

The Opinion ("Gutachten")

Of the Theological Faculty of Wauwatosa, on the Essay Entitled: "God's Message to Us in Galatians: The Just Shall Live By Faith."

The Text

Translation by OTTO GRUENDEMANN

(G1) No proof is required to establish that the passage of Galatians 3:11, quoted as the theme above, pertains to justification by faith. The essayist commits the fundamental error of turning the text into a sanctification demand, namely this: that we who are justified must now lead a life by faith. The result is that he throws justification and sanctification together into one thing against which as "the keynote struck by the harp of God" he tests our life by faith as to its genuineness. Consequently he arrives at the following verdict of condemnation: The great majority of our congregation-members are people without faith. The current sermons and spiritual ministrations of our pastors are, by and large, lifeless drudgery under the law. The doctrine and teaching-methods of our teachers and professors in our schools, colleges, and especially in our seminaries quench the spirit and kill faith. Finally, he rejects the catechism course as it has been established among us, and the dogmatic and homiletic courses of our seminaries as well.

(G2) In the further course of his essay he assumes the role of John the Baptist preaching repentance to us, as to people who have lost Christ and are fallen from grace. But of the law as one of the instruments to
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A Small Part of The Story of Cain's Hardening of Heart, all of which appeared in FAITH-LIFE, July/August, 1960

By KARL KOEHLER

...Cain also has his worship, he believes in God — he cannot get around it: but as for the Saviour, of whom his parents and Abel make so much — he has no use for Him. Abel's offering and his faith, which there reveals itself, has a premise: the knowledge of sin. Cain evidently lacks this, he is a self-righteous man; and to such a one the Gospel must remain a book sealed with seven seals. Therefore he has no sensorium for Abel's offering in spite of the good news of the Saviour bound up in it and is angry that God prefers it to his offering, v. 5b. He himself brings his offering as a bounden duty to God and naturally assumes that Abel acted from the same motives and can't for the life of him understand why Abel's offering is better.

His lack of interest in the Saviour, his lack of sensitivity for the Gospel as it shows itself in his indifferent offering, and his lack of understanding for the offering of Abel is the beginning of Cain's spiritual stasis. It is self-stasis, somewhat similar to what we later find in the history of Esau, who also, growing up under the overtones of the Gospel of Abraham, with an indifferent shrug rejects the whole issue with the words: 'Behold I am at the point to die; and what profit shall this birthright do to me?' How the process of stasis develops can be seen from the following.

(End of manuscript)

EDITORIAL NOTE: Apparently this is the end of part one of the projected essay. The continuation, if it was written, has never been found.

A Brief History of the "Gutachten"

By PAUL HENSEL

THE Paper, *God's Message to Us in Galatians: The Just Shall Live by Faith*, 1926, was quietly read and received by the spiritually minded man in synod; but it provoked a violent commotion in the carnal mind.

The author of the paper belonged to the Western Wisconsin District of our synod. G. Thurow, who at that time had just moved from Wisconsin Rapids to Waterloo, was the president of the district. The paper and its contents therefore was his immediate responsibility according to synodical regulations. Thurow was hostile to the *Message* but unequipped to handle it. For instance, he had never heard of 'Ichabod' (1 Sam. 4:21) before. The oil of the Spirit was likewise rather low in the lamps of his administrative assistants. In fact, the theology of all the officials, down the line, was quite sophomoric. Their helplessness exemplified what they refused to admit, namely, the intonation of the *Message* that we like the Galatians are in a bad way.

In his dilemma, Thurow appealed to the Director of the Seminary for help. "Ein Notschrei," as Pieper put it. He appealed to the faculty for a *Gutachten*, an official and formal opinion. Koehler was displeased with the idea from the outset, for it flew in the face of everything the Wauwatosa Seminary had stood for during the preceding twenty-five years, to wit: Scripture is the only authority we recognize in the church, in the light of which all questions as to doctrine and practice can, and should, be settled on a local level.

The reason Koehler gave ear to the plea at all may be that he feared to widen the breach between himself and his colleagues, who stood shoulder to shoulder against him; he feared to intensify the strained relation in the faculty, which, due to the difference of viewpoint on all vital issues confronting them since the Watertown Board's high-handed action in 1924, had grown apace.

Each member of the faculty, Koehler, Pieper, Meyer, and Henkel, was to write a private review, so it was agreed, and then to present the same for mutual discussion. When the faculty convened next to carry out the agreement made, it was found that Koehler had written nothing. He had been busy working at the plans for the new seminary. And he was the man whose foremost interest otherwise was to build the spiritual walls of Zion and not the material. In this instance he found joy in his architectural work rather than in the *Gutachten*-project, which was quite distasteful to him.

After each faculty member had read his contribution, Pieper was commissioned to amalgamate the whole. He labored at the task for three weeks. For "the peace and unification of Synod required that the *Gutachten* be correct and carefully formulated." All placed their signatures under the monstrosity, including Koeh-

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bring about repentance he wants to know nothing, but insists that repentance can be brought about by the Gospel only. He does not notice, however, that thereby he has fallen into antinomianism which is condemned by our confessional writings, F.C. Art. V.

(G3) Finally, in contradistinction to our dogmatic and homiletic instruction, he advocates an assumed God-given method of teaching and studying the Gospel. He also sponsors a method of making unprepared sermons --in which ventilation much is said that is correct and worthy of consideration. Taken as a whole, however, it is fanatical and dare not be tolerated under our conditions lest the Gospel, preaching, and ministry be ruined.

(G4) Before reviewing the essay in detail we wish to make a further remark. We could not follow the author's peculiar arrangement throughout, because the three main parts mentioned are not clearly separated from each other. In this way the condemnations of evil conditions visualized as existing among us run through the entire essay. And we are not mentioning everything. And still we cannot assemble all details into strict order without tearing things apart, and thereby probably doing the author an injustice. Besides, it is not feasible to enter in on each and every incorrect sentence.

1. The Essayist's Verdicts Concerning Our Alleged Apostasy from a Zealous Life by Faith into a Life of Dead Forms and Laws

(G5) The essayist arrives at his verdicts of condemnation in regard to us by comparing our alleged Christianity-by-the-law with that of the Galatians. He holds the two to be identical. Therefore he applies Paul's denunciations of the Galatians directly to us without qualification. This again is an error and a twofold one at that. The apostasy of the Galatians from the Gospel of justification by faith to the gospel of justification by works was a deliberate one; with them it was a matter of principle and confession. Led astray by heretical teachers, they held that Paul's Gospel was false. As such they rejected it. In its stead they accepted the false law-gospel of their seducers as being the correct one. And as such they practiced it. They no longer desired to be justified by faith alone. They desired again to serve the weak and beggarly elements. They desired to be under the law. They desired to be justified by the law. Gal. 4:9; 4:21; 5:4. Because they desired this, and insofar as they desired this, the Apostle sharply condemns them, stating: 'Ye have lost Christ and are fallen from grace.'--But this is surely not our position. Forsooth, there is not one single pastor, professor or teacher who, not one single congregation which, in principle, condemns the Gospel of justification by faith and confesses to the false doctrine of justification by works as did the Galatians. But we all believe and confess that we are justified and saved by the grace of Christ alone, alone through faith in Him. And we condemn as a matter of principle, and with great emphasis, the doctrine of justification by works as leading into the bottomless pit. Therefore, if Christianity-by-the-law is actually present among us, it can only be something which has entered furtively, unnoticed, due to our lack of spiritual vigilance. This would merit Paul's sharp verdict only if and when it has ripened into a full-blown and total Christianity-by-the-law; and only if and when in its overall effect it equals the legalism principally and tenaciously adhered to by the Galatians. If it is not a total Christianity-by-the-law and is only an ailment adhering to our life

by faith, then it is an insufferable judgment of hearts if anyone for that reason completely denies our life by faith. It is an insufferable judgment of hearts if anyone, in default of objective certainty as to the motives behind such legalism, brands the observance of certain ecclesiastical forms, or the observance of definite teaching-methods, or the observance of ministerial functions--optional in themselves--as living by the law.

(G6) Now there is no question that, with the old Adam, we Christians all, without exception, have a streak of legalism in us which we will not shed until death. And there is no question that the church ever and at all times is, and we in these times especially are, in grave danger of falling into legalism, and hence of losing the Gospel and the faith. There is also no question that many of our activities which should be Spirit and life threaten to become mere form and law. Yes indeed, there is no question that much on which the essayist passes judgment may, here and there, be true of individual teachers and listeners and may be true, to a certain degree, of all of us. Insofar as he, while pointing to the destructive consequences of legalism, warns against it as a very acute danger and against a general tendency asserting itself also among us, or lays his finger on actual and concrete individual cases of legalism in our midst, one should feel obliged to thank him for this. And in actual fact, several such utterances are found at the beginning of the *Message*, e.g. paragraphs 2, 37, and, in a casual way, in 36-40. But already in par. 4 and in succeeding ones we encounter unconditional denials of our Christianity. This is what he says in par. 4: "Not having the Spirit, the life by faith, we have an imitation of it." "Not having the power of godliness we stress the forms. We have a head knowledge of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, but our heart is far from it, so that whether we deny the Christ as the Savior from sin in word or in power, it nets the devil the same proceeds and us the same damnation. We professed 'just' Christians live no longer by faith." This tone prevails throughout and is applied to many details. From the following pages, beginning with par. 7, we now summarize and quote as follows. The essayist makes these assertions:

(G7) 1. We* have advanced so far on this road of spiritless Christianity that the Christianity of the "average Christian" among us, "the great majority," yea, "most of our church members is not a life by faith but by works, driving a sharp bargain with God, a barter," an ordinary horse-trade, a mere imitation of life by faith (pars. 8-9).

