

"Meditate
upon these things;
give thyself
wholly to them;
that thy profiting
may appear unto all"

I Timothy 4:15

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THE BOOK OF CONCORD AND THE DOCTRINE OF CHURCH AND MINISTRY

DOCTRINAL OVERVIEW

... In 1939, when Cardinal Pacelli, as Camerlengo [head of the Conclave], turned to face the Cardinals, they saw beads of perspiration forming on the forehead of that experienced, arrogant, and utterly self-confident Vatican diplomat.

Odd, one would think, for men so used to power. But Conclave is different, even for such men as these. "Nothing, for that moment," wrote Cardinal Antonelli in the nineteenth century, "nothing stands between us and the Lord Jesus. All our lives we have someone above us — our parents, the priest, the Superior, the Cardinal, the Pope. But now, nobody. Until we have a Pope, this is it. And we are it. An appeal from us for help can reach no higher authority. We stand at the brink of the chasm between what is human and what is divine."¹

Perhaps these sentences come as close as anything could to exhibiting in a nutshell a good deal of the terrible essence of Roman Catholicism: the everlasting shrinking from that direct confrontation with the Triune God which is the ultimate objective of all His doing, loving, and speaking. All our training, even from earliest youth, is toward this objective, that each one stand by himself before God: bold, cheerful, unhypocritical, honest, confident, unhindered by human intermediaries. We do this in Christ, Who is the one Mediator. In Him we have access (Rom. 5:2). In Him we have boldness in connection with the day of judgment (I John 4:17). In Him we come boldly unto the throne of grace (Heb. 4:16). In Him we walk the ladder from earth to heaven (Gen. 28:12). Pursuing such direct confrontation and fellowship with ever more confidence and boldness is our greatest privilege and joy.

For the Roman Catholics, however, this very thing is always to be avoided, shifted back, shrunk from, side-

stepped. There is only avoidance of responsibility, dishonesty. All is dark, obscure, threatening, unclear, shadowy. What a multiplication of intermediaries we behold. The objective which we pursue is regarded as intolerable by them. And when it cannot be avoided, then sweat appears!

In Rome everything is different. The papacy is the representative of mediation and externalism in religion. Nothing, nothing is really internal, spiritual, true, sincere, evangelical; everything is external, material, law, pomp, yes, show and delusion. Whatever of spirit and truth remains in the Roman church is there outside its system, in opposition to its system. External membership in the external church, external faith, blind assent, external obedience to external mediators, external works, performance of prayers, church forms, confessions, communions, acts of repentance, masses — external, glittering piety of works is the essential characteristic of the Roman religion, thus also the principle of mediation. Everything with which the papacy has to do is an untouchable sanctuary, a mystery, sacrament, secret, a *noli me tangere* not only for the unbeliever, but also for the believing laity. All of these things have been given over to a priesthood which is equipped with special holiness, a special call, special power and might, for its sole use, jurisdiction, and dispensation. They are the ones who alone stand in the holy place before God, who are the mediators between Christ, the Savior, and the common Christian. The church itself, the entire institution, especially the church κατ' ἐξοχήν, the papal, hierarchically ranked priesthood is essentially nothing else but the mediator before God for the individual believing soul. "No one comes to the Father, but through Me," the Lord Jesus has said; "No one comes to the Lord Jesus Christ, but through me," says the Roman church, the priesthood, the pope. — Externalism and mediation in religion, this is really Rome's essence; the inner life and direct approach to God, this is Luther. — It is self-understood, that no one can express this in many other ways as well.²

Here is the stark contrast. Where does it have its roots? In the acceptance or rejection of the Scriptural teaching on the priesthood of all believers. Or, to put it another way, in one's understanding of Church and Ministry. What is the nature of the Church? What are the rights and privileges of its members? What is the nature of the Ministry? The questions are closely interrelated. But let's go back to the beginning.

Through the merits of Jesus Christ, God the Father accounted the world of sinners to be righteous. This righteousness is received solely by faith, apart from works of the law. Here we have the chief doctrine. "In Lutheran theology the article of justification is the central, chief article by which the Christian doctrine and the Christian Church stands and falls (*articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*); it is the apex of all Christian teaching."³ It is the one doctrine by which the Church lives. The Church is the offspring of this doctrine, drawing its life from no other source. To discuss the Church, therefore, is to discuss the product of the chief article, to view the chief article in action and in all its fruits. To discuss the priesthood of all believers is to rejoice at the glorious status, the liberties, the privileges, the possessions which all flow from justification. To discuss Ministry is to discuss the arrangements for the proclamation of this same doctrine, arrangements which are designed to serve and advance the freedom of the saints. "What is the Church? Scripture tells us that it is nothing else than the communion of those who believe the promise, that is, the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake (Gal. 4:21ff.). What is the Christian ministry? It is the 'ministration of righteousness' (2 Cor. 3:9), the office which teaches righteousness as coming from the Gospel, without the deeds of the Law."⁴

In what eloquent terms and with what beautiful pictures the Holy Spirit describes His holy creation, and with what glory He invests her. "That he [Christ] might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:27). "Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:23).

"In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. 2:21-22). "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. 21:2). "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (I Peter 2:9). How vast are the possessions of its members, how rich they are! "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph. 1:3). "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (I Cor. 3:21-23). How glorious is the Ministry of the Word! "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (Ps. 119:130). "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth" (James 1:18). "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Is. 55:11). "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth forth good tidings, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" (Is. 52:7). Where shall one stop? Who can sufficiently glorify the God of all grace? Whose lips or pen can adequately set forth the praises of the God of our salvation?

So then: the priesthood doctrine, the Church and Ministry doctrines are simply the chief article in its results. But let's have Pieper express it for us: "The doctrine of the Church and of its commission (office) is only the reverse of the doctrine of justification, nothing more than the doctrine of the status, the nature, the call of those who have been justified by grace through faith and in Christ are freed from every law."⁵ "This is the doctrine of the spiritual priesthood, which is so well known to all of us, and which Luther has explained so clearly. Next to the doctrine of justification, he has written no more and no more thoroughly on any doctrine

against the papacy than on its reverse side, the doctrine of the Church and its ministry, particularly on the doctrine of the spiritual priesthood and its power to forgive and retain sins. We have Walther to thank for bringing it into prominence in the church of our country. In our confessional writings it is treated more fully than any other doctrine."6

Luther, as we know, passed directly from justification to the spiritual priesthood. Clarity on the one led to clarity on the other. Then the battle with Rome was irrevocably joined. When theory advanced into practice, massive conflict was the only possible result. And how natural it is that also the confessions exhibit a monumental extension of this battle, first joined clearly in Luther's *The Freedom of a Christian*. The true line might be traced loosely as follows: justification, full possession of all spiritual treasures, freedom, invisible Church, rejection of human authority, uselessness of all human works, diligent occupation with all divinely ordained means of grace, spiritual nature of the ministry, etc. The false line might be traced loosely as follows: no justification, continued bondage, evolution of intermediaries, spawning of ceremonies, multiplication of makeshift human efforts directed toward justification, submission to human authorities and laws, externalism and a visible church, neglect of God's Word, prominence of human tradition, unspiritual nature of the ministry, gross abuse of office, etc. Church and Ministry is the practical doctrinal area in which the divergences resulting from distinct stances on the chief article stand before us in all their Scriptural glory, on the one hand, and in all their unscriptural shame, on the other. To grasp this contrast in its many ramifications is to have an overview of the confessions which emerged from the conflict with Rome. This arena of conflict we now enter; this critical area of doctrine we now proceed to explore more fully.

I. CHURCH

Also they teach that one holy Church is to continue forever. The Church is the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and

the Sacraments are rightly administered.

And to the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, that is, rites or ceremonies, instituted by men, should be everywhere alike. As Paul says: One faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, etc. Eph. 4:5-6. (Augsburg Confession, Article VII: "Of the Church").

Much discussion has centered on the meaning of the sentence concerning "the true unity of the Church." It has been stressed by some that these statements do not concern themselves with "the terms of union in the visible church," but deal with "the spiritual unity of the Una Sancta."⁷ Others have stressed that "Gospel" is to be understood here in the wide sense and includes all of Scripture. The distinction between doctrine and ceremonies is used especially by those who contend for the broad sense of "Gospel." Those who wish may pursue the matter in the vast literature.⁸ It is our judgment that the key consideration here is the fact that the Una Sancta is spoken of, as can be seen not only from the terminology in this very article — "one holy Church," "saints" — but also from the fuller development in the Apology. But it is also true that the body of heavenly doctrine is set off against the traditions and ceremonies of men. Thus, those are quite right who contend that "Gospel" is used in the wide sense. Even so, however, this would not mean that the article is dealing with the church fellowship question as it has emerged so prominently among us. Very much to the point are the remarks by Kurt Marquart: "The remarkable thing is that the whole church is here tied up with the whole saving Gospel ('purely preached'). Common sense would suggest that one must choose between the whole church and the whole truth but that one cannot have them both together. For if one embraces the whole church, all Christians, one must, it would seem, reduce the Gospel-truth to some bare minimum or common denominator. Or else, if one wishes to hold on to the complete Gospel, including the Sacraments, one will have to let go of large parts of Christendom, and end up with but a small orthodox fraction or segment of the whole. How then does the Augsburg Confession resolve

this 'truth or unity' conundrum?"⁹ The more extended treatment by J. P. Meyer also assumes that the invisible Church is under consideration, but it further argues against those who want to reduce "the doctrine of the Gospel" to no more than its principal truths.¹⁰

What does the Augsburg Confession further teach, directly or indirectly, concerning the holy Christian Church?

