

The Doctrine of Subjective Justification

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Nineteen eighty-three is a quincentenary year. It marks the 500th anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther, religious leader, reformer, preacher, teacher, poet, hymn-writer, devoted husband and father. What more fitting tribute could we pay this many-sided servant of God in this anniversary year than to turn our attention to the doctrine through which God effected the Reformation of the church, and on which Dr. Luther himself staked his life and hope for future glory, the doctrine of justification by faith! “For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law” (Romans 3:28). Luther pointed to justification in his preface to the Acts of the Apostles (1534) as “the true chief point of Christian doctrine; namely, that we must all be justified only through faith in Jesus Christ, without any addition of law or help from good works.”ⁱ

The Bible teaching on justification is the heart and core of Christian doctrine, or as the old theologians of our church were fond of calling it, “*articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*,” the article by which the church stands or falls. Justification is the so-called “material principle” of our Lutheran theology, the subject matter proper of theology, that around which all other points of doctrine revolve, and to which all other doctrine is either, again in the words of the great theologians of our faith, “antecedent” or “consequent.” Even the beloved “formal principle” of our Lutheran theology which we treasure so dearly, the Scripture principle, by which all church doctrine is drawn from and subjected to the Bible and the Bible alone, stands in a servant role to the doctrine of justification. Justification stands alone as the great object of God’s redemptive activity on earth.

In writing this paper I was not unaware that the hearers would include pastors, teachers, and laymen. This ought not prevent us from entering into deep issues of theology here. Indeed, we can hardly discuss justification without doing so, for this central article of the Christian religion is under attack from every side, and has been for centuries, and it is necessary for Christians to learn to speak truly and correctly about it, and to avoid the erroneous expressions. Laymen as well as pastors and teachers need to set their sights high in this regard, and strive to raise their level of understanding of God’s Word. Significantly, when the Augsburg Confession, the basic document of our Lutheran confessional writings from the time of the Reformation, was adopted, the signers were not preachers and theologians but leaders from among the laity. They rightly sensed the personal stake they had in the preservation and promulgation of true doctrine. The doctrinal issues of their day were not to them the mere idle prattle of theologians but true life and death concerns. These were consecrated laymen who were not about to relegate their responsibilities in spiritual matters to others. So they made it a point of mastering their theology.

And further, we have the right to assume that everyone here in some way or another has been placed by God into a position of leadership in the church. We have high expectations of you. The doctrine of justification is at the very heart and core of what we believe about God. Fight for it. Don’t let it be taken from you. In these days when the Word of God is ignored or spoken ill of, we need to cling all the more tenaciously to the true biblical doctrine of justification. For if this doctrine is lost or distorted, the Christian religion and the Christian church is lost with it. Luther said, “If the article of justification is lost, all Christian doctrine is

lost at the same time... When the article of justification has fallen, everything has fallen... Of this article nothing may be yielded or conceded.”ⁱⁱ

Justification is the gracious act by which God declares sinners to be innocent of their sin (1). There is but one justification from sin, not two, though the single act may be conceived subjectively or objectively (2). God’s justification of the sinner is a forensic act that takes place, as it were, judicially in a court of law (3). Thus to be excluded from justification are any considerations of a moral change or moral condition in man (4). The justification of the sinner occurs at the moment he is brought to faith in Jesus Christ (5). It is the free gift of God for the sake of the merits and satisfaction of Christ (6), and is in no way dependent on the merit or worthiness of man (7). Man is justified by faith alone, yet faith is never alone (8). By justification God applies to the sinner the forgiveness of sins (9), and imputes to him the righteousness of Christ (10). The doctrine of justification is the central teaching of our Christian religion (11), by which true Christianity is to be distinguished from all false religions in the world (12), and by which God impels his people to their mission in the world (13).

1. Justification is the gracious act by which God declares sinners to be innocent of their sin.

Justification is God’s answer to man’s most pressing need, to be freed from the sin to which his fallen nature is subject, and from the guilt and condemnation that attach to his sin. The Lutheran World Federation only displays its theological bankruptcy and its abandonment of the Christian faith for secularism when it says in partial excuse for its failure to agree on a doctrine of justification (Helsinki, 1963): “The Lutheran doctrine of justification is irrelevant for a generation which expresses no need to be justified.”ⁱⁱⁱ

The secular world’s insistence on no God, no moral absolutes, no sin, in no way invalidates the decrees of God’s Word. Our failure to “feel the need to be justified” does not remove the need. The eternal, immutable law of God expresses that need in the clearest terms possible when it judges and condemns the world “so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God” (Romans 3:19). God’s all-seeing eye makes mockery of our attempts to justify ourselves: “God looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God. Everyone has turned away, they have altogether become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one” (Psalm 53:2-3). All stand condemned. “Jew and Gentile alike are all under sin” (Romans 3:9). The consequence of sin is death, eternal death, the utter and irreversible separation of the sinner from God and his love. “Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned” (Romans 5:12). Only the perversity and blindness of man’s fallen nature leads him to speak of these needs as irrelevant.

God’s gracious way of meeting these needs is so astounding that it is incomprehensible to fallen man. “The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians 2:14). What God does is to issue a blanket acquittal (justification) of the world for the sake of Christ, which becomes my personal justification from sin and death through the Spirit’s working faith in Christ in my heart. “Just as the result of one trespass [Adam’s] was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness [Christ’s] was justification that brings life for all men. For just as through the disobedience of the one man [Adam] the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man [Christ] the many will be made righteous” (Romans 5:18). “For by grace you have been saved, through faith

– and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

The Augsburg Confession underscores the gracious activity of God in justification:

Also [the Lutherans] teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for Christ’s sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor, and that their sins are forgiven for Christ’s sake, who, by his death, has made satisfaction for our sins. This faith God imputes for righteousness in his sight. Romans 3 and 4. (CA, Art. IV: Of Justification)^{iv}

2. There is but one justification from sin, not two, though the single act may be conceived subjectively or objectively.

The terms subjective and objective will pose a problem of understanding for those unfamiliar with their use. Yet it is common, in the churches that come out of the former Synodical Conference, at least, to speak of an objective and subjective justification. These terms are not so difficult as to be beyond our grasp. We distinguish in this way because there are passages of Scripture that speak of God’s declaration of justification occurring at the moment when Christ completed his redemptive work, such as Romans 4:25: “He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification,” which we call the “objective” or “general” justification. God declared the *world* just for Jesus’ sake. At the same time there are many (the majority of) passages on justification that speak of the declaration of justification occurring at the moment when a person is brought to faith in Christ, such as Galatians 2:16: “So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified,” which is the “subjective” or “individual” justification.

Which is correct? Is God’s declaration of justification a thing of the past, or is it an existential decree, pronounced on the sinner at the moment when the Spirit brings him to faith in Christ? And then, what difference does it make? It does make a difference, as we will presently see, and our use of these difficult terms “subjective” and “objective” is only to safeguard two critical elements in justification, and not to lose either, or, as Synod President Mischke refers to them, “the two sides of the same coin” of justification.^v

The choice of terminology is in some ways unfortunate. All of justification takes place objectively, that is, outside of man, as the act of God’s grace. Even the faith by which we accept God’s declaration of forgiveness is not “subjective” in the sense that it is our act, but is every bit as “objective” as Christ’s death on the cross, since faith is God’s working in us (Ephesians 2:8-9). Although the terminology may be imperfect, the substance of the matter is of supreme importance to our faith. Australian Lutheran theologian Henry Hamann, Jr., writes on this point:

One of the truths that St. Paul holds is that *justification is complete before there is such a thing as faith*. This fact of Paul’s teaching has been known, particularly in the theological literature of “Missouri Lutherans,” as objective justification. The term is not a good one, chiefly for the reason that the counterpart to it, subjective justification, if it means anything, should mean a justification that goes on in the believer, a thing which no “Missourian” ever held. Subjective justification, the justification of the individual sinner who believes, is every whit as objective as

objective justification, the pronouncement of forgiveness for all men. To obviate this weakness of terminology, some have suggested that “objective justification” is merely a mistake for “objective reconciliation.” Whether this is the answer to the problem of terminology seems to me to be doubtful. However, terms do not concern us at the moment, but the thing involved; and the thing to be substantiated is this, that to St. Paul justification and reconciliation are, to all intents and purposes, the same, and that faith, although it is also more than this, is, first and foremost, the trusting acceptance of an accomplished fact. Faith does not bring it about in any way, it receives it. Or, to put it in as strong a way as possible, justification does not follow faith, it precedes it. (Emphasis author’s own)^{vi}

The applying of the “subjective” – “objective” terminology to justification originated, as far as this author can see, in the Election Controversy that split the Synodical Conference in the 1880s. Our Lutheran Confessions do not employ it. The theologians of the classical age of Lutheran Orthodoxy did not make use of the term “objective justification,” but they did speak of an “objective reconciliation.” Franz Pieper uses “objective justification” sparingly in his “Christian Dogmatics,” frequently setting “objective reconciliation” in apposition to it, for clarity of definition. In my scanning of Edward Preuss’ “The Justification of the Sinner before God,” heralded by C.F.W. Walther as the finest work on justification to appear in the 19th century,^{vii} no use is made of the subjective/objective terminology, nor does it appear in Missouri’s “Brief Statement” of 1932, nor in the WELS tract “Justification” (1966), nor in the WELS statement of faith “This We Believe,” although the substance of the matter is taught in unmistakable terms in all the above documents.

