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A CHURCH BODY'S SHOES

John Reim

EXEGESIS: GALATIANS (Continuation)

Dr. Joh. Ylvisaker

(Trans. C. M. Gullerud)

A Church Body's Shoes *

John Reim

* This essay is the first of a two-part presentation. The second part will consist of a review of *Christian Worship, A Lutheran Hymnal* (Northwestern Publishing House, 1993), and will appear in the June 1994 issue of the *Journal Of Theology*. This first part was originally presented to the Great Lakes Pastoral Conference of the C.L.C., September 30, 1992.

Editorial Caveat: In publishing an article recommending flexibility in liturgy, for various worthy reasons, it is important to keep in mind that the liturgy is not under the authority of the pastor only, but that it is conducted "vom Gemeinschaftswegen" (In behalf of the congregation). The reader is asked to consider the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Article XXIV, 79ff., where λειτουργεω is translated, "I attend to, I administer public [i.e., not my own] goods." - J.L.

The word "liturgy" can evoke a number of sights and sounds: a pastor and congregation in worshipful dialogue; a choir singing the introit for the day; "page 5 in the forepart of the hymnal." Such familiar features in the services of Christian congregations are representative of what appears in the practice of liturgical worship. Used in its broadest sense, the term "liturgy" can encompass everything from the Church Calendar to the Hours (Matins, Vespers, Compline, etc.), to the Propers (changeable parts of the service), to the Ordinary (unchanging parts), to the Psalter, to the arrangement of events in a worship service and the musical settings which surround them. As summarized by the historian Schaff, "Liturgy means, in ecclesiastical language, the order and administration of public worship in general, and the celebration of the Eucharist in particular."¹

In considering the objectives of liturgy in worship, one might employ a simple analogy: shoes. This is suggested by the familiar analogy of the human body for any group of people joined by common religious belief and purpose. For reasons which will be enumerated, the liturgy of a church body will be likened to a pair of shoes it might wear; this to demonstrate the how and the why of liturgical form, and to point up the advantages and disadvantages of such form for Christian church bodies which equip themselves with liturgical shoes for their walk through earthly life.

Simple Sandals

At the outset it should be noted that some church bodies do not choose to step into "liturgical" shoes for their worship walk. In fact, historians are hard pressed to find evidence of established liturgical forms in use during the earliest years of the New Testament church. Some routine practices did exist in the

gatherings of Christians during the Apostolic Age. Yet even such practices varied significantly among congregations of differing ethnic backgrounds. Soon after Pentecost, believers in Jerusalem were continuing daily in the Temple (Acts 2:46). "The Jewish Christians, at least in Palestine, conformed as closely as possible to the venerable forms of the cultus of their fathers, which in truth were divinely ordained, and were an expressive type of the Christian worship. So far as we know, they scrupulously observed the Sabbath, the annual Jewish feasts, the hours of daily prayer, and the whole Mosaic ritual, and celebrated, in addition to these, the Christian Sunday, the death and resurrection of the Lord, and the holy Supper. But this union was gradually weakened by the stubborn opposition of the Jews."²

Worship forms found among early Gentile-Christians, on the other hand, featured different emphases. "In the Gentile-Christian congregations founded by Paul, the worship took from the beginning a more independent form."³ No uniform pattern of worship was devised by the mutual consent of all parties involved. Schaff goes so far as to suggest that there would have been a certain incompatibility factor between an established worship form and the early church. "They prayed freely from the heart, as they were moved by the Spirit, according to special needs and circumstances. We have an example in the fourth chapter of Acts. There was no trace of a uniform and exclusive liturgy; it would be inconsistent with the vitality and liberty of the apostolic churches. At the same time the frequent use of psalms and short forms of devotion, as the Lord's Prayer, may be inferred with certainty from the Jewish custom, from the Lord's direction respecting his model prayer, from the strong sense of fellowship among the first Christians, and finally from the liturgical spirit of the ancient church, which could not have so generally prevailed in the East and the West without some apostolic and post-apostolic precedent."⁴ Whatever the early Christians may have had by way of liturgy was, at the most, applied rather loosely. They put on no formal liturgical shoes as they walked the way of worship. They were shod with sandals, as it were. And that is the case also with some church bodies of our own time.

Some prefer a freer format than that found mostly in Lutheran, Anglican (Episcopal), Eastern Orthodox, and Roman Catholic churches. Dr. Hilbrich, of the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, summarized the perspective of his Baptist Church with the statement, "The liturgy is to have no liturgy." The same could be said of many who are influenced by the theological viewpoints of John Calvin. He felt that only the Psalms of the Old Testament were worthy of repetition in church worship. This opinion has affected Reformed worship modes for centuries.

Additional arguments against the use of formal liturgy are certain to be advanced by other Christian communities. There is no biblical mandate that there be such. Yet there are compelling reasons in favor of it which-in our view-reflect biblical considerations and concerns. So it is that many church bodies continue to wear the liturgical shoes which have been centuries in the making.

It must be granted that not every reason for developing liturgical services has been particularly lofty. Some of the push came from dangerous intruders, such as gnosticism. Qualben states, with respect to the second century, that "Christianity was influenced by gnosticism in at least seven ways . . . (3) The gnostic stress on mysteries, spiritual hymns, and impressive rites induced more elaborate liturgical services in the churches."⁵ There is also reason to suspect that at certain points in history liturgies were expanded in order to create more money-making sacrifices. Nevertheless, a number of worthy objectives for liturgical services were developed and have remained to this day.

Liturgy as Structural Support

Like a good pair of shoes, good liturgy can provide needed structural support. While it can stand on its own two feet only so long as it continues to worship "in spirit and in truth," the church's worship gains much structural support through its liturgy.

Consider the need for orderliness. Without some agreed-upon organization of public worship, the event can easily become chaotic. In his first epistle to the Corinthians, Paul provided some basic guidelines which are to be kept in mind as Christians congregate for the purpose of worship. He directs all believers to let all things in the church be done "in order" (kata taxin, 1 Cor. 14:40). Such a directive certainly argues in favor of a liturgical format. Even though corporate prayer and praise can be conducted in an orderly fashion apart from the regimen of formal liturgy, good order is practically guaranteed when a liturgical service is followed. Among Paul's concerns for the Corinthian congregation was this, that an unbeliever might walk into a service and be discouraged from learning of Christ by what might appear to be a pointless free-for-all.

Liturgy provides parameters within which the various acts of worship can be carried out with logic and order.

The practice of uttering an "Amen" can serve as an example. Nothing could be a more appropriate response to the hearing of the gospel than a heartfelt "Amen." Christians responded that way early on (1 Cor. 14:16). But how and when are such responses most fitting for the Christian worship service? The free and spontaneous calling out of an "Amen" during a service is one way, a way often associated with certain churches in the South. And it would be difficult to argue that such an approach is inappropriate. But it's not particularly orderly. Liturgy serves to provide an order, a structure, to a service in a way that encourages everyone to declare "Truly!"-that is, "Amen!"- in a unified fashion.

In 1 Thessalonians the Apostle Paul cites what should be paramount in Christian worship: "Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (5:16). Liturgy leads worshipers in carrying out these activities. It gives organization to prayer, praise, and thanksgiving. Among the many parts of a liturgical service are the following elements:

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| The Introit | "the `entrance' text that traditionally marks the beginning of the service and notes the theme of the day" ⁶ |
| The Alleluia | "consists of the word `Alleluia' sung twice and a psalm verse, followed by a single `Alleluia'" ⁷ |
| Kyrie | "now in our service we come with the simple prayer to our Lord to be our helper in every need" ⁸ |
| Gloria in Excelsis | "varied performance of the Gloria in excelsis is surely one of the most effective means of heightening the special nature of a festival service" ⁹ |
| Sanctus and Benedictus | "always grouped together in the liturgy, though separated in some musical compositions, these two texts form a musical high point in the Eucharist. In the Sanctus the faithful join in song with the seraphim before the throne of God in Isaiah's vision and with the throngs welcoming Jesus into Jerusalem." ¹⁰ |
| The Collect | "the Collect for the Day is that prayer which gathers together the thoughts of the congregation in relation to the theme of the day and expresses them in a few terse, significant words." ¹¹ |

Liturgy as Protection

One of the primary reasons for shoes is protection. Similarly, church bodies step into the format of liturgy as a means of protecting themselves. For dangers do threaten true spiritual edification in worship. One such threat is doctrinal error. False teaching is an ever-threatening, ever-eager foe seeking to make destructive inroads into the faith-life of the Christian community. By establishing a liturgical worship service which is squarely based on the Holy Scriptures, a defense device is set up. Liturgies which rehearse the chief doctrines of the Bible-as many do- help to insure that the worshiping community will receive a steady, nourishing diet of proper spiritual food. An example can be seen in the last sentence of a familiar form of the Absolution. It is a quotation of Christ's words: "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved." Upon every hearing of this, a congregation is reminded of the greatest of guarantees: eternal salvation is a free gift of grace given to everyone who believes in Christ as Savior. What a powerful deterrent to the pushy notion of work-righteousness is this constant reminder!

Proper liturgical format also guards against the tendency of many pastors to become too limited in their perspective. "The propers, then, are the insurance that worship will dwell on each part of the gospel, keeping them in balance and insuring full coverage. They keep the prayers, praise, and preaching of the church from the subjective whim of the preacher or musician by keeping both under a discipline imposed by common agreement of the whole church."¹² By following a carefully arranged table of scriptural readings and texts it is far more likely that "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27) will be kept before the people than if all is done by random selection.

A well-formulated liturgy can also cover for oversights that might be made by those in the pulpit. If, for some unfortunate reason, the central teachings of man's sin and God's grace are not clearly presented in the sermon, the liturgy insures that all present will be reminded of their need for a Savior and will be assured that God has provided that Savior in the person of His Son.

The Liturgy as Education

For those who are just beginning to walk there are training shoes. For those believers who are infants in the faith or spiritually weak, liturgy properly functions as an educational tool to be used as a means of education. Great instructional value accompanies any properly arranged liturgical format. This was viewed by some of the Reformers as one of its primary objectives. Luther became actively involved in liturgical reform, keeping the young and the weak in the forefront of his thinking. "We prepare such orders not for those who already are Christians, for they need none of them ... But such orders are needed for those who are still becoming Christians or need to be strengthened ... They are essential especially for the immature and the young who must be trained."¹³ His co-worker, Melancthon, also saw one of the chief objectives of liturgical worship to be the training of the young in faith. He stated in the Augsburg Confession that "almost all the ceremonies that are in use ... are added for the people's instruction. For therefore alone we have need of ceremonies, that they may teach the unlearned."¹⁴

This particular value of a liturgical format, of course, was appreciated and applied by individuals of other eras as well, and was seen to be of benefit also to those quite mature in the faith. "Part of the liturgical reform under Charlemagne was an emphasis on preaching. He ordered sermons to be preached within the eucharistic liturgy, where they were to exert a strong educational influence. For pedagogical reasons the sermon was followed by the Creed, the Our Father, and the Decalog."¹⁵ Through the inclusion of these biblical basics in the oft-repeated liturgical services, it was assured that the teachings would become well learned and easily retained. They would continue in the hearts and minds of the Christians as a well of refreshment from which they could draw through their earthly pilgrimages. B. M. Schmucker, a 19th century scholar of liturgies, observed, "If the coming generations of Lutherans have put into their mouths and hearts the pure, strong, moving words of our church's Service from week to week and year to year, they will be brought up in the pure teaching of the church, and the church of the future will be a genuine Lutheran Church."¹⁶

Perhaps one of the best lessons which is reinforced by liturgy (through its format more than through anything directly stated) is the lesson to be learned regarding the priesthood of all believers. As the congregation dialogues with the minister or liturgist, the equal standing which God gives to clergy and laity is underscored. When the minister, in the Salutation, says, "The Lord be with you," he does so from no loftier position than do the members of the congregation who respond with the same prayer, "And with your spirit." This important principle, the priesthood of all believers, is taught over and over to the worshipers as they put it into practice by means of a liturgical format.

