bringing others to court, that of the private citizen defending himself or others against violence or fighting for his own or others' self-preservation. As a Christian, he would simply take even this against his own person, but as a citizen he has the duty to appeal to the law and seek justice for himself and especially for others, so that society is not destroyed by evil men. And as a father or master, he has the duty to defend those under his authority: "Thus you are not

[16] Luther, *Admonition to Peace* (1525), AE 46:29.

[17] See AE 21:xvii–xxi for the date and circumstances of these sermons. Luther's preface to this work, written in 1532, shows he wishes with this work to combat both the Roman Catholic canonists (whom he calls "asses") and the Anabaptists. The former simply ignore Jesus' words in Matthew 5. The latter read far too much into them and ban the courts completely. See Luther, *Sermon on the Mount* (1532), AE 21:4–5.

[18] Luther, *Sermon on the Mount* (1532), AE 21:108, emphasis mine.

[19] Luther, *Sermon on the Mount* (1532), AE 21:110.

[20] Luther, *Sermon on the Mount* (1532), AE 21:111.

forbidden to go to court and lodge a complaint against injustice or violence, just so long as you do not have a false heart, but one that remains as patient as it was before, one that is doing this only to maintain the right and to avoid the wrong, out of a genuine love for righteousness."[21]

In order to show what the mindset of a Christian should be when lodging a complaint against someone, Luther points to the example of Joseph, who in Genesis 37:2 brings a report of his brothers' ill conduct to his father. Luther maintains Joseph was not prompted by malicious intent, but brought the matter to the proper authority "because he did not like to see them acquiring a bad reputation."[22] That is, he did it for their own good, out of genuine love for them. This is a theme that recurs time and again in Luther and the Lutheran tradition, that a Christian may not go to court with any malice whatsoever, with any hate in his heart or greed for money or desire for vengeance.[23] For this reason, Luther speaks entirely in terms of defense of self or others when he allows for a Christian taking another to court. He compares a Christian going to court to a mother defending her children against wolves: "What kind of a crazy mother would it be who would refuse to defend and save her child from a dog or a wolf and who would say: 'A Christian must not defend himself'?"[24] Again, he compares it to a master saving his sheep from wolves. "For [Paul] does not prohibit invoking justice or seeking the necessities of life, or else a master would not be allowed to tear the lamb away from the wolf."[25]

It should be pointed out here that Luther allows for Christians bringing suits in self-defense or for the defense of others while discussing suing *in general*. When he talks specifically about suing other Christians, he never talks about a single exception. He simply categorizes it as a sin. This is the pattern throughout the Lutheran tradition.

To return to Luther's distinction between the secular person and the Christian person, or the secular office and the Christian office, it is clearly not a clean separation. Luther is simply trying to point out, albeit rather circuitously, the difference between public duty and private duty, "the secular and the divine realm,"[26] and so he still insists that a Christian, even in his secular office, keep "a

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[21] Luther, *Sermon on the Mount* (1532), AE 21:111; Luther insists already in his preface that it is right to protect oneself (p. 5).

[22] Luther, *Sermon on the Mount* (1532), AE 21:112.

[23] See below, under "Mortal Sin."

[24] Luther, *Sermon on the Mount* (1532), AE 21:110.

[25] StL ed. (22:1958), quoted in Paul E. Kretzmann, *Popular Commentary of the Bible: New Testament Vol. II* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1924), 114.

[26] Luther, *Sermon on the Mount* (1532), AE 21:5.

Christian heart." Thus the judge or soldier or lawyer do what they do in the secular realm, but still remain at heart Christians:

> At the same time he keeps a Christian heart. He does not intend anyone any harm, and it grieves him that his neighbor must suffer grief. So he lives simultaneously as a Christian toward everyone, personally suffering all sorts of things in the world, and as a secular person, maintaining, using, and performing all the functions required by the law of his territory or city, by civil law, and by domestic law.[27]

Luther goes on to clarify that a Christian in his private capacity should "leave the resistance of evil, the administration of justice, and punishment to the one who holds a position in the secular realm." Meanwhile, Christians should "put up with all sorts of things and maintain a pure and friendly heart toward those who treat you unjustly or roughly." He more than once points out that the Christian uses the courts only when "required" to do so, a distinction later Lutherans will also point out.[28]

But when it comes to Christians bringing suits against fellow Christians, Luther simply does not approve. In treating 1 Corinthians 6 particularly, he maintains that with Christians "no one should be a complainant in his own case," that the aggrieved party should rather "request and insist that his case not be brought to trial," and let others fight for him, so that the affair is "conducted in a friendly, Christian, and brotherly spirit, with more regard to the sin than to the injury." Such a procedure would require Christians to behave like Christians, to want reconciliation above vengeance or money or possessions. And so again Luther calls the act of suing another Christian instead of seeking reconciliation a sin.[29]

Well known, finally, are Luther's own personal attempts to bring feuding Christians to reconciliation with one another. In fact, he died doing exactly this. Traveling to Eisleben in late January of 1546, Luther spent the last weeks of his life helping to bring about reconciliation and agreement between the counts of Mansfeld, who were feuding over land rights and debt. He died the night after the final treaty was signed. This was a long and painful process—Luther, in ill health, was so exhausted that he could sit in on the negotiations only for an hour or two a day—and the result of reconciliation seemed impossible. But it was Luther's preaching on reconciliation and giving up one's own rights that helped to end the feud between Christian nobles (at least for a time). "Wherever reconciliation was at

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[27] Luther, *Sermon on the Mount* (1532), AE 21:113.

[28] Luther, *Sermon on the Mount* (1532), AE 21:114. "Here he must necessarily do what he is told and what this outward life requires" (p. 109); he is "under obligation to a secular person and authority" (p. 110); "the person who has obligations toward other persons under secular law" (p. 111).

[29] Luther, *On Trade and Usury* (1524), AE 45:278.

stake, justice had to be set aside."[30] This was no academic point for Luther. It was theology and therefore practical. Reconciliation is the heart of the gospel. Christians ought to seek it with one another, even at their own loss, since this is what their Lord has done for them.

There is one point on which Luther is remarkably silent. Perhaps because he is not specifically writing a commentary on 1 Corinthians 6, he does not stress the shame and offense suing a fellow Christian brings on the church (1 Cor 6:5, "I say this to your shame"). This will be a constant theme in later Lutheran writers. Luther described himself as a lumberjack, who paved the way for more precise and systematic articulation of the faith.[31] We see this prove true in the Lutheran exegetical tradition following Luther. While we find in Luther talk of suing for various reasons—out of self-defense, because of necessity, and for the sake of reputation—these categories are not fleshed out as they would be later. Likewise, his treatment of the difference between public and private is less precise than we find in the tradition that follows him. With that said, the later tradition does not depart from Luther, but rather clarifies and adds to his arguments against suing a Christian brother. It is to Luther's contemporaries and heirs that we now turn.

The Exegesis of 1 Corinthians 6:1–9 in the Lutheran Tradition

While Luther's reading of 1 Corinthians 6 has to be gathered from various types of writings, from his commentaries on other books of the Bible, his sermons, his prefaces, his table talk, letters, and tracts on specific doctrinal topics, a much more orderly and direct assessment of the later Lutheran interpretation of 1 Corinthians 6 is possible due to the many commentaries on 1 Corinthians written by Lutherans in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Since this tradition is harmonious both with Luther and with itself, this study will proceed topically in presenting the Lutheran position.

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[30] Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther: The Preservation of the Church, 1532–1546*, trans. James L. Schaaf (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 369–375; see p. 374 for the quotation from Brecht.

[31] "I was born to take the field and fight with the hordes and the devil, and therefore my books are very stormy and warlike. I have to dig out the roots and trunks, cut down the thorns and hedges, and fill up the pools; I am the crude lumberjack who has to blaze a trail and prepare the way." Quoted in Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther: Shaping and Defining the Reformation, 1521–1532*, trans. James L. Schaaf (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 243; cf. Luther, "Preface to Philip Melanchthon, *Exposition of Colossians*" (1529), AE 59:249–50.

Against the Anabaptists: Divine Institution of the Courts

Every Lutheran commentator on 1 Corinthians 6:1–9 is careful, usually at the very start, to point out that St. Paul is not condemning the courts *per se*, but Christians using the courts against one another. Philip Melanchthon (1497–1560), in fact, practically says nothing else in one of his commentaries, using these verses as an excuse to extol the divine institution of secular government. His citation of Romans 13 is typical of later Lutherans: "He is not condemning courts or any part of the courts, or legal disputes for that matter. For these political ordinances are good things, divinely ordained and approved, as is taught very clearly in Romans 13."[32] Melanchthon goes so far as to list the virtues a Christian can practice by making a proper use of the courts:

1. Reverence toward laws and magistrates, because he commits the judgment to them, backing off from his own wisdom.
2. Love of justice, because he is not seeking someone else's stuff, but as it were, laying aside his own stuff and leaving it to the power of the judge and the laws, so that they may give it to whom they think best. A greedy soul does not do this.
3. Love of truth, because he allows his arguments (*rationes*) to be examined and judged.
4. Love of public peace, because he prefers his stuff to be given to another by a judge rather than that the public peace be disrupted.[33]

As can be seen by these "virtues," Melanchthon has quite the optimistic view of Christians' reasons for going to court.[34] Regardless, he is adamant that the courts are godly institutions of themselves and that Christians may appeal to them.

Citing Romans 13, Friedrich Balduin (1575–1627), professor at Wittenberg, argues that even the governments of Turks and Papists are God's institution and can be used by Christians when necessary.[35] Tilemann Heshusius (1527–1588), a Gnesio-Lutheran and prolific commentator, writes that the courts are not only allowable but necessary for restraining evil and keeping people from harming

[32] Philip Melanchthon, *Brevis et utilis commentarius in priorem epistolam Pauli ad Corinthios, & in aliquot capita secundae* (Wittenberg: Johannes Crato, 1561), 10.

[33] Melanchthon, *Brevis et utilis commentarius*, 10–11.

[34] "These are the virtues of the saintly litigator." Melanchthon, *Brevis et utilis commentarius,* 11.

[35] Friedrich Balduin, *Commentarius in omnes epistulas Pauli* (Frankfurt: Balthasar-Christophorus Wustius, 1691), 352. See also David Pareus, *In divinam ad Corinthios priorem S. Pauli Apostoli epistolam commentaries* (Geneva: Peter and Jacob Chouet, 1614), 211.

themselves and others.[36] The Lutherans also frequently cite Acts 25:10–11, where Paul himself appeals to the secular court of Caesar to judge between himself and the Jews.[37]

Trivial Cases

In 1 Corinthians 6:2 and again in 6:3, St. Paul refers to the types of cases the Corinthians are bringing against one another. In verse 2, he calls them ἐλαχίστων, trivial or of very little importance, and then in verse 3 he calls them βιωτικά, bodily or having to do only with this life. The Lutherans are unanimous in seeing these two descriptions of the cases as complementary. They are trivial precisely because they have to do with this life only, with the body and its provision.[38] Christians will judge the world; they will judge angels (1 Cor 6:2–3)! Their mindset should not be worldly but heavenly; they who are found worthy to judge with Christ concerning righteousness and eternal life are certainly capable of coming to brotherly agreement on such base things as property and money. Aegidius Hunnius (1550–1603) gives an assessment typical of the Lutherans:

> [Paul] calls these cases and controversies of the Corinthians "most trivial matters" (*res minimas*) first because of themselves they are not very important due to the baseness of their object, namely, things that will eventually pass away of their own accord; and second by comparison, because they cannot in any way be compared with the things that will come to be judged on the Last Day.[39]

Friedrich Balduin sees that Paul has in mind the baseness of these suits over material things already in the first verse, "Dare any of you, having a matter against another,

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[36] Tilemann Heshusius, *Commentarius in omnes D. Pauli epistulas, et Eam quae scripta est ad Hebraeos* (Frankfurt: Spiessius, 1606), 201, arguing on the basis of Romans 13 and Luke 12:14. Also, "Paul is not prohibiting or condemning civil offices," 202.

[37] Balduin, *Commentarius*, 352; Aegidius Hunnius, *Thesaurus Apostolicus Complectens Commentarios in omnes Novi Testamenti Epistolas et Apocalypsin Iohannis* (Wittenberg: Gerdesius, 1705), 179.

[38] Sebastian Schmidt, *Commentarii in epistolas S. Pauli ad Romanos, Galatas and Colossenses. Una cum Paraphrasi Epistolae Prioris ad Corinthios* (Hamburg: Schiller, 1704), 837: "matters which pertain to the sustenance and life of this world." Balduin, *Commentarius*, 351: "pertaining to the use of this life." Hunnius, *Thesaurus*, 179; Christian Chemnitz, *Commentariolus in omnes epistolas D. Pauli* (Jena: Bauhofer, 1667), 244: "which are minor and pertain only to the things of earthly life and money." Abraham Calov, *Biblia Novi Testamenti illustrata* (Dresden and Leipzig: Johann Christopher Zimmermann, 1719), 299: "which have to do with the use of this life." Philipp Spener, *Philippi Iac. Speneri Divi Pauli Apostoli epistolae ad Romanos et Corinthios homiletica paraphrase illustratae* (Frankfurt am Main: Johann David Zunner, 1691), 337: "concerning temporal things." Niels Hemmingsen, *Commentaria in omnes epistolas Apostolorum* (Frankfurt am Main: Corvinus, 1579), 180: "concerning things trivial and passing away."

[39] Hunnius, *Thesaurus*, 179.

go to law before the unrighteous instead of the saints?" "We dare," Balduin notes, "either difficult things or things not entirely lawful. Here Paul is noting not the difficulty, but the baseness of the matter." In fact, Balduin says, Paul identifies these disagreements with the banal word πρᾶγμα, "business" or "matter," because all such cases over material things can be solved in another way than through court, at least among Christians.[40] Luther's habit of condemning suits that had to do with money or possessions agrees perfectly with this later Lutheran emphasis.

Scandal to the Church

St. Paul repeatedly stresses the scandal that results from a Christian suing his fellow Christian. It is not that making an appeal to the courts is wrong *per se*. This cannot be true, since St. Paul himself appeals to the courts (Acts 25) and God himself has instituted secular governments to administer justice (Romans 13). Rather, as Hunnius puts it, St. Paul is condemning lawsuits *secundum quid*, that is, in specific circumstances. Those circumstances are, as St. Paul makes clear, when a Christian brings a suit against another Christian in secular courts. Hunnius is adamant:

> This is the mind of the apostle: with what arrogance do you dare, you who are Christians in name and profession, to bring your private grievances which you have against others who are themselves Christians to secular judges, unbelievers, heathen, who have already previously taken any opportunity to denigrate the doctrine of the Gospel; and this you do not without considerable offense both to believers who are still weak and to the godless and unbelievers who use this occasion to mock you as men prone to litigating and fighting even about things that amount to nothing.[41]

We see here that the offense is twofold. First is the offense within the church itself, as Christians' faith is scandalized in seeing fellow Christians behaving in public as if money and possessions mean more to them than the gospel of reconciliation. Second is the offense to the church from outside, from "the godless and unbelievers," who use this as an occasion to label Christians as petty hypocrites. This double offense is consistently stressed in the Lutheran tradition. So Tilemann Heshusius writes: "It is shameful for Christians, who ought to be bound by a chain of love one to another, to bring litigations and suits against one another. This gives opportunity to the heathen to blaspheme the name of God and the church of Christ."[42] Note again that the offense is first internal, within the church, that Christian suing

[40] Balduin, *Commentarius*, 350. So also Calov, *Biblia Illustrata*, 299, who makes the same point and otherwise takes much of his commentary from Balduin.

[41] Hunnius, *Thesaurus*, 179.

[42] Heshusius, *Commentarius*, 201.

Christian contradicts the law of love by which Christians are bound to each other and thus gives offense to Christians in the church. This then gives rise to the second offense, the opportunity for the world to blaspheme Jesus. Niels Hemmingsen (1513–1600), a leading Danish Lutheran theologian and exegete, goes so far as to call their actions "insanity," saying that Paul is accusing them of being out of their minds for exposing the gospel to ridicule before the world. "For men's vices are assigned also to their profession," that is, if men bearing the name Christian behave this way, the Christian confession is necessarily smeared, something no Christian could willingly and sanely bring about.[43] Christian Chemnitz (1615–1666) uses the strongest of words to speak of this shame: "[Christians] ought rather to suffer loss than to expose their religion to ridicule and allow it to be damaged."[44]

Some Lutheran commentators take the main verb in 1 Corinthians 6:4 as an imperative, so that it would read, "Therefore if you have disputes having to do with this life, set up those least esteemed in the church as judges!"[45] This rendering, followed also by the King James Version, has its merit. St. Paul uses the word for "least esteemed" (ἐξουθενημένους) also in 1 Corinthians 1:28 to describe the things "despised" (ἐξουθενημένα) in the world which God has chosen, a reference to Christians. Paul's point would then be that the very least, the lowest of Christians, are better suited to judge matters between Christians than the heathen.[46] If the main verb in 1 Corinthians 6:4 is taken as indicative and expressing a question, as it was by most Lutherans and by all major modern translations, the verse says, "Therefore if you have disputes having to do with this life, do you set up those least esteemed in the church as judges?"[47] This translation has St. Paul calling the secular judges or heathen those "least esteemed in the church," which ironically comes to the same basic sense as the alternative translation: Christians should settle their disputes amongst themselves, because the foolishness of the church puts to shame the wisdom of this world (1 Cor 1:27). In any case, St. Paul expects the Corinthian

[43] Hemmingsen, *Commentaria,* 179.

[44] Chemnitz, *Commentariolus,* 245. The word "expose to ridicule" is *prostituere* and could also be translated "to prostitute."

[45] Those taking this position include Hemmingsen, *Commentaria*, 180; Hunnius, *Thesaurus*, 179; Spener, *Divi Pauli epistolae*, 338.

[46] Spener, *Divi Pauli epistolae*, 338–339, in particular argues strongly for this meaning: "There is no need to burden pastors or the especially capable in the congregation with settling secular or petty business like this, since they could otherwise preside over important and spiritual matters. Rather, others should be chosen, among the least."

[47] Philip Melanchthon, *Annotationes in epistolam Pauli ad Romanos unam, Et ad Corinthios duas* (Argentorati: Johaness Hervagius, 1523), 92, has a good summation of the two translations, but prefers taking the verb as an indicative. Those who take it in the indicative include Calov, *Biblia Illustrata*, 300; Balduin, *Commentarius*, 351; and Schmidt, *Commentarii,* 837. Chemnitz, *Commentariolus*, 244, simply gives both positions and lets the reader decide.

Christians to decide their disputes amongst themselves, since (1) Christians are of such character that they will judge better, and (2) the alternative brings loss and shame to the church. Regardless of the translation of 1 Corinthians 6:4, this is the entire thrust of 1 Corinthians 6:1–6. So Balduin, commenting on verse 3, writes,

> Here he expresses what kind of people he understands the saints to be, namely, that they are practitioners of their own faith. They are the kind of people who will judge angels on the Last Day, when by their vote they will approve of Christ's judgment on the angels who have fallen and have been cast into hell. . . . How much less should the faithful be denied decision and judgment in secular things, that is, in things pertaining to the use of this life! Therefore what he had previously called ἐλάχιστα he now calls βιωτικά, in order to make light of these petty controversies, which could easily have been settled in private, so that there was no need to call on a Gentile judge in this matter.[48]

Heshusius likewise points out that Christians are truly saints who are "enlightened by the Holy Spirit; they have the Word in view, which is a light to their feet; there is also a true and genuine zeal for righteousness, truth, and concord among the saints."[49] With such judges and advisors at hand, it is unchristian and foolish for Christians to go to the secular courts for judgment against one another.

Mortal Sin

St. Paul ends his lecture against Christians suing Christians with the words, "Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?" (1 Cor 6:9). On the basis of this passage, the Lutheran commentators consistently and emphatically taught that those who bring suits against other Christians will, if they do not repent, lose the faith and heaven. Here the Lutherans are simply articulating the clear words of 1 Corinthians 6:9 and Galatians 5:21, that the practice of unrighteousness—that is, consistent willful sinning—cannot stand together with faith. Luther makes the same point in the Schmalkald Articles, and Melanchthon in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession (SA III 45; Ap IV 64, 109, 144). Heshusius sums up the Lutheran position well, insisting that Christians must desist from suing one another, "lest they fall from grace and lose the inheritance of eternal life. For manifest unrighteousness cannot stand together with faith. You should rather suffer the injury, cover it up, and commend vengeance to God. Indeed, this is what the Christian religion demands."[50]

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[48] Balduin, *Commentarius*, 351.
[49] Heshusius, *Commentarius*, 201.
[50] Heshusius, *Commentarius*, 202.

It is not, in other words, simply the sins we are accustomed to think crass (adultery, homosexuality, orgies, drunkenness, etc.), but also sins that look respectable on the outside that can lead a Christian from the faith. Paul mentions the greedy in particular in 1 Corinthians 6:9–10 and those who act according to enmity, strife, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, and divisions in Galatians 5:20–21. The continued practice of such is utterly incompatible with faith in Christ's reconciliation. And the nature of a lawsuit is that it is an ongoing procedure, one that is not a onetime passionate sin, but a continual and deliberate decision, which can go on for months or years. Friedrich Balduin illustrates this point by expressing his disgust with lawyers' love for litigation:

> Those lawyers and attorneys deserve just punishment who for their own profit make a flame out of a spark, and a raging fire from the flame, and encourage others not to give up something of their own right. What arises from this is that all court cases are filled with complaints, often of a trivial matter, nor does the litigation cease until each litigant shamefully runs out of money. According to the example of Paul, this most wicked behavior must be condemned incessantly and seriously by ministers of the word, as a very serious hindrance to Christian charity.[51]

We see here that, as with Luther, Balduin expects Christian preachers to warn and preach specifically against the sin of suing another Christian. Balduin goes on to say that those who bring lawsuits against Christians need to hear "the wrath of God" preached against them.[52] Hunnius, while warning of "the peril of eternal damnation," breaks out with this beautiful appeal, "Let us remember that we are brothers! Let us be horrified, then, at the idea of hurting those who are so closely joined and united with us!"[53] Sebastian Schmidt (1617–1696) paraphrases Paul with the exclamation, "I cannot but preach the curse of the Law to you, that those who do such things will not enter the Kingdom of God."[54] Niels Hemmingsen writes, "Repent, lest you lose so great an inheritance by your own fault!"[55] Christian Chemnitz perhaps says it more plainly than any, "He who does this is committing a mortal sin, as he does his brothers wrong and causes them harm."[56] In the same vein, Heshusius says that those who harm their fellow Christians in this way are harming

[51] Balduin, *Commentarius*, 354.
[52] Balduin, *Commentarius*, 351.
[53] Hunnius, *Thesaurus*, 181.
[54] Schmidt, *Commentarii*, 837.
[55] Hemmingsen, *Commentaria*, 181.
[56] Chemnitz, *Commentariolus*, 245; Calov, *Biblia Illustrata*, 301, argues that it is specifically because a brother brings harm to another brother that Paul transitions to talk of mortal sin.

Christ, "As the Son of God testifies, 'Whatever either of good or of evil you do to one of the least of these, you have done to me.'"[57]

This insistence on the seriousness of the sin is coupled with a description of how Christians are called to act. Instead of being obsessed with property and money, they should be obsessed with reconciliation. Instead of insisting on their right, they should be willing to give it up. Instead of being greedy, they should be generous. Instead of nursing hate, they should constantly forgive and love. Schmidt points out the contrast quite well:

> It does not belong to Christians to have court cases (*lites*) and contentions, but to cultivate peace. No, more than this, it belongs to Christians much more to suffer injury and loss than to bring contentious and scandalous legal suits. Why do you not then suffer injury from a brother? Why do you not rather accept loss from him, rather than to cause scandal and bring him to court before unbelieving judges?[58]

This focus on the Christian's willingness to suffer wrong rather than bring a suit against a brother is commentary on St. Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 6:7, "Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded?" Hunnius warns that "the disease of litigating" should be so foreign to us "that we would prefer to suffer injury rather than inflict injury on another or to repay evil for evil or to insist on our right too strictly and in so doing disregard love for one another."[59] Philipp Spener (1635–1705) correctly points out the underlying issue in this passage, that Christians should not care so much about earthly things.[60] In fact, says Hunnius, St. Paul is teaching the Corinthians not simply not to love the things of this world, but also to despise them, "The apostle, by making little of things that pertain to bodily needs (*victum*), teaches us also to contemn them, as he does in 1 Cor 7:[30–31]: 'Let those who buy be as if they do not possess, and those who use the world as if they do not use it.'"[61]

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[57] Heshusius, *Commentarius*, 202.

[58] Schmidt, *Commentarii*, 837.

[59] Hunnius, *Thesaurus*, 180.

[60] Spener, *Divi Pauli epistolae*, 340, "For this shows that you love temporal things too much and that the love which is required of you is not among you. For Christians should think little of temporal things, nor care too much whether they have them or not. Also, we should so love one another that when a controversy arises between me and a brother, whether something is mine or is his, and I think that I am rightly pursuing it and he thinks he is, nor is he willing to cede to my explanations, then this temporal thing ought to be esteemed less and my brother more, so that I would rather dismiss what I think is mine and pardon or forgive my brother than to descend into court against him on account of it."

[61] Hunnius, *Thesaurus*, 181.

The Dangers of Suing in General

That this is to be the mindset of the Christian gives the Lutheran commentators opportunity to discuss in what circumstances a Christian may sue anyone at all. While the Lutherans allow for suing non-Christians, they also include plenty of warnings concerning doing so. In his *Enchiridion*, Hemmingsen says it flatly, "An example of a good litigator is hard to find."[62] Hemmingsen calls it an "exceedingly obscure question" whether a Christian may sue anyone at all, for any reason. Citing Jesus' command to "possess your souls in patience" (see Luke 21:19), Hemmingsen states: "Scripture often exhorts us to forgive as often as anyone sins against us, to conquer evil with good, etc. Also, that we not return evil for evil. From these passages it seems to follow that we may not sue anyone for an offense committed against us."[63] Using Aristotelian terminology, Hemmingsen then goes on to insist that we must distinguish between "the thing itself" and "the accident." The thing itself, to sue, to bring an accusation against someone, is clearly not wrong. Paul allows it. But what attaches to it is almost always wrong. To sue anyone risks danger, because of the vicious affections that accompany the action—lack of self-control, desire for vengeance, overboldness, and such: "If therefore a Christian wants to pursue his right without offending God, he ought especially to beware that he does not go to court with a desire in his soul for vengeance, or any corrupt movement of the soul, or anger, or any poison. The best moderator of this will be LOVE."[64] Philip Melanchthon makes the same distinction: "A legal dispute is one thing, the hatred or greed in the litigator is quite another."[65] The decision to sue, in other words, is not merely a legal decision, not merely a matter of pursuing one's own right. You may very well be completely in the right legally, but if you bring the suit with any hatred in your heart, greed, anger, or desire for vengeance, then you are offending God and sinning against him.[66]

Hunnius makes a similar and no less helpful distinction. He speaks of "two ways," one of strictly pursuing your own right (*ius strictum*) and the other of equity (Greek: ἐπιείκεια). This is a distinction known even to the heathen, made by Cicero

[62] Niels Hemmingsen, *Enchiridion Theologicum praecipua vera religionis capita breviter et simpliciter explicata continens* (Vögelin: Ernst, 1562), 364.

[63] Hemmingsen, *Enchiridion*, 363.

[64] Hemmingsen, *Enchiridion*, 364; cf. Calov, *Biblia Illustrata*, 302.

[65] Melanchthon, *Brevis et utilis commentarius*, 12.

[66] Hemmingsen, *Enchiridion*, 365, who warns that the private vindication forbidden to Christians can be exercised just as easily in the public courts as privately. "Either way, it is forbidden to Christians."

and Roman jurists,[67] but especially applicable to Christians. The one way is to demand your right according to the law without compromise. The other is to seek reconciliation, attempt to settle things outside court, be willing to make some sort of compromise or agreement. Hunnius writes:

> As there are two ways of either keeping what you have or of recuperating what you have lost, the one of strict right, the other of equity, where the conflicts are accustomed to be resolved before judges through amicable agreement, Paul thinks that this latter way is to be far (*longissimi*) preferred over the other. The reason is obvious, since the way of equity fits more with the rule of Christian charity commended to us in Matthew 7:12: "Whatever you wish men to do to you, so also you do to them."[68]

We see again that the moral law, the rule of Christian charity, extends even to suing in the public courts. Christians are to love their neighbors as themselves. They are to do what they wish done to them. They may not strictly pursue their right, even if they are completely in the right, unless their opponent refuses absolutely to be reconciled and the matter is of such moment that it must be pursued:

> When your opponent does not permit the way of equity and the matter is of significant importance, then it is allowable to use the other way, which is the way of the law (*iuris*), but only if the matter is so managed that it gives no offense to the Church, that there is no hatred involved, no desire for vengeance, and no unlawful seeking of another's goods.[69]

Exceptions

This brings us to the matter of exceptions. John Brenz (1499–1570) warns that even speaking of exceptions is dangerous, because people love to make the exception the rule when it is in their own interest. They can and will easily cover up their anger, their thirst for vengeance, or their greed under legal guise "in any way possible." Lawyers love loopholes. Yet we must discuss exceptions anyway, Brenz says, because "pious doctrine must not be set aside because of its abuse by impious men."[70] As with Luther, exceptions are discussed in the Lutheran tradition when treating suing

[67] See, for example, Cicero, *Pro Oratore*, I.240, "speaking many things in favor of equity against strict justice" (*pro aequitate contra ius*).

[68] Hunnius, *Thesaurus*, 181.

[69] Hunnius, *Thesaurus*, 181.

[70] John Brenz, *Evangelion quod inscribitur secundum Joannem, centum quinquaginta quatuor homiliis explicatum* (Frankfurt am Main: Corvinus, 1569), 712; Luther voices the same concern. Cf. Luther, *Sermon on the Mount* (1532), AE 21:111, "The danger here is that the wicked world, along with our flesh and blood, always seeks its own advantage and yet puts on a lovely front to hide the scoundrel within."

in general. Here the Lutherans show how concerned they are to follow the rule of the gospel and to shun all legalism. There are cases in which Christian love requires a Christian to go to court. The Lutherans speak of this in terms of necessity. Christians go to court only when they are forced to. This happens in two basic ways. First, to defend oneself or others from financial ruin. Second, to defend the name of Christ.

Here, of course, the Lutherans are speaking of private cases. As Niels Hemmingsen points out, no one has any choice in a public case.[71] You must obey the government when they call you to court in the matter of some public case. But in private cases, we always have a choice. And the choice must be morally and biblically defensible.

First, some Lutherans make a blanket exception for self-defense, that is, if you are the one being brought to court and not the one who lodged the complaint. So, for example, John Brenz reads Matthew 5:40 as prohibiting only private vengeance and returning evil for evil, but encourages Christians to make use of magistrates and laws that will defend the innocent: "It is licit to employ a legal defense."[72] Niels Hemmingsen likewise makes a blanket exception if you are called to court and must defend yourself.[73] Philip Melanchthon perhaps gives the best explanation for this exception, "The one who sues does the wrong, and it must be answered in such a way that if anyone forces you, you go a mile with him [Matt 5:41]. . . . But you must speak your case, because the sword commands those called to court to speak."[74] Melanchthon's advice is to go, answer the summons, speak the truth simply, never lie, and not worry about the outcome.

Others, including Luther, urge Christians not even to go to court in self-defense if the matter is insignificant.[75] Rather, Christians are urged simply to take the loss, even from a non-Christian. But when taking the loss will financially ruin you or those for whom you provide, the Christian must protect himself and his family.[76] Thus the first exception proceeds out of love for the neighbor. The second exception proceeds out of love for God. We must as Christians love God and honor his name. If our name is suffering and God's word is suffering because of it, in cases of slander

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[71] Hemmingsen, *Enchiridion*, 363.

[72] Brenz, *Evangelion*, 712.

[73] Hemmingsen, *Commentaria*, 179.

[74] Melanchthon, *Annotationes*, 91.

[75] Luther, *Sermon on the Mount* (1532), AE 21:114; Balduin, *Commentarius*, 350, "both the actor and the defendant."

