

The Lutheran Way (to unity)?

Senior Church History

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The Lutheran Way?

From our point of view, the recent decade of union attempts of the Lutheran church has more of woe than of weal in it. What was originally conceived as a mighty army of bold confessors of the faith has turned into a timid army of compromisers who seem to have forgotten that God's Word is truth, and eternally sure. Rather than negotiations to unity under God's Word, church men now seem to think negotiation means to take away the offense of the Gospel to men of the world. After study of this ~~period~~ period it is no wonder that our Synod does not take flying leaps into union discussions, for these have become traps and mighty temptations to those whom the Lord's yet holds to His Word.

For a number of years, committees of the synods in the Synodical Conference, including our own synod, had been meeting with a committee of the Iowa Synod (later united with the Ohio, Buffalo Synods in the American Lutheran Church (ALC)). in efforts to reach agreement in points of doctrine (church and ministry) that had from our beginnings separated the Iowa Synod from us. The former Buffalo Synod also joined in the discussions. The doctrines in controversy were chiefly these: conversion and election; Scriptures as the inerrant Word of God, Church and church fellowship, ministry, Antichrist, Chiliasm, Sunday, Open Questions. As a result of these talks the Chicago Theses was completed in 1928 and was supposed to show that the Iowa Synod was now agreed with us in these doctrines which had been in controversy.

The Missouri Synod was the first Synod of the Synodical Conference, at Chicago in 1929, to consider the Chicago Theses. The Synod rejected the Theses on the grounds that they failed to be an actual settlement of the Old doctrinal controversies with Iowa, nor did they expressly reject their former false teachings of the Iowa Synod. (Proceedings, Missouri Synod, 1929, pg. 110f.) (Appendix A) The Missouri Synod resolved not to deal any further with Iowa because that Synod showed its unionistic spirit by negotiating with other false Lutheran Synods. (VLC)

It was at this time that the Missouri Synod drew up its Brief Statement

to show what it wanted, in such a confession. How ironical that Old Missouri, having rejected the Chicago Theses upon the grounds of inadequacy, should take issue with us for finding inadequacy in the Common Confession many years later. She taught us a lesson then that we would find valuable years later. *(Appendix B)*

At its convention in 1932, the Missouri Synod accepted the Brief Statement formally. This statement had been drawn up by a committee which was chaired by F. Peiper. This statement our Synod never adopted formally as our own but we did warmly approve of it and use it in our own work. The Old Iowa Synod and later the American Lutheran Church never accepted the Brief Statement by itself simply because they had never in fact changed their position in their doctrine.

In 1935 the newly formed American Lutheran Church extended an invitation to Missouri and Wisconsin. The ALC as we remember was the result of a merger of the Iowa, Ohio, and Buffalo Synods. Its invitation reads ~~that~~ it desired to confer "with those Synodical bodies with which we are not in fellowship, with the end in view of establishing pulpit and altar fellowship." (Waverly Resolution). But this invitation was sent, not only to the Synods of the Synodical Conference, but also to the liberal ULC. The ALC was working both ends against the middle.

Our own synod replied that while we indeed yearned for a true unity of heart and mind of Lutherans in America, nevertheless it could not enter into doctrinal discussions with the ULC or ALC until its openly unionistic and unorthodox practices were in some way repudiated. Otherwise no honest attempt could be possible in unity. It should be noted that the aim of our church in all such talks is not to "negotiate" unity or "arrive" at unity implying compromise *in beyond* Scriptural truth; rather we attempt to uncover our mutual unity as it exists in the entire Word, and if necessary, to encourage proper practice¹. For too often today union committees seem to content themselves with trading away jots and tittles of *(often more)* Divine Word until agreement can be reached. All this leads to is a blank page of Scripture, indifference, and confusion. When a church believes it has the truth and that this truth is solidly founded on God's word, it has no business, nor *should* would it willingly enter into talks which will only serve to fritter away this truth.