In this life, hypocrites are mingled with the true believers (Article VIII).

The members of the Church have freedom and full salvation. Consciences therefore are not to be burdened; freedom is to be retained by avoiding the bondage under ordinances of men (Article XV).

Members of the Church have all they need in Christ. There is no room for the worship of saints (Article XXI).

The Church possesses, directly from the hands of its Lord, the Sacrament of the Altar, just as He instituted it (Article XXII).

The freedom bestowed by the Gospel is again prominent in Article XXV, "Of Confession." Consciences are not to be burdened, as though obligations of one kind or another must be met to ensure salvation. Hence, the abuses of confession — that it is required, that one must enumerate sins, that one must do it to the priest, etc. — are exposed and condemned.

Consciences are endangered by regulations on meats, as though our contribution in the keeping of such rules is necessary for salvation. The Church is thereby threatened (Article XXVI). "Thirdly, traditions brought great danger to consciences; for it was impossible to keep all traditions, and yet men judged these observances to be necessary acts of worship. Gerson writes that many fell into despair, and that some even took their own lives, because they felt that they were not able to satisfy the traditions; and they had all the while not heard any consolation of the righteousness of faith and grace."¹¹

The same article again stresses the liberty of the Church: "Such liberty in human rites was not unknown to the Fathers" (p. 75).

The members of the Church possess Christ's perfection. Why seek a righteousness in the monasteries? (Ar-

ticle XXVII).

The first part of the article in the Apology on the Church upholds the truth "that the Church, properly so called, is the congregation of saints [of those here and there in the world], who truly believe the Gospel of Christ, and have the Holy Ghost" (p. 237). Melancthon repeats that hypocrites are mingled outwardly with the believers, stresses that the fellowship of the Church "is originally a fellowship of faith and of the Holy Ghost in hearts" (p. 227), points again to the outward marks of the Gospel and Sacraments, cites Eph. 1:22f. to show that the Church is the body of Christ, cites Eph. 5:25f. to demonstrate the holiness of the Church, reminds us that we are to fortify ourselves against despair by trusting in God's promise that the Church will endure forever, rejects any view of the Church as "an outward government of certain nations" (p. 229), vents his frustration at having to spend so many words on so obvious a point ("But what need is there of words in a manifest matter?", p. 231), rejects the charge that the Lutherans are dreaming of a Platonic state (p. 233), and concludes this first section with the claim that "these things are clearer than the light of noonday" (p. 237). The second part of the article deals with the opponents' arguments about traditions. "What religious men they are! They wish that the rites derived from the apostles be retained; they do not wish the doctrine of the apostles to be retained" (p. 241). The proper means of giving birth to the Church is identified when it is said that human traditions "are not instruments through which God moves hearts to believe, as are the divinely given Word and Sacraments" (p. 241).

Melancthon was developing and upholding basic and obvious truths of Scripture. How long could one deal calmly with the obtuseness which confronted him? Is there a passage in which frustration with the thick-headedness of the Romanists bursts into vehement and sarcastic expression? There is:

But the adversaries perhaps require [a new Roman definition], that the Church be defined thus, namely, that it is the supreme outward monarchy of the whole world, in which the Roman pontiff neces-

sarily has unquestioned power, which no one is permitted to dispute or censure [no matter whether he uses it rightly, or misuses it], to frame articles of faith; to abolish, according to his pleasure, the Scriptures [to pervert and interpret them contrary to all divine law, contrary to his own decrees, contrary to all imperial rights, as often, to as great an extent, and whenever it pleases him; to sell indulgences and dispensations for money]; to appoint rites of worship and sacrifices; likewise, to frame such laws as he may wish, and to dispense and exempt from whatever laws he may wish, divine, canonical, or civil; and that from him [as from the vicegerent of Christ] the Emperor and all kings receive, according to the command of Christ, the power and right to hold their kingdoms, from whom, since the Father has subjected all things to him, it must be understood, this right was transferred to the Pope; therefore the Pope must necessarily be [a God on earth, the supreme Majesty,] lord of the whole world, of all the kingdoms of the world, of all things private and public, and must have absolute power in temporal and spiritual things, and both swords, the spiritual and temporal. Besides, this definition, not of the Church of Christ, but of the papal kingdom, has as its authors not only the canonists, but also Daniel 11, 36ff. [Daniel, the prophet, represents Antichrist in this way.]¹²

The theme of concern for consciences rings forth again and again in the Apology also. "In order, therefore, to deliver pious consciences from these labyrinths of the sophists, we have ascribed to repentance [or conversion] these two parts, namely, contrition and faith" (p. 259).

Without any doubt, two of the most famous passages, and deservedly so, in all our confessional writings, are descriptions of the Holy Christian Church from the pen of Martin Luther. The one is from the Large Catechism: "I believe that there is upon earth a little holy group and congregation of pure saints, under one head, even Christ, called together by the Holy Ghost in one faith, one mind, and understanding, with manifold gifts, yet agreeing in

love, without sects or schisms. I am also a part and member of the same, a sharer and joint owner of all the goods it possesses, brought to it and incorporated into it by the Holy Ghost by having heard and continuing to hear the Word of God, which is the beginning of entering it" (p. 691).¹³ The other is Part III, Article XII, "Of the Church," of the Smalcald Articles: "We do not concede to them that they are the Church, and [in truth] they are not [the Church]; nor will we listen to those things which, under the name of Church, they enjoin or forbid. For, thank God, [to-day] a child seven years old knows what the Church is, namely, the holy believers and lambs who hear the voice of their shepherd. For the children pray thus: I believe in one holy [catholic or] Christian Church. This holiness does not consist in albs, tonsures, long gowns, and other of their ceremonies devised by them beyond Holy Scripture, but in the Word of God and true faith" (p. 499).

The conflict with Rome quite naturally ended up centering on the papacy, in which the chief evils of the Roman system came to their fullest development. Polemics against the papacy involves both the Church and the Ministry. The two are really inseparable. In Part II, Article IV, "Of the Papacy," of the Smalcald Articles, Luther argues forcefully that the Church can and should exist without the Papacy. For the Papacy is of no use in the Church. And "the Church can never be better governed and preserved than if we all live under one head, Christ ..." (p. 473). For all the papal abominations only war against the chief article and destroy souls.

The inimitable spark and fire of Luther are missing from Melancthon's "Of the Power and Primacy of the Pope," but some very important points are made in that treatise: the Church possesses the keys and has the right to administer the Gospel and the authority to call. "In addition to this, it is necessary to acknowledge that the keys belong not to the person of one particular man, but to the Church, as many most clear and firm arguments testify. For Christ, speaking concerning the keys, Matt. 18:19, adds: If two or three of you shall agree on earth, etc. Therefore he grants the keys principally and immediately to the Church, just as also for this reason the Church

has principally the right of calling" (p. 511). "For wherever the Church is, there is the authority [command] to administer the Gospel. Therefore it is necessary for the Church to retain the authority to call, elect, and ordain ministers" (p. 523). The doctrine of the priesthood of all believers is thus very prominent in this writing.

II. MINISTRY

That we may obtain this faith, the Ministry of Teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Ghost is given, who works faith, where and when it pleases God, in them that hear the Gospel, to wit, that God, not for our own merits, but for Christ's sake, justified those who believe that they are received into grace for Christ's sake.

They condemn the Anabaptists and others who think that the Holy Ghost comes to men without the external Word, through their own preparations and works. (Augsburg Confession, Article V: "Of the Ministry.")

They condemn the Donatists, and such like, who denied it to be lawful to use the ministry of evil men in the Church, and who thought the ministry of evil men to be unprofitable and of none effect. (AC, Article VIII.)

Of Ecclesiastical Order they teach that no one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the Sacraments unless he be regularly called. (AC, Article XIV: "Of Ecclesiastical Order.")

