

Journal of Theology

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Journal of Theology

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The *Journal of Theology* is the theological journal of the Church of the Lutheran Confession. The *Journal of Theology* is designed to deepen the understanding and sharpen the skills of those who teach the Word of God. The *Journal of Theology* also testifies to the confession of our church body and serves as a witness to Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, and His unchanging Word.

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From the Editor

Wayne C. Eichstadt

The January 1960 Interim Conference held in Mankato, MN recognized the need for the developing church body to have a theological magazine. The organizing convention of the Church of the Lutheran Confession convened in August 1960. When the organizing convention reconvened in January 1961 a theological journal was formally established and named by the fledgling church body. With thanksgiving to the Lord for His grace and for His faithfulness, this issue begins Volume 57 of the *Journal of Theology*.

This is also the year, as has been well-documented, that we celebrate the 500th Anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. Our prayer is that the *Journal's* content will always reflect and be consistent with a Reformation theme: "The true treasure of the Church is the Most Holy Gospel of the glory and the grace of God" (Martin Luther, *Ninety-Five Theses*, #62). We pray that the writings of 2017 will reflect the Reformation heritage as well as that of the past 56 volumes of the *Journal of Theology* and most importantly the sure foundation of God's holy Word.

One of the Reformation blessings is the catalog of writings passed down by Martin Luther and the other reformers—the historic Lutheran Confessions, including the *Small and Large Catechisms*, sermons, tracts, and more. Though on a different scale, past writings published in the *Journal of Theology* can also serve current studies in God's Word. With that in mind, we are pleased that the online archive of the *Journal of Theology* is growing. This archive includes a searchable index. A large portion of the *Journal's* archive is already online. In time, all of the past issues will be available and searchable.

A new feature on our website is the "Article Series" tab which links to compilations of particular articles that appeared serially in the *Journal of Theology*. Currently, there is only one entry, "The Deity of Christ" – a compilation of articles written by Professor Clifford Kuehne detailing Sharp's Rule and Colwell's Rule in New Testament Greek Grammar.

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May the Lord richly bless your time in His Word!

In the Footsteps of the Reformers

Johann Heermann

David J. Reim

How many times have you sung the last stanza of “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”? Undoubtedly, many of us have sung it hundreds of times,

And take they our life,
Goods, fame, child, and wife,
Let these all be gone,
They yet have nothing won;
The Kingdom ours remaineth.” (*The Lutheran Hymnal*, 262:4)

It is easy to sing the words boldly when those things in our lives are not being threatened. Of course, we can lose any or all of those things that are dear to us at any time, but this verse is talking about the enemies of the gospel taking them from us. Have your family and possessions been threatened by the enemies of the gospel?

So when we sing those words, they seem more hypothetical. If that were ever to happen, we would know that we still have God’s kingdom which is worth more than everything else combined. This possibility is so removed from our experience that it almost seems strange to sing about it. Some newer versions of this hymn have even changed the text to sound less harsh.

But Luther lived in a time and place where these treasured possessions were being threatened. In fact, this verse is a direct response to a specific threat from one of the papal representatives. He apparently threatened the reformers, “If you keep this up we are going to destroy you. We will take your life, your goods, fame, child, and wife.” Luther recognized that they very well might do that, but he responded, even if they do take all of that, they yet have nothing won, “The Kingdom ours remaineth.” Many of the reformers did have those treasures taken from them by the enemies of the gospel. Yet they still sang those words with confidence and trusted in the Lord who has given His eternal kingdom.

The Peace of Augsburg lasted for several years until almost exactly one hundred years after the Reformation began.¹ At that time (1618), Emperor Ferdinand II wanted to impose religious uniformity in his empire, forcing everyone back to Catholicism. When the people did not submit, Ferdinand came with his troops to force submission. Thus began thirty years of sorrow and suffering for the people of central Europe.

By all accounts, the Thirty Years' War was one of the longest, most destructive wars in European history and resulted in millions of civilian casualties. For the reformers, who continued to teach the gospel of salvation by grace alone through faith alone, it was especially difficult.

There are many accounts of soldiers entering homes and plundering at will. Or they would simply take up residence and expect the owners to provide for them. The Lutheran pastors were forced to flee, often with no more than the shirt on their back, when a city was conquered by the Catholic forces. The churches were turned over to the priests and mass was begun. One of the most devastating effects of the war was the pestilence. One witness reported watching daily funeral processions to the cemetery.