Thus the biblical doctrine of justification can be adequately treated without recourse to the subjective/objective terminology. But the truths these terms are meant to convey we will not yield for a moment. For justification viewed apart from its “objective” character will inevitably result in the denial of the grace of God, in whole or in part, and will make ourselves the workers of our own salvation; while justification viewed apart from what we call its “subjective” side may well degenerate into universalism, the heresy that everyone will be saved irrespective of faith.^{viii}

Caution and moderation will mark the careful theologian’s use of this terminology particularly in these times when the rhetoric on this issue has become inflamed (see below). As a sermon or paper outline “Part I: Objective Justification, Part II: Subjective Justification” “strikes this writer as artificial and ought not be employed except for a special purpose, for some of the truth about justification might be obscured in this fashion since the proof passages for objective justification have to them also a “subjective” side in that the completed forgiveness is the very one, and not another, that God applies to the sinner, and the proof passages for subjective justification have to them an evident “objective” side in that also the applying of the declaration of forgiveness to the sinner through faith is a divine not human work.

The question has become more than a minor issue in our times with unfounded charges of universalism (“everyone will be saved by the cross of Christ, whether he believes or not”) being leveled at our own Wisconsin Synod because of our unwavering defense of the objective character of justification.^{ix}

Kurt Marquardt comes to the defense of sound Lutheran doctrine:

The impression should not be given that “objective justification” is a technical subtlety originating in the 19th century U.S. squabbles among Norwegians, Swedes, and the Missouri and Ohio Synods. Whatever the terminology, the doctrine itself is at the very heart of Lutheran theology, where *grace alone* is confessed against Romanism, *universal grace* against Calvinism, and the *means of grace* against both.

The whole Lutheran notion of “special faith” (Apol. XII,45,59), which is “conceived of the gospel or absolution” (CA XIII) presupposes a real, objective treasure of forgiveness (Apol. IV,103-105) brought into existence for all men by the work of Christ, and really and truly offered, distributed, and communicated to them in the means of grace, to be appropriated and received by faith alone. (Emphasis author’s own)^x

Wisdom dictates that we continue not to make undue insistence on the terminology in this matter, but hold tenaciously to the doctrine that the terminology is meant to convey. Since we hold to one justification, not two, we ought further not to attempt to treat the one aspect without the other, for we distinguish, but do not separate the two aspects of the one justification as though there had been two justifications. At what time did God’s declaration occur? At the time of the completion of Christ’s redemptive work. The same declaration, not another, is spoken to the individual believer when the Holy Spirit brings him to faith. The same declaration is spoken again and again to the believer living out the daily life of contrition and repentance when the gospel of forgiveness comes to him in Word and sacrament.

3. God’s justification of the sinner is a forensic act that takes place, as it were, in a court of law.

With this point we enter now into the heart of the controversy between Lutheranism and Rome. Once again we are faced at the outset with a term that may at the first hinder understanding, but is not in fact difficult to master. We are talking about the word “forensic.” Lutheran orthodoxy from the time of Luther to today has insisted that the word “justify” is used exclusively in a forensic sense in its thirty-eight occurrences in the New Testament. Catholicism does not accept this, indeed, cannot accept this without dismantling its whole system. The Lutheran World Federation at Helsinki supplied not altogether unexpected support for world Catholicism in the remark published in their “Proceedings”: “Is the doctrine of justification still crucial as the ‘*articulus stantis aut cadentis ecclesiae*’?” they ask. “Yes,” they answer, “provided it is understood not just forensically, but inclusively of the renewal of the whole man.”^{xi} This is the classic Roman Catholic answer to the question of the nature of justification, here spoken by the representatives of 54 million of the world’s 70 million Lutherans. In fairness to the Assembly it must be stated that there was no agreement among the Lutherans on this point.

We need now to try to understand that little word “forensic.” This English word comes from the Latin “forum” which was the ancient Roman marketplace. But the forum was also the place where court was held and disputes were settled. Thus “forensic” has come to be used in theology to describe justification as a judicial, declaratory act, as when a judge pronounces a defendant to be innocent. It is clear that the judge in so doing does nothing to alter the condition of the defendant, to “make” him innocent or guilty, but simply declares him to be whatever the verdict states.

By the courtroom analogy, when God justifies the ungodly, he pronounces his innocent verdict (forgiveness) on them. The justification of the sinner is nothing more, and nothing less, than the full forgiveness of his sins. This is stated in simple, straightforward terms in the Formula of Concord:

We believe, teach, and confess that according to the usage of Holy Scripture the word “justify” means to absolve, that is, to declare free from sins (Proverbs 17:15; Romans 8:33).^{xii}

Rome’s answer to this is embodied in the decrees of the Council of Trent (1545), Session VI:

Justification itself...is not only the remission of sins but also the sanctification and renewal of the inner man.^{xiii}

If anyone says that a man is justified either solely by the imputation of Christ’s righteousness or solely by the remission of sins, to the exclusion of the grace and charity [love] which is poured out into their hearts by the Holy Spirit and stays with them, or also that the grace by which we are justified is only the favor of God; let him be anathema [damned].^{xiv}

This error of denying forensic justification and saying that justification and sanctification are the same thing leads directly to the “*monstrum incertudinis*” of Roman theology by which they deprive their people of the assurance of salvation. A good Catholic is not permitted at any given point to know for certain whether or not he is in a state of grace. But that you hear this not just from the Lutheran side, let a respected Catholic authority speak to this point. This is from Karl Adam’s *Spirit of Catholicism*:

When we define justification as an “infusion of charity,” it follows...[that] the justified man has indeed an absolute certainty of faith, but he has no unconditional certainty of salvation... Without a special divine revelation he has no unconditional guarantee that he is at any given moment in the grace of God.^{xv}

What makes the certainty of salvation “conditional” in Roman theology? It is conditioned by the “infusion of charity.” For when one looks inside oneself, and not to Christ, for the assurance of salvation, to the evidences of love and good works in one’s own life, one is led only to despair of salvation. In this way the whole purpose of the gospel, to give us the certainty and assurance of God’s love for us in Christ, is negated by Rome.

But the matter of the “forensic” nature of justification is not to be decided in this way. If the Bible teaches that the word “justify” means what the Roman Council of Trent says it means, that is, not only God’s declaring the sinner just but also God’s making him just, and that therefore my justification before God is both my being forgiven by God for Jesus’ sake and my good works which together produce my salvation, we must accept it even if it means that the assurance of salvation is taken from us. But in fact the word “justify” in those passages of Scripture where the doctrine of justification is treated is used exclusively in the forensic sense of “to pronounce or declare righteous,” never “to make righteous.” Already four hundred years ago

Martin Chemnitz demonstrated this beyond question in his detailed study of the word in his *Examination of the Council of Trent*.^{xvi}

Johann Gerhard, who has been called the “prince of Lutheran theologians,” lists four reasons why the word “justify” in Scripture must be understood in a forensic sense, and with each reason offers an abundance of Scriptural proof, of which we will reproduce only a small sample here: **1)** because *it denotes a judicial act*, both in its general usage, as in Isaiah 5:23: “Who acquit [justify] the guilty or a bribe, but deny justice to the innocent,” which becomes nonsense if you understand it to mean infusing a quality of goodness into the guilty; and also in the very article of justification, as in 1 Corinthians 4:3-4: “I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent [justify me]. It is the Lord who judges me”; **2)** because *it is opposed to condemnation*, as in Romans 8:33-34: “Who will bring any charge against those whom the Lord has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns?” with the implied answer that no one can declare guilty those whom God has declared innocent; **3)** because *its correlatives are judicial*, and here Gerhard adduces a wealth of passages in which God’s saving activity with the human race is set in the context of a judgment, a judge, a tribunal, a criminal, a plaintiff, a witness, an indictment, an obligation, an advocate, an acquittal, as in the reference in 1 John 2:1, to Jesus as defense lawyer: “But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense – Jesus Christ, the Righteous One”; **4)** because *the equivalent phrases are judicial*. To be justified is to be not called into judgment, to not be condemned, to not come into condemnation, not to be judged. The publican went down to his house justified, that is, acquitted of his sins (Luke 18:14). Luke 16:15: “You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts.” Luke 10:29: “But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbor?’” But the sense here is strictly forensic, not of people trying to “make” themselves just, but of people trying to “declare” themselves just in the eyes of others. Chemnitz and Gerhard cite dozens of other passages to this point to whom we would direct the reader who wants to settle this matter for himself.^{xvii}

Gottlob Schrenk, writing the article on justification for Kittel’s *Theological Wordbook of the New Testament*, comes to the same conclusion Chemnitz reached at the time of the Reformation, that the word “justify” in the New Testament has a forensic sense; it is a legal, judicial verdict, and not the changing of a person by infusing new qualities into him.^{xviii} J.A. Ziesler in a more recent, exhaustive study of the word, says:

The debate about whether on *a priori* grounds *δικαιόω* [justify] can mean “declare righteous” must surely be regarded as closed. Not only is it clear that it *does* mean this in biblical Greek, but the parallel with *ἀξιόω* [consider worthy] and the fact that in secular Greek there is only one place where it has been discovered to mean “make righteous,” show that a declaratory force ought to be given to it unless there are strong reasons to the contrary. (Emphasis author’s own)^{xix}

Markus Barth says flatly in his book, *Justification*: “The justification of which Paul speaks in Galatians, Romans, and Philippians is to be understood as a judicial process.”^{xx}

Therefore it cannot be on biblical evidence that Roman Catholicism denies the forensic sense of justification and insists that it means to change or alter a person’s conduct, or that the Lutheran World Federation joins hands with Rome to say that justification is important only “provided it is understood not just forensically, but inclusive of the renewal of the whole man.”^{xxi}

They do not let the text of Scripture determine what justification means, but apply to the word a foreign sense that agrees with what they want justification to be.