Missouri, however, was a disappointment to us, and perhaps significant for the future developments. For ~~in~~ⁱⁿ spite of the fact that Missouri had in 1929 very clearly declared that negotiations with the Iowa Synod must stop until Iowa comes to its senses and repudiated ~~the~~^{the} unionistic practices in its negotiations; and ~~in~~ⁱⁿ spite of the fact that Iowa instead JOINED the ALC and was now even negotiating with the ULC and ELC; nevertheless, Missouri now accepted the invitation of the ALC and resumed doctrinal discussions with a unionistic church body that never accepted the Brief Statement. In hind sight this action might be considered the beginning of the end ~~of~~ for our relation with Missouri. But at that time few could have foreseen the events of the next decades, ~~they~~^{Many} became ~~so~~ blinded by the half truth_s of unionism.

In 1938 a convention of the Missouri Synod received the first results of its negotiations with the ~~American~~^{American} Lutheran Church and accepted a compromiseⁿ, not to say ~~strange~~^{strange} confession of faith by joining the Brief Statement with the ALC Declaration. The upshoot was that the Brief Statement be viewed in the light of the Declaration with the understanding that nothing was in conflict with the ~~Minneapolis~~^{Minneapolis} Theses of 1925² (formation of American Lutheran Conference). By this Declaration, ~~the~~^{the} ALC insisted on sup^uplementing the Brief Statement which for some reason was not adequate from their point of view. They added resolutions on Holy Scripture and Inspiration, Pred^ustination and Conversion, Church, Means of Grace, ~~and~~^{They} also insisted that certain other doctrines included in the Brief Statement were not divisive of church fellowship, that no agreement is necessary to have scriptural fellowship with ALC: Here Antichrist, Conversion of the Jews, Resurrection of Martyrs, Millennialism. ^{we intend:} Then ironically the Resolution states, "with other points of doctrine presented ^u in the Brief Statement... we are conscious of bring in agreement." What a snow job! Missouri was being ~~forced~~^{forced} to fellowship on ALC's terms and not her own. But the most ^{ambiguous} ~~flagrant~~ statement of ALC document is that there were non-divisive doctrines. If a doctrine is derived from Scripture alone, it is mandatory as God's Word. ~~One~~ None of God's word is optional. It is contrary to Scripture, and it contradicts directly ~~the~~ Missouri's ~~own~~ resolutions of 1929 concerning

agreement on Scripture and open questions. When the Missouri Synod accepted the Brief Statement and Declaration as a doctrinal basis for future church fellowship between the Missouri Synod and ALC, point three of the Resolution reads--"in regard to the points of non-fundamental doctrines mentioned in the Declaration...we endeavor to establish FULL agreement."⁴ Since the Synod did make reservations for further agreement which it required before fellowship² could be established, its initial reaction may have been too enthusiastic in accepting the Brief Statement and the Declaration as a JOINT document as a doctrinal basis for such fellowship. Many within Missouri protested this ambiguity (as in the "Confessional Lutheran"). The Missouri resolution also asked the ALC to "establish on the part of the American Lutheran Church doctrinal agreement with those Church bodies with which the ALC is in fellowship." (The American Lutheran Conference is referred to here) These church bodies also represented Synods with which the Missouri Synod had formerly been engaged in controversy. This request the ALC never really honored. In fact, one of their leading men said that if Missouri was going to come in as a reformer of doctrinal laxity and weak practice, that they wanted nothing of Missouri.²² They were very pleased with what they had. Missouri also promised to submit the documents to the Synods of the Synodical Conference for approval, which was how we become officially involved. Wisconsin itself had not been invited to attend. Originally thought to be an oversight or even postal delivery problems, there is ~~now~~ some evidence for thinking that our ~~xxxx~~exclusion was intentional by Dr. M. Rev.⁵ Why he would not want our little light there is hard to determine, perhaps it is the old "divide and conquer."