One of the fleeing pastors was Johann Heermann. He already had a difficult life as a child. He was born in Silesia (in modern day Poland)—the fifth and only surviving child of Johannes Heermann. As a child he became so sick that his mother vowed that if he would recover she would educate him for the ministry even if she had to beg for the necessary money.

Johann became a pastor in 1611 and had six peaceful years in Köben. He referred to this time as “the Sabbath of his life.” Then the war began. No part of Germany suffered more in the war than Silesia. It was a constant battlefield.

While Heermann was pastor in Köben, the town was plundered four times, and it was devastated by fire and pestilence. Whenever the district fell into the

¹ Following the Augsburg Confession, Charles V ordered Lutherans to reunite with the Catholic church by April 15, 1531. The reunification did not occur and this emboldened the protestants against Charles. Ongoing turmoil was the result. When the Diet of Augsburg convened in 1555, it was clear that the Peace of Passau (1552) would be made permanent. Charles chose not to be present and turned the diet over to his brother Ferdinand. He did not wish to take responsibility for making Lutheranism legal in the empire. On September 25, 1555, the Peace of Augsburg was signed. This gave every prince the authority to determine whether his state would be Lutheran or Catholic. Anabaptists and Calvinists were not included in the agreement.

hands of the Imperialists, Johann and other evangelical pastors were immediately barred from their churches, mass was celebrated, and the people were forced by great oppression to accept Jesuit priests. When Gustavus Adolphus and his Swedish army came, the Jesuits were dispossessed and the evangelical pastors restored, only to be banished again at the next reversal.

Johann Heermann lost his wife at the very beginning. He lost all of his possessions several times and was frequently in danger of his life. In the midst of these troubles, Johann found great comfort and consolation in the cross of Christ and published several volumes of original hymns. He composed four hundred hymns, most of which show great tenderness of feeling and an intense love for the Savior. Like Paul Gerhardt, who also lived and suffered much during this time, his hymns were joyful and trusting.

The Lutheran Hymnal contains these ten of Johann Heermann's hymns:

"O Dearest Jesus, What Law Hast Thou Broken" (143)

"Jesus, Grant that Balm and Healing" (144)

"Thine Honor Save, O Christ Our Lord (265)

"Zion Mourns in Fear and Anguish" (268)

"O Lord, Our Father, Shall We be Confounded" (269)

"If Thy Beloved Son, O God" (375:1-4)

"O God, Thou Faithful God" (395)

"How Can I Thank Thee, Lord" (417:6)

"O Christ, Our True and Only Light" (512)

"Feed Thy Children, God Most Holy" (659)

Here we see the real power and blessing of the gospel. The gospel not only has the power to bring us to faith and keep us in the faith, it also has the power to sustain us through the most difficult of times. The gospel of God's grace and forgiveness in Christ holds before our eyes the promise of a glorious future in God's eternal kingdom, where there will be nothing but perfect joy and peace; where we will be in the presence of God and see His full glory; where there will be no more tears or sorrow or dying. This is not just a dream, or something for which we wish, hoping that it might come true. No, this is a sure promise from the faithful God who never lies.

It was that promise of eternal bliss with God that gave Johann and many others like him the hope and courage to continue in the face of horrible

conditions, because they knew nothing could take their eternal life away from them. They knew that it was secured for them by Christ.

As Paul says,

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:31-39).

May we all keep that goal of eternal life, won for us by Christ's death and resurrection, ever before our eyes so that we may joyfully serve our Savior all our lives even when life's circumstances are difficult.



An Exegetical Notebook

Romans 10:4

Mark S. Tiefel

τέλος γὰρ νόμου Χριστὸς εἰς δικαιοσύνην παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι

*“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness
to everyone who believes.”*

Romans 10:4

Questions abound in the public ministry. Sometimes these questions involve inquiries into historical facts, geographical locations, or various doctrines and philosophies. Pastors bear an awesome responsibility to offer correct answers and to lead their flocks through God’s Word.

Few questions can be more important than those involving free salvation in Jesus Christ. As Lutherans, we’re used to hearing many things which target the pillars of “grace alone” and “faith alone.” Some people wonder if God will accept them, or how He will do so. Others, sometimes in a polemic tone, question where the Bible teaches that salvation is a product of God’s grace alone and that it is received only by Spirit-produced faith.