4. Thus to be excluded from justification are any considerations of a moral change or moral condition in man.

A clear understanding of the meaning of the word “justify” will eliminate the need for a lengthy discussion at this point. Justification takes place outside man, in the court of God, with God for Jesus’ sake declaring the sinner to be acquitted of his sins. This has led our Lutheran theologians to speak of justification as an act “external” to man. To be rejected here are the Roman notion of an infused righteousness in man as the basis of man’s justification before God, and the equally erroneous teaching of the 16th century Lutheran, Andrew Osiander, who developed the theory that God justifies the sinner by infusing into him the essential righteousness of Christ, in either instance making something in man the basis of his justification and leading again to the *monstrum incertudinis* (monstrous uncertainty) by which no one can know for sure his status before God, whether he is saved or not, which is to say, the denial of the grace of God.

5. The justification of the sinner occurs at the moment he is brought to faith in Jesus Christ.

Francis Pieper says in his *Christian Dogmatics*: “As soon as a person believes in the remission of his sins, he comes, by means of this faith, into personal possession of the remission of sins; in other words, he is justified before God [subjective justification].”^{xxii} And again: “When the sinner comes to faith in Christ or in the gospel, he is at once justified before God by his faith. Since the gospel offers him the forgiveness of sins gained by Christ for the whole world [objective justification], the acceptance of this offer, by faith, is all that is needed to accomplish his subjective justification.”^{xxiii}

The majority of New Testament passages that use the word “justify” in connection with God’s act of justifying the world from sin, specifically tie justification to faith. Acts 13:39: “Through [Christ] everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from the law of Moses.” Romans 3:28: “For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.” Romans 3:30: “Since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith.” Romans 5:1: “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Galatians 2:16: “[We] know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.” Galatians 3:8: “The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: ‘All nations will be blessed through you.’” Galatians 3:11: “Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, ‘The righteous will live by faith.’” Galatians 3:24: “So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.” Additional passages do not specifically tie justification to faith, but say as much from a negative standpoint by excluding works from justification.

Our theologians have always taken care not to speak of faith as a condition of salvation, as though Christ by his redemptive work had supplied a part of our salvation and we, or the Holy Spirit, must supply the balance of what is lacking through our faith. We have already said no to that.^{xxiv} Christ’s work is the only and complete basis for God’s declaration of forgiveness, or justification. So it is correct to say that justification is complete at the death and resurrection of

Christ. It is also correct to say that justification occurs when the sinner believes in Christ and the gospel.

The frequency of the joining of justification to faith in Scripture will lead the theologian to beware of separating these two thoughts at too great a distance in his treating justification. It is for this reason that to approach justification under the heads, part 1 objective/part 2 subjective, ought not become normative in our treatment of the doctrine except when called for by special circumstance. Pieper says: “One simply cannot treat justification by faith without at the same time treating justifying faith.”^{xxv} Heinrich Schmid suggests that our earlier Lutheran theologians did a better job than our later theologians keeping the discussion of justification connected to the discussion of faith: “For, according to the arrangement introduced by the later Dogmaticians, the articles concerning Justification and Faith, which had been so closely connected together at the time of Reformation, and by the earlier Dogmaticians are too widely separated,”^{xxvi} although Pieper challenges that assertion.^{xxvii}

Although the Lutheran Confessions clearly teach the substance of what we call objective justification without using the term, I could find no instance in the Confessions of the treatment of justification in isolation from justifying faith. Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, then, encourage us to discuss justification and justifying faith within the same context, always bearing in mind that the justification, the forgiveness of sins, is complete in Christ and needs no contribution of our own, whether of our faith or works, to “really” complete it.

A word is in place here on the nature of justifying faith. Saving faith has been defined classically among Lutherans as consisting in knowledge (Luke 1:77), assent (Hebrews 11:1), and confidence (Hebrews 11:22). Pieper contests this definition and contends that only confidence belongs properly to saving faith.^{xxviii} However one feels on that question, it is clear that confidence constitutes the chief element in saving faith, which may be seen in the etymology of the word, both in the Latin “*fides*” (faith) and “*fiducia*” (confidence), coming from the same root, and in the Greek *πίστις* (faith) and *πεποίθεσις* (confidence), also deriving from a common root. This must stand against the horrendous assertion of the Council of Trent:

If anyone says that justifying faith is nothing else than trust in divine mercy, which remits sins for Christ’s sake, or that it is this trust alone by which we are justified, let him be anathema [damned]...^{xxix}

6. It (the justification of the sinner) is the free gift of God for the sake of the merits and satisfaction of Christ.

Geoffrey J. Paxton, Australian Anglican cleric and consulting editor of *Verdict* (editor, Robert Brimsmead) – a theological journal formerly known as *Present Truth* which is by its stated editorial policy “dedicated to the restoration of New Testament Christianity and committed to upholding the great Reformation principles: Justification by faith alone, the Bible alone, the priesthood of all believers” – begins a lecture entitled “The Radical Basis of Acceptance with God” by posing a challenging question to his hearers.^{xxx} The Anglican Paxton and former Seventh-Day Adventist Brimsmead, by the way, do a remarkable job in presenting the biblical doctrine of justification, and have mastered to a high degree not only Luther and the Lutheran Confessions on justification, particularly the Augsburg Confession, Apology, and the Formula of Concord, but also the writings of Chemnitz and other Lutheran divines, and are well worth the time reading. Back to Paxton’s question. It is this: *On what basis does God accept a man?* He explains to his hearers that this is the most fundamental of all religious questions, and

then he gives the choice of several answers by a show of hands. I won't embarrass you by asking you to raise your hands because I got it wrong myself and he, Paxton, the Anglican, is right about Lutheran doctrine on this point. Remember, the question is: *On what basis does God accept a man?* And his choice of answers:

1. A life of obedience to the law
2. Faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ
3. Some other way

In the setting described here 100% rejected number 1. About 90% chose number 2. A few chose number 3, and some abstained. Then Paxton lets loose his bomb: "The only correct answer to this question is number 1," and he's right. Then he goes on to a brilliant essay on the righteousness of Christ. The only basis, ground, foundation upon which one may be accepted by God is a life of obedience to the law, Christ's life of perfect obedience. To base or ground one's acceptability to God on one's faith is the answer of much of American evangelicalism, but it is not the Lutheran or biblical answer. My faith is not the work by which I justify myself before God. No quality in me, whether given by the Holy Spirit or not, is the basis of my acceptance by God. Paxton even claims, with some degree of accuracy, that answer number 2 is the classic Roman Catholic answer as found in the decrees of the Council of Trent on Justification. You have to get deeply into the Scriptures and Article III of the Formula of Concord, "The Righteousness of Faith before God," to see the profound truth that is involved here. Strictly speaking, there is a more complete answer than any of Paxton's choices: The sinner's acceptance by God is grounded first on the gracious, good will of God to save, and then on the merits of Christ (his life of obedience to the law), and on his satisfaction to God through his innocent suffering and death. On the point of Christ's satisfaction the Bible says: "Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God" (Ephesians 5:2). On the point of Christ's merits becoming the sinner's own the Bible says: "Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God – that is, our righteousness, holiness, and redemption" (1 Corinthians 1:30). And also Jeremiah 23:6: "This is the name by which he will be called: The Lord Our Righteousness."

7. And is in no way dependent on the merit or worthiness of man.

"Where, then, is boasting?" the apostle asks. "It is excluded. On what principle? On that of observing the law? No, but on that of faith" (Romans 3:27). "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not of yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9). "Therefore, as it is written: 'Let him who boasts boast in the Lord'" (1 Corinthians 1:31). The Pharisee in the temple whose righteousness is in himself is not justified; the publican whose righteousness is in Christ is justified (Luke 18:9-14).