The ALC showed its true colors on really basic disagreements when in 1938 they resolved in convention: "We declare the Brief Statement of the Missouri Synod, together with the Declaration of our commission, a sufficient doctrinal basis for Church-fellowship."⁶ "That...the afore mentioned doctrinal agreement is sufficient... and that we are firmly convinced that it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines. Nevertheless, we are willing to continue to negotiate concerning the points termed in our Declaration as

'not ~~xxxxxxx~~ devisive of church-fellowship,' and recognized as such (!!!!???)
 by the Missouri Synod's Resolution." We can see the "false" impression ALC
 had or tried to make Missouri think it had. Rau himself imbarassed many in
 Missouri when he declared that Missouri had now changed their possition
 (somewhere in the Confessional Lutheran). Rau was clearly exploiting the
 momentary weakness in Missouri to loosen it from its strict narrowmindedness
 by such tactics as he had been using against Missouri for years. Even Missouri's
 respect for scholarship he managed to us in his amary. In resolution 4, the
 ALC ~~said~~: "We understand why the Missouri Synod is for the time being not
 yet ready to draw this logical conclusion and immediately establish Church
 fellowship with our church." ALC was treating Missouri as a weak brother
 who needed time to see the wisdom of ALC. Oh, what a ~~xxxxx~~ mess Missouri had
 gotten her~~s~~elf into.

In 1939, our Synod rejected these doctrinal theses and called upon the
 Missouri Synod to suspend further negotiations with the ALC until that body had ~~g~~
 given up its unionistic positions (The American Lutheran Conference and relations
 with ULC which ALC flattly declared that they would not give up). Our Synod
 pointed out that for the sake of clarity and precision in meaning and ~~xxxxxx~~
 implication, if ~~one~~ and when doctrinal discussions would continue that efforts
 must bend toward preparing a single confessional document that by thesis and ~~xxxx~~
 antitheses--stating accepted doctrine and rejecting the corrolaty false doctrine.⁷
 Our point that no real doctrinal unity existed was vividly underlined when
 the Pittsburgh Agreement was arranged in 1940 between ALC and ULC. Missouri
 knew that she was not in agreement with the ULC, and so could not see how
 any real honest agreement could in reality exist between all three bodies.
 Somewhere, someone was not communicating what they where ~~xx~~ really thinking.
 A sense of betrayal pervaded Missouri. Wisconsin would have fully been justified
 in saying "I told you so." But the ~~xxxxx~~ real shame of this whole affare is
 that Missouri learned nothing. The effect of the Pittsburgh, Minneapolis,
 Sandusky Resolution and the Declaration was to leach all meaning out of the

Brief Statement. In 1941, though stunned by the ALC's games, Missouri refused to withdraw the 1938 document, but did instruct its Union Committee to prepare a single statement of Agreement. The ALC had again asserted that it was "neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non~~fundamental~~ doctrines," and that Prayer fellowship is wider than Church-fellowship. Despite such clear indications of confusion and denial, negotiations continued⁸. ALC also laid plans for joint work ("external" they said) with Missouri in the relief of foreign missions ~~displeased~~ and in work among service men. The Union Committee was encouraged to look closer at Church-fellowship itself, but such did not happen.

In 1943 our Synod again appealed to the Missouri Synod to stop its negotiations with ALC, since the practice of the ALC showed that it was not sincere in its assertions of doctrinal oneness nor in its endeavors to bring about agreement or even discussions with its sister Synods in the American Lutheran Conference (Augustana, Norwegian, Danish, ect). The Missouri Synod committee on Doctrinal Unity admitted that there was indeed a basic difference between the ALC stand on Unionism and the Missouri Synod stand.⁹