Liturgy as Adornment

A pair of shoes properly complementing an outfit may enhance one's overall appearance as much as any other form of adornment. In the same way, the church body which makes use of a good liturgical format can also, thereby, add a good deal of attractiveness to its worship. To be sure, some initial liturgical designs came into being alone with a number of other elaborations. "In the Nicene age the church laid aside her lowly servant-form, and put on a splendid imperial garb. She exchanged the primitive simplicity of her cultus for a richly colored multiplicity. She drew all the fine arts into the service of the sanctuary, and began her sublime creations of Christian architecture, sculpture, painting, poetry and music."¹⁷

Consciously adding the element of attractiveness to Christian worship is not a concept which is foreign to the directives of the Apostle Paul. The verse from 1 Corinthians which calls for all things to be done "in order" (14:40) adds the adverb *ενοχημονως*. "Let all things be done becomingly, properly." Charles Hodge wrote, "The adjective, the adverbial form of which is here used, means well-formed, comely; that which excites the pleasing emotion of beauty. The exhortation therefore is, so to conduct their worship that it may be beautiful; in other words, so as to make a pleasing impression on all who are right-minded."

One of the liturgical adornments with ancient beginnings is the Introit. Although it developed into a

useful tool with which to state the overall theme of the service, it seems to have originated as a decorative device to fill the time during which the priest would make his way to the altar. Likewise, the Gradual was developed for the period of time during which the priest would walk from the lectern for the Epistle to the lectern for the Gospel. Generally sung, the Introit and Gradual added an element of beauty to portions of the service which would otherwise seem a bit barren.

In using a term like "decorative" to describe liturgy one risks the impression of a shallow basis for this form. Shallowness is avoided, however, when decorative items incorporate God's Word. Even if introits and graduals were first introduced just to fill a silent part of a service with sound, they are given importance by virtue of their usefulness in giving voice to Scripture.

Liturgy is capable of adorning worship with a dignity befitting the presence of the Almighty. People coming out of more loosely structured worship forms have expressed appreciation for the ability of liturgical services to create an awareness of being "in God's house," of being in God's presence, which certainly calls for a sense of dignity and awe.

Liturgy as Comfort

Broken-in shoes are known to be more comfortable than those you put on for the first time. So the well-worn shoe is often the choice. So also with liturgy. At various points in history it was felt that the worshipers needed to feel at home in their home congregations and also at affiliated churches which they may attend when away. Liturgy has been recognized for providing visiting worshipers with comfortable familiarity. Luther wrote, "Let each one surrender his own opinions and get together in a friendly way and come to a common decision about these external matters, so that there will be one uniform practice throughout your district instead of disorder-one thing being done here and another there-lest the common people get confused and discouraged."¹⁹

Of course, he was quick to balance his directive with a word of caution. "At the same time a preacher must watch and diligently instruct the people lest they take such uniform practices as divinely appointed and absolutely binding laws ... one must not enforce or have them accepted for any other reason except to maintain peace and unity between men."²⁰

According to Specifications

Shoes are useful only if they are a good fit. If they aren't built according to the specified design, they become a hazard rather than a help. So also with liturgy. It can be of benefit only when it conforms to a wisely prescribed design. The simple design for Christian worship, set down by Christ Himself, is that His people are to worship in truth. Every part of the liturgy, therefore, must be in line with the revealed will of God if it is to be of spiritual value.

A variety of events and movements in history have effectively altered the overall design of church liturgies. At times they have been altered or expanded improperly. Some liturgy acquired elements out of line with Scripture. When they fit badly in this sense they became hazards threatening the church bodies with tripping and falling.

Such was the case found by Luther during the Reformation. Over the centuries a variety of unscriptural teachings gained a foothold in the official dogma of Rome. It was inevitable, then, that spin-offs would find their way into the liturgies of Catholicism. Luther recognized the danger of these extra-biblical elements and became instrumental in liturgical reform. And in doing so, he maintained, once again, a balanced perspective. "He wished to purge the tradition only of that which was objectionable theologically, and he exhibited a pastoral concern for moving slowly in reform of ceremonies to prevent unnecessary shaking of popular piety. His conservative approach was not rooted in a romantic awe of the liturgical tradition itself."²¹

By way of illustrating his decisive, yet careful approach to liturgical reform it may be noted that he directed all festivals honoring saints to be discontinued while retaining the elevation of the host in the eucharist for the sake of the weak. The Formula Missae (in Latin) and the Deutsche Messe (in German) were the two main liturgical formats which he proposed.

Formula Missae (1523)

Introit
Kyrie
Gloria in excelsis
Collect
Epistle
Gradual with Alleluia
Gospel
Nicene Creed
(Sermon)
Preparation of Bread and Wine
Preface
Words of Institution
Sanctus
Lord's Prayer
Pax Domini
The Communion
Agnus Dei
Proper Communion
The Post-Communion
Collect
Benedicamus Domino
Aaronic Benediction

Deutsche Messe (1526)

Hymn or German Psalm
Kyrie
Collect
Epistle
German Hymn
Gospel
Creed
Sermon
Paraphrase of Lord's Prayer
Admonition to Communicants
Words of Institution
Distribution of the Elements
Collect
Aaronic Benediction

One Size Fits All?

More than likely, everyone reading this has more than one pair of shoes in his closet. The reason is obvious. Not every pair is going to be appropriate for all occasions. If we dress up for some occasion, we put on a pair of dress shoes. For athletic events we wear tennis shoes. For certain types of terrain we prefer boots. Essentially, every pair functions in the same way, but different situations call for different types. So also with liturgical services.

In light of some of the historical settings which led to the development of certain elements in the liturgy, and in view of the fact that each congregational setting is unique, it hardly seems reasonable to assume that one particular format for worship is going to be well suited for every situation. Compare a large established congregation with decades of centuries of established traditions with a small mission outpost in an area where people have not heard of liturgy. Even though Luther saw advantages to liturgical uniformity, he also saw the need for allowing great flexibility. He wrote, "The Scriptures prescribe nothing in these matters, but allow freedom for the Spirit to act according to his own understanding as the respective place, time, and persons may require it."²²

A situation in which this perspective was practiced is mentioned by Winfred Schaller in a review of the

worship supplement (Concordia Publishing House, 1969). Even though he found several items which caused him to sound a warning, he wrote, nevertheless, "We are happy to see the supplement to the Lutheran Hymnal . . . Being involved in mission work we have felt the need for new forms and up-dated language. We are more than ready to admit that the old forms do not always communicate the good news to modern man . . . There are also three samples of services, 'of prayer and preaching.' These are non-liturgical services and are extremely well done. In our congregation we have experimented with these and found them very useful. It is sometimes incongruous and difficult and unbeautiful to attempt the traditional liturgical service with a very small number of people."²³

It must be granted that the comfort factor will be somewhat in jeopardy if uniformity of liturgy is not maintained. The historical setting in which Luther expressed his desire for uniformity, however, must be kept in mind. His concern was directed toward those whom he called "common people," a designation for the non-educated, illiterate segment of the population, of which there were a great many. Uniformity was much more of a concern because many worshipers had to rely on memorization of liturgical forms in order to be able to participate. Many were not able to read and would, therefore, be at a disadvantage in the face of any alterations. The modern American society is largely a literate one. The vast majority of Lutheran worshipers in America can read and are, therefore, quite capable of following varied formats without becoming confused. What is more, it is not necessary to be uniform in every detail to produce a sense of comfortableness. More general, overall designs are quite capable of establishing a sense of familiarity.

"Luther himself, who suggested somewhat different patterns for large cities and towns, where greater musical resources might be at hand and where somewhat more educated congregations might be supposed to be in existence, than for the simpler situations and resources of smaller towns and rural parishes, reflected the kind of diversity recognized and, in many ways, encouraged and sought by Lutheran congregations. Likewise in America, the conditions of early Lutheran church life often necessitated adaptations and adjustments not always evident in the orders that were at least nominally followed. That problem is no different in our time."²⁴

Too Tight?

Having a good fit in a pair of shoes is one thing. It is quite another when they are too tight or stiff. Circulation can be reduced and numbness can set in. The same problem can develop in connection with a liturgy which might be described as being "too tight" or "inflexible."

Unfortunately the human mind is not the ever-alert, ever-concentrating organ that we might like it to be. And when activities become too familiar they can easily become routine exercises carried out with lips and voices but without heart and mind.

It seems safe to say that everyone who worships within the confines of a strict liturgical format has caught himself or herself, at one time or another, completing the prescribed responses with very little conscious thought given to what was said. Even the low level of audible enthusiasm which frequently accompanies the congregational singing of an "Alleluia" in the liturgy seems to indicate that many minds are not focused as one would hope.

The ability to concentrate on the spiritual matters in a service can be greatly enhanced by means of variety, as illustrated by the Holy Spirit Himself. Think of the many different ways He communicates certain biblical principles. The concept of the forgiveness of sins, for example, is expressed in terms of drowning something in the sea, of paying off an enormous debt, of measuring the distance between east and west, of a color change, to name but a few. The value of variety is also recognized with regard to hymns. It's interesting to note that in the very book which houses the liturgy [the hymnal] there are to be found hundreds of hymns on the same themes. Variety in hymnody is seen as basic. Yet, in the forepart of the hymnal, so little variation is made available.

To suggest that there be a greater number of varied liturgical forms, or at least flexibility within the familiar few, is not to suggest inadequacy in what has withstood the test of time. It is, rather, a matter of recognizing the benefits which a worshiper might derive from greater flexibility.

It may be felt that flexibility would jeopardize the protective or instructive aspects of liturgical worship. But that is unlikely. The chief parts of Christian doctrine are communicated by a variety of Scripture passages. And the worshiper who attends services for years will undoubtedly be able to commit a variety of

Christian prayers and passages to memory.

The entire matter of passive involvement versus active involvement in a worship service also comes into play. The format of a changeless system tends to lull the worshiper into a passive mode of participation. When that happens, a basic principle set down by the Apostle Paul may well be violated. A few verses prior to 1 Corinthians 14:40 (which directs all things to be done "decently and in order"), Paul speaks of the importance of letting all things be done for edification, for building up (14:26). If, due to unwavering repetition, Christians are led into a thoughtless rehearsal of "going through the motions," very little edification can be expected. Even minor differences from service to service will likely help to reawaken the worshiper to a greater level of concentration, and thereby, of growth. Luther observed, "The Quadragesima graduals and others like them that exceed two verses may be sung at home by whoever wants them. In church we do not want to quench the spirit of the faithful with tedium."²⁵ The Reformer was also able to see benefits in new approaches to formal worship. "Both in his hymns and in his chants he [Luther] neither disdained the use of older traditional materials nor shrank from revolutionary changes in the interest of German speech rhythm and popular appeal."²⁶ Typically, balance emerged in Luther's thinking on this point, as on others. He stated that a bishop "should choose the best of the responsories and antiphons and appoint them from Sunday to Sunday throughout the week, taking care lest the people should either be bored by too much repetition of the same or confused by too many changes in the chants and lessons."²⁷

In Step With the Visitor

It is an awkward experience to walk in someone else's shoes. Stepping into a liturgical service can be awkward for the visitor who is unfamiliar with such an approach to worship. Such a person may feel particularly uncomfortable if he or she is new to the whole concept of liturgy. And since potential converts to Christianity are a primary concern and interest of the Church, pains should be taken to the end that newcomers can follow along without feeling lost. A system of responses spoken by pastor and congregation between the major events in a service (especially when surrounded by several printed rubrics), can be very confusing to the visitor. One pastor, speaking recently with respect to the liturgy, said that for a visitor, "It's not very user-friendly." One of the reasons for having liturgy|to provide a sense of comfort and familiarity for the church member |may be a major cause of discomfort for the mission prospect.