As Article VII, "Of the Church," has prompted much discussion, so there has been no lack of discussion of Article V, "Of the Ministry."¹⁴ The point is convincingly made in an article in the *Theologische Quartalschrift*¹⁵ that this article treats of the ministry, not in its narrow sense, but in its broadest sense. It does not deal with any specific class of people; it is not dealing with the public ministry. Rather, it is dealing in general with the use of the Word, without regard to specific persons, states, or calls involved. This is demonstrated,

not only from the very general condemnation of the Anabaptists for their denial of the external Word as a means of grace, but also from the course of thought in the Augsburg Confession: the general means (Article V) whereby the Spirit works justifying faith (Article IV) is first discussed separately, and not until Article XIV is the ministry in the narrow sense treated, and that class of persons specifically discussed who receive a call into the public ministry. How refreshing to find embodied so beautifully in the AC the teaching that the public ministry is but one specific offshoot of the general ministry of the Word, carried on among and by all Christians as spiritual priests and kings.

In upholding the Spiritual teaching on the Ministry, our confessions were obliged to wage polemical warfare along two fronts. On the one hand, they had to deal with the enthusiasts, who taught that the Holy Spirit did not employ means. On the other hand, they had to deal with the Roman Catholics, among whom the Ministry, both in doctrine and practice, had become something very different from what was intended by the Holy Spirit. Thus, against the enthusiasts, the concept of the means of grace comes to repeated and forceful expression. (Even evil men effect no diminishing of the power inherent in the Word.) That this is one of the true glories of our confessions was demonstrated in the previous *Journal of Theology*.¹⁶ The entire eighth article of Part III of the Smalcald Articles must be read in this connection. It is a classic. Nor is Luther afraid to group the Papacy with Muenzer as "nothing but sheer enthusiasm." Thus, with his customary spiritual insight, Luther shows that the Papacy not only embodies the final development of all the specifically Roman evils in the area of Ministry, but is also engulfed in the same fundamental error as were the most radical opponents of Rome!

Let us turn to the other polemical front. If there is indeed a divinely instituted Ministry of the Word, and if, as an offshoot of this, also willed by God, there are individuals who are regularly called by the members of the Church into a public teaching position, then are we perhaps being led back into the camp of Rome? Is the Ministry of the Word perhaps something that checks and

restricts the freedom of the members of the Church? Do the holders of the office of the public ministry perhaps constitute a class or level of intermediaries between the people and God?

Once we view the whole matter spiritually and in its essence, we see that exactly the opposite is true. For, in the first place, the Ministry is a Ministry of the divine Word alone, exclusive of human authority or admixture. Therefore it separates and frees from all human authority and bondage. More importantly, the Ministry of the divine Word conveys, supports, and advances total spiritual freedom from all hostile and enslaving evil powers, whether on earth or in hell. For it is Ministry of the GOSPEL, and therefore a Ministry of freedom. "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

From the insight granted by this passage, we can take our stand and survey the ground before us, viewing the irreconcilable split in doctrine and practice between the Christian and the anti-Christian views of the Ministry. Massive conflict is inevitable. On the one hand, we have a Ministry which glorifies Christ, establishes freedom, rejects human authority, draws the sinner into immediate fellowship with the Triune God, occupies itself only with divine things, bypasses involvement in earthly political matters, addresses itself to the troubled conscience, calls forth faith in the divine promises — a Ministry, in short, which exists to serve the sinner with the inestimable riches of the grace of Christ, lifting him up to heavenly things. On the other hand, we have a "ministry" which buries Christ, establishes bondage, rejects divine authority in favor of human authority, prohibits the sinner from entering into full fellowship with God, has little use for the truths of God's Word, becomes heavily involved in earthly political matters, ignores the pangs of the troubled conscience, sinks its people into the stupor of *ex opere operato* — a "ministry," in short, which exists to serve itself at the expense of the people by withholding from them the riches of the merits of the perfect Savior of the world. Alas! Who can sufficiently grasp the horror of it all?

What does the Augsburg Confession further teach, directly or indirectly, about the Ministry?

No special distinguishing mark, such as celibacy, is to be required of the bearers of the office of the public Ministry of the Word (Article XXIII).

Confession is kept because it is an important aspect of the Ministry of the Gospel (Article XXV).

The Ministry of the pure, saving, freeing Word of grace is obscured by the distinction of meats (Article XXVI). "First, the doctrine of grace and of the righteousness of faith has been obscured by it, which is the chief part of the Gospel, and ought to stand out as the most prominent in the Church, in order that the merit of Christ may be well known, and faith, which believes that sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, be exalted far above works" (p. 71).

The Ministry of the Word and Sacraments suffices to bring all spiritual blessings (Article XXVII). How sad, that "thus they made men believe that the profession of monasticism was far better than Baptism" (p. 77).

In the last and longest article, Article XXVIII, "Of Ecclesiastical Power," a thorough treatment of the nature of the Ministry is given. We are not surprised that one of the points stressed is that the power of the Ministry deals with spiritual and eternal blessings, and is not to be confounded with temporal power, as is done in the Roman Church. "Therefore the power of the Church and the civil power must not be confounded. The power of the Church has its own commission, to teach the Gospel and to administer the Sacraments" (p. 85). Another major point is that bishops and pastors have no "right to introduce ceremonies in the Church, and to make laws concerning meats, holy-days and grades, that is, orders of ministers, etc." (p. 87). "But concerning this question it is taught on our part (as has been shown above) that bishops have no power to decree anything against the Gospel" (pp. 87-88). On page 89, the imposition of a Levitical service is rejected.

As we proceed into the Apology, where these and other points are developed much more thoroughly, restraint will have to be exercised in selecting but a few from among many splendid passages treating of aspects of the

Ministry.

On the Keys: "It is well known that we have so elucidated and extolled [that we have preached, written, and taught in a manner so Christian, correct, and pure] the benefit of absolution and the power of the keys that many distressed consciences have derived consolation from our doctrine; after that heard that it is the command of God, nay, rather the very voice of the Gospel ..." (p. 249; Cp. pp. 261, 493, etc.).

On the Roman system: "Now, concerning this faith, which obtains the remission of sins, there is not a syllable in so great a mass of regulations, glosses, summaries, books of confession. Christ is nowhere read there" (p. 251). "This voice of the Gospel these writers of the Confutation condemn" (p. 253).

Faith thirsts for and lives from the divine means. "Meanwhile this faith is nourished in a manifold way in temptations, through the declarations of the Gospel [the hearing of sermons, reading] and the use of the Sacraments. For these are [seals and] signs of [the covenant and grace in] the New Testament, i.e., signs of [propitiation and] the remission of sins. They offer, therefore, the remission of sins, as the words of the Lord's Supper clearly testify. ... Thus faith is conceived and strengthened through absolution, through the hearing of the Gospel, through the use of the Sacraments, so that it may not succumb while it struggles with the terrors of sin and death" (pp. 261-263; Cp. the choice paragraph on the Sacraments on p. 309).

Remission of sins is obtained by faith in the Word, not *ex opere operato* (p. 267). How clear, at this point, is the contrast between the true and spiritual, and the false and external. See also pp. 313, 387, 391, and especially 393, where a parallel between the Catholics and the Jews is drawn.

The Ministry is a Gospel Ministry. "Such is the doctrine of the adversaries, the doctrine of the Law, the annulling of the Gospel, the doctrine of despair" (p. 279). "Because the ministry of absolution is favor or grace, it is not a legal process, or law" (p. 281).

The concept of a current Levitical priesthood with its sacrifices is roundly rejected in more than one place. See p. 311, or the very thorough treatment begin-

ning on p. 383, "Of the Mass."

Where the Ministry is in effect, the Church exists. "And we know that the Church is among those who teach the Word of God aright, and administer the Sacraments aright, and not with those who not only by their edicts endeavor to efface God's Word, but also put to death those who teach what is right and true" (p. 315).

The public Ministry involves solemn and weighty responsibilities; diligent instruction is the duty of pastors. Teaching the Gospel is the highest privilege one can have. Read the powerful words on pp. 325-327. "... On the contrary, in our churches all the sermons are occupied with such topics as these: ..." What great neglect, on the other hand, prevails among the adversaries: "But would that the adversaries would hear, on the other hand, the complaints of the churches and of godly minds! The adversaries courageously guard their own dignities and wealth; meanwhile, they neglect the condition of the churches; they do not care that the churches are rightly taught, and that the Sacraments are duly administered. To the priesthood they admit all kinds of persons indiscriminately. [They ordain rude asses; thus the Christian doctrine perished, because the Church was not supplied with efficient preachers.]" (pp. 443-445).

We need only turn to the two catechisms of Luther to see the practical outcome of a true understanding of the Ministry. What intense concern we find for having a well-instructed clergy who can lead their people into the truths of salvation. So it happens that classic passages on the office of the Ministry and the power of the Word are found in these two practical manuals of instruction. Let us take these words to heart and apply them to ourselves.