In 1944 the Missouri Synod published a single document which was to represent a mutual statement. Although it was prepared by a joint committee of ALC and MS men, in 1946 the ALC rejected it. This document was called the Doctrinal Affirmation, It was in a large part an enlargement of the Brief Statement, but far less clear. That the ALC should reject it is no surprise since ALC had always refused to accept the Brief Statement itself as adequate¹⁰. Nor had the ALC changed its stand on any of these things over the years in spite of the Declaration.¹¹ Once one understands what ALC sees as its mission it is easier to see a method in its madness. It had always seen as its mission being the middle way between two extremes, the liberalism of the ULC and the narrow Confessionalism of the MS. Obviously the doctrinal stand of the ALC could never be honestly identified with strict confessionalism, for not only would she offend some of her own people, but then the liberalism of the ULC

would be automatically excluded. Yet even after the Affirmation was a dead issue, the MS still had not learned her lesson, but continued negotiations. Instead of MS becoming more sure of its confessional stand, a growing number of its pastors and teachers became increasingly uneasy with the former rigidity in religion and proclamation of the Gospel.¹²

1944 was also the year that the MS abandoned its former position against Scouting because it thought it could keep out the "opinio legis" of work righteousness by having Church sponsored and directed "packs," but many have found that not to be how Scouting operates. Here also the chaplaincy enters ~~in~~ as an issue.

Increasingly in 1945 there were instances of joint prayer, and cooperation in "externals" in social work. In 1945 the Statement of the 44 opened some eyes to the deterioration of the Synod leadership. This Statement and its aftermath deserve more attention but not here in this paper. Though the Statement itself was withdrawn as a basis of discussion, the sentiments it expressed were never really repudiated or otherwise effectively neutralized.

In 1946 the ALC rejected the Affirmations, as we have said. It also stated that "it dispaired of attaining Lutheran unity by way of additional doctrinal formulation and reformulations."¹³ It instead decided to "explore the measure of agreement toward the goal of ture unity," (note here a correspondence with the thoughts of Dr. Fendt later in the paper) and thereby sanctioned the new and Satanic device of Selective Fellowship with pastors and parishes of other church bodies not in fellowship. "Resolved, that pastors and parishes of the ALC shall be free to have pulpit, altar, and pæayer fellowahip with such pastors and parishes of other Lutheran synods as agree in doctrine and practice" determined locally. The ALC then issued its "Friendly Invitation", which was to contend for an "allowable and wholesome latitude of theological opinion on the basis of the teachings of the word of God." They further state that "no intervening discussions have revaaeked any fundamental doctrinal differences...that forbids entry into pulpit and altar fellowship with the Missouri Synod." It seems as if the Doctrinal Affirmation for all of its weaknesses was really too adequate for the ALC, since it made no allowance for that wholesome latitude of mind which the ALC theology seems to feel is the heart of the Christian message. Also we begin ti see the working of that axiom "doctrinal divides, service unites."

It also suggested a joint meeting with the Missouri Committee in order to determine, "what practical steps can be taken to demonstrate in actions, life and practice the measure of unity which now exists." Here too we see ALC's insidious strategy. Close external relations cannot but develop into closer and closer relationship which tend to unify opinions. Talk together, work together, drink together, pray together, think together, believe together, worship together, together. If we had not seen this happen with our own eyes we would not have thought this kind of deception possible.

Many in the Missouri Synod were also bewildered. The ALC insisted that unity already existed, but would not accept the Affirmation which Missouri thought combined the Brief Statement and Declaration in a way acceptable to the ALC. The Commission said in its Report¹⁴: "There are chiefly three difficulties standing in the way of fellowship with the ALC