God’s Word in Romans 10:4 is useful because it is a single verse which answers these all-important questions. A key to those answers is contained in the very first Greek word (τέλος)—the completion or end of something. A Biblical synonym is the oft-mentioned word, “fulfillment.”

The Bible contains many prophecies about Jesus in the Old Testament which He fulfilled, or completed. Jesus also taught that God’s Word could not simply be abolished or destroyed (Matthew 5:17). Instead, it needed to be completed by the fulfillment of God’s promises. Jesus did that and τέλος testifies to this truth.

Once the thought of completion is introduced, the rest of the verse answers three questions regarding this completion.

What is complete?

The passage reads in English that *“Christ is the end...”* This might lead us to conclude that He is the one who has been completed. But, it’s actually the

law (νόμου) that has been completed. Fulfillment of the law is what God required. Fulfillment of the law was incomplete ever since sin first created a rift between man and God. It was the law that needed to be kept. When Christ is called the τέλος, it is an honorary title which indicates His relationship to the law as a source of salvation.

Why is it complete?

The next question adds even more information. The law, in and of itself, is not wrong. It's the purpose for which the law is used that can lead to problems. This verse indicates the purpose of Christ's τέλος in connection with the law by using the preposition εἰς. One lexicon tells us that εἰς indicates an "extension toward a special goal."¹ The special goal of Christ's completion was to uphold God's standard of holiness.

Therefore, Christ did not end the law in all uses. He ended, or completed it, as a means by which one would justify himself. Christ's mission started by being born "under the law" for the purpose of redeeming "those who were under the law" (Galatians 4:4-5).

What does it have to do with me?

Deep spiritual truths mean very little if we cannot apply them to our lives. The last part of Romans 10:4 tells us what these things mean for mankind. Those who believe (πιστεύοντι) in Jesus have this hope. We no longer have to rely on our efforts to keep the law in order to be declared righteous before God. Christ has put an end to that. Of course, this truth also shows why the many false beliefs which emphasize what a person must do to be saved are wrong.

This verse says much the same thing as passages written earlier in Romans, such as, "But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference (Romans 3:21-22)." Christ is the source of "righteousness apart from the law." He has put an end (τέλος) to the humanistic ritual of using the law as a means of justification by one's works.

¹ *Greek—English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*, Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, United Bible Societies, New York, accessed on *BibleWorks 9*.

It is as if God has put up a stop sign, telling all people to end the futile process of self-justification and instead turn around (conversion) from “*dead works to serve the living God*” (Hebrews 9:14b). How is this achieved? By faith in the cleansing blood of the unblemished Lamb of God (Hebrews 9:14a).

All people fall into one of two categories. Either they continue to use the law for the special goal (εἰς) of righteousness, or they believe in Christ, who has completed the former already. It is one or the other, never both, and never neither. Some feel the need to attack this beautiful teaching of God’s Word. Others may question it because of their insecurities or doubts. Romans 10:4 is a simple passage to help in either situation.



“Game Changers” of Jesus in John’s Gospel Account

Paul M. Tiefel

Experience tells us that when teaching a group of students—whether in a Sunday School setting, or in a Christian Day School, or at the high school level, or in a church—it is important to highlight a few key points. Chosen carefully, these key points will focus the student’s attention on the parts of the lesson that need to be remembered. We focus on these “take-home” points so that they are not lost in the overall bulk of material that is covered during a class period.

A professor at Immanuel Lutheran College uses the term “game changer” in his classroom, another gets the student’s attention with a long pause. In either case, the student is alerted that an important point is being made.

Jesus, the Master Teacher, practiced this tool of effective teaching. To catch the attention of His hearers, Jesus used the word *amen*. Matthew records thirty uses of the word, Mark records fourteen, and Luke records seven.¹ It is as if the Savior is saying “Here’s one very important point. Pay attention! Listen carefully!” These are attention-grabbing “game changers” in the teaching of our Savior.

In John’s gospel account—and only in his—use of this effective teaching tactic is marked by a double *amen*. The Holy Spirit has recorded twenty-five instances² of Jesus using a double “amen” in John’s account. This phrase is variously translated:

Verily, verily (King James Version, KJV)

Most assuredly (New King James Version, NKJV)

Truly, truly (English Standard Version, ESV)

¹The *Textus Receptus* includes five additional uses: At the close of each of the four gospel accounts and at the end of the Lord’s Prayer in Matthew (Matthew 6:13).