This consideration may in itself warrant a streamlining, of sorts, particularly since some portions of the liturgy no longer function in the capacity originally prescribed (such as the Introit and the Gradual). The portion of the liturgy preceding the sermon could easily be simplified, while retaining a proportional amount of Scripture. One possibility would be:

- Hymn
- Invocation
- A form of Confession and Absolution
- The responsive reading of a Psalm
- Some musical setting of the Kyrie and Gloria in excelsis, or of the Magnificat, or of the Te Deum, or of some other hymn of praise
- Prayer
- Scripture Lessons
- A Confession of Faith
- Hymn
- Sermon

This is not to suggest that every pastor or musician should attempt to formulate individual variants. The writing of materials to be spoken in unison is an art in itself. A sermon is written one way. An article is written another way. Statements to be spoken in unison call for their own special form of expression, if the end result is to be easy on the eyes and pleasant to the ears. Even Luther hesitated to be the one to administer liturgical reforms because of his perceived lack of ability in this particular area. Nevertheless, there already exist many fine com-positions (literary and musical) from which to draw, and there are gifted people in these modern times with the ability to create useful additions to present-day worship formats.

Tying Things Together

The topic of liturgical worship encompasses so much. We certainly have not covered all the ground here. The "church's shoes" have so many paths to tread. We are grateful that the Scriptures keep the objectives of Christian worship so simple and clear: pray, praise, and give thanks.

It is common, when reading Lutheran scholars on the liturgy, to hear that an objective of liturgical worship is to keep worship Lutheran. Insofar as that can be interpreted to mean "keeping worship in line with the doctrines of the Bible," that is well and good. If that means, however, that the goal is merely to preserve a certain custom or tradition of corporate worship, such a perspective invites revision. Hopefully the objective of any humanly-devised structure is to promote an active, heartfelt participation in praise, prayer, and thanksgiving, while instructing in the Word. Liturgical worship forms certainly can help us attain this goal. Carefully designed and judiciously used, they will help the people of God keep in step with the will of their gracious Lord.

NOTES

1 Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, 7 vols. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1910) 3: 518-19.

2 Schaff 1:460.

3 Schaff 1:461.

4 Schaff 1:463.

5 Lars P. Qualben, *A History of the Christian Church* (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1958) 78.

6 *A Handbook of Church Music*, ed. Carl Halter and Carl Schalk (St. Louis: Concordia, 1978) 140.

7 Handbook 141.

8 *The Lutheran Liturgy* (sound recording) Kurt J. Eggert, dir. The Lutheran Chorale of Milwaukee.

9 Handbook 145.

10 Handbook 147.

11 Handbook 150.

12 Handbook 29.

13 *Luther's Works*, Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann, gen. ed., 55 vols. (1958; St. Louis: Concordia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1965) 53: 62.

14 Schaff 7: 489.

15 Handbook 38.

16 Handbook 47.

17 Schaff 3: 375-6.

18 Charles Hodge, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1964) 307.

19 *Luther's Works* 47.

20 *Luther's Works* 48.

21 Handbook 40.

22 Luther's Works 37.

23 Winfred Schaller, "Missouri's New Worship," Lutheran Spokesman December 1969: 4 and 7.

24 Handbook 57.

25 Luther's Works 24.

26 Luther's Works 149.

27 Luther's Works 38.

Perhaps one of the best lessons which is reinforced by liturgy (through its format more than through anything directly stated) is the lesson to be learned regarding the priesthood of all believers. As the congregation dialogues with the minister or liturgist, the equal standing which God gives to clergy and laity is underscored. When the minister, in the Salutation, says, "The Lord be with you," he does so from no loftier position than do the members. A pair of shoes properly complementing an outfit may enhance one's overall appearance as much as any other

The Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Galatians

Exegesis by Dr. Joh. Ylvisaker

Luther Seminary, Hamline, Minn. 1905

Translation from the Norwegian by C.M. Gullerud

PART V

The apostle has shown that his teaching regarding justification by faith agrees with the history of Abraham. In the following section he proceeds to prove that his teaching also agrees

III. WITH THE SINAITIC LAW'S HISTORICAL RELATIONSHIP TO THE MUCH OLDER PROPHETIC COVENANT.

This is the thrust of verses 15-18. God's covenant with Abraham was a prophetic pact. It pointed forward to Christ. The law, given 430 years later, could not disannul this pact, so that the inheritance, as the false teachers insist, would become effective by the law and not by grace, as God promised Abraham; for if a man's covenant is unassailable, how much more this is true of the unfailing God! God's pronouncement to Abraham would be destroyed if the opponents' teaching were valid.

We are now confronted with a section which presents special difficulties for the exegete. It contains crux after crux.

Verse 15.* ἀδελφοί, "brethren." Paul used this form of address in 1:11 but not again until now. He would now embrace the readers, thereby encouraging them, affectionately, to give heed to his word. He is conscious of the fact that he had spoken stern words of admonition. But he wants them to know that they were spoken out of love for them. *κατα ανθρωπον λεγω*, "I speak after the manner of men." This is an expression used frequently by Paul (cf. Rom. 3:5; 6:19; 1 Cor. 9:8). This may be taken in two ways: either it is saying that the expression is such as a natural, unconverted person would present it (as in Rom. 3:5), or a presentation is being made from life in order to make it understandable to the unlearned (as in Rom. 6:19). The latter applies here. It points to a situation taken from life. It is as if he is apologizing in advance for using language from everyday life in explaining a sacred covenant. But he does it in order to make it plain to everyone. *Quem ad modum homines loqui solent* ("As men are accustomed to speak" - Schoettgen). This corresponds to the classical *ανθρωπειως* and *ανθρωπινως*. *ομως* appears only three times in the New Testament, John 12:42; 1 Cor. 14:7 and here, but more frequently in the classics. It serves to indicate a conclusion *a minori ad majus* which is the Latin *tamen*, our "yet." What is evident regarding the confirmation of a human covenant, is to a higher degree true of God's covenant. This belongs to the *αθετει* which logically should precede *ουδεις*, but here is placed at the end by means of a not unusual transposition. *διαθηκη* is derived from *διατιθημι*, the Latin *dispono, ordino, constituo*. Grimm interprets it thus: *dispositio, quae cunque est, quam aliquis ratam fieri vult, (ordinance, testament) speciatim statutum ultimum, quo aliquis de rebus suis terreris post testamentum* ("An arrangement

* Notes on v. 14 are missing in the original. — Editor.

which someone wishes to be ratified, hence an ordinance, a will, especially for the final testament in which he decides about earthly matters for after the testament"). In the profane Greek the word is often used to designate a special will. *foedus, pactum*, in Hebrew הַבְּרִית. In this sense the word is used when speaking of God's pact with Noah (Gen. 6:18; 9:9), with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Gen. 15:18; 17:2; cf. Lev. 26:42). Luther takes the word in this passage in the sense of testament. Thus also Olshausen; and in the early church Augustine, Winer, Wieseler, Siefert, Philippi and others take it in the common usage. It is here understood as an exercise of the will on the part of God with reference to inheritance. It refers to His permanent will, His final will, a reliable testament. Naturally the thought is not here of the death of the testator or a reference to earthly instruments. *κεκυρωμενων* and *κυρος*, *caput, id quod summum est, robor, vis, auctoritas ratum facere, publice vel solemniter confirmare*. It refers to the formal, ceremonious ratification which makes it juridically binding. *ουδεις* - no third party. *αθετειν*, "reject, abolish, subvert, disannul" (cf. 2:21). *επιδιατασσειται*, to add something, to attach stipulations whereby the original covenant would be modified. Accordingly, even in a man's covenant one does not set himself up as a superior judge over it, nor should he change it in any way. It should universally be received as valid.

Verse 16. Verse 15 points out that even among men, the civic principle is maintained that a testament is unchangeable. Verse 16 says that the promise made to Abraham is a testamentary provision of God's will which is no less unchangeable, and it is noteworthy that it pertains not just to a short period of time, but extends way up to Christ. From this it follows (v. 17) that the law, which was given later, cannot disannul God's covenant with Abraham regarding the attainment of the inheritance. Wieseler presents the thought process somewhat as follows: before Paul makes the application of verse 15, which comes in verse 17, he shows in verse 16 that the words contained in the *διαθηκη* with Abraham point to Christ. There could be no sense in speaking of a disannulment by the law if the *διαθηκη* (with Christ as its center piece) did not extend to the time when the law was given. If, on the contrary, the promise to Abraham was only a temporary pact effective only until the law was given, as was the case with the law's housekeeping purpose according to verse 19 (cf. also Rom. 5:19), then an annulment by God would indeed not stand in opposition to the

unchangeableness of a divine *διαθήκη* (v. 15); for not every pronouncement of God, as such, is of eternal duration; also the law's housekeeping purpose, according to Paul, was in accordance with God's ordinance, and in Exodus 24:6ff. it is clearly called a covenant, and yet it was legitimately repealed. This necessary support for the application that the pact with Abraham had reference to Christ was not contested by the Galatian Judaizers against whom Paul was polemicizing, and therefore it is that he could deal with it so briefly. Paul simply takes the wording of the promise, analyzes it, and shows that it points to Christ as the main subject.

δε points to and introduces the syllogism of verses 15-17. *ερρηθῆσαν* is the 3rd person pl. aor. pass. of *ρεω*. Lachmann and Tischendorf prefer the *ε* as used in some manuscripts, while other manuscripts have the Attic form with *η* (*ερρηθησαν*) which is the form used in other Pauline passages. Here *απο Θεου*, "of God," is implied (cf. v. 17). The promise was made by Him. *επαγγελιαι*, the plural does not point to many kinds of promises, but indicates that the promise was repeated many times. This must be carefully noted because it casts light upon that which follows. *ου λεγει*, namely, *ο Θεος*, not *η γραφη*; for God is indicated as the subject in *ερρηθῆσαν*; so "he does not say." *ως επι, επι* with genitive, *verbi dicendi*, "with reference to." This is not quite the same as *περι*, which rather emphasizes the direction of the saying. In the promise God is not speaking of many, but of one (cf. Winer § 47, Andover Ed., p. 379). *ο εστιν Χριστος*, "which is Christ." The relative *ο*, as usual, refers to the following name. But to which Old Testament passage is he referring? With the idea that the passage referred to is similar to the one mentioned in verse 8, several interpreters have chosen Genesis 12:3; 18:18; 22:18. Tertullian and Chrysostom prefer the last passage. There the LXX has it thus, *και ενευλογηθησονται εν τω σπερματι σου παντα τα εθνη*. Others have chosen Genesis 28:14 where *και* precedes *εν τω σπερματι* corresponding to *και* here: *και ενευλογηθησονται εν σοι πασαι αι φυλαι της γης και εν τω σπερματι σου*. The argument here depends on the verbal sound. The result is that Paul's word referred to in the promise must be taken literally. The dative *τω σπερματι* cannot be controlled by the preposition *εν* as in passages referred to. If with this light we go to Genesis and rehearse the history of Abraham, we must pause at verse 15 of Genesis 13 and at verse 8 of chapter 17. Here LXX has the words: *και τω σπερματι σου*. Here we also have the distribution of an inheritance, *κληρονομια*, namely