Particularly my faith must be excluded from any consideration of merit or worthiness for salvation. Paul Tillich shows how this can become the worst "work-righteousness" of all, and can take away all assurance of salvation:

The material principle of the Reformation is the doctrine of justification by faith, or rather by grace through faith. Excuse me for this slip of the tongue! Never say what I just said by mistake, but always say, justification *by* grace *through* faith. The justifying power is the divine grace; the channel through which men receive

this grace is faith. Faith is by no means the cause, but only the channel. In the moment in which faith is understood as the cause of justification, it is a worse work of man than anything in Roman Catholicism. . . . If faith is a human work which makes us acceptable to God, and if this human work is the basis or cause of salvation, then we can never be certain of our salvation in the sense in which Luther sought for certainty when he asked the question, “How do I find a merciful God?” Therefore, whenever you are dealing with Protestant theology, dismiss forever this distortion of faith – *sola fide* in Latin – which sees faith as a cause instead of as a channel. Luther made this clear repeatedly when he said that faith is always receiving and only receiving; it does not produce anything. Certainly it does not produce the good will of God.^{xxx1}

While we can agree with most of what Tillich says here, we will not likely abandon the use of the *sola fide* (by faith alone) formula. In fact, it is solidly biblical. But in our use of the expression “by faith alone,” we acknowledge that we do not make of faith a cause of our eternal salvation, which has as its cause the gracious will of God and the redemptive activity of Christ alone.

8. Man is justified by faith alone, yet faith is never alone.

Luther, as many of you are aware, added an arbitrary “alone” to his translation of Romans 3:28, which fueled the fires of contention at the time of the Reformation and thereafter, although it need not have: *So halten wir nun dafür, daß der Mensch gerecht werde ohne des Gesetzes Werke, allein durch den Glauben.* (Therefore we hold that a man is justified by faith alone without the works of the law.) The “alone” is not in the original Greek of the text. Luther, of course, was aware of this, but he stuck by his translation. He was not just being stubborn on the point.^{xxxii} Luther’s followers stood by him, to the point that a defense of his translation found its way into the Formula of Concord. In fact, it is not so much Luther’s controversial translation that is defended as it is the substance of the matter he taught by the inclusion of the “alone.” The Formula says:

We believe, teach, and confess that for the preservation of the pure doctrine concerning the righteousness of faith before God it is necessary to urge with special diligence the *particulae exclusivae*, that is, the exclusive particles, i.e., the following words of the holy apostle Paul, by which the merit of Christ is entirely separated from our works, and honor given to Christ alone, when the holy apostle Paul writes: *Of grace, without merit, without law, without works, not of works.* All these words together mean as much as that *we are justified alone by faith in Christ.* Ephesians 2:8; Romans 1:17; 3:24; 4:3ff; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 11. (Emphases in original)^{xxxiii}

It is against this emphasis that the Roman Council of Trent inveighs most vigorously:

If anyone says that the ungodly is justified by faith alone in such a way that he understands that nothing else is required which cooperates toward obtaining the grace of justification and that it is in no way necessary for him to be prepared and disposed by the movement of his own will, let him be anathema [damned].^{xxxiv}

If anyone says that justifying faith is nothing else than trust in divine mercy, which remits sins for Christ's sake, or that it is this trust alone by which we are justified, let him be anathema [damned].^{xxxv}

If anyone says that a man is absolved from sins and justified because of this that he confidently believes that he is absolved and justified, or that no one is truly justified except he who believes that he is justified, and that through this faith alone absolution and justification is effected, let him be anathema [damned].^{xxxvi}

Against the biblical doctrine of justification by faith alone without the works of the law Rome has pressed such passages as Galatians 5:6: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love." This, they contend, proves that it is not faith alone that justifies, but "faith that shows itself in love." Also they cite James 2:20-24: "You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. And the Scripture was fulfilled that says, 'Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness, and he was called God's friend.' You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone." Thus, they say, man is not justified before God for the forgiveness of his sins by faith alone, but by faith together with works. They point also to 1 Peter 4:8, which says that "love covers a multitude of sins," as scriptural evidence that our love can help to overcome sin and death, and not just the merits and satisfaction of Christ. Also they argue from 1 Corinthians 13:13, that since love is greater than faith or hope ("the greatest of these is love"), that which is the greatest must be that which justifies.

The complete analysis of these and other passages and thorough refutation of the Roman claims is found in great detail in Articles III and IV of the Apology of the Augsburg Confession which was written by Philip Melancthon.^{xxxvii} Also Chemnitz may be read with profit on this point.^{xxxviii} But before we give answer to the Roman contentions above, it is important to be clear just what the point is that is in dispute. The point is not whether or not renewal of the person must follow where God's grace is bestowed, or, whether or not where faith is, there also love and good works will be present. For these things we do teach and have always taught plainly and clearly. We do not separate faith from life, but do distinguish what the Scripture requires that we distinguish, in this case distinguishing that by which the new life is created in us from the life itself. It ill behooves a respected Catholic scholar like Karl Adam to accuse Lutheranism of "separating" justification from sanctification, a thing which no Lutheran that I am aware of would ever think of doing, and which someone of Adam's theological stature certainly must know as well as any of us. But in this way the issue has become clouded over as in a heavy fog, and innocent minds are confused. Adam does not help theological understanding by writing of the Lutheran doctrine of justification in this way:

Justification is not a mere covering over of sin, a mere internal imputation of the righteousness of Christ. It is the communication of a true inward righteousness, of a new love which re-makes the whole man; it is sanctification. Justification and sanctification are not to be separated the one from the other, as though

sanctification were merely a happy consequence of justification. On the contrary, God's justifying word of forgiveness is an omnipotent word which re-makes the man, not only forgiving the penitent but conferring on him the supernatural life of grace; nay, forgiving him for the very reason that it implants in him the germ of this new life.^{xxxix}

But now from this it appears that because Lutherans distinguish, as Scripture requires we must, between justification and sanctification, and do not say, as Adam says, that justification is sanctification, we therefore teach that the two can be separated from each other and that the one can exist without the other, denying the necessity of sanctification and renewal. Surely Adam knows better than that. We too teach that a faith without works is a dead faith, that is, to say, no faith at all. The true and living faith will always "work through love." But this is not the issue at all, and never has been. Martin Chemnitz, one of the greatest Lutheran theologians of all times, answered this false charge so well four hundred years ago in his *Examination of the Council of Trent*, that no one from that time forward should have had any question as to what Lutherans believe and teach on this point. Chemnitz says:

So also we by no means teach that justifying faith is alone, that is, that it is such a persuasion which is without repentance, and that it does not bring forth any good works at all. But we say that a faith without works, idle, and dead is not the true and living faith which works through love (Galatians 5:6). But let the reader consider what the consequence of the argument of the men of Trent is. Living faith is not alone, without love, therefore it does not justify alone, but together with love. Do therefore the things which are present at the same time, which hang together and are connected, have one office, and one and the same function? In that case we shall hear with our ears and with our feet and see with our eyes and with our hands. There will, therefore, be no distinction either of the senses or of the powers of the soul, because a man receives and possesses them at one and the same time. As therefore these and many similar things, even when they are present at the same time, are rightly and necessarily distinguished, so we do not tear apart reconciliation and renewal, faith and love, in such a manner that we remove and deny one of them, but we give to each its place, its function, and its peculiar nature, with the Scripture, which teaches that this is the peculiar function of faith alone that it apprehends and accepts Christ in the promise of the gospel for righteousness before God to life eternal.^{xl}

But we should not permit ourselves to be sidetracked and lose sight of what is the true point at issue, namely, what it is on account of which God justifies sinful man and forgives his sin. Is it the satisfaction, merit, and obedience of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, or is it our human love, the renewal that has begun in us, or other human virtue? When our attention is brought back to this point, everything becomes clear. But that the Scripture denies to us and to our works or merits, or to any quality in us, the power to justify and cleanse us from sin, is evident not only from the bare proposition of Scripture that justification is not by works but by faith, but also from the several reasons Scripture gives why justification must be denied to works, whether regenerate or unregenerate. Chemnitz lists four reasons: **1)** One of Paul's reasons is that justification by works belongs to the law of deeds, or works, according to Romans 3:10 (3:19?)

and Galatians 3:10, and the law cannot pronounce a man righteous if he is defective in only a single point (James 2:10). **2)** The second reason is taken from the distinction between the righteousness of the law and the righteousness of faith in Romans 10 and Galatians 3. We must be justified either solely by the law or solely by faith in Christ. **3)** The third reason is that all our own boasting may be excluded, so that he who boasts may boast in the Lord, by whom Christ has been made our righteousness (1 Corinthians 1:30). But boasting is not excluded but promoted by the law of works. **4)** The fourth reason is found in Romans 4, namely, that the promise of the inheritance may be sure. The moment our human works, though they be regenerate and produced by the Spirit, are introduced into the discussion of justification, the *monstrum incertudinis* (monstrous uncertainty) arises to destroy all assurance of salvation.^{xli}

Justification and sanctification are to be clearly distinguished on the basis of Scripture, but not to be separated. Although God's act of justification is inseparable from the believer's inner renewal and sanctification, the two may not be confounded. Man is justified by faith alone, yet faith is never alone.