²The twenty-five instances in John are: 1:51, 3:3, 3:5, 3:11, 5:19, 5:24, 5:25, 6:26, 6:32, 6:47, 6:53, 8:34, 8:51, 8:58, 10:1, 10:7, 12:24, 13:16, 13:20, 13:21, 13:38, 14:12, 16:20, 16:23, 21:18.

I tell you the truth (New International Version, NIV – 1984)

Very truly I tell you (New International Version, NIV – 2011)

I tell you the truth (An American Translation, William F. Beck)³

Remember the structure of John's gospel account. He records the fewest miracles of all the gospel writers, only seven compared to Matthew's twenty, Mark's eighteen, and Luke's twenty-two.⁴

John's Spirit-led methodology was to record a miracle and then spend much more time on what happened after the miracle. In this way John showed the significance of the miracles and why they were "signs," as he regularly calls them. For example,

Healing the lame man (John 5): John uses nine verses to relate the event and thirty-eight verses following the miracle, including three uses of a double *amen*.

Feeding the five thousand (John 6): The miracle is reported in fourteen verses, but there are fifty-seven verses that speak of what followed, including four uses of a double *amen*.

Healing the blind man (John 9): Only seven verses convey the event, while thirty-four record the man's subsequent conversations with the Pharisees and with Jesus.

Raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11): John uses eleven verses to share the amazing demonstration of power over death, but forty-five verses before and after the miracle and another eleven verses in chapter 12 (John 12:9-19) to give additional information and instruction.

In the following study, the twenty-five "game changers" recorded by John are grouped into seven summary statements of biblical truth. These summary statements together with the notes that follow may provide a framework for a rich and rewarding parish Bible Study.

Another approach for this study is simply to list the twenty-five game-changing passages in John's account and ask the Bible student to highlight the

³ Martin Luther concluded each of his explanations to the articles of the Apostolic Creed with the declaration, "This is most certainly true!" That declaration is another appropriate translation.

⁴ There is variation in how the miracles are counted, but this is one approach and demonstrates the point at hand.

teaching(s) found in each passage and then group them in summary statements of God’s truth.

Teaching #1: The Deity of Christ

John 1:51—*And He said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”*

John 5:19—*Then Jesus answered and said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.”*

John 8:58—*Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.”*

These verses touch on the heart of the gospel. Who is Jesus? Clearly, He is true man, for He calls Himself “the Son of Man” with flesh and blood (John 6:53) and with a spirit that can be troubled (John 13:21). But, He is also true God. Jesus uses divine terminology in describing Himself, such as, “I AM” (John 8:58) and “Son of God” (John 5:25). He references God as His Father (John 5:19; 6:32; 14:12, 16:23). He references works done in coordination with the Father (John 1:51; 5:19; 13:20, 16:23). Jesus also has divine attributes, for example, omniscience (cf. Teaching #6). Who is Jesus? He is true God and true man. This is most certainly true!

Teaching #2: Everlasting Life

John 5:24—*[Jesus said], “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.”*

John 6:47—*[Jesus said], “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.”*

John 8:51—*[Jesus said], “Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death.”*

Note the phrases “believes in Him who sent Me” and “believes in Me,” coupled with “believes in Me” from John 14:12. These passages underscore the truth that saving faith can only be faith in the true God. Faith itself does not save. Rather, it is the *object* of that faith which saves—if the object is Jesus. Faith does not save if the object is anything or anyone else. Observe

the connection with “My word” (5:24, 8:51) and the passages in Teaching #4. The God-man was sent from Heaven by the Father on a mission to bring everlasting life. This is most certainly true!

Teaching #3: Jesus Is the Only Way to Heaven

John 6:32—*Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.”*

John 6:53—*Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.”*

John 10:7—*Then Jesus said to them again, “Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.”*

John 12:24—*[Jesus said], “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.”*

Can everlasting life be found in anyone other than Jesus? No! There is only one true bread from Heaven (6:32). In the context of chapter 6, Jesus reveals that providing physical bread for the body is a simple matter to solve, but for true life—eternal life—there is only one Bread, and there is only one Door to Heaven.