Canaan. Here we have the noteworthy *σπερμα Αβρααμ*. If we do not depart from what is here clearly recorded, then we must say that Paul shows us in this verse that God, by using the singular *σπερμα*, "offspring," and not the plural, in the promise to Abraham, wanted to point to him to whom the physical offspring pointed forward, the issue *κατ' εξοχην*. Therefore it is not so that only Paul found this **indication**, but the very God wanted to point forward to him and thus with purpose used this form. This is the intention of the apostle's word. And so because this was God's very purpose, therefore Paul, enlightened by the Holy Ghost regarding this passage, could speak as he did. It is wrong, therefore, to say that because Abraham and the other patriarchs are dead, therefore this promise of God is no longer applicable; no, it points to Christ and He still lives. Many modern interpreters such as Meyer, deWette, Ewald and others say that Paul puts more into the form of the word than is found there, that he applies a rabbinical art of interpretation, hung upon the words, an art that is learned in the rabbinical schools. Also Zoekler says: *Nicht ohne eine gewisse sprachliche Haerte deutet Paulus den eigentliche kollektivisch gemeinten Singularis σπερμα, ער, auf die einzelperson Messias* ("Paul interprets the singular *σπερμα, ער*, which has properly a collective meaning, as referring to the individual Messiah, not without a kind of linguistic violence"). In answer to this it must be said that it was certainly not the apostle's intention that the singular form as such must necessarily point to Christ. Neither could it be his intention that the singular *σπερμα* **only** can be referred to Christ. Paul had sufficient understanding of the Hebrew to know that the Hebrew *ער* which corresponds to the Greek *σπερμα* in the singular can have a collective meaning. That he knew this full well can be seen from other passages where he takes the word in a collective sense (cf. Rom. 4:18; 9:7,8; 11:1; 2 Cor. 11:22). In the Old Testament we also find that, while the word is used for an individual in six passages (Gen. 3:15; 4:25; 21:13; 1 Sam. 1:11; 2 Sam. 7:17; 1 Chron. 7:11), it is used in a collective sense in all other passages. It could, therefore, not be the apostle's intention that Christ alone was meant in that promise. He is very conscious of the fact that the promise first applied to Abraham's descendants, but at the same time he also knew that the passage had a deeper meaning. Accordingly, he knew that God from the beginning had so ordained that Abraham's seed should be combined in one, so that, therefore, in a collective sense there

should come one in Abraham's seed who in a special sense should be of Abraham. Not by accident, but in a definite way, it should point to an occurrence which would be of special concern to Abraham and his descendants and to whom it would otherwise apply. It has in part been explained to mean that the singular is used to refer to the descendants of Isaac and not to the descendants of Ishmael, Esau and Keturah. But Christ is the true and legitimate seed of Abraham, which includes his descendants, and is therefore their representative, and so it can be said that the promise pointed to Christ (cf. *Lehre und Wehre*, 1901, p. 14,20). But this is a somewhat forced interpretation. The reference to Christ cannot be otherwise interpreted than that it specifically points to the person of Christ, as Luther and others have rightly taken it. Here it cannot mean Christ and His Church (thus Calvin, Bengel, and basically also Philippi). Bengel says: *Paulus hoc dicit, unum esse semen, unam posteritatem, unam familiam, unum genus filiorum Abrahami, quibus omnibus per promissionem obtingat haereditas, non aliis per promissionem, aliis per legem* ("Paul says that there is one seed, that is, one posterity, one family, one race of Abraham's sons, to all of whom the inheritance falls by promise—not to some by promise and to others by the law"). Philippi says: *So also faellt ihn der collective Sinn von σπερμα = Gemeinde der Glaebigen mit dem individuaellen Sinne = die Person Christi, in eins zusammen. Das σπερμα Abraham ist die Gemeinde der Glaebigen oder Christus, beides ist unabtrennbar mit einander Verbunden* ("Thus the collective sense of σπερμα, meaning the congregation of believers, coincides with the individual sense: the person of Christ. The σπερμα of Abraham is the congregation of believers, or Christ; both are inseparably bound together"). But nothing mystical is here indicated nor suggested by the context. Here it is ruled out by the connection. It is also ruled out by the fact that ενος is contrasted with πολλων. There are two other expressions in the Old Testament which are parallel to the expression, "Abraham's seed," and must be similarly explained, namely, "seed of the woman" and "David's seed" (זרע הנשמה and זרע הדוד). "The seed of the woman" who should crush the head of the serpent is, of course, Christ. This is an expression pointing to Him in the deepest sense. "David's seed" points first of all to the descendants of David, but also in the deepest sense to Him who descended from David, the Son of David who should sit upon his throne to all eternity (cf. 2 Sam. 7:12ff.;

Acts 2:30; Heb. 1:5). But what does it mean when the promises refer to Abraham and Christ? In order to find an answer to this question one must first consider the content of the promise. If we consider the cited passages in the Old Testament we will find that the immediate content refers to Abraham and his descendants as recipients of the land of Canaan as a permanent possession. But Canaan had already been called the land of Immanuel (Isa. 8:8) and, as Daechsel says, it was thereby clearly shown that the expected Christ was the true seed of Abraham who received the land as His possession. And according to general Biblical typology, Canaan is indeed a picture of the heavenly fatherland, its future perfection or heavenly inheritance (cf. Rom. 4:13; Heb. 11:9,10,13,14,16). This heavenly inheritance, this celestial fatherland, was the chief content of God's promise to Abraham and his descendants. They called themselves foreigners in connection with the heavenly fatherland which they longed for even while they were inhabitants of the earthly Canaan. With a free-spoken promise all of this was directed to Abraham. There was no kind of performance required of him or of those who received the promise.

But how can it be said of God's kingdom or this inheritance that it refers to Christ? Indeed it was He who had to acquire it and who also did acquire it for others, for us. Yes, but He had to receive it from the Father. The Father appointed Him (Heb. 1:2). He is, therefore, the heir (Matt. 21:38). He is the firstborn among many brethren (Rom. 8:29), and He Himself says that the Father conferred the glory upon Him (John 17:22). If we are to have a part in this kingdom with its glory, then it must take place by entering into fellowship with Him who is the real possessor. With Him and through Him it is that we can partake of God's kingdom. We are indeed heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17). This it is that is also stated in Heb. 2:10, where Christ is called captain of our salvation. He is *αρχηγος*, who goes in the midst of all the brethren. The thought expressed here is the following: If one desires to partake of the promise, it is necessary to be in fellowship with Him who stands at the center of the promise (cf. Bugge).

Now Paul has certified the application of the picture of verse 15. Now he has cut off the objection which someone might raise by saying that the law had abolished the promise. He can now proceed with what he has to say.

Verse 17. *τουτο δε λεγω* is Paul's introduction to a state-

ment which shows that what he had said of man's *διαθηκη* applies also to God's *διαθηκη* with Abraham. This mode of expression with or without *τουτο* is used by Paul on several occasions (cf. Rom. 15:8; 1 Cor. 1:12; Gal. 4:1; 5:16). *λεγω* introduces a more detailed explanation similar to our, "I mean," and *τουτο*, "this," pointing to that which follows: I mean this, the following is my meaning. The covenant here referred to is, of course, God's will as expressed in the promise (cf. v. 16). This was validly confirmed by God when He made the covenant with Abraham, even before He added the mark of the covenant, namely circumcision, which is properly called a seal of the righteousness of the faith, *σφραγιδα της δικαιοσυνης της πιστεως* (Rom. 4:11). *προ* in *προκεκυρωμενην* indicates the time before the law and responds to the following *μετα*. The reading *εις Χριστον* is missing in a number of manuscripts and is stricken by Tischendorf and others. But Wieseler and Philippi are right in maintaining that the context requires it, for it is thus sharply emphasized how unthinkable it is that such a covenant could be disannuled. *εις Χριστον* does not mean "up to Christ," but corresponds to the dative in verse 16, "with reference to Christ." *ο μετα . . . ετη . . . ακυροι*, Bengel insists that the 430 years are included since *magnitude intervalli auget promissionis auctoritatem* ("the magnitude of the interval increases the authority of the promise"). The time is clearly emphasized with purpose. Wieseler says: "The longer an agreement endures in uncontested validity, the stronger becomes its authority." Concerning the fact that God made His promise before the law was given, Luther says: "God has done well by giving the promise so long before the law, thus emphasizing that no one would dare to say that righteousness came by the law and not by promise. For if it had been His purpose and will that we should be justified by the law, then He would have given it long before the promise, namely 430 years earlier or at least at the same time as the promise." The 430 years are an explanation of *προ* in *προκεκυρωμενην*. Modern interpreters take exception to the number. Usteri says that Paul here suffered a loss of memory since Exodus 12:40,41 says that the stay in Egypt lasted 430 years. Siefert considers it completely futile to try to reconcile the 430 years of Paul with Exodus. According to his view, the apostle has here in a dependent manner followed an erroneous presentation in LXX which in the Exodus passage has added the words "in the land of Canaan." In the LXX we read *Η δε κατοικησις των υιων Ισραηλ ην κατωκησαν εν γη Αιγυπτω και εν γη*

Χαυααν ετη τετρακοσια τριακοντα. Josephus follows this time schedule (cf. Ant. 2:15,2). Siefert says that if Paul were more independent, he would have said at least 600 years since the promise to Abraham had been given long before Jacob's journey to Egypt. In order to bring about harmony, some have sought to apply Exodus 12:40 other than to the stay in Egypt. Grotius has set Abraham's trip to Egypt as the *terminus a quo* for the 430 years. Others have dated the 430 years way back to Abraham's departure from Ur of Chaldees. Luther has given the following dates: From the first promise to Abraham until the birth of Isaac 25 years; from the birth of Isaac to the birth of Jacob 60 years; from Jacob's birth to the birth of Joseph 90 years; the life-time of Joseph 110 years; the bondage of Israel in Egypt to the birth of Moses 65 years; the age of Moses at the departure from Egypt 80 years; a total of 430 years. But this does not agree with Exodus 12:40 nor with the prophecy in Gen. 15:13 which says that Israel should be in bondage in Egypt 400 years. But the question has rightfully been asked how Israel's children could become so numerous in the comparatively short time which would remain if the 430 years are dated back to the first promise given to Abraham. According to Numbers 1:45 there were at the departure 603,550 who were able to go forth to war if we do not include the Levites. Some have pointed to Exodus 6:20 as a proof for the contention that the stay in Egypt did not last for a very long time since it is claimed, according to verse 18, that Amram, Moses' father, was the son of Kohath and that, according to verse 16 Kohath was Levi's son. Moses accordingly would be Jacob's son and Levi's great grandson. But in accordance with the record of the Old Testament itself this would be impossible. Either Amram, the father of Moses, is not identical with Amram, Kohath's son, or Amram, Kohath's son, is not Moses' physical father. In one passage generations may be passed over which often is the case in Biblical genealogies. According to Numbers 3:27, in Moses' day the Kohathites were divided into four families: the Amramites, the Izeharites, the Hebronites, and the Uzzielites. The number of all the males in these families was 8600. Accordingly, the Amramites would number about 2150 males. But Moses, according to Exodus 18:3,4, had only two sons. If now Amram, Kohath's son, the Amramites' ancestor, was Moses' physical father, then Moses would have 2147 brothers and nephews excluding the corresponding offspring from the women's side of the family. Here some generations are passed

over in the same manner as, for instance, in Ezra's genealogy (Ezra 7:3) no fewer than five generations are passed over (cf. 1 Chron. 6:3). Exodus 6:20 cannot be offered as proof against the 430 of years sojourn in Egypt. But how, then, can Paul be brought into harmony in this instance? This is the case: Paul counts the time of the patriarchs as an epoch. It is a time of promise, in which promises are often repeated to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Shortly before the departure to Egypt Jacob receives the promise (Gen. 35:11ff.; cf. 28:13ff.) and in the words recorded in Genesis 35:11 the Lord reminds Jacob immediately before the departure concerning a part of the promise (cf. 46:2-4). Jacob repeats this promise of the Lord when he blesses Joseph (cf. 48:3ff.). But with Jacob the promise was muted. From the sojourn in Egypt, the family relations between God and the patriarchs passed away. Now Israel had become a people. Thus Paul deliberately sets down the number. From the oft-repeated promise, from the time of promise to the giving of the law there is a time span of 430 years. We also note that *τω Αβρααμ* is not added to *διαθηκην προκεκυρωμενην*. It is as if the apostle himself wanted to project his meaning (1) by using the plural *επαγγελια* although he was pointing to a single promise, and (2) by not adding *τω Αβρααμ* to the application. If the interpreters had observed these points, they would have avoided bringing Paul into contradiction with Exodus.