Our office is now become a different thing from what it was under the Pope; it is now become serious and salutary. Accordingly, it now involves much more trouble and labor, danger and trials, and, in addition thereto, little reward and gratitude in the world. But Christ Himself will be our reward if we labor faithfully: To this end may the Father of all grace help us, to whom be praise and thanks forever through Christ, our Lord! Amen.¹⁷

On the other hand, such is the efficacy of the Word, whenever it is seriously contemplated, heard, and used, that it is bound never to be without fruit, but always awakens new understanding, pleasure, and devoutness, and produces a pure heart and pure thoughts. For these words are not inoperative or dead, but creative, living words. And even though no other interest or necessity impel us, yet this ought to urge every one thereunto, because thereby the devil is put to flight and driven away, and, besides, this commandment is fulfilled, and [this exercise in the Word] is more pleasing to God than any work of hypocrisy, however brilliant.¹⁸

We arrive at the Smalcald Articles, and pause to bring again our grateful praises to the Holy Spirit for the gift of a Martin Luther: Luther, who so epitomized the spirit of the priesthood of all believers. Luther, who as a member of the Church, the Body of Christ, could fling down his challenge to the whole world: "These are the articles on which I must stand, and, God willing, shall stand even to my death; and I do not know how to change or to yield anything in them. If any one wishes to yield anything, let him do it at the peril of his conscience" (p. 501). Luther, a living exhibition of the power of the Word, emboldened and equipped to defy all the power of hell, and to overcome. Luther, whose complete trust in the efficacy of that divine Word, and whose constant unfailing use of that Word, enabled him to become the reformer of Christendom, the human instrument for the release into spiritual freedom of uncounted souls. Rarely, if ever, do the great truths concerning Church and Ministry come to more powerful expression than in the Smalcald Articles. We literally feel them in energetic operation. They throb on page after page. They leap forth, life-like, from the heart and pen of Luther. Humbly, reverently, prayerfully, we drink deeply of his spirit.

Study these Articles again. Read the ringing denunciation of the Papacy as the very Antichrist (p. 475), whose teaching even at its best runs contrary to all of God's gracious intentions in instituting the Ministry. Exult in the clarity introduced by Luther in treating the

functioning of the Word in its two parts, Law and Gospel, as he rudely brushes aside the Roman Catholic nonsense on repentance and forcefully delineates, first, the shattering impact of the Law on the hard, blind, hypocritical heart of man, and then the consoling power of the Gospel to lift up those who are cast down. "But to this office the New Testament immediately adds the consolatory promise of grace through the Gospel. ... But whenever the Law alone, without the Gospel being added, exercises this its office, there is [nothing else than] death and hell, and man must despair, like Saul and Judas; as St. Paul, Rom. 7:10, says: Through sin the Law killeth. On the other hand, the Gospel brings consolation and remission, not only in one way, but through the Word and Sacraments ..." (p. 481).¹⁹

In Melanchthon's treatise, three claims of the Roman pontiff are scrutinized and rejected: 1) the claim to supremacy in Christendom; 2) the claim to secular as well as religious dominion; and 3) the claim "that to believe this is necessary for salvation" (p. 503). "Christ expressly prohibits lordship among the apostles" (p. 505). "The authority of the ministry depends upon the Word of God" (p. 507). "In I Cor. 3:6, Paul makes ministers equal, and teaches that the Church is above the ministers" (p. 507). "The second article is still clearer, that Christ gave to the apostles only spiritual power ..." (p. 513). The errors of the Papacy are listed, beginning on p. 517. In a final section devoted to the true power of bishops, the right of the Church to refuse to recognize bishops who teach false doctrine is affirmed.²⁰

R. E. Wehrwein

FOOTNOTES

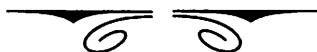
1. Malachi Martin, *The Final Conclave* (New York: Stein and Day, 1978), pp. 118-119.
2. August Pieper, "Luther's Doctrine of Church and Ministry," *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, Vol. 60, No. 1 (Jan., 1963), pp. 17-18. (The Translation from the original German article, 1917:3 and 1918:1-2, is by Rev. Harold R. Johne. The remaining two parts are

in Nos. 2 and 4 of Vol. 60.) Rarely does the energetic and forceful Pieper soar to greater heights than when employing his powerful pen in exposition of the doctrine of Church and Ministry. One simply must quote him. See, for example, p. 5 of the September, 1979 (Vol. 22, No. 3), issue of the *Lutheran Spokesman*, where statements from the above-cited article are also quoted: "Rome teaches an external, visible, legalistic church; Luther an inner, invisible, evangelical church. Rome places the church between God and the Christian as the dispenser of salvation; with Luther the Church, that is all Christians themselves, are sitting right in God's lap." To read him, as this writer can testify from personal experience in the preparation of this article, is to be overwhelmed with the feeling that all has been said so clearly and compellingly that it were an act of unforgivable arrogance to proceed any further and do anything but refer to his presentations.

3. Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. II (St. Louis: CPH, 1951), pp. 512-513.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 514.
5. August Pieper, "Concerning the Doctrine of the Church and of its Ministry, with Special Reference to the Synod and its Discipline," *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, Vol. 59, No. 2 (April, 1962), p. 87. (The translation from the original German article, 1929:4, is by Prof. H. J. Vogel.)
6. *Ibid.*, p. 101.
7. E. Schaller, "Omnes Christiani de Evangelio Consentunt," *Journal of Theology*, Vol. I, No. 1 (February, 1961), p. 10. He also cites the Apology.
8. Cf. "Some 16th Century Theses Based on Articles 5, 7, and 8 of the Augsburg Confession," by Aegidius Hunnius (translated by Philip K. Press), *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, Vol. 64, No. 3 (July, 1967), pp. 169-192. Kurt Marquart, in arguing against false conceptions of Christian unity, states emphatically: "But the Augsburg Confession does not know of any Gospel isolated from Biblical doctrine as a whole." (A *Christian Handbook on Vital Issues*, *Christian News*, 1963-1973, New Haven, Missouri, p. 424.) An excellent study is A. Aijal Uppala's "'It is Enough' — 'Satis Est'," *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, Vol. 65,

- No. 3 (July, 1968), pp. 169-186. See also J. Lau, "The Book of Concord and Gospel Reductionism," *Journal of Theology*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (September, 1979), pp. 8ff., for evidence of repeated use of "Gospel" in the broad sense. A host of references on Church is given by N. S. Tjernagel in his *The Lutheran Confessions - A Harmony and Resource Book* (published by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, 1979), pp. 210-211.
9. Kurt Marquart, *Anatomy of an Explosion* (Fort Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1977), p. 17.
 10. J. P. Meyer, *Studies in the Augsburg Confession* (Mequon: The Seminary Mimeo Company, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, photographically reproduced from *The Northwestern Lutheran*, 1940-1946; 1965), p. 45.
 11. *Concordia Triglotta*, pp. 71 & 73. This is a sample of how an item on abuses touches both on Church and Ministry.
 12. *Ibid.*, p. 235. The exegesis of Daniel is open to serious question, but the splendor of the polemics is nevertheless unsurpassed.
 13. The Formula of Concord (*Triglotta*, p. 895) quotes from this portion of the Large Catechism.
 14. "Few questions, however, have prompted greater arguments than has the concept of the ministry in the Lutheran Confessions. This discussion, which was carried on in the middle of the 19th century, has not yet been concluded but has, on the contrary, once again become a matter of great interest." So writes Holsten Fagerberg on p. 226 of his book, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions (1529-1537)* (St. Louis, London: CPH, 1972, translated by Gene J. Lund). Cf. also A. Hunnius - Press, *op. cit.*, (footnote 8), *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, Vol. 64, No. 3, esp. p. 172: "Here reference must be made to the testimonies of Holy Writ which ascribe this efficacious operation to the preached and heard word, yes, also to the word that is written, read, and meditated upon." Cf. N. S. Tjernagel, *op. cit.* (footnote 8), p. 183, for further references; also pp. 179-180 and p. 210.
 15. Ed. R., "Die Lehre vom Heiligen Predigtamt," *Theologische Quartalschrift*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (October, 1912), pp. 233-234. The entire article is well worth reading.
 16. P. Nolting, "The Book of Concord and Ecumenicism,"

- Journal of Theology*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (December, 1979), esp. p. 4 and pp. 26-27. See, further, *Triglotta*, p. 491 ("Of the Gospel"), pp. 693, 901, 903, 911 (point 6), 1071, 1073, 1075, 1101 (point 2).
17. *Triglotta*, p. 539. These are the powerful concluding words of Luther's preface to his Small Catechism. Cp. p. 573: "but that they daily exercise themselves well in these studies and constantly treat them."
 18. *Ibid.*, p. 609. This is from Luther's treatment of the third commandment in the Large Catechism. Read also the entire preface, esp. pp. 571 & 573.
 19. This is the longest and perhaps the most fiery article in the Smalcald Articles. This important part of the Ministry, proper use of Law and Gospel, is treated at length in Article V of the Formula of Concord. The need of maintaining this distinction for the support of troubled consciences is emphasized (p. 951). Even the excuse of limitations of space does not entirely dispel from the mind a distinct uneasiness at making but so brief a mention of so important a subject.
 20. We might round out this necessarily cursory treatment with reference to the fact that excommunication is also distinctly treated. Cf., for example, pp. 497 and 521.