- 1) the MANIFEST lack of doctrinal unity. Although the members of the Fellowship Committee told us that they were not aware of doctrinal differences between our two bodies, yet reports indicate the existence of differences...
- 2) The difference in conviction regarding the degree of doctrinal unity required for fellowship.
- 3) No action to bring about acceptance of doctrinal statements agreed on by other church bodies in the American Lutheran Conference." The Missouri Synod saw the Selective fellowship for what it was, a ploy¹⁵ to promote unity with our Synod. But it was a unity sought outside of the only real, satisfying, scriptural way, agreement in doctrine. But yet, still missing all that had happened and insisting good faith, they plunged into blind negotiation again. ~~ALC's~~ ALC's insistent and willful unionism dragged Missouri further into unfaithfulness. In 1949 the Wisconsin Synod felt constrained to address six questions to the Missouri Synod concerning the Lutheran men of America, cooperation in Welfare Agencies, cooperation with the National Lutheran Council, the first Bad Boll conference in Europe, the booklet "Scouting in the Lutheran Church," and the applicability of Romans 16:17 to all errorists, Lutheran or not. Missouri made a weak attempt to defend her accusations by evasion or outright denial of what we thought we ~~say~~ saw.

In any case, the result of the renewed negotiations at the invitation of the ALC is the Common Confession of 1950. In view of the events which for decades preceded this document and the impasse which had developed, one wonders what happened to make it possible, that the Churches now agreed. A reading of the confession would hardly give one a clear picture, or even a clue, of the critical issues which had been so hotly debated and which so often had brought disappointment. ^{before} What became of the old doctrinal differences. We ought to put the best construction on these things and say it is an honest attempt at resolve differences, But how! by ignoring them, by writing something so "well" worded that every party can find its own interpretation. Missouri's men claim they did not change their doctrine, and there is no evidence that ALC changed its doctrine. Yet behold, a common confession. In the words of one Synod evaluation, it "involves an untruth, and creates an untruthful situation."

Upon a cursory first reading the common confession seems to be a fine confession of faith. We would be pleased if our people could produce this type of glowingly positive statement of faith (since we spend so much of our time telling them what we are against I often wonder if they remember what we are for), ~~especially~~ ^{that is} in connection with the Scriptural knowledge such a statement calls for. But as fine as this confession may seem, it makes this impression only WHEN CONSIDERED IN A VACUUM. It completely disregards all historical situations and does not start with the point of controversy, the very reason Missouri had turned down the Chicago Thesis. As it said so well in A CITY SET ON A HILL by Aaberg: "In a time when Churches press for relevance to the world and its lost millions, the common confession is arrogantly irrelevant." As a statement of faith for even a relatively sheltered Seminary student it is quite acceptable, but as a statement of church ~~xxx~~ statesmen who ought to know ~~xxxx~~ what is "in the fire" and what isn't, a an agreement between churches which had never been able to agree before, it is a dismal failure. When two nations find themselves in disagreement over boundaries one expects ~~the~~ ^{the} resulting agreement

to so clearly define that new boundry so that it can be clearly marked foot by foot in order to forstall all future ^{possibility} of disagreement. Neither would be foolish enough to think that by denying all boundaries and pretending that none ever existed is going to maintain peace for long. "Somewhere outthere" will never do. "Somewhere outthere" is exactly where the Common Confession puts the doctrinal problems of recent years. It is no ~~resolution~~, but an ignoring of something which ^{to them} is not that important and ought not to divid^e. ALC had been insisting this point of view all along. A church which takes its task sincerely and earnestly of proclaiming the saving Word of God will never be content with knowing that somewhere out there there is a Bible where somewhere there is a vague passage on that point, but don't bother about that now! (?) Indiferance and confusion can be and has been the result of this aproasch.

When the Common Confession ~~xxxx~~ was submitted to a Convention of the Missouri Synod, the Synod stated that "we can find in this document nothing that contradicts the Scriptures" and it was "resolved that we accept the common confession as a statement of these doctrines ~~x~~ (which are) in harmony with Scripture."¹⁶ Again such a statement out of context of the situation is unoffending and even a happy one. But considering the fact that it was the result of talk^s with the ALC one would have expected a bit more concerned probing in eagerness to see if the ALC had indicated any chagne in its stands, but not even a word is breathd here. Does this show a shift in attitude, if not indifference to doctrainl matters, in view of the acknowledgment in 1947 of the "manifest lack of doctrinal unity" which Missouri saw in relation to the ALC. Though it is often claimed that the Common Confession is not intended to be a formal document to sever as a basis for fellowship, it was treated just this way by the individual Conventions when they considered them. Missouri on its part resolved, "That if the ALC, in convention assembled, accepts it, the CC shall be recognized as a statement of agreement on these doctrines between us and the American Lutheran Church." Not one word is said in the 1950 MS resolutions of the sharp doctrinal differne^s nor is it said how the Common Confession shows agreement in these matters beyond that they "find ~~nothing that~~ in this document nothing that contradicts the