εις το καταργησαι expresses the intention of *ακυροι*, to set aside the promise which attributed the inheritance to grace alone without the merit of works. The law says: If you do so and so you will be rewarded. The law presents works as the condition. If the law had come with such a condition, then it would serve to destroy the promise by grace. The law is also here personified.

Verse 18 gives the basis for contending that the law would have the outcome of destroying, disannulling the promise, since it is here stated that the promise would be no more a promise if the inheritance would be conditioned by the law; for if something is obtained as a payment, this would exclude the idea that it is a free gift. But Paul immediately states that the inheritance was not of the law. God's pact with Abraham shows that the inheritance is assured by a promise of free grace. *η κληρονομια*, supply *εστι*. *κληρονομια* is the Hebrew *אֲרָצָה*. Thus the Old Testament designates the land of Canaan as the inheritance promised to Abraham and his descendants, the people of Israel (cf. Deut. 4:21; Josh. 13:23ff.). But this was only the lower

side or part of the inheritance. The inheritance in the higher sense is that of which the earthly Canaan was but a picture, namely the coming kingdom of God, βασιλεια του Θεου (cf. 1 Cor. 6:9; Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:5; Matt. 25:34); σωτηρια (Heb. 1:14); ζων αιωνιος (Matt. 19:29; Mark 10:17; Luke 10:25); the glorified earth (Matt. 5:5); the glorified world (Rom. 4:13; Eph. 1:14,18; Col. 3:24; Rev. 5:10). The root of all the New Testament expressions for the heavenly inheritance is founded on the Old Testament promise made to Abraham and his descendants. εκ νομου, εκ designates the mediation from the standpoint of origin, therefore conditioned by the law as basis and source. If the inheritance in this manner was attached to the law, then ουκετι . . . ουκετι is not to be taken historically, but logically, saying that one of the two opposing statements excludes the other. If one was the case, then the other would not. Here, then, is an absolute either-or: Either by the law and its works, or by promise and so by grace. εξ επαγγελιας, by promise, so that the promise, and not works of law, is the ground and source for the attainment of the inheritance. But the promise has, as Philippi states, grace as its correlative as well as its source. What is obtained by promise is obtained by grace, since the promise is a free act of grace. The natural heart of man cannot accept this that the one is exclusive of the other. Rieger has strikingly said: "So long as the deceitful heart of man divides his love between light and darkness, nothing would be more agreeable than to obtain it (i.e., the inheritance) by promise and also by merit so that one could pride himself of law and deeds as far as they reach, but where this does not suffice, by promise drawing in Christ's grace and obedience. Thus one would not have to dig himself in a hole. Just stir a bit in the law, and thus you will not be greatly humiliated by grasping grace."

τω δε Αβρααμ δι' επαγγελιας κεχαρισται ο Θεος, "But God gave it to Abraham by promise." Therefore it cannot be by the law, conditioned by deeds. It cannot be denied that the giving of the inheritance to Abraham by promise is an historical fact. But God would be guilty of breaking His Word if later He would make the inheritance dependent on works of the law even though the promise by its very form shows that it is not subject to a provision. To attribute this to God would be blasphemy. The true Israelites did not obtain the inheritance in any other way after the giving of the law on Sinai than before. Concerning Moses we read in Hebrews 11:26, "Esteeming the reproach of

Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward." Did he learn to seek the recompence in some other way after the giving of the law? No.

In verses 15-18 Paul has presented proof showing that his teaching is in complete harmony with the law's historical relation to the promise. But he is not finished with his line of argument regarding the law. His teaching is in agreement also

IV. WITH THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW IN RELATION
TO THE RECEPTION OF SALVATION BY FAITH. 3:19-29.

In answer to the question "wherefore then serveth the law?" Paul answers: "It was added because of transgression till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." This law does not abolish the promise. This it could do only if it were able to make alive. For in that event righteousness would truly be by the law. But since all of mankind is concluded under sin, according to Scripture, then the promised blessing by faith of Jesus Christ is given to those who believe. Before faith came we were kept under the law as a schoolmaster; but now that faith is come, the law's significance as a schoolmaster is past. All Gentiles, as well as Jews who are God's children by faith in Jesus Christ whom they have put on in baptism, are no longer under it but are thus Abraham's seed and heir according to the promise.

Verse 19. In the preceding it has been said that the spiritual blessings of salvation and life are by promise and not by the deeds of the law. Also it has been said that the law can by no means abolish the promise as the opponents would assume in their teaching. It is natural that this would bring up the question: "What, then, is the purpose of the law?" It must have some significance in the economy of salvation. This question regarding the law's positive meaning, its purpose and relation to the reception of salvation by faith, this is the subject now taken up by Paul as he poses the question in verse 19a. But he does this with the definite purpose of showing that his teaching was in complete agreement with the answer which must here be given. After *νομος* one must simply supply *εστι*. *Quo consilio lata est, lex? Quid sibi voluit* (Winer). Other interpreters supply *εγενετο* or *εδωθη* or *ερεθη*. If any of these are accepted, then *τι* must stand as equal to *δια τι* (Wieseler). But the expres-

sion *τι ουν* is often used by Paul with a definite meaning (cf. Rom. 3:1; 4:1 and many other passages). *των παραβασεων χαριν*, "because of transgression." Of all the admitted transgressions, the article marks those that are known (cf. Rom. 7:8). But when the apostle says that the law was added because of transgressions he does not mean to say that the law prevents transgressions or hinders them. *χαριν* does not disallow this thought as some have, in part, maintained; because *χαριν* can also be equated with *ενεκα* (cf. 1 John 3:12 and Passow on *χαριν*). But *παραβασις* and the context shows that the law did not come to take away transgressions but to call forth transgressions as a reality. The better to understand this, we need to remember that Paul draws a distinction between *αμαρτια* and *παραβασις*, sin and transgression. In his terminology *παραβασις* is simply sin in the form of transgression of a definite positive commandment. Therefore he imputes both *αμαρτια* and *παραπτωμα* to the Gentiles but never *παραβασις*. Sin was in the world before the definitive Mosaic law was given; but it was given in order that the preceding sin might be revealed as a definite transgression of the fixed positive commandment. Thereby the sin might the more easily be recognized as sin (cf. Rom. 3:20). So long as sin does not run up against an obstacle, it flows quietly and unnoticed like a stream; but if you drive a stake into the midst of the stream, then the water begins to gush up and one can detect the power of the stream (cf. Rom. 7:7, 8, 11). Augustine says: "In the law there resides a great mystery. It is given in order that sin may be increased so that the proud may be humbled, that the humble may confess and be healed. A person may be sick and not realize it and then there seems to be no need for healing. When sickness becomes worse, concern enters in and the need for a physician and healing becomes apparent." Luther says: *Pecatum sumsit initium in Adam, per legem etiam incrementum, per solum Christum finem accipiet* ("Sin takes its beginning in Adam, is still more increased by the law, and comes to an end solely through Christ alone"). We understand that Paul is not here talking about *usus politicus legis*, nor of *usus eleutheticus*, but concerning its *usus medicinalis*, in which case it makes the offense to abound and thereby prepares the way that grace may much more abound (cf. Rom. 5:20). This function of the law to increase sin by pointing it to a definite transgression is, of course, not its ultimate purpose, but an intervening one. This is shown by the apostle in his use of *προς*. But an addition was made, namely in accordance with the will of God,

whereby the inheritance was given by grace through faith and not because of works of the law. "*So ist das Gesetz das aueserste Gegenteil der Verheissung*" ("Thus the law is the most extreme opposite of the promise") says Besser. *αχρις*, "till . . ." Now the *terminus ad quem* for the law's house-keeping time is given. Accordingly, it should be a school which would not have a lasting significance. The law covenant's time was to be displaced by the day of the fullness of salvation. *το σπερμα* is, of course, Christ and not the Church, nor is it Christ and His believing people. In Christ the law's house-keeping function has reached its end. His coming marked the end of the time of preparation. *ω επιγγελται*, the *επιγγελται* has in part been regarded as the medium: *cui promiserat*, with *ο Θεος* to be understood; but from the context one must regard it as passive: *cui promissio facta est* (cf. v. 16). *ω* must be explained the same as in verse 16, accordingly not as equal to *ει ου*. It was the promise concerning God's kingdom that was given to Him. When He has completed the work of redemption, He then stands as the heir. He who becomes His brother receives the inheritance together with Him (Bugge). *διαταγεις δι' αγγελων, διατασσω* is the Latin *dispono, constituo*, our "ordained" (cf. 1 Cor. 16:1). The law is a divine school instituted by God Himself; but in its promulgation at Sinai He used the service of angels, the ministering spirits (Heb. 1:14). It appears from this passage and other references that God at Sinai caused the angels to speak the words of the law. This does not contradict Exodus 20:1 which says that God spoke all these words. It was not necessary that the words should be spoken without intervening agency. We have in Deut. 33:2 the first indication that the giving of the law was mediated with angels. There it is stated that God, at Sinai, came with ten thousands of angels. The LXX there has *αγγελοι*, "angels." Stephen, in his discourse, said that the Jews had received the law by the disposition of angels (Acts 7:53) and in Hebrews 2:2 it is plainly stated that the law was "spoken by angels." With the word "angels" Paul, in our passage, is understood to refer to the holy angels and not the Angel of the Lord who is Christ; for this is ruled out by the plural. The term "angels" doesn't refer to men whether that be Moses and Aaron, or priests, or Moses and the prophets, or indeed John the Baptist.

But why does Paul say that the law was ordained by angels? Some maintain that this is done in order to indicate the glory of the law. God brought forth the law through the service of

angels, the lofty, glorious angels and not by lowly servants. Others like Luther, Bengel, Besser, Zoeckler, Bugge, etc., held the view that God by using servants to speak the law did so to bring forth the thought that "the setting up of the law was not to be the chief economy but merely a secondary arrangement whereby the law is presented as something that was 'added to' or 'came in alongside of' the chief permanent arrangement of God's relationship to man as set up in the covenant of promise made with Israel's ancestor to whom God Himself in a personal direct manner had spoken the word of promise" (Bugge). Luther says: *Lex est servorum vox, evangelium domini*. The law is also presented at this point as a secondary, serving, transitory thing. God wanted this to be made known by having his servants deliver the word at the giving of the law, but He did not use servants when He set up the permanent covenant of grace, but spoke personally (cf. also Philippi). *εν χαρι μεσιτου*, this mediator is Moses and not Christ as Origen, Chrysostom, Augustine, Calvin, etc., have explained it. Christ certainly is presented as mediator in several passages. As examples we think of 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 12:24. But this occurs in an entirely different connection. Moses is not indeed termed mediator in the Pentateuch; but his activity as mediator is often spoken of (cf. Deut. 5:5,29; Ex. 20:19; cf. Acts 7:38; Ex. 31:18; 32:15). In the letter to the Hebrews Jesus is described in several passages as the mediator of a better covenant. Moses is presented in an indirect sense as mediator (Heb. 7:22; 8:6; 12:24). *μεσιτης* in general designates a go-between, one who steps between two or more parties to bring about a relationship of one or another kind. Why is Moses in this instance designated as mediator? Such interpreters as Calvin, Wieseler, Winer, Baumgarten, Crusius, Meyer, Gerlach and others say that by this designation the glory of the law's promulgation is shown. Others like Luther, Olshausen, V. Hofmann, Philippi, Bugge, Zoeckler find in this designation an expression of the lower dignity of the law in comparison with grace and the gospel message. That this is the right interpretation is shown in the following verse.