SOME OBSERVATIONS ON LANGUAGE

Linguistics has been defined as the scientific study of language. In particular it seeks answers to the questions of what language is and how it works. Anyone who looks through lists of new scholarly publications has to be impressed with the large number of volumes devoted to general linguistics and to some of its allied fields such as psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, anthropological linguistics, philosophical linguistics, mathematical and statistical linguistics, and language teaching.

But not only is linguistics one of the fastest growing areas of study in our day; it is also a science very

much in turmoil. Old theories are being questioned, and new ones are being offered as explanations to the many unanswered questions regarding language. Everything today seems to be in flux, so that there are few if any "truths" which are universally recognized and accepted. Books that are only a dozen years old are already out of date, and the future will probably continue to bring more new ideas and revolutionary changes.

With all this scholarly controversy, it is not surprising that linguistics has become a highly technical area of science. A recently published introduction to linguistics presents a glossary of linguistic terms for beginning students of the subject. This list covers twenty pages and contains over 400 terms, including such items as age-grading, case grammar, emic, phrase-structure component, relic area, and zero allomorph.¹ One writer attempts to simplify the concepts of the new generative-transformational grammar in his book on the *ABC's of Language and Linguistics*, but finds such a simplification so elusive that he begs pardon for the "heady" quality of what he is presenting and expresses the fear that his treatment has probably exhausted his readers.² Those of us who took linguistics in college during the relatively quiet Bloomfieldian era find ourselves in a new and strange world!

A review of several recent works on general linguistics reveals another fact about this area of science. It has remained thoroughly naturalistic in its approach. Most writers of note leave no room for supernatural intervention in the origin or history of language, and even presume to label the Biblical records of Eden and Babel as legendary and fanciful reconstructions.³ With this we must, of course, take vigorous exception. It is the conviction of this writer that the science of linguistics would be much farther ahead if it would accept as factual the Biblical statements concerning language and man. We have seen often enough how the natural and social sciences have taken wrong turns because of evolutionistic presuppositions. It is no different with linguistics.

CREATION

We have come to confess with Martin Luther "that God has made me with all crea-

tures, giving me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my faculties."⁴ Among these rational and physical endowments is the gift of language. For Adam and Eve this involved not only the inherent ability to use language — a remarkable aptitude that is still only very imperfectly understood by linguists — but also a complete language with all of the required vocabulary and grammar. Years ago Biblical scholars would debate whether or not that language was Hebrew. The question cannot be answered from Scripture and is therefore both speculative and relatively unimportant.

This we do know, however, about the language of our first parents. It was a fully developed and completely functioning entity. Through that language God was able to communicate to Adam and Eve His will regarding their use of the world into which He had placed them, including His commandment regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 1:28-30; 2:16-17). That original language possessed sufficient lexical items to make it possible for Adam to give names to all the cattle, to the birds of the sky, and to all the beasts of the field. These names were not accidental ejaculations uttered in surprise at the sight of novel forms of life. For the terminology "give names to" in the Hebrew narrative involves the selecting of designations which are indicative of the nature and character of the things named. That the names given by Adam were of such a kind appears from the solemn statement in the account: "Whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof" (2:19).

The language given by God to Adam and Eve surely served as a perfect means of communication between the two of them and between them and their Creator. When Adam first beheld his wife, he responded with words revealing a deep understanding of her nature and of the intimate relationship between him and her: "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man" (2:23). And although there is no direct record of it, Adam and Eve must have spent truly happy moments in conversing with their loving Lord during the time between their creation and the subsequent fall into sin.

THE FALL INTO SIN

With the fall into sin, things changed. Satan, employing the serpent as his mouthpiece, began using human language as a means of deception. His clever twisting of the words of God are apparent to anyone who reads the inspired history with care. God's free permission, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat," was turned by him into an unwelcome restriction, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" (Genesis 2:16; 3:1). And soon Eve herself became guilty of altering the divine command, by adding the words "neither shall ye touch it," and reducing God's warning "thou shalt surely die" to a weak "lest ye die" (2:17; 3:3).

God approached Adam and Eve after the fall and attempted to bring them to a conscious awareness of the nature and magnitude of their sin against Him. In what follows we find further abuse of the marvelous gift of language — Adam and Eve attempting to shift the blame to each other and then to God Himself. The Hebrew is highly expressive: "The woman whom you set at my side, she it is who gave to me from the tree, and so I ate. ... The serpent it is who misled me, and so I ate" (3:12-13). Then comes what all sinners ought to recognize as the most blessed use to which human language can be put, the proclamation of a Savior from sin in the Gospel: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (3:15).

Linguistics are emphatic in their denial of deterioration in language. They affirm that while language obviously does change with the passage of time, it loses nothing in the way of communicative ability. One might well question such a conclusion, on the basis of both theology and empirical evidence. The fall into sin has had its harmful effects on all of creation. The Apostle Paul affirms that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Romans 8:22). The natural powers of man, including his innate language ability, have been touched by sin and no longer function as effectively as they once did. Ambiguity and misunderstanding are part of the language scene, contributing much to the problems of mankind. Who knows how far

language would have degenerated by now if it were not for the gracious providence of God, which has preserved the gift of language no less than other things that make up our natural world? Because of that providence no language has ever disintegrated through changes, nor have such changes ever altered the basic design features of a language.

But empirical evidence as well testifies to deterioration in language. One of the better substantiated procedures of linguistics has been the reconstruction of a Proto-Indo-European language as the ancestor of Greek, Latin, and most modern-day European languages including English. This parent language, it is believed, possessed an inflectional complexity far beyond that of most of its descendants. It had, for example, eight different cases and an equal number of sets of distinctive case endings for nouns, adjectives, and pronouns. By the time of classical and koine Greek, some of this inflectional precision had already been lost, so that the modern-day student of the New Testament at times wonders whether one ending is to be regarded as a genitive or an ablative, or whether another is to be taken as a locative, instrumental, or dative. It is not always an easy thing for us to discern the intention of the writer in such instances. As we well know, the inflections for case, number, tense, mode, etc., have to a large extent disappeared from English. Has our language lost anything in the process? Many are the Biblical scholars who will answer that question in the affirmative. It can be so difficult at times to convey in English translation the nuances of the Greek original. A whole sentence may be needed in English to reproduce the thought that is expressed by a single word in the Greek. For example, the one Greek word for Christ's cry of victory on the cross, "It is finished," conveys the thought: "It has been finished, and the results of it stand as complete."

BABEL We accept the account of Babel as factual,
 in spite of the negative comments of the
linguists. It was the will of God following the flood
that mankind move out from Ararat and repopulate the
globe. Instead of this, men clustered together in one
area and began pursuing their humanistic goals. To frus-

trate them in their self-seeking designs, the Lord "made a babble of the language of the entire earth" and scattered men abroad (Genesis 11:9). Instead of possessing one common language, various groups of men now spoke different languages that were mutually unintelligible. The result was the same then as we have seen it so often in history since that time — the isolation of mankind into distinct peoples and nations according to language.

Linguists have grouped the 4000 or so languages of this world into several major families, such as the Indo-European, Hamito-Semitic, Finno-Ugrian, and Sino-Tibetan families. All of the languages in each family group are assumed to have descended from some hypothetical, extinct parent tongue, such as Proto-Indo-European. Interestingly, the linguists have not been able to carry on their investigations beyond such hypothetical parent languages. These languages appear as fully functioning entities at a certain point in history, and it has not been possible to discover behind them a still more ancient language from which they in turn were derived.

We should note that this situation is precisely what we would expect as a result of Babel. A number of diverse, unrelated languages were suddenly created by God. Because of the migrations that followed, these parent tongues came to be associated with certain areas of the ancient world. All subsequent language history has involved the formation of many generations of daughter languages, a result of mechanisms of language change that are still in operation.

LANGUAGE UNIVERSALS Yet, in spite of the fact that God confused the language of man at Babel and that the resulting languages have been changing ever since, there are nevertheless elements which are common to all languages. These are the so-called language universals, which have become a common topic of conversation among linguists. That such universals exist is generally recognized. The debate centers rather on the nature of these universals.

One of America's most distinguished linguists, Joseph H. Greenberg, lists a number of basic similarities_

found in the structure and vocabulary of all languages.⁵ He points out that there are a large number of everyday situations which can be expressed in all languages of the world. In addition, all languages possess a large area of what he calls "fundamental vocabulary," namely, words for such everyday things as boy, drink, and water. All languages, moreover, distinguish nouns and verbs, either through differing grammatical inflections or through a fixed difference in word order or through both. Similarly, all languages indicate in clear fashion the grammatical relations of subject and object, either by case endings on the nouns or by a fixed word order.