(G8) 2. There are pastors among us who, in their ministerial practice, turn the Gospel into pure law; instead of saving souls they merely seek congregation members; who, instead of desiring to build the kingdom of God with the Gospel, operate with chicken dinners; who preach the Gospel as

(G7a) * Although the author says many things in the first person plural, so that he includes himself in the condemnations, in one instance he even explicitly asserts that he wants to be included; nevertheless, the course of his discussions clearly gives evidence that he uses the word "we" (no doubt quite unconsciously) merely to express his external membership in our church corporation while in reality he is excluding himself from his condemning verdicts.

a cold, empty ceremony, which differs from the Roman Mass in little besides language (pars. 9-10).

(G9) 3. If we would be honest we must say: *Lehabod* (the Glory of the Lord is departed) is written over our houses, churches, synods, schools and hearts. In our mouth the passage: The just shall live by faith, is sheer blasphemy and our hymn singing is sacrilege, because our heart is not in it. Do we want to challenge God still further to cry this woe over our Lutheran Church: Woe unto you, Synodical Conference, it shall be more tolerable for the Catholic Church and the sects at the Day of Judgment than for you! And you, Wisconsin Synod, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell. For if the mighty works, which have been done in you, had been done in the Masonic Order it would be God's Church this day. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the Masonic Order in the Day of Judgment than for you! (par. 10). We shudder as we hear the words: The axe is already laid at the root of the tree. The unfruitful tree will be cast into the fire. We know that for years the fig-tree of our Christianity has brought forth nothing but leaves to cover our fruitlessness and our life without faith (pars. 10-11).

(G10) 4. Our preparatory and college courses are usually only a rehashing of the catechism husks. Dogmatics in our seminaries are only an advanced catechism course (pars. 6-7). Both have done much to bring about the state of affairs existing today (pars. 24-25). In our seminaries we were taught, in contrast to the Prophets, Apostles, and Christ Himself, to preach the law to bring about repentance (par. 25). One can see from this what dogmatics has done to us. Dogmatics "bleeds the life of faith in Christ of the living blood, till we finally have the skeleton, the forms, the dogmas, the doctrines, the shells, the husks left; but the Spirit is departed" (par. 6). It cuts up for the intellect; but just such vivisection of the Body of Life, the Word of Life, the Body of Christ, makes for spiritual death, gives us a dead Savior, a corpse, so that we must join the plaintive cry of Mary Magdalene: They have taken away my Lord (par. 26). The old dogmatical formula: 1. Law; 2. Gospel; 3. Evangelical admonition has worked untold havoc in our church, for as an appeal to the head it manufactures painted sins and a painted Christianity (par. 24). Dogmatics at once presses a form upon the life-giving Word, with preconceived human ideas, because "we do not trust the Gospel to accomplish things." We act as though we must steady God's hand, or the Word will not be correctly understood (par. 30). Our Savior has a different way. He did not attempt to make the Father known unto His disciples by a course of dogmatics or catechism (par. 46). Can you feature Him holding forth with a treatise on dogmatics, or Adam and Eve appealing to their sons with the doctrine of the trinity, or Paul and Silas advising the jailor at Philippi to buy a set of dogmatics? Can you think of Abraham speaking to his son Isaac of the active and passive obedience of Christ? Can you picture to yourself the man out of whom a devil had been cast telling his household about original and actual sin (par. 47)? Due to our lack of faith

we build up more and more forms. We are no longer living by faith (par. 47). Would to God that, instead of looking to the world for recognition and borrowing from its education, we were able to offer it in its failure that which the Lord has entrusted to us: the Gospel (par. 47).

(G11) 5. Another deception by which the devil keeps us from living by faith is the impersonal, purely professional-mechanical study of Scriptures, carried on for the purpose of learning a trade, so that we later on know how to run our pastoral machinery. We stored up extra parts for "wrecked Ford souls," parts to be used later in the ministry. What we studied did not become a matter of life with us (par. 27). Thus we are urged to deal with souls as with so many Fords, especially in this mechanical age (par. 29).

(G12) 6. In regard to homiletics—If we study the Bible as a love letter of Jesus as it was given to us, without man's improvements, we will, through His love, learn to love Him again and lead a life by faith. We then have a motive and a call ("business") to preach. "Don't sit down as early as Monday morning and sit, perhaps, until late into Saturday night with the object in view of getting up a sermon." (Indeed do not ask:) "What shall I preach? I'll take a portion of the Word and work it up into a sermon for the congregation." How wrong! If you as a husbandman first partake of the fruits (2 Tim. 2:6) then you will want to pass them on; then you will not need to sit down to fabricate a sermon according to homiletical rules, but you will follow Luther's words as to the mode and manner of making a sermon, who advises but to jot down the main things and to speak freely as across a table, commending the entire matter to God's direction (par. 32). That's Lutheran, that's Christian, that's living by faith. Notice how far we have drifted from faith and substituted forms for all things. Shame on us! We are not Lutheran. We study the Bible for sermonizing, instead of edifying ourselves in Christ. Is it any wonder our sermons are cold, lifeless, bolstered up with additions of all manner of man-made forms, and we accomplish nothing (*Damit lockt man keinen Hund vom Ofen*, par. 33). And withal, our listeners remain babes in Christ for time and eternity. Life by faith seeks expression. What I myself have experienced I am able to impart to others, like an automobile wreck; I need not fabricate a way of telling it (pars. 32-34). It is the same arrangement in the economy of God. The new wine cannot be held in old bottles. The new inner life will burst the old forms. The message will out. Of this the German missionary Georg Mueller, who came to England, is a living example. He says: "I do not study the Bible with the object in view of preaching, I study it for my own edification. What has meant something to me during the past week or years, that I preach as occasion presents itself; and I am seldom or never without a message." The inner life of the preacher expresses itself as Christ, the source of life, directs (par. 34).

(G13) As we ourselves live by faith we will get others to live by faith; that is preaching the Gospel. That is witnessing unto Christ, bearing testimony of that which we have seen and heard.

Then we do everything to the glory of God, and that is preaching. We can't preach any more of Christ than is in us, we can preach more about Christ, but absolutely no more Christ (pars. 35-36). Now that is also a sad but true feature with us. How much is palmed off as preaching the Gospel which is only preaching about Christ! And thus no life is imparted, because no Christ is imparted. Only life can beget life. A corpse cannot beget life, no matter how fair it is dressed up. The contention that God works through the Word irrespective and independent of the person uttering it is only a half-truth. The Lord does not want unbelievers as preachers. A long and learned intellectual discourse on the active and passive obedience of Christ by an infidel will not impart life (par. 36).

(G14) How many of us restrict preaching to holding forth on the pulpit and are glad to be rid of the sermon! Are we ready to preach without a man-made call and a goodly salary? How these questions cut us to the very quick! (Par. 37.)

(G15) 7. "It beats all; and our faculties are not a little to blame for our being in such shackles. Instead of making us see Christ and making us free in Him, the Great Emancipator, we are chained for time if not for eternity. We hate to part with our old mechanical idols and tools, so many doctrines and dogmas, which we can manipulate at leisure. We are not willing to cast all man-made forms to the winds and cast ourselves alone on Christ." (Par. 38.)

(G16) What applies to preaching in its restricted sense, namely, that it must be witness of Christ, not a "series of logical deductions," not a "preaching of doctrines," but an expression of life (par. 40), that applies to teaching as well. Teaching is not a cold, more or less mechanical, imparting of unrelated, cold facts. It is faith expressing itself to others. "It is the just living by faith." This life expressing itself is the only thing that can truthfully be called "teaching." All teaching which does not teach the center of faith, Christ, is, in the last analysis, a burden, death, a lie. "Proved by that spirit, little teaching really stands the test. How little teaching is true witnesship! How much is mere drudgery, lifelessness, formality, death, life-killing, self-glorifying! How few real teachers we have that are worthy of the name 'teachers,' even at our seminaries! How many teachers, so-called, are putting in time, watching the clock, looking for the pay-check, are mere time-servers!" (Pars. 42-45.)

(G17) Concerning the above verdicts of the essayist, which we have compiled into seven points, the following is to be said:

(G18) Concerning Point 1. Scriptures and the Confessions clearly teach that the church at all times contains an admixture of unbelievers and hypocrites. If, after proper and faithful admonition, these become manifest as such, the church is to put them out of her midst, 1 Cor. 5. Congregation members who are not manifest unbelievers or hypocrites are known to no one save alone to God. In love we are to regard them as Christians according to the example of the Apostles. To place the "average Christian," the "majority," "yea,

most" of our congregation members in the category of unbelievers and legalists, who barter with God for their salvation and drive a sharp bargain, that constitutes an intrusion upon God's court of justice and villification of our Christians in the highest degree.

(G19) Concerning Point 2. Pastors in our midst, whom the essayist knows to be such as he describes in their spiritual practice and preaching, he is to reprove with all diligence and with all earnestness, according to Rom. 16:17, 18 and Titus 3:10. He is to do this for their own sake, for the congregation's sake, and for the sake of God's Word of Truth. Eventually he is to avoid them and hale them before the church for final action. To use the platform of a public conference paper for calling attention to the presence of such pastors in our midst—without observing the steps outlined above, and using this charge as a clinching argument that "we" are fallen away from the life by faith and have returned to the law, constitutes vulgar slander of brethren in office and defamation of the entire synod.

(G20) Concerning Point 3. Everything the essayist here says in regard to our "homes, churches, synods, schools, and hearts" is horrifying judgment of hearts. It is not—as he says of Scripture on our lips and of our hymn singing—"sheer," but actually unheard-of and shameless "blasphemy" and "sacrilege of the Holy One."