Verse 20. The question centering on the identity of the mediator, Moses or Christ, called forth many solutions at the time of the Reformation. Luther calls attention to this. But especially after the middle of the 18th century when the historical grammatical exegesis began to increase in popularity, "nearly all exegetes tried to make of this verse an exegetical exercise"

(Philippi). Now the Englishman Jowett could talk about 430 explanations of this *locus vexatissimus*, as Winer calls it. In the time of rationalism one finds the strangest interpretations. We cannot enter upon a discussion of these but we will take up a study of the words with the purpose of getting at their meaning according to the context. First of all, we take note of the fact that *μεσιτης* appears with the article, which here must be the generic article, showing that no specific mediator is indicated, whether it be Moses or Christ, but the kind of mediator, what a mediator is, as such. *ενος ουκ εστιν* - Since the succeeding *εις*, "one," apparently connects with *ενος* and is of the same significance and gender, then *ενος* must be taken as masculine. The numeric significance of *ενος* must indicate one party. This expression must be saying in general that there must be at least two parties, if there is mention of one mediator. If there is no more than one party, then there could be no thought of a mediator. One could not with *ενος* understand either *μερους* or *νομου* or *τροπου* or *σπερματος*.

ο δε θεος εις εστιν, "but God is one." God is simply one, not two. This *εις* cannot be explained as one and the same, the unchangeable and similar; but in agreement with the preceding "one party." God is one party, not several. But what does this mean in this connection? Bugge has in a clear manner given the interpretation which must be the correct one, which is also shared with several of the better exegetes (cf. his Introduction to this epistle). The context indicates that here a distinction is made between law and gospel or promise. At the giving of the law there was one mediator. This shows that by the law there is one party over against God with whom he in the law by means of a mediator enters into a contract, a binding agreement in which, as Philippi says, the mediator represents and mandates for both parties the conditions upon which the contract rests. But thereby the relationship becomes shaky and uncertain, for the question will always arise whether the contract has been fulfilled. In the promise, in the gospel, there are not two negotiating parts. God deals alone. There is no such thing as a contractual relationship or mutual obligatory relationship. There are no conditions attached, for God deals alone and freely without requiring any corresponding contribution from us. It comes as a gift of free grace. This is the case with law and gospel, with salvation by the law and salvation by the gospel. Delitzsch says: "Only where God reveals Himself in His unity and uniqueness is there a revelation with no refraction. Such a

revelation is found in the gospel's accomplished promise which has as its content God's work for humanity, God's grace as the motive. In contrast to it, the law according to its meaning, character, and content, has just as strong a human side as a divine . . . there is no deeper perception of the distinction between law and gospel than the Pauline."

But one might here raise the objection that also the gospel and the new covenant speak of a mediator. Does not everything in the gospel also depend on conditions, on a contractual relationship? Certainly also the new covenant speaks of a mediator. But there is a great difference between the mediatorship of Moses and that of Christ. At the giving of the law, the mediatorship of Moses was restricted to delivering to the people what he had received from God. But with Christ there is a great difference. "He does not receive a completed salvation from God's hand like Moses received a complete law. No, Christ accomplishes salvation Himself." Nor must it be forgotten that the mediator of the new covenant is God Himself. In Christ it is God who acts. "And this is the expression which says that the condition is one-sided, that is, God acts alone."

Verse 21. After Paul has answered the question raised in verse 19 he propounds another question occasioned by verse 20, to which *οὐν* refers. Since the law is not an adequate expression for God's will of salvation in the same manner as the promise, is not then the law against the promise? *οὐν* indicates that the apostle thinks that there are those who would draw this conclusion from the foregoing. Paul answers the question with the characteristic denial: *μη γενοίτο*, "certainly not." He does not drop the matter with a simple denial but gives the reason for the denial. His defense is the following: a contradiction between the law and promise would exist only in the event that the law would be able to mediate salvation for sinners, as the opponents maintain. This would bring about the following contrast: the law gives life by stipulating a contractual fulfillment as a provision for salvation and the promise by granting it as a free gift of grace. But it is so far from being the case that the law is able to bring life and righteousness that the very opposite is true because of man's sinfulness. Righteousness is by faith. *νομος* appears without the definite article but it is evident that the reference is to the Mosaic law. *ο δυναμενος*, the article indicates what the context would require, namely a law which would be able to give life, *ξωπονησαι*, in the full sense of the word, the spiritual and its continuation, the eternal. "Life giving"

presupposes death. The word refers back to verse 12, "shall live." *οὕτως*, "verily," not merely according to the Judaizer's imagination. *δικαιοσύνη* is the righteousness which avails before God. As Wieseler says, in order to communicate this righteousness it is not enough that the law is given by God and is therefore in itself holy, righteous and good. But since man is dead in sin, the law would have to possess power to make alive or to communicate the Holy Ghost (see v. 2); for it is the Holy Ghost who gives life. But the Mosaic law cannot communicate the Spirit and in spite of its holiness as a letter, it kills (2 Cor. 3:6). The law does not give, but only demands.

Verse 22. *ἀλλὰ*, "but," introduces the sharp contrast to the thought that the law should be able to mediate righteousness. This it cannot do, but that which now follows is the truth. *ἡ γραφή*, "the Scripture," is here again personified. It is God's Word and can therefore accomplish what God has done (cf. Rom. 11:32). It is attributed to Scripture because it affirms it and declares it. *συνκλειω* is an intensified *κλειω*, completely enclosed in a place from which there is no escape without breaking in and opening up an exit from prison. *συν* must not here be understood as equal to *una*, *una includere*, locking together with, namely, with others. Also among profane writers, the word is often used of an individual person in the sense of imprison, to be delivered into the power of another. *τα πάντα* is here equal to *τους παντας* in Rom. 11:32. It must be noted that the neuter in this passage has a particular meaning. When used of persons the neuter denotes common category; thereby the concept of something without exception is made stronger than it would be with the masculine (cf. Winer, Andover ed. p. 178). Consequently all without exception are enclosed like in a prison. *υπο αμαρτιαν*, *υπο* is used here, as is frequently the case, to denote dominion. Thus it is so that we have not only sinned but sin ruled with its unrestricted power like a ruler over a slave who has been delivered to him as his possession. There could be no thought of freedom nor of the obtaining of righteousness. *ινα η επαγγελια*, here comes the divine intention, namely, that every thought of claim or earning must be discarded. It must be acknowledged that it was completely by grace. *η επαγγελια* is here equal to *το επηγγελμενον*, the promised blessing equal to *η κληρονομια*, "inheritance," the fullness of God's kingdom and salvation. This is shown both by *δοθη* and verse 18. The prepositional expression *εκ πιστεως* modifies the predicate *δοθη*. This may seem to be a

tautology or unnecessary repetition. This, however, is not the case. It is significant that Paul does not merely say that it should be given to those who believe, but that it should be by faith. The opponents in Galatia would agree that the inheritance should be given to the believers and no one else; but they wanted works of the law to be included. In opposition to this boast about man's behavior, Paul states that it is by faith and therefore not by deeds of the law. Here *sola fide* is the answer. $\epsilon\kappa$, here again the mediation is indicated from the standpoint of the origin; "by faith of Jesus Christ," faith in Jesus Christ (gen. obj.), His person and His work.

Verse 23. While the preceding portion emphasized what the law cannot do, the apostle now shows the purpose for which it was given by God, but he does this merely for the purpose of proving again that as a divine house-keeping instrument it had merely a transitory meaning. "But before faith came," the modern interpreters have taken faith, $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$, to mean *fides qua*, the act of believing; and this act was initiated when He on whom they believed entered into history. But Paul in the conclusion of the verse shows forth what he means by faith when he speaks of "the faith which should afterwards be revealed." Accordingly this faith is *fides quae*, the economy of faith in New Testament times, the preaching of faith in the Savior who was revealed. Luther says: "That is to say: before the time when the gospel was issued and grace, through it, was proclaimed, it was the office of the law to guard us and enclose us under it like as in prison." As long as the covenant of the law lasted, Israel was under its strict training. The prepositional phrase $\upsilon\pi\omicron$ $\nu\omicron\mu\omicron\nu$ belongs to $\sigma\upsilon\gamma\kappa\epsilon\kappa\lambda\epsilon\iota\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\iota$, corresponding to verse 22, and not to $\epsilon\phi\rho\upsilon\rho\upsilon\mu\epsilon\theta\alpha$, which would require $\upsilon\pi\omicron$ $\tau\omicron\upsilon$ $\nu\omicron\mu\omicron\nu$. $\phi\rho\upsilon\rho\epsilon\omega$ is the Latin *custodio*, our "guard." Accordingly, as such who were confined under the law, we were guarded by that through which we were confined. It had imprisoned us and stood guard outside the prison gate to prevent prisoners from escaping. This graphic description is a strong picturesque expression concerning the unfree condition which prevailed in a time of law covenant. Israel, you might say, could not move without one or another command standing in the way. These commandments lay as yokes around their necks, yokes which they could not bear (Acts 15:10). The imperfect indicates a continuation in ancient times. It lasted a long time. $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ $\tau\eta\mu$ $\mu\epsilon\lambda\lambda\omicron\upsilon\sigma\alpha\nu$ $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\iota\nu$, $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ indicates the intention of the economy of law from God's side. The covenant of law was not the final disposition. There

would come another, a better covenant; but before that there would be a time of slavery under the law to teach Israel to long after freedom from slavery and condemnation which the law pronounced over all the guilty. So it is not only the law's *usus politicus* that is here spoken of. *μελουσαν* refers not simply to the future, but, as often is the case, to God's established counsel. *πιστις* is a short expression for the economy of faith in contrast to the economy of law, the gospel's time of custody, in which salvation comes by faith and not by deeds. It was to be revealed by Him who came in the flesh. The gospel was hidden in the counsel of God and had to be revealed (cf. Rom. 16:25f.; Eph. 3:5, etc.). Surely there was gospel also in the Old Testament, but it was in prophecies, in promises, in shadows and types. It was a time of shadows in contrast to the clear day of grace in the new covenant.

Verse 24. *ωστε*, "wherefore," namely, as the result of what was stated in verse 23. Here it is shown that the interpretation of *εις* in verse 23 was the correct one. *παιδαγωγος*, "boy leader, custodian, school-master." Pedagogues, child attendants, were the slaves who had the assignment to lead the children to and from their teachers. They were stern lords. From this image Paul draws a highly significant picture of the office of the law and the covenant of the law. It held Israel, the sons of the house, as children not of age, in bondage and slavery, showing them their sins and pronounced judgment over them. This caused Israel to long after freedom and salvation, something that it could not provide for itself (cf. Rom. 8:3). Thus the law turned away from itself and toward Christ, being a schoolmaster unto Him, not by improving them, a thing which the law cannot do; but by tyrannizing them and bringing their inner sinfulness to their attention, sin was portrayed as transgression, and the total powerlessness of man was shown. This is repeated in the life of the individual sinner who comes to Christ. Luther says: *Lex ad gratiam praeparat, dum peccatum revelat et auget, humilians superbos ad auxilium desiderandum* ("The law prepares for grace, while it reveals sin and increases it, humbling the proud till they desire help"). *ινα* indicates the divine purpose, the purpose that is the will of God, namely that the pedagogue of the law should reach those who were placed under it. "That we might be justified by faith" in Christ unto whom the law is our schoolmaster. The law indeed does not mediate righteousness.

Verse 25. The schoolmastership of the law was to prepare

for the new time, the time of faith and grace. But when the new time of Christ is come, the schoolmastership of the law has performed its service and its time has expired. We are no longer under the law as a dominating power. We have been transferred to a new time and into the blessed dominion of grace. We notice that *παιδαγωγου* appears without an article. Thereby it has the meaning of *Paedagogen Gewalt* ("pedagogue-power"), as Meyer puts it. While the time of the law's schoolmastership has expired, this does not apply to those who still stand under the law. They stand there because they have chosen to stand there. In a subjective sense one comes under grace by accepting faith as the way to salvation and by coming into fellowship with the Lord Jesus by such faith (Rom. 6:14; 10:4).