Scriptures." This is not confessionalism. Upon this stand they could have saved themselves some time and adopted the Creeds or the Augustana, if all they wanted to do was state SOME scriptural truth. There is no relevance in this confession.

As might be expected in the confused annals of Church unionism the lie of the "common Confession" became evident in short order as it happened before. Just as the 1938 agreement on the basis of the Brief Statement and Declaration was shown to be without foundation by the ALC's adoption of the Pittsburgh Agreement with the ULCA in 1940, and just so the agreement of 1950 on the basis of the Common Confession was shown to be less than genuine by the ALC's adoption of the "united Testimony on Faith and Life" with the other members of the American Lutheran Conference in 1952. This Testimony was in disagreement with Missouri's position and the officials of Missouri knew it. One becomes ~~xx~~ more than suspicious when doctrinal agreement seems to be so unstable that one day you have it and the next you don't. Where is that old Zion on the Mississippi. One dare never put trust in men's ability for then we stumble; only God can keep us standing.

The putting aside of the Common Confession in 1959 leaves one with a strange feeling. If it had truly resolved differences and the ALC also acknowledge it, why could it not be used in the formation of a new ALC. It was relegated as "a significant historical statement which may like other documents of a similar nature, serve our church for purposes of discussion and instruction."¹⁸

The president of the ALC declared that differences "remaining to be ironed out" for the final merger of the ~~A.L.C.~~ American Lutheran Conference bodies "have nothing to do with doctrine and practice." Also the president of the ALC declared to the 1954 convention of his church that there is "complete agreement" between the Common Confession and the United Testimony, the doctrinal basis of the new church, while, on the other hand, officers of the Missouri Synod publically expressed grave concern regarding the adequacy of the United Testimony and raised questions concerning the consistency between the United Testimony and the Common Confession.¹⁹

Obviously the Synod recognized, even if only tacitly, that there were troubling discrepancies between what they had negotiated with the ALC commission and what the ALC actually believed. In spite of the assurances of the ALC officials of substantial agreement between the CC and the United Testimony, the Common Confession was withdrawn as a union document. If anything can shake the confidence of a church and the sincerity with which confessions are made it is this type of double cross. Momentarily the great rejoicing and enthusiasm disappeared, but not for long. Even though it was here obvious that someone was being lied to, ALC always came back for more. The road to Lutheran unity should not go through the land of the two-faced.

Another unhappy relation is that of Dr. Fendt of the ALC, a member of the joint subcommittee which drafted the CC, who declared ²⁰ that the Common Confession sets forth "the doctrine taught by both synods" and that "the underlying ~~motivation~~ motivation in drafting the CC was to give expression to existing doctrinal unity rather than to ~~rehearsing~~ rehearsing past doctrinal disagreements or to seek compromises or conversions among the negotiators." "To question such omissions (^{clauses} ~~clauses~~ of excluded beliefs) many indicate a psychological rather than theological attitude and may call for psychiatric analysis rather than theological reflection...to seek to determine the rightness or wrongness of former contentions in doctrinal controversy was not the task of the committees, nor is that its task of the synods today" (p. 774) If this ^{was} ~~is~~ the attitude of the ALC and A LC-MS commissioners, then the CC is misrepresented as a resolving of former issues between the churches, for it is only a statement of public teaching which both sides regard as scriptural and neither side could deny. It also shows how the doctrinal basis of acceptable fellowship had shrunk in Missouri. By accepting the CC Missouri virtually agreed to ALC's fellowship standards.