(G21a) Concerning Point 4. The first sentence regarding our preparatory and college courses is slander. What the essayist says about dogmatics and the catechism respectively is attributable first of all to ignorance, but then also to fanaticism. He does not at all know what dogmatics is. In par. 25 he calls the catechism and dogmatics "man's ideas" (something we didn't especially note in point 4). In par. 30 he says verbatim: "Or let us approach the Bible from the angle of dogmatics, and we are at once pressing a form upon the life-giving Word. We come with preconceived ideas, either our own or those of others. He labors under the delusion that the dogmatic form perforce mixes man's thoughts with God's thoughts. And when he says: "We are at once pressing a form upon that life-giving Word," he here, as throughout, understands form as being a legalistic form by which the life-giving Word of God is deprived of its life-giving power. In the essayist's view, therefore, dogmatics is *eo ipso* a falsification and a legalistic perversion of the Gospel; and in par. 46, he places the catechism on a par with dogmatics. But only an ignoramus can talk like that. Dogmatics can be what the essayist says it is, but as such it is not. Indeed, it is generally acknowledged as historical fact that even our Lutheran dogmatics, beginning with Melancthon to our present time, has occasionally overreached itself and has missed the mark by logical construction of Scripture-concepts. But, by and large, and from beginning to end, dogmatics is the pure, genuine Gospel, which saves souls.

(G21b) From beginning to end, Lutheran dogmatics is the theology of Scriptures. It takes all of its structural abstractions from Scriptures objectively. Yea, for the most part, this is true even of the linguistic form of dogmatics. With precision it compiles the component elements of a larger concept scattered throughout Scriptures. With precision dogmatics compiles the revealed Scriptural truths, or divine doctrines, comprising the Gospel—the one great truth unfolded in many individual divine truths—in a manner commensurate with

them. In short, dogmatics is simply the external, logical systematization of the truths of salvation which find their unity in the grace of Christ or the Gospel. These truths of salvation are actually contained and expounded in the Scriptures—though not formally arranged there according to an external system. Dogmatics does not fabricate this system; it merely reveals it through systematic arrangement. Dogmatics does not add anything to nor subtract anything from Scriptural truth. It is not guilty of this even where it coins its own expressions for Scriptural concepts which take no concise, linguistic form in the Scriptures, as is the case with such abstractions as: Trinity, Godman, the two states of Christ, the active and passive obedience of Christ, original and actual sin, etc. That dogmatics violates Scriptural truth in so doing is an erroneous opinion of the essayist. Least of all, does it thereby empty divine truth of its divine power to save. This power does not lie in the inspired form in which divine truths are given in the Bible. If that were the case, every non-inspired translation of the Bible, every non-inspired sermon, every non-inspired witnessing to Christ would be ineffectual for conversion and salvation.

(G21c) The divine power to save lies entirely, and exclusively, in the divine content and in the divine authority inherent in the Bible itself. Insofar as both, divine content and divine authority, are set forth untarnished and fully, with correct differentiation of Law and Gospel, in the correct relationship and order given in the Scriptures—even if but the principal truths are thus set forth by means of but human expression—the Word, the divine Truth, the Gospel, proves its divine power to convert and to sanctify. Besides, every theological pupil who has but a modicum of Scripture knowledge knows that Holy Writ itself, particularly the Epistles of Saint Paul, are full of logical discussions of the Gospel and that individual doctrines of salvation are discussed in abstract forms—dogmatics—as a pattern for us.

(G21d) And the symbolical books, to which the essayist, as well as all of our pastors, became pledged when entering the ministry, what are they—beginning with Luther's pure Small Catechism through to the Formula of Concord—other than an unparalleled dogmatical summary and discussion of the chief contents of Holy Writ! Indeed, what is the Apostolic Creed if not a dogmatics in miniature! In spite of that, all of our confessional writings are not merely doctrinal presentations cut up for the intellect, intended to make divine truths plausible to reason by abstractions, but they are confessions of the innermost heart, of our personal faith, a witness to our deepest and most sacred convictions, intended for all Christendom and for the world. Yea, precisely by pointedly defining divine truths and by apprehending their meaning in dogmatic purity are they profitable and effective for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and instruction in righteousness, for blessed comfort and for the preservation and restoration of faith. In child-like faith Luther daily prayed the Catechism—the one existing before his time and the one he himself wrote. And every correct Lutheran dogmatics—if it be otherwise clothed in popular language—is a priceless devotional book for all upright and sound Christians.

(G21e) Everything the essayist says to dishonor dogmatics and the Catechism is sacrilege born of ignorance. It is also ignorance to call that which is now and then taught to theological students to be a summary

of their future duties in the ministry, *viz.*, preaching of the Law, preaching of the Gospel, and evangelical admonition of the Christians, an old dogmatical formula which solely appeals to the head and only produces painted sins and a painted Christianity. It is coarse ignorance and judgment of hearts, too, when the essayist maintains that we practice dogmatics because "we do not trust the Gospel to accomplish things" or, as we practice dogmatics, "we act as though we must give God a lift or the Word will not be correctly understood." Like every other form of sermon or testimony and like every translation of the Bible, so also all dogmatical diction, in which the doctrines of Scriptures are summarized, is motivated in God's command and in the practical necessity that the Word of Truth be tailored, thereby making it applicable to the different hearers and scholars in their existing historical circumstances. (Luther [and AV]: rightly dividing), 2 Tim. 2:15; cf. 1 Cor. 3:1f; Hbr. 5:11ff; 6:1ff; John 16:12.

(G21f) Thus, in Lutheran folk tongue, Luther's Small Catechism, which the essayist disdains as a dogmatical summary of the chief parts of Christian doctrine, has rightly been called the "Layman's Bible." Especially future preachers and teachers of the Word need the sharp abstract summary of Gospel truths, because they are to be skilled in teaching others and in "correctly tailoring" the Word of Truth for them. To that end an insight into the form and sequence of individual doctrines is indispensable.

(G21g) But there is still another reason for the sharp dogmatical summarization and the systematic presentation of Scriptural doctrine, namely, to resist abstract and systematic distortion and falsification of evangelical doctrine. All divine truth is couched in human language and words, and each word has its very own, definite meaning. This mere fact unavoidably makes every teacher of the Word a dogmatician and a systematist, because he is to preach the Word in purity and entirety. But many corrupt the Gospel, being misled by the Old Adam and evil lusts. Every year brings forth new corruptions and heresies. Christianity stands in need of constant emphasizing of the correct form of doctrine and of ever sharper defining of the boundary lines against heresy, in order to safeguard itself against constantly rising new forms of error. Out of this need all correct confessions of faith (Symbols) in the church have come into being. Consequently, it is precisely dogmatical theology, squarely based on healthy exposition of Scripture and continually orienting itself afresh in Scripture, which keeps the church secure from heresy and preserves it in the true faith.

(G22a) But in the essayist's condemnation of the Catechism and of dogmatics, also a good deal of fanaticism is revealed. One need but turn to par. 46! In other places, too, he calls all dogmatics nothing but theology of the intellect and of the head. Here he says: "All appeal in all studies must be to the heart, not head. We must learn the Savior's way of teaching. If we live by faith we will teach like He did. . . . In all questions put to Him, He answers the heart, not the head. He did not attempt to make the Father known to His disciples by a course of dogmatics or Catechism."—The first sentence would be correct, had the essayist said: All appeal must direct itself to the heart through the head.

(G22b) It so happens that God has posited His divine thoughts and truths for the average person in human words and conceptions. Like all language, they

are first of all calculated for the head or the intellect. And just as they enter into our hearts through the head, so again they must project themselves in a sermon out of the heart through the head, cf. 1 Cor. 14:9ff. In the heart of the common Christian there is absolutely nothing of Spirit and life, even by a hair's breadth, beyond the Spirit and life conveyed by the words and concepts of Scriptures into our hearts through the intellect. It is a fundamental insight of Luther and of the church called by his name "that God gives His spirit or grace to no one except it be through or with the outward Word preceding." "Everything, however, which the spirit boasts of, aside from such Word and Sacrament, is the devil," Art. Smal. III, 8.

(G22c) To characterize dogmatics and the Catechism as dead head-theology because these endeavor to achieve precise comprehension of the concepts of salvation revealed in the Scriptures, is more than plain ignorance. To contrast head and heart, reason and emotion, placing exclusive stress on the latter, is an indication of sentimental fanaticism and of a diseased emotional Christianity which ignores the importance of other soul faculties. The Gospel is certainly calculated for the heart and emotion; yet not solely for these, but it is calculated for the entire person, including intellect, emotion, and volition. The Gospel is to create in us not merely Christian emotion, but Christian conviction and Christian character, a perfect man in Christ, according to faith and knowledge of the Son of God unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, no more tossed to and fro, but standing steadfast against every wind of doctrine—a perfect Christian man in intellect, emotion, and volition, Eph. 4:13. All teaching in our seminaries: exegetical, historical, systematical, and practical is aimed toward that goal. To this end the teaching of dogmatics and of the Catechism can do its part; and it will, if handled correctly.

(G23a) The fanaticism of the essayist, however, becomes fully transparent in the following sentences from the quotation cited above, when he attempts to tie us to the Saviour's manner and method of teaching and represents all dogmatical methods of teaching as forbidden by the Scriptures. Because the Lord did not follow a "Course of dogmatics or Catechism" when teaching His disciples, therefore it is implied that it is wrong for us to do so. Adam and Eve, Abraham and Paul and Silas did not teach dogmatics; for that reason we must not do it either. One would bestow too much honor on such an argument should one attempt to refute it.