The words of John 6:53 require special attention. At first reading they might appear to be a reference to the Lord’s Supper. The false teaching that the Lord’s Supper is merely a spiritual reception of Christ’s body and blood instead of a physical reception with the bread and wine is built, in part, upon a misunderstanding of this passage. The context reveals that this passage cannot be a reference to the Sacrament. The eating and drinking of this verse is the equivalent of “believing.” Without Jesus there is no life!⁵

⁵ John 6:53 reveals that this “eating” and “drinking,” is required to have life, something that is not true of the Lord’s Supper. John 6:54 reveals that whoever does this eating and drinking, i.e. has faith in Jesus, has eternal life—something that is not necessarily true for all who receive the Lord’s Supper (cf. 1 Corinthians 11). There are no earthly elements referenced in John. Interestingly, Jesus uses “flesh and blood” in John 6 and “body and blood” in the references to the Lord’s Supper (cf. Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, 1 Corinthians 11). John 6 has references only to life, but not remission of sins. The Lord’s Supper accounts have references only to remission of sins, but not life. All of these help to distinguish John 6 from the three synoptic accounts of Jesus’ institution of the Lord’s Supper.

John 12:24 is a transitional verse. The first reference is to the death of Jesus—His death has produced a huge harvest of souls. By extension, it can be applied to the death of the Christian whose body is sown as a seed only to be raised with a dramatic makeover (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:35-44).

Only Jesus is the God-man. Only Jesus has been sent from Heaven. Only Jesus has the words of everlasting life. Jesus is the only way to Heaven. This is most certainly true!

Teaching #4: The Word and Sacrament of Baptism

John 3:3—*Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”*

John 3:5—*Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”*

John 5:25—[Jesus said], *“Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.”*

John 13:20—[Jesus said], *“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.”*

We have already noted the references to the Word (Teaching #2). It is significant that the Savior used two different verbs with the object, “My word”—*hears* (5:24) and *keeps* (8:51). Not hearing the Word of God at all or not keeping/treasuring it by letting it go in one ear and out the other short-circuits God’s intention to provide us with spiritual nourishment. As food is to the body, so the Word is to the soul. If the supply is cut, weakness and eventually death will be the result.

While speaking with Nicodemus, Jesus speaks of regeneration and the role of baptism (John 3). The power in Baptism is the Gospel.

The phrase, *“and now is”* (5:25) points to a current and active change from death to life through the Word of God. This is the first resurrection (Revelation 20:5-6), namely, the resurrection from spiritual death to spiritual life, from unbelief to faith, from dead in sin to alive in Christ.

In John 13:20, Jesus establishes the Office of the Keys and the gospel ministry when He speaks of those who will come in His name and with His message (cf. also 14:12).

Faith in Jesus comes through the Spirit's work and His use of the Gospel through Word and Sacrament. This is most certainly true!

Teaching #5: Discipleship

John 13:16—[Jesus said], "Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him."

John 14:12—[Jesus said], "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father."

John 16:23—[Jesus said], "And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you."

Certain truths simply are part of being a Christian, a follower of the Savior. The hearing and keeping of God's Word equip us for everlasting life and for a life of service right now. We are sent to share Jesus (John 13:16). As we serve our Savior, we will do greater works than Jesus (14:12)—greater in number. We will baptize more souls, commune more people, travel further, preach more sermons, and lead more Bible classes. We should expect opposition from the world and the devil just as they opposed our Master. Nevertheless, in the face of such opposition from these outside enemies and also from our own flesh, we have our Savior enabling us and providing the special privilege of prayer—an extremely powerful tool that accesses the almighty Father at any time and in any place (16:23). This is the sure truth of discipleship. This is most certainly true!

Teaching #6: Omniscience in Soul Care

John 13:21—When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me."

John 13:38—Jesus answered him, "Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times."

John 21:18—[Jesus said], "Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish."

John 16:20—[Jesus said], “*Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy.*”

The Bible speaks in several places about the omniscience of Jesus. For example, “*Lord, You know all things*” (John 21:17), and “*Now we are sure that You know all things*” (John 16:30).

There are also instances that demonstrate the omniscience of Jesus, such as the passages of this group. However, these passages are not mere instances of Jesus’ ability to know all things. Rather, His omniscience is tenderly combined with a Savior’s love for souls.