But now we are prepared to answer the question: Does the Scripture, as Rome contends, ascribe justification not only to faith but also to the good works of the regenerate? The passages used to prove this are of different types, and need to be treated separately. First of all, there are the many passages of the law of God that tell us to do certain things and not to do other things, as when Jesus said to the expert in the law regarding the summary of the commandments, "Do this and you will live" (Luke 10:28). But these law-words of Scripture do not in any way oppose the article on justification, for they were given primarily to accuse and condemn us in order that we might see our need for a Savior. But that these law-words were not given to show us an alternate way to God than through Christ is clear from the teaching that whoever would be saved by the law must keep the law in its entirety (James 2:10). When the purpose of the law is understood, the law-words of Scripture not only do not pose a problem to the biblical doctrine of justification by faith, but in fact reinforce it.

Other passages of Scripture may appear superficially to support an "*opinio legis*" (salvation by works), but only because they are removed from their context and made to say things that they do not say. For example, in the 1 Peter 4:8, passage quoted above,^{xlii} which tells us that "love covers a multitude of sins," it is clear that Peter is talking about love for one's neighbor, the point being that dissensions and strife are best forestalled by a loving spirit that overlooks faults in others, forgives them, yields, and does not force its own way, as becomes evident in a reading of the full Old Testament passage Peter quotes partially here: "Hatred stirs up dissension, but love covers over all wrongs" (Proverbs 10:12), which says nothing whatever of the unbiblical notion that our human love atones for sin and death. Likewise, when Paul says that love is preferred to faith and hope for "the greatest of these is love" (1 Corinthians 13:13), we are not led by this to believe that Paul is here contradicting what he says elsewhere when he tells us that we are justified before God by faith without the works of the law. For love is indeed the greatest work of the law, but even the greatest work cannot justify. Again, the context shows us the meaning of Paul's words. What he means to teach us is the importance of love, the chief human virtue that will outlast even faith and hope, because the day will come when faith and hope will cease to be for they will be realized in the presence of God, but love will endure forever; but nowhere does Paul say that our love merits the remission of sins.

Then there are passages where the Scriptures want to teach us about the fruits and effects of faith in our lives, such as where Paul speaks about "faith that shows itself in love" (Galatians 5:6), and James says that "faith without deeds is useless [dead]" (James 2:20), which same thing

our Lord taught in the parable of the barren fig tree and elsewhere. In all these passages God speaks to us about the nature of justifying faith, that it is a living thing, producing fruits of righteousness in the lives of believers. James, in contending against dead faith, even goes so far as to say, “You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone” (James 2:24), which is taken as the strongest proof that justification is not by the merits of Christ alone received by faith, but also by the believer’s good works. But James himself excludes this interpretation when he tells us in the first chapter of his epistle that we are reborn by the gospel (“Word of truth”), which speaks clearly of justification by faith, for it is faith on our part that apprehends the gospel, and not works. It must be borne in mind that James here is disputing against empty protestations of faith that are accompanied by godless living. In this sense the James 2:21-24 passage is rightly understood that the many good works that followed Abraham’s faith declared him to be truly justified, as the evidence that his faith was not dead but a true and living thing. But James does not teach us here to set aside the merits of Christ in favor of our own merits, and he does not mean to say that our good works or good character can achieve our salvation, for he himself rejects the *opinio legis* (salvation by works) when he says: “Whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it” (James 2:10).

But the Scripture throughout takes away from us and from our merits our justification before God to life eternal, and attributes this to the merits and satisfaction of Jesus Christ, which is apprehended by us by faith. Our justification is God’s free gift to us by his gracious, good will, unearned, unmerited, purely for the sake of the righteousness of Christ and his innocent sufferings and death. When we say “by faith alone,” we mean that we look to Christ’s redemptive work alone, and to nothing within ourselves, as the basis of our justification before God. But let no one be deceived thereby as though Lutherans denied the necessity of sanctification and the renewed life. Thus we say that man is justified by faith alone, yet faith is never alone.

9. By justification God applies to the sinner the forgiveness of sins.

Justification *is* God’s declaration of forgiveness, as the Scriptures show when Paul says that the forgiveness of transgressions, the covering of sin, and the non-imputation of sin are *the same thing* as God’s justifying the wicked.

Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness. David *says the same thing* when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: “Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him.” (Romans 4:4-8).

So our Lutheran Confessions state:

To attain the remission of sins is to be justified, according to Psalm 32:1.^{xliii}

The righteousness of faith before God consists alone in the gracious (gratuitous) reconciliation or the forgiveness of sins.^{xliv}

10. And imputes to him the righteousness of Christ.

The applying of the forgiveness of sins to the sinner and the imputing to him of the righteousness of Christ are not two separate acts, but are one and the same, as the Romans 4 passage above demonstrates. Since no real change takes place in the sinner at the point of his justification, but he is simply imputed righteous, or accounted righteous, by God, this has led to the charge against the Lutheran doctrine that it is a “legal fiction,”^{xlv} and no real justification at all. The sinner remains essentially as he was before. The 16th century Lutheran theologian Andrew Osiander was influenced by thoughts of this nature, which led him to the erroneous position that God first makes a person just by infusing into him the essential righteousness of Christ, and then on the basis of that righteousness in him declares him just. Osiander argued that “God would not commit the injustice of declaring a man to be righteous in whom there is nothing whatever of true righteousness.”^{xlvi}

Verdict editor Brimsmead answers the charge that the biblical doctrine of justification is a “legal fiction” by restating in contemporary language what our theologians have always maintained, that the imputation of Christ’s righteousness is a real, not fictional imputation.

If God justifies on the basis of this new history of Christ which is pleasing to him, then forensic justification is no legal fiction. It is not a matter of God waving a wand over the sinner, declaring him righteous when he possesses no righteousness at all. The believer possesses righteousness good enough and big enough to stand before the tribunal of God. He is identified with the holy history of Christ. It has become his own history. This is no make-believe. This history is real. The believer stands with a good record. It justifies him before God.^{xlvii}

We have no place here to go into detail on Osiander’s theory, which some have called “analytic justification.” I would refer the interested reader to the Formula of Concord, Article III, and F. Bente’s “Historical Introduction to the Symbolical Books,”^{xlviii} and to a recent conference paper on this topic by Pastor Alan J. Eckert.^{xlix} But lest our brief treatment here make it appear Osiander’s theory is a trifling concern, let it be noted the theory has found modern proponents. It has been praised by Catholic theologians as an acceptable statement of the doctrine of justification.

Brimsmead sets the two mediating theories (between Protestantism and Rome) of Osiander (“analytic justification”) and 19th century Anglican-turned-Catholic Cardinal John Henry Newman (“effective justification”) side-by-side, and says that “all arguments against forensic justification seem to echo either Osiander or Newman.”¹ Brimsmead further demonstrates that both Osiander and Newman make something in man the basis of his justification, though from different approaches, which, while acceptable to Rome, spells the end of Protestantism, if accepted.

Whereas Osiander said that God declares righteous as a result of making righteous, Newman said that God makes righteous as a result of declaring righteous. But both roads lead back to Rome because, in both instances, sanctification becomes confounded with justification.

Newman earnestly tried to find a way to satisfy both the Protestant and Catholic camps. His synthesis and his history prove one thing that we must never forget. Rome can accept the synthesis of the two positions and still be Rome, but Protestantism cannot accept the synthesis and still be Protestant.^{li}

11. The doctrine of justification is the central teaching of our Christian religion.

Dr. Luther said of justification: “This doctrine is the head and cornerstone. It alone begets, nourishes, builds, preserves, and defends the church of God; and without it the church of God cannot exist for one hour.”^{lii} The Apology of the Augsburg Confession calls it “the chief topic of Christian doctrine... which alone shows the way to the unspeakable treasure and right knowledge of Christ, and alone opens the door to the entire Bible.”^{liii} The Formula of Concord says: “This article concerning justification by faith is the chief article in the entire Christian doctrine, without which no poor conscience can have any firm consolation, or can truly know the riches of the grace of Christ.”^{liiv} Dr. C.F.W. Walther, the sainted founder of the Missouri Synod, wrote: “The doctrine of justification, namely, that man becomes righteous and blessed before God by grace alone, for Christ’s sake alone, and through faith alone, without any merit or worthiness, is the chief doctrine of all Christendom. Yes, it is the real kernel of the whole Christian religion whereby it is differentiated from each and every other religion in the world.”^{liv}

We are at a point now where we may assess the place of justification in the world today. How well is justification holding its place at the head and cornerstone of Christian theology?

Our evaluation of the Roman Catholic position on justification to this point has been based largely on the decrees of the Council of Trent (1545-1563). But did this not take place over four hundred years ago and in a setting overtly hostile to the Reformation, coming as it did out of the inflamed religious situation of the 16th century and as a direct negative reply to the work of the Reformers? Have not new insights and a new spirit permeated Roman theology especially since the days of Pope John XXIII and the Second Vatican Council? In fact, we are permitted no choice but to go back for our starting point in this discussion to the decrees of the Council of Trent since those who participated in Vatican II were required to reaffirm their loyalty and adherence to the Tridentine decrees as the true teaching of the church. At the opening of Vatican II, each member of the Council subscribed to the statement: “I do accept entirely all that has been decided and declared at the Trent Council, concerning the original sin and justification.”^{livi} No decree of Trent has been altered or disavowed, including those which anathematize the biblical doctrine of justification purely by God’s grace through faith. Trent still today represents the official teaching of Rome on justification.