Greenberg affirms that the total number of marked grammatical categories, such as number and tense, found in the languages of the world is a relatively small set. Thus one does not find unlimited variation among languages with respect to grammatical distinctions. Other universal features found in languages are words and sentences as fundamental units of structure, with sentences divided into basic types such as statements and questions.

What this means is that, in spite of the obvious differences among languages, all languages are remarkably similar in their structure. They are, to put it simply, far more alike than different. The reason for this, we confidently affirm, is the fact that all men are creatures of God who have been endowed with a common set of mental and linguistic gifts. A growing number of linguists are testifying to this fact when they speak of an innate knowledge of basic linguistic features found in all normal children, an inborn programming for language which enables them to acquire their mother tongue in a remarkably short period of time.

We can surely discern God's providence also in this matter of language universals. The fact that languages are similar in so many ways makes it far easier for a person to become proficient in a "foreign" language, so that he can communicate with others in that language and produce written translations for speakers of that language. Thoughts which can be expressed in his own language can generally be expressed also in that second language. The implications for Bible translation and the dissemina-

tion of the saving Gospel to the various nations of the world are obvious.

EVOLUTIONISTIC IDEAS

During the decades following Darwin, many linguists optimistically believed that evidence would eventually be found to demonstrate the process of evolution in the development of human languages. This evidence, they thought, would be of two major types: archeological finds revealing early languages in a rudimentary, undeveloped state; and anthropological discoveries showing primitive languages among backward cultures in the world today. Not only has no such evidence been forthcoming, but the findings have tended rather to disprove evolutionistic ideas in connection with language.

What has archeology revealed? The earliest written records present languages fully as complex as any in existence today. If anything, the direction of change in the history of language has been from greater structural complexity to lesser. Reference has already been made to the eight cases of Proto-Indo-European and the fact that its daughter languages have been losing cases with the passage of time. According to the theory of evolution, there would have been a period of growing complexity leading up to these eight cases of the Proto-Indo-European. What factor, we might ask, caused this supposed evolutionary process to reverse itself, so that many modern-day Indo-European languages retain very little of the original case system? Some evolutionists have tried to explain their way out of this problem by assuming that languages change according to a cycle, the highly developed inflectional system of the Proto-Indo-European being one stage in that cycle. According to this hypothesis, daughter languages of the Indo-European family will at some future time move again in the direction of inflectional complexity. Suffice it to say that there is no evidence whatsoever for such cyclical changes in language.

How simple the situation becomes when one accepts the Biblical account of Babel. Regard the Proto-Indo-European as one of the languages which God produced at that time — a highly developed language with a complex grammatical structure. The trend ever since, under the

effect of sin, has been progressive deterioration in the direction of decreasing complexity.

Note well the observation of Lincoln Barnett in a *LIFE* magazine article on "The English Language": "Contrary to popular supposition, languages evolve [we would prefer to say "degenerate"] in the direction of simplicity. English, being a highly evolved, cosmopolitan, sophisticated language, has been refined and revised, planed down and polished through centuries of use so that today it is far less complex in grammar and syntax than any primitive tongue."⁶ Investigations of so-called proto-languages and of the earliest written languages have failed to bring to light even one "fossil" language in a primitive state of development. Greenberg concludes: "These facts upset widely held notions concerning the evolution of languages from simpler to more complex structures which were held by many nineteenth-century linguists and linger on today in other fields."⁷

What now have linguistic anthropologists found in their investigations of the languages of primitive cultures in the world today? The discoveries have been surprising, and once again the opposite of what evolutionists would expect or desire. The languages of the less civilized peoples are found frequently to contain complexities unknown to the speakers of such languages as English. The Eskimos, for example, have a wide variety of words for snow, different terms being used for falling snow, loosely packed snow, hard packed snow, etc. The desert nomads of the Near East employ a large series of technical terms relating to the use of the camel. The *Bible-Science Newsletter* once reported concerning one of the aboriginal languages of Australia: "Its sound-system alphabet has about 400 symbols, and there are 21 ways to say 'we went' in just one language."⁸ In the words of Barnett: "Some of the most difficult languages in the world are spoken by some of the world's most backward people — e.g., the Australian aborigines, the Eskimos, the Hottentots and the Yaghan Indians of Tierra del Fuego."⁹ And Aitchison: "Even the most primitive tribes have languages whose underlying structure is every bit as complex as English or Russian or Chinese."¹⁰

Attempts have been made in the past, however, to apply the evolutionary theory to the origin of language. Some 19th century linguists affirmed that language began in man's attempts to imitate the sounds of nature, such as the babbling of a brook and the barking of a dog (the "bow-wow" theory). Others claimed that language arose as exclamatory grunts to intense physical activity (the "yo-he-ho" theory) or as outcries to such emotions as anger, fear, and pleasure (the "pooh-pooh" theory). Then there are the "ding-dong" theory and the "ta-ta" theory.¹¹

All such inane attempts to explain the origin of language have been discredited in recent years. Modern-day linguists know only that they do not know how language originated. "How language began is a puzzle, ... a problem which has not yet been solved."¹² Hayes makes the frank admission: "It now appears likely that man was born to speak."¹³ If this statement were changed to "man was created to speak," we would find it completely acceptable. One anthropologist, otherwise evolutionistic in his approach to science, has recognized that the reality of human language testifies to the existence of a creative power: "We are biologically adapted for the symbols of speech. We have determined its forms, but its potential is not of our conscious creation. Its mechanisms are written in our brain, a simple gift from the dark powers behind nature."¹⁴ If only this scholar would identify such "dark powers behind nature" with the Creator God of Holy Scripture!

ANIMALS AND LANGUAGE More recently much work has been done with animals, such as chimpanzees and dolphins, to discover in them the potential for human speech. Some reports, designed for popular consumption, imply that the apes are only a small step from full-blown language ability. The truth of the matter is, however, quite different. Even the most promising results obtained with animals have been negligible when compared with the language ability of even a small child.¹⁵

There exists in fact a vast gulf between human language and animal communication. One major way in which human language differs is in the matter of productivity.

A human being can produce theoretically an infinite number of new combinations from the elements of his language, including sentences which he has never heard nor uttered before. Moreover he is able to deal with new situations in life by inventing words to represent these situations. Such terms as laser, maser, radar, and astronaut are among the many recent additions to the English language. This ability to cope with novel situations, or productivity, appears to be absent or very limited in animal communication.¹⁶

Another distinctive feature of human language is known as duality of patterning. It consists in the ability to combine a relatively small number of sound units (phonemes) into a very large number of units of meaning (morphemes). Compare, for example, how in the English words "cat," "tack," and "act" three sound units are combined in different sequences for three completely different meanings. A typical human language may construct a hundred thousand or more units of meaning from a supply of 30 to 40 sound units. No assured example of such duality of patterning has yet been found in the animal world.¹⁷

A third distinctive feature of human language is that of displacement, namely, the ability to talk about things which are not in the immediate environment but are removed in time and space. The millions of books that have been written and read are telling evidence for the importance of this ability to communicate about things that are absent. There is one example of such displacement in the animal world, namely, the dancing of bees whereby they inform other bees about the existence of nectar at some remote location. But even here the difference between human language and animal communication is notable. The bees "can inform each other only about nectar. Human language can talk about any subject whatever, no matter how far away the topic of conversation may be."¹⁸

Because of such significant differences between human language and animal communication, some linguists have come to regard language ability as a major mark of differentiation between human beings and animals. Language

age, one writer says, is "the one institution that truly separates human beings from the other animals."¹⁹ Another affirms: "The ability to learn languages is, perhaps, the chief difference separating man from all other animals."²⁰ In a day when unbelieving scientists are so frequently minimizing the differences between human beings and animals, we can appreciate these frank admissions. We know, of course, that there are other important distinctions between a man and a beast, such as man's possession of an immortal soul.

THE MARVEL OF LANGUAGE

We use language so frequently and so readily that we may easily lose sight of the marvelous nature of this gift of God. Any language constitutes an extremely complicated code of communication, whose rules are "thousands of times more complicated than those of chess."²¹ The acquisition of a language by a small child, carried on without grammar books or conscious effort, is the most fantastic feat of human learning that he will accomplish during his entire lifetime. "Even as adults we are oblivious to the complexity of this code that we call language and to the enormity of our feat in simply using it."²²

Good evidence for the intricate nature of this thing that we call language is the large number of books being published each year in the area of linguistics. The most brilliant scientists in language are finding it very difficult to arrive at adequate and convincing explanations for man's acquisition and use of language. The more that they learn about the subject, the more complex they find it to be. The number of unanswered questions is, if anything, increasing.

THE BLESSING OF LANGUAGE

Without language, society as we know it would be impossible. Without language, the resources of the human mind would remain largely unused. Without language, our lives would be animal-like, far removed from the culture and civilization that sets man above the beasts.