Our synod was very accurate when it said that the CC involved an untruth and created an untruthful situation. The ALC's denial that it had changed its position ²¹, by its approval of the CC and the United Testimony, and rejection of the Brief Statement and the ambiguous Affirmations is very telling against Missouri with it accepted the CC as adequate; and then denied any change in its own thinking.

Certain points of controvercy were not even vaguely discussed, as Sunday and Creation days. This evading, ambiguous, refusal to speak clearly pro or con is NOT the way to Lutheran unity. For the Lutheran way the Scriptures and Confession point out the only proper way to settle doctrinal differences: "For the preservation of pure doctrine and for thorough, permanent, godly units in the church it is necessary, ~~that~~ not only that the pure, wholesome doctrine be rightly presented, but also that the ~~apparent~~ opposenents which teach otherwise be reprov'd. I Timothy 2 (2 Tim. 3:36) Titus 1:9 (Triglot p. 855)

My hopes in this paper have been to get an overview of the dialogue between Missouri and the ALC to see in what way our Synod's criticism was justified concerning the CC that it "involved an untruth and created an untruthful situation" (whoever coined this phrase should be commended, it is a beauty). Perhaps I have really proved nothing except that it is awefully hard to make people stick to their agreements. Perhaps also an indepth doctrinal study of all the documents would and should be a vital part of this paper, as it was I have used the various Synodical critiques of them and on the whole have been satisfied with there positions. The Missouri Synod's rebuttals and denials and evasions seemed more to frustrate an understanding of the situation than bring enlightenment and understanding. Needless to say, and not necessarily due to factors entirely out of my control, there is not longer time not space to deal with this issues.

Appendix A

Extract from the Report of the Examining Committee for Intersynodical Theses (Chicago) given at Springfield in 1929.

"After careful examination...your Committee finds itself compelled to advise Synod to reject these as a possible basis for union with the Synods of Ohio, Iowa and Buffalo, since all chapters and a number of paragraphs are inadequate. At times they do not touch upon the point of controversy, at times they are so phrased that both parties can find in them their own opinion; at times they incline more to the position of our opponents than to our own. (underlining mine LK).

"The Chief criticisms of your Committee are that in the short presentation, etc under "C" the Scriptural doctrine of the universal will of grace is not clearly separated from the doctrine of election by grace. One gains the impression that election is included in the universal will of grace and concerns persons only in so far as it decrees that those shall enter heaven, who, according to the foreknowledge of God, already believe. Everywhere one misses the clear statement that in Christ Jesus, God elected unto faith, unto sonship, unto perseverance, and unto salvation certain persons who are known to him alone.

"We must furthermore criticize the fact that neither in the "Short Presentation" nor under "A" the distinction between natural and malicious resistance was ruled out.

"Most of the paragraphs under "D" are inadequate, they do not remove, but keep silence about, the old differences. We nowhere find a clear statement of the fact, that the doctrines of the Church, the ministry, Sunday, Chiliasm, and Antichrist are not open questions but clear and ~~well~~ defined doctrines of the Scriptures and our Confessions. In the article on the Church a clear confession of the Church, in the true sense of the term, is invisible, was not made. The language ~~permits~~ permits the opponents to retain their old doctrine of a visible side of the church.

Your committee considers it a hopeless undertaking to make these these unobjectionable ~~from~~ from the view of pure doctrine. It would be better to discard them as a failure. It now seems to your committee a matter of wisdom to ~~desist~~ desist from intersynodical conferences. It ought now also to be apparent the the manner of conducting these conferences, to wit, the exclusion of all historical matters is wrong. As a result the opponents hardly understand each other.

(English version) : b) because the omission of all historical data in working out

the theses was evidently not conducive to a full understanding on the part of the colloquents, we must begin with the status controversiae.