Two of these passages deal specifically with the soul care of Peter (13:38, 21:18). Jesus foresaw Peter’s denial and warned him in advance in order to bring him to repentance when the time came. He also knew of Peter’s eventual martyrdom and gave him comfort for use in that trial.

Another passage reveals Jesus’ soul care of Judas (13:21) and His deep desire to prevent him, if it were possible, from betraying Him. Jesus’ words in John 16:20 are spoken as comfort for the time that would soon come when Jesus’ arrest, suffering, and death would shatter the world of the disciples and the hopes they had dared to hold. But joy would follow soon thereafter when Jesus rose gloriously on Easter morning.

Likewise, the days of sorrow in my life must give way to joy because my Jesus lives! We have the confidence that this Jesus will continue to use His omniscience to provide loving soul care to us—His disciples of today. This is most certainly true!

Teaching #7: Beware of False Teaching

John 3:11—[Jesus said], “*Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness.*”

John 6:26—*Jesus answered them and said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.”*

John 8:34—*Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.”*

John 10:1—[Jesus said], *“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.”*

We have been given the truth to proclaim. This truth is revealed and emphasized throughout Scripture. God’s enemy, “the old evil Foe,” will not, however, rest and leave the truth without attack. As a result, we proclaim the truth, but at the same time also warn against the true and deep danger posed by our spiritual enemies. Armed with the truth, we stand watch for souls.

In the course of speaking to Nicodemus (3:11) Jesus recognizes that there will be those who reject the truth and encourages us not to follow in their wayward ways. In His sermon following the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus uses the miracle as a starting point to warn against a misplaced focus on daily bread at the expense of the true Bread from Heaven (6:26).

Jesus’ words in John 8:34 reveal the horrific bondage that one sin brings, then the following verses reveal Jesus as the source of freedom from this bondage—a freedom purchased by His blood. Finally, John 10:1 underscores the truth that Jesus is the only door to salvation (cf. Teaching #3). Any and all who suggest otherwise and proclaim an entrance into salvation by some other means are imposters and a danger to the sheep.

These passages were included by Jesus in His points of emphasis and use of a double *amen*. They are words of Jesus to which we should listen carefully and take heed. In an age of religious tolerance and apathy toward pointing out error or discussing false teachings, Jesus wants us to know the truth so that we will not be swayed by those who reject Jesus and His Word, nor turn aside from the Bread from Heaven for mere daily bread on earth, nor think of sin lightly, nor be lead astray by false christs. Such warnings are also most certainly true!

Conclusion

Clearly, other Bible teachings are addressed by these twenty-five “game changers.” In these verses, Jesus also touches on God’s truth concerning Heaven, angels, faith, the Bible, and the Kingdom of God. Additional summaries and groupings can be made from these texts, but in every case Jesus seizes our attention with His teaching tool and declares these truths to be undeniably and unalterably true!

If we consider each of these *amen, amen* statements, extract the main point of each, and summarize them, then an aggregate statement of truth would be,

Jesus, true God and true man, is the only way to everlasting life in Heaven. Faith in Jesus is connected to the Word of God. What contradicts the Word is to be avoided. Jesus uses His omniscience to care for souls.

What is the result of this exercise? A concise and beautiful summary of the very essence of Christian doctrine. In these “game changers,” Jesus emphasizes the very points that the child of God needs to know and which at the same time stir the hatred of the world,

Jesus is the *only* Savior for the sinner.

The Word connects us to Jesus and Jesus connects us to everlasting life.

Saving faith is not generic. It is specifically faith in Jesus.

Jesus is true God!

These closing paragraphs were written at the bedside of this writer’s dying mother. The efforts of several great doctors and a variety of tools available through modern medicine are losing the battle to death, and then what will be? Is there really a victory coming? My eyes and ears say, “No!” Is there really going to be a resurrection of that weak, frail, and aged body? Human logic says, “There is no way.” “Has God really promised eternal life in Heaven?” asks the devil with his familiar tactic of lying and sowing seeds of doubt.

In contrast are these twenty-five verses in which I am immersed while death approaches my dear mother. In these passages, Jesus does not simply tell us the truth as He promises always to do (John 14:2). He does not merely add one word to emphasize the certainty of these teachings. He adds two words, “*amen, amen!*” Verily, verily! Truly, truly!