Vatican II did not formally discuss justification. If anything it moved farther away from the biblical doctrine by embracing a form of universalism, allowing that the heathen who do not know Christ can be saved by Christ without being aware of it, provided they “persevere in charity.” The decrees of Vatican II on the Virgin Mary directly repudiate the biblical doctrine of justification in respect to the all-sufficiency of the merit of Christ:

Rightly therefore the holy Fathers see [Mary] as used by God not merely in a passive way, but as cooperating in the work of human salvation through free faith and obedience... This union of the Mother with the Son in the work of salvation was manifested from the time of Christ’s virginal conception to his death... Finally, preserved from all guilt of original sin, the Immaculate Virgin was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory upon the completion of her earthly sojourn.

She was exalted by the Lord as Queen of all, in order that she might be more thoroughly conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and the conqueror of sin and death... All the saving influences of the Blessed Virgin on men originate, not from some inner necessity, but from the divine pleasure.^{lvii}

The study documents of the current Lutheran-Catholic dialogue in this country are highly classified and kept in confidential archives, and would not be released to me by the Lutheran World Ministries, the New York-based arm of the Lutheran World Federation, which has sponsored these dialogues since their inception in 1965.^{lviii} But when Lutherans themselves at the Lutheran World Federation Assembly at Helsinki in 1963, representing 54 million of the world's 70 million Lutherans, find justification by faith to be "a difficult and obscure doctrine" that is "irrelevant" because people no longer feel the "need to be justified," and are therefore incapable of reaching an agreement on justification, we cannot have high expectations that these Lutherans in dialogue with Catholics will be capable of doing anything to promote the centrality of justification by faith in world Christendom.

Further, the abandonment of the forensic nature of justification by Lutherans at Helsinki (Justification is to be "understood not just forensically, but inclusively as the renewal of the whole man"), by Lutherans in dialogue with Catholics in Germany (cf. Wolfhart Pannenberg's acceptance of Vinzenz Pfnür's thesis that "Article IV [of the CA] does not teach a simply external and purely forensic justification but rather joins forgiveness of sins with the inner renewal effected by the Spirit"),^{lix} and again by Gerhard Müller's subscribing to the assertion of the Jesuit Maurer that "the Augustana did not intend a mere forensic doctrine of justification,"^{lx} does not portend well for the doctrine of justification in these discussions.

At this point it is clear that Rome is not prepared to accept any doctrine of justification other than that in the Tridentine–Osiandrian–Newmanian tradition of justification for the sake of something in man, which perpetuates the original error of confounding justification with sanctification, and "world" Lutheranism appears ill-prepared to challenge this.

The Lutheran-Episcopal dialogues in this country that led to the recent agreement to establish intercommunion between the Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. and the three Lutheran bodies, LCA, TALC, AELC, on merger course, have produced a document entitled "Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue" (1981). On justification they say little or nothing as to what will be the basis for their intercommunion (and perhaps future merger?), other than non-committal historical reflections on what either body at one time or another may have believed.

- B. At the time of the Reformation, Anglicans and Lutherans shared a common confession and understanding of God's justifying grace, i.e., that we are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings...
- D. In both communions the understanding of the term "salvation" has had different emphases. Among Lutherans, salvation has commonly been synonymous with the forgiveness of sins; among Episcopalians, salvation has commonly included not only the forgiveness of sins but also the call to and promise of sanctification. As we continue to listen to each other, may God grant that justification by grace and the new life in the Spirit abound.

- E. We rejoice in these common convictions, and recommend them to our churches for reflection and use.^{lxi}

One looks in vain here for a sturdy confession of the biblical truth on justification. At this point we can see little in these discussions that will redound to the glory of God by raising high the banner of God's central message to a fallen world, the doctrine of justification by grace through faith.

The world "evangelical" scene presents a somewhat different picture. Many of the groupings that fit loosely under this umbrella retain a high regard for God's Word. They are almost uniformly the spiritual descendants of John Calvin, whose teaching on justification closely resembled that of Luther. Calvin, with Luther, calls justification "the main hinge on which religion turns."^{lxii} He held to a strictly forensic view of justification. He opposed Osiander for confounding justification and sanctification. But Calvin's descendants in the broad-based evangelical movement have in general slipped into so gross a subjectivism that they have created a *monstrum incertudinis* (monstrous uncertainty) all of their own. Once again the believer is turned away from the only certainty we have in the objective redemptive work of Christ and God's gracious, good will to save, to one's own inner strugglings and strivings with faith. *Verdict* editor Brimsmead, himself with Calvinistic underpinnings, has no sympathies with what evangelicalism has done to the article on justification, and does not shrink from attacking the movement broadside:

When we look at the evangelical movement in the general as it nears the end of the twentieth century, we must say that it scarcely has a doctrine of justification at all. Much is said about the new-birth experience, the Spirit-filled life and many different techniques of inner healing, peace and power. But the center of attention is the subjective religious experience of the believer rather than the outside-of-me righteousness of Another. This represents a kind of evangelical Romanism which has grown up within the Protestant movement. If Protestantism stands on the centrality of justification by faith, then Tillich had grounds for saying that the Protestant era is at an end.^{lxiii}

The "success" theologies of Norman Vincent Peale, Robert Schuller, and the wizards of the electronic church present an even more unpleasant picture for the central article of our faith. For when sin becomes "feeling bad about yourself" (Peale)^{lxiv} or "negative thinking," "having a low self-esteem" (Schuler),^{lxv} and hell becomes "looking back on my life to see what I could have done, and didn't," it is clear that a biblical doctrine of justification is going to have no place. The description of Peale's theology as "a curious assemblage of Coue'ism, autohypnosis, superficial medical theory, naive psychiatry, literal biblicism [the torn-out-of-context variety], American materialism, Horatio Algerism, conventional middle-class morality, and Masonic natural theology"^{lxvi} would probably fit your pick of the TV evangelists. They want people to feel good about themselves, so they give people what they want, and what they want is far from the doctrine of justification from sin by grace through faith.

Verdict (then, *Present Truth*) is equally devastating in its expose' of the incompatibility of emphases in neo-Pentecostalism (the Charismatic movement) with the biblical doctrine of justification as it is in disclosing the widespread apostasy from the doctrine in evangelicalism:

The central thesis of the Pentecostal movement is that the baptism, or infilling, of the Spirit is a definite second blessing which comes at a time subsequent to conversion. This Pentecostal thesis is a complete negation of the truth of justification by faith...

1. The Pentecostal idea of a post-conversion baptism of the Spirit implies that God's act of justification is not sufficient to bring the infilling of the Spirit...
2. The Pentecostal teaching implies (and sometimes explicitly) that the experience of being baptized in the Spirit is something greater and beyond the justification which comes by faith...
3. Pentecostalism presents an unfortunate dichotomy of receiving Christ and receiving the Holy Ghost...
4. Pentecostalism makes two different events of the baptism into Christ and into the Spirit.^{lxvii}

Do Brimsmead, Paxton, and others in the Australian Forum who have so evident a commitment to the justification principle of the Reformation, have the remedy for the subjectivism plaguing evangelicalism and Pentecostalism, which they have diagnosed so accurately? Kurt Marquardt, in a brilliant series of lectures on justification delivered at Bethany Seminary, Mankato, Minnesota, (Reformation Lectures, 1977), submits that they do not and cannot.^{lxviii} The roots of the subjectivistic malady in Christendom, he argues, go far deeper than to American frontier revivalism, the Holiness movement, Wesleyanism, but to their very source in Calvin's and Zwingli's denial of the objective means of grace and their denial of the universal grace of God.

The same reasons led Dr. Walther in the 19th century to defend in a convention paper the thesis: "The Evangelical Lutheran Church alone has the pure doctrine of justification."^{lxix} Is this thesis still to be maintained today, as Marquardt does, even over against a group such as the Australian Forum who have come so far toward the Lutheran side in their understanding and defense of the doctrine of justification, particularly in the face of the common cause we hold against secularism and humanism in the churches, the liberal and neo-orthodox departure from Scripture, the sickly sentimentalism and subjectivism of modern-day evangelicalism and neo-Pentecostalism, the "success" theologies, and whatever posits a cause of God's justifying act in man? Is the continued maintenance of Walther's thesis, which in fact did not originate with him, but has been the thesis of Lutheran orthodoxy from the time of the Reformation, in this day just a sign of petty tribalism, of small-minded spiritual pride on our part? It obviously wears badly on Brimsmead who writes: "This writer has detected such antipathy toward Calvinism among many Lutherans that they hesitate to give due emphasis to important biblical truths lest they might acknowledge something of merit in Reformed theology."^{lxx}

There's more to it than that, of course. We readily acknowledge that the Australian Forum has spoken with greater force and clarity on justification to a world audience than anyone has done for a long time, and in a fresh, imaginative, contemporary idiom that people can hear. Their efforts to restore justification, to its rightful position at the center of Christian theology stand in refreshing relief to the insipid pronouncements of the Lutheran World Federation on justification. Still within them they bear the seeds of the very subjectivism they oppose magnificently in the evangelical and charismatic movements with the objective gift of God in Christ. For the denial of the universality of God's will to save and the denial of the objective means of grace remove from us the solid, reliable ground for the assurance of salvation, opening

the door to subjectivism, which cannot but end in the creation of a new *monstrum incertudinis*, which is of course only the old monstrous uncertainty of Rome. Thus we have no choice but to stand, not out of sinful pride or out of the desire to beat our own orthodox drum, with the thesis of Dr. Walther: “The Evangelical Lutheran Church alone has the pure doctrine of justification.”^{lxxi} But further, since the Australian Forum is not by their stated position doctrinaire Calvinist but only speaks from the Calvinist camp, might we not pray to the Lord of the church that he might lead them through the detailed study of his Word and the Lutheran Confessions to confess also in unconditional terms the objectivity of the means of grace and the universality of God’s gracious will to save.