Appendix B Contrast the preceeding report and the Chicago these with this report of the Review Committee of our study of the Common Confession Missouri Report of Wisconsin Synod Review Committe of the CC (New Ulm, 31st Conv.)

I. B. In our examination of this material we found nothing contrary to Scripture as far as the expression of Scripture doctrine is concerned.

II. On the other hand, your Committee feels compelled both by a love for the Gospel and a conscientious regard for the several sister synods of the Synodical Conference to make the following observations.

A. We recognize unreservedly the right, yea, the duty, of any synod within the Synodical Conference to exercise thorough supervision over the doctrine and practise of a sister synod, and to call the respective synod's attention to what is believed to be a violation of Scriptural principles. Such mutual discipline, if properly exercised, is basis for the continued welfare of the Synodical conference.

B. Speaking specifically of the criticism and subsequent rejection of the Common Confession by the Wisc. Synod, your Committee regrets to state that, in its opinion, the method employed in this criticism goes beyond the requirements of Scripture, and is, therefore to that extent unscriptural, and out of harmony with truly evangelical procedure. It is one thing to cite clear Scripture texts in support of the charge of false doctrine. It is quite another thing to base charges of so serious a nature on personal opinion.

1. Proceedings.p.129, criticism of Artical VI of the Common Confession, your Committee believes that Art. VI clearly states all the essentials of the doctrine of justification, to wit, its universality, the monergism of divine garace, the redemption through the means of grace, the creation of faith by the Holy Spirit as the means of appropriation of God's decree of justification, we therefore, hold that the criticsim that "this truth is impaired" and that "this formulation admits of false answers, etc." is unwarranted.

2. It will not be necessary to take up in detain the criticiscims of each art^{ic}le of the Common Confession. The criticism does not cite false doctrine, but operates with fears and misgivings on the basis of what might be read into the statements of the Common Confession. If the possibillity of misconstruction were made the ~~xxx~~ criterion of acceptablility, then we should have to repudiate the three Ecumenical creeds as well as all of our Lutheran Confessions

And so you aan see the attitude has changed in these matters.

Appendix C A basic criticism of the CC from the
ELS Report, 1951p. 54-55

- 1) Some parts of the Bible are not divinely inspired, John 10:35. Many who hold this view in the ALC can also accept the CC's "content and fitting word."
- 2) Justification of all mankind is openly denied in ALC, the CC does not definitely state that God has declared all mankind to be righteous in Christ.
- 3) Some people are converted to Christ while others are not, because the converted offer only a neutral resistance, while others offer willful resistance is not rejected by the CC. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~
- 4) CC does not reject the error taught in ALC that God elected His people to eternal life in view of their foreseen faith.
- 5) ALC wrongly teaches that the means of Grace belong to the essence of the Holy Christian Church

also: Last things

Papcy

Conversion of Jews

Millennialism

Endnotes:

- 1) Proceedings...Wisconsin Synod, 1935, p. 64 f.
- 2) Wolf, Documents of Lutheran Unity in America, p. 394 - 396.
- 4) Wolf, Documents, p. 399.
- 5) J. Behnken, This I Recall, p. 169.
- 6) Wolf, Documents, 400 f.
- 7) Wolf, Documents, p. 402-403
- 8) Proceedings...Wisc., 1941, p. 74ff.
- 9) ~~XXXX~~ Proceedings...1943, p. 64ff.
- 10) Confessional Lutheran, May 1947, p. 55f.
- 11) Quart., Jan. 1947, p. 64f., April 1947, p. 132f, July 1947p. 206f.
- 12) Quart., Jan 1947, p. 70f. Confessional Lutheran, Dec. 1944.
- 13) Proceedings...Wisc., 1947, p. 100f.
- 14) Reports and MEM., 1947, p. 381.
- 15) MS - Reports, 1947, p. 382.
- 16) Proceedings...LC-MS, 1950, p. 585.
- 17) Proceedings...LC-MS, 1950, p. 586
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