Verse 26. This verse serves as proof of what has been stated in verse 25. The proof is to be found in the word *υιοι*, which stands as a contrast to *παιδες* as contained in *παιδαγωγος. παιδες* are those who have not reached the age of majority. *υιοι* has the force of an antithesis, with meaning of sons who are of age, free, and not under the yoke of the law and who do not as slaves fear God's wrath, not being driven by external commandments to do His will. One whom God has accepted as a son considers Him as his Father and is freed from slavish fear. He has received the spirit of adoption and does the Father's will out of a free, inner impulse created by the Holy Ghost (cf. Rom. 8:14f; Gal. 4:6; 5:18). The law does not rest upon him as an accuser and judge. In the law he sees a loving friend, a mirror and a rule for the new obedience. And they have become such free sons through faith and not by the law, which is incapable of making anyone a son for under it one remains a *παις*. Jesus says, "The servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the son abideth ever" (John 8:35). "All," says the apostle. He does not thereby want to give the readers apostolic assurance that every single one of them has come over from death to life, that there are no hypocrites to be found among them. But at the same time, as he speaks out of love, he wants to have it said that this is the case whether or not the readers were originally Gentiles or Jews. With this in mind we will understand why the apostle now uses the second person, whereas he before had used the first person. He addresses the readers in general, not only the Jewish Christians of whom he himself is a part. *εν Χριστω Ιησου*, the question is here: to what does this prepositional phrase apply? The article with *πιστις* is not repeated, and the rule is that the article is omitted only in a prepositional phrase attached to a

substantive or a substantival expression, when the substantive and prepositional phrase constitute a thought conception, "one leading idea," (Winer); otherwise it must be repeated. If *εν Χριστω Ιησου* belongs to *πιστις*, then the article would be omitted, because it would then be closely attached to the word faith and faith would then by *εν* be resting in Christ. Wieseler, Philippi, etc., attach *εν Χριστω Ιησου* to the predicate. The prepositional phrase expresses the thought that besides faith, the subjective mediation of the adopted sons, also this is expressed wherein it has its objective foundation, that is Christ Jesus, the One who took upon Him the demands and judgment of the law and redeemed us by His vicarious atonement.

Verse 27. By combining this verse with the foregoing through the use of a new *γαρ*, "for," the apostle would clearly prove what he had said in verse 26, namely, that all—Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians—are God's children through faith in Jesus Christ. He proves this by showing how the relationship spoken of in verse 26 takes place. A number of interpreters here cite Luther's striking words: *Si autem Christum induisti, Christus autem filius Dei, et vos eodem indumento filii Dei estis* ("If you have put on Christ—but Christ is the Son of God—then you also are the sons of God by that same putting on"). *σοι, quot quot*, "as many as," all who relate to the *παντες* in the foregoing verse. *βαπτισθαι εις τινα*, by baptism being brought into relationship with another so that he belongs to him. To be baptized into Christ is to be united with the Lord Christ, thus becoming partakers of all His blessings, having Him as Lord (cf. Rom. 6:3). *Χριστον ενεδυσαθε*, "have put on Christ." Baptism leads the one being baptized into such close communion with Christ that, being clothed with Him as with a garment, which hides the natural nakedness, he is in God's eyes adorned as royalty, inwardly glorified. This is a figurative expression showing that in baptism one partakes of Christ, in the fruit of His deeds. His righteousness and holiness becomes ours. This being so, we also receive inheritance with Him. The one who is baptized stands before God as a son like unto Christ's sonship with this difference that He is such by nature by virtue of an eternal birth, while we become sons by adoption here in time. The apostle can attribute this to baptism because in baptism Christ comes with the gracious forgiveness of all our sins. But here the apostle speaks not only of what is objectively present in baptism but also of the subjective reception. But how can the apostle say that all

who are baptized into Christ have put on Christ? Does this mean that baptism works *ex opere operato*, so that factually all who are baptized put on Christ and become members of His body, whether they believe or not? Certainly not! The gracious gifts of baptism are not forced upon anyone and they are not received except by faith. Throughout this whole chapter the truth runs like a gold thread, showing that faith is only the subjective medium of salvation, the *organon leptikon* on our part. The situation is this that the apostle is here addressing Christians, taking for granted that they have received baptism in faith (cf. 2:38).

Verse 28. This verse is closely connected with the two preceding verses. The son relationship abolishes whatever separated people before. It fills all chasms and bridges all depths. Jews as Jews were "under the law"; the Gentiles as Gentiles were "without law" (1 Cor. 9:20,21), and this difference had previously been very pronounced. But this difference which before had been so great does not apply to those who were baptized into Christ. Paul places the civic and gender differences alongside the religious and national differences indicated by "Jew" and "Greek." A bridge was erected over the gaping cleft which at that time had separated the slave and the free, the male and the downtrodden female. All these differences had ceased to have any meaning in connection with the relation to God in Christ (cf. Col. 3:11; Rom. 10:12; 1 Cor. 12:13). *εν* is used adverbially for *ενεστω*, *inest*, *est inter*, *locum habet* (cf. 1 Cor. 6:5; Col. 3:11; James 1:17). To fulfill the connection, *εν υμιν* must be understood - among you Christians . . . Verse 28b shows how verse 28a has taken place. They constitute a homogeneous unity - "a new man" (Eph. 2:15), "a body" with many members (Eph. 4:4; 1 Cor. 12:13). But what an anachronism it would be to place oneself under the law again! Paul does not say *εν* but *εις* which makes the statement stronger. They constitute one person, as it were, one living organism. But this unity is in Christ. The point of unity centers in Him. Christ Jesus is the basis for the relationship according to which all of them form a unity. But it was this very unity through faith in Him that was sinking.

Verse 29. You have become Christ's possession by having put Him on, verse 27. But through this relationship to Christ, by the power received from it, they also became the seed of Abraham. Christ is the seed, but those who belong to Christ are with seed. But if this is so, then it is clear that those who

are Abraham's seed must have entered into the same relationship to Abraham as his child. Thus the apostle reverts to verse 7. Emphasis is placed on *εστε*. You do not need to ask how you may become a child of Abraham; you are his child. But if this be true, then you are heirs according to the promise. You are then in the same situation as Abraham with reference to the inheritance which is God's kingdom with all its blessings and gifts. This inheritance became Abraham's in fulfillment of the promise. Just as Abraham was God's heir so also are those who stand in the same relation to God as he. Consequently, then, they were not heirs of Abraham but heirs of God.

Chapter IV

The apostle continues to present proofs of his orthodoxy. He deals with the law which the opponents emphasized and by which they claimed they could entrap Paul. His teaching is in agreement

V. WITH THE LAW'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE ADOPTION OF SONS. 4:1-7.

The Old Testament law when placed over against the gospel can be most fittingly compared to children's elementary school training and thereby representing a period of dependency as with Israel, though the call to be heirs took place in the time appointed by God. According to God's pedagogy, Israel as an heir was, as it were, under inspectors and guardians according to the law until Christ came. But in the fullness of time God sent forth His Son who redeemed them who stood under the law and by grace granted both to Jews and Gentiles the adoption of sons to which action also the Spirit in their hearts testifies. Therefore they are no longer in bondage under the law, but are God's free children and His heirs by grace, that is, unless by absolute desire they want to remain in the old status as slaves in the old prison.

Verse 1. *λεγω δε*, "now I say." The apostle ties the following section to the preceding and especially to the words which are concluded with 3:29. The apostle is not presenting anything new. He will give a more extensive explanation in such a way that the law is dealt with in relation to the adoption of sons. *εφ' οσου χρονου* is our "as long as" (cf. Rom. 7:1; 1 Cor. 7:39). *ο κληρονομος*, "the heir." When using this word

the apostle is referring back to κληρονομοι in the preceding verse. We might use the indefinite article since no distinct individual is meant, and verses 1 and 2 present a picture taken from human life. The article is here generic and serves to emphasize the heir as such. Even though the father be alive, the son can be regarded heir *de jure*. And here the thought centers upon an heir whose father is still alive, for Paul designates the guardianship as dependent on the father as he says, "until the time appointed of the father." This shows that the heir is not one whose father is dead, as a number of interpreters have explained it; for if the father were deceased, the time of guardianship would be determined by law and not by the father. υηπιος is a child, a minor. Such a child is like a servant, not indeed in every respect but in the sense of being one who cannot make major decisions. The minor is not *sui juris*. He is like the servant in his personal bondage, although as heir he is lord of all and will one day own it all.

Verse 2. επιτροπος cannot be a tutor in the juridical sense since the father is living, but a manager, as the word is often defined, and of these επιτροποι there are such who are called οικονομοι, upon whom the young child was dependent in regard to external things. He could not administer the cash resources or take of them at will. προθεσμια appears only here in the New Testament, but since the word is used often in the ancient Greek the meaning is evident. προθεσμια is the Latin *tempus praesitutum*. This designates the time the father has set for the son's coming of age. The interpreters who think of the father as dead have, of course, difficulty with this word.

Verse 3. This verse brings the application. ημεις does not refer to Christians in general, much less to Gentile Christians alone (so Augustine). Nor does it refer to *die Christenheit in ihren fruheren vorchristlichen Stande gedacht* (thus Siefert); but it is "we of Israel" before the fullness of time. Israel was God's son among the people (Ex. 4:22; Deut. 14:1; Jer. 31:9). In and with the election to this sonship Israel received the promises of the inheritance. But the enjoyment of this inheritance would not immediately fall to the lot of the people in freedom. The law with its manifold provisions would be its attendant. This kept the people in bondage and in the status of minority. Israel according to the old covenant was considered and treated as a child under strict guards so that it could be trained till the time of majority would come. υπο τα στοιχεια corresponds in thought to the foregoing ουδεν διαφερει δουλου.

The word *στοιχειον* is derived from *στοιχος*, "a row," that which belongs to a row or that whereof a row consists. It is used concerning a pole or pin in a row, for example, on a sun dial. Plato, Aristotle, etc., often use it of alphabet letters in so far as they refer to parts of written speech. In physics the word is used to designate the elements, the elements of the earth, its basic ingredients. Thus it is used in a sentence found in classical literature: *εστι δε στοιχειον εξ ου πρωτου γινεται τα γινομενα και εις, ο εσκα του αναλυεται — το πυρ, το υδωρ, η αηρ, η γη* (cf. also 2 Pet. 3:10,12) In the later Greek literature *στοιχειον* is used to designate the stars as part of the sky, while others say that in them are found the principles ruling human life and fortune. Then also the word has had an intellectual meaning according to which it has been used to designate the first principles of an art, science, discipline, *rudimenta disciplinae*, the ABC of art or science, also the first principles of a doctrine (cf. Heb. 5:12,13). Many, especially ancient interpreters, have taken the word in this passage in the sense of physics. Others have referred it to the nature religion of the heathen with its adoration of the stars and forces of nature, but to drag this in comes from a misunderstanding of the passage. What does Paul refer to by *στοιχεια*? From the context it is clear that it must refer to the Mosaic law with its ritual and ceremonial provisions which the Jews, like children with their ABCs, had to learn. That this is the meaning is shown by the preceding *νηπιοι* (cf. the connection of *στοιχεια* and *νηπιοι* in Heb. 5:12, 13). This is borne out by verse 9 with the use of the adjectives *ασθενη* and *πτωχα*, which would not fit in at all with the physical interpretation but fits well with the thoughts of elementary teaching. In the parallel passage, Colossians 2:8,20, *στοιχεια του κοσμου* is spoken of as *σκια* (cf. v. 17). We can also understand the apostle's meaning from verse 5 where *υπο νομου* clearly agrees with this conception. The law, accordingly, is represented as an elementary teaching, a childhood teaching. But what of the *του κοσμου*? *κοσμου*, "world," here self-evidently refers to the Old Testament mankind. Paul here calls the law the world's, mankind's childhood doctrine, because collective humanity is here looked upon as a unity, needing the divine upbringing as Israel according to the flesh. Paul has thus set forth how it was with Israel, the heir, in the old covenant. The people were by children's schooling to be trained to the age of majority and this was so strict that Israel, though an heir, could be regarded as servants.