And now, what about ourselves? Is the chief article of our Christian religion at the heart and core of our faith, and are we a driving force in the world to restore the justification principle to its proper place at the center Christian theology? Of course, in a sense it *is* there and has always been there wherever true Christian theology has been practiced. As far as we ourselves are concerned, fed as we are on a steady diet of Calvinistic literature in America it is not surprising if we discover in ourselves and in our people a low level of understanding of the biblical doctrine of justification. Marquardt observes: “Yet the fact of the matter is that many of our people, while Lutheran in theory, are Calvinists in practice. That is, they view the means of grace and the church through the ‘spiritualizing’ spectacles of the myriad Reformed paperbacks they have absorbed.”^{lxxii}

How well are we informed? Three Lutheran surveys in this country spaced a decade apart (1962-1972-1982) give a partial answer that does not portend well for the doctrine of justification among us. The 1962 survey was made of Lutheran youth nationwide. Sample responses: “Although there are many religions in the world each one leads to the same God” (60% No). “If I say I believe in God and do right I will get to heaven” (59% No). “I can hope to be saved, but I cannot be certain I am saved” (40% No). “God is satisfied if a person lives the best life he can” (37% No). “The main emphasis of the gospel is on God’s rules for noble living” (46% No). “Salvation depends upon being sincere in whatever you believe” (31% No). “The way to be justified before God is to try sincerely to live a good life” (24% No). Dr. Merton Strommen, conductor of the survey, comments:

Many are uncertain whether God’s forgiveness places them in an intermittent state of grace, withdrawn with each sin and restored upon confession, or a constant one. For almost half of the youth, God’s grace is intermittent, relating only to sins specifically confessed following an infraction. This contributes to increased uncertainty that they are forgiven. Half do not believe that they “live in God’s forgiveness twenty-four hours daily.” More than half doubt that they can be certain of salvation. A great number of youth confuse feelings with forgiveness. Thus three-fourths of them say that faith is only a right feeling in the heart about God and that a person is forgiven only when he feels right in the heart. Similarly, many confuse sincerity with faith, thinking sincerity is the most important element in salvation. In fact, sincerity is considered by many to be more important than the object of their faith. No wonder, so many think the gospel centers in God’s rules for noble living and that a sincere attempt to observe these rules is the way to be justified.^{lxxiii}

Closer to our time *A Study of Generations* (1972) profiles beliefs of Lutherans of all ages in our country. The editors comment on the responses to the beliefs section of the survey:

This dimension...is a crass statement of “religion-in-general,” the belief that doing right things, being sincere, and following the rules is what makes God think you’re all right and opens the gates of heaven. It includes a syncretistic attitude: all religions are basically the same, that is, they are systems of merit. This is the practical atheism of Lutheran theology. Merit is won by following the rules of achievement orientation set by the society... Seven out of ten Lutherans agree that all religions lead to the same God while four out of ten agree that hard work is directly beneficial. About four in ten agree with direct statements of salvation by works.

Individual responses included the following: “The main emphasis of the gospel is on God’s rules for right living” (59% Yes). “Although there are many religions in the world, most of them lead to the same God” (72% Yes). God is satisfied if a person lives the best life he can” (50% Yes). “Salvation depends on being sincere in whatever you believe” (44% Yes). “If I say I believe in God and do right, I will get to heaven” (31% Yes).^{lxxiv}

To these older surveys may now be added the findings of a new report, *Profiles of Lutherans in the U.S.A.* (1982), edited by Carl F. Reuss. While the 1962 and 1972 studies covered only the LCA, TALC, and LC-MS, the 1982 *Profiles* includes a cross-section of the WELS, which, however, due to our small size is less than a 5% factor in the findings. Some of the statements in the beliefs section of *Profiles* correspond to statements in the earlier surveys: “The main emphasis of the gospel is on God’s rules for right living” (agree 55%; disagree 34%). “Although there are many religions in the world, most of them lead to the same God” (agree 58%; disagree 32%). “God is satisfied if a person lives the best life one can” (agree 43%; disagree 44%). “Only those who believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior can go to heaven” (agree 71%; disagree 18%).^{lxxv}

Dr. Glen Barnes and Dr. John Isch of the Dr. Martin Luther College faculty compiled the information on the WELS respondents to *Profiles* in a 157-page book entitled *A Profile of WELS Lutherans*, and summarized their findings in three consecutive issues of the *Northwestern Lutheran* (May 1; May 15; June 1, 1982). According to the May 1 issue GBHM Executive Secretary Norman Berg will be putting out a paperback that will analyze the findings. Barnes and Isch find the WELS respondents to be “strongly orthodox” in their beliefs regarding the Bible, the miracles, original sin, the historicity of biblical characters, and on the fact that only those who believe in Jesus will go to heaven, but “not so firm in rejecting” certain statements that touch on salvation by works. *A Profile of WELS Lutherans* does not give percentages but lists the responses on a scale of 1-5, “1” meaning “strongly disagree” and “5” “strongly agree.” Thus a statement marked “3” would indicate that the average response was approximate, “2” would be toward disagreeing with the statement, “4” toward agreement with it. Also, responses here are divided between young (Y = under 35) and old (O = over 35). Taking the same statements we extracted from *Profiles* above, now noting the WELS responses only: “The main emphasis of the gospel is on God’s rules for right living” (Y = 2 ½; O = 3 ¼). “Although there are many religions in the world, most of them lead to the same God” (Y = 2 2/3; O = 2 ¾). “God is satisfied if a person lives the best life one can” (Y = 2; O = 2 ¼). “Only those who believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior can go to heaven” (Y & O = 4 2/3).^{lxxvi}

Being unskilled in statistical analysis I have refrained from making comments, but have simply given you some of the raw data that has been compiled. Certainly no one is about to make judgments about the personal faith of those who made incorrect replies. It doesn't necessarily mean that they lack saving faith in Jesus Christ and are trusting their own good works for salvation. In fact, we are required in the case of Christian brothers and sisters to assume otherwise. Statements like these can be misleading and confusing to people. If given the opportunity to discuss the statements and explain themselves, there is no reason to doubt that our people would correct their answers to conform with the truth of God's Word.

But the fact remains that a great number of our people fail miserably when giving initial responses to questions that deal with the very heart of the Christian faith. This tells us as pastors and educators and lay leaders that the task of carefully preaching and teaching justification by grace alone through faith is never finished. We dare never take for granted that our people already know it too well, and we might as well move on to other matters. At stake is the very treasure of the church, the gospel of salvation. Satan knows that this is our treasure, and here is where his greatest assaults will be concentrated. Pastor Daniel Deutschlander says in a conference paper on justification: "That Satan hates this precious and brightest jewel in the Bible is evident from the repeated attacks made on it during the history of the church."^{lxxvii} We dare not sleep, or while we are carefully on guard against false doctrine from the outside, we succumb to apathy within and lose our treasure of justification by grace through faith, which is to say, lose Christ.

12. By which true Christianity is to be distinguished from all false religions.

In all the world there exist only two religions, whether we call them the natural religion and the revealed religion; the religion of works and the religion of grace; the religion of the law and the religion of the gospel; or, simply, the Christian religion and the non-Christian religion. Although the familiar passage in Pieper's *Dogmatics* may no longer be safely attributed to the 19th century towering genius, Max Mueller, the passage remains no less forceful in the truth it conveys:

In the discharge of my duties for forty years as professor of Sanskrit in the University of Oxford, I have devoted as much time as any man living to the study of the Sacred Books of the East, and I have found the one keynote, the one diapason, so to speak, of all these so-called sacred books... – the one refrain through all – salvation by works. Our own holy Bible, our sacred Book of the East, is from beginning to end a protest against this doctrine.^{lxxviii}

Only Christianity knows a doctrine of forgiveness; only Christianity knows the grace of God. All other religions in the world fit under the heading "religion of works," and the doctrine of justification by grace through faith is our bulwark against them. Justification is the safeguard God has given us against encroachments in all other articles of faith by the natural, man-made religion. Martin Chemnitz says: "This one article above all distinguishes the church from all other people and their superstitions... Indeed, this article is, as it were, the fortress which most excellently safeguards the entire Christian doctrine and religion."^{lxxix}

13. And by which God impels his people to their mission in the world.

To us God has committed the ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:19), the carrying of his good news to a world that walks in darkness and in the shadow of death (Isaiah 9:2). Because God has justified the world through the cross and death of his Son, we have a message to carry, a message of a completed, unconditional declaration of forgiveness which can be believed. In very truth there is no other kind of justification that can be received by faith.