(G23b) The essential characteristic of all fanaticism is that one sets his head on his own inventions as though they were God's inviolable word, using such inventions as a fulcrum for every ounce of his weight and at the same time condemning everyone as irreligious who does not join in with him. That holds true of the essayist and applies to his entire paper, especially to his doctrine of repentance. All fanaticism has the characteristic that it mixes law and Gospel, makes false application of evangelical liberty and evangelical restraint, yes, lifts up its heel against God's clear Word, and is ready to be martyred for its own little invention. Fanaticism is even blind and deaf to every clear word of Scripture which annihilates it. In the same breath with which the essayist damns dogmatics and the catechism he says: "I tell you witnessing, preaching, teaching is a very sober matter." But to witness, preach, and teach in this

sense is in every way a fanatical thing, because it allows only the method the Lord supposedly followed to stand as pleasing to God: "If we live by faith we will teach like He did," whereas the Lord Himself does not demand a single method of us nor does He forbid any. Declaring the dogmatical method of teaching as a sign of apostasy (par. 26), the essayist holds the "historical, exegetical, the expository" method of teaching to be the only one which does not make for vivisection of the Word of Life and make of Christ a dead Saviour. But he appears not to know that therewith he not only condemns Paul, who often employs "theological abstractions," but he condemns the Lord Himself, who Himself applies them wherever they seem suitable to Him. What wonderful, logical psychology of arrangement the Sermon on the Mount contains, and what marvelous systematizing! What stringent logic undergirds the proof for the resurrection of the dead! "God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Luke 20)! Surely, that method of teaching is dogmatical! And—isolated instances in the Scriptures aside—what is the first part of the Epistle to the Hebrews, 1:1 to 10:18, but one great, uninterrupted, dogmatical treatise, setting forth in the most stringent outline and in sharp, abstract concepts the proof for the dogma that Jesus Christ is the true God and the only Mediator between God and man! And all of that the essayist damns unscrupulously, not realizing that he is thereby blaspheming God.

(G24) Concerning Point 5. What the essayist says about the purely professional, mechanical study of the Scriptures, "for the purpose of learning it as a trade" suffers from the same ailment as do his other adverse verdicts. Had he spoken relatively, pointing out the danger inherent in such study, the strong inclination and temptation in that direction, or of having partially fallen into such study accidentally, he could not be censured. For there is no studious person who would not be affected by it here or there. But the essayist's verdict is historical, categorical, and judges hearts. Besides, the study of theology, in its nature, is a study for the acquirement of the pastoral or teaching profession (*Handwerk*, trade). That is not wrong, if one but study simultaneously for his own soul and what the essayist says about the necessity of such study is correct and beautiful, as indeed all teaching in the seminary points, urges, and invites to such study in all earnestness as being the great, primary essential.

(G25a) Concerning Point 6. To study the Bible as a "loveletter" of Jesus addressed to each individual personally is correct study. But to conclude from this that it is wrong to choose "a portion of the Word" and on the basis of it "fabricate a sermon with much study according to homiletical rules," is a dangerous, fatal-to-congregations, and not-to-be-tolerated fanaticism, which has been abandoned even by the Methodists. For it presupposes either a constant or a constantly-recurring direct inspiration of the Holy Ghost, not only as to the content but also as to the form of the sermon; or someone takes any one portion of the Bible and reads that for a sermon, just as it is written, or as he is able to recite it from memory (clearly, even in the latter case, a form of study would already be applied); or it presupposes that through general Scripture study someone possesses enough of God's Spirit and sufficient mental ability to deliver an excellent sermon, every time, on the spur of the moment.

(G25b) The first is absolutely not the case with any

person, since once the Gospel has been given in writing, as we profess with Luther in the Smalk. Art. III, 8. The second supposition is nonsensical. And the third proves true only in very isolated cases. The advice for preaching unprepared sermons off the cuff is condemned by this single word of Scripture 2 Tim. 2:15: Study (exert yourself) to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing (tailoring) the word of truth. Here even the appeal to a quotation from one of Luther's Table Talks is of no avail. Much less an appeal to the Pietist, Georg Mueller, or to any one else who speaks without previous preparation.

(G25c) In the so-called Table Talks of Luther, particularly in the earlier editions, much is found which Luther never said; much was misconstrued, wrongly combined, and disassociated even by the original copyists. Many things others have said was interpolated under Luther's name, so that one of the best Luther scholars remarks: There hardly is a book which is so unreliable as to the authenticity of its contents as are the so-called Table Talks of Luther. Whoever wants to inform himself more precisely on this subject should by all means read Professor Hoppe's introduction to Vol. 22, St. Louis Ed., at least what is written on page 4, 46 toward the bottom and 53, 56, 57; 28, 27 (Luther's own confession concerning his random remarks)! Now it so happens that the very quotation which the essayist cites is not even extant in the latest critically revised editions; therefore it has been omitted as inauthentic. Portions of it are found in the St. Louis edition, Chap. 22, 11 and 13 (Vol. 22, pages 636 and 637) but the very quotation cited by the essayist is missing! And whoever is acquainted with Luther's expression: *Oratio, meditatio, tentatio, faciunt theologum*, and has read but a few of Luther's writings, such as "To Council Members" and "The Sermon that Children Be Encouraged in Going to School," will not run into the danger of making Luther the patron saint of such who, in reliance on the Holy Ghost, fancy they may spare themselves the exertion of putting much study into each sermon to mould it as perfectly as possible in regard to contents, form and language.

(G26) Now when the essayist (par. 33) proclaims the way of preaching recommended by himself to be the only Lutheran, yea, the only Christian preaching, the only kind flowing out of life by faith, and then exclaims: Shame on us that we call ourselves Lutheran, and are not; and then remarks concerning the sermon which is drawn up according to homiletical rules: we accomplish nothing, thereby our hearers remain "babes in Christ" for time and eternity, one needs to fabricate a sermon just as little as we need to fabricate a way of telling about an automobile wreck which we have experienced, new wine will of itself burst the old bottles—all that constitutes fanaticism which ruins all efficient preaching and ruins every congregation.

(G27a) In par. 36, a new indictment is found, and a new error. Says the essayist: That is a sad but true feature with us that much is palmed off as a sermon of the Gospel which is only a sermon about Christ.—Until this contention has been proven, it must be rejected as slander of our pastors. Taken in connection with what precedes and with what follows, it denies the faith of many of our preachers, and judges hearts. And when he says: the contention that God also works through the Word irrespective and independent of the person uttering it is only a half-truth, one can only preach as much Christ as is in him, then that again is

an error founded on fanaticism and is very far-reaching in application, an error which our church has already condemned in the eighth Article of the Augustana as a Donatistic heresy with reference to Mt. 23:2. For as assuredly as God does not want an unbeliever or a godless person to be a messenger or teacher of His Word, Ps. 50:16f., and threatens all such with His judgment, *ibid.* v. 20-21, just as assuredly the converting power of the Word does not issue from the preacher's faith or piety, but from the Holy Ghost alone, who works faith in and by the Word, when and where He will in those who hear the Word, C. A. Art. V.

(G27b) Expressions such as these: Only life can beget life; a corpse cannot beget life, no matter how fair it is dressed up, sound well, but they deprive the Holy Ghost of the honor that He alone converts sinners and give such honor to the preacher's piety, which latter is altogether impotent, uncertain, and untrustworthy; they can only awaken a haughty spirit in the preacher against which God threatens: My glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images, Is. 42:8 and: God resisteth the proud, 1 Ptr. 5.—The sentences in par. 37 which speak of pastors who restrict their preaching to holding forth in the pulpit, and who heave a sigh of relief when through with the sermon—and the sentences which speak of a man-made call and goodly salary, which questions, directed to our conscience, "cut to the very quick," are foul insinuations regarding our sincerity.

(G28a) Concerning Point 7. Here the lamentation concerning the corruption imagined as existing among us, and the indictment of specific persons reaches its climax. Regarding the former, he cries out: "It beats all," and then he asserts that to a large extent our faculties are responsible for the corruption prevailing among us. For they have not shown Christ to their scholars, have neglected to make them truly free in Christ, but have instead laid them in shackles and bound them in chains for all time if not, indeed, for eternity.

(G28b) Then the essayist describes what Christian teaching is—in part very beautifully. In so doing, he says quite correctly: "all knowledge taught without the center of faith, Christ, is only a burden, death, a lie in the last analysis." But after that, he continues: "Proved by that spirit how little teaching really stands the test! How little teaching is true witnesship! How much is self-torture, lifelessness, formality, death, life killing, self-glorifying." And then he adds: "How few real teachers we have that are worthy of the name 'teachers,' even at our seminaries. How many teachers so-called are putting in time, watching the clock, looking for the pay-check, are mere time-servers."—There with the saving faith of the professors and teachers of our church is denied in the same proportion as was the saving faith of our Christian people in Point 1. And, in addition, their worthiness to be in office and their general honesty is also denied. It makes one shudder to realize that he includes his own theological teachers in this horrifying verdict. Obviously he does not even comprehend that he has thereby excluded all the accused from his faith-fellowship, and has, as far as he is concerned, publicly pronounced the sentence of excommunication upon them.

II. The Essayist's Teaching in Regard to Repentance.

(G29) To make it easier to form an opinion of his teaching we shall first briefly set forth the teachings of

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Scripture regarding repentance in so far as these come into question here.

(G30) 1. Since the fall of Adam the way unto life, for all natural men, is through repentance, Mt. 3:2ff; 4:17; Mark 1:17; 2:17; Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 26:18 etc., etc.

(G31) 2. Repentance consists of **contrition and faith**. Contrition is *passiva contritio*, terror and fear over conscious sin and the wrath of God, Ps. 6:32; 38; 51; Is. 57; 66; 2 Sam. 12; Mt. 11:28 etc.; C.A. XII; Apol. XII (V); Art. Smal. III, Art. II and III. Faith is the confident taking hold of the grace of Christ offered in the Gospel, Mt. 11:28; Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:18ff.; Hbr. 11:1, etc. C. A. XII; Apol. XII (V) *passim*; Large Catechism, First Commandment, etc., etc.

(G32) 3. Contrition is brought about only by the Law and not by the Gospel, Rom. 3:20; 7:7ff; 8:15;—Art. Smal. L.c.; F.C. Art. V. Faith is brought about only by the Gospel and not by the Law, Rom. 1:16; 10:15-17; Gal. 3:2 etc., etc.—Art. Smal. III, III; F.C. Art. V. For the Law is not a preachment of comfort and the Gospel is not a preachment of reproach.