What is it that Jesus emphasizes? Jesus, the Son of God and Son of Man, gives everlasting life to all who believe in Him. Death is swallowed in victory! (I Corinthians 15:54). It is not even close! Death loses in an overwhelming defeat.

These twenty-five passages proclaim the teaching of eternal life, and that is, most definitely a “game-changer.” This is not merely true, it is most certainly true! Jesus says so.

Objective and Subjective Justification as a Lutheran Hermeneutic

Timothy T. Daub

The Centrality of Justification as a Hermeneutic

Justification is the doctrine by which the Church stands and falls. The reformer Martin Luther rightly confessed justification as the central doctrine of Holy Scripture based on God's own self-revelation: "The proper subject of theology is man guilty of sin and condemned, and God the Justifier and Savior of man and sinner. Whatever is asked or discussed in theology outside the subject, is error and poison."¹

The words of the Holy Ghost through the apostle prove that justification is the apex of all teaching when he said he declared "*the whole counsel of God*" (Acts 20:27), but at the same time was "*determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified*" (1 Corinthians 2:2). These two expressions are harmonized in the confession of justification as the most important matter the Scriptures have to disclose.

By virtue of verbal inspiration, all doctrine is equally the Word of God, but by God's own testament of His desire for the salvation of man, all other doctrine is servant to the chief doctrine: the law is given *propter evangelium*, the attributes of Christ are the foundation of justification, the church is the congregation of the justified, etc. Every utterance of Scripture finds significance in justification and vice versa, "*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine*" (2 Timothy 3:16).

There is no greater shining light to the believer than the doctrine of justification: "*For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith'*" (Romans 1:17). It is interesting to note the example of how the material and formal principles were restored in

¹ Martin Luther, "Psalm 51," in *Luther's Works, Volume 12, Selected Psalms I*, ed. Pelikan, Oswald, and Lehmann (St. Louis, MO: CPH, 1955), 311.

the Lutheran Reformation as the Holy Spirit revealed pure doctrine to Luther through this verse first and then from there through the entirety of Scripture.²

Since the Bible declares itself to be “*a lamp to my feet*” and “*a light to my path*” (Psalm 119:105), the perspicuity of Scripture begs us to use the centrality of justification as a hermeneutical principle. Since “*no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God*” (1 Corinthians 2:11), the only way for that light to shine forth is for Scripture to be its own interpreter. Since the Word of God is so inerrantly woven together by the Lord’s divine wisdom in such a way that the “*the Scripture cannot be broken*” (John 10:35), the clear must be used to clarify the unclear and not the other way around. Thus, justification as the chief doctrine stands as a lighthouse to shed insight on everything else found in the Bible.

In this regard, one must certainly be on guard against gospel reductionism, which seeks to remove the gospel from its manger of Scripture—its only true source—in such a way that it reinterprets, or rather obfuscates, other clear statements of the Bible. Such false teachers create a false dichotomy as a distraction technique to invent their own doctrines. The proof of this is that the gospel reductionists, either from the very inception of their error or at least quickly thereafter, do not actually teach the Scriptural doctrine of justification.

Justification as the central teaching of Scripture is a hermeneutic in that when an interpretation of Scripture contradicts it, it is proof that the interpretation cannot be the actual intended sense of the passage and must somehow be twisted by man’s “wisdom” from God’s original context and intent.

The Greek term δίκαιόω is used thirty-eight times in the New Testament. It is a judicial term which means, “to declare righteous.” In its *usus loquendi*,

²The “formal principle” is the authoritative source of a theology (*sola Scriptura*). The “material principle” is the central doctrine of the specific theology (forensic justification). “The Christocentricity of Scripture unites the formal (*sola Scriptura*) principle of theology with the material principle (justification through faith in Christ) in such a way that neither stands alone, but each complements the other perfectly. The sacred Scriptures, which are the norm of doctrine, are the Scriptures that declare Christ throughout” (Robert Preuss, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism* Volume 1, p. 331, Concordia Publishing House, 1970). See also, Franz Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Volume 1, pp. 23-28, Concordia Publishing House, 1950.

if a man were accused of a crime, he could be considered innocent and treated as such only if the judge were to declare him righteous. “Justification” and its imagery of courtroom justice is the etymological paragon³ of the gospel: *“He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him”* (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Many other Greek words in the New Testament and Hebrew words in the Old Testament are likewise used to express this salvific work of the gospel, some as direct equivalent (קִדְּוָה) and others as doctrinal synonyms (ἀφίημι, χαρίζομαι), but it may be argued that none of them do so with the same vivid clarity as justification. The only proper understanding of each of these other terms is in the sense of a declared righteousness from God.