[76] Heshusius, *Commentarius,* 202, speaking of defending your own people and property, insists, "You ought not to defraud your own because of your negligence or superstition."

and libel, then we must defend our name and therefore God's word, in court if necessary. Hunnius describes each exception well:

> But if the injury cannot be borne without significant loss or our reputation is being dirtied, and hence the [pure] doctrine would be disgraced and God's name would suffer a bad reputation unless our reputation should be defended from the accusations of our detractors, then it is a good thing (*integrum*) to seek restitution of our reputation before the regular magistrate, or even restitution of wealth which we cannot give up without enormous detriment to those committed to our care. For he who does not provide for his own has denied the faith; he is worse than an unbeliever (1 Tim. 5:[8]).[77]

Distinction between Suing a Christian and Suing in General

While the Lutherans articulate reasons Christians may sue others with good conscience, provided they do it in important matters and with a Christian heart, without anger or thirst for vengeance or greed for gain, they speak strictly when treating Christians suing Christians. It is simply shameful. It causes offense to the church. This is highlighted by the contrast made between suing Christians and suing others. For example, Friedrich Balduin poses the question, "Why does the Apostle Paul condemn the Corinthians' forensic actions before an unbelieving Magistrate, when he himself appeals to the tribunal of the Roman Caesar (Acts 25:10)?" The answer is revealing:

> Here we must distinguish between the persons litigating. When each, both the actor and the defendant, is a Christian, then the Apostle Paul condemns it in this passage as a shameful thing if one brings the other to the tribunal of a secular magistrate, especially in a trivial matter, which could and ought to be resolved either publicly in the assembly of the believers or privately through friendly agreement, lest the name of Christians be blasphemed among the Gentiles. But when either of the litigants is an unbeliever, then nothing forbids someone from pursuing his right against him before an unbelieving judge. For in this case there is no opportunity for a friendly agreement or the judgment of fellow brothers. Such was the position of St. Paul, who was accused by the Jews concerning the Christian faith and sedition excited because of this name. He rightly appealed to Caesar, who though he was a Gentile was still the regular magistrate over the Jews.[78]

Note that it is precisely because there is no opportunity to solve it as Christians that suing the heathen is permitted. But for Christians, reconciliation between brothers

[77] Hunnius, *Thesaurus*, 180.
[78] Balduin, *Commentarius*, 352.

is simply expected. In fact, Jesus commands it in Matthew 18:15–17, specifically saying that if such disputes cannot be dealt with privately they must be brought before the church. It is only after a brother refuses to listen to the church and so is counted as an unbeliever that going to a heathen court against him is proper.

Niels Hemmingsen likewise contrasts suing in general with suing among Christians: "Here Paul's counsel must be followed and we must bear the injury rather than prosecute it with the accompanying mockery of the gospel and reproach of the brothers." He then points to his *Enchiridion* for instruction on Christians suing in general.[79] Thus, as Hunnius argues at length, it is against suing Christians *in particular* that St. Paul warns, because it is "wholly a loss" (see 1 Cor 6:7) for the individual Christians and for the Christian church. It is an unnatural and torturous rupture of Christ's body. "The souls of those who ought to be joined in Christ are dissociated." There is injury caused on one side and impatience "unbefitting a Christian" on the other.[80] And it all ends up hurting souls and the church. Therefore, instead of suing, Christians must patiently seek reconciliation privately or within the public gathering of the church.

Finally, as Abraham Calov (1612–1686) helpfully points out, especially when dealing with brothers we must distinguish between "trivial and serious, verbal and real, those things which can be ignored while retaining a good conscience and reputation, and those which cannot."[81] In the former case, when dealing with "trivial" matters, Christians should simply ignore and forgive the offense of a brother instead of bringing it to arbitration. The same is the case when the offending brother is poor and cannot pay the damage. It is only when the offense of a brother is such that it cannot be borne without significant damage to our livelihood or reputation that we must deal with it. Of course, Calov stresses that these disputes be settled among the brothers.[82] Thus even these significant disputes should be brought first to the church, and only if a brother refuses to listen to the church should they be brought to the secular court (Matt 18:15–17). In all such things, "Christian love dictates as moderator."[83]

Walther and Modern Lutheran Commentaries

Modern Lutheran commentaries on 1 Corinthians follow the same pattern as those of Reformation and post-Reformation Lutheran theologians. The text of

[79] Hemmingsen, *Commentaria*, 179.
[80] Hunnius, *Thesaurus*, 179.
[81] Calov, *Biblia Illustrata*, 302.
[82] Calov, *Biblia Illustrata*, 301.
[83] Calov, *Biblia Illustrata*, 302.

1 Corinthians 6:1–9 is clear, and it forbids Christians from litigating one against the other in secular courts.[84] At the same time, this text cannot be used to dismiss the validity and divine institution of the secular government.[85] In the most recent major Lutheran commentary on 1 Corinthians, Gregory Lockwood is particularly explicit in condemning any lawsuit brought by one Christian against another, regardless of what the grounds of that suit are: "Paul's stricture against Christians going to law against one another is absolute."[86] And again: "But it is never proper for a Christian or a church to take fellow Christians or church leaders to a secular court."[87]

These absolute statements need always to be supported by the scriptural reasons for the prohibition against suing. It cannot be ignored that St. Paul speaks of "trivial cases" and cases that "have to do with this life," nor can it be overlooked that St. Paul stresses the shame and harm done to the church by Christians bringing suits against other Christians. The Lutherans consistently stress these two theological points. These, together with the Christian desire for reconciliation, must always be the theological basis for the condemnation of suing in the church, so that we do not devolve into a legalism that exalts rules above love. While the Lutherans never explicitly say a Christian may sue another Christian (in fact, as we have seen, some of them explicitly say that this is never permitted), neither do they bring up specific cases of casuistry in their commentaries, in particular, cases where a Christian might sue another Christian for no material reason but solely for the reputation of the church and in hope of reconciliation.

The example of C. F. W. Walther (1811–1887) is particularly relevant here. Johann Früchtenicht, a pastor in the Ohio Synod, had written a letter slandering Walther's teaching and particularly his life, accusing him of gross sins. Walther attempted rapprochement, and the pastor refused. Walther sued for libel in the Indiana courts, which led to the pastor recanting everything he had written and spoken against Walther, making a public apology in the pages of *Der Lutheraner*, and seeking Christian reconciliation with him. The apology is explicit in confessing that Walther is a man "of great piety" and that the accusations made against him were false. Walther, in turn, printed his explanation for suing on the very same page of *Der Lutheraner*. In this explanation, he outlines the Lutheran position concisely in seven points, all with support from Scripture.

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[84] Kretzmann, *Popular Commentary*, 113–114; R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of First and Second Corinthians* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1963), 242–243; Gregory J. Lockwood, *1 Corinthians*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2000), esp. 189–195.

[85] Kretzmann, *Popular Commentary*, 114; Lenski, *Interpretation*, 239; Lockwood, *1 Corinthians*, 192, 194.

[86] Lockwood, *1 Corinthians*, 190 n. 11.

[87] Lockwood, *1 Corinthians*, 195.

The first five points are basically a summary of what Christians may not use the courts to do. First, it is a gross sin to take private vengeance when insulted (Matt 5:43–48). Second, it is "thoroughly unchristian" to bring a believing brother and member of your own church to secular court instead of settling it within the church (Matt 18:17; 1 Cor 6:1–8). Third, it is wrong to bring one's slanderer to court before trying to reconcile with him (Matt 5:25). Fourth, it is wrong for a Christian to instigate a process over a trivial loss that he has incurred and not simply rather to let the loss go (1 Cor 6:7). Fifth, it is shameful for a Christian or a minister of the word not to bear shame for the sake of Christ (1 Pet 4:14; Luke 6:22–23).

These are the very same points made by the Reformation and post-Reformation Lutherans. Walther focuses on reconciliation, on Christians settling things outside court, and he condemns taking people to court over material possessions, things St. Paul calls "trivial." But he continues by making an exception in his sixth point:

> Still there could be circumstances in which it is not only not unchristian but totally right, yes, a sacred obligation, not to ignore certain slanders perpetrated by one who is no brother and does not wish to be, but instead to seek help against the slanderer from the secular authority which is established by God to protect its citizens and subjects from unrest, so that "they may live a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and reverence" (1 Tim. 2:1–2).[88]

Two things should be noted here. First, Walther makes plain that the person in question is no brother, or at least refuses to act like one. That is, he refuses to reconcile. He does not want to act like a Christian to Walther. Second, the offense has nothing to do with money or material possessions.

In his seventh point, finally, Walther makes it clear it was simply necessary as a pastor and father to sue. A pastor is required to have a good reputation with those outside (1 Tim 3:7). A father cannot do his job if his reputation is destroyed and his children do not respect him. For the sake of the church, for the sake of the ministry, and for the sake of his children, Walther was required to sue if the man would not recant his public slander. Again, Walther insists there was no anger, no hate, no desire for vengeance, and definitely "not a cent" to be made by him. And the result of Walther's case was his reputation restored, the church and her doctrine defended, and slanderers publicly repenting of their sin and seeking reconciliation.

Did Walther act rightly? The shame brought on the church and the scandal to the people caused by Früchtenicht's slanders against Walther were public and needed to be addressed. Walther tried to address them in the church and the man refused. There could be no further shame to the church caused by Walther suing.

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[88] *Der Lutheraner*, July 1884, 109.

Only good could come from it for the church, as, thank God, it did. It seems impossible that the Lutheran fathers would condemn Walther for suing his slanderer. Given their stress on condemning suits over material things and their insistence that Christians must defend the word of God and the reputation of the church, it is hard to believe the Lutherans would not also make an exception in this case. It is arguable, in fact, whether Walther or the Lutherans of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries would even consider what he did an exception at all. He did not sue a Christian in his own church body who could be dealt with within the church. He did not sue a brother asking for reconciliation. He did not sue for trivial reasons (money or property). And his suit, settled out of court, brought honor, not shame, to the church, both by restoring Walther's and the synod's reputation and by bringing sinners to repentance and reconciliation.[89]

Conclusion

Tertullian tells the story of pagans seeing the way Christians treated one another and saying, "See how they love one another!"[90] Jesus himself says on the night he was betrayed that men will know that we are his disciples if we have love for one another (John 13:35). The act of suing a Christian brother for the things of this world instead of patiently seeking reconciliation or eating the loss is in direct conflict with this great command of the Lord Jesus. St. Paul preaches against it in unmistakable and clear words. Lutherans have from the beginning warned and taught against it. And this is out of love of the gospel, a love that prizes forgiveness and brotherly affection in Christ far above the mammon of this world. Faith in the gospel produces works that flow from a heart captivated by the gospel, and there is hardly a more beautiful and Christian work than seeking reconciliation with other Christians in the name of Christ. "Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!" (Ps 133:1).

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[89] See esp. Calov, *Biblia Illustrata,* 302, "Christian love dictates as moderator." The same type of theological analysis and judgment should be used in other such cases which have nothing to do with money and have instead to do with the honor of the church. When Lockwood, *1 Corinthians*, 190 n. 11, writes, "Among the rationalizations [Paul] would reject is the claim that we may resort to the courts of the land in order to force the church to attend to its business," he is clearly referencing the Robert Preus case, which Preus brought to secular court with the sole purpose of allowing the church to conduct its own business within her own courts. The specificity of Lockwood's judgment here is unprecedented in Lutheran commentaries and does not allow for the examination of unique cases on theological and exegetical grounds.

[90] *Apologeticus* ch. 39, sect. 7.

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Pneumatology in Luke-Acts and Baptism: An Explanation of the Samaritan Believers Who Had Not "Received the Spirit" (Acts 8:4–17)

Mark P. Surburg

On the day of Pentecost, Peter announced that those who are baptized "will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).[1] Later there are Samaritans who believe and are baptized (Acts 8:4–13). When the Jerusalem church sends down Peter and John, however, they find that the Spirit "had not yet fallen on any of them" and instead, "they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 8:16). The apostles lay their hands on the Samaritans, and through this the new believers receive the Spirit. It seems that Baptism had apparently *not provided the Spirit* to the Samaritans (and instead hand-laying later does this), so there are believers in Jesus Christ who *had not received the Spirit*. This presents an obvious challenge for Lutherans who confess the Small Catechism's explanation of the Third Article of the Creed.[2]

The apparent contradiction of Peter's words about Baptism continues in chapter 10, when as Peter shares the gospel with the Gentile Cornelius and those gathered with him (Acts 10:19–20), the Holy Spirit falls on all who hear the word and they begin to speak in tongues (Acts 10:44–46). Peter then commands that they are to be baptized (Acts 10:48), and so there is immediate reception of the Spirit apart from Baptism, which is then added later. Finally, Paul later meets a group of twelve individuals who at first are described as disciples (Acts 19:1), but know only the baptism of John (Acts 19:3). Paul provides instruction (Acts 19:4), and the group receives Baptism (Acts 19:5). Then, they receive the Holy Spirit through Paul's hand-laying, and begin to speak in tongues (Acts 19:6). It appears that hand-laying here provides the Spirit instead of Baptism, and this is accompanied by speaking in tongues.

[1] Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

[2] *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2017), 17.

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This study will examine the pneumatology of Luke-Acts and the way this determines the understanding of Baptism in Acts. It will show that when Acts 8:4–13 is understood within Luke's pneumatology, the Samaritans can have faith through the presence and work of the Spirit. They *can also* be described as individuals who have not "received the Spirit," because for Luke, "to receive the Spirit" has a specific meaning related to *the activity of the Spirit*, and not the mere presence or absence of the Spirit.

Pneumatology in Paul and in Luke-Acts

When considering the relation between the Holy Spirit and Baptism in Acts, it is necessary to read the accounts mentioned above on the basis of the pneumatology found throughout Luke-Acts, without importing the pneumatology of Paul or the rest of the New Testament. Paul's highly developed theology of the Spirit has shaped much of the dogmatic tradition of the church. Though never losing sight of the corporate aspect of the church, Paul describes the significance of the Spirit *for the individual*. He says in Romans 8:9, "You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him." Confession of Jesus as Lord is possible only by the work of the Spirit (1 Cor 12:3). Paul repeatedly discusses the presence (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor 1:22) and activity of the Spirit in the individual (Rom 8:16, 26; Gal 4:6).

By contrast, one has difficulty finding explicit references to the Spirit's work in converting individuals and creating faith in Acts. The connection between the Spirit and faith is not left in doubt since Luke describes Stephen as "full of faith and of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 6:5) and Barnabas as "full of the Holy Spirit and of faith" (Acts 11:24). The example that most closely approximates the Spirit's work in conversion occurs in the circumstances of Peter's preaching to Cornelius (Acts 10:43–46) and his description of this at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:7–8). In the event with Cornelius, the preaching of the gospel, the work of the Spirit, and faith coincide. Though not explicitly stated, the conclusion must be that the Spirit has worked faith in the hearers.

Luke's primary interest when he speaks about the Spirit is elsewhere. He focuses on *groups of people*, and he has chosen a narrative format to describe theologically the work of the Spirit in expanding the church. Even the individuals mentioned are almost always part of a larger group.[3] Luke's approach is different from, but complementary to that of Paul.

[3] Cornelius (Acts 10:24, 44); Lydia (Acts 16:15); the Philippian jailer (Acts 16:32–34); Dionysius and Damaris (Acts 17:34); Crispus (Acts 18:8). The twelve disciples at Ephesus are a

Background in the Old Testament and Second Temple Judaism

Scholarship has appropriately called Luke's pneumatology the "Spirit of prophecy," and has noted how it is rooted in the way that Second Temple Judaism viewed the work of the Spirit.[4] In Max Turner's careful and precise work, he has defined the "Spirit of prophecy" as "a semi-stable concept that we can trace from pre-Christian Judaism through to the targums." The concept is "that of the Divine Spirit communicating revelatory knowledge, or wisdom, or some other special enabling closely associated with one or both of these, including certain types of inspired speech."[5]

Within the Old Testament, the most common activity of the Spirit is that he causes individuals to prophesy (נָבָא)[6] and to speak (דָּבַר or אָמַר) the word from Yahweh.[7] The Spirit instructs the people (Neh 9:20) and admonishes them through the prophets (Neh 9:30). The Spirit also provides the wisdom needed for craftsmanship to Bezalel (Exod 31:1–5; 35:30–34), and will give wisdom, understanding, and knowledge to the Davidic descendant (Isa 11:1–2). The eschatological gift of the Spirit will enable God's people to walk in his statutes (Ezek 36:27). The Spirit also creates life (Job 33:4; Ps 104:30). It is notable that the Spirit very rarely causes miraculous actions. This is the case with Samson (Judg 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14–15) and Ezekiel (whether physically or in a visionary manner).[8]

In light of this Old Testament background, it is not surprising that Second Temple Judaism, along with later Rabbinic Judaism and the Targums, continued to associate the Spirit with divine inspiration, revelation, wisdom, and knowledge.[9] Although this basic point is acknowledged, there has been sharp disagreement between Robert Menzies and Max Turner about the exact form of this Spirit of prophecy and its relation to Luke's theology of the Spirit.

Menzies has argued that "the literature of intertestamental Judaism consistently identifies experience of the Spirit with prophetic inspiration," which includes special

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group of nameless individuals (Acts 19:1–7). The three exceptions are Saul/Paul (Acts 9:17–18), the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:35–39), and Sergius Paulus (Acts 13:12).

[4] See Max Turner, *Power from on High: The Spirit in Israel's Restoration and Witness in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 20–79 for a survey of scholarship.

[5] Turner, *Power from on High*, 91.

[6] Numbers 11:17, 25; 1 Samuel 10:6, 10; 19:20, 23; Joel 2:28.

[7] 2 Samuel 23:2; 1 Chronicles 12:18/MT 12:19 (verb implied); 2 Chronicles 15:1–7; 20:14–17; 24:20. Such speaking is prophecy and identified as such in 2 Chronicles 15:8. See also Zechariah 7:12; Ezekiel 11:5.

[8] Ezekiel 2:2; 3:12, 14, 24; 8:3; 11:1, 24; 37:1.

[9] Robert Menzies demonstrates this general truth in great detail (Robert P. Menzies *Empowered for Witness: The Spirit in Luke-Acts* [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994], 48–101).

knowledge and understanding and "is almost always related to inspired speech."[10] He maintains that Second Temple Judaism was reluctant to associate the Spirit with miraculous deeds, and did not view the Spirit as having ethical or soteriological significance. In his view, "the Jews of the pre-Christian era generally regarded the gift of the Spirit as a *donum superadditum"* ["a gift added over and above"] "granted to various individuals so that they might fulfill a divinely appointed task."[11] For Menzies, the "Spirit of prophecy" had a largely fixed and traditional understanding in Judaism, and Luke actually rejected a portion of the early church's understanding (works of power) in order to retain this Jewish view.[12]

Turner argues convincingly that the "Spirit of prophecy" was not a fixed and rigid concept in Second Temple Judaism.[13] Instead, he identifies four "prototypical" gifts that would have been widely recognized in Second Temple Judaism as included in the general concept of the "Spirit of prophecy": (1) charismatic revelation and guidance; (2) charismatic wisdom; (3) invasively inspired prophetic speech; and (4) invasively inspired charismatic praise.[14]

In charismatic revelation and guidance, the individual receives revelatory knowledge from God that has "as its content either foreknowledge of the future, or revelatory insight into some aspect of the present world or the heavenly realm."[15] Turner says that this is the most common gift associated with the Spirit in Second Temple Judaism as well as Rabbinic Judaism.[16] The second, charismatic wisdom, is "an event in the psyche of the individual in which the cognition is perceived to be altered by God thereby enabling improved analysis of a particular situation or handling of a skill or problem."[17] This can be either a single charismatic event, or an ongoing infusion of wisdom. This is the second most common gift found in Second Temple Judaism and the Targums, and it frequently does *not* produce prophecy or

[10] Menzies, *Empowered for Witness*, 102.

[11] Menzies, *Empowered for Witness,* 102.

[12] Since Luke describes how Jesus went "in the power of the Spirit" (ἐν τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ Πνεύματος) (Luke 4:14), and Peter says that God anointed Jesus "with the Holy Spirit and with power" (Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ καὶ δυνάμει) (Acts 10:38), Menzies is forced to employ the unpersuasive argument that Luke has a "highly nuanced usage of πνεύμα and δύναμις" which actually separates the Spirit from exorcisms and miracles (Menzies, *Empowered for Witness,* 102).

[13] While the term "Spirit of prophecy" is common in the Targums (Menzies, *Empowered for Witness,* 90–94), within Second Temple Judaism it is only found in *Jub.* 31.12 (along with the similar "prophetic Spirit" [τὸ . . . προφητικὸν πνεῦμα] twice in Philo, *Fug. 186*) (Turner, *Power from on High*, 86).

[14] The term "prototypical" is drawn from the study of semantics and indicates the items which would normally be regarded as belonging to a particular class (Turner, *Power from on High*, 86).

[15] Turner, *Power from on High*, 86. Examples of this include *1 En. 91.1*; *4 Ezra* 14.22; *Jub.* 31.12; *Bib. Ant.* 9.10; 28.6; 1QS 8.16; CD 2.12; Sir. 48.24; Philo, *Jos.* 116–117; *Somn.* 2.252; *Spec. Leg.* 4.49*; Vit. Mos.* 1.175.

[16] Turner, *Power from on High*, 94.

[17] Turner, *Power from on High*, 95.

inspired speech.[18] The third, invasively inspired prophetic speech, is immediately inspired by the Spirit.[19] Finally, invasively inspired charismatic praise is "an event of doxological speech, typically (but not necessarily) addressed to God and regarded as immediately inspired by the Spirit in a way closely related to 'invasive prophetic speech.'"[20] This is rare in Second Temple Judaism (but see *1 En.* 71.11 and *Bib. Ant.* 32.14).[21] Turner concurs with Menzies "that there was no lively interest or widespread desire to associate the Spirit with works of power in the ITP period."[22] On the basis of the examples we have seen in the Old Testament related to Samson and Ezekiel, however, it is not surprising that it was still present.[23]

It is highly significant that in Isaiah 11:1–2, in addition to being the Spirit of wisdom, understanding (וּבִינָה חָכְמָה רוּחַ), and knowledge (דַּעַת רוּחַ)—all classic elements of the "Spirit of prophecy"—the Spirit upon the Davidic figure is also "the Spirit of counsel and *might*" (רוּחַ עֵצָה וּגְבוּרָה), as this one then slays the wicked (Isa 11:4). This language is the basis for the description of the Elect One in *1 En.* 49.2–3 (who is also the "Anointed One"; see *1 En.* 48:10; 52:4), and the Messiah in *Ps. Sol.* 17:37, whom God made "*powerful in the holy spirit* and wise in the counsel of understanding *with strength* and righteousness."[24] Finally, the connection between Spirit and power is seen in the Qumran fragment 4Q521 (the *Messianic Apocalypse*) which says that "upon the poor he will place his spirit, and the faithful he will renew with strength" (2 II, 6).[25] There is ample evidence in Second Temple Judaism that the concept of the "Spirit of prophecy" did not exclude works of power.

Since the "Spirit of prophecy" grants charismatic wisdom, one would expect this wisdom to impact people and lead to ethical restoration that reflects God's will. Menzies grants that this view is found in *Wisdom of Solomon* (such as Wis 9:17–18)

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[18] Turner, *Power from on High*, 96–97. Examples include *Jub.* 40.5; *Jos. Asen.* 4.7; Josephus, *Ant.* 10.239*;* 1QH 12.11–13; *1 En.* 49.2–3; 61.7, 11; *Pss. Sol.* 17.37; 1 QH 9.32; Sir. 39.6; *T. Levi* 2.3; Philo, *Gig.* 23–29, 47; Wis. 7.7, 22.

[19] Turner, *Power from on High*, 98. Examples include *Jub.* 25.14; 31.12; *Bib. Ant.* 28.6; Josephus, *Ant.* 4.119; 6.222–23; Philo, *Rer. Div. Her.* 265; *Vit. Mos.* 1.175, 277.

[20] Turner, *Power from on High*, 100.

[21] Turner, *Power from on High*, 100.

[22] Turner, *Power from on High*, 105. ITP stands for "Intertestamental Period."

[23] Turner, *Power from on High*, 106. In *Biblical Antiquities* 27:9, the Spirit of the Lord clothes Kenaz, and in 27:10 this is then called being clothed with the "Spirit of power" as he helps kill a large number of Amorites. In *Bib. Ant.* 36.2, Gideon puts on the Spirit of the Lord and is strengthened. Just as the Old Testament associated the Spirit with creating life, 2 Bar. 21:4 says that the Spirit was involved in the act of creation and 23:5 says that God's Spirit creates the living.

[24] Turner, *Power from on High*, 115. Text cited from James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha Vol. 2* (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 668. It also provides the content of 1QSb5.24–25.

[25] Turner, *Power from on High*, 116. Text cited from Florentino Garcia Martinez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated*, 2nd ed., trans. Wilfred G. E. Watson (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 394.

and in the Qumran (such as 1QH 7.6–7). Menzies minimizes this evidence by arguing that Wisdom of Solomon is atypical among Diaspora literature and that the Thanksgiving Hymns are not representative of the Qumran material.[26] Instead, they both represent the culmination of a process of development.[27] Turner, however, has shown that this understanding of the Spirit is seen elsewhere.[28] There is no real doubt that Second Temple Judaism could and did understand the Spirit of prophecy to have an ethical and soteriological role.

Menzies has argued that based on the Jewish background of the Spirit of prophecy, in Luke's view, the disciples received the Spirit as a prophetic *donum superadditum* which assisted in the missionary work of the church and so was a benefit for others.[29] The Spirit was the source of insight and especially *inspired speech* that served the missionary work.[30] The work of Turner has shown instead that the Jewish background enabled Luke to see the Spirit of prophecy as the source of revelation and wisdom. This could result in speech, though it need not, and instead could guide decisions made in the life of the church. In addition, this wisdom and insight provided by the Spirit helped to shape, change, and enable Christians to live in ways that reflected God's will as they lived in the salvation God had provided to them. We will see that while Luke does emphasize the manner in which the Spirit empowers the proclamation of the gospel, his description of the Spirit is not limited to this. The Spirit also plays a role in the life of the Christian.

The Baptism by John

The starting point for understanding the Spirit and Baptism in Acts is John the Baptist's ministry of "a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν) (Luke 3:3).[31] In their use of water, the ritual washings

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[26] Menzies, *Empowered for Witness,* 58–58, 62, 80, 82.

[27] Menzies, *Empowered for Witness,* 80.

[28] Philo says in *Gig.* 55 that the divine spirit is with a man "conducting him in every right way," and here, the context of *Gig.* 23 and 26–27 makes it clear that the referent is the Spirit (Turner, *Power from on High, 124).* In *T. Sim.* 4.4, the ethical qualities of being good, full of compassion and mercy are attributed to Joseph, "one who had within him the Spirit of God." Text cited from James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha Vol. 1* (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 786. Likewise, *T. Benj.* 8.3 describes the individual who "has no pollution in his heart, because upon him is resting the spirit of God" (text cited from Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha Vol. 1, 827).* (Turner, *Power from on High, 126-127.)* Finally, Turner points again to the important Isaiah 11:1–4 text and those based on it (*1 En.* 49.2–3; *Pss. Sol.* 17.37; 18.7; 4QpIsa[a] 3.15–23), noting that the Spirit causes the messianic ruler to act in righteousness (Isa 11:3–4) (Turner, *Power from on High*, 132–133).

[29] Menzies, *Empowered for Witness*, 227.

[30] Menzies, *Empowered for Witness*, 45.

[31] The phrase is best understood to mean "a baptism which expresses repentance" (Robert L. Webb, *John the Baptizer and Prophet: A Socio-Historical Study* [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press,

of the Old Testament provided a rich background for biblical language about washing and cleansing of sin, and the eschatological outpouring of the Spirit.[32] While washings continued to be very common in Second Temple Judaism,[33] it seems clear that "John derived the conception of his prophetic symbolism not from any existing rite but from the Old Testament prophecies themselves."[34]

John announced, "I baptize you with water [ὕδατι], but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire [ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ καὶ πυρί]" (Luke 3:16). While fire can be purifying (Mal 3:2), the burning and destruction of the fruitless tree in Luke 3:9 and the chaff in Luke 3:17 indicate that it is an image for judgment here.[35] In this eschatological event, John says the coming one would give the Spirit to the repentant, and judgment to the unrepentant.

It is in the setting of John's baptism that Jesus receives his messianic anointing with the Spirit. The Spirit descends on Jesus "in bodily form, like a dove," and the Father's statement, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased" (Luke 3:22), identifies Jesus as both the Davidic Messiah[36] and the Servant of the Lord.[37]

1991], 186). While self-administered ritual washings were common in Judaism, John's baptism was unique because he administered it to others (180).

[32] See Webb, *John the Baptizer and Prophet,* 96–108, for a discussion of Old Testament washings. The Old Testament speaks about washing and cleansing of sin (Pss 26:6; 51:2, 7; 73:13; Isa 1:16–17; Jer 4:14) and the eschatological washing/cleansing Yahweh will enact (Isa 4:4; Ezek 36:25). The prophets speak of how God will pour out his Spirit (Joel 2:28–29; Isa 32:15; 44:3; Ezek 39:29). Especially notable in relation to John's baptism is Isaiah 44:3, "For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants."

[33] See Webb's discussion of washings in Second Temple Jewish literature and at Qumran in *John the Baptizer and Prophet*, 108–162. It is unlikely that proselyte baptism was an established conversion ritual in the pre-Christian period. See John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus. Vol. 2 Mentor, Message, and Miracles* (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 52, and Everett Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church: History, Theology, and Liturgy in the First Five Centuries* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2009), 76–82.

[34] G. W. H. Lampe, *The Seal of the Spirit: A Study in the Doctrine of Baptism and Confirmation in the New Testament and the Fathers*, 2nd ed. (London: SPCK, 1967), 25.

[35] Greek grammar allows "Spirit" and "fire" to be understood as separate actions (a baptizing with the Spirit and a baptizing with fire) (see evidence cited by Webb, *John the Baptizer and Prophet*, 290 n. 7), and the context (3:9, 17) indicates they should be understood in this way.

[36] Luke's wording (σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱός μου) is not identical with LXX Psalm 2:7 (Υἱός μου εἶ σύ). However, Luke 1:32–33, 35, 68–70, and 2:10–11 have created the Davidic expectation, and Psalm 2:7 is directly quoted and applied to Jesus in Acts 13:33 (just as Ps 2:1–2 is quoted and applied in Acts 4:25–26).

[37] Luke's wording in 3:22 (ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν σοὶ εὐδόκησα) does not match LXX Isaiah 42:1 "my chosen, my soul has accepted him" (ὁ ἐκλεκτός μου προσεδέξατο αὐτὸν ἡ ψυχή μου). However, the descent of the Spirit upon Jesus corresponds to the statement in Isaiah 42:1, "I have put my Spirit upon him" (ἔδωκα τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπ' αὐτόν), and at the transfiguration, as the words are repeated,

More important for the purpose of this study is the fact that in Luke 4:18 Jesus quotes Isaiah 61:1 ("The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me" [ἔχρισέν με]), and applies these words to himself (Luke 4:21). In addition to designating Jesus as the messianic Servant, the endowment of the Spirit provides power for Jesus' work.[38]

St. Augustine commented that it would be absurd to believe that Jesus first received the Spirit at his baptism.[39] Jesus, who was conceived by the work of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35), did not cease to possess the presence and work of the Spirit prior to his baptism.[40] Instead he receives the Spirit for a new nexus of activities, just as he will again at his ascension (Acts 2:33). These multiple occasions of "receiving the Spirit" will prove important for understanding the Christians' experience of the Spirit in the Book of Acts.

The Outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost

There is little doubt that Luke intends the reader to see a correspondence between the descent of the Spirit on Jesus at his baptism and the outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost. Jesus who received the Spirit for his ministry in the setting of John's baptism has completed his work and, as the ascended and exalted Lord (Acts 2:33), pours out the Spirit in fulfillment of John's words about how the coming one will baptize with the Spirit (Luke 3:16; Acts 1:4–5). This correspondence indicates that the work of the Spirit poured out by the ascended Christ is grounded in the work Jesus did during his ministry by the power of the Spirit. It does not mean that Jesus' reception of the Spirit becomes the paradigm for each individual Christian life.[41]

Luke has "my chosen One" (ὁ ἐκλελεγμένος) (9:35) using a participial form. See also Arthur A. Just Jr., *Luke 1:1–9:50* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1996), 161–162.

[38] See the references to the Spirit and power in Luke 4:14 and Acts 10:38.

[39] *On the Trinity*, 15.46. This text is cited by A. Theodore Wirgman, *The Doctrine of Confirmation: Considered in Relation to Holy Baptism as a Sacramental Ordinance of the Catholic Church; with a Preliminary Historical Survey of the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1902), 47.