But what is the chief blessing of language for us humans? We find it in that miracle of Pentecost described in Acts 2:6-11: "Now when this was noised abroad, the

multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God." It is through the medium of human language that the Holy Spirit conveys to fallen mankind the gracious message of salvation in Christ. The very words of language become in the hands of the Spirit "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Romans 1:16).

This miracle of Pentecost has been often repeated in history. In every generation of mankind, the Holy Spirit has seen to it that the Gospel has been made available to the various peoples of the world through adequate translations of Holy Scripture. Here we find God's own answer to the curse of sin and of Babel — men of every nation and kindred and tongue and people being brought to a saving knowledge of the Gospel through the medium of language and joining their voices together in praise of Christ, their Savior!

Martin Luther was surely correct when he said that anyone who loves the Gospel must love also the languages. Let this brief discussion of language close with the following words of the Reformer, found in his "Letter to the Mayors and Aldermen of All the Cities of Germany in Behalf of Christian Schools":

Indeed, if the languages were of no practical benefit, we ought still to feel an interest in them as a wonderful gift of God, with which he has now blessed Germany almost beyond all other lands. We do not find many instances in which Satan has fostered them through the universities and cloisters; on the contrary, these institutions have fiercely inveighed and continue to inveigh against them. For the devil scented the danger that would threaten his king-

dom, if the languages should be generally studied. But since he could not wholly prevent their cultivation, he aims at least to confine them within such narrow limits, that they will of themselves decline and fall into disuse. They are to him no welcome guest, and consequently he shows them scant courtesy in order that they may not remain long. This malicious trick of Satan is perceived by very few.

Therefore, my beloved countrymen, let us open our eyes, thank God for this precious treasure, and take pains to preserve it, and to frustrate the design of Satan. For we cannot deny that, although the Gospel has come and daily comes through the Holy Spirit, it has come by means of the languages, and through them must increase and be preserved. For when God wished through the apostles to spread the Gospel abroad in all the world, he gave the languages for that purpose; and by means of the Roman empire he made Latin and Greek the language of many lands, that his Gospel might speedily bear fruit far and wide. He has done the same now. For a time no one understood why God had revived the study of the languages; but now we see that it was for the sake of the Gospel, which he wished to bring to light and thereby expose and destroy the reign of Antichrist. ...

In the same measure that the Gospel is dear to us, should we zealously cherish the languages. For God had a purpose in giving the Scriptures only in two languages, the Old Testament in the Hebrew, and the New Testament in the Greek. What God did not despise, but chose before all others for his Word, we should likewise esteem above all others. St. Paul, in the third chapter of Romans, points out, as a special honor and advantage of the Hebrew language, that God's Word was given in it. ... And St. Paul, in Romans 1:2, speaks of the Hebrew Scriptures as holy, no doubt because of the Word of God which they contain. In like manner the Greek language might well be called holy, because it was chosen, in preference to others, as the language of the New Testament. And from this language, as from a fountain,

the New Testament has flowed through translations into other languages, and sanctified them also.

And let this be kept in mind, that we will not preserve the Gospel without the languages. The languages are the scabbard in which the Word of God is sheathed. They are the casket in which this jewel is enshrined; the cask in which this wine is kept; the chamber in which this food is stored. And, to borrow a figure from the Gospel itself, they are the baskets in which this bread, and fish, and fragments are preserved. If through neglect we lose the languages (which may God forbid), we will not only lose the Gospel, but it will finally come to pass that we will lose also the ability to speak and write either Latin or German. ...

The apostles considered it necessary to embody the New Testament in the Greek language, in order, no doubt, that it might be securely preserved unto us as in a sacred shrine. ...

In a word, since the Holy Ghost, who does nothing foolish or useless, has often bestowed the gift of tongues, it is our evident duty earnestly to cultivate the languages, now that God has restored them to the world through the revival of learning.²³

C. Kuehne

FOOTNOTES

1. Ronald Wardhaugh, *Introduction to Linguistics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972), pp. 202-222.
2. Curtis W. Hayes, et al., *ABC's of Languages and Linguistics*, new ed. (Silver Spring, Maryland: Institute of Modern Languages, Inc., 1977), pp. 76, 88.
3. Cf. Jean Aitchison, *General Linguistics* (London: Teach Yourself Books, 1972), p. 27.
4. Martin Luther, *Small Catechism* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1956), p. 4.
5. Joseph H. Greenberg, *A New Invitation to Linguistics* (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1977), p. 126ff.
6. Lincoln Barnett, "The English Language," *LIFE*, Vol.

- 52, No. 9 (March 2, 1962), p. 74.
7. Greenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 78.
8. *Bible-Science Newsletter*, May, 1974, p. 6.
9. Barnett, *op. cit.*, p. 74.
10. Aitchison, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
11. For a description of these and other theories, *cf.* Hayes, *op. cit.*, p. 12.
12. Aitchison, *op. cit.*, p. 19; *cf.* Hayes, *op. cit.*, pp. 7, 14.
13. Hayes, *op. cit.*, p. 119.
14. Loren Eiseley, "Man Is an Orphan of the Angry Winter," *LIFE*, Vol. 64, No. 7 (February 16, 1968), p. 86.
15. Aitchison, *op. cit.*, p. 15f.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
19. Advertisement on back cover of Greenberg, *op. cit.*
20. Hayes, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
21. Advertisement on back cover of Greenberg, *op. cit.*
22. *Ibid.*
23. F. V. N. Painter, *Luther on Education* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1889), p. 183ff.



B O O K R E V I E W S

Isaiah II — An Exposition of Is. 40-66, by August Pieper. Translated by Erwin E. Kowalke. (Northwestern Publishing House). 706 pp. \$19.95. Hardcover.

To write a full-scale review of this scholarly book is a task that cannot be accomplished on short order. However, it is important to get out a notice of the availability of the translation of it, without undue delay. The rendition of August Pieper's *Jesaias II* into English has been accomplished by E. E. Kowalke, who for many years was president of Northwestern College at Watertown, Wisconsin. During his incumbency, as well as before and after (for 53 years), Prof. Kowalke trained future pastors in the basics of Hebrew. This, together with his experience in teaching English, certainly pro-

vided a generous background for the work which he undertook and completed after his retirement from the college presidency. Many of his former students, as well as pastors, teachers, and seminary students of another generation, not so conversant with the German language, will gratefully welcome the publication of this book.

No doubt Prof. Kowalke caught the spirit and tone of Pieper's book and has carried it over from the German to the English language. This has been accomplished even to the extent of rendering the text of the prophet Isaiah in blank verse, even as Pieper in the original German of *Jesaias II* used the iambic rhythm.

Isaiah II covers chapters 40-66. Pieper saw this section as being divided into three parts, each consisting of three triads. Chapter by chapter and verse by verse, Pieper lays out the contents grammatically, analytically, and exegetically, with all due emphasis on the Messianic core of this inspired book of Isaiah, who has been called "the golden evangelist of the Old Testament." In the translator's short foreword this evaluation is made: "*Isaiah II* is a compendium of the Gospel of Salvation. The author ranges over the Old and New Testaments, from Genesis to the Revelation of St. John, and shows how God's plan of salvation dominates all of history, not only the history of Israel, but the history of all mankind" (p. 5).

The student who comes into possession of this book will especially appreciate the fact that the original Hebrew text is given at the head of each section to be treated. And, just in case someone has become a bit rusty in his reading of the Hebrew, the Hebrew words are given by way of transliteration in the body of the work.

Lest someone gets the false impression from the title, let it be said that Pieper by no means intended this to convey the false idea that the authorship of this section is to be assigned to a Deutero-Isaiah, a Trito-Isaiah, or to a number of authors other than the author of the first section. As a sidelight in connection with the titling of the book as *Isaiah II*, it was of interest to note a quotation from Prof. L. Fuerbringer's obituary of

Aug. Pieper appearing in *Der Lutheraner*: "His Isaiah commentary was actually supposed to be a joint work with Stoeckhardt, as I learned from what both related. Stoeckhardt intended to treat the first section of the book, Chapters 1-39 and Pieper the second section. Unfortunately Stoeckhardt could not carry out his intention because of other tasks and other exegetical works and only published a short commentary on the first twelve chapters," (p. 11).

As August Pieper himself says in his foreword, the book is philological in character and was not intended as a practical or popular commentary. However, anyone who sets his mind to it will find the book of great value in capturing the intended message of this great book of the Bible, the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Gospel Parallels: A Synopsis of the First Three Gospels, by Burton U. Throckmorton, Jr. (Thomas Nelson, Inc., publishers.) 191 pp. \$8.95. Hardcover.

In the study of the Synoptic Gospels it is helpful to have at hand the three Gospel texts, set up in parallel columns such as is done in this volume. Using the text of the RSV of 1952, Burton Throckmorton, Jr. has edited *Gospel Parallels* (a new 4th edition) according to the arrangement of Huck-Lietzmann's *Synopsis*, 9th edition of 1936. While one may not always agree with every harmonization, still the usefulness of this book is not thereby to be minimized or discounted. The chronology followed in this synopsis is that of Mark, which is also the case with the harmony of Burton and Goodspeed, as well as that of A. T. Robertson (the *Broadus Harmony*). Besides other considerations, this approach is based on the premise that the Gospel of Mark was the earliest of the Gospels and was thus referred to by Matthew and Luke.