(G33) 4. The contrition brought about by the law is neither a human virtue nor a saving power of God, but is solely a passive endurance of the wrath of God and of death, a taskmaster unto Christ, or a way in which God wants to drive us to Christ, who is being preached simultaneously, so that we are justified by faith, Gal. 3:24; Rom. 7:10ff; 4:15; 2 Cor. 3:6, 7, 9 etc., etc.—Art. Smal. II, III.

(G34) 5. The fruits of repentance by virtue of the righteousness apprehended in faith, are: peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, living by the faith of the Son of God, diligent companionship with the Word of Truth, setting our affections on things above, daily contrition and repentance, growth in the knowledge of the Gospel and of the Law, prayer, love, strengthening of faith, wrestling with sin, exercise in good works—sanctification. Rom. 5:1ff; Gal. 2:20; Col. 3:4; Gal. 5; Eph. 6 etc., etc.

(G35) 6. Repentance and its fruits remain imperfect until death. We are saved by grace through faith, Phil. 3:12ff; 3:9; Eph. 2:8f.

(G36a) Before we test the essayist's teaching of repentance in the light of the above sentences, we must point to a declaration of his fundamental principle in regard to the inner connection between justification and sanctification, which he lays down in two sentences, in par. I, right at the beginning of his essay. There he says of the Galatians: They looked upon justification as something separate from sanctification. . . . They were trying to separate justification from sanctification, a process that will only work havoc in every case.

(G36b) The verdict is historically untrue in so far as it concerns the Galatians. Since these wanted to become righteous by means of the law, they had neither Christian justification nor Christian sanctification, but for both of these they substituted pagan self-righteousness through pagan sanctification. Hence they mixed justification and sanctification together into one thing, so to speak. But this historical error is of no concern to us here.

(G36c) What is serious is contained in this sentence: ". . . a process that will only work havoc in every case." It is entirely correct to say this in reference to someone wanting to possess the one without the other in actual practice. Both justification and sanctification come from the same Holy Ghost, through the same Word of God, with the same faith. And they are so inseparably bound together with each other that the one is never present without the other.

(G36d) On the other hand, in regard to their specific nature, their ultimate relationship to each other, and in their operation they are so radically different from each other that one must keep them scrupulously separate when teaching, never mix or interchange them, lest one transform the Gospel into a law and life by faith into pure work-mongering. The primary, great difference, which is never to be lost sight of, is this: justification is a judiciary and donative act of God taking place outside of man, which changes nothing whatsoever in the damned one except his social standing with God. It transfers him out of the state of wrath and damnation into the state of grace and blessedness. Sanctification is a physician-like act of God, taking place in the heart of the godless, which act converts the godless heart into one that is truly God-fearing.

(G36e) Both acts of God become man's own possession by the faith which God works through the Word. In justification, however, faith is not active as a moral-spiritual quality, for it operates purely as a receiving instrument for saving righteousness, which is communicated through the Word, presented without merit, and calculated for faith. In sanctification, faith is the principle, germ, fountain, and force of a new spiritual life, the life by faith, it is the sum total of renewal and sanctification. By means of justifying faith, justification is the fountain and cause for sanctification, the latter is the result of the former and not the other way around.

(G37) This sharp differentiation of dogmatical abstractions is, indeed, not an idle toying with definitions. It is motivated by the direct, practical interest of preserving the one great, capital truth of the Gospel pure and clear, namely: that we are justified by faith on a free-gift basis, outside the law, through the redemption of Christ, Rom. 3:21-26. Falsification of this truth makes a damning law out of the entire Gospel as was the case with the misguided Galatians. The unsullied preservation of this truth keeps all other specific doctrines pure and, in their deviations from these, sets believers right again and again. Were Christendom at one in regard to this article, it would, perforce, also soon become united in all other doctrines. Only through this sharp and clear differentiation will we correctly apply Law and Gospel in proclaiming salvation. This is the essayist's specific point of failure throughout his presentation, especially in his doctrine of repentance, as we shall show directly. The mixing of justification and sanctification, of Law and Gospel, is the most pernicious of all heresies, because it annihilates the Gospel with a show of piety.

(G38) We now proceed to analyze the essayist's presentation of the doctrine of repentance.*

(G39a) Proceeding on the assumption that the vast

(38a) * If in this part we deviate again from the detail of the essayist's somewhat confused train of thought, we do so for the sake of clarity.

majority of teachers and hearers among us have fallen from a life by faith into a dead form- and law-Christianity, on account of which the judgment of God and the fire of hell threatens especially the Wisconsin Synod (see especially Points 1, 3, and 7 of the first part)—proceeding on this assumption, the essayist stresses that only the Spirit of life in Christ can still avail to put new life into the parched skeleton of empty forms in this valley of death. For, once the Spirit, the power, the life by faith is departed from the Christian, there is but a life of drudgery, one damned thing after another (pars. 15 and 14).

(G39b) But the road of this life by faith is said to lead through the miry valley of repentance (par. 17). And the latter is declared to be "made of sterner stuff" than mere intellectual assent to the teaching of the Catechism or the mere going through the liturgical form of confession; it is declared to be "a vital, a very much alive affair" (par. 18). A little later, toward the end of par. 19, he says, "it must be true, heartfelt repentance." But without first telling us what true repentance consists of, he inquires right off about the characteristics of true repentance, and says: Were we not as blind as the multitudes coming out to John the Baptist, we would know what heartfelt repentance consists of. But things being allegedly what they are, we would need to ask about the fruits meet for repentance as they did. John gives us the answer. Himself living by faith, he proved the spirits and, finding them unrepentant, speaks some very hard words to them. And these are written for us.

(G39c) He tell us: Ye generation of vipers, who hath warned you. . . . Bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Then the essayist enumerates the fruits of repentance quoted by John and adds thereto a number of others, like: love to fellowman, being at peace, satisfied, at rest, and walking by faith. And as examples of true repentance he cites Zacchaeus, the Jailor at Philippi, and the great sinner who washes the Lord's feet with her tears and dries them with her hair. Then he says word for word: "By that touchstone we can test ourselves whether our repentance is sincere," and asks us whether we are so constituted. In the next paragraphs, 21f., he specifies the distinctive marks of repentance as: Realizing what we are without Christ, with grace, separated from God, the source of love, and joy, and life; recognizing and feeling sin as a hell, yearning after the grace of Christ, being homesick for the Father's house; really meaning to give up that which separates us from the Father—sin; having a broken and contrite heart, extreme agonies of soul and despair, perhaps entertaining thoughts of suicide; saying with Peter: Depart from me, Lord, etc.; with Paul I am the chief of sinners; with David: My bones wax old, etc.; with Isaiah: I am undone, the flames of conscience lashed to fury as we behold ourselves alongside the Holy Son of God; sensing our abject unworthiness, our sin, over against the sinlessness of Jesus and finding it to be hell for us.—These are the distinctive marks of repentance according to the essayist.

(G40) Following hard upon this description the essayist immediately continues: Ah, you say, *how shall I get such consciousness of sin?* And he answers with the Bible-passage which he uses as his text: The just shall live by faith, and living by faith in this Jesus, alongside with Him, seeing 'the goodness of the Lord, it will lead you to repentance' (Rom. 2:4). When we

behold His gentleness, meekness, lowliness, tenderness, love over against our haughtiness, pride, vainglory, brutality, lovelessness, we, too, will exclaim: Lord, depart from me. When we compare our sinfulness with His purity and innocence, we, too, repent in sackcloth and ashes. . . . You will become sensitive to your sinfulness in your association with your Jesus. You will find repentance at the foot of the cross (par. 23).—You will see the heinousness of sin, the hell of it, by looking at Christ on the cross. Whoever is not of stone must cry out in anguish: God, be merciful to me, a sinner!

(G41) True heartfelt repentance is not obtained from the individual commandments, as most of us have learned to know from our Catechism, or catechetical course. That may bring about a head repentance, a formal confession, but it will not stand the test of God. We kid ourselves with our external confession of sins, and as Luther aptly says: We have painted sins, a painted forgiveness, a painted Saviour, a painted salvation, a painted justification and sanctification. Show me where (in Scripture) you find law preached to bring about repentance as we are taught at our schools and seminaries (par. 25). The real edge is put on the law only through the knowledge of the love and grace behind it, through the Jehovah, the Jesus. That is written in the introduction to the law, Ex. 20:2; 34:5-7; Rom. 2:4 (par. 24). Just see how the prophets preached: Peter on Pentecost, Paul, Philip, John, how Christ Himself preached. It is that mercy, that love behind the law, that Christ, not the commandments apart from that mercy, that causes the Pentecost audience to be pricked in their hearts (conscience). This same love made the jailor at Philippi exclaim: What must I do to be saved? It was the look of Jesus that made Peter go out and weep bitterly. It was the thought of the Father's goodness that made the prodigal son exclaim: Father, I have sinned (par. 25).—While the formal study of our church, dogmatics, tends to kill spiritual life and our Saviour, so that one must join the cry of Mary Magdalene: 'They have taken away my Lord,' the only method which does not do this is the historical, the exegetical, the expository. It is the God-given way throughout the entire Bible. That makes for life, not death, for spirit not forms; that makes the just live by faith instead of by forms.

(G42) The following general remarks must be made concerning all this.