[40] This is seen in the repeated references to how Jesus as a youth was "filled with wisdom" (πληρούμενον σοφίᾳ) (Luke 2:40), displayed amazing understanding about the Scriptures (Luke 2:47), and "increased in wisdom" (προέκοπτεν [ἐν τῇ] σοφίᾳ) (Luke 2:52). We have already seen the tight connection between the Spirit of prophecy and wisdom/insight. This is also confirmed by John the Baptist. If the forerunner was "filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb" (Luke 1:15), and "became strong in spirit" (ἐκραταιοῦτο πνεύματι) (Luke 1:80) before his ministry began, we should expect nothing less from the coming one who was conceived by the Spirit.

[41] Arguments for this view such as in Ervin (Howard M. Ervin, *Conversion-Initiation and the Baptism in the Holy Spirit: A critique of James D. G. Dunn, Baptism in the Holy Spirit* [Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1984], 5–6) and Shelton (James B. Shelton, *Mighty in Word and Deed: The Role of the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts* [Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 1991], 49) ignore the

The ascension and the promise of the Spirit unite the end of Luke (24:44–52) and the preface and recapitulation with which Acts begins (1:1–11). In this way, both prepare for the critical explanation of Pentecost: the risen and exalted Christ has poured forth the Spirit (Acts 2:33). The condensed statements of Luke 24:48–49 are explained fully by those in Acts 1:4–5, 8. Jesus says that they are witnesses (Luke 24:48) and that he will send "the promise of my Father" (τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ Πατρός μου) on them (Luke 24:49). In Acts 1:4, he then tells them to wait for "the promise of the Father, which . . . you heard from me" (τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ Πατρός). Jesus then explicitly identifies the content of the promise as the Holy Spirit by indirectly quoting John the Baptist's words (Luke 3:16): "for [because; ὅτι] John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now" (Acts 1:5).[42] In taking up John's words, Jesus leaves out any mention of fire because his words focus upon the promise for the disciples.[43]

Jesus tells the disciples in Luke 24:49 that they are to remain in the city until they are "clothed with power from on high" (ἐνδύσησθε ἐξ ὕψους δύναμιν). Acts 1:4–5 has revealed that the "promise of the Father" is the Holy Spirit. Acts 1:8 then explains that the Spirit is the source of the power, and this will enable their witness (cf. Luke 24:48): "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." The statements in Luke 24:48–49 and Acts 1:4–5, 8 leave no doubt that the primary focus of the Spirit's work is to grant power to the witness about Jesus Christ.[44] But this does not yet explain the character and nature of how the Spirit will work. This occurs on the Day of Pentecost as the disciples are filled with the Holy Spirit.

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uniqueness of Christ who *alone* fulfills the Scriptures by his reception of the Spirit, and is the only one who receives power to carry out God's saving work.

[42] Haulotte has noted the subtle manner in which this is done in 1:5, and then how in 11:16, it becomes a direct statement from Jesus. See Edgar Haulotte, "L'Impact du baptême de Jean sur la vie de l'Eglise primitive selon les Actes des Apôtre," *Cahiers Bibliques Foi et Vie* 7 (1969): 56–67, 58.

[43] Luke 12:49–50 with its language about fire and the baptism with which Jesus must be baptized (βάπτισμα δὲ ἔχω βαπτισθῆναι) indicates that Jesus himself has received the fiery judgment on the cross, and so there is nothing but the blessing of the Spirit for those who believe in him. James D. G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit: A Re-examination of the New Testament Teaching of the Gift of the Spirit in Relation to Pentecostalism Today* (London: SCM Press, 1970), 42–43, and Just, *Luke 1:1–9:50*, 154–156. Instead of the fire of judgment, John's words are fulfilled by the "tongues as of fire" (γλῶσσαι ὡσεὶ πυρός) (Acts 2:3) that accompany the outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost.

[44] The disciples are twice described as "witnesses" (Luke 24:48; Acts 1:8), "power" is mentioned twice (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8), and Acts 1:8 plainly states that the Spirit will be the source of power for witness out into the world.

The inception of the Pentecost event is announced audibly with "a sound like a mighty rushing wind" (Acts 2:2) and visually through "divided tongues as of fire" (Acts 2:3) distributed on each of the disciples. The language of "wind" calls to mind the Spirit, and the reference to "fire" becomes a fulfillment of Luke 3:16. The disciples are "filled with the Holy Spirit" (ἐπλήσθησαν πάντες πνεύματος ἁγίου) (Acts 2:4) and begin to speak in other tongues (ἑτέραις γλώσσαις) as the Holy Spirit gives them the ability to speak. Acts 2:8 explains that these "tongues" are the human languages of the Jews from foreign areas present in Jerusalem. The disciples speak of the mighty deeds of God in these foreign languages, thus demonstrating the work of the Spirit in and through them.

Peter's address in this setting of the Spirit's Pentecost activity is the key text for understanding the pneumatology of Acts. Just as Jesus' quotation of Isaiah 61:1–2 (with 58:6 added; Luke 4:18–19) in his Nazareth synagogue address (Luke 4:16–30) is programmatic for the Gospel of Luke, so also Peter's quotation of Joel 2:28–32 (LXX 3:1–5; Acts 2:17–21) in his speech (Acts 2:14–40) is programmatic for Acts.[45] The text explains that it is as the Spirit of *prophecy* that the Spirit will empower the witness about Jesus Christ.

In response to the charge that the disciples are inebriated (Acts 2:13, 15), Peter replies that the events are instead what Joel had said in 2:28–32 (Joel LXX 3:1–5). Several alterations to the LXX text help to emphasize his point. Where the LXX 3:1 had "after these things" (μετὰ ταῦτα), Acts 2:17 has "in the last days" (ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις) which demonstrates the eschatological character of the event.[46] The text of Joel already identifies Pentecost as the event in which God pours out the Spirit on all flesh (ἐκχεῶ ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματός μου) so that the sons and daughters prophesy (προφητεύσουσιν). It also speaks of young men seeing visions and old men dreaming dreams (Acts 2:17/LXX Joel 2:28). While LXX Joel 3:2 goes on to speak about God pouring out the Spirit (ἐκχεῶ ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματός μου) on male and female servants, Acts 2:18 makes these *God's* servants (twice adding μου), instead of being merely a sociological category.[47] Then, most importantly, the text of Acts 2:18 adds "and they shall prophesy" (καὶ προφητεύσουσιν) so that 2:17a and 2:18b now form an inclusio in which it is twice stated that the Spirit is poured out and God's people prophesy.

The quotation of LXX Joel 3:1–5 and the modifications made to it in Acts 2:17–20 demonstrate that the character and nature of the Spirit's work will be as the *Spirit*

[45] The point is widely acknowledged. See, for example, Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation; Volume Two: The Acts of the Apostles* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 29–30.

[46] This change makes explicit what is already implicit in the broader context of Joel 3:1–2 (LXX 4:1–2).

[47] Turner, *Power from on High*, 270.

of prophecy. There is nothing in the programmatic text of Acts 2 that leads us to expect the Spirit's work in Acts to be understood along the lines of Ezekiel 36:25–27 in the way that Paul does.[48] Instead, as Turner has demonstrated, in the Book of Acts the Spirit's work regularly corresponds to the quotation of Joel in 2:17–20 and the concept of the Spirit of prophecy as it existed in Second Temple Judaism. The Spirit provides revelation through visions and dreams.[49] He provides revelatory words and guidance, supplies charismatic wisdom or revelatory discernment, and inspires invasive charismatic praise.[50] The Spirit also causes charismatic preaching or witness.[51]

In addition to explaining the outpouring of the Spirit that has occurred (Acts 2:1–5), the quotation of LXX Joel 3:1–5 provides the foundation for Peter's sermon in the final verse: "And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord [πᾶς ὃς ἂν ἐπικαλέσηται τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου] shall be saved" (LXX Joel 3:5/Acts 2:21). Peter proclaims that Jesus, who was killed by crucifixion (Acts 2:23), has been raised from the dead by God (Acts 2:24–32) and exalted to God's right hand (Acts 2:33–35) as Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36). While κυρίου in LXX Joel 3:5 translates יְהוָה of MT 3:5, the verse is now applied to the risen Jesus who is Lord.[52]

The remarkable claim about Jesus which identifies him with Yahweh is heightened by Peter's statement in Acts 2:33: "Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God [τῇ δεξιᾷ οὖν τοῦ Θεοῦ ὑψωθείς], and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit [τήν τε ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου λαβὼν παρὰ τοῦ πατρός], he has poured out [ἐξέχεεν] this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing." Before the ascension, Jesus had twice told the disciples to await the promise of the Father (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4), and explained that this promise is the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5, 8). Now, as the ascended and exalted Lord, Jesus himself has

[48] For an example of an attempt to read the text in this way, see Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 47–49. Menzies (*Empowered for Witness*, 187) and Turner (*Power from on High*, 352) are both correct in rejecting this.

[49] Acts 7:55–56; 9:10–18; 10:10–20; 16:9–10; 18:9–10; 22:17–18, 21; 23:11.

[50] Revelatory words and guidance: Acts 8:29; 10:19; 11:12, 28; 13:2, 4; 15:28; 16:6–7; 19:21; 20:22–23; 21:4, 11. Charismatic wisdom or revelatory discernment: Acts 5:3; 6:10; 13:9–10. Invasive charismatic praise: Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6.

[51] Charismatic preaching or witness: Acts 1:8; 4:8, 31; 6:10. The terms and analysis are from Turner, *Power from on High*, 349–350.

[52] Romans 10:13 applies LXX Joel 3:5 to Jesus as Paul speaks about faith in Jesus (Romans 10:9–11). Rowe demonstrates how Luke in the Gospel has already developed the Christology narratively through the use of κύριος, and so this is not unexpected. See C. Kavin Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006).

received this promise of the Father, and has poured out the Spirit on the disciples in fulfillment of his words (the verb ἐκχεῶ is used in Acts 2:17, 18, and 33).[53]

In response to the hearers' question, "What shall we do?" (Acts 2:37), Peter exhorts them to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus for salvation (cf. Acts 2:21) by being baptized: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ [βαπτισθήτω ἕκαστος ὑμῶν ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ] for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit [λήμψεσθε τὴν δωρεὰν τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος]" (Acts 2:38). Peter promises not merely the forgiveness of sins, but also the gift which is the Holy Spirit.[54] He explains this further by adding: "For the promise [ἡ ἐπαγγελία] is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself" (Acts 2:39). The language of "promise" identifies the Spirit received by believers as the same Spirit poured out on Pentecost (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4; 2:33).[55] This means that the Spirit promised to believers in connection with Baptism is the Spirit understood according to the concept of the Spirit of prophecy. As Acts 1:8 has indicated, the Spirit working in this way provides power for the witness of the church.

The Spirit and Baptism

There is little doubt that this is the primary emphasis in Luke's presentation of the Spirit. Does it, however, exhaust what Luke shares about the gift of the Spirit?[56] The text of Acts indicates that it does not. The first thing to note is the manner in which the Spirit is given *in the setting of conversion and Baptism*. This is the case in the programmatic Acts 2:37–42, and repeats in 8:4–17 (Samaria), 9:17–18 (Paul),

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[53] Jesus' words in Luke 24:49 await full explanation in Acts 1:4–5, 8. However, the statement "I will send the promise of my Father" expresses a truth that is not explained until Acts 2:33. It is Jesus himself (note the emphatic form ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω) who sends the Spirit. Keener has emphasized the importance this has for understanding the relation between Luke's Christology and pneumatology. See Craig S. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary, Vol. 1 Introduction and 1:1–2:47* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 957.

[54] The phrase τὴν δωρεὰν τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος should be understood as an epexegetical genitive; see James Hope Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek, Vol. III Syntax* (Edinburgh: T &T Clark, 1963), 214. Acts describes the Spirit as the "gift" in 8:20; 10:45; and 11:17 (referring to the Pentecost event itself).

[55] Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary, Vol. 1*, 987; Friedrich Avemarie, *Die Tauferzählungen der Apostelgeschichte: Theologie und Geschichte* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 180.

[56] Menzies is the chief example of a scholar who answers in the affirmative. He maintains that "the gift of the Spirit does not constitute a Christian," and that the "Spirit is a supplementary gift given to Christians who have already been incorporated into the community of salvation." See Menzies, *Empowered for Witness*, 211.

10:44–48 (Cornelius and the Gentiles), and 19:1–7 ("disciples" in Ephesus).[57] This fact suggests that the gift of the Spirit is part of receiving salvation as a Christian.

Confirmation of this is found in Acts 2:17–21, 38–40. The texts of both LXX Joel 3:1–5 and Acts 2:17–21 presume that individuals upon whom the Spirit has been poured (Acts 2:17–18/Joel 3:1–2), call on the name of the Lord and are saved (Acts 2:21/Joel 3:5). Acts 2:38 promises the Spirit to those who are baptized. Those who receive the "promise" of Acts 2:39—namely, the Spirit of prophecy—are believers whom "the Lord our God calls to himself" (ὅσους ἂν προσκαλέσηται κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν). The promise of the Spirit cannot be separated from salvation. In the same way, Luke provides a summary of Peter's exhortation in the words, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation" (Acts 2:40), and Turner points out that this "would appear to be a poor one, missing the essence of his speech, if the gift of the Spirit is not truly part of the 'salvation' envisaged at all, but merely an 'additional gift' empowering witness to others."[58]

Acts narrates many conversions. Both Avemarie and Turner have observed that what it does *not* contain are examples where those who are converted and have received the gift of the Spirit then engage in active witness.[59] Instead, immediately after the outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost, Luke narrates the ideal religious life of the Jerusalem church, which includes the sharing of possessions (Acts 2:42–47). Luke leaves no doubt that this is the work of the Spirit since in chapter 4, after narrating how the place where the disciples were was shaken "and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 4:31), he once again describes how the church shared possessions in common (4:32–37).[60] The work of the Spirit cannot be limited to prophetic empowerment for mission. The Spirit also enables Christians to live in the salvation they have received.[61]

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[57] The variations that occur in these texts have already been noted. Here, it is sufficient to observe that all of these instances combine conversion, Baptism, and the gift of the Spirit.

[58] Turner, *Power from on High*, 353.

[59] Avemarie, *Die Tauferzählungen der Apostelgeschichte*, 145–146; Max Turner, "'Empowerment for Mission'? The Pneumatology of Luke-Acts: An Appreciation and Critique of James B. Shelton's *Mighty in Word and Deed*," *Vox Evangelica* 24 [1994]: 103–122, 115–117.

[60] The significance of this repetition for understanding the work of the Spirit is noted by Nikolaus Adler, *Das erste christliche Pfingstfest: Sinn und Bedeutung des Pfingstberichtes Apg 2, 1–13* (Munich: Aschendorf, 1938), 138.

[61] As mentioned earlier, the Spirit is linked with faith in the description of Stephen (Acts 6:5) and Barnabas (Acts 11:24). Acts 9:31 speaks of how the church lives "in the comfort of the Spirit" (τῇ παρακλήσει τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος), and 13:52 states that disciples "were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit" (ἐπληροῦντο χαρᾶς καὶ πνεύματος ἁγίου).

In the texts considered thus far, we have seen an ample sampling of the language that Luke uses to describe the giving and receiving of the Spirit.[62] Turner argues convincingly that spatial references, such as when Jesus says that "the Spirit of the Lord is upon me" (Πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ' ἐμέ), provide the starting point for understanding.[63] In these, "The assertion that the Spirit is 'on' a person, or 'in' him, are simply two different spatial metaphors denoting the same reality: *viz.* that God's Spirit is at work in and through the life of one so described."[64] This understanding leads to the recognition that language about the Spirit coming upon, being poured upon, being given, or received are dynamic metaphors that correspond to the spatial, static metaphors. They are metaphors of inception and so, "To say that at a particular point in time the Spirit 'came upon' someone is to say that *from* that moment the Spirit commenced (in some sense) to be active in him; or, at least, to be active in a new *way* in him."[65]

More than One Reception of the Spirit

The example of Jesus proves important in demonstrating there can be more than one reception of the Spirit, and that each one can be *related to different activities*. Jesus, who was conceived by the Spirit (Luke 1:35), has the Spirit descend upon him at his baptism (Luke 3:22), and later describes this as being anointed by the Spirit (Luke 4:18). This action designates Jesus as the messianic Servant and indicates the divine source of power for his work. Then Peter announces at Pentecost that, as the one exalted to the right hand of God, Jesus received the Holy Spirit whom he has poured out (Acts 2:33). As the exalted Lord, Jesus now has the authority and commission to administer the work of the Spirit among God's people. Turner provides precision when he comments, "the phrase, 'to receive (the) Holy Spirit' has a common connotation (it always means the beginning of some new nexus of activities of the Spirit in a man) but it has several different denotations (or

[62] Christ baptizes (βαπτίζω) and individuals are baptized with the Spirit (Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5; 11:16). The Spirit is received (λαμβάνω + πνεῦμα) (Acts 2:33, 38; 8:15, 19; 10:47; 19:2), is a gift (δωρεά) (Acts 2:38; 8:20; 10:45; 11:17), and is given (δίδωμι + πνεῦμα) (Acts 5:32; 8:18; 11:17; 15:8). The Spirit is poured out (ἐκχέω) (Acts 2:17, 18, 33; 10:45), comes upon (ἐπέρχομαι) (Acts 1:8), (ἔρχομαι + ἐπί) (Acts 19:6), and falls upon individuals (ἐπιπίπτω) (Acts 8:16; 10:44; 11:15).

[63] Other examples include the Spirit being upon Simeon (πνεῦμα ἦν ἅγιον ἐπ' αὐτόν) (Luke 2:25) and the Spirit being in Jesus as he was full of the Spirit (πλήρης πνεύματος ἁγίου) (Luke 4:1). Similar language is found in the Old Testament where the Spirit is "on" Moses (Num 11:17), and "in" Joseph (Gen 41:38), Joshua (Num 27:18), and Daniel (Dan 5:11). See Max Turner, "Spirit Endowment in Luke/Acts: Some Linguistic Considerations," *Vox Evangelica* 12 (1981): 45–63, 48.

[64] Turner, "Spirit Endowment in Luke/Acts," 48.

[65] Turner, "Spirit Endowment in Luke/Acts," 49 (emphasis original).

referents) depending on which particular area of activity of the Spirit in a person is in mind."[66]

When this understanding is applied to the Pentecost event, the context demonstrates that what the disciples received (and what is promised in Acts 2:38 to those who are baptized) is the Spirit's activity included in the concept of the Spirit of prophecy as understood by the early church. The Old Testament and Luke's Gospel demonstrate that Pentecost was not the first time that God's people had received the Spirit's presence and work.[67] Instead, Pentecost and the gift promised in Acts 2:38 is the exalted Christ giving (Acts 2:33) this eschatological activity of the Spirit to *all of God's people* (Acts 2:17–18). In this activity, the primary focus is the Spirit providing power to the church for witness. But the Spirit is also the means by which the saving work is delivered (Acts 2:21, 39), and he enables Christians to live in the salvation they have received.

Many have seen the statement in Acts 2:4, that the disciples "were all filled [ἐπλήσθησαν] with the Holy Spirit," as being fundamental to understanding the pneumatology in Acts. On this view, the verb πίμπλημι describes a literal and continual "filling" with the Spirit.[68] This, however, fails to acknowledge the metaphorical character of the language. Luke regularly uses the verb in the aorist indicative or participle in contexts where a speech event follows immediately thereafter (Luke 1:41, 67; Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 13:9).[69] Here, "what is meant is that the Spirit was the immediate inspiration of the speech event specified."[70] For this reason, it can happen to the same individual on multiple occasions.

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[66] Turner, "Spirit Endowment in Luke/Acts," 59. He goes on to add: "The phrase 'to receive the Spirit' is thus a relatively ambiguous metaphor: its precise referent in any instance is only recoverable by an examination of the context in which the assertion is made" (60). For example, one will not claim that the referent of the exalted Jesus receiving the Spirit (Acts 2:33) is the same as that of a believer receiving the Spirit (Acts 2:38).

[67] Adler contends that what was received was the Spirit himself, the Third Person of the Trinity; see *Das erste christliche Pfingstfest*, 91. Similarly, see Frederick Dale Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit: The Pentecostal Experience and the New Testament Witness* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1970), 163. But since the Spirit has always been the Third Person of the Trinity, the endowment of Moses (Num 11:17) or Simeon (Luke 2:25) could have been no less that of the Spirit himself. This cannot be what is unique about Pentecost.

[68] Ervin, *Conversion-Initiation and the Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 36; J. H. E. Hull, *The Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles* (Cleveland: World Publishing, 1967), 69, 171.

[69] Acts 9:17 has the aorist subjunctive (πλησθῇς) and the speech event does not follow immediately, but the proclamation in 9:20 is certainly a result of it. Luke 1:15 appears to be an exception since it uses the future indicative (πλησθήσεται) to describe that John the Baptist will be filled with the Spirit while yet in his mother's womb.

[70] Turner, *Power from on High*, 167. This does not indicate a permanent and enduring state any more than when the people in the synagogue are "filled with wrath" (Luke 4:28) or those witnessing a miracle are "filled with awe" or fear (Luke 5:26).

In a related usage, the spatial metaphor "full of the Spirit" (πλήρης + πνεῦματος) indicates that a person's life and behavior demonstrated the presence and work of the Spirit. This is no different than the common use of πλήρης + a defining genitive to describe an individual.[71] Here, the metaphor is used to refer to an ongoing and enduring situation.[72] Luke's application of this description to the choice of the seven (Acts 6:3, 5) suggests that being "full of the Spirit" distinguishes those who are especially identified by the Spirit's work.[73] An individual whose life is described in an enduring way as being "full of the Spirit" can on multiple occasions be "filled with the Spirit" since "the two types of metaphors make different but complementary assertions."[74]

The Samaritan Believers in Acts 8

Thus far we have framed what "the gift of the Holy Spirit" entails within the pneumatology found in Luke-Acts. As noted in the introduction, Acts 2:38 seems to indicate that reception of the Holy Spirit will accompany the administration of Baptism. The events in chapters 8 (the Samaritans), 10 (Cornelius), and 19 (the "disciples") present a more complicated picture. Closer examination, however, reveals that Pentecost and these accounts are in fact linked by multiple interlocking textual features, which lead us to *interpret them together* as unique and extraordinary events.

Pentecost (Acts 2:17, 18, 33) and Acts 10:45 are connected by the fact that the Spirit is poured out (ἐκχέω); these are the only occurrences of the verb with the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is described as "gift" (δωρέα) (Acts 2:38; 8:20; 10:45; 11:17; only occurrences in Acts); is "received" (λαμβάνω) (Acts 1:8; 2:33, 38; 8:15, 17; 10:47; 19:2; only occurrences of the verb with the Spirit); and "falls" upon people (ἐπιπίπτω) (Acts 8:16; 10:44; 11:15; only occurrences of the verb with the Spirit). There is also speaking in tongues (γλώσσαις) (Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6, and is suggested by 8:18). Acts 1:8 says the disciples will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon (ἐπέρχομαι) them at Pentecost, and in Acts 19:6 the Spirit comes upon (ἔρχομαι + ἐπί) the "disciples." Finally, the laying on of hands to give the Spirit is present only in Acts 8:17–19 and 19:6.

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[71] Tabitha is "full of good works and acts of charity" (πλήρης ἔργων ἀγαθῶν καὶ ἐλεημοσυνῶν) (Acts 9:36), which means that her life was characterized by these actions.

[72] Luke's lone use of the verb πληρόω with the Spirit in Acts 13:52 (here in the imperfect) seems also to indicate an enduring quality of their life: "And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit" (οἵ τε μαθηταὶ ἐπληροῦντο χαρᾶς καὶ πνεύματος ἁγίου).

[73] Turner, *Power from on High*, 169. The same thing is seen in Barnabas (Acts 11:24).

[74] Turner, *Power from on High*, 169.

The description of Pentecost as unique and extraordinary needs little explanation since it is the eschatological outpouring of the Spirit prophesied by Joel and promised by Christ. Likewise, Acts 10 is God's dramatic action to include the Gentiles, and Peter explicitly compares the event with their own experience at Pentecost (Acts 11:15). We will see in the exegesis below that Acts 8 is the first movement of the gospel beyond the Jews to the Samaritans, who could be considered both Jew and Gentile, and with whom there had been a history of intense antipathy. The event of Acts 8 demonstrates God's acceptance of this mission. Finally, Acts 19 deals with the inclusion of a fringe element in early Christianity which shows that Jesus is the one who brings the eschatological reign of God and provides the correct understanding of John the Baptist.

In Acts 8:1, the persecution by Saul scatters the church in Jerusalem, apart from the apostles. Luke says that those who were dispersed "went about preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). He then provides Philip as an example of this as he goes to the city of Samaria and "proclaimed to them the Christ" (ἐκήρυσσεν αὐτοῖς τὸν Χριστόν) (Acts 8:5). At first, this may seem surprising since Philip was one of the seven selected in Acts 6:1–6 to administer the distribution of food to the needy, an activity that was set in contrast to the apostles who were to preach the word and not wait on tables (Acts 6:2). But the content of Philip's preaching[75] and the description of the miracles he performs[76] leave no doubt that this is true gospel ministry which must be placed on the same level as that carried out by the apostles.[77]

As a result of Philip's ministry, the Samaritans believed (ἐπίστευσαν) and were baptized (Acts 8:12).[78] Even Simon, who previously practiced magic and received religious adoration, believed (ἐπίστευσεν) and was also baptized (Acts 8:9–13). The verb πιστεύω is the standard means by which Luke expresses saving faith in Christ,

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[75] For example, Philip is provided as an example of those "preaching the word" (Acts 8:4), just as Paul and Barnabas are described as "preaching the word of the Lord" (Acts 15:35). Philip "proclaimed to them the Christ" (Acts 8:5), just as Peter (Acts 2:31, 36; 3:18, 20), the twelve apostles (Acts 5:42), and Paul (Acts 9:22; 17:3; 18:5, 28).

[76] The Samaritans "saw the signs that he did" (τὰ σημεῖα ἃ ἐποίει) (Acts 8:6), as did Simon (Acts 8:13). In the same way, Jesus was attested by signs (Acts 2:22), as were the apostles (Acts 2:43; 4:22, 30; 5:12), Stephen (Acts 6:8), and Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:3; 15:12). Philip also performed "miracles" (Acts 8:13; δυνάμεις μεγάλας) like Jesus (Luke 10:13; 19:37; Acts 2:22) and Paul (Acts 19:11).

[77] This point has been affirmed by the following: V. J. Samkutty, *The Samaritan Mission in Acts* (London: T & T Clark, 2006), 155–157; F. Scott Spencer, *The Portrait of Philip in Acts: A Study of Roles and Relations* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 53; Turner, *Power from on High*, 364; Avemarie, *Die Tauferzählungen der Apostelgeschichte*, 88–89.

[78] James Dunn has denied that the Samaritans were actually believers in Jesus (*Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 63–66). His arguments, however, do not withstand examination, and have been widely rejected.

and so it seems apparent that the Samaritans and Simon have converted and become Christians.[79]

The fact that the Samaritans had received the word of God and believed in Jesus Christ was an event of great significance because of the relation between the Jews and Samaritans. After a detailed examination of this history, Samkutty says, "In brief, the Jewish-Samaritan relationship in the New Testament period was one of constant tension, hostility and religious animosity."[80] Part of what fueled this was the ambiguous status of the Samaritans. They were not Gentiles because of their shared Jewish characteristics and background. At the same time, they were certainly not Jews.[81]

The apostles take action to verify the events in Samaria and to connect the Samaritan Christians to their leadership by sending Peter and John (Acts 8:14).[82] It is important to recognize that Acts 8:14 does *not* describe the giving of the Spirit as the purpose of their trip, which was prompted by the report that the Samaritans had received the word of God.[83] Once there, they found a situation that needed to be addressed. Luke states that Peter and John "came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit [ὅπως λάβωσιν πνεῦμα ἅγιον], for he had not yet fallen on any of them [οὐδέπω γὰρ ἦν ἐπ' οὐδενὶ αὐτῶν ἐπιπεπτωκός], but they had only been baptized [μόνον δὲ βεβαπτισμένοι ὑπῆρχον] in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 8:15–16).

The statement that the Spirit "had not yet fallen on" the Samaritans contradicts the expectation created by Acts 2:38, and the absence of the Spirit in believers is not possible in Paul's view (Rom 8:9). For this reason, some scholars have argued that the Samaritans had received the Spirit. What they had not yet received were dramatic and charismatic manifestations of the Spirit (the phrase "had not yet fallen on any of them" is often used as support for this interpretation).[84] Yet, the explicit

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[79] See Acts 2:44; 4:4, 32; 5:14; 9:42; 10:43; 11:17, 21; 13:12, 39, 48; 14:1, 23; 15:5, 7; 16:31, 34; 17:12, 34; 18:8, 27; 19:2, 4, 18; 21:20, 25; 22:19.

[80] Samkutty, *The Samaritan Mission in Acts*, 77–78; see Samkutty's examination of this history and the status of the Samaritans in 57–85.

[81] Samkutty, *The Samaritan Mission in Acts*, 84; Spencer, *The Portrait of Philip in Acts*, 68.

[82] The Jerusalem church does the same thing for the same reasons when it receives news about Christians in Antioch and sends Barnabas (Acts 11:22).

[83] I have only found this observation in Gerhard Delling, *Die Taufe in Neuen Testament* (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1963), 65; Turner, *Power from on* High, 360 n. 31; Laurence Decousu,"Liturgie baptismale et don de l'Esprit aux origines Chrétiennes: Une pneumatologie oubliée," *Revue des sciences religieuses* 89 (2015): 47–66, 54. Scholars generally assume that Peter and John went to Samaria in order to give them the Spirit, but the text nowhere says this.

[84] J. E. L. Oulton, "The Holy Spirit, Baptism, and Laying on of Hands in Acts," *Expository Times* 66 (1955): 236–240, 238; Michel Gourgues, "Esprit des commencements et Esprit des prolongements dans les *Actes*. Note sur la «Pentecôte des Samaritans» (*Act*., VIII, 5–25)," *Revue Biblique* 93 (1986): 376–385, 378, 382.

statement about the absence of the Spirit (Acts 8:16), the prayer of Peter and John that they might receive the Spirit (Acts 8:15), and then the description that through the laying on of their hands the Samaritans received the Spirit (ἐλάμβανον πνεῦμα ἅγιον) (Acts 8:17) leave no doubt that the Samaritans had not received the Spirit in the manner that Luke uses this phrase.[85]

Peter and John pray for the Samaritans to receive the Spirit (Acts 8:15), and after explaining why this was necessary (Acts 8:16), Luke states, "Then they laid their hands on them [ἐπετίθεσαν τὰς χεῖρας ἐπ' αὐτούς] and they received the Holy Spirit [καὶ ἐλάμβανον πνεῦμα ἅγιον]" (Acts 8:17).

The need for the Spirit to be given through hand-laying to those who had already been baptized marks Acts 8:14–17 as an exceptional circumstance.[86] An additional feature also marks this as an exceptional event. Acts 8:18 states that "when Simon saw that [ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ Σίμων ὅτι] the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands," he offered money to acquire this power. The fact that Simon could *see* the Spirit had been given indicates that there was some kind of perceptible manifestation of the Spirit's presence.[87]

It has been noted earlier that multiple interlocking textual features connect Acts 2 (Pentecost), Acts 8 (Samaritans), Acts 10 (Cornelius and the Gentiles), and Acts 19 (the "disciples"). These lead us to interpret them *together* as unique and extraordinary events. Since there is speaking in tongues (γλώσσαις) present in each chapter (Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6), it is highly likely this is also the case in Acts 8:17 (and

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[85] Denying that the Samaritans had received the Spirit: Nikolaus Adler, *Taufe und Handauflegung: Eine Exegetische-Theologische Untersuchung von Apg 8, 14–17* (Münster Westf.: Aschndorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1951), 83; Kilian McDonnell and George T. Montague, *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit: Evidence from the First Eight Centuries*, 2nd, rev. ed. (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1994), 31–32; Spencer, *The Portrait of Philip in Acts*, 213; Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 57; Shelton, *Mighty in Word and Deed*, 130; Turner, *Power from on High*, 368–369, 373; Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit,* 175.

[86] So also Hull, *The Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles*, 118; McDonnell and Montague, *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 35; Darrell L. Bock, *Acts* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 330–331; James Hickinbotham, "Confirmation in the Early Centuries," *The Churchman* 77 (1963): 84–91, 87; Laurence Decousu, "Imposition des mains et onction: recherches sur l'adjonction de rites additionnels dans les liturgies baptismales primitives – Première partie: L'impositon des mains," *Ecclesia orans* 34 (2017): 11–46, 12–13; Delling, *Die Taufe in Neuen Testament*, 66–67.