The Lutheran Christian who has the heart and core of Christian doctrine at his heart, that God for the sake of Christ has declared the world acquitted of their sins, has inner impelling power to Christian mission. Nowhere is this doctrine of justification by grace through faith taught and maintained in its richness and fullness as it is taught and maintained among us. No one possesses within him the reason of Christian mission in greater measure than we who are gathered here.

The treasure of justification has been given not to put into a glass case to admire, but to be liberally dispensed in the world. May this blessed article of faith, that God justifies the world freely for the sake of his Son be my personal treasure, and may its power in me impel me to my mission in the world.

We began with Luther in this his quincentenary year. We end with Luther:

This one article reigns and should only reign in my heart, namely, faith in my dear Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only beginning, middle, and end of all the spiritual and divine thoughts which I may ever have by day and by night... This article is the one firm rock and the eternal, firm basis of all our salvation and blessedness; namely, that we, not through ourselves, much less through our own works and accomplishments (which are certainly much smaller and less than we ourselves), but that we through foreign help, namely, through the only-begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ, are redeemed from sin, death, and the devil and brought again to eternal life.^{lxxx}

Soli Deo Gloria!

Endnotes

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- ⁱ *Luther's Works*, Philadelphia Edition, VI,445.
- ⁱⁱ Quoted by Brimsmead in *Verdict*, 2,6, p. 6.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Proceedings of the Fourth Assembly, LWF (hence, LWF Proceedings), p. 443.
- ^{iv} *Triglotta*, p. 45.
- ^v President's Newsletter (WELS), June, 1982.
- ^{vi} Hamann, Henry, *Justification by Faith in Modern Theology*, pp. 60-61.
- ^{vii} Quoted in Preuss, Edward, *The Justification of the Sinner before God*, preface. Also note Hoenecke's high praise of Preuss' work in Koehler's *History of the Wisconsin Synod*, p. 153. Incredible that Preuss should have later converted to Roman Catholicism, after writing this book.
- ^{viii} The 16th century Reformed-turned-Lutheran theologian Samuel Huber went from teaching universal justification to universalism, according to the Ft. Wayne faculty statement, "General (Objective) Justification," printed in *Christian News Encyclopedia* (hence, CNE), p. 1121.
- ^{ix} Letters to *Christian News*, pass. in recent years.
- ^x Marquardt, Kurt, letter to *Christian News*, printed in CNE, p. 1122.
- ^{xi} LWF Proceedings, p. 442.
- ^{xii} Formula of Concord, Epit. III,5.
- ^{xiii} Council of Trent, Sess. VI, chap. vii.
- ^{xiv} Trent, Sess. VI, Canon xi.
- ^{xv} Adam, Karl, *The Spirit of Catholicism*, p. 194. Note also the Apology of the Augsburg Confession's comment: "If the remission of sins depends upon the condition of our works, it is altogether uncertain. For we can never be certain whether we do enough works, or whether our works are sufficiently holy and pure..." *Triglotta*, p. 173.
- ^{xvi} Chemnitz, Martin, *Examination of the Council of Trent* (hence, "Examen"), pp. 469-477.
- ^{xvii} Schmidt, Heinrich, *Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, pp. 427-427. Cf. also endnote 16 above.
- ^{xviii} Schrenk, Gottlob, in *Bible Key Words*, pp. 57-66.
- ^{xix} Ziesler, J.A., *The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul*, p. 48.
- ^{xx} Barth, Markus, *Justification*, p. 11.
- ^{xxi} Cf. endnote 3 above.
- ^{xxii} Pieper, Francis, *Christian Dogmatics*, II,403.
- ^{xxiii} Pieper, op.cit., II,503. But note the suggested correction of the English translation at this point in Meyer's *Ministers of Christ*, pp. 99-100.
- ^{xxiv} Cf. thesis two of the paper above.
- ^{xxv} Pieper, II,421.
- ^{xxvi} Schmidt, op.cit. p. 408.
- ^{xxvii} Pieper, II,421.
- ^{xxviii} Pieper, II,426.
- ^{xxix} Trent, Sess. VI, Canon xii.
- ^{xxx} Paxton, Geoffrey, in CNE, pp. 1700-1.
- ^{xxxi} Tillich, Paul, *A Complete History of Christian Thought*, pp. 12-13. Cf. Koehler's remark in his *History of the Wisconsin Synod*: "[A Christian] does not put his faith in the fact that he believes but wholly in the grace of God in Christ," p. 248.
- ^{xxxii} Cf. Luther's defense of his translation in LW, V,20ff, "On Translating, An Open Letter."
- ^{xxxiii} *Triglotta*, p.795.
- ^{xxxiv} Trent, Sess. VI, Canon ix.
- ^{xxxv} Trent, Sess. VI, Canon xii.
- ^{xxxvi} Trent, Sess. VI, Canon xv.
- ^{xxxvii} *Triglotta*, pp.119-227.

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- ^{xxxviii} Chemnitz, *Examen*, esp. pp. 477-492; cf. also the entire Tenth Topic “Concerning Good Works,” pp. 619-663.
- ^{xxxix} Adam, *Spirit of Catholicism*, p. 191.
- ^{xl} Chemnitz, *Examen*, p. 580.
- ^{xli} Chemnitz, *Examen*, pp. 488-492.
- ^{xlii} Cf. page 11 above.
- ^{xliii} *Triglotta*, p. 143.
- ^{xliv} *Triglotta*, p. 925.
- ^{xlv} Barth, Markus, *Justification*, p. 12.
- ^{xlvi} Pieper, II, 526.
- ^{xlvii} *Verdict*, 2,6, p. 19.
- ^{xlviii} *Triglotta*, pp. 152-161; 791-797; 917-937.
- ^{lix} Eckert, Alan, “The Righteousness of Faith before God,” unpublished conference paper.
- ^l *Verdict*, 2,6, p. 12.
- ^{li} *Verdict*, 2,6, pp. 12-13. When Hans Kung concludes that “there is a fundamental agreement between Catholic and Protestant theology, precisely in the theology of justification,” he does so on the basis of a Newmanian understanding of justification. *Justification*, p. 284.
- ^{lii} Quoted in *Verdict*, 2,6, p. 6.
- ^{liii} *Triglotta*, p. 121.
- ^{liv} *Triglotta*, p. 917.
- ^{lv} Quoted in Lueker, Erwin, “Justification in the Theology of Walther,” *Concordia Theological Monthly*, 32,10, p. 598.
- ^{lvi} CNE, p. 1113.
- ^{lvii} *Documents of Vatican II*, pp. 88-91.
- ^{lviii} Personal correspondence with Dr. Joseph Burgess, Executive Director of the Division of Theological Studies of the Lutheran Council in the USA. Dialogues on justification began in 1978. According to news releases a completed document of agreement on justification is expected in February, 1983.
- ^{lix} Pannenberg, Wolfhardt, “The Confession Augustana As a Catholic confession and a Basis for the Unity of the Church,” in *The Role of the Augsburg Confession, Catholic and Lutheran Views*, p. 35.
- ^{lx} Müller, Gerhard, in *Confessing One Faith*, p. 130.
- ^{lxi} *Lutheran–Episcopal Dialogue*, pp. 25-26.
- ^{lxii} Calvin, John, *Institutes of Christian Religion*, Bk. 3, chap. 11, sec. 1.
- ^{lxiii} *Verdict*, 2,6, p. 11.
- ^{lxiv} Lehmann, William, *The Theology of Norman Vincent Peale*, in CTM, 29,2, p. 96.
- ^{lxv} Cf. Pinchoff, Edward, “An Analysis of the Current Robert Schuller Type of Positive Religiosity,” unpublished conference paper, p. 4.
- ^{lxvi} Lehmann, “Theology of Peale,” p. 97.
- ^{lxvii} Quoted in Marquardt, Kurt, “The Doctrine of Justification,” printed in CNE, p. 1107.
- ^{lxviii} Marquardt, Kurt, “Justification,” in CNE, pp. 1105-1110, esp. Lecture 2, p. 1107.
- ^{lix} From a conference paper by Walther quoted in CTM, 32,10, p. 603.
- ^{lxx} *Verdict*, 2,6, p. 22.
- ^{lxxi} Cf. endnote 69 above.
- ^{lxxii} Marquardt, op.cit. in CNE, p. 1108.
- ^{lxxiii} Strommen, Merton, *Profiles of Church Youth*, pp. 51-54.
- ^{lxxiv} Strommen, Merton, et al, *A Study in Generations*, pp. 145; 369.
- ^{lxxv} Reuss, Carl, *Profiles of Lutherans in the U.S.A.*, pp. 31-33.
- ^{lxxvi} Barnes, Glenn, and John Isch, *A Profile of WELS Lutherans*, pp. 65-67.
- ^{lxxvii} Deutschlander, D., “On the Distinction between Objective and Subjective Justification,” p. 1.

^{lxxviii} Pieper, I, 15-16.

^{lxxix} Chemnitz, Martin, quoted in Pieper, II, 515.

^{lxxx} Luther, Martin, quoted by Lueker, Erwin, in CTM, 32, 10, p. 598.

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