This claim proceeds from confessing the centrality of the doctrine of justification and the perspicuity of Scripture. If justification is the chief doctrine, it must also be the chief image of salvation that God desires to impress upon man in his meditation on the Word. All imagery of the gospel employed in Holy Scripture must be understood in light of the chief image, justification.

For instance, the imagery of ἀφίημι, “to send away,” could be distorted in connection with all sorts of false ideas of man’s salvation, such as God simply abandoning His wrath, but when the imagery is interpreted in the light of justification one sees that sin is only truly “sent away” by the declaration of righteousness, the true Scriptural justification of the sinner before God. Likewise, the imagery of χαρίζομαι, “to extend favor,” can only properly be understood as the favor that comes from the declaration of righteousness.

The Terminology of Justification as a Hermeneutic

No more ferocious language against false doctrine can be found in the Scriptures than against false teaching that attacks the gospel: *“[L]et him be accursed!”* (Galatians 1:9). Satan wants to pervert this most precious jewel like no other. This is not to say that false doctrine concerning other truths of

³A word's etymology often has imagery tied to it. Sometimes it applies to the meaning of the word; sometimes it is a historical remnant. Some of those images are mentioned later in the article. The clearest image by far is δικαιόω, “to declare innocent” as in a courtroom. This image informs all other imagery of salvation and forgiveness in the Bible. So, it's the chief image for salvation, the most beautiful etymology.

Scripture is to be dismissed or regarded as any less dangerous. All false doctrine is to be taken with the same gravity on two counts. First, anything that attacks the Word of God is a serious offense by virtue of disobedience to an utterance from the very same God who gives the gospel, *“The words of the LORD are pure words”* (Psalm 12:6).

It is also to be taken seriously on account of Satan’s intent to use any false doctrine as leaven hell-bent on traveling straight to the heart of justification. The apostle’s reiteration that *“a little leaven leavens the whole lump”* (Galatians 5:9, 1 Corinthians 5:6) brings attention to this heat-seeking nature of all false doctrine because the whole cannot be penetrated without compromising the central doctrine.

Thus, when faced with error, the Lutheran church has always had to defend justification by using terminology that says what Scripture has to say about it. “Justification by faith” had to be spelled out in such words on account of those who taught that it could be achieved by works. “Forensic justification” had to be confessed against those who falsely taught that justification is a medicinal act whereby man is infused with a righteousness that guarantees salvation over time and with cooperation. We teach both “objective and subjective justification” against various errors that have arisen in the history of the Lutheran church and in light of how God Himself uses the word in Scripture.

There is only one justification in Christ both for the world and for the individual believer, *“But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”* (Romans 3:21-24). There are not two justifications. There is only one justification in the saving work of Christ, *“one Lord, one faith, one baptism”* (Ephesians 4:5). When we speak of objective and subjective justification, they are not separate intended senses as in the wide and narrow or improper and proper senses which some lexical entries exhibit (e.g. νόμος). There is only one intent in the justification of man. The

Scriptural usage of the one word reveals in one breath that justification has both objective and subjective aspects: “to all and on all who believe.” And the same “all” who “have sinned” are those who are “justified freely.”⁴

We must confess both the objective and subjective aspects of the one justification because to deny either leads to error. Those who hold to the false doctrine of universal salvation so popular among liberal Lutherans, deny the necessity of a subjective justification of man and thus hermeneutically see every use of justification as purely objective. This is not a true justification according to Scripture. Likewise, those Lutherans who hold to the *intuitu fidei* error deny an objective justification of mankind and thus hermeneutically see every use of justification as purely subjective. This too is a false justification according to Scripture.

Justification as the chief image of salvation must carry its terminology with it—everything Scripture has to say about it. All of the words and imagery Scripture employs for salvation are thus both objective and subjective.

Hermeneutical Misunderstanding: Two Cases in Point

Justification as the chief doctrine is a key Lutheran hermeneutic. To deny that objective and subjective justification informs all other imagery of salvation in the Scriptures leads to error: “Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him” (Hebrews 10:38). Let us examine two cases that prove this point