(G43a) After the essayist has thrown us into the same bed with the audience of John and has applied his sermon, *Ye generation of vipers*, to us, one would perforce expect that he—our preacher of repentance—would now also deal with us as John deals with his audience. Even though John preached a turn-about from their workrighteousness and a turning to Christ, his hearers very explicitly confessed their sins outwardly and were baptized of him, but they persisted in their workrighteousness and impenitence, pleading the fatherhood of Abraham, compare Mt. 11. And as such stiff-necked impenitents John calls them a generation of vipers and unconditionally pronounces upon their heads the wrath to come. That is absolute refusal of mercy as the Lord Himself repeats it to the Pharisees, Mt. 23. For such, a 'brood of vipers,' there is indeed no further Gospel. But now John, nevertheless, calls upon the entire impenitent multitude: Bring forth therefore 'fruits meet for repentance'; and upon their question, as to what such fruits actually are, John adapts himself to their sins and answers the multitude, the publicans and soldiers: Love of neighbor, honesty, contentment.

(G43b) Now here the essayist misunderstands John just as thoroughly as he misunderstood Paul's verdict regarding the Galatians. As he there has Paul pronounce an absolute verdict of damnation upon the Galatians and from that takes the liberty to pronounce a similar verdict upon us, so here he has John preach fruits of repentance—that is, sanctification—to the impenitent, and applies such preaching to us, his [the essayist's] generation of vipers. That is brought about by the fact that he represents the inquiring multitude, the inquiring publicans and soldiers, as asking their questions out of penitent hearts, and represents John as replying to penitent hearts. But that is an error. In none of the three Gospels does the text allow this assumption.

(G43c) The train of thought of John the Baptist's sermon as well as the whole situation and the subsequent history in Mt. 11 and 23 absolutely exclude repentance in the multitude, the Pharisees, and Sadducees. The questions of the enquirers do not flow out of a repentant frame of mind—as though the penitent do not know what the "fruits meet for repentance" consist of—but they flow out of an impenitent, self-righteous, and repelling frame of mind, like those of the rich young man, Mt. 19, and the lawyer who wanted to justify himself, Lk. 10, and like those which the Scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees were want to address to Christ. So the replies John the Baptist gives to the multitude, the publicans, and soldiers have no other meaning on his part than to hold before their eyes, in concrete form, the vigorous demands of the Law, that it may serve as a mirror unto a knowledge of their unmerciful selfishness; the exorbitant demands and oppressions of the publicans and the brutalities of the soldiers. John's expression: 'Fruits meet for repentance' must not be understood to mean a summons unto sanctification; on the contrary, it is nothing less than an extremely sharp designation of repentance itself over against hypocritical form-repentance.

(G44) On the basis of this misconstruction, the essayist now preaches unto the majority of hearers and teachers among us—this faithless brood of vipers, which is completely submerged in dead form- and law-Christianity—the fruits and the tokens of repentance (such as love of neighbor, peace of God in the heart, serving Christ, giving up sin, self-denial, anguish of soul because of sin) as the miry road and the narrow gate to life by faith (pars. 17ff.). That is turning the plan of salvation upside down, totally and completely barricading the way to life, and making pious hypocrites. The plan of salvation is recorded very clearly in C. A. XII.

(G45) In particular the following is to be noted.

(G46) 1. Though in this part, too, the essayist says full many a thing correct in itself, it, nevertheless, becomes perverted when taken as a whole, because of the false relation he gives it. Thus much of his description of repentance and its characteristics is true, but the essayist does not realize that he confuses the repentance of the truly repentant with the repentance of the godless, and portrays the former instead of the latter as the way to everlasting life. This stands out most clearly in the fact that he cites as examples the penitent men: Peter, Paul, David, Isaiah, and the homesickness of the repentant prodigal son. Surely these all passed through the narrow gate and the miry valley of the first great repentance before they arrived at these "fruits" of repentance.

(G47) 2. Then the essayist's description of contrition points to the most extreme anguish of soul (to the

point of entertaining thoughts of suicide), anguish of hell, which indicates that he substitutes particularly deep feelings of remorse for contrition. That is dangerous, pietistic, and sentimental fanaticism, which goes beyond Scripture. On the one hand, it condemns everyone as impenitent who does not possess this deep remorse over sin but who is, nevertheless, under the effect of a *contritio passiva* effected by God and who believes. On the other hand, the demand for contrition of such degree is pure legalism, which shifts the center of gravity in repentance and brings forth an artificial remorse (Art. Smal. III, III, 2 and 18). The degree of contrition varies in different people.

(G48) 3. Along the same line is the erroneous emphasis on contrition as part of repentance, which runs through the entire paper. Here we refer back to Point 4 of our sentences covering repentance. Contrition—either that which accompanies initial repentance or that of daily repentance—is something necessary and absolutely indispensable for the attainment of salvation, but is not a virtue, has no independent value (Saul, Judas, the damned in hell), and is not to be cultivated for its own sake as a virtue or as a part of sanctification. Contrition is a state or condition which is tied to sin and to the law, a suffering and sensation of death, and with these it is to be overcome by faith. The normal state of the Christian, his constant objective, is faith, peace of God, and joy in the Holy Ghost (Epistle to the Philippians), the triumph of faith in the victory over all enemies, afflictions, sufferings and sorrows, Rom. 8: 2 Cor. 1; 1 Cor. 15. Also in initial repentance, contrition is a transitory state or condition, which is to be overcome by faith and is to make room for joy. The presence of contrition, in whatever degree it may be, is an indication of the imperfection of faith. Were our faith perfect, contrition would disappear entirely. The cause of contrition is sin. The strength of sin is the Law. But Christ is the end of the Law, of sin, and of contrition (which is a part of eternal death). Whoever believeth in Him is justified, Rom. 10. In Christ faith is firm as the conqueror over the world and over all its sorrows, 1 John 5; 1 Cor. 15:57.—That is what Luther teaches so often and stresses so strongly, that Moses and the Law with all its threats and terrors dare not reach farther than unto Christ in whom their functions cease. Compare Luther's Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, especially on 3:24.

(G49) In contradistinction to what has been said above, the essayist makes contrition, or the consciousness of sin, the distinctive feature of life by faith. Just take a look at pars. 19 and 20. And then, in par. 23, the essayist induces the reader to ask: Ah, how shall I get such consciousness of sin? And in many words he suggests by what means one might come by it. As though the consciousness of sin were something to strive after; as though it were to be the one chief point of concern, the real heart and center of life by faith. A doctrine such as this can only create a mournful, tearful, sour, complaining, a deeply diseased Christianity. And a thorough motivation for acquiring it can but engender an artificial contrition and a pietistic piety. For all true contrition is not man-made—neither that of the first nor that of the second repentance—but it is always brought about in the conscience of the sinner by God through the Law; it is always *contritio passiva*.

(G50) 4. But now full-blown antinomistic fanaticism faces us in the fact that the essayist teaches with great enthusiasm that contrition—the intense conscious-

ness of sin described by him—is brought about by the Gospel of God's love and grace, but not by the Law, knowing full well that he teaches this in the face of the doctrine prevailing among us. He reproaches us for teaching the opposite in our schools and seminaries, and claims that life by the Spirit is killed by dogmatical formulas.

(G51) But the whole thing is stamped as false doctrine by the Holy Ghost through Paul, in Romans 3:20, saying clearly: 'By the law is the knowledge of sin,' and even more energetically in Rom. 7:7: 'I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet!' This teaches with absolute clarity not only that the law brings about the knowledge of sin, or contrition, but also that the knowledge of sin is brought about only by the law and by nothing else. These statements are abstract doctrine. But now it is an ironclad rule applying to all sound exegesis that all concrete examples which come under the heading of one abstract tenet must be interpreted in conformity with that tenet, and that the interpretation of such concrete examples must not offend against that clear, abstract tenet. The essayist's offense against this self-evident rule of interpretation thrusts him into direct denial of the clear Word of God. Thus he reads into the introduction to the giving of the Law, Ex. 20:2, that the love and grace of God revealed in the words of this verse give the ensuing law its real edge and efficacy for bringing about repentance. Likewise he reads into Ex. 34 that the God who stands behind the Law reveals himself as the infinitely merciful and sin-forgiving God; and that in Rom. 2:4 it surely is explicitly stated that the goodness of God leadeth to repentance.—But here we are faced with false interpretation.

(G51a) It is true that God stands behind the Law with all His attributes, including His love and grace. However, not only with His love, but also with His holiness and severity. He says: Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy, Lev. 11, 19, and 20. Very often the love and holiness of God stand side by side particularly in the deuteronomy. That is the case in Ex. 20:5, immediately following the first commandment (Luther's conclusion to the commandments). Likewise in Ex. 34, threatening words follow the preaching of grace. And the Law in itself is always meant in just that way, in only that way and never in any other way.

(G52b) But now it must not be overlooked that the Law in its innermost characteristic demands. The Law knows but one language: Thou shalt, thou shalt not! Grace and the promise of every blessing is attached to the fulfillment of the Law, to its voluntary, perfect fulfillment. It is conditioned by that stipulation. Displeasure, wrath, and threat is tied to the transgression of the Law as when it was first given. If thou wilt keep it, I will be gracious unto thee and bless thee, yea, give thee life eternal. If thou break it, the curse will not miss its mark. It is written: Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the Law to do them, Gal. 3:10. Now the matter in which of these two attributes God faces man in the Law—whether in love or in holiness—depends upon the moral condition of him who hears and receives the Law. As, of course, Ex. 20:5 explicitly says: I, the Lord Thy God, am a jealous God, visiting them that hate me, and showing mercy unto them that love me.