In the footnotes which contain references to variant readings, with manuscript support for each of them, one finds an additional feature, namely the addition of pertinent quotations from the Church Fathers, as well as ci-

tations from non-canonical writings such as the Gospels of the Hebrews, of the Ebionites, of the Egyptians, of the Naassenes, of the Nazaraeans, of Peter, and of Thomas, as well as the Acts of Philip. While we regard these writings not only as non-canonical but also as spurious, they may be of interest to the student who wishes to become acquainted with writings that were allegedly circulated in the 2nd and 4th centuries. For instance, in connection with Matt. 18:20 we have references made to the so-called Gospel of Thomas (Logion 77b and Logion 30) which has Jesus quoted as saying: "Where there are three gods, they are gods; where there are two or one, I am with him" (footnote on p. 99). This we would recognize as heresy and certainly not in accord with the inspired Gospel account regarding Thomas himself, who, although he showed a lack of faith, nevertheless came through with a true confession of the risen Savior when he said: "My Lord and my God."

In an introduction to footnote references, information is given regarding types of text, Greek manuscripts, the papyri, versions, the Church Fathers, and the non-canonical Gospels.

The New Testament Pocket Concordance, by Charles J. Hazelton. (Thomas Nelson, Inc., publishers.) 630 pp. \$4.95. Vinyl cover.

This handy vest-pocket size concordance presents 27,000 references to New Testament texts according to the King James Version. Because of its compact size one does not expect this concordance to be complete and exhaustive, but it can well serve to find many Bible passages the location of which may have slipped one's memory. In most cases enough of each passage is given so that it can be recognized and identified. As an additional feature, this concordance includes brief biographical outlines of the following: Abraham, Jesus, John, Paul, and Peter, as well as outlines of Jesus' parables and miracles.

C. M. Gullerud

Holy Spirit Baptism, by Anthony Hoekema, professor of systematic theology, Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

With the so-called "charismatic movement" gaining such inroads into most mainline denominations and sometimes even breeding confusion among our own people, it is always refreshing to read a Scriptural refutation of some of the charismatic errors. Such an opportunity presents itself in this book by Dr. Hoekema. The author's expertise is in the area of Neo-Pentecostalism, which he defines as "Pentecostal teachings and practices spilling over into non-Pentecostal churches." He believes that this trend began in 1960 and has mushroomed ever since. In this book he discusses the essential elements of Neo-Pentecostalism in the light of Scripture. As an aid to understanding the material, we will summarize and review each chapter separately.

I. "Baptism in the Spirit." This is the central doctrine from which all other Neo-Pentecostal teachings flow. Hoekema defines it as "an experience distinct from and usually subsequent to conversion in which a person receives the totality of the Spirit into his life and is thereby fully empowered for witness and service." Without Baptism in the Spirit, the Neo-Pentecostal believes that the Spirit does not live fully in the Christian. Spirit-Baptism provides the missing link in our relationship with Christ, brings greater love and service, and results in the full bestowal of the gifts of the Spirit.

II. "What do the Scriptures Teach on Baptism of the Spirit?" Scripture, not experience, remains the only authority. The expression, "to be baptized in the Spirit," occurs seven times in the New Testament. In its four Gospel uses (Mt. 3:11, Mk. 1:8, Lk. 3:16, and Jn. 1:33) and in Acts 1:5 it refers to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. In both of the other passages (Acts 11:15-16 and I Cor. 12:13) the expression has reference to conversion, although in Cornelius' case the Spirit manifested Himself through the simultaneous gift of tongues, thus demonstrating the equality of Jew and Gentile before God. Dr. Hoekema also discusses other New Testament passages cited by the Neo-Pentecostals and con-

cludes that the expression never describes a post-conversion reception of the Spirit.

III. "Speaking in Tongues." Neo-Pentecostals believe that Baptism in the Spirit brings with it full bestowal of the gifts of the Spirit, especially the gift of speaking in tongues. In the Statement of Fundamental Truths of the Assemblies of God, the largest Pentecostal church in the world, we read: "The Baptism of believers in the Holy Ghost is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues," (Article 8). Many Neo-Pentecostals share this view that speaking in tongues is an indispensable or at least highly desirable sign that one has received the Baptism in the Spirit.

In examining Acts 2, it is evident that speaking in tongues was just one of three miraculous and unique signs accompanying this one-time outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. If tongues are to remain for all Christians of all ages, why not the other signs as well? If we wish to use the Pentecost story as a norm for Christian experience, then we should rather look at the 3000 who believed following Peter's sermon. While we are told many things about how their faith manifested itself, there is no mention whatsoever about speaking in tongues. Such is the case throughout Acts. In fact, there are nine instances where people in Acts are described as being full of the Holy Spirit, and not one of these mentions tongue-speaking. There are twenty-one descriptions of people coming to faith or gaining salvation and, again, no mention of tongues. Surely tongue-speaking cannot be the indisputable evidence of the Baptism of the Spirit. A similar yet even more powerful message is proclaimed by the rest of the New Testament. With the exception of I Cor. 12-14, there is no mention of speaking in tongues. And even there it is never presented as evidence of the fullness of the Spirit.

I Cor. 12 shows that tongue-speaking was just one of many gifts of the Spirit. I Cor. 14 teaches that "prophecy" (proclamation or explanation of God's Word and Will) as a gift of the Spirit far exceeded tongue-speaking in its benefit to the Church. And that, after all, is why God gives spiritual gifts. And in I Cor. 13 Paul praises

faith, hope, and love as being even greater than all.

IV. "Gifts and Fruits of the Spirit." Pentecostals and Neo-Pentecostals alike claim that all gifts of the Spirit are permanent and manifested in the church of all ages. This includes both the "ordinary" (preaching, teaching, etc.) and the "miraculous" (tongues, healing, etc.). It is Dr. Hoekema's contention (and we would concur) that for the most part these miraculous gifts of the Spirit ceased after the Apostolic age. They were given then to authenticate the Apostles as God's spokesmen and messengers. This seems in keeping with Hebrews 2:3-4: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with diverse miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost according to his own will?"

Did these miraculous gifts actually cease after the Apostolic era? Dr. Hoekema believes that history answers with a resounding "Yes." He argues that tongue-speaking was virtually absent from the visible church between 100 and 1900 A.D. — until the rise of Pentecostalism. More importantly, Scripture itself gives no hope as to the perpetuation of these gifts beyond the Apostolic era. There is no instruction in the New Testament telling us that the church must continue to exercise these miraculous gifts of the Spirit. Read Romans 12:6-8 for a list of the seven gifts Paul urged the Roman Christians to seek to cultivate. And if these miraculous gifts are necessary or even so important, why are they not included in the lists of qualifications for the office of bishop?

Dr. Hoekema draws an interesting distinction between the gifts of the Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit. Gifts of the Spirit are given by God to certain of His children at certain times for certain purposes in His church. The fruit of the Spirit is the believer's natural response to God's love in Christ Jesus. Not all have every gift, but all should have the fruit of the Spirit. And "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control ... If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit,"

(Gal. 5:22,23,25).

V. "Fulness of the Spirit." While the Holy Spirit dwells within us and we live in the Spirit, Scripture gives us much encouragement to continue walking in the Spirit — living by the Spirit's guidance and in the Spirit's strength. Those who oppose Neo-Pentecostalism also appreciate the work of the Holy Spirit in all its areas. Noticeably absent in this chapter was any reference to the means of grace by which the Holy Spirit both works and strengthens faith.

Hoekema's final words are an apt summary: "While rejecting Neo-Pentecostal teachings on 'Spirit-baptism' and tongue-speaking, we may well be happy and grateful for true baptisms in the Spirit. When unbelievers are brought into living fellowship with Christ and when believers are enabled to live richer and more fruitful Christian lives than they lived before, we can only thank God. The proof of this living fellowship with Christ, however, is not to be sought in spectacular or ecstatic phenomena, but in the growing presence of the fruit of the Spirit."

In summary, Dr. Hoekema's book certainly has its drawbacks. His recognition of the Neo-Pentecostals and Pentecostals as brothers in Christ, his "decision for Christ" leanings, and his obvious misinterpretation of the Baptism passages all part company from the Scripture he claims to honor. In addition, the reader would appreciate a clearer definition of what he actually means by tongue-speaking — whether in an unknown foreign language or humanly unintelligible babbling.

Yet, as a useful tool in Scripturally refuting the errors of Neo-Pentecostalism, this paperback serves a worthwhile purpose. In these areas it is, for the most part, clear, concise, and Scriptural.

D. Schierenbeck

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