Verse 4. With this verse the apostle passes on to the presentation of the opposite, namely the freedom from bondage. Verses 4 and 5 present it objectively as a change which had been wrought, verse 6 as subjectively brought to them, and verse 7 as the result of all of it. "Fullness of the time" corresponds with "the time appointed of the Father" (v. 2). *το πληρωμα*, "fullness," is the drop which brings the water to the edge of the vessel so that it flows over (cf. John 7:8; Dan. 9:24). Applied to the concept of time *πληρωμα* designates the goal, the completed time period, the fulfillment of time, time appointed of the Father, which brought the world's childhood teaching to an end, in which the law had fulfilled its pedagogic office. "God sent forth His Son." With the strong expression *εξαπεστειλεν*, "sent forth," two things are presented regarding the Son: (1) His pre-existence and (2) the pre-existing relation to the Father. God sent Him forth from Himself (John 1:18), *εκ του κολπου του πατρος*. Therefore the *υιος* must be taken in the metaphysical sense, entirely different from our being called children of God. He is *ιδιος υιος* (Rom. 8:32; cf. also Rom. 1:3). He who should bring us *υιοθεσια*, the adoption of sons, had to be *υιος Θεου*, God's Son. *γενομενος* is aor. part. of *γινομαι*, *esse incipio, nascor*. Another reading in some manuscripts, *γεννημενον*, the pres. part. passive of *γενναομενον* from *γεννωω*, must be considered a gloss. The expression "made of a woman" points back to the Hebrew *יָוֹלֵדֶת* of Job 14:1. Here has been found a proof for the supernatural conception of Jesus without the participation of man. One cannot say directly that this lies in the expression itself but indirectly and in connection with *εξαπεστειλεν* it is indeed indicated that He did not have an earthly father in the same manner as He had an earthly mother. A proof for the human nature in the person of Christ has been found in the preposition *εκ*, "of." While it cannot be said that the preposition *εκ* as such proves the point, nevertheless the whole passage does, for when it is said that he is born "of" a human, then he must possess true human nature, having the same as the one who gives birth (cf. John 3:6; Matt. 1:16; 1 Pet. 1:23). And the human nature was necessary for the redemption, as was His divine nature. He had to be human in order to suffer and die and to fulfill the law for us human beings. By being born of a woman there lies an expression of the deep state of humiliation that He entered. He did not come in a form which corresponded to His divine majesty. He took upon Him the form of a servant and laid the divine glory under it (Phil. 2:7).

"Made under the law." Here we hear what position He took upon Himself by being born; He placed Himself under the law (cf. 3:25). The second *γενομενον* cannot be taken to be different from the first so that the first means "made" and the second "came" (so Wieseler and others). It is not necessary to make this distinction. As Siefert states, Paul desired clearly to set forth the birth of God's Son in time not merely to show that it was human, but also as Jewish (cf. Heb. 2:14-17). Therefore he does not simply say that God sent forth His Son to be made of a woman but adds that He was born under the law, being bound to its provisions from His birth to keep them even as other Jewish children. Therefore He had to be circumcised on the eighth day. Later He was baptized to fulfill all righteousness. Our ancient Lutheran fathers used this passage as a *dictum probans* for the teaching of Christ's *obediencia activa meritoria*, and both Philippi and Zoekler agree. Philippi includes His *obediencia passiva* as he reminds us of the old saying: *actio Christi fuit passiva et passio ejus fuit activa*.

But what was Jesus' intention by letting Himself be born and put under the law? This is answered in -

Verse 5. Here we have two *ινα*(s), "that," which report the double purpose which God had when He sent forth His Son as stated in verse 4. These two *ινα*(s) stand as parallels to those given in 3:14 which states the purpose for the benefit of (a) Israel and (b) all others in common. *τους υπο νομον*, "them that were under the law," clearly refers to Israel. Concerning those who were of Israel, it is stated in the foregoing that they were held in custody, kept under the law. They were under **restraint** of the law, also under its **condemnation** because they had not obeyed it. In both respects Jesus purchased their liberty by His death, which was the greatest obedience and the greatest suffering on the part of Jesus. *υιοθεσια* is a word that appears only 5 times in the New Testament, namely, in Romans 8:15, 23; 9:4; Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 1:5. This is derived from *υιος* and *θεσις*, which in turn comes from *τιθεμι*. *υιοθεσια* means *adoptio filiorum*, installation or admission into the status as son. It has a different meaning only in one instance, namely, in Romans 8:23, where it refers to the final fulfillment of the adoption, namely, the entrance into heaven with its full enjoyment of the inheritance. Here in Galatians *υιοθεσια* has the special meaning: the son who has come of age, which stands as a contrast to the child in bondage. The Son became a servant in order that the servants might become sons. Starke correctly distinguishes three

steps of sonship: (1) the age of minority, referring to the believers of the old covenant; (2) the age of majority, referring to the believers of the new covenant; (3) the age of glory which refers to the completed possession of the eternal inheritance (Luke 20:36; Rom. 8:23). In verse 5a we have the third person; but in 5b the first person, because here the reference is to the Christians as a whole. Here the ways of the Jews and the Gentiles are joined. In the same instant that Israel is redeemed, the Gentiles are likewise redeemed. All of humanity is included in the redemption, as was the case with the giving of the law at Sinai. In this adoption of sons Paul sums up the fruits of Christ's redemptory work. *απολαβωμεν*, we take with us that which has been extended to us (cf. Luke 16:25).

Verse 6. Here comes what we have subjectively received through the change in us. In this there is subjectively no difference between Jew and Gentile. *οτι* is not, as Wieseler and others claim, equal to *quod, quod attinet ad id, quod*. Neither is it simply "that" as some interpreters take it; but it is equal to the Latin *quoniam*, our "because" (so also Luther). God did not send forth the Spirit of His Son to dwell in your hearts if you had not become *υιοι* through the reception of *υιοθεσια*. The indwelling of the Spirit follows the adoption as a fruit thereof. Emphasis is placed upon *εστε υιοι*, "ye are sons." Verse 6b gives from experience, proof of 6a (Rom. 8:16). The indwelling of the Spirit is a seal on the adoption as sons, the divine confirming *σημειον*, "mark," as Siefert calls it. Paul does not here show how and by what means the Christians became sons, but that they were such. Bengel says: *quia filiorum statum sequitur inhabitatio Spiritus sancti non hanc ille* ("Because the indwelling of the Holy Spirit follows the state of sonship, not the latter the former"). *το πνευμα του υιου αυτου*, "the Spirit of His Son." This Spirit is the objective Spirit, the Holy Spirit. He is the Father's Spirit (1 Cor. 2:12). *εξαπεστειλεν* also indicates this (cf. v. 4). But the Spirit is also the Spirit of the Son (Rom. 8:9). This is especially emphasized here because Paul calls the Christians sons, thus raising them up to the proper status. They have not only been accepted as sons; the Spirit of the Son has set up His residence in their hearts. Could they conceive of anything greater, anything that could lift them up to a higher status? The Spirit is called the Spirit of the Son: (1) because the Son has acquired Him for us. He is, therefore, the one who prays the Father to send the Spirit to us (John 14:16) and sends Him to us (John 16:7) or has Him sent to us

in His name (John 14:26); (2) because the Spirit declares Christ, the Son, to our hearts; (3) because it is through the Spirit that Christ communicates Himself to us, lives and works in our hearts. This passage provides an important proof for the doctrine setting forth the procession of the Spirit from the Son, the Occidental *filioque*. This procession is not the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost, but that which occurs in the individual as a fruit of his adoption as son. The false teachers wanted the Galatians to believe that their status as Christians could not be perfected without circumcision and the law. To counteract this Paul exerted himself to strengthen them in the assurance that they were children of God. *εις τας καρδιας ημων*, "into our hearts." The heart is the center of our personality, the mental faculties in their undivided unity. To this goal God sent the Spirit. *Textus receptus* with a number of other manuscripts has the reading *υμων*, but Tischendorf has *ημων*. If this is the authentic reading, then we have here a striking change from the second to the first person. In declaring this great fortune which has come to the Christian, Paul must also include himself. He is himself one of those who has experienced this divine proof for the adoption of sons. He with them and they with him. *κραζον* (cf. Rom. 8:15), the verb *κραζειν* does not here refer to an audible cry, but a deep, a violent inner crying. The subject of *κραζειν* is here the Spirit as the activating instrument, while the son is the organ of the Spirit (cf. *υπερευθυγαχει* in Rom. 8:26). So completely it is that the Spirit is the One who activates prayer to God in our hearts. *Αββα ο πατηρ*, this expression appears also in Romans 8:15 and Mark 14:36, indicating devout prayer to God in both instances. This expression shows how the son cheerfully calls God, Father. *Αββα* is an Aramaic word, belonging to the prevailing language of the Palestinian Jews and has the same meaning as the Greek *ο πατηρ*. Some interpreters believe that Paul added the Greek word for the benefit of Greek readers who did not understand the Aramaic; others say that Paul has diligently used both words to show that the congregation consisted of two peoples, Jews and Gentiles. And though both Jews and Gentiles pray to God calling Him Father in two languages, they all send up the same cry since they all call Him "Father." Meyer maintains that "Abba" has, in prayer, received the character of a *nomen proprium* and can therefore have an additional title, *ο πατηρ*, alongside of it. Others take it as an intensification similar to "Amen. Amen." Luther finds it as an expression indicating the unity of spirit

existing between Jewish and Gentile believers, two people having the same Spirit.

Verse 7. This verse is connected to the previous verse by *ωστε*, presenting the apostle's conclusion to the preceding (cf. 3:9). By the second person singular Paul addresses all those who in verses 4 and 5 have been referred to with different pronouns. Here the Gentiles are also included, who were not involved in the part dealing with the bondage under the ceremonial law, but were taken along in verse 5. *ουκετι*, "no more," no longer as it was in time before Christ. But what is then meant by *δουλεια* which designates a status of Jews and Gentiles before they became Christians? In the case of the Jews, it referred to their bondage under the law. In the case of the Gentile, he was under bondage in another sense. Objectively the Gentile was under the wrath of God; subjectively he lay under Satan's power in his heathendom as verse 8 shows. In both instances they were in bondage under sin and fear of death. They had the spirit of bondage again to fear (Rom. 8:15). For all Christians this *δουλεια* is gone and in its place the adoption of sons has entered according to which they have all become heirs, God's heirs, joint heirs with Christ. It is not the servant who inherits, but the son. The full enjoyment of the inheritance lies in the future, belonging to the kingdom of glory. Paul concludes by saying that this inheritance relationship has been gained *δια Θεου*. He would thereby conclude that all is by grace without any power, work, or merit on our part. This is the contrast. In 3:29 Paul had stated that the promise was the determining factor. The thought here is basically the same. Promise, gospel, grace, work of God, are expressions which correspond with each other. Thus the description of Christians as *υιοι* and *κληρονομοι* is by the apostle traced back to God, and in this way it is connected to the chief thought of the epistle. The *Textus receptus* has the reading *δια Χριστου*, which some take to be more Pauline and therefore preferable. But it must be said that the emphasis of the epistle setting forth the *sola* in the work of God for our salvation is just as strong whether by the reading *δια Θεου* or *δια Χριστου*.

(To be continued)