(G52c) But now, since the fall of Adam, there are by nature no longer any people of the latter sort; they all belong to the former, Rom. 3:10-18. For them, therefore, all love and mercy, all promise of life and blessing, behind the Law are in vain. They are all children of wrath by nature, Eph. 2; they feel the smart, and flee from the loving, kind, and merciful God, who speaks to them in the Law, as from the holy and angry One, even as the Children of Israel did at the giving of the Law, Ex. 20:18-20. And that is the manner in which God, in the Law, faces every one who has not fulfilled it to the last and minutest dot but knows himself to be guilty of transgression—up to that moment when the sinner has paid Him everything he owed Him. For the Law, or God in the Law, knows no love or mercy in the sense of forgiveness. Paul says in Gal. 3:12 (right after the essayist's text): And the law is not of faith, but: The man that doeth them shall live in them; compare Rom. 10:5. That means: it nets us nothing to believe in God's love as revealed in the Law so long as we do not keep the Law. This love is relevant only to the doers of the Law. Indeed, we cannot at all believe in the love of God behind the Law because we are conscious of our guilt and of His wrath. It is completely impossible for natural, sinful man to think of God as the most loving and the most kind-hearted One, since He demands such numerous, such wholly impossible things of us and has imposed such frightful penalty upon our sins.

(G52d) The faith of an unregenerate person in the lovingkindness of God standing behind the Law is delusion and imagination. This faith does not bring him to repentance; least of all does it bring him to contrition, or to the knowledge of sin, or to the consciousness of sin. On the contrary, such faith can only lull the sinner to sleep in the secure delusion that the loving, kind and gracious God behind the Law is not at all in dead earnest about the demands and threats of His Law—all of which can only harden the sinner against any semblance of repentance and against any love, mercy, and forgiveness of sins revealed in the Gospel of Christ, as is actually the case with all rationalists.

(G53) As for Rom. 2:4, the essayist has uprooted this passage from its connection and has dragged it in by sheer force. It is not relevant to this dispute. This passage does not speak of converting grace, but of that specific goodness of God which is revealed in his forbearance toward the hypocritical evil-doer who thinks he can escape the righteous judgment of God by condemning others in the very things of which he himself is guilty. With insolent boldness he despises the long-suffering of God, who still holds the threatening judgment in abeyance for him to occasion his escape by faith to the mercy-promises of Christ, after recognizing his wickedness by way of the Law.

(G54) How natural man comes to repentance no one, aside from Scripture, has told us more clearly than Luther in the Smalkald Articles, to which we have frequently referred. And we entreat every one to turn to Part III, Art. II and III. Both the Law and the Gospel must perform their office in the sinner. [Luther:] "The principal office or strength of the Law is that it reveals original sin with its fruits and all. . . . By that means he [the sinner] becomes terrified, humbled (*humiliatur*), despondent, desperate; his heart yearns for help and he knows not where to flee. . . . Now that is the impact of God's flashing thunderbolt by which He strikes into

one heap, both manifest sinners and false saints . . . herding them all into one heap of terror and despair. . . . That is not *activa contritio*, a manufactured contrition, but *passiva contritio*, true sorrow of heart, the tribulation and sensation of death. This then is the beginning of true repentance. . . . But to such office (of the Law) the New Testament at once joins the comforting assurance of grace through the Gospel, which is to be believed. . . ." Here we have language spoken in conformity with Scripture. Contrition, or the knowledge of sin, comes through the Law. Faith in Christ comes through the Gospel. Contrition is the beginning of repentance, faith its end.

(G55) For that reason it is a direct denial and annulment of Scriptural teaching when the essayist says: True heartfelt repentance (with which he means chiefly the consciousness of sin, the knowledge of sin) is not acquired from the individual commandment in the Catechism, as most of us have learned to know them in our Catechisms. That may bring about a head repentance, etc. One cannot understand why the essayist in this particular connection singles out the individual commandment, while for our practical life, God Himself has dissected the one commandment of love into so many individual commandments. By such means the individual commandment does not lose its nature as law. Scripture calls the very transgressions of the individual commandments sin and enumerates them singly, by name, as here in the Epistle to the Galatians, 5:19ff. It is through the very punishment inflicted by God for the transgression of one definite commandment that he works contrition and terror of sin, as Scripture shows in the cases of Adam and Eve, Cain, Eli, Saul, and David. and by the publicans and sinners, Pharisees and Scribes—in short, everywhere. Indeed, the definite mention of the individual sin, such as eating of the tree by Adam and Eve, bloodshed by Cain, murder and adultery by David is the characteristic manner in which God calls sinners to repentance. In God's way of speaking it may well suffice to bring us to contrition when He calls us sinners, transgressors, and the like in a general way; but His specific way is that He directly and positively says to David: Thou art the man who had acted thus: Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife. Indeed, if the sinner is to come to the knowledge of his sin, it will not do to speak of his sinfulness in a general way, but one must name his particular individual sins as being what they truly are. Here too 1 Cor. 14:7ff holds good. Thus our own experience bears out that certain particular, individual sins turn the world into a straitjacket for us and drive us into the arms of Christ.

(G56a) It is furthermore wholly inconceivable that the essayist risks to say: Show me, where (he means: in Scripture) you find law preached to bring about repentance!—And then, as proof to the contrary, he quotes as examples the first Pentecost audience, the Jailor, the weeping Peter, and the prodigal son. From Genesis 3 through to the final chapter of Revelation, Holy Scripture is replete with the very preaching of the law unto repentance. One need but think of how all the prophets preached, e.g., Is. 1; 57; 58; 59; think of the law preaching of John the Baptist, of Jesus, and the Apostles! But the passages which he uses as examples of proof to the contrary are evidence that the essayist is no longer able to distinguish between Law and Gospel, between the first and second repentance. He does not know the meaning of Law preaching nor of Gospel preach-

ing. He imagines that when Christ, or grace, or the Holy Ghost are mentioned in the proclamation of the Law that the latter thereby becomes Gospel. He quotes a series of such passages (par. 25).

(G56b) But that is, indeed, a hopeless confusion and intermingling of Law and Gospel. When Peter tells the Jews: Ye have killed the Prince of life, Act. 3:15, or: Him ye have crucified and slain, 2:23, and the like, he therewith certainly calls them Christ's murderers and charges them with the most weighty sin against the first commandment. That is indeed the most cutting preaching of the Law possible. And it was chiefly that preaching of the Law as a result of which the hearers were 'pricked in their heart,' or as it is expressed in the Greek, 'their hearts were transfixed,' so that they asked in anguish, what they were expected to do, whereupon Peter preached unto them the faith that is in Christ and baptism unto the forgiveness of sins and the receiving of the Holy Ghost. Peter first proclaims Christ as the Judge of the quick and the dead to the house of Cornelius—that is preaching the Law—and only subsequently as the One in whom all that believe shall receive the forgiveness of sins—that was preaching the Gospel—and in this way they came to complete repentance and received the Holy Ghost, Act. 10:42-44.

(G56c) To gain the right understanding of differentiation between Law preaching and Gospel preaching, by all means read Art. V of the Formula of Concord and note what is quoted from Luther on p. 635, No. 12 (*Trgl.*, p. 954): All preaching which concerns our sins and the wrath of God is Law preaching, be it how or when it may, etc." Of course, this is sheer dogmatical argumentation, but it clarifies the head.

(G56d) The course of repentance in the Jailor's case is identical with that of the first Pentecost audience. Overwhelmed by the revelation of the majestic and holy God, he asks in terror and anguish 'What must I do to be saved?' Then Paul's counsel, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,' brings rest to his heart. Had he possessed this faith previously, he would not have been moved to ask.

(G56e) At the vision of the majestic and glorified Jesus coupled with the Law preaching: I am Jesus whom thou persecutest, Paul is inwardly annihilated and physically prostrated—by the Law, and later on receives the Holy Ghost by the Gospel preaching of Ananias. Christ's look at Peter does not belong here; it was meant for one who had fallen because of weakness, but who at heart was still a disciple clinging to his Lord. His faith had not entirely failed. It was a look of simultaneous reproach and love, restoring him who had fallen.

(G56f) So was the prodigal son brought to the knowledge of his sin by experiencing the curse of sin in his own body—namely by his misery. The word of the Prophet had come true for him: Know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, Jer. 2:19. That was God's direct Law preaching. And through this remembrance of his Father's and his God's lovingkindness and grace he again came to faith. This remembrance became the messenger of mercy, the Gospel, unto him. The Law is the beginning of repentance, as Luther correctly says, Art. III in the third part of the Smal. Articles, and faith is the completion of repentance. That is God's way unto grace. There is no other way, Rom. 3:20; 7:7.

(G56g) Only by the Law, by nothing else whatsoever, is the knowledge of sin, likewise contrition, anguish of

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soul brought about—always as the *passiva contritio*, when the hammer of the Law pulverizes the deceitful and desperately wicked heart. That is the real essence of the Law and its real function. Since the Law finds no one on earth in whom it can perform its loving assurances but finds only godless people, who hate the Lord and continually trespass against the kind, merciful, "gracious," and bounteous God, and who disdain both His loving-kindness and His majesty, therefore the Law, according to its intrinsic nature, can only demolish and kill. For that reason Scripture calls it the ministration of condemnation, 2 Cor. 3:6-9.

(G56h) Therefore Luther, as quoted above, calls the Law's work in the heart, i.e., contrition: "true sorrow of heart, the tribulation and sensation of death." And thereby the Law becomes our schoolmaster unto Christ, who, alongside the Law and simultaneously with it, should be preached to the sinner as his Saviour from sin and his fulfiller of the Law. Not by that love and grace of God revealed in the Law, but which applies only to the voluntary and perfect doer thereof, and which knows nothing of grace in the sense of the forgiveness of sins, but solely by that love and grace which has revealed itself to us in Christ, in His cross, in His vicarious obedience and curse-laden death can the law-stricken sinner find hope, faith, and confidence in the forgiveness of sins. Scripture does not say: Everyone that believeth in the love of God behind the Law is justified, but: Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth, Rom. 10.

(G56i) Consequently, whosoever teaches that we come to the knowledge of sin, or contrition, or faith, or repentance by the love and mercy of God revealed in the Law, turns God's order of salvation upside down, teaches acquisition of salvation by the Law, does not produce penitent people but pious hypocrites or despairing souls. As much as he is involved, he leads souls but to eternal destruction.