[87] The perceptible character of the Spirit's presence has been commented on by Richard F. Zehnle, *Peter's Pentecost Discourse: Tradition and Lukan Reinterpretation in Peter's Speeches of Acts 2 and 3* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971), 128; Gourgues, "Esprit des commencements et Esprit des prolongements dans les Actes," 382; Spencer, *The Portrait of Philip in* Acts, 213; C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles Vol. 1* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994), 413; Gregory Dix, "Confirmation, or Laying on of Hands?" *Theology Occasional Papers, No. 5* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1936), 18; Decousu, "Liturgie baptismale et don de l'Esprit aux origins Chrétiennes," 54.

perhaps also the Spirit inspired praise of God and prophecy found in Acts 2:11; 10:46; 19:6).[88]

Thus, Acts 8 is a "Samaritan Pentecost," and it represents the first movement of the gospel beyond the Jews.[89] This is not an advance undertaken by the twelve apostles, and it is directed toward a group with whom the Jews shared a long and bitter opposition. The delay of the reception of the Spirit, the bestowal through hand-laying, and the likelihood of tongues and other manifestations of the Spirit show God's approval of this development.[90] Lampe comments, "The original nucleus of the Church received the Spirit in the most striking and dramatic way at Pentecost, and at every turning-point in the missionary enterprise something in the nature of a Pentecostal manifestation of the Spirit occurs."[91] Attempts to discount this understanding regarding the exceptional circumstances are not persuasive.[92]

Three features in Luke-Acts as a whole support the understanding of the Samaritans as a significant advance of the gospel that is marked by the reception of the Spirit in an exceptional manner. First, Acts 1:8 identifies Samaria as a destination between "in Jerusalem and in all Judea" and "to the end of the earth" in which the Spirit will give the disciples power to be witnesses. Second, Samaria has already been

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[88] The presence of tongues is suggested by Adler, *Taufe und Handauflegung*, 84; Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church*, 184; Gustav Stählin, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962), 122; Jürgen Roloff, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981), 135; Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary*, trans. Bernard Noble and Gerald Shinn (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971), 304; Bock, *Acts*, 332; John Fleter Tipei, *The Laying on of Hands in the New Testament: Its Significance, Techniques, and Effects* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 2009), 194; Anthony Ash, "John's Disciples: A Serious Problem," *Restoration Quarterly* 45 (2003): 85–93, 87.

[89] Lampe, *The Seal of the Spirit*, 72; and Richard I. Pervo, *Acts: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 213.

[90] This point is emphasized by Craig S. Keener, *Acts An Exegetical Commentary Vol. 2, 3:1–14:28* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 1521; Lampe, *The Seal of the Spirit*, 69; G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Baptism in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1962), 118; Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 289; Samkutty, *The Samaritan Mission in Acts*, 174; Oulton, "The Holy Spirit, Baptism, and Laying on of Hands in Acts," 239.

[91] Lampe, *The Seal of the Spirit*, 72. "Pentecostal" here has to do with the original Pentecost, not modern Pentecostalism.

[92] Both Dunn (*Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 62) and Tipei (*The Laying on of Hands in the New Testament*, 199) argue that there are other instances which are significant advances, yet which do not display exceptional circumstances in the reception of the Spirit. However, the Ethiopian is a *single individual* who holds a peculiar status as a *eunuch*. This event does not rank as a watershed moment in Acts. Strangely, they argue that the Cornelius event (Acts 10:1–48; 11:1–18) disproves the approach, while the text quite explicitly indicates that Peter and the church considered it to be exceptional (Acts 10:45–48; 11:15–18). Finally, they point to Antioch (Acts 11:19–26) as another example which does not display exceptional circumstances. Yet, such a view ignores the obvious point that this follows immediately after the Cornelius event, which has already shown that God desires the inclusion of the Gentiles in the church.

the scene of a striking event at a turning point in the Gospel of Luke.[93] Finally, the Gospel of Luke has demonstrated a particular interest in the Samaritans.[94]

At the same time, describing the reception of the Spirit in 8:14–24 as an exceptional circumstance does not yet explain how the Samaritans could believe and be baptized without receiving the Spirit. The key to understanding this is the recognition of the extent to which Luke describes, and the early church probably expected, a "Samaritan Pentecost." A number of scholars have called attention to the dramatic character of the verb ἐπιπίπτω ("fall upon").[95] It is used with the Spirit only in the events involving the Samaritans and the Gentile Cornelius (Acts 8:16; 10:44; 11:15). Acts 10:44–45 demonstrates that Luke uses this verb interchangeably with ἐκχεῶ, which was the verb used to describe Pentecost (Acts 2:17, 18, 33).[96] The use of ἐπιπίπτω in Acts 8:16 suggests that a dramatic outpouring of the Spirit and accompanying manifestations of the Spirit's presence and work were expected at Samaria.

This can be further supported by a feature of Acts 8:14–16 that has not been previously observed. This text is notable because of the concentration of perfect and pluperfect tense verbs. Acts 8:14 uses δέδεκται to describe the fact that the Samaritans had received the word of God. In the twenty-four times that Luke-Acts uses δέχομαι, this is the only time it appears in the perfect.[97] Acts 8:16 has the pluperfect periphrastic form, ἦν . . . ἐπιπεπτωκός. In Luke's eight uses of ἐπιπίπτω in Luke-Acts, this is the only instance of a perfect or pluperfect form. Finally, Acts 8:16

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[93] After Jesus sets his face to go to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51), he sends messengers into a Samaritan village to make preparations, but "the people did not receive him" (Luke 9:53). In response, James and John want to call down fire from heaven and burn them up (Luke 9:54). In Acts, word that *Samaria had received the word of God* prompts the apostles *in Jerusalem* to send down Peter *and John* (Acts 8:14), who bestow the Spirit through the laying on of hands. Das (A. Andrew Das, "Acts 8: Water, Baptism, and the Spirit," *Concordia Journal* 19 [1993]: 108–134, 130) and Samkutty (*The Samaritan Mission in Acts*, 175) call attention to these parallel features as well.

[94] In addition to their rejection of Jesus (Luke 9:51–56), there is mention of the good Samaritan in a parable (Luke 10:33–35) and the thankful Samaritan healed of leprosy (Luke 17:16).

[95] Tipei, *The Laying on of Hands in the New Testament*, 202–203, 213–214; Turner, *Power from on High*, 368–369; Gourgues, "Esprit des commencements et Esprit des prolongements dans les *Actes*.," 381–382; Decousu, "Liturgie baptismale et don de l'Esprit aux origines Chrétiennes: Une pneumatologie oubliée," 53 n. 18; R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles* (Columbus: Wartburg Press, 1944), 324.

[96] Acts 10:44 says that "the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word" (ἐπέπεσεν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐπὶ πάντας τοὺς ἀκούοντας τὸν λόγον), then Acts 10:45 says that Peter and those with him were amazed "because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles" (ὅτι καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ ἔθνη ἡ δωρεὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου ἐκκέχυται).

[97] This is all the more striking, because, when Luke includes the exact same phrase, "received the word of God," in 11:1 to describe the report that came to the apostles and brothers in Judea, he uses the aorist (ἐδέξαντο).

goes on to describe Baptism using another pluperfect periphrastic form, βεβαπτισμένοι ὑπῆρχον.[98] In the thirty-one uses of βαπτίζω in Luke-Acts, this is the only perfect or pluperfect form.

Thus, Luke has used the perfect tense to highlight the significance that the *Samaritans* had received the word of God in Philip's Acts ministry (Acts 8:14). He has used the verb ἐπιπίπτω (Acts 8:16), which is utilized in Acts to describe events identical to the Pentecost outpouring of the Spirit. He has employed the pluperfect twice (Acts 8:16) to emphasize that the Samaritans had in fact been baptized, but that the outpouring of the Spirit ("a falling upon"; ἐπιπίπτω) had not yet occurred. The Samaritans had believed in Jesus Christ and been baptized (8:12). Not only should the Samaritans have received the Spirit through Baptism, but as the gospel extended to this controversial group, this reception was most likely also expected to be one that was accompanied by Pentecost-like manifestations of the Spirit. It would not be surprising that a church that continued to experience conspicuous action by the Spirit, such as that narrated in Acts 4:31, would also expect this when *the Samaritans* believed in Jesus Christ and were baptized.

After Peter and John had arrived (Acts 8:15), they discovered that this had not happened. In order to address this anomalous situation, they prayed that the Samaritans might receive the Spirit (Acts 8:15) and laid hands on them (Acts 8:17). Then the Samaritans did receive the Spirit (Acts 8:17), and this fact was most likely demonstrated by Pentecost-like manifestations of the Spirit (such as tongues, and perhaps Spirit-inspired praise of God and prophecy). As argued earlier, this is what Simon saw (ἰδών in Acts 8:18) that led him to think that the Spirit was given through the laying on of hands. Why does Luke not describe these manifestations and only leave them strongly implied? The most likely explanation is that since the Samaritans are only the first step outside of Judaism, he is reserved in his narration as he saves a full description (Acts 10:44–46; cf. 11:15–17) for the great leap forward as the Spirit compels the church to recognize God's acceptance of the Gentiles. There, Luke makes the identification between Pentecost and the events involving Cornelius and the Gentiles completely obvious.

The manner in which the event was expected to be, and is described as a "Samaritan Pentecost," aids in understanding the situation of the Samaritans after they believed and were baptized, but before Peter and John arrived to pray and lay on hands. Turner has correctly suggested that the best analogy for understanding

[98] The verb ὑπάρχω can be and is often used in Hellenistic Greek as a substitute for εἶναι. See *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed., rev. and ed. Frederick William Danker (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1029.2.

the Samaritan experience is that of Jesus' disciples prior to Pentecost.[99] He cogently argues that the disciples had experienced the work of the Spirit through Jesus' proclamation.[100] Turner is correct when he concludes "that Luke envisages the disciples to have experienced the Spirit as a divine presence addressing them, and consequently as a moulding influence upon them, long before they came to receive the Spirit at Pentecost; they experienced this through Jesus' powerfully charismatic ministry and proclamation."[101]

Conclusion

Understood within Luke's pneumatology, the Samaritans, like the disciples before Pentecost, can believe in Jesus Christ through the Spirit's work upon them. Yet, at the same time, Luke can also describe them as those who had not yet "received the Spirit." This is because, beginning at Pentecost, the phrase "to receive the Spirit" has the denotation of the *eschatological activity of the Spirit* poured out by the exalted Christ (Acts 2:33) who provides prophetic empowerment for mission, and does not refer to the mere presence of absence of the Spirit.[102]

Though a lesser emphasis in Luke, this gift of the Spirit also brings salvation and enables Christians to live in the salvation they have received. However, in describing the exceptional events at Samaria, these do not factor directly into Luke's presentation. The Samaritans believed and had been baptized, but the Spirit "had not yet fallen on any of them" (Acts 8:16). They had not experienced their "Pentecost," and it did not happen until Peter and John addressed through hand laying the anomalous situation of baptized Christians who had not "received the Spirit." It was only then that they "received the Spirit," that is, they received the eschatological activity of the Spirit poured out by the exalted Christ (Acts 2:33). This was most likely accompanied by charismatic manifestations such as tongues and praise of God (Acts 8:18, and parallels with Acts 2, 10, and 19). In this way, God

[99] Max Turner, "Interpreting the Samaritans of Acts 8: The Waterloo of Pentecostal Soteriology and Pneumatology?," *The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* (2001): 265–286, 272.

[100] Turner, *Power from on High*, 333–334.

[101] Turner, *Power from on High*, 337. Why does Luke not say that the apostles "received the Spirit" during this time? Most likely, it was so that this was not confused with the Pentecost gift of the Spirit poured out by the exalted Christ (Acts 2:33).

[102] The explanation provided here is different from the one rejected earlier in which scholars have argued that the Samaritans had received the Spirit, but what they had not yet received were dramatic and charismatic manifestations of the Spirit. The difference is the understanding of what it means "to receive the Spirit." For Luke, this is far more than charismatic manifestations. Instead, the denotation of the term is the eschatological activity of the Spirit poured out by the exalted Christ (Acts 2:33).

dramatically demonstrated the validity of the gospel's expansion to the Samaritans. By receiving the Spirit, the Samaritans then certainly also possessed the Spirit's work in sustaining faith itself and aiding them to live in the salvation they had received.

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Translations, Traditions, and Transformations: Catherine Winkworth and the Lutheran Chorale in English

Benjamin Kolodziej

How incongruous is it that a writer and poet steeped in the English Victorian tradition, herself having trifled with Unitarianism, should become one of the earliest providers of hymn translations for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod? In fact, her translations (or some variation thereon) are used some seventy-three times in *The Lutheran Hymnal* of 1941. Thus, eleven percent of the hymnody in *TLH* originates from Winkworth in some way. Even astute and experienced musicians and theologians could be forgiven for thinking Catherine Winkworth held the Lutheran faith, for her representation in Lutheran hymnals belies her actual involvement in that church, which was next to none. Anyone for whom that wistfully tranquil stanza of Luther's evokes Christmas Eve—"Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, Make Thee a bed, soft, undefiled, Within my heart that it may be A quiet chamber kept for Thee"—has unwittingly encountered Luther's hymn through the lens of Winkworth's own incarnational theology, for whom it was of utmost importance that Christ be presented both as God and man. What First Sunday in Advent is complete without singing "Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying"? These, too, are her words as much as Nicolai's, her particular sense of the sacrament at the conclusion of stanza 2 having presented problems for Lutheran hymnal editors for generations. Her inclination for some pietist hymnists resulted in a rich panoply of those texts entering common usage. Winkworth expressed God's omnipotence as well as his loving kindness when she declared through Joachim Neander, "Ponder anew What the Almighty can do As with His love He befriends Thee," the response to which she adapted Martin Rinckart's text to proclaim, "Now thank we all our God With hearts and hands and voices." So imbued have her words been on the hearts and tongues of countless Christians for a century and a half, one could argue that she should be considered for inclusion in that noble pantheon of other poetic luminaries such as Olearius, Gerhardt, Crüger, Rambach, or even Luther, for their poetic theologies have found expression in English through her over four hundred chorale translations.

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Life and Vocation

Knowledge of Catherine Winkworth's life comes from her sister Susanna's 1883 biography of her, *Letters and Memorials of Catherine Winkworth*,[1] while a niece, Margaret Shaen, contributed her *Memorials of Two Sisters: Susanna and Catherine Winkworth* in 1908.[2] Both provide invaluable, and sometimes overlapping, accounts of her life referencing copious primary sources, the first suffering from the romantic nostalgia one would expect from a Victorian writing about her sister. Susanna herself admits that she omitted many events from Catherine's life, including much correspondence, particularly that of the theological kind. Shaen's book, published thirty years after Catherine's death, beneficially collects letters which had been omitted from Susanna's volume. Beyond these semi-primary sources, and other than a smattering of obsequious articles condensing information from Susanna's biography, Robin Leaver's short 1978 monograph, *Catherine Winkworth: The Influence of Her Translations on English Hymnody*, published by CPH, remains the only in-depth scholarly work on her life and work.[3]

Born in London in 1827, Winkworth would move with her family to Manchester two years later. Her childhood was marked by a deep appreciation both for reading and travel, and the family frequently availed themselves of visits to new destinations, certainly fostering in the daughters (Susanna had been born in 1820) an appreciation for other cultures.[4] Winkworth's grandfather was an evangelical minister at Southwark, her father was in the civil service, and her "childhood was passed in the warmest atmosphere of evangelical devotion."[5] Although they were Anglican, her sister Susanna recalled that Catherine learned Isaac Watts's catechism "from the time we could speak." Susanna remembered of their childhood, saying,

> I know I earned my first Prayer-Book by repeating the church catechism without a fault, when I was about seven and a half. Both our parents used often to take us aside to talk to us, pray with us, and explain the Bible to us . . . the doctrines we were taught were those of the Calvinistic Evangelical School of Newton, Romaine, Toplady, etc., but in my mother's teachings, the love of God

[1] Susanna Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials of Catherine Winkworth, Edited by Her Sister* (Clifton, UK: E. Austin and Son, 1883).

[2] Margaret J. Shaen, ed., *Memorials of Two Sisters: Susanna and Catherine Winkworth* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1908).

[3] Robin Leaver, *Catherine Winkworth: The Influence of Her Translations on English Hymnody* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1978).

[4] Shaen, *Memorials of Two Sisters,* 1ff.

[5] Shaen, *Memorials of Two Sisters,* 6.

> was so brought out as almost to conceal with its brightness the sterner aspects of the creed to which she too subscribed.[6]

Susanna continued, "Owing to her remaining at home with Mamma, Kate had the advantage over us elder ones of having the bright and loving aspects of religion instilled into her in early childhood, while we learnt much more about the terrors of the law."[7] Catherine Winkworth commenced study of Italian at age twelve, and Greek a year later. The German language, though, enthralled her after a sojourn to Dresden in 1845, and she soon immersed herself in the Teutonic culture, of which music was of prime importance. She recalled that "there is much still that I wish to learn independently of the fact that I do not yet speak either French or German by any means perfectly. With regard to music, if I were to take a year's more lessons here I might make something of it. As it is, I do not know what will become of my music. I do not choose to give it up."[8] She wrote later of her experience with church music, "In my days in Dresden, there were a famous organ and organist in the Hofkirche, where you had chorales and Bach's fugues in perfection."[9]

Upon return to England, Winkworth's studies continued with James Martineau, a Unitarian who espoused a Christianity free of miracles and traditional scriptural authority, but who also would turn his interest to hymnody and encouraged Winkworth's translation work. Her sister observed of Winkworth's exposure to a less evangelical milieu, both in Germany and through Martineau, as having

> . . . thrown her out of the old traditional grooves of thought and feeling in which her childhood had moved, and her whole intellectual being was now in a state of ferment; she had entered on what the Germans call the Sturm and Drang period of her life. Her early beliefs had been rudely shattered, and she was at this epoch much inclined to replace them by the worship of art and culture. [Martineau's] teaching laid down for her, once for all, the landmarks of mental and moral philosophy, which proved her guide . . . Nevertheless, I do not think that she at any time adopted Mr. Martineau's views with regard to Christian doctrine or the teachings of scripture.[10]

In 1850, the family moved to a suburb of Manchester and Winkworth began what would be her second vocation after translation—helping the poor. Through her efforts to alleviate poverty, she worked alongside or corresponded with many

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[6] Shaen, *Memorials of Two Sisters,* 8.
[7] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials,* 13.
[8] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials,* 103.
[9] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials,* 110.
[10] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials,* 120.

luminaries of the time, including Florence Nightingale, Charlotte Brontë, Adelaide Procter, John Ruskin, and even Ralph Waldo Emerson. As her work as a translator blossomed during the 1850s and 1860s, she was able to realize her dream of sustaining herself financially, continuing to work for social change. In 1860, the family moved to Clifton, outside of Bristol, where her father, to whom Catherine was particularly close, died in 1861. Winkworth herself died at age 50 in 1878 in Switzerland.[11]

Winkworth and Hymnody

Winkworth's story owes its origins to the Prussian diplomat and amateur theologian Christian Carl Bunsen. During those heady years around the three-hundredth anniversary of the Reformation, it was Bunsen who envisioned a common Reformed and Lutheran liturgy for universal use based on that of the English Church, and he worked tirelessly to promote the cause of the Prussian Union. Bunsen likewise assembled a hymnal, the purpose of which had been to "seek out the finest hymns because most of the modern ones (since the time of Gellert), although pious and devout, are commonplace in sentiment and expression and unworthy of general use."[12] Examining some 2,500 hymns from the various hymnals in circulation, his efforts resulted in the publication in 1833 of the *Versuch eines allgemeinen evangelisches Gesang- und Gebetbuchs*, a "union" hymnal of 934 hymns and 350 prayers.[13] Bunsen may have been a pawn of a rationalist monarch desirous to eliminate anything uniquely Lutheran, but Bunsen's own words suggest that his purpose was instead to reclaim the original texts. Bunsen observed, "Each government, sect, or school of opinion, thought themselves justified in remodeling the older National Hymnody according to their own ideas, till at length little remained of their pristine rugged glory."[14] Bunsen's goal was not to modernize German hymnody, but to preserve it as a living relic of the German national consciousness.

It was Bunsen who encouraged Arthur Tozer Russell, an Anglican vicar, to translate a number of hymns into English—eventually publishing the *Dalton Hospital Book* of 1848. Bunsen encouraged others to translate German hymns into English, including Richard Massie, Frances Elizabeth Cox, and Catherine

[11] Shaen, *Memorials of Two Sisters,* 329.

[12] J. Vincent Higginson, "Catherine Winkworth and the Chorale Book for England," *The Hymn* 25, no. 1 (January 1974): 9–13.

[13] *Versuch eines allgemeinen evangelisches Gesang und Gebetbuchs zum Kirchen- und Hausgebrauche* (Hamburg: Friedrich Perthes, 1833).

[14] *Versuch eines*, preface.

Winkworth. Susanna writes of the genesis of Catherine's first major translation effort, *Lyra Germanica: Hymns for the Sundays and Chief Festivals of the Church Year:*

> I have in vain sought to discover among our letters anything which would fix the exact date when Catherine first took up the idea of translating the German Hymns for publication . . . I think it must have been in the summer of 1854, that I suggested she should translate a . . . volume of sacred poetry, since she had always succeeded well with the translations from German poetry . . . She replied that that was quite beyond her powers; but when at Heidelberg, I imparted my idea to Bunsen, who strongly approved of it, and afterwards wrote me a letter on the subject, which will be found dated October the 8th. From the following letter, it appears that she was attempting to translate some hymns, but was so far from having any definite plan of publishing them, that she was still looking for some book to translate, in which case she would give them up. But I think that the letter of Bunsen's to which I have alluded brought her floating ideas to the crystallizing point, and that then, or soon after, she began to try and arrange a series of hymns for translation.[15]

It was through Susanna that Catherine was encouraged by Bunsen to translate hymns of the German nation into English. In October of 1854, Baron Bunsen wrote to both sisters setting forth the "idea of a *Lyra Germanica* as exhibiting the Spiritual Epos of the German mind in lyric form."[16] Bunsen's plan was not a mere hymnal in English, but something which would capture the ethos of the "National German Church, constituting an uninterrupted link of Spirit and Sacred Poetry, from Luther's Great Hymn in 1521, down to our own days." Its scope far beyond a collection of hymns, the book would also contain a Table of Lessons "artistically arranged for private and public edification."[17] Bunsen's letter must have inspired Catherine well enough, for by July 1855 she had completed this first major project. She recounted in the preface the origins of *Lyra Germanica:*

> The following hymns are selected from the Chevalier Bunsen's "*Versuch eines allgemeinen Gesang- und Gebetbuchs,*" published in 1833. From the large number there given, about nine hundred, little more than one hundred have been chosen. This selection contains many of those best known and loved in Germany, but in a work of this size it is impossible to include all that have become classical in that home of Christian poetry. In reading them it must be remembered that they are hymns, not sacred poems, though from their length

[15] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials,* 454.
[16] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials,* 461.
[17] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials,* 461.

> and the intricacy of their metres, many of them may seem to English readers adapted rather to purposes of private than of public devotion. But the singing of hymns forms a much larger and more important part of public worship in the German Reformed Churches than in our own services. It is the mode by which the whole congregation is enabled to bear its part in the worship of God, answering in this respect to the chanting of our own Liturgy.[18]

Winkworth's volume contains hymns by Luther, whose poetry she claims is "wanting in harmony and correctness of metre to a degree which often makes them jarring to our modern ears, but they are always full of fire and strength, of clear Christian faith, and brave joyful trust in God."[19] She lauded the works of Paul Eber, Nicholas Hermann, and the "rich" sacred poetry of the Thirty Years' War hymnists—Johann Rist, Johann Heermann, Simon Dach, and Paul Gerhardt. Winkworth looked fondly on the pietists, or the "elder school of German sacred poetry, a school distinguished by its depth and simplicity."[20] Yet, Winkworth acknowledged the defects of the school of pietists, observing that the hymns could "degenerate into sentimentality."[21]

She intended her work for devotional rather than historical use, hoping "that these utterances of Christian piety which have comforted and strengthened the hearts of many true Christians in their native country, may speak to the hearts of some among us, to help and cheer those who must strive and suffer, and to make us feel afresh what a deep and true Communion of Saints exists among all the children of God in different churches and lands."[22] This volume is arranged according to the liturgical calendar, with each Sunday given its own hymn(s), as well as the minor feasts and each day of Holy Week. Although standard practice now, this arrangement anticipates the "hymn of the day" process now in common usage, but not a common organizational principle for many hymnals up to that point, particularly German ones. Consider the *Hannoversches Kirchen-Gesangbuch* of 1832, whose *Inhalt* (table of contents) is typical:

1. Praise Hymns and Weekly Songs
2. Hymns for the Liturgical Year
3. Of God's Works and Deeds

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[18] *Lyra Germanica: Hymns for the Sundays and Chief Festivals of the Christian Year,* trans. Catherine Winkworth (New York: Stanford, 1856), preface.

[19] *Lyra Germanica: Hymns for the Sundays*, preface.

[20] *Lyra Germanica: Hymns for the Sundays*, preface.

[21] *Lyra Germanica: Hymns for the Sundays*, preface.

[22] *Lyra Germanica: Hymns for the Sundays*, preface.

4. Of God's Mercy
5. On the Afflictions of Man
6. In Times of Trial
7. On the Last Things
8. Morning, Table-songs, Evening Hymns
9. Vocational Songs, Occasions, and Travel Songs.[23]

One might be tempted to attribute Winkworth's liturgical arrangement to the influence of the Oxford Movement, but she was no proponent of the Tractarians as she remained loosely within the Evangelical fold. There had been hymnals in the evangelical tradition arranged according to the liturgical year, but according to Robin Leaver, "Catherine Winkworth surpasses them all in her choice of days and seasons. Indeed, in doing so she was many years ahead of her time . . . [she] was not only a careful translator of German hymns: she was also a thoughtful hymn book compiler."[24] *Lyra Germanica* sold out its first printing within a few months and a second edition was produced by Longmans. According to Leaver:

> The book was very sympathetically received. Bunsen was extremely pleased with it and hoped that the demand would produce "a second or fourth or tenth edition!" Martineau wrote that these translations introduce "the English reader with the least possible drawback of passing out of their own language." The anonymous reviewer in *The British Quarterly Review* wrote, "Happy are we to receive from the authoress this fruit of her piety, intelligence, and good taste . . . it is a beautiful book in its stationery, and printing, and binding, but much more beautiful intrinsically."[25]

Even the negative reviews speak more about the source material than Winkworth's actual translations. Martineau also wrote, "The extreme inwardness of the German Christian sentiment (appears) in the English a little sickly and unreal."[26] Erik Routley observed that to read the *Lyra Germanica* "at a sitting leaves one with the kind of indigestion that is naturally induced by an overdose of Pietism."[27] Leaver himself acknowledged that "Certainly some of the hymns have a devotional expression which sounds strange to modern ears, but hymns speak with individual voices and each one has to be heard for its own sake, and so judged on its merits,

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[23] *Hannoversches Kirchen-Gesangbuch* (Hannover: Verlag des Moringschen Waysenhauses, 1832).

[24] Leaver, *Catherine Winkworth*, 31.

[25] Leaver, *Catherine Winkworth*, 32.

[26] Shaen, *Memorials of Two Sisters,* 131.

[27] Leaver, *Catherine Winkworth*, 33.

and cannot be expected to shout out its message from the confused Babel created by our lack of time for leisured reading."[28]

The success of *Lyra Germanica* led in 1858 to the publication of *Lyra Germanica: The Christian Life,* an elaborately bound and profusely illustrated volume of new translations to supplement the first volume. (In fact, famed artist John Ruskin had been considered for the illustrations.) These two series contained 223 translations, among which are those enduring standards: "From Heaven Above to Earth I Come," "All My Heart This Night Rejoices," "Blessed Jesus at Thy Word," "Christ the Lord Is Risen Again," and "Now Thank We All Our God."[29] A clarification on nomenclature is necessary at this point. Winkworth's first *Lyra Germanica* is sometimes referred to as *Lyra Germanica, First Series,* as opposed to *Lyra Germanica: The Christian Life,* which even in early publication runs (but not the first) is called *Lyra Germanica, Second Series.* To further confuse matters, the first *Lyra Germanica* is secondarily entitled *Songs for the Household* on the title page, and in some editions this is even embossed on the cover (one edition says "Household Songs"). This secondary title clarifies that Winkworth intended her translations to be sung and used at home. But only a few years later she would hone her ambitions toward producing a hymnal.

By 1862, she had published *The Chorale Book for England,* a tome whose ambitions are evident in its title. *Hymns Ancient and Modern* had been published only a year before, with its own aspirations to provide a single hymnal for the island empire. Winkworth specified the purpose of her new volume: "The *Lyra Germanica* was intended chiefly for use as a work of private devotion; the *Chorale Book for England* is intended primarily for use in united worship in the church and family, and in meetings for the practice of church music."[30] Her translation principles remained the same, although she acknowledged that some of the hymns had been shortened to accommodate those accustomed to singing only four stanzas at a time. Nonetheless, this volume differs from the *Lyra Germanica* in that the music was considered and printed along with the texts. Winkworth wrote, "As a rule, the hymn and tune have been considered as one and indivisible and the original metres therefore strictly preserved for the sake of the tunes, which would not admit of any deviation without detriment to their characteristic beauty."[31] Winkworth, though, was only an amateur musician, so this effort was aided by both William Sterndale

[28] Leaver, *Catherine Winkworth*, 33.

[29] *Lyra Germanica Second Series: The Christian Life*, trans. Catherine Winkworth (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph, 1858).

[30] Catherine Winkworth, William Sterndale Bennett, and Otto Goldschmidt, eds., *The Chorale Book for England* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, and Green, 1865), preface.

[31] *The Chorale Book for England*, preface.

Bennett, professor of music at Cambridge University, and Otto Goldschmidt, composer and professor at the Royal College of Music in London (as well as husband to Jenny Lind, the "Swedish Nightingale" singer). Musical notation attached to hymn texts, of course, was a fairly new development. *Hymns Ancient and Modern* included music, but most hymnals, in English or German, provided only texts. *The Chorale Book* was even more forward-thinking, however, as it employed the original rhythmic versions of the chorales, not always to the pleasure of Winkworth herself, who observed in September 1861:

> Mr. Goldschmidt came today . . . the truth is, there is a fundamental difference in our conceptions of the work which cannot entirely be get over. I am always thinking of the poetical and devotional use of the work among English people, who know nothing of its contents beforehand; he, of its scientific value among a learned musical class. We both agree in wishing to combine the two; but where they clash, I should always prefer the first, and he the second. On some points they have yielded to me, but on a good many I must follow them; and what I am a little anxious about, and can do nothing to prevent, is the general tone of the music, which I fear will be too severe.[32]

Representative authors included Luther, Zinzendorf, Neumann, Franck, Scheffler, Gerhardt, Tersteegen, Heermann, Rist, Nicolai, "Anon. Thirty Years' War," and many other German Reformed and Lutheran writers. Although its success as a hymnal was largely mitigated due to the burgeoning usage of *Hymns Ancient and Modern,* this hymnal not only introduced the original tunes to reticent ears, but also provided English texts that Lutheran hymnals in the United States would begin to quarry as they transitioned from German.

Winkworth's Theology

As an evangelical Anglican tutored by a Unitarian and mentored by a unionistic amateur politician/diplomat, her theology was less systematic as it was infused with an intense piety oriented toward simplicity. Winkworth addressed her changing theological views when she said, "Sometimes I love Jesus and have confidence in him, but these nice feelings go away very soon and naughty doubts come again."[33] Perhaps it was her Baptist governess who influenced her to write in 1840, "Last Sunday evening I had a good deal of thought about serious things. I re-gave myself to God. It was an event to be remembered."[34] Although her tutor James Martineau

[32] Shaen, *Memorials of Two Sisters,* 224.
[33] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials,* 27.
[34] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials*, 33.

was a Unitarian, Winkworth "told Susanna to beware of Unitarianism and of worshipping the pride of intellect,"[35] adding, "It won't do now . . . What blank there would be were I to give up Christ to turn atheist or even Socinian; it would be like looking at a transparency without a light. Thoughts of Him come in everywhere."[36] She was not without her time of doubts. She recalled befriending a minister who questioned her on her beliefs:

> He asked me whether I went regularly to the Communion, and so thereupon I told him how much I cared to go, and yet how I doubted whether I had a right, because I didn't believe all that the services said, etc., and we discussed the sacramental services and the Athanasian Creed. He was very good and friendly and not shocked at anything I said; to my surprise, for he is a great deal too Calvinistic for me; but I don't think we convinced each other a bit. We could have got the same amount of conversation in half the time, if he wouldn't have followed that clerical practice of illustrating what you know as well as possible beforehand.[37]

Winkworth perhaps should be credited for even knowing of the Athanasian Creed. That it provided a starting point for some of her theologizing suggests how well-versed in theology she actually was.

Sacraments

Despite her disparaging comment about her Calvinist minister friend, her views on the Lord's Supper were decidedly Calvinist. She noted that she agreed with her father's view of the Lord's Supper, that "he considers it as a remembrance of Christ's death, and as a sign of a pledge on God's part, of the covenant between him and his people for their redemption."[38] Winkworth's sacramental theology is manifest in stanza 2 of Philipp Nicolai's king of chorales, "Wachet Auf":

> Zion hört die Wächter singen,
> das Herz tut ihr vor Freuden springen,
> sie wachet und steht eilend auf.
> Ihr Freund kommt vom Himmel prächtig,
> von Gnaden stark, von Wahrheit mächtig,
> ihr Licht wird hell, ihr Stern geht auf.
> Nun komm, du werte Kron',

[35] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials*, 46.
[36] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials*, 34.
[37] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials*, 388.
[38] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials*, 48.

Herr Jesu Gottes Sohn!
Hosianna!
Wir folgen all‘ zum Freudensaal,
und halten mit das Abendmahl.

Zion hears the watchmen singing,
And all her heart with joy is springing,
She wakes, she rises from her gloom;
For her Lord comes down all-glorious
The strong in grace, in truth victorious,
Her Star is risen, her Light is come!
Ah come, Thou blessed One,
God’s own Beloved Son,
Hallelujah!
We follow till the halls we see
Where Thou hast bid us sup with Thee.[39]

The text at issue here is *Abendmahl*, which of course literally means “evening meal” or “supper,” but it has always been used metonymically for the Eucharist or Lord’s Supper. The original text conveys a connotation of present action—we “follow all to the hall of joy, and keep the Lord’s Supper.” She colors the phrase with eschatological content—the implication being that one may “sup” at some point in the future in heaven rather than on earth. At a minimum, the translation offers theologically interpretive space.

Relative to Baptism, she wrote to new parents:

> I hope you are going to have the little creature baptized? . . . But it seems to me such a right and beautiful and appropriate thing, whether the apostles did it or not, to consecrate the little creature to God as soon as he has given it, and mark it with the sign of the faith in which it is to be brought up. Though I think it would be very un-Christian to believe that the absence of a ceremony would prevent its being a Christian hereafter.[40]

Winkworth omits mention of the Holy Spirit’s action in Baptism, preferring to think of it as a consecration to God, again betraying a Calvinist understanding.

[39] *Lyra Germanica Second Series,* 243.
[40] Shaen, *Memorials of Two Sisters,* 91.

The Trinity

Her ideas of the Godhead were consistent with orthodox Christianity, as she explicated:

> I have just finished Stuart's Letters to Channing. To me they seem satisfactorily to prove that the doctrine of the Trinity is contained in the Bible. . . . Yet again when I find it stated that he was born, that he prayed, sorrowed, died, rose again, must I not conclude him to be man. I believe therefore that there is but one God, yet that in the Godhead there is a threefold distinction, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost do in some respects really and truly differ from each other, yet that this difference is not subversive of the unity of the Godhead; also that Jesus has two natures human and divine. How this can be I know not.[41]

She theologizes elsewhere, asserting a relatively orthodox view of Christianity:

> I have been reading a German novel called Spinoza . . . many parts are too metaphysical for me, and what I can understand is too unbelieving to suit me. None of the characters are what I call Christians. Spinoza of course is a Jew, but not even a "Gläubiger Jude," and the rest do not appear to have any firm faith in Christ; they think him a good man, that is all. Such books make me uncomfortable. I cannot live in the mists of metaphysics; I must have faith in something real and personal.[42]

In 1844, at age 17, she offered herself up for confirmation in the Church of England, a seminal venture of importance in her theological formation. Amidst the doctrinal concerns, she hoped to maintain the simplicity of her childlike faith:

> My only objection has been the fear lest by this step I committed myself to an entire acquiescence in the Church Services, Articles, etc.—but after reading the prayer Book, it appears to me that the test of membership laid down by the Church for the laity, simply consists in a profession of belief in the Apostle's Creed, and an intention to lead a holy life; and since I can sincerely accede to both of these, and also it (the Church of England) appears to me a more liberal communion than any other (unless it be the Unitarian, which I cannot conscientiously join), and as I decidedly prefer the daily Liturgy of the Church to the ordinary service in a Dissenting Chapel, I have determined to be confirmed.[43]

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[41] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials,* 51.
[42] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials*, 73.
[43] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials*, 74.

Certainly the beauty of the English liturgy enticed her; yet, she did acknowledge fealty to the doctrines as laid forth in the Apostles' Creed, if not exactly that as explicated in the prayerbook and services of the English Church. Yet, throughout her life, as well-read and educated as she was, Winkworth avoided controversy, eschewing what she perceived as rigid dogmatism, whether from the Lutheran Church or the Tractarians.

Epistemology

In some ways, Winkworth's epistemology bore imprints of Luther's own theology of *sola fide,* with an emphasis more on faith than on reason, in particular as regarded revelation:

> I am in a manner ambitious, but my ambition is to have intellect, but to turn it all to the glory of God. In my mind deeper feelings than I have ever felt before are beginning to develop themselves; the intense, earnest aspirations of the soul after holiness and immortality—the ardent longing to glorify, to serve God—the desire for truth—the thirst for knowledge. These emotions have hitherto slept darkly within me, but now they are waking from their slumbers and rousing my whole soul. And to know that perfect holiness is attainable, for immortality is sure, that God is our Father and that we can serve him, that Jesus came down to earth to atone for sin, and has told us both what to do and what to believe. This is joy![44]

Her emotive language here recalls the manner of the pietists, but also reflects her worldview as a nineteenth-century Victorian. She continued expressing her skepticism for the attainments of the intellect, "I [am] too apt to forget religion and confidence in God and salvation through Jesus Christ, in desires after working out my intellectual progress."[45] Winkworth thus tacitly acknowledged that her human nature—her "intellectual progress"—often distracted her from God, the source of faith. She elsewhere manifested disdain for the dry intellectualism of the Unitarians:

> Certainly I should as not have a child christened at all as have done like the only Unitarian affair I ever saw . . . not in the chapel, with no solemnity about it, and the whole service expressing but one thing—"Please don't think us superstitious for doing this, I'm going to prove intellectually that we're not." Not one bit of single direct faith that it was a right thing.[46]

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[44] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials*, 52.
[45] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials*, 69.
[46] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials*, 367.

To Winkworth, then, Christianity embodied more than mere intellectual principles, but included the scriptural witness of miracles and of "direct faith."

Ecclesiology

Winkworth's ecclesiology drew from a patchwork of sources and influences, lacking any sophisticated methodology:

> I asked what was meant by the "Communion of Saints" in the Apostles Creed. He said he thought that communion is a short word for common union and that it meant the bond of union among Christians, as we read in the Epistles, that Saints form one body, are all 'members on of another.' The 'communion of saints' differs from the 'Holy Catholic Church' in being the principle which unites Christians; their common belief in the great facts of Christianity, their common hopes and fears, the love which they all should bear to each other, unite their hearts and form a bond of union which is the 'communion of saints.' The 'Holy Catholic Church' is the visible bond of Christianity in the common profession of certain truths and their common obedience to certain laws.[47]

A Lutheran might well wish for further explication of Christ's nature as the head of the "Holy Catholic Church," as one of the "certain truths" she mentions. A Lutheran will certainly also chafe at any description of the church which predicates membership on "obedience to certain laws." Winkworth's theology does not hold up well to such detailed scrutiny, and is exactly the sort of theologizing Winkworth sought to avoid. Although she could never embrace Unitarianism, she remained distrustful of the institutional church and, by extension, its doctrines:

> I am jealous of seeing the authority of the Church in any way put above that of the Scriptures . . . because it seems to me that the life and words of our Lord and His apostles must be the highest authority . . . I suppose it comes to this; you speak as if there were but two means of arriving at truth—mere human reasoning, or the outward authority of the Church, giving us notions and views, or a complete body of doctrine. And I think this leaves out the grand method by which truth comes to us—namely, that the Spirit shows it to those who do the will of the Father . . . such truth is confirmed by the outward witness, but cannot be given by that alone . . . You seemed to me to hold that there is no salvation out of the Church; and it seems to me that the Bible teaches that there is no salvation out of Christ, which is not the same thing.[48]

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[47] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials*, 57.
[48] Shaen, *Memorials of Two Sisters,* 171.

One can discern here Winkworth's hesitation towards establishment authority, and maybe even latent anti-Romanism. To interpret her words generously, though, Winkworth here extols a certain *sola scriptura* principle not unlike Luther's, in which Scripture, rather than an institutional tradition, guides the church. For Winkworth then, intellectual accession to certain doctrines was futile if not infused by the Holy Spirit, which is then confirmed by "outward witness." This, of course, aligns well with the theology of the German pietists.

Translation Style

The first task of a translator is to know what to translate. Winkworth's intimate knowledge of German and the chorale *corpus* resulted in her application of astute judgments as to what would sound best rendered in English. Whether or not her translations are still the favored ones in the twenty-first century, her translations represent "nearly all of the classic German hymns," according to Robin Leaver.[49] Leaver further observes that, even up until 1950 with the publication of *Das Evengelische Kirchengesangbuch* for the churches in Germany, which contains 394 "hymns which are deemed to be the finest examples of German hymnody taken from every major period of hymn writing . . . That Catherine Winkworth had [such] an eye, or an ear, for the best of German hymns is underlined by the fact that she translated 149 texts to be found in the *Evangelisches Kirchengesangbuch,* which is almost forty percent of the total."[50] Her translations *can b*e divided into three main streams:

1. The Luther tradition: 79 total including 14 by Luther, 6 by Weisse, 3 by Eber and Selnecker.
2. The Gerhardt tradition: 142 total including 27 by Gerhardt, 10 by Rist, 9 by J. Franck and Heermann, 7 by Schmolck.
3. The Pietist tradition: 82 total including 11 by Tersteegen, 6 by Neander, 5 by Dessler and Arnold.

She clearly favored Gerhardt. In 1869, she published a biographical handbook of German hymn writers entitled *Christian Singers of Germany*, in which Paul Gerhardt figures prominently on the frontispiece. From the preface, she wrote admiringly:

> Yet it was just at this time that the religious song of Germany found the purest and sweetest expression in the hymns of Paul Gerhardt, who may be said to be

[49] Leaver, *Catherine Winkworth,* 47.
[50] Leaver, *Catherine Winkworth,* 48.

> the typical poet of the Lutheran Church, as Herbert is in English . . . as a poet he undoubtedly holds the highest place among the hymnwriters of Germany. His hymns seem to be the spontaneous out-pouring of a heart that overflows with love, trust, and praise; his language is simple and pure; it has no vulgarism, and at times it rises to a beauty and grace . . . his tenderness and fervor never degenerate into the sentimentality and petty conceits which were already becoming fashionable in his days; nor of his penitence and sorrow into that morbid despondency we find in Gryphius . . . If he is not altogether free from the long-windedness and repetition which are the besetting sins of so many German writers, and especially of hymn-writers, he at least more rarely succumbs to them.[51]

Winkworth's hymns aim foremost to enhance devotion, and are only secondarily didactic, as she claimed in the preface to *Lyra Germanica: The Christian Life*: "As the object of this work is chiefly devotional, the hymns are arranged according to their subjects, not in chronological order, and have been selected for their warmth of feeling and depth of Christian experience, rather than as specimens of a particular master or school." Thus can be described her affinity for Paul Gerhardt's hymns, whose devotional aims she saw as congruent with her own, noting that: "[Gerhardt] is without doubt the greatest of the German hymn-writers, possessing loftier poetical genius, and a richer variety of thought and feeling than any other."[52] Gerhardt, of course, represents a softer and gentler form of hymnody in which first-person singular is acceptable as a means to a devotional end. Theodore Hewitt evaluates Gerhardt's approach as follows: "Approximately one-eighth of Gerhardt's hymns begin with 'ich,' while not one of Luther's begin this way. Gerhardt's hymns, then, proclaim his own personal experiences . . . one may find one's own thoughts and feelings expressed in these poems."[53] Gerhardt was less interested in reestablishing a doctrinal framework for the believer as he was in expounding devotionally on Christian experience, as Hewitt's evaluation continues: "Gerhardt was essentially a 'Gelegenheitsdichter,' a poet of occasions, choosing for his themes the various vicissitudes of life and such events as would present themselves to an earnest pastor devoted to the flock in his care."[54] And this concern for pastoral devotion is exactly where Winkworth begins her life's work—her texts are not hymnological specimens for doctrinal study, but should aid in devotion and

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[51] Catherine Winkworth, *Christian Singers of Germany* (London: MacMillan, 1869), 201.

[52] *Lyra Germanica: Hymns for the Sundays,* xiii.

[53] Theodore Hewitt, *Paul Gerhardt as a Hymn Writer and His Influence on English Hymnody* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1917), 17.

[54] Hewitt, *Paul Gerhardt as a Hymn Writer,* 17.

edification. Her ends were remarkably consonant with Gerhardt's and allowed her to achieve great success with his texts, as she observed:

> I admire and love Gerhardt's hymns so much that I am half unwilling to admit their defects; yet while many have marvelous dignity, force and tender sweetness, others, it must be confessed, are curiously prolix and unpoetical . . . But a hymn that sounds popular and homelike in its own language must sound so in ours if it is to be really available for devotional purposes.[55]

Hewitt cites Winkworth's translation of Gerhardt's "Wie Soll ich Dich Empfangen" as an example of a translation borne of an innate understanding of the original, noting that "As Winkworth was so thoroughly at home in the German she was able to reproduce a surprising number of details. Even the alliteration and repetition for emphasis of which Gerhardt is so fond find in her poem at least a partially corresponding place."[56]

Ich lag in schweren Banden
Du kommst und machst mich los;
Ich stand in Spott und Schanden,
Du kommst und machst mich gross
Und hebst mich hoch zu Ehren
Und schenkst mir grosses Gut,
Das sich nicht lässt verzehren,
Wie irdlich Richtum tut.

In heavy bonds I languish'd long,
Thou com'st to set me free;
The scorn of every mocking tongue—
Thou com'st to honour me.
A heavenly crown Thou dost bestow,
And gifts of priceless worth,
That vanish not as here below
The riches of the earth.

Nichts, nichts hat dich getrieben
Zu mir vom Himmelszelt
Als das geliebte Lieben,
Damit du alle Welt

[55] Shaen, *Memorials of Two Sisters,* 180.
[56] Hewitt, *Paul Gerhardt as a Hymn Writer,* 17.

In ihren tausend Plagen
Und grossen Jammerlast,
Die kein Mund kann asufagen,
So fest umfangen hast.

Nought, nought, dear Lord, could move Thee
To leave Thy rightful place
Save love, for which I love Thee;
A love that could embrace
A world where sorrow dwelleth,
Which sin and suffering fill,
More than the tongue e'er telleth—
Yet Thou couldst love it still![57]

In Gerhardt's hymnody, she recognized her own proclivities. She preferred hymnody of a simple, devotional style which avoided dogmatically controversial theological nuances. She masterfully crafted her phrases allowing for some degree of interpretation. She gladly employed this interpretive space in a way her mentor Richard Massie never would, for whom doctrinal content had to take precedence over poetic style. Massie wrote: "My first aim has been to give the meaning of the original with accuracy and fidelity . . . since the slightest mistake, or, in some cases, even the change in a word, might involve the change of a doctrine, and thus destroy the interest which they possess, as a plain and short Epitome of the great Reformer's views"[58] Consider Johann Franck's phrase in "Schmücke Dich, O Liebe Seele," in which he prays: "oder mir vielleicht zum Schaden, sei zu deinem Tisch geladen!" which Winkworth translated as "Never to my hurt invited, Be Thy love with love requited." Franck's original meaning, that it would be literally to "my detriment not to be invited to Thy table," with its sacramental and eschatological implications, turns into a general address noting the singer's response in love to God's initial act of love. Winkworth here accentuates the human response rather than the invitation ("geladen"). She employs similar poetic flexibility in Paul Eber's "Wenn wir in Höchsten Nöten sein":

Und heben unser Aug und Herz
Zu dir in wahrer Reu und Schmerz
Und flehen um Begnadigung

[57] *Lyra Germanica: Hymns for the Sundays,* 7.
[58] Alan C. Hoger, "A Victorian Legacy: Translating the German Hymns," *Logia: A Journal of Lutheran Theology* (April 1994): 18–25.

Und aller Strafen Linderung,

To Thee may raise our hearts and eyes,
Repenting sore with bitter sighs,
And seek Thy pardon for our sin,
And respite from our griefs within.[59]

The first line is translated exactly, while the second replaces "Reu and Schmerz" with "bitter sighs," a line which could have been inelegantly but literally rendered "To Thee in true remorse and pain," a solution which even preserves the meter. Yet, she chose the more poetic "bitter sighs," which is preceded by "repenting," a word not found in the stanza, but one which is certainly congruent with Eber's thought. If her work here is judged strictly on literally faithfulness to the poetry, she might be found wanting. Yet, she has managed to create a poetic hymn which preserves the overall sense of this confessional text.

For Luther, theological truth was arguably binary—black or white, right or wrong, of God or of Satan. Gerhardt lived in the same tradition, but such theological concerns as had beset Luther had been worked through by Gerhardt's time, whose era was marked by political strife masquerading often in the guise of theological difference. Gerhardt manifested more of an experiential approach, a position which Winkworth likewise favored. One of her favorite words was "prolix"—something that is too verbose or discursive, or tending toward doctrinal contention. In positioning herself in the *via media* of a broad church tradition, her more experiential and devotional texts then are more easily able to find favor and utility among multiple denominations, which certainly lent her popularity most primarily throughout the Lutheran denominations in the nineteenth-century United States. Her texts were remarkably consonant with the ethos of the era, but yet usually conveyed remarkably faithfully the thoughts of the original chorale.

Winkworth approached the other pietists cautiously, realizing the saccharine and cloying spirituality the texts could sometimes imbue. She was drawn to Phillip Friedrich Hiller because of his similarities to Gerhardt. Although Hiller's hymns could be more "purely didactic," they are "never in bad taste, never irreverent or extravagant."[60] She thought of Tersteegen as "the greatest poet" of the tradition, but slightly less so of Joachim Neander, whose style she thought "unequal; [with] occasional harshnesses contrast[ing] with very musical lines."[61]

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[59] *The Chorale Book for England,* #141.
[60] *The Chorale Book for England*, 57.
[61] *The Chorale Book for England*, 58.

Toward Luther's hymns, which she characterized as having "a certain manliness, breadth and fervor about them," she was more ambivalent and less enthusiastic, as they tended to affront her Victorian sensibilities. Consider "Ein Feste Burg" as a point of comparison, with Luther's original followed by Winkworth's translation:

> Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott,
> ein gute Wehr und Waffen.
> Er hilft uns frei aus aller Not,
> die uns jetzt hat betroffen.
> Der alt böse Feind
> mit Ernst er's jetzt meint,
> groß Macht und viel List
> sein grausam Rüstung ist,
> auf Erd ist nicht seins gleichen.
>
> God is our stronghold firm and sure,
> Our trusty shield and weapon,
> He shall deliver us, whate'er
> Of ill to us may happen.
> Our ancient Enemy
> In earnest now is he,
> Much craft and great might
> Arm him for the fight,
> On earth is not his fellow.[62]

Winkworth was not happy with her setting of this hymn, which appeared first in *Lyra Germanica*. In fact, in *The Chorale Book for England* she used William Gaskell's translation, which borrows heavily from Winkworth's:

> A sure stronghold our God is He,
> A trusty shield and weapon;
> Our help He'll be and set us free
> From every ill can happen.
> That old malicious foe
> Intends us deadly woe;
> Arm'd with the strength of hell
> And deepest craft as well,

[62] *Lyra Germanica: Hymns for the Sundays,* 173.

On earth is not his fellow.[63]

Both of these translations, which are close to the versions appropriated by American Lutheran hymns over the past 150 years, are yet poetically distant from Luther's original; if one has any doubt, consider George MacDonald's translation. This Scottish Christian minister (and mentor to C. S. Lewis) captures the spirit of Luther's original, although in so doing demonstrates exactly Winkworth's reticence in appropriating Luther's style too closely:

Our God he is a castle strong,
A good mail-coat and weapon;
He sets us free from ev'ry wrong
That wickedness would heap on.
The old knavish foe
He means earnest now;
force and cunning sly
His horrid policy,
On earth there's nothing like him.[64]

Ulrich Leupold in his edition of Luther's Works laments the efforts of some Victorian translators as they sought to tone down the uneven language:

> Unfortunately little of the original ruggedness of Luther's poetic style survived in the translations of his hymns that have found their way into modern English and American hymnals. With the mighty resurgence of English hymnody during the nineteenth century, many poets tried their hand at rendering Luther's verse into English. But most of them took considerable liberties with the originals. Frequently they changed irregular verse forms into more accepted meters. Usually they aimed at a more polished and elegant style than was really justified in view of Luther's angularity. They tried to make him speak in the mellifluent accents of a Victorian churchman, with the result that both the literal sense and the original style often were lost.[65]

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[63] *The Chorale Book for England,* #124.

[64] George MacDonald, *Exotics: A Translation of the Spiritual Songs of Novalis, the Hymn Book of Luther, and Other Poems from the German and Italian* (London: Strahan and Co., 1876), 66.

[65] Ulrich Leupold, ed., *Liturgy and Hymns:* vol. 53, p. 199, in *Luther's Works, American Edition*, vols. 1–30, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955–76); vols. 31–55, ed. Helmut Lehmann (Philadelphia/Minneapolis: Muhlenberg/Fortress, 1957–86); vols. 56–82, ed. Christopher Boyd Brown and Benjamin T. G. Mayes (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2009–), hereafter AE.

George MacDonald's translation, although perhaps rendering the thoughts of Luther better, loses singability in the English language, always an utmost concern for Winkworth who intended her translations to be sung. They were no mere academic renderings. Thus, the "mellifluent accents" of Victorian verbiage sometimes actually provides for good singability.

That is not to say Winkworth could not exercise great fidelity in translating even Luther's hymns. Here one can see Winkworth's attention to faithful detail, conveying his words in a modern, poetic manner:

> Mit Fried und Freud ich fahr dahin
> in Gotts Wille;
> getrost ist mir mein Herz und Sinn,
> sanft und stille,
> wie Gott mir verheißen hat:
> der Tod ist mein Schlaf worden.
>
> In peace and joy I now depart,
> according to God's will,
> For full of comfort is my heart,
> So calm and sweet and still;
> So doth God his promise keep,
> And death to me is but a sleep.[66]

Luther employs simple language in this extrapolation of the *Nunc Dimittis,* the meditative character of which Winkworth preserves. The only poetic liberty she has arguably assumed is in the phrase "mein Herz und Sinn," which literally would be rendered "my heart and senses" (or "reason") but which she translates as "For full of comfort is my heart." She has turned the 85 84 77 meter into a less-jagged 86 86 77, with an ending line artfully and precisely translated as "And death to me is but a sleep." Consider, too, her translation of the eighteenth-century hymn "Alles ist an Gottes Segen":

> Alles ist an Gottes Segen
> Und an seiner Gnad gelegen,
> Über alles Geld und Gut.
> Wer auf Gott sein Hoffnung setzet,
> Der behält ganz unverletzet
> Einen freien Heldenmut.

[66] *The Chorale Book for England,* #81.

All things hang on our possessing
God's free love and grace and blessing,
Though all earthly wealth depart;
He who God for his hath taken,
'Mid the changing world unshaken
Keeps a free heroic heart.[67]

Her translation has experienced alteration through the years, but her words, "all things hang," is a faithful rendition of "Alles ist an," albeit a bit unwieldly to the modern tongue. She moves "Segen" to the second line to accord with the original second line which speaks of "Gnad" or "mercy," to which she adds "love." "Geld und Gut" becomes "earthly wealth," a remarkably close translation, considering she was limited to three English syllables. The last line, "Einen freien Heldenmut," becomes "Keeps a free heroic heart," an exact, literal translation of "Heldenmut," which has no direct English equivalent. Modern translations have replaced this with "dauntless heart," although this arguably lacks the specific coloring and implicit elation of the original and Winkworth's translation.

Winkworth's personal iteration of pietism eschewed any theology she deemed as excessively "dogmatic." This, of course, sets her on a collision with Luther, who bore no such compunctions. Winkworth had to confront Luther's systematic theology, much too doctrinaire for her own liking, as she translated some of his hymns. Robin Leaver posits, "The hymns of Luther were a particular problem for her. Again, it was not because she did not appreciate his theology or could not respect the important part his hymns played in the cause of the Reformation: it was rather that their rough-hewn directness was an embarrassment to her feelings about smoothness of style."[68] It may be, however, that theology and style, at least as Luther evidences them, are so intertwined that her discomfort with his "rough-hewn" directness really does speak to a clash between the Renaissance Teutonic and the English Victorian worldviews. Leaver further notes that "She thought that Speratus' hymn 'Es ist das Heil' sounds 'like a bit out of the Augsburg Confession done into rhyme.'"[69] Her aspersions against dogmatic theology likely reflected her own personality and her desire to remain in the *via media* even between the warring factions in the Church of England. She acknowledged that "I never comprehend the Scripture proofs; perhaps because I have not studied the Scriptures controversially."[70] This is not to imply that she did not believe Scripture, as

[67] *The Chorale Book for England*, #130.
[68] Leaver, *Catherine Winkworth*, 59.
[69] Leaver, *Catherine Winkworth*, 59.
[70] S. Winkworth, *Letters and Memorials,* 226.

elsewhere she is clear as to the primacy of Scripture, but she tended to avoid polemic disputations. Although theologically astute, she knew she was no trained theologian and never claimed to be one.

Historical Evaluation

Winkworth stands with other translators of the era. Frances Elizabeth Cox, Richard Massie, the Borthwick sisters, and Frederic Hedge were predecessors or contemporaries who contributed fine and useful translations in their own right. Nonetheless, Winkworth's translations have probably received the most usage in the Lutheran Church. Why? How does one even frame the question? Does one judge a translation based on its faithfulness to the original text? What about its singability? What about considering other less poetic elements? All these may be competing interests which may not achieve ultimate reconciliation and must be taken on their own terms. Yet, consider Winkworth's own evaluation of herself. In the preface to her *Christian Singers of Germany,* she acknowledges her own deficits as a translator:

> In reading the poems scattered through the following pages, it must be remembered that they suffer under the disadvantage of being all translations and from one hand, which inevitably robs them of somewhat of that variety of diction which marks, in the original, the date of the composition or the individuality of the author. Still, as far as possible, their characteristic differences have been carefully imitated, and the general style and metre of the poem retained.[71]

Leaver evaluates her, saying,

> If texts which speak well in English are the primary concern then looseness of translation is quite permissible and it could be argued that the versions of Robert Bridges and Philip Pusey are superior . . . But if fidelity to the thought and expression of the original is a prime concern then one will judge differently: if these other translations are compared with those of Miss Winkworth it soon becomes clear which are more faithful to the original.[72]

Consider Matthäus Apelles von Löwenstern's (1594–1648) hymn, with translations from Winkworth and Pusey:

> Christe, du Beistand deiner Kreuzgemeine,
> Eile, mit Hilf und Rettung uns erscheine.

[71] C. Winkworth, *Christian Singers of Germany*, 3.
[72] Leaver, *Catherine Winkworth*, 67.

Steure den Feinden, ihre Blutgedichte
Mache zunichte.

Frieden bei Kirch und Schule uns beschere,
Frieden zugleich der Obrigkeit gewähre.
Frieden dem Herzen, Frieden dem Gewissen
Gib zu genießen.

Catherine Winkworth:

Christ, Thou champion of that war-torn host
Who bear Thy cross, haste, help, or we are lost;
The schemes of those who long our blood have sought,
Bring Thou to naught.

And give us peace; peace in the church and school,
Peace to the powers who o'er our country rule,
Peace to the conscience, peace within the heart
Do Thou impart.[73]

Philip Pusey: (cf. *LSB* 659)

Lord of our life, and God of our salvation,
Star of our night, and Hope of ev'ry nation:
Hear and receive Thy Church's supplication,
Lord God Almighty.

Peace in our hearts, our evil thoughts assuaging;
Peace in Thy Church, where brothers are engaging;
Peace when the world its busy war is waging,
Calm Thy foes' raging.[74]

LSB prefers the Pusey translation for its poetic value, but it strays far from the literal meaning which Winkworth preserves. Pusey completely changes the first line, while Winkworth captures "Kreuzgemeine," ("those gathered under the cross"), for which there is no plausible English equivalent, with "war-torn host." She preserves "peace in the church and school," which Pusey must have considered too parochial a phrase. She keeps the martial feel of the original text, although Pusey keeps the original feminine endings of each line (in which the last syllable is unstressed), while

[73] *Lyra Germanica: Hymns for the Sundays*, #105.
[74] Cf. *Lutheran Service Book* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2006), #659.

Winkworth accents each ending syllable; in so doing, however, she is able to preserve more of the literal meaning of the original. Leaver evaluates her thusly:

> This care for as precise a rendering as possible was for Catherine a duty she owed to the original authors. She was not a versifier who drew her inspiration from German hymns but a translator who sought to lose as little as possible in the process of transposition from the one language to the other. She wrote to Massie: "I feel that the more I have read and translated, the more I see the inward adaptation of thought and metre in good poems, and the less license I am inclined to take." To many this has been a mark of her success, to others a measure of her failure. In an otherwise favourable review the anonymous reviewer in *The Christian Observer*, August, 1856, had to make the following observations about the translations of the first series of *Lyra Germanica.* "It concerns us not to be able to give all the commendation we could desire to the translation before us. It bears no marks of either ignorance to the German language, or of the hearty desire to preserve the precise meaning of the original composition in the best idioms admit. But we must think that, in the anxiety to be literal, the author has suffered himself [*sic*] to become bald. There is little attempt to translate the figurative expressions in the original into the corresponding figure in our native tongue." Although she knew of this particular criticism we do not know how she answered it. It is likely that she would have said that she was a translator not a hymn writer and her first concern must be to let the original authors speak for themselves.[75]

Her loose translation of *Abendmahl* in Nicolai's aforementioned hymn demonstrates one liberty she was willing to take, in this case with sacramental implications. The third stanza of "Wachet Auf," which concludes "Dies sind wir froh, io, io, Ewig in dulci jubilo," employs a macaronic turn which she chose to translate, "But we rejoice, and sing to Thee our hymn of joy eternally." Yet, in her translation of "In dulci jubilo" later in *The Christian Singers of Germany,* she preserves the macaronic, "Matris in gremio, Alpha es et O." Likely, though, this was simply because this volume was neither practical nor devotional, but historical and hymnological, and she assumed a highly educated audience who would be able to maneuver the Latin. She was averse to anything Roman Catholic, even looking askance at the Tractarian movement in the Anglican Church. Thus when she came to translate the second stanza of Laufenburg's "Ach liebe Herre Jesu Christ," she was careful to omit the Marian reference "Maria, müter Jesu Christ Sit du dins Kinds gewaltig bist," which becomes "Since in Thy heavenly kingdom, Lord, all things obey

[75] Leaver, *Catherine Winkworth,* 64.

Thy lightest word." Winkworth would modify a text if it offended her sensibilities. She was not the first to do this, of course. John Wesley's translations of the pietist chorales would frequently reduce the number of affectations such as "dear, precious, sweet Lord," or the number of divine kisses involved. Winkworth avoided reveling in the gory aspect of hymnody in which the pietists held a fond compunction. She modified Eber's hymn "In Jesu Wunden schlaf ich ein, die machen mich von Sünden rein" to "I fall asleep in Jesu's arms sin washed away, hushed all alarms," avoiding "sleeping in Jesus' wounds." Heermann's "Jesu, deine tiefen Wunden deine Qual und bitter Todt" becomes "Lord! Thy death and passion give strength and comfort at my need," here avoiding mention of "deep wounds." And the thought of kissing in Zinzendorf's "Solche Leute will der König küssen" ("Such People the King Would Kiss") is softened to "Such the King will stoop to embrace." The pietist hymn writers could tend toward a writing style which anachronistically limited their hymns to their particular time and place; in this instance at least, Winkworth improved this German text for English utility.

Winkworth in Lutheran Hymnals

Catherine Winkworth's translations initially experienced a gradual, rather than burgeoning, acceptance. The first edition of the monumental *Hymns Ancient and Modern* appeared in 1861 with six translations from Winkworth therein, including "Now Thank We All Our God." Orby Shipley's *Lyra Eucharistica: Hymns and Verses on the Holy Communion, Ancient and Modern; with Other Poems* (1863) was likely the first hymnal not affiliated with the Church of England to use her texts, including four of her translations from *Lyra Germanica: The Christian Life. The Chorale Book for England,* which was really a joint publication among Winkworth, Goldschmidt, and Bennett, is the second major hymnal to carry her texts. Both of these were published by Longmans, who assiduously guarded her copyrights, sometimes to her detriment. In a letter in this author's possession from Winkworth to hymnal editor Charles D. Bell, in which he had asked for permission to utilize some of her texts, she laments that she is not "quite at liberty there" to grant permission, because "they [Longmans] are in the habit of charging 5 shillings for permission to reprint each hymn. I occasionally give permission for the use of one or two from the Second Series gratuitously but it is not in my power to do so for any large hymnal."[76] Longmans' rather exorbitant licensing fee was obviously intended to dissuade

[76] Letter from Catherine Winkworth to "Rev. D. Bell," dated January 16, 1878. In personal possession of this author.

reprinting, and only a smattering of her texts appeared in England throughout the 1870s and 1880s.

Her fortune fared better in America simply because the ecclesiastical landscape required her texts. Although by this time the Lutheran Church in America was well established and represented numerous European language groups, the German General Synod was the oldest, based in New York and Pennsylvania, and had generated the first attempts at adopting English hymnody. Frederick Quitman's *Hymns and a Liturgy* of 1814 was the first, and rather idiosyncratic, attempt at an English hymnal. It included few actual Lutheran hymns, a characteristic that afflicted many of the mid-nineteenth-century Lutheran hymnals of the General Synod which, in their haste to acculturate, often eschewed German chorales in favor of American camp songs of rationalist expressions.[77] Certainly there are profound theological concerns involved here, but the fact that the compilers of early English-language Lutheran hymnals had few preexisting translations to use naturally resulted in their usurping the offerings of their local Reformed/Methodist/Presbyterian brethren, at least until the *Hymns for the Use of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (1865), edited by Frederic Mayer Bird of the Pennsylvania Ministerium.[78] This hymnal contained forty-nine Winkworth texts. Three years later, in 1868, the *Church Book for Use of Evangelical Lutheran Congregations* included fifty-six total Winkworth translations.[79] The *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnal of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States* in 1880 contained sixty-four of her texts,[80] while the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn Book* of the Evangelical Lutheran Conference of Missouri and Other States in 1889 contained fifty-four.[81]

No thoughtful analysis is required to understand the dynamics here. As Winkworth's efforts were aimed primarily at translating German chorales, naturally the English-speaking Lutheran Church would gravitate to them. After all, the second half of the nineteenth century saw something of a confessional revival—even Beale Schmucker in the General Synod was advancing a thoughtful and historical

[77] Frederick Henry Quitman, *A Collection of Hymns and a Liturgy for the Use of Evangelical Lutheran Churches; to which are added Prayers* (Philadelphia: D. Billmeyer, 1814).

[78] Frederic Mayer Bird, ed., *Hymns for the Use of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Philadelphia: J. B. Rodgers, 1865).

[79] *Church Book for Use of Evangelical Lutheran Congregations* (Philadelphia: Lutheran Book Store, 1868).

[80] *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnal of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States* (Columbus: Ohio Synodical Printing House, 1880).

[81] *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn Book* (Baltimore: Harry Lang, 1889).

approach to liturgy and hymnody and was working toward the development of the Common Service.

The LCMS, of course, represents a different strand of American Lutheranism which only later began to engage the Winkworth translations because, August Crull's efforts aside, the LCMS was less enthusiastic to acculturate. Catherine Winkworth's texts benefitted from their historical location; her first publications in the latter half of the nineteenth century broadly corresponded with American Lutheranism's nascent interest in acculturation. The LCMS's involvement in such matters manifests later, but in mining the chorale translations they found Winkworth's texts available, generally faithful, and hence useful. The flaws of her translations—such as frequently not translating all the stanzas of a chorale, omitting or altering sacramental stanzas, or even mitigating certain dogmatic tendencies in the original texts—could all be seen as advantageous (or at least less detrimental) in an era in which the Eucharist was commonly celebrated only four times a year and the lack of reliable, original source material for the chorales precluded any sort of detailed, doctrinal, or hymnological examination, even when there was a desire for it. (For example, consider C. F. W. Walther's commitment to hymns and hymnals containing only "pure" Lutheran doctrine.) Additionally, her Victorian and occasionally sentimental language, seen now as antiquated in places, was certainly no hinderance at the time, and English-language hymnal editors were fond of including her work. Once her work became so ingrained in American Lutheranism through multiple hymnals, and after multiple generations knew certain chorales only through her hymns, it then became a pastoral concern to preserve these now-familiar texts. This propelled her translations into the twentieth century and beyond:

Hymnal	Number of Winkworth Texts
Common Service Book, 1917	53
American Lutheran Hymnal, 1930	45
The Lutheran Hymnary, 1935	67
The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941	73
Service Book and Hymnal, 1958	28
Lutheran Book of Worship, 1978	30
Lutheran Worship, 1982	41
*Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymna*l, 1994	57

Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary, 1996 75

Lutheran Service Book, 2006 68

Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 2006 19

Although Lutheran hymnals clearly held an affinity for Winkworth's translations, her work does appear elsewhere. *The Hymnal 1940* contains seven, while the *Moravian Book of Worship* contains twenty-two—not surprising for a denomination stemming from the German nation. The Episcopal Church's *The Hymnal 1982* contains only nine.

A Twenty-First-Century Evaluation

What exactly is Winkworth's hymnic legacy? Her texts are still quite popular in the more conservative corners of the Lutheran Church, particularly in the WELS, ELS, and LCMS. But how do modern hymnal editors evaluate her impact on modern hymnody? This writer posed some questions to Carl P. Daw, Curator of Hymnological Collections and Adjunct Professor of Hymnology at Boston University School of Theology, former Executive Director of the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada, and a member of the hymn committee for *The Hymnal 1982.* Drawing from his experience in compiling hymns for *The Hymnal 1982,* Daw evaluates Winkworth and addresses his own translational concerns:

> At the outset it must be acknowledged that Winkworth is a formidable translator, as becomes readily apparent to anyone who attempts to render German texts in English. Of course, the convention in her day that hymns should appear in archaic English gave her the distinct advantage of being able to use "-eth" forms of third person singular verbs, a strategy that often helped her deal with the unstressed final syllables of many lines in German chorales. But her craft was sometimes blunted by her reticence to make her translations too angular or confrontational.
>
> This latter consideration lay behind the decision of the Text Committee for H82 to seek a new translation of "Wachet Auf" that would convey the immediacy and urgency of the German text. In particular, the absence of any reference to the "uns" of the original first line was felt to be a fault to be corrected. On the other hand, I was under some pressure not to make the opening words too startling, so I adopted the phrasing familiar from many English choral versions of the chorale. If I were to undertake a new translation today, I would probably choose something bolder and more idiomatic (such as "Wake up now!").

> In all such choices the essential criteria were to communicate the original text (German or other language) as accurately and effectively as possible, with particular attention to familiarity, poetic excellence, and singability. The nine Winkworth texts in H82 testify to her enduring significance in making German hymns available to English-speaking congregations around the world.[82]

Daw's translation also moderates the *Abendmahl* of the end of the first stanza, translating it as "wedding feast." This, of course, is consistent with other translations (*TLH* says "nuptial hall"), but it still arguably lacks the specific sacramental context of the original German. If nothing else, here is Daw, a contemporary translator, with his own sacramental concerns, struggling with how poetically and musically to translate from the German:

> "Sleepers, wake!" A voice astounds us;
> the shout of rampart guards surrounds us:
> "Awake, Jerusalem, arise!"
> Midnight's peace their cry has broken,
> their urgent summons clearly spoken:
> "The time has come, O maidens wise!
> Rise up, and give us light;
> the Bridegroom is in sight.
> Alleluia!
> Your lamps prepare and hasten there,
> that you the wedding feast may share."[83]

Although Winkworth's translations are few in *The Hymnal 1982,* that fact is consistent with Anglican hymnals through the last 150 years. Their hymnic corpus simply relies less heavily on the German chorale, but where it does, Winkworth (and Bridges and Hedge) provides a means through which English speakers may sing these *Kernlieder* (core hymns). Daw's observation of Winkworth's reticence to create hymns that are too "angular or confrontational" she certainly would have accepted as a compliment!

What about Winkworth's contributions to *Lutheran Book of Worship* of the precursor ELCA denominations? Why had only thirty of Winkworth's texts been employed? According to Gracia Grindal, Emeritus Professor of Rhetoric at Luther Seminary and a member of the hymn text committee for *LBW,* "The committee wanted to change Winkworth because her language was so Victorian. Inclusive language was not her problem so much as the old intimate forms, thee, thy, thou.

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[82] Correspondence with the author, September 2019.

[83] *The Hymnal 1982* (New York: The Church Hymnal Corporation, 1985), #61 and #62.

But we found when we tried to change part of the text, our efforts stuck out badly, the worst being 'Jesus Priceless Treasure.'"[84] Grindal refers to the two excised stanzas of Franck's text, in this case stanza 3 ("Wealth, I will not heed thee") and stanza 4 ("Farewell, thou who chooseth"). Elsewhere, Grindal had written of her experience on the committee that she perceived that many in the church viewed the new hymnal as an "attack" on a preceding hymnal—*TLH* or *Service Book and Hymnal*—complicating the task of the committee and limiting the utility of the final hymnal.[85] Grindal had lamented the lack of traditional language in the hymnal, observing, "I kept saying that good poetry is good politics and if we made a bad revision to be PC it would stick out. The *LBW was* an attack. When we began, nothing [from] before 1970 seemed appropriate. So yes, we got rid of lots of language we didn't like in the old 19th century hymns, but our revisions just made things worse."[86] Phillip Pfatteicher, a member of the Liturgical Text Committee and thus not directly involved with the hymn selection in *LBW, was* responsible for placing Winkworth on the Calendar of Saints in the ELCA and Episcopal Church in his *New Book of Festivals and Commemorations* (2008). Pfatteicher's admiration of Winkworth is tangibly evident:

> Winkworth was the most productive of a remarkable group of 19th century women who opened the riches of German hymnody to English-speaking Christians. The riches of Latin and to a lesser extent Greek hymnody was made available in English by a group of male high churchmen, chief of whom is John Mason Neale. That is why I suggested we commemorate Winkworth and Neale together on the same day, July 1. Winkworth's translations capture not just the sense but the spirit of the German originals and do so in smooth and effective and frequently beautiful English that seldom sounds like a translation but rather like very good English poetry.[87]

However, Grindal's deep respect for the nineteenth-century texts and Pfatteicher's admiration for Winkworth's work failed to stem the tide away from her translations, whereby the 2006 ELCA hymnal includes only nineteen of her translations, the fewest of any American Lutheran hymnal since the nineteenth century. There are certainly nuances in whatever explanation is invoked for this, but Grindal laments how the Scandinavians had no great translator as the Germans had in Winkworth:

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[84] Correspondence with the author, September 2019.

[85] Gracia Grindal and Philip Pfatteicher, "Two Memoirs of Making the *Lutheran Book of Worship*," Lutheran Forum, accessed August 2021, https://www.lutheranforum.com/blog/2017/9/19/two-memoirs-of-making-the-lutheran-book-of-worship.

[86] Correspondence with the author, September 2019.

[87] Correspondence with the author, September 2019.

"Had it not been for the Englishwoman Catherine Winkworth, there would have been very little good German hymnody in the English language at all. The Scandinavian languages had not benefited from such a talent."[88] Indeed, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has continued to benefit from Winkworth's labors.

Lutheran Service Book and the LCMS

The *Lutheran Service Book* (2006) of the LCMS contains sixty-eight of Winkworth's texts. Joseph Herl of Concordia University, Nebraska, and member of the Hymnody Committee, offered his evaluation of Winkworth in general and her frequent inclusion in the hymnal:

> It was largely a conserving element, or more precisely, a pastoral one. We didn't want to change what we had unless there was a good reason, because we reasoned that people were already familiar with it. Our policy was essentially "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." In any case, we made very few changes for theological reasons. Nearly all were for the sake of updating the language, improving the poetry, or occasionally making the language inclusive.
>
> We also didn't have enough time to examine existing translations thoroughly. In almost no case did we go back to the original language to determine how close the translation was, and if stanzas were missing, we rarely knew about them.[89]

This process, then, was not about being "conservative" in a mere political or social sense, but simply acknowledging that past usage has shaped the way people sing and believe. This committee took this concern seriously, in a manner that arguably the editors of *LBW* and *LW* could have heeded to produce more successful products. Paul Grime, project director for *LSB,* concurred with Herl's analysis, saying:

> I suspect that our decision to use many of her translations as a starting point was predicated on the reality that that is what the Synod had used by and large for all of our previous English-language hymnals. There was that conserving principle that was at play in many of our decisions. Of course, this didn't prevent us from correcting a few obvious problems. Most notable was "Wachet Auf" where at the end of the second stanza we worked toward a clear reference to *Abendmahl* as the Lord's Supper.[90]

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[88] Grindal and Pfatteicher, "Two Memoirs of Making the *Lutheran Book of Worship.*"
[89] Correspondence with the author, September 2019.
[90] Correspondence with the author, September 2019.

Stephen Starke, a prominent hymnist and translator in his own right who served on the *LSB* hymn text committee, noted this conserving principle which guided the committee, and that this often brought them back to texts from *The Lutheran Hymnal.* Starke addresses how this conserving principle arguably led to *LSB*'s favoring Winkworth's translations:

> As far as her translations being "favored" in *LSB*: one of the initial filters our Hymnody Committee worked with was determining the "base" text, that is, which text would we use or with which text would we start. Should we use the text as it appeared in *TLH, LW,* or *HS '98*? *We* looked very carefully at the *TLH* texts and sought to retain many of those just because we hoped to woo the *TLH* congregations to the forthcoming hymnal and because *LW* has messed up some beloved texts in the effort to update language. Returning them to *TLH* was "down-dating." So I guess that could mean that we favored our own Lutheran material and did not search that far afield into other traditions. If I am recalling correctly, there were occasions, on further examination of some of Winkworth's translations that we noted the omission of an original stanza or stanzas—untranslated stanzas, that is—and often those omissions were of a sacramental nature. She was not alone in such omissions; it may have been a sign of the times in which the texts were translated, perhaps reflecting the Sacrament had fallen into sad disuse. [91]

It seems, then, that Winkworth still maintains such a prominent status in LCMS hymnody for the following reasons:

> 1. *The "conserving" principle.* From a pastoral concern, it seemed sensible to use language that people already knew. This principle probably partially developed due to the failure of the compilers of *LW/LBW* to engage with such a concern, leading to a rejection of those hymnals in so many quarters. Although only tangentially related, the fact that the LCMS has been, arguably, a theologically "conservative" denomination explains why this has worked in Winkworth's favor in the LCMS while not in the ELCA.
>
> 2. *The "faithful" principle.* Winkworth's texts are, in general, highly faithful to the original German, meaning that Winkworth conveys the original Lutheran doctrine faithfully in most instances. This fidelity to Lutheran doctrine, of course, has always been a concern for the LCMS in general. That Winkworth channeled her efforts on the German chorales, and that the LCMS has largely been of German background, has contributed to the acceptance of her work.

[91] Correspondence with the author, September 2019.

3. *The "lacuna" principle.* There is not much alternative to Winkworth's texts. The LCMS had translators in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries such as Martin Guenther (1831–1893), Carl Janzow (1847–1911), and August Crull (1845–1923), but their output was less, and their usage less frequent, with Crull having only fourteen appearances in *LSB.* F. Samuel Janzow, long associated with Concordia Chicago, translated all of Luther's hymns and his work is employed twelve times in *LSB.* Stephen Starke is probably one of the most notable hymn writers in the LCMS, but his work is more comprehensive than Winkworth's in that his efforts involve translations from several languages as well as writing new hymns. Winkworth's work benefitted the church's hymnic repertoire because of its singular focus on the German chorales.

Conclusion

Winkworth holds a deservedly high place in American Lutheran hymnody. As Erik Routley observed, "The judgment of Percy Dearmer was that her *Lyra Germanica* ranks with the devotional classics of the nineteenth century."[92] Robin Leaver assesses Winkworth's import as "The greatest translator of German hymns . . . she was able to catch the spirit and thought of the German originals and express them in a truly authentic English style."[93] Her combination of theological, poetic, and literary acumen resulted in providing to Lutheran congregations in America much of their hymnic heritage which otherwise would have been limited. The words of the German chorales come to life in the English language through her efforts, and they "sing well." If that variation of *lex orandi lex credendi* is true, and that singing promulgates belief, generations of Lutherans have Winkworth to thank, in part, for their catechetical development.

[92] Erik Routley, *Hymns and Human Life* (London: John Murray, 1952), 223.

[93] Carlos R. Messerli, ed., *Thine the Amen: Essays on Lutheran Church Music* (Minneapolis: Lutheran University Press, 2005), 32.

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Boasting in the Rags of Scripture Rather Than the Robes of Reason: Johann Georg Hamann as an Enlightened Advocate of Classical Lutheran Theology in His *London Writings*

John W. Kleinig

"God an Author!"[1] That is Hamann's bold assertion at the beginning of his *London Writings*. The triune God is an author! He is, in fact, the only true author. The Father is the author of the world that he has created. The Son is the author of the church that he has redeemed. The Spirit is the author of the Scriptures that he has inspired. Yet the word authored by the Spirit is by far the greatest of all these wonders, for it discloses the mysteries of creation and redemption.[2] The word of the Spirit is where I will start in this introduction to Hamann and his *London Writings*.

Yet I must admit that I am sorely tempted to start elsewhere, as most scholars do. I could join John Betz, his best English interpreter, by commending him to you as "probably the most interesting and radical thinker the ranks of Lutheran orthodoxy has produced," "arguably one of the greatest, most prophetic, and, ironically, most forgotten Christian authors of modernity, the Irenaeus of his time."[3] I could also present him to you, quite justifiably, as he himself did, an author who wanted to recognize "no other orthodoxy than our Lutheran Small Catechism."[4] Then, in this context, I could even introduce him to you quite aptly, as C.F.W. Walther did in 1862 before an excerpt from Hamann's "Thoughts on the Course of

[1] See also the repetition of this in Johann Georg Hamann, Londoner Schriften, ed. Oswald Bayer and Bernd Weissenborn (München: C. H. Beck, 1993), 59, 67, hereafter BW, and the repetition of this phrase in BW 67.

[2] BW 59/LW 1. Hamann has this to say about God's authorship: "The inspiration of this book is as great an act of self-effacement and condescension as the creation of the world by the Father and the incarnation of the Son. . . . The Word of the Spirit is just as great a work as the creation of the world, and just as great a mystery as the redemption of mankind. Yes, this Word is the key to the works of the former and the mysteries of the latter."

[3] John Betz, "Hamann's London Writings: The Hermeneutics of Trinitarian Condescension," *Pro Ecclesia* 14, no. 2 (2005): 191–192, 194.

[4] See his letter to Kraus from 1784 (Johann Georg Hamann, *Briefwechsel*, edited by Arthur Henkel, Weisbaden: Franfurt am Main, 1959, vol 5, 291, 24–26), and Oswald Bayer, *A Contemporary in Dissent* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 15.

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My Life" as "one of the few highly gifted writers of the German nation of recent times who had a sincere faith in the Scriptures."[5]

Yet no matter how much I am tempted to start with praise for him as a spiritually enlightened author, that would not do justice to him and his unique contribution as a lay theologian. It would misrepresent him to you for two reasons. On the one hand, he never published his *London Writings*, nor did he intend them to be published. Apart from the account of his so-called conversion in his "Thoughts on the Course of My Life" which he shared with his father, brother, and two best friends,[6] the *London Writings* were written for himself as a kind of spiritual journal.

On the other hand, in the *London Writings* he writes as an astonished reader of a story written by God's Spirit, or, rather, the reader of God's stories—the story of Israel and Jesus in the Bible, the story of the world, and the story of his own life as a reader of the Bible.[7] These are, in fact, not three stories but a single story with one divine author. Since that story tells of God's threefold condescension in creation, redemption, and inspiration, it requires a reader with the right mentality, the right receptive disposition. So, says Hamann, "a humble heart is the only proper frame of mind for reading the Bible and the essential preparation for doing that." We, then, have God the author and Hamann the reader. By becoming a reader of this one book, this bookworm, this critical reader of many books, discovers that in reading the Bible he himself is read and understood by its author—he is both critiqued and affirmed.[8]

I must confess that I have a special interest in his *London Writings* and in him as a Lutheran thinker. He has been a theological mentor for me since I first encountered him when I was a student of German literature in university and a student of theology in seminary. I have also just completed an English translation of his *London Writings*, which has been published by Ballast Press.[9] These writings have, in fact, been published as a whole in a single critical volume by Bayer and Weissenborn only recently in 1993. Up to now, only parts of it have been translated into English, even though they lay the intellectual and theological foundations for all his other published works, which make good sense only in their light. While this English translation may be of some interest to academic scholars, it should be even

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[5] See *Lehre und Wehre* 8, no. 5 (1862): 152–157, and John Henry III, "God an Author: J. G. Hamann, the Bible and Lutheran Tradition" (STM Thesis, Concordia Theological Seminary, 2019).

[6] See BW 345/ LW 291.

[7] For a discussion of Hamann as a listener and reader, see Bayer, *A Contemporary in Dissent*, 3. This was so, too, for Hamann as an avid reader of what was written by human authors.

[8] Bayer, *A Contemporary in Dissent*, 6.

[9] Johann Georg Hamann, *London Writings: The Spiritual and Theological Journal of Johann Georg Hamann*, trans. John W. Kleinig (Evansville, IN: Ballast Press, 2021), cited as LW.

more useful to us his largely unacknowledged heirs. We can, I hold, learn much from his Lutheran vision of God's enlightening glory and our present ignorance, hidden as they both are *sub contrario*, under their opposite.

So here I want to introduce Hamann and his *London Writings* to you by examining their origin, contents, and nature. Even though it will be all too brief, I hope to arouse your interest in them, so that you may perhaps even read my translation of them.

The Origin of the *London Writings*

Hamann lived from 1730 to 1788 and spent most of his life in the city of Königsberg, the German-speaking, administrative and academic center of East Prussia. Born to parents of modest means, he had a rather conventional Lutheran upbringing with a father who was still largely orthodox in orientation and a mother who was much more influenced by Lutheran pietism. He studied theology and the law in local university, where he became a fashionable advocate of the Enlightenment with his two best friends. He admits that his own interest lay elsewhere than in the study of theology and law: "What took away my taste for theology and all serious subjects was a new inclination that awoke in me for antiquities, for criticism—for the fine, decorative arts as well; for poetry, novels, philology; for French authors and their talent for writing, painting, portraying, pleasing the imagination, and so on."[10] Due to his haphazard attendance of classes, his pursuit of extracurricular activities, and a speech impediment that precluded a career as a pastor or a lawyer, he failed to graduate. Yet all the time he kept on reading widely and voraciously.

After employment as a tutor for two German noble families from 1752 to 1756 in what is now Latvia, he was employed in Riga as a secretary of a merchant firm owned by the family of his best friend Christoph Berens and sent on a trade mission to London to negotiate a secret trade deal for the firm between Russia and England. When that failed, he lived rather dissolutely, fell into the bad company of fashionable homosexual men, and got deep into debt. Lost and lonely, he suffered from ill health from overindulgence and deep depression from his social isolation. Then, befriended by a devout, Christian couple who provided cheap accommodation for him early in 1758, he went into seclusion. He first began to read some of the many books that he had bought and found no consolation in them. On impulse, he bought an English Bible and began reading it on March 13.

[10] BW 323/LW 269.

It had little impact on him for six days. Yet, as he read it from cover to cover, he became aware of the veil over his reason and his heart that had closed this book to him.[11] Then, on Palm Sunday, it struck him that God was speaking to him personally as he was reading it. He no longer analyzed it critically, but meditated on it as it critiqued him and his rationalism. On that day, he began to read it for a second time in a new way and wrote down the results of his meditations in a kind of spiritual journal that he called "The Biblical Meditations of a Christian." On a Friday evening, March 31 in the week of Easter, he fell into deep reverie as he was reading Deuteronomy chapter 5 with its report that the Israelites heard God speaking the Decalogue face to face with them at Mount Sinai. Here is how he describes what happened to him then:

> I recognized my own offenses in the history of the Jewish people. I read the story of my own life and thanked God for His forbearance with this His people, because nothing but such an example could justify a similar hope for me . . . In the midst of these reflections which seemed rather mysterious to me, I read the fifth chapter of Fifth Book of Moses on the evening of 31 March and fell into deep meditation. I thought about Abel and God's word about him: "the earth had opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood."— — I felt my heart thump, I heard a voice groaning and wailing in its depths like the voice of blood, like the voice of a murdered brother who wanted to avenge his blood, even though I, at times, did not hear it and would continue to shut my ears to it — — It said that this was what made Cain restless and unable to escape. At once I felt my heart flowing, it poured itself out in tears, and I could no longer — — I could no longer hide from God that I was the killer of my brother, the murderer of His only begotten Son. Despite my great weakness, despite the long resistance which I had, until now, put up against His witness and His tender touch, the Spirit of God kept on revealing to me, still more and more, the mystery of divine love and the benefit of faith in our gracious, only Savior.[12]

In that momentous upheaval, that dramatic awakening, Hamann was convicted of two things: his own sin of fratricide and God's grace for him as the murderer of his Son. Then in his broken heart, he heard how the blood of Jesus which called out to God for vengeance was also proclaiming God's grace and love to him. That broke his blind, hard, rocky, misguided, stubborn heart, and he surrendered it to God for re-creation by his Spirit. God poured him out, he says, "from one vessel into another."[13]

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[11] BW 342/LW 288.
[12] BW 343-344/LW 288-289.
[13] BW 345/LW 290.

In another place, he gives us this summary of what he had experienced that momentous evening:

> When we get to know ourselves, when we come to see ourselves almost as we really are, how we then wish, plead, fear for ourselves. How we then feel the need for all that God, without us knowing it, being interested in it, and asking for any of it, has never grown tired of presenting to us, offering to us, and encouraging us, yet frightening us to receive. Then we hear the blood of the Redeemer crying out in our heart. We feel that the bottom of it has been sprinkled with the blood that was shed for the reconciliation of the whole world. We feel that the blood of vengeance cries out for grace on our behalf.[14]

After that event, he continued to read the Bible and record the fruit of his meditations. As he did so, the tone of those meditations gradually changed. The comments became less intellectual and more devotional. Then, when he completed the composition of the "Biblical Meditations," he recorded his "Thoughts on the Course of My Life" from April 21 to 25, followed by "Thoughts on Church Hymns" from April 29 to May 6, as well as five other pieces before he set out for Riga and returned home on June 27. It was there that he added some further thoughts on his life and a personal prayer of supplication and intercession for his own devotional use.

Thus the *London Writings* were written over the period of six months in what was the turning point of his life. They mark his transformation from an ardent advocate of the Enlightenment to a rather unlikely champion of classical Lutheranism. They document his transition from unenlightened rationalism to enlightened faith in Jesus, the Alpha and Omega, the be-all and end-all of his life.

The Contents of the *London Writings*

The *London Writings* are a series of separate texts that differ greatly in character and length. They are all personal in their origin and are all, in some way, the product of deep reflection on the Bible. Since they were never meant for publication, they are polished in some places and rough elsewhere. There are in all nine compositions, most of which are clearly dated.

[14] BW 138–139/LW 80.

On the Interpretation of Sacred Scripture (Undated)[15]

Here Hamann does not set out his principles for the cognitive appropriation of the Scriptures, but graphically explains why a humble heart is the only proper frame of mind for reading the Bible, which is even more misinterpreted by its philosophical critics than Aesop's fables about animals would be if they were able to read them. A humble heart alone does justice to its miraculous inspiration by the condescending Holy Spirit and the Spirit's paradoxical revelation of God's wisdom and power through what seems to be foolish and weak. The Word of the Spirit is an unlikely means of grace, like the rags that were used to rescue Jeremiah from his muddy prison, like the pool of water with spittle and dust that Jesus used to give sight to a blind man. What the Scriptures have to say for our salvation and enlightenment appears to be just as stupid to unbelievers as the feigned madness and scribblings of David, the fugitive from Saul in the court of the Achish, the Philistine king.

Biblical Meditations of a Christian (March 19 to April 21)[16]

Here we have the heart and soul of the *London Writings*. They come first because God's word came first for Hamann. His meditation on it brought on his spiritual awakening and transformation from a rational intellectual to a faithful confessor of the triune God. Its original title was the "Journal of a Christian." By this change, he shifted attention away from himself to the Bible. His choice of the German term *Betrachtungen* emphasizes his visionary engagement with it, or rather its visionary impact with him and his imagination as he meditated on it. He did not meditate on the Bible analytically and cognitively to further his knowledge of its content, but devotionally and contemplatively, to *see* what God was saying to him as he read it. He read it in order to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit and gain insight into God's dealings with him and all people. Once it is understood that he does not seek to interpret the text exegetically, we can make sense of its unsystematic, haphazard character, with his attention to what appear to be insignificant texts and apparent neglect of other more significant passages. As he reads, he meditates on those parts that strike him, that address him personally or challenge him intellectually as a child of the Enlightenment. They identify his blind spots, in order to grant him deeper and more accurate insight into the spiritual realities that they portray.

[15] BW 59-61/LW 1-2.
[16] BW 65-311/LW 3-258

Thoughts on the Course of My Life (April 21 to 25)[17]

Like the *Confessions* of Augustine, this best-known work of Hamann relates the circumstances of his so-called conversion; it is a personal confession addressed to God and himself that begins and ends with prayer to God the Father. In it, he engages in three kinds of confession: confession of his sins, confession of thanksgiving for God's saving word, and confession of faith in the triune God. His confession of faith in the Trinity is in God the Father for the revelation of himself to humanity, in Jesus for his incarnation as a needy man, and in the Holy Spirit for foolishly providing a book for us proud people as his word in which seemingly trivial, contemptible events tell us the story of heaven and earth. The most significant and overlooked feature of this confession is its concentration on God's word rather than his own spiritual awakening.

Thoughts on Church Hymns (April 29 to May 6)[18]

Here Hamann meditates devotionally on six hymns which all reflect on the hidden glory of Christians, who are not only made in God's image but also participate in the communion of the Son with the Father by the Holy Spirit. The centerpiece of these meditations is a reflection on Christ's exaltation on Ascension Day 1758. There he notes that "God became a son of man and an heir of its curse and death and fate, so that the man would become a son of God, an only heir of heaven, as closely united with God as the fullness of divinity dwelt bodily in Christ."[19] By his *kenosis*, his self-emptying, we have *theosis,* since we by faith share in his divine nature. Hamann therefore exclaims in amazement at this great exchange:

> How human, how weak and lowly God makes Himself on our account![20] How small He makes Himself, and how proud He makes a human being! He Himself became a man to make us gods — — He gives us all that He has — — What could be dearer than His Son and His Holy Spirit — — *All that God has is mine* — —and what was the purpose of that? He says, "My son, give me your heart."[21]

He concludes with this description of that sacramental union:

> This true union with God is a foretaste of heaven, it is heaven itself. It is the last rung on the ladder who unites earth as a footstool with God's throne. This

[17] BW 313-349/LW 259-294.
[18] BW 353-395/LW 295-337.
[19] BW 375/319.
[20] Philippians 2:7–8.
[21] BW 356/LW 299.

> participation in the divine nature is the final goal of God's incarnation. They are both equally great mysteries which are nevertheless prefigured by human nature and its parts.[22]

Deuteronomy 20:4–10 Together with Romans 10:4–10 (Undated)[23]

While these undated reflections on the correlation between God's creative word and receptive faith may be regarded as a separate document, they are best regarded as an appendix to previous meditations on church hymns by their conclusion with a verse from a hymn.

Fragments (May 16, 1758)[24]

In this, the most philosophical of all the *London Writings,* Hamann reflects on our human dependence on the five senses, which are compared to the five loaves that Jesus transformed into twelve baskets full of leftover scraps after the feeding of the five thousand in John 6. Apart from the senses and their illumination by the Holy Spirit, both reason and faith are blind. Our knowledge is therefore limited and partial. So, for example, we cannot even know ourselves apart from God and our neighbor; only through Jesus our neighbor do we truly get to know ourselves and God. But that only partially as we are known by God. He concludes: "*Here we live on scraps. Our thoughts are nothing but fragments*. Yes, our knowledge is patchwork."[25]

Meditations on Newton's Study on Prophecies (Undated)[26]

In these observations, Hamann notes that the Old Testament does not just record some messianic prophecies, but claims: "Every biblical story is a prophecy — — that would be fulfilled through all centuries — — and in every human soul."[27] He shows how the Holy Spirit revealed himself in his word in the form of a servant and became enfleshed in the Old Testament in anticipation of his incarnation in Jesus, just as our spirits are enfleshed in our bodies.

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[22] BW 370/LW 314.
[23] BW 397-403/LW 338-344.
[24] BW 405-420/LW 345-356.
[25] BW 407/LW 347. Italics mine.
[26] BW 421-425/LW 357-361.
[27] BW 421/LW 357.

(Further Thoughts on the Course of My Life) (May 29, 1758 to January 1, 1759)[28]

This untitled section consists of three units: a report from May 29 on his decision to leave London for Riga, entries after his return to Riga from June 25 to the last day of 1758, and a prayer for New Year's Day 1759.

Prayer (Undated)[29]

No date is given for this comprehensive series of fifteen prayers. While they seem to originate from his time in London, these prayers were reworked subsequently and used by him in his daily devotions. It is a fitting conclusion to his *London Writings*, which come from the time when he himself learned to pray.

The Nature of the *London Writings*

On a cursory reading, it is hard to discover any external coherence in these nine disparate confessional documents that make up Hamann's *London Writings*. Yet there are two markers which show how they are interrelated.

The first and most obvious of these are the chronological notes which relate—most of them sequentially—to three months in Hamann's life. Thus after his intense engagement in a new way of reading the Bible on March 13, 1758, he writes the "Biblical Meditations of a Christian" from March 19 to April 21. After that he pens "Thoughts on the Course of My Life" from April 21 to 25 and composes his "Thoughts on Church Hymns" from April 29 to May 6. Then he starts work on "Fragments" on May 16 and continues his autobiographical journal on May 29. So they are all related to his personal reorientation over that period in his life.

There is also another deeper chronology for him with this, a parallel, more hidden dimension to his life that is shown by Hamann's correlation of his reading and writing with certain significant times in the liturgical calendar. Thus he begins his meditative reading of the Bible on Monday after *Judica*, the Fifth Sunday in Lent, and starts writing his "Biblical Meditations" on Palm Sunday. He interrupts their sequence with an extended meditation on the Sermon on the Mount on Maundy Thursday, passes over Exodus entirely and considers Leviticus on Good Friday. Then on Friday in the week of Easter, he comes to Deuteronomy and experiences his spiritual awakening on the evening of that day. On Saturday the Eve of the Fifth Sunday after Easter, he begins his "Thoughts on Church Hymns" and interrupts them on Ascension Day to pen a moving meditation on our involvement in Christ's

[28] BW 429-437/LW 362-270.
[29] BW 440-446/LW 371-376.

condescension and exaltation. Then come the composition of "Fragments" on Tuesday in the week of Pentecost and the continuation of his journal on the Monday after Trinity Sunday. In this way, Hamann reconnects his life once again with the life of the church and the life of Christ. His spiritual reorientations result in the renewal of liturgical piety. That is most evident in his report of his association with the German Lutheran congregation in London and its Pastor Pitius[30] and his repeated reflections on a wide range of Lutheran hymns.[31]

Taken as a whole, the *London Writings* are devotional texts, the product of intense meditation on God's word and appropriation of it in ardent prayer. Since a rationalist does not meditate on God's holy word and does not pray to God the Father through his Son, Jesus, they clearly show Hamann's transformation from rationalism to orthodox Lutheranism. The inspired word of God and prayer by the power of the Holy Spirit belong together; they are the two main drivers in the composition of these texts. Their arrangement and sequence reflect the truth of this—they begin with biblical meditation and end with intercessory prayer.

As we read these outpourings, we listen in on a man as he meditates on the Bible, a man who is enlightened by God's Spirit as he contemplates what the triune God is saying to him there and then in that word, a man who sees what God is saying as he listens with his heart.

At the same time, we also listen in on a man who learns to pray as he is guided by the word of the Spirit and the Spirit of prayer who intercedes within him, just as Jesus intercedes for him. The turning point came for him with ardent prayer. Thus Hamann says:

> In the tumult of all my passions, which so overwhelmed me that often I could often hardly breathe, I kept on praying to God for a friend, a wise, sincere friend, such as I could no longer envisage. Instead of that I had tasted, tasted enough, the bitterness of false friendship and the unlikelihood of a better friendship. A friend who could give me a key to my heart, the thread that would lead me out of my labyrinth — — was a wish that I often had, without understanding and discerning its content rightly.[32]

[30] BW 349, 429, 431–432/LW 294, 362, 364-365.

[31] See BW 103, 323, 347–348, 353–372, 380, 381–394, 403, 432, 445/LW 42, 269, 292-293, 295-316, 324, 324-337, 344, 365, 375.

[32] BW 342/LW 288.

These prayers range from short exclamations[33] to extended intercessions and supplications.[34] They occur more often as he becomes more confident in prayer and of the Spirit's guidance in his praying. By listening to God the Father speaking the Spirit to him through the Son, he speaks to the Father through the Son by the Spirit.

Conclusion

Hamann's intellectual peers fancied that they would be enlightened by the critical exercise of observation and reason; they imagined that through their reason they could overcome the blindness of ignorance and understand all natural phenomena. Theirs, after all, was the age of philosophy and science, the age of comprehensive systems that seemed to explain everything and encyclopedias that claimed to encompass the sum of human knowledge. Enlightened by the superstitious faith in their sovereign reason, they wanted to be the new seers, independent thinkers.

In contrast with them, Hamann acknowledges the limits of human reason and knowledge and his utter dependence on God's revelation. Like Socrates, he presupposes his own ignorance and seeks a different kind of enlightenment through God's word and his Holy Spirit. This is how he describes that kind of prophetic seeing:

> *What is the origin of the high regard for the arts of divination and of the great number of them which are based on nothing but the misunderstanding of our instinct or our natural reason? We are all able to be prophets.* All natural phenomena are dreams, visions, riddles, which have their meaning, their secret sense. The book of nature and the book of history are nothing but ciphers, hidden signs, which require the same key that interprets Holy Scripture and is the purpose of its inspiration.[35]

Here Hamann refers to the misuse of natural reason by the philosophers of his day, rather sarcastically, as the practice of divination, the attempt to discover the secrets of the natural world, the occult meaning of natural phenomena, so that they could foretell the future and gain control of the whole natural world for their benefit.

He regards this as a case of superstitious overreach with its abuse of created, human powers. It exploits our human calling to be prophets, people who are called to hear God's voice, receive his Spirit, and speak his word. That prophetic vocation

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[33] See BW 66, 71, 128, 131, 148, 323, 328, 345, 353, 403/LW 4, 11, 68, 71-72, 89, 269, 274, 290, 296, 344.

[34] See BW 123–124, 131, 313–314, 347–348, 377–379, 436–437, 441–446/LW 63-64, 71-72, 260-261, 292-293, 321-322, 369-370, 371-376

[35] BW 417/LW 355.

is abused by people who attempt to become seers by the exercise of natural instinct and reason rather than by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

So the key to true enlightenment is the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who has inspired the Scriptures, so that we may be inspired by him through them and receive enlightenment in the three main domains of our existence: our salvation, nature, and history. First, the Spirit himself interprets his book for us and enlightens us through it, so that we see what God has done, is doing, and will do for our salvation.

Then the same Spirit uses his book to interpret the book of nature and the book of history, so that we see how the triune God is at work in a hidden way in the natural world and in human affairs. The Holy Spirit, the divine Historian, the Author of the Bible, condescends to "reveal the counsels, mysteries and ways of God to people in their own speech, their own history and in their own ways."[36] He accommodates himself to our all-too-human limitations.

As we read the Bible with the faith that the Spirit produces in us, all the miracles of the Bible occur in our own souls.[37] Thus Hamann confesses:

> I am convinced that every soul is a stage for the great wonders that are contained in the history of creation and the entire Holy Scripture. The course of the life of every Christian is included in the daily work of God, in His covenants with people, in transgressions, warnings, revelations, miraculous preservations, and so on. For a Christian, who has passed from the death of sin into a new life, can the preservation of Jonah, the raising of Lazarus, the healing of the cripple, and so on, be conceived as greater miracles? Does not the Savior Himself say: "Which is easier, to forgive sins or to say: take up your bed and walk?"[38]

All this depends on the Holy Spirit. He enlightens his readers through his word and teaches them how to read it. Hamann therefore concludes:

> It is not Moses or Isaiah that has left behind their thoughts and the events of their time as earthly authors and writers for future generations or their people. It is the Holy Spirit that has revealed Himself through the mouth and pen of these holy men. The Spirit who hovered over the waters of the young, unformed earth, who overshadowed Mary and acted so that the Holy One would be born, the Spirit who alone is able to search out and discover the depths of the Godhead. This should move us to read the divine Word with very great reverence and enjoy it too.[39]

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[36] BW 152/LW 93.
[37] BW 139/LW 80.
[38] BW 403/LW 344.
[39] BW 304/LW 251.

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Theological Observer

A Warning and a Strategy about the Dangers of Digital Media

Though Neil Postman warned us, there was a time not long ago when most of us were largely ignorant of what damage is done to our cognitive ability by almost any amount of time looking at electronic screens. We thought that all technology was neutral and what mattered was the message, not the carrier or medium. In hindsight, this was remarkably naive if not irresponsible. We have always known, at some level, that the medium itself has meaning.

Now, though, the evidence is so overwhelming that we cannot ignore it. Screens, along with a lack of reading physical books, are damaging our ministers, our members, and our society. We have all experienced this decline ourselves. We cannot focus and concentrate the way we used to. Our confirmands, despite Ritalin and the astronomical financial cost of public education, are often wigglier and less educated than ever before. Our congregations and our families are more fragile, more divided and opinionated, more prone to temper tantrums, and more stressed out than ever before. The sermons we preach and hear are often scandalously short compared to our forefathers. They sometimes lack much in the way of doctrine. At times their strict "gospel emphasis" leaves them having far more in common with Billy Graham's revival preaching than Luther's or Walther's sermons.

But we do not need simply to rely upon our own experience and fading memories of what life was like before high-speed internet, smartphones, and social media. There is significant neurological research that demonstrates this is not just hand-wringing from old people. Our brains have changed with our habits. This is a reality that cannot be denied and should not be embraced. It is not simply a matter of taste. We are less than we used to be, and the cause is indisputable: screens are ruining us.

Even though it is now over ten years old, the best summary that I have found of the scientific evidence available in a single book that is accessible to those who are not neurological researchers is Nicholas Carr's *The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2011). All pastors should read this. The bleak picture he paints has only gotten worse since 2011. For those looking for a theological perspective that is built upon much of the same research, or for those who teach at a seminary or are charged with ecclesiastical supervision, I suggest T. David Gordon's W*hy Johnny Can't Preach: The Media Have Shaped the Messengers* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P & R Pub, 2009). Again, Gordon's argument only rings truer based upon the increasing expansion of "smart devices" into all of our lives.

Of course, it is not hopeless. God's Word does not change, but it can and does change us. Some have argued that God himself is in favor of technological advances. He used, for example, the Roman road system and papyrus to spread the gospel. That is true in a sense, but I think it works in reverse of the argument being made. My thinking is that God was deliberate in the timing of the incarnation and the subsequent Pentecost miracle and early spread of the gospel. He could have become a man earlier, before the Roman roads, but he waited. He could also have waited until the internet was available and spared Paul all that hard and dangerous travel, but he didn't. He chose when he came based upon the best technology for the gospel. The best technology for the gospel was written letters followed up by personal visits and preaching.

This is not to say that we should not use technology in service of the gospel. I do not think it was Luther who made use of the printing press to spread the Reformation. I think it was God. But the printing press, as technology, was not a change from letter writing and personal visits. It simply was a method for spreading the letters. It was still the written word that went forth, not images with embedded and distracting hyperlinks, not backlit letters on entertainment devices connected to the internet with the constant temptation of amusement and distraction. When we use technology in service to the gospel, we should know what the technology itself conveys, what its associations and abuses are, and how it might hinder the message or the ministry despite the intents of the user. We should not be so naive or irresponsible as to think that the technology itself is simply good or that it is neutral.

So what do I think pastors should do with regards to digital media in their own lives and in their ministries?

First, the pastor should become aware of not only potential dangers but also the harm that he himself and his people have suffered from digital media. Screens are making us distracted. Reading Scripture or listening to a sermon is more difficult than it used to be. Screens promise community and connection, but they actually make us feel more disconnected and lonely than ever before. They draw us into ourselves and away from others. The need for the dopamine rush from attention on social media or the hope for an interesting or flattering email keeps us constantly in the screen's glow and prevents us from listening to one another, looking one another in the eye, and simply being present. This is exaggerated by a particular nuance of big tech's algorithms. In order to keep us clicking, they create echo chambers and radicalize us. They have also ruined our ability to be bored and do uncomfortable things. Our wired brains are screaming for constant amusement. All of this increases

stress while decreasing healthy physical activity and quality sleep; it hurts body, mind, and soul.

Second, I am convinced that pastors should teach and warn their people about these dangers. Screens are a real and present spiritual danger. They are not neutral. They can have a purpose, and people will resist limiting their use. While I think it is unrealistic to suggest that they not be used at all, they should be treated with the same sort of respect that we treat guns, alcohol, and sex. Screens easily enslave those who use them. Therefore they should not be used without disciplined limits and safeguards. The danger is not simply pornography. The screen itself is a danger even when it delivers wholesome or edifying content.

Third, the pastor himself should engage in and model a purposeful and limited use of media for his members. Even as he should not be a drunkard, he should not be addicted to his phone. To this end, I suggest the book *Digital Minimalism: Choosing a Focused Life in a Noisy World* by Cal Newport (London: Penguin Business, 2020).

Fourth, along with this purposeful, limited use of media, the pastor needs to relearn and develop analog skills. I think pastors need to set aside blocks of time, probably at least twenty-five minutes at a stretch, for concentrated, single tasks, including reading. He not only needs to visit and minister to actual people in the physical world, but he also needs to get away from his computer while in his study. I suggest that pastors spend at least some time each day reading the Bible from an actual, physical Bible. Take notes on a piece of paper with a pen or pencil while you read, and do at least some of your sermon preparation this way. So also pastors should read other books in the real world and not always from a glowing screen. They should set strict weekly time limits for watching television, Netflix, and other media, as well as be careful about what they watch. The hours saved not looking at screens can be put to other, healthier recreational activities such as exercise or puzzles or doing chores.

Finally, pastors need to consider how their congregations use media in their ministries. I do not think congregations should abstain from using the media completely, but we should be more discerning in how much is used. The evidence in Carr's book above demonstrates the somewhat surprising fact that screens and multimedia presentations are not as effective at imparting knowledge, love of the topic, or retention in the students as lectures. Learning is work, and it is often boring. Students typically prefer to be entertained rather than make a concentrated effort. Convincing teachers of this will likely require a great deal of patience and kindness. We also need gently to destroy the myth of "learning styles." This has been

completely debunked by research,[1] but it is still taught in some education departments and at various seminars. Many teachers and students insist upon it based upon their own experience, which is heavily biased toward not liking to be bored, even though all the evidence demonstrates it is a fantasy.

Even if the teachers or board of education cannot be convinced about the challenges that screens present, the pastor himself does not need to let screens dominate his own Bible class, confirmation instruction, or other teaching duties. Though they may not like it and it may be less convenient, the pastor can at least attempt to have the people have real Bibles in front of them and look up passages. This will be of benefit to them.

If screens present challenges in the classroom, then we need to be sensitive to the challenges they present in worship. The argument is that they are often less boring than simply looking at words on a page or listening to someone talk. Decreasing or discontinuing their use will take great patience and compassion. If they must be used, I suggest the pastor do his best to make the slides as boring as possible. Keep them as black-and-white text without graphics or animation.

In a similar fashion, sermons that teach take time. They are not as immediately interesting as anecdotes, personal stories, or even an emotional existential crisis. Much in the way that people often prefer light hymns over sturdy hymns, the fallen flesh would rather be entertained or taken to an emotional mountaintop than be challenged or bored in a sermon. Changing the culture of our instruction and our worship will require a lot of patience, but if we are to be in the world but not of the world, we have to try.

For all that, I think that electronic media should be used by congregations for two purposes. First, it should be used to advertise. Congregations need a Facebook page and a webpage. Those pages should include not only times for services, contact information, and confessional identity, but also some photographs and perhaps videos and other resources or links that show potential visitors what the congregation is like and what they can expect. We want people to be able to find us. Keep the purpose of this to advertise and not to replace worship, evangelism, or visitation. The goal is to lead people to the congregation for real, physical ministry.

The second way that electronic media can be used is to supplement shut-ins or members home sick with devotional material and as a way of aiding and easing contacting the church or pastor. Every congregation and pastor wants to minister to

[1] See, e.g., William Furey, "The Stubborn Myth of 'Learning Styles,'" Education Next, https://www.educationnext.org/stubborn-myth-learning-styles-state-teacher-license-prep-materials-debunked-theory/.

their members. YouTube videos and Facebook chats are not a replacement for face-to-face ministry, but they can lead to and supplement ministry.

Taking up a disciplined approach to media is not easy. There are things that we love about media which will be lost, but what is to be gained is far greater: not only increased cognitive ability and focus, but also peace. The world is cluttered. Our minds need not be. Jesus came to bring us rest.

David H. Petersen
Pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, IN

Reach the Lost, Who?[2]

"Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon his name;
make known his deeds among the peoples!"[3]

With these words of Psalm 105:1, we have been celebrating our 175th anniversary. Indeed, what a remarkable milestone! Together, "we give thanks to the LORD" for *his use of all of us* to "make known his deeds among the peoples!"

Perhaps some of you wonder why the preacher for this vital occasion is not President Rast or Dean Gieschen or even a synodical official. I wonder why too! It is my joy and privilege. But there is a tremendous risk in inviting such a lowly professor to preach. Dr. Grime has to live with his decision!

As foolishly as I accepted the invitation, I wanted to broaden my scope by looking into anniversary sermons of the past. I could not spend too much time in this inquiry. But I did find interesting articles and addresses in relation to certain anniversaries, such as the 125th anniversary of the synod, our sister seminary's 150th anniversary, the 125th anniversary of CTS while still in Springfield, the inauguration addresses of a couple of our seminary's former presidents, Wikipedia articles, and the 150th anniversary of CTSFW. These were all interesting reads, but what caught my attention most were remarks of four men whom you and I know quite well and hold in high esteem: President Robert Preus, President Dean Wenthe, Dean Charles Gieschen, and President Lawrence Rast.

Dr. Preus expounded on the meaning of the three words *Concordia*, *Theological*, and *Seminary* in his inaugural address back in 1974. In contrast to many

[2] Sermon based on Luke 19:1–10. For the 175th Anniversary Celebration. Vespers, Kramer Chapel, CTSFW Pentecost 22, October 24, 2021. The service and sermon can be viewed at https://boxcast.tv/view/175th-anniversary-vespers-service-990253.

[3] All Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Emphasis is added by the author.

seminaries in the world that teach *everything but theology*, he said that CTSFW is dedicated to *implant the seed of the gospel in all its articles* in the minds, hearts, and lives of our students. Dr. Wenthe added to this, in his 150th celebration remarks of 1996, four distinctively Wenthean phrases: *Integrity of Spirit*, *Clarity of Mind*, *Charity of Heart*, and *Centrality of Mission*. He stressed the importance of engaging in the contemporary culture. He emphasized the vitality of the chapel as our magnificent anniversary hymn, "Open Wide the Chapel Doors," captures perfectly. He said, "Whether our culture and world perceive it or not, the church and its seminaries are more crucial for the future than Wall Street or Washington." Dr. Gieschen, in his collegial recognition speech at the banquet following the installation of President Rast in 2011, compared the transition of presidency from Dr. Wenthe to Dr. Rast to Moses handing over his staff to younger Joshua, viewing the event as part of divine history, a history that unfolds with each service in Kramer Chapel, every class that lifts up Jesus, and every faithful student who is sent from here to testify to Jesus in this world. As a church historian, President Rast commented that the seminary would face new challenges, although I am pretty sure that he did not know about the pandemic yet back in 2011. More recently in 2019, he wrote in *CTQ* that our Lutheran identity has been challenged by the democratization of American churches, but we are "bound up with" our "confession of the biblical witness—the *fides quae*, the faith once delivered to the saints" that "is found in the Augsburg Confession (1530) . . . and in the Lutheran symbols that make up the Book of Concord 1580, *because* the Lutheran Confessions are a faithful exposition of the doctrine of the Scriptures."[4] CTSFW "remains committed to the vision of its founders to provide faithful servants who teach the faithful, reach the lost, and care for all."[5]

To me, these voices of our beloved seminary leaders past and present are an echo of the Preface to the Christian Book of Concord: "We have desired to direct and earnestly to exhort our churches and schools first of all to the Holy Scripture and the Creeds and then to the aforementioned Augsburg Confession, in order that *especially the youth who are being trained for service in the church and for the holy ministry* may be instructed faithfully and diligently, so that among our descendants the pure teaching and confession of the faith may be kept and spread" (Preface 21).[6]

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[4] Lawrence R. Rast Jr., "Pastoral Formation in the 21st Century," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 83, nos. 1–2 (January/April 2019): 139.

[5] Lawrence R. Rast Jr., "Seminary Future," *For the Life of the World* 17, no. 3 (September 2013): 11.

[6] Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, trans. Charles Arand, et al. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 14, emphasis added.

The Lord has blessed our seminary in the past 175 years. It is humbling for us to recognize that he has been using us to teach the faithful, reach the lost, and care for all.

To continue our joyful service at and through our beloved seminary to do just that, our Gospel appointed for this day brings us to another aspect of our celebration. In the form of a question, let me put it this way. Does our mission statement talk about *what we do* as a seminary? Or does it also talk about *what we receive* from the Lord as a seminary? Are we *to teach, reach, and care for alone*? Or are we *also* the ones *who are taught, who are reached, and who are cared for by Jesus*?

We know the Zacchaeus story.

He was a *tax collector*. He was not an "ordinary" tax collector as in the previous chapter in a parable who, with a Pharisee, went up into the temple to pray (18:9–14). Zacchaeus was a *chief* tax collector, which meant that he was *very* rich, perhaps richer than the rich young ruler who was told by Jesus to sell all his properties before following him (18:18–23).

This Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus, just like some Greeks in John 12.

He did what a man of his stature never did. He ran before the people, just as the father of the prodigal son (Luke 15). He even climbed up on a tree like a little boy.

Luke then mentioned an action version of a confession, saying the same thing as what the Lord has spoken. He *did* exactly what Jesus had told him to *do*. Jesus said, "Hurry, and come down." Zacchaeus "hurried and came down" (19:5–6).

Then, Jesus said to him, "I must stay at your house *today*" (19:5). *Today* is one of the key words the evangelist Luke uses at some key points: "For unto you is born [*today*] in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (2:11). "Truly, I say to you, *today* you will be with me in paradise" (23:43).

Zacchaeus welcomed Jesus to his home *rejoicing* or *joyfully*. This is the word of faith. This is the word of the gospel. Just like when a shepherd found a lost sheep (15:5) or when a father found a lost son (15:32) or when a sinner repents (15:7, 10).

Zacchaeus's repentance and faith manifested themselves in his plan of returning his properties as he followed the stipulation written in Exodus 21.

Then, Jesus said, "*Today* salvation has come to this house" (19:9). This is the second time the word *today* is used. For Luke, salvation is always a result of forgiveness of sins, just as we sing in the Matins, the "Song of Zechariah" from Luke 1.

Jesus has the last words: "For the Son of Man came *to seek and to save the lost*" (19:10). This was the fulfillment of Ezekiel 34:15–16, "I myself will be the shepherd

of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the LORD GOD. *I will seek the lost*, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak."

Jesus reached Zacchaeus, the lost, and forgave him. We love this story, because we used to be the lost, until Jesus found us and saved us with the water of Holy Baptism. We love this story because it encourages us to reach the lost. But another reason for our love of this story is that we still find ourselves among the lost in our daily Christian lives.

"Wait a minute," some of you may challenge me. "I am part of the faithful. Who are you to tell me that I am still lost? I am a seminarian. I am a deaconess student. I am a professor. I am a Christian in good standing. Do not include me in the category of the lost!" I agree! But when you begin to say: "I do not need to *be taught*. I do not need to *be reached*. I do not need to *be cared for*," you begin to see my point! Think about the apostle Paul. He was a former persecutor of the church. When we trace his words, we discover that his knowledge of his sinfulness grew deeper as he grew older. In 1 Corinthians 15:9, he was claiming himself as "the least *of the apostles*." When we move to Ephesians 3:8, we hear him say, "I am the very least *of all the saints.*" But toward the end of his life, he confessed, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinners, of whom I am the foremost*" (1 Tim 1:15). Did Paul's faith get weaker and weaker as he got older? No. Because he grew as a Christian, he became more aware of the fact of his sinfulness.

"Reach the lost" of our mission statement reflects the Lord's words, "The Son of Man came *to seek and to save the lost*" (19:10). Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, Jesus knows you. Jesus knows your need, your fear, your concerns, your weaknesses, your sins. It is good to be reached out to by Jesus still *today*, which he actually does here and now! God came into the mess that sinners have created and was born as one of us. He took our sin and answered for it. He took our death and overcame it. All this he did *for you*, so that he might declare to you, "*Today* salvation has come to this house." Jesus still comes to the messy sinners, and messy sinners alone. He does not call the righteous. There is *great joy* in heaven over one sinner who repents. And *you* are the reason for that *great joy*!

What a joy it must have been for Zacchaeus to welcome Jesus at his home. What a joy it is for us to welcome Jesus *today*, for messy sinners like us! It must have been for my father, too, when he was converted back in the 1940s, when Jesus through a devout Christian lady, a teller of a local bank in Japan, sought after a high school boy by *painstakingly* asking him more than thirty times to come to her tiny and poor congregation until he finally agreed to come. On that first visit, Jesus saved him. The

joy was *with Jesus and all his angels* more than with my father and more than with the members of that congregation.

Jesus is the one who rejoices more than us in this 175th anniversary celebration. And his joy will continue not only for another 175 years but forever, *because* the Lord Jesus is alive and will never die. We are his. Every day, Jesus continues to give us his gifts. "*Today*, I am here for you," says he. So, we pray, "We are yours, oh Lord. Build us solid to you, and use us." Happy anniversary! Amen.

Naomichi Masaki

Thanksgiving Day Church Services: Are They Really Necessary?

A not uncommon way of beginning a Thanksgiving Day sermon in conservative Lutheran churches is telling the assembled saints that the holiday is not liturgically required like Christmas or Easter is. This service is seen as nonessential. This may cause those present to ask why they are in church. They now have good reason not to come the following year. The holiday was initiated by Abraham Lincoln during the dark days of the Civil War, so the day has this religious significance: that God is worthy of thanks even in bad times. Whether Lincoln was a Christian, and in what sense, is a matter of continuing historical debate. Driving through the neighborhood on the morning of Thanksgiving Day, you are unlikely to see worshipers dressed in their Sunday best heading to church. Catholics do not celebrate the holiday and neither do the Eastern Orthodox. Other denominations often use the day for interdenominational worship, led by the members of the local clergy association. LCMS congregations commonly commemorate Thanksgiving, many with a service on Wednesday evening.

For the sake of religious freedom, the Pilgrims fled England first for Holland and then for America with a brief stopover back in England. They landed on Cape Cod in 1620, and the following year the survivors of a horribly cold winter held a feast with the Native Americans in thanksgiving to God. So here are the roots of our national holiday. In the Old Testament, certain days were set apart for thanking God, so there is a biblical precedent for the commemoration apart from a president's or governor's proclamation. Ironically, *eucharist*, a word sometimes used for the service of Holy Communion, means "thanksgiving" and specifically thanksgiving to God. If a Lutheran pastor ends a reading with the words "This is the Word of the Lord," without coaxing the congregation would most likely respond, "Thanks be to God." If he says, "Bless we the Lord," again the response is, "Thanks be to God." This

is part of our religious fiber. Thanking God comes close to being synonymous with believing in him.

Quite apart from whether a president or governor proclaims that as citizens we should thank God, our society has already scraped off any remnants of religious meaning from the day. Even going around the table and having each one say for what he or she is thankful for hardly makes it a Christian custom, since the focus of thanking should be on the God who gives and not on what he gives. The Giver takes precedence over the gift—or at least he should. Any thought of thanking God for his bounty has been rendered nearly impossible by calling it "Turkey Day." If watching Macy's two-hour Thanksgiving parade is not a good enough reason for staying home and skipping church, there are the afternoon football games. With Santa Claus coming in at the end of the parade, it provides a transition into the season named for Christ, a season in which, however, his name is hardly mentioned in public celebrations.

In the pericope of the cleansing of the ten lepers, which is the Gospel assigned for Thanksgiving Day, Jesus says that in thanking him the once-leprous Samaritan is thanking God. "Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" (Luke 17:18).[7] So Thanksgiving Day is more than a First Article matter, in that we speak of God not in generic terms but address him as the Father of our Lord Jesus, who is present with his Spirit. Christians should be a little uncomfortable speaking of God only in terms of the First Article, as if that would be possible at all. John is quite specific about this: "All things were made through him [Jesus]" (John 1:3). Jesus is the Pantocrator, the Almighty, a title used of Jesus in the Book of Revelation (Rev 1:8). Should we have to settle on a corrective theme for Thanksgiving Day, it could be this one.

Nothing would be amiss if in our sermons, we commemorated those Englishmen who were not going to let King James I tell them how to conduct their church services. In Europe, kings called the shots not only in secular but also churchly matters. So it was ever since the Roman emperor Constantine legalized Christianity, which led to its establishment as the official religion of the empire. With the dissolution of the empire, kings and other princes assumed that authority, which led often to conflict between princes on one side and the pope and bishops on the other. It was also a factor in the sixteenth-century Reformation.

In England, the king's domination of the church led to a group of outsiders, known to us as the Pilgrims, who left England first for the Netherlands. There a

[7] All Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

shared faith with the Reformed did not compensate for differences in language, so they sailed across the Atlantic not to Virginia, as they had planned, but to the uninviting New England coast, not far from what was soon settled by Puritans as Boston. Within a year, half of the Pilgrims had died. Looking at replicas of the rickety *Mayflower*, one wonders how many times it may have crossed the minds of these English refugees that the religion of the king may not have been all that bad. Today with governments and courts in America making regulations about where and how Christians may worship, with persecutions of Christians who choose not to support same-sex marriage publicly, with cancel culture and wokeism, the Pilgrims in their day—even with their adherence to the Reformed confession of Protestantism—stand out as exemplars of faith.

If Lutheran congregations cancel Thanksgiving Day services so as not to associate themselves with the Pilgrims, they overlook their own story of how the Missouri Synod came into being when Lutherans in Saxony and Prussia fled their countries to avoid a religious persecution that would require them to adopt Reformed liturgies and practices. In 1830, Lutherans in Prussia were forced to use a liturgy that, in accommodation to the minority Reformed population, required them to compromise their faith in the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the Holy Supper. This persecution occurred slightly more than two centuries after the Pilgrims successfully fled their persecution. Refugees from the Saxon State Church came in five ships, of which only four made it to the port of New Orleans—one was lost at sea. These Lutherans even prepared a document like the Mayflower Compact, which provided rules for their community in their adopted country. Things did not go well in their new home in Missouri, and some wanted to go back to Germany, just as some Pilgrims wanted to return to England and later did so. The fleshpots of Egypt have their attraction. Most stayed and found other Lutherans in America who believed as they did. These are the people who established The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Compare the Missouri Synod's story to the Pilgrims'. Change the language from English to German, add a few more ships, push the calendar forward two centuries, and one story begins to resemble the other. The characters in the story have different names, spoke different languages, lived at different times, and came from different places, but the plots of their stories are startlingly similar—it was about fleeing religious persecution. Persecution belongs to the Christian experience. Read Acts. Why then would Lutherans in America *not* celebrate Thanksgiving Day services?

David P. Scaer

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing": What Happened to Stanza 4?

With the passing of time, how things once were is soon forgotten—but sometimes not. "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" is one of those pieces of music that is sung in church as a hymn and as a carol outside of the church, even though with the passing of each year carols are heard less in secular venues. For some, it was annoying to hear Christmas music on the radio and in all sorts of public places weeks before the holiday. Now we hear it less often. Christmas music, much of it religious, was standard in the local fitness club. Then one year it was all secular Christmas music: Santa Claus and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer. My petitions to return to the old ways of playing religious Christmas music did not carry any weight, and besides all that, the club closed down during the COVID crisis. Things do change.

Things changed with *Lutheran Service Book* (*LSB*) replacing the *Lutheran Worship* (*LW*) hymnal and *The Lutheran Hymnal* (*TLH*).[8] It is hard to replace old friends with new ones, but according to all reports the transition from the older hymnals to *LSB* went, with few exceptions, smoothly, so congratulations to the surviving members of the Commission on Worship who produced it. *Lutheran Worship* was produced by the Commission on Worship of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) with much of the material taken over from the *Lutheran Book of Worship* (*LBW*)[9] that was produced by the synods now comprising the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the LCMS. The LCMS still possesses copyright privileges to *LBW*. This brings us to the rendition of "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" that appeared first in *LBW* 60, then *LW* 49, and now *LSB* 380, which sits in LCMS pew racks.

Here is a carol that many churched and unchurched folks know by heart. In singing the *LSB* version for the first time, coming to the end of the hymn at the third stanza and not going on to stanza 4, as we did in *TLH*, was like traveling along an interstate at seventy miles an hour and driving into a wall. The mind and the voice wanted to go on, but the organist did not, and really could not. Whatever happened to stanza 4? Those over thirty may have a living memory of the missing stanza, and those under twenty may have never heard its words in church. Here is the missing stanza taken from *TLH*: "Come, Desire of Nations, come. Fix in us Thy humble home; Oh, to all Thyself impart, Formed in each believing heart! Hark! the herald

[8] *Lutheran Service Book* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2006); *Lutheran Worship* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1982); *The Lutheran Hymnal* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1941).

[9] *Lutheran Book of Worship* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1978).

angels sing, 'Glory to the newborn King; Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!' Hark! The herald angels sing, 'Glory to the new-born King'" (*TLH* 94).

Omitting the stanza was hardly on account of the hymn's length. Of Charles Wesley's nine hymns that made it into *LSB*, only "Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies" (*LSB* 873) is measurably shorter. So the omission of the fourth stanza of "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" was hardly a matter of space. The longer hymn "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" (*LSB* 700) escaped the executioner's ax, as did the seven-stanza "Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing" (*LSB* 528). Stanza 4 of "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" was missing in *LW*, which probably took over the amputated version from *LBW*. Here it can only be surmised what was in the mind of the joint commissions of the LCMS and the synods now comprising the ELCA, or whoever makes these kinds of decisions, in omitting the fourth stanza. Was it omitted because of the Lutheran aversion to the dwelling of Christ in the believer as a cause of salvation, as might be suggested to some in the line "Formed in each believing heart"? Whether this has ever crossed the mind of anyone who sang the carol, especially Lutherans, is doubtful. More of a concern is the fourth stanza of Charles Wesley's "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling": "Finish then Thy new creation, Pure and spotless let us be; . . . Changed from glory into glory, Till in heav'n we take our place" (*LSB* 700). As it stands, this fits the Wesleyan doctrine of striving for moral perfection, but it can also refer to the glory believers will receive, experience, and enjoy in the next life—and that is great. Hymns as forms of poetry are not subject to doctrinal scrutiny in the way ordinary theological sentences are. My concern here is not doctrinal, but deals with why the fourth stanza of "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" was omitted and why this omission, originating in *LBW*, made it into *LW* and from there was transfused into *LSB*. Was its continued omission in *LSB* accidental in that the commission did not compare the *LW* version of "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" with *TLH*?[10]

If we can speculate, its omission was due to an aversion to the Methodist teaching that the indwelling of Christ is a cause of salvation, which according to the

[10] As written by Wesley in 1739, the hymn had ten four-line stanzas. According to the eight-line melody familiar to us, this would be five stanzas. In a later edition (1743), Wesley revised it, omitting the last eight lines, giving us our traditional four-stanza hymn. Already in 1940, stanza 4 was omitted in The Hymnal of the Protestant Episcopal Church (New York: The Church Pension Fund, 1940), no. 27. Was *LBW* following the lead of the Episcopal Church? See also John W. Matthews Jr. and Joseph Herl, "380 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," in Lutheran Service Book: Companion to the Hymns (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2019), 1:136–139; W. G. Polack, The Handbook to the Lutheran Hymnal (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1942), 76–77, no. 94. Polack includes the original text.

Lutheran doctrine of subjective justification happens through faith. If this is the reason for its omission, then also stanza 13 of Luther's well-known Christmas hymn "From Heaven Above to Earth I Come" (*LSB* 358) should be subject to the same kind of scrutiny: "Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled, A quiet chamber set apart For You to dwell within my heart." Christ dwells in believers.

After "O Come, All Ye Faithful" and "Silent Night," "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" is the hymn that both churched and unchurched people sing by memory. This short Theological Observer is written with the hope that in the next edition of the hymnal, which this author will not be around to see, the fourth stanza of "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" will be restored to its rightful place in the galaxy of the songs we love to sing in the Lutheran Church at Christmas. Until that time, maybe the words can be supplied in the church bulletin. It does not take up that much space.

David P. Scaer

One of the Holy Trinity Suffered for Us

Very few books come with a title bearing such theological depth as the recently published *Festschrift* for William C. Weinrich, *One of the Holy Trinity Suffered for Us*. Trinity Sunday, which commemorates the mystery of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, comes several weeks after Good Friday, and it may not be evident that the two commemorations belong together. Christ's death for our sins is the object of our faith and, on that account, crosses are placed on our altars. We are accustomed to hearing "Jesus died for us," "the Son of God died," or as Paul says, "at the right time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom 5:6).[11] Christ's death for our sins was part of God's eternal plan. It was not just a random moment in time. In his sermon on Pentecost, Peter called his hearers to repentance for calling for the crucifixion of Jesus; however, it happened according to the "foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23). The second stanza of the hymn "O Darkest Woe" has this startling line: "O sorrow dread! Our God is dead" (*LSB* 448). This does not mean that God went out of existence, as was proposed in the formerly popular "God is dead" theology of the 1960s and 70s. God himself is life and the source of all life. In preaching to the Athenians, Paul said as much: "In him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). So what does it mean that God died?

[11] All Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Death in the Scriptures does not mean that the one who dies no longer exists. Rather in death, the soul is separated from the body. As the Book of Ecclesiastes says, the body returns to the earth and the soul to God who gave it (12:7). Jesus was God, but as a man, he died the kind of death that all die. In dying, he entrusted his soul to God: "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" (Luke 23:46). And so Stephen committed his soul to Jesus—"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59)—and he became the first of many martyrs who died confessing Christ, whose souls are safely with him (Rev 20:4). Jesus promised the thief who was crucified with him that he would, on that very day of their death, be with Jesus in paradise (Luke 23:43). Jesus' words on the cross, "It is finished" (John 19:30), do not refer to his death as the soul leaving the body, but signals that his suffering for our salvation had been accomplished. This was happening as he spoke these words: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matt 27:46). When he committed his soul to God with those words, the atonement for all was a completed reality.

Christ's suffering was literally hell. Along with the extreme agony of being put to death by crucifixion, God the Father had removed his gracious presence from him. Matthew points to God's abandonment of Jesus when he says that, from noon to 3:00 p.m., there was a darkness over the face of the earth (Matt 27:45). In his preaching, Jesus spoke of the horror of hell as the "outer darkness" (see Matt 8:12; 22:13; 25:30), the place where the light of God's gracious presence is absent. Death by crucifixion may have been the cruelest form of execution ever designed, inflicting pain throughout the body. Until the moment of death, this form of public execution exposed the victim to public ridicule. Being forsaken by God is unimaginably worse. God's abandonment of Jesus in his crucifixion is the most profound moment in time and eternity because it involved all three persons of the Trinity, which, in and of itself, is the mystery of all mysteries.

All this is contained in the title of the *Festschrift* for the Rev. Dr. William C. Weinrich, *One of the Holy Trinity Suffered for Us.* It is also all made visible in the book cover, a thought-provoking painting of the Holy Trinity by Jusepe de Ribera (1591–1652). At the center of the painting is the corpse of Jesus, resting on a shroud stained with his blood. Suspended in space (indicating that Christ's death was more than just another event in time), the shroud is held by angels who turn their faces away, daring not to look upon the tragedy brought about by man's sin. Wounds in the hands, feet, and side of Jesus are visible, indicating that Jesus' death happened in time. In the painting, the Father looks forlornly down on the corpse of Jesus, signifying that this was the only way in which humankind could have been redeemed from the tragedy of sin which separated them from God and which all had brought upon themselves. In offering Christ as an atonement, God was not coerced by

anything outside of himself. He did it out of a sense of his own love and righteousness. He loves because he is love, not because of an external ideal of love. He is righteous not because of an external ideal of law, but because he is righteous in himself. God is moved to do what he does because of what he is in himself. In him, righteousness and love exist in perfect harmony. His righteousness required responding to man's disobedience with exclusion from his presence, and his love for the creature, created in his image, moved him to offer his Son as an atonement to bring the disobedient creature back to himself. Without atonement for the transgression, God would offend against who he is. As it says, "The LORD is our righteousness" (Jer 33:16).

Execution by crucifixion was not uncommon in the ancient world. The Persians did it, the Greeks took it over, and the Romans perfected it until it was abolished by Emperor Constantine in the fourth century. The crucifixion of Jesus may have been a perversion of justice in that he had done nothing that made him deserving of death, but others, too, had been put to death unjustly. What made Christ's death an exception was that it happened in heaven. To be more exact, it happened to him who is true God, and all three persons were involved in the act. Not only did Jesus as the Son offer himself as a sacrifice to God, but also, in the same act, God offered his Son as a sacrifice. In de Ribera's painting, hovering above the hands of the Father, on the head of the Son, is the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, who had assisted Jesus in his suffering and through whom God would raise Jesus from the dead. As the sin-bearer, Jesus was abandoned by God, but in carrying out God's will, in offering himself as a redemptive sacrifice, the Father never abandoned him. Those who are in Christ are, in life or death, never abandoned by God. The title of the Weinrich *Festschrift* says it all: *One of the Holy Trinity Suffered for Us.*

You can order your copy of Dr. Weinrich's *Festschrift* at https://bookstore.ctsfw.edu/ or by calling +1 260-452-2160.

David P. Scaer

Christian Identity: Colossians 2:6–15[12]

Well, is it so or not so that we live in totally unique times? It is, of course, true that every time is filled with its own evils and its temptations and its destructiveness. But I must say, I do not know of any time in the history of man which is quite like our time. Tell me of a time in which the entire reality which lies outside the psychic

[12] This sermon was preached on July 30, 2021, in Kramer Chapel. Video of the sermon can be viewed at https://media.ctsfw.edu/Weblink/ViewDetails/19750.

self is denied. In what time has such a view ever been, except in our own time? And so, of course, it is true, obviously, and necessarily so, that identity is at issue, when the substance and foundation of identity is merely on the vagaries of psychic instabilities! So it comes to somewhat of a shock to the modern mind how this text by the apostle Paul speaks.

Now, this text does not quite read as the translation has it. It does not begin, "As you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him" (Col 2:6, ESV).[13] That is not quite what the Greek says. The Greek says, "Since you have received Christ Jesus, the Lord, walk in him." That is a much stronger statement. It does not say "walk after him," as though Jesus is a good example. This is a much stronger statement of discipleship than following after Jesus. No, "In him, walk." In him, not according to him, by way of his example, nor even according to his power, but "In him, walk." It is a remarkable claim! It is a remarkable demand! It is a remarkable promise!

And exactly who is this "him" in whom we are to walk? Well, the apostle tells us. He is the firstborn of creation. He is the one through whom all things have been created and unto whom all things are tending. He is the one in whom there is the fullness—later on in our text—of deity, which dwells bodily (Col 2:9). This "him" in whom we are to walk is a man, but such a man. This text does not speak of the preexistent, divine Christ. It speaks of Jesus, the man of flesh, who was himself the very human form of God. And so, this man's cause was none other than the cause of his heavenly Father—no distinction, no separation, no division. The cause of God was nothing else than this man, who in the world and as man represented the cause of God. So when our apostle tells us, "Since you have received Christ Jesus, the Lord, walk in him," he means that you and I are now given the task to represent in the world the cause of Christ, which is the cause of God. And our identity lies precisely therein.

When you go home, I want you to open up this text of Colossians. You can start if you want where our text begins, in chapter 2, verse 6. Or maybe you could begin in chapter 1, verse 15 and the great christological hymn, and just ponder these words that you read. Is it about Christ? Of course! It is about you too—every verse.

Just pay attention. For example, in chapter 2, verse 9 and following—we love this dogmatic claim, do we not? That the fullness of divinity, the πλήρωμα τῆς Θεότητος, dwells in him σωματικῶς, bodily. The next passage, following directly on: "And you are completely filled in him." You are a participant in that man, who is of

[13] Scripture quotations marked ESV are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. All other Scripture quotations are the author's translation.

deity, bodily inhabited. Now, that is an identity, ladies and gentlemen! That is an identity. You are rooted in a man, who is himself by a personal identity rooted in the divine Son, who is himself rooted in the divine Father. That is an identity! So when we sing about Christ being the head of the church, it means he is *your* head. And the body follows the head, or the body is *dead*. A body decapitated does not walk. And so, it is in this man that you are going to walk—because we are talking about Jesus! We are not talking about some divine sphere of influence. We are talking about the concrete man, Jesus. Is it a mystery? I suspect it is. But nonetheless, this man in whom we are to walk is a man. That is our identity.

So when today the issues of identity rise up in strange, strange ways, you ask yourself, "Is that according to Christ?" Who was the man who represented directly, and by way of an inseparable identity, the cause of God? Is that really what he represents? I know it is a little strange and banal, but "What would Jesus do?" is a serious question.

And then, of course, our text speaks about our Baptism, does it not? This is said to be the circumcision of Christ (Col 2:11–12). Your Baptism was a circumcision. But what a circumcision! The circumcision of the old covenant of course was the foreskin. Paul says Christ's circumcision means you've taken away your entire flesh! And put on, of course, his body! And so we can speak, "You were dead in your trespasses and in the uncircumcision of your body" (Col 2:13). So to be circumcised according to Christ is not just to become a member of a group. It is to die, so that you might live in the One in whom you are to walk. That is identity. An identity which is rooted in a *reality*. Not your reality, not my reality, not the reality of our heads or of our psyche or of our heart, but the reality of the ever-living God. That is an identity! So, when we are called upon to give our identity, or when we ask the question, "Who am I?" the answer we are to give is this: "I am what Jesus is."

And then, the last part of this passage. "He disarmed the rulers and the authorities, and placarded them openly to their shame" (Col 2:15). Now, the ESV translation here says "by triumphing over them," but I think the Greek word here has its primary meaning: "leading these powers in a victory procession as slaves." How does Jesus do that? Is that just something Jesus does? Well, yes—but through you. Or through me. If we are in him, then Christ leads the powers captive through faithful Christians. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, you are in this text. If you abstract yourself from the story and meaning of Christ, then this text loses its focus and its meaning. This text does not speak in abstractions. It speaks quite directly to you and to me. There is no victory in the world if *you* are not victorious. Or is it not true that Jesus came for you, that you might rise with him?

It is quite amazing how often in these few verses this dative construction exists: "In him, walk." "Buried with him." "In him you have life," this kind of language. Seven times in our text, the "in him" appears, and if you add the first chapter to the mix, you've got a bigger number. Christian identity lies in the man Jesus, our Savior, in the man Jesus, our Lord, in the man Jesus, our King. And yes, in the man Jesus, our identity.

So as you confessed in the hymn, which we just sang, "Your sacraments, O Lord, And Your saving Word To us, Lord, pure retain." And then comes the plea: "O make us faithful Christians."[14] If you want a description of the reality—big word, ontology—of Christian identity, of that faithful Christian, you read Colossians.

William C. Weinrich

[14] From the hymn "Lord Jesus Christ, the Church's Head" (*LSB* 647:2, 3). Text: © 1941 Concordia Publishing House.

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Research Notes

Online Resources from CTSFW Available to Pastors

All pastors are scholars, even if they do not seek PhDs or other terminal degrees. Each week, pastors study biblical texts, prepare for worship, explore doctrinal expositions in the Lutheran Confessions and other systematic texts, locate resources, and research history, demographics, and issues in our culture and society. Both seminary libraries of the LCMS are ready to assist professional church workers in finding the resources they need to serve God and the people in their care.

Concordia Theological Seminary does this in a number of ways. The Kroemer Library loans books and other materials to church workers on the roster of the LCMS and will scan articles and chapters of books for them.[1] The library also provides access to Atla's *Atlas PLUS for Alum* for the seminary's alumni.[2] The seminary's professors record podcasts that explore the readings of the *LSB* three-year lectionary.[3] The chapel staff also provide podcasts to help with preparing worship services for the upcoming season of the church year.[4]

The Kroemer Library also maintains an online institutional repository, informally known as the media server.[5] It is an electronic index to a wide variety of texts, audio files, video files, and images produced or recommended by CTSFW faculty, students, guest lecturers, her sister institutions, the LCMS, and the seminary's friends. The home page of the media server contains quick links to featured items, the newest titles indexed, and the most viewed objects. A search box provides a full-text search engine, and there are three indexes to help browse our collections.

In the upper-left corner of the media server home page is a drop-down menu that allows you to select an index to browse. The Scripture verses index allows you to view lists of sermons and articles written on particular passages by selecting the biblical book, chapter, and starting verse.[6] The periodical index allows you to view journal and magazine articles by title and issue.[7] Here you can find the complete

[1] The catalog of items owned by the Kroemer Library is at https://ctsfw.on.worldcat.org/discovery.

[2] To request assistance, send an email to library@ctsfw.edu. Include your name, the office in which you serve, your mailing address and/or email address, and a citation for the book, article, or chapter you are requesting. If you are requesting the Atlas PLUS password, mention that you are an alum of CTSFW and your graduation year.

[3] "Podcasts/Lectionary," CTSFW, https://video.ctsfw.edu/category/Podcasts%3ELectionary/.

[4] "Podcasts/Worship," CTSFW, https://video.ctsfw.edu/category/Podcasts%3EWorship/.

[5] "Media Resources," CTSFW, https://media.ctsfw.edu.

[6] "Browse Titles by Bible Verse," CTSFW, https://media.ctsfw.edu/Bible.

[7] "Index of Periodicals," CTSFW, https://media.ctsfw.edu/Periodical.

contents of *Concordia Theological Quarterly*, *The Springfielder*, *Concordia Theological Monthly*, *Theological Monthly*, *Theological Quarterly*, and select articles from other publications. The public collections index includes links to papers delivered at symposia, conferences, and other meetings; the lectionary podcasts by series; course videos; sermons preached at Kramer Chapel and the Lutheran Hour; and miscellaneous subjects.[8]

Best of all our resources are the library staff. We are always ready to assist you in locating the information you seek. Email us at library@ctsfw.edu.

Robert E. Smith
Electronics Resource Librarian, CTSFW

[8] "Public Collections," CTSFW, https://media.ctsfw.edu/Collection/Public.

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Book Reviews

***Luther's Rome, Rome's Luther: How the City Shaped the Reformer*. By Carl P.E. Springer. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2021. 292 + xxv pages. Paperback. $27.00.**

Sometime during his late twenties, Martin Luther traveled to Rome as a pilgrim from Germany and, after spending some four weeks there, returned home (1). Specific details as to what year the trip happened, which route he followed there and back, the identity of his traveling companion, just why he went, and exactly what he saw and did in the city have been lost to the mists of time—and to the vagaries of Luther's memory, for the evidence, such as it is, was based on the reformer's own recollections, usually presented decades after the fact. So one of the things Springer has done in this "masterpiece of Renaissance/Reformation scholarship" (dust jacket) is to sift through all those meaty Weimar volumes containing the reformer's critical works, letters, biblical expositions, and table talks (written in Luther's idiomatic German and Latin) with an eye toward gleaning details not only about the initial trip itself, but Luther's complicated relationship toward Rome. Then there is all the secondary scholarship in English, German, French, and Italian devoted to these and related issues (see the bibliography, 259–277). Basically Springer supposes that Luther possessed a classic "love hate" relationship toward the eternal city and all that she represented to him and to the world. He was himself a son of the Roman Church, his "mother," and the pope was his "father"—at least, at first. However, toward the end of his life there was a definite "hardening" as Luther realized that his earlier reforming efforts had come to naught: "His language directed against the Roman papacy became almost entirely condemnatory, and his humor turned more sardonic and bitter" (192). There was not nearly as much evidence of "love" as "hate" in his later writings toward those who set themselves in opposition to his prophetic proclamations.

The book is organized into four coordinated chapters that probe the complex relationship Luther possessed vis-à-vis Rome: (1) "Hail, Holy Rome!" (The Pilgrim); (2) "I Love Cicero" (The Latinist); (3) "The Kingdom Ours Remaineth" (The Citizen); (4) "If There Is a Hell, Rome Is Built on It" (The Catholic). The first chapter is longest, and the part wherein Springer attempts to retrace Luther's original journey and weigh how much of it may have been true (see "Who Knows Whether It's True?," 49–60). Interestingly, support from the SunTrust Chair of Excellence in the Humanities, a post Springer currently holds at the University of Tennessee Chattanooga, made it possible for him in 2018–2019 to spend about six months trying to retrace Luther's steps while on his way to and from Rome, and in the city itself (ix). In the second chapter, Springer exposes Luther's formidable command of

the Latin language and Roman history. In the third chapter, Springer points out Luther's conservative political views, and that he was indeed a loyal citizen of the Holy Roman Empire—which, according to Voltaire, was never in any way "holy, nor Roman, nor an empire" (114). As such, Luther was inordinately respectful toward Charles V, even though the latter plainly did not "get" the Reformation, and even proved to be Luther's implacable foe (126). In the fourth chapter, Springer sets forth Luther's viscerally negative reactions toward the pope, shaped to some extent by the reformer's declining health and even psychological factors (154–155). Despite Luther's "negative speech" against Rome especially toward the end of his life, Springer attempts to demonstrate that the harsh language the reformer employed could be viewed as an acerbic preachment of the law—intended to drive the papists to repentance and forgiveness in the gospel (see "Law and Gospel," 177–191): "The ultimate purpose of the scalpel is not to harm but to heal" (179).

Springer's book demonstrates mastery not only of Latin philology and the ancient world in general, but also Luther's spiritual struggles and finer points of Lutheran doctrine. As such, Springer himself is indubitably the leading voice in that movement known as Lutheranism and the Classics (there have been six conferences to date, hosted at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, in late September/early October on alternating years). Springer has written extensively on Martin Luther before—for example, *Luther's Aesop* (2011) and *Cicero in Heaven: The Roman Rhetor and Luther's Reformation* (2017). Springer's latest book will be of interest to classicists, pastors, and laypersons who want to probe the reformer's complicated relationship toward Rome, and Rome's relationship toward him.

John G. Nordling

***Luke-Acts in Modern Interpretation*. Edited by Stanley E. Porter and Ron C. Fay. Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2021. 398 pages. Hardback. $31.99.**

The confessional church's relationship with the academy is increasingly tenuous. Attend the convention of the Society of Biblical Literature, and you will have to look long and hard for sessions that bear the mark of true Christianity. Identity politics is the order of the day, and you are bound to find the text under various sociological lenses, with the result that the Scriptures end up looking like the glasses by which they are read. This has long been the case, but no one can doubt the scholarship of previous generations, in which entrance into the academy demanded mastery of many languages and a wide-ranging knowledge of the cultural and historical context. Many Christian colleges either accept the orthodoxy of the academy as a given, or they avoid such scholars all together.

But there is still much to learn. *Luke-Acts in Modern Interpretation* is a case in point. In a helpful volume of twelve essays, readers are introduced to the work of such scholars as Martin Dibelius, F. F. Bruce, and Hans Conzelmann. It might surprise today's readers to learn that Adolf Harnack was convinced that the book of Acts was written around the year 62 AD. Harnack's argument for Luke himself being a Christian from Antioch is compelling. Zachary K. Dawson's essay "Adolf Harnack and Lukan Scholarship at the Height of Classical Liberalism" offers an open window into the thinking of a man who influenced much of the academy that came after him. Likewise, James D. Dvorak demonstrates how Martin Dibelius highlighted aspects of Luke's Gospel that comport with the ancient genre of biography. Osvaldo Padilla shows how Henry Joel Cadbury helped us to see Luke-Acts as a work in two parts, the Gospel anticipating Christ's work in the church of the Pentecost. Stanley E. Porter gives the reader an appreciation for F. F. Bruce's thoroughgoing defense of Luke as a reliable historian.

A book such as this will be of interest to those who wish to be introduced to the titans of scholarship past, an age in which the texts, even when put under a skeptical microscope, mattered. For those who would like to gather a little bit of the past, this volume is recommended.

Peter J. Scaer

***Provoking Proverbs: Wisdom and the Ten Commandments.* By David Lawrence Coe. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2020. 160 pages. Paperback. $16.99.**

Many have recognized that the Psalms in all their rugged beauty are more relevant than ever. But the wisdom literature seems to lag behind in popularity. The Sermon on the Mount is too often treated as a kind of unattainable ideal, while the Proverbs seem perhaps outdated. But there may be no more valuable book for today's world than Solomon's Proverbs. Wisdom is in short supply. What wisdom literature teaches us is that the world is created in a certain way, and that there is an underlying and accessible reality beneath all things. Consider a world in which marriage has been undefined, and no one can define, with any kind of confidence, the meaning of a man or a woman. But wisdom takes us deeper. Wisdom literature reveals to us a life that has meaning, a life that is lived according to God's purpose and design.

David Lawrence Coe, a professor of theology and philosophy at Concordia University, Nebraska, has done the church a great favor by authoring his accessible and engaging *Provoking Proverbs.* The book's structure is simple and helpful, matching proverbs to each of the Ten Commandments. This volume would work

well for any age group, from youth to seniors. It is especially helpful that Coe offers a template for putting the proverbs to memory, so that the wisdom of God might be planted in our hearts and enrich our lives. Along the way, Coe offers insightful and amusing anecdotes and observation. One of the best parts may be Coe's plan to put to memory ten proverbs, one for each of the commandments.

Perhaps this book fits our age so well because it is so countercultural. The world teaches us that we are our own creators and that there is no such thing as reality, only my truth and your truth. This secular aimlessness has left many without rudders or compasses. In a world where pride is given a month in its honor, we would do well to put certain proverbs to memory, such as "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov 16:18).[1] In a world where money matters, are we tempted toward stinginess? Proverbs 28:27 reminds us, "Whoever gives to the poor will not want, but he who hides his eyes will get many a curse." But entitlement is not an option, and hard work matters, as we read in Proverbs 28:19: "Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits will have plenty of poverty." What should a young man look for in a woman? Proverbs has plenty to say, and Coe leads us to the passages and puts them into an easy-to-follow context. No doubt, these proverbs are bound to hit us and hurt us in different ways. Each of us is prone to a certain kind of foolishness. So, let the proverbs have their way with us. And use this book with your young people, at home, in school, and in church. Use it in college classes along with Aristotle. Compare and contrast. When you feel sheepish to speak about things, let Solomon start the conversation, and let David Lawrence Coe be your guide.

Peter J. Scaer

***Faith Misused: Why Christianity Is Not Just Another Religion*. By Alvin J. Schmidt. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2022. 150 pages. Paperback. $15.99.**

For a faithless generation, the word *faith* has become part of the general vocabulary. Even those who have very little use for God can say "I am praying for you" and "keep the faith" with perhaps no more meaning than being courteous. Retired seminary and college professor Alvin Schmidt has produced a very readable analysis of this misunderstanding and convincingly argues that the word *faith* itself

[1] All Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

is strictly a Christian concept drawn from the Bible. In chapter 4, Schmidt gets practical and lists several misuses of the word: "Faith Is Illogical Belief," "Leap of Faith" (popularized by Kierkegaard), "Faith Requires No Evidence," "Evidential Faith Is Inferior Faith," and "Faith Is Independent of the Five Senses." This was summed up by President Dwight D. Eisenhower: "Our government makes no sense unless it is founded on a deeply felt religious faith—and I don't care what it is" (90). That says it all. Christians, Muslims, and Jews can all have faith. This book will make for lively discussion in church Bible classes and will open the eyes of high school, college, and seminary students studying religion.

Chapter 2, "Faith Hijacked from Its Biblical, Historical Foundation" (26–49), is for those who want to delve into the history of how faith was denuded of its christological content. It all began with the eighteenth-century Enlightenment up through David Friedrich Strauss, Rudolf Bultmann, and Paul Tillich. The much admired Dietrich Bonhoeffer held that regarding the resurrection of Jesus as a historical event is "senseless and crude" (46). Note should be made of Martin Kähler who, by separating the Christ of faith from the Christ of history, could find a place for the resurrection in preaching but not in history (37–41). For those who are still asking what the theological fuss is all about, they can find an answer in *Faith Misused*.

David P. Scaer

***Bright Valley of Love: The True Story of a Handicapped Child Who Finds a Haven of Love in the Nightmare of Nazi Germany*. By Edna Hong. Fort Wayne, Indiana: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 2021. 159 pages. Paperback. $9.99.**

The book's idyllic title seems undermined by its jarring subtitle. What is it that makes for a wonderful life, a life well lived? What do we prize? Many would list health and happiness, a good home with parents who care, followed then, perhaps by a family of our own. But Edna Hong takes us beyond surface smiles into a deep and abiding joy that can be found in Christ and in the Christian love of those who care. Hong tells us of flowers in the midst of thorns, hope that thrives in the desolation of human frailty against the backdrop of Nazi horrors.

Hong introduces us to Gunther, an epileptic with limbs feeble and deformed. Children may thrive on words of affirmation, but Gunther was told that he was "no good for anything." And that was from his grandma. But to Grandma's credit, she stepped in when Gunther's mom wanted nothing to do with him. She may have been ashamed of her grandchild, but she had just enough maternal instinct to spoon feed the child and ultimately take him to Patmos, a Christian home for disabled children,

and that would make all the difference. It was there, in this little boarding school, that Gunther was first loved, really loved, and heard a deaconesses sing, "O Jesus so meek, O Jesus so kind."

Indeed, the book has a kind of soundtrack, sweet and gentle hymns that played in the background of Patmos, and then in the boarding school to follow. Gunther had not much of a family to speak of, but he was brought into a communion of love, a place where the pastor took special care and treated the children, whom he called birds, as his own. A place where music filled their ears and hymns were placed in their hearts and upon their tongues. There Gunther learned to walk, at least in his own way. And it was there at Patmos that Gunther learned the true meaning of Christmas, how Christ came to patch things up, because, as they learned, "There is a crack in everything."

This book is a splash of joy in what for too many is a joyless world. Emotionally charged, this is no easy read. At first, I read it all at once. This is not a story easily put away. The second reading, if anything, was harder, but in the best of ways. For those susceptible to weeping, tissues should be close at hand. But hardly any eye will be left unmoistened. Every life matters, and there can be great joy in the midst of sadness. And this is made possible by Christian love, and by the kind of songs written by the likes of Paul Gerhardt, the kind of treasures that can be found in *Lutheran Service Book* and any hymnal worth its salt. Life is precious, and music matters. Gunther's life is a testimony to such deep and abiding truth.

Peter J. Scaer

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Books Received

Jeremiah and Lamentations: A Commentary for Biblical Preaching and Teaching. By Duane Garrett and Calvin F. Pearson. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Minstry, 2022. 416 pages. Hardback. $38.99.

Jesus and Gender: Living as Sisters & Brothers in Christ. By Elyse M. Fitzpatrick and Eric Schumacher. Bellingham, WA: Kirkdale Press, 2022. 288 pages. Hardback. $24.99.

40 Questions about Arminianism. By J. Matthew Pinson. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2022. 400 pages. Paperback. $27.99.

Covenantal and Dispensational Theologies: Four Views on the Continuity of Scripture. Brent E. Parker and Richard J. Lucas, eds. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2022. 280 pages. Paperback. $30.00.

Your Kingdom Come: Comentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark. By Daniel M. Deutschlander. Milwaukee, WI: Northwestern Publishing House, 2021. 616 + xii pages. Hardback. $44.99.

Revelation through Old Testament Eyes. By Tremper Longman III. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2022. 368 pages. Paperback. $29.99.

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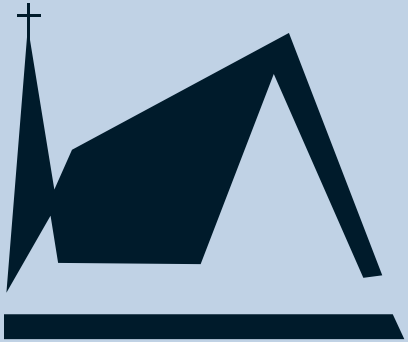

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