(G57a) It is just as wicked if, by means of throwing away the Law as the medium unto the knowledge of sin, one seeks to bring about the true knowledge of sin by the Gospel of Christ in the way the essayist is zealous to accomplish this with intense passion and with vexed temper concerning our seminaries, which teach the contrary. He wants to see "such consciousness of sin" brought about by faith or by "living by faith," by association with the loving, pure and holy Jesus. "You will become sensitive of your sinfulness as you learn to walk and live with your Jesus. You will find repentance at the foot of the Cross" (par. 23). So it's by the Gospel! Aside from this that the essayist is here again turning God's order of salvation—first the knowledge of sin and then faith—upside down, seeking to create the tree by virtue of its fruits, repentance by virtue of the fruits of repentance, we here want to call attention to the fact that in times long past our church has, of course, sternly rejected this heresy with great earnestness as soul-destroying Antinomianism and has condemned it as pernicious and destructive to souls, F. C. V and VI.

(G57b) Likewise, everyone acquainted with Reformation history also knows how Luther refuted the originator of this doctrine, Johann Agricola, with Scripture and wanted to have him expelled from the church. And to this article of the Formula of Concord, the essayist, as well as all of our pastors, stands pledged. Therefore we here simply refer the matter to this portion of

our Confessions instead of troubling ourselves with a thoroughgoing refutation. For the sake of completeness we merely draw attention to a few points.

(G57c) **First:** The Gospel of the cross of Christ is not, in its nature or in its objective, a preaching of repentance and reproof for effecting knowledge of sin; but it is solely a preaching of grace concerning the forgiveness of sins in Christ. It is the comfort against sins that have been recognized through the Law, so that the terror-stricken may find rest and be refreshed in faith, Mt. 11:28ff.

(G57d) **Secondly:** The Gospel of the cross of Christ is a stumbling-block and foolishness for all unconverted people and, for that reason, it dare not be preached to them unless the damning Law is preached to them beforehand or simultaneously unto the knowledge of sin, 1 Cor. 1; Is. 1; Mt. 3:1; 4:17; Acts 2:22ff, 38; Is. 57:15; Mt. 7:6.

(G57e) **Thirdly:** The Gospel is also not given to the penitent, or Christians, for effecting knowledge of sin. We admit that we, who have recognized our sins by means of the Law and have to some extent learned to understand the Law in its intrinsic spiritual sense by means of the Gospel, sing, and justly so, "Of sin how great the danger; How it excites God's anger . . . shall I from all thy suffering learn."

(G57f) But in one of his disputes with the Antinomians, Luther quite as correctly calls attention to the fact that the sufferings of Christ can indeed—in a casual way—bring us Christians to the knowledge of the magnitude of God's anger with sin, but that this anger does not teach us which specific actions constitute sin. So the Gospel does not assist us in the least, even in attaining a knowledge of the profundity of God's anger with sin, before the Law has named and described sin, Rom. 7:7. Moreover, it is a serious misconception for anyone to think that the knowledge of God's anger comes directly out of the Gospel. Here the Gospel merely refers back to the Law, out of which, illuminated by the Gospel, the knowledge of sin can solely come, F. C. Epitome V, 8 and 9, p. 535 (*Trgl.*, p. 802); see also V, 18, p. 637 (*Trgl.*, p. 956). "It is, therefore, dangerous and wrong to distort the Gospel, properly so called, as distinguished from the Law, into a preaching of repentance or reproof, p. 639, 27 (*Trgl.*, p. 960).

(G57g) **Fourthly:** "Accordingly we reject and regard as incorrect and injurious the dogma that the Gospel is properly a preaching of repentance or reproof, and not alone a preaching of grace; for thereby the Gospel is again converted into a doctrine of the Law, the merit of Christ and Holy Scripture are obscured, Christians robbed of true consolation, and the door is opened again to the papacy." (Epitome, p. 535, II, *Trig.* p. 804.)

(G58) We believe that we have properly disposed of the matter without enlarging on all of the essayist's absurdities individually. For example: that he, offhand, regards all church forms as an indication of dead law-mongering; that he looks upon Martha as being without faith who, of course, was still a pious Christian woman, her legalistic inclination notwithstanding, etc., etc. We do hope that this publication will be of assistance in making possible the essayist's return from his utterly insufferable heresies in the church, and that others will remain immune to them. Therefore we here once again summarize the essayist's most serious errors. They are:

(G59) 1. That he twists a justification text into a preaching of sanctification, as a result of which he

mixes and intermingles justification and sanctification, Law and Gospel throughout his essay and perverts the way unto life.

(G60) 2. That, on the basis of his erroneous conception of the Epistle to the Galatians, he condemns the majority of hearers and teachers among us as people living in the dead works of the Law and that he describes the Lutheran church, the Synodical Conference, and especially our Synod as ripe for the Judgment of God, because of their legalism.

(G61) 3. That his teaching of repentance is fanatical and Antinomian, beclouding the way to peace and everlasting life for Christians and non-Christians.

(G62) 4. That he fanatically condemns the teaching methods cultivated among us, particularly the Catechism instruction, dogmatics, and homiletics, as leading to spiritual death and recommends fanatical teaching methods of his own.

(G63) Finally, the author of this essay must be given corrective instruction not only concerning his insufferable heresies, but must also be admonished concerning his horrible judgment of hearts and the ghastly public slander of his brethren in office and the teachers. Concerning both of these duties, we entreat those especially called thereunto to act with unstinted love but with uncompromising earnestness according to the directives laid down in the word of God, so that peace among the brethren and unity of doctrine be restored.

Wauwatosa, Wis., June 7, 1927

Signed by the members of the Theological Faculty of Wauwatosa:

JOH. PH. KOEHLER, *Director.*
WILHELM HENKEL, *Secretary.*
AUG. PIEPER.
JOHANN MEYER.

not slander but a witness of the Holy Ghost. The Beitz paper is of this nature. Many, perhaps most of the readers into whose hands the *Gutachten* fell, had never read the *Message*, not then nor to this day. All they know is by way of the *Gutachten*'s distortion of Beitz. Naturally their minds were poisoned and prejudiced against him. The faculty failed in not providing an unexpurgated edition of the *Message* together with their critique. They have no moral right to charge anyone with slander.

The contemplated private discussion with Beitz, *post festum*, naturally proved a painful undertaking. Yet Koehler went through with it and Beitz, wounded though he was, graciously cooperated. Pieper and his henchmen were indifferent to the outcome of Koehler's visit, but faulted him for going over the head of President Thurow, and neglecting to check with this official beforehand. Koehler then wrote his own review, called "*Ertrag*." In this he censured the inexact terminology and the lack of clarity in certain portions of the paper, but found the charges of false doctrine and slander unsubstantiated. When he reported to the faculty accordingly, Pieper shook his head, ostentatiously feigning displeasure, and cried: "Woe is me! Now we shall have to start all over again." Thereupon they deliberated for five weeks; the argumentation grew nasty. They arrived at an impasse, and Koehler struck his name from the *Gutachten*.

In the meantime, and in conformity with the withdrawal of his signature, Koehler ordered the printing and mailing by the Northwestern Publishing House, at his expense, of the following communication:

Wauwatosa, Wis., July 2, 1927.

MY DEAR PASTOR:

The "*Faculty-Gutachten*" was published without my knowledge and consent.

I had a different conception from my colleagues as to what the "essayist" actually wished to say. Consequently I offered to discuss the contents of the *Gutachten* and the *Message* with the essayist and apprized the assembly of the General Committee of this fact.

The publication of the *Gutachten* acutely disturbed these private deliberations, and in my opinion, as matters now stand, must mislead, agitate and eventually slander. Do your part in helping us arrive at an understanding, which must be our constant endeavor, so that our efforts be not frustrated.

With cordial greetings,

JOH. PH. KOEHLER

"The projected postcard never got beyond the proof stage. The Publishing House had surreptitiously furnished Professor Pieper a proof which Pastor Ebert saw him display in Professor Henkel's house. Ebert and Board Member Knuth, however, at the instance of W. Hoenecke, who outside of his ministerial and board functions, was employed as proof-reader at the Publishing House, and thus received a proof of this private job—had already interviewed Professor Koehler the day before, and implored him to withdraw the notice. They agreed with his side of the cause but anticipated awful consequences to Synod of such a step." Koehler trusting them, as always, acquiesced, for he was bent on healing the breach, not on widening it.

Despite Koehler's conciliatory attitude displayed in relinquishing his prerogative, his opponents stormed and said he had double-crossed his colleagues. The Board became involved; and eventually also the synedrium,

History of the "*Gutachten*"—Continued from page 12

ler, after the latter had told them expressly that his understanding of what Beitz wished to say differed from what his colleagues read into the paper. He furthermore forbade them to publish the thing before he had occasion personally to discuss the matter with Beitz, which he intended to do during summer vacation, after which he thought the *Gutachten* would be superfluous.

But lo, and behold, when he was on his way to Rice Lake for his visit to Beitz, Zeisler handed him a printed copy of the *Gutachten*. Koehler was thunder-struck. His colleagues had broken faith. Pieper, by now a victim of his evil imaginations, who had called the *Message* a Trojan horse, which the author had surreptitiously wheeled into the gates of the Holy City "under cover of darkness"—a bland lie, if there ever was one—now underhandedly, contrary to agreement, and behind the back of his trustworthy colleague, lent his hand to the broadcasting of the slanderous *Gutachten*.

It is a phenomenon in church history that a man will harangue against those sins in others of which he is himself possessed. It was an obsession with Pieper, the archslanderer, to thunder against slander, but never to admit anything when exposed. Similarly, faith, in reproving the evil trends of the times, also therein reveals the sins of the own heart—but penitently, as it finds the personal, evil inclinations and missteps mirrored in the life roundabout, which critique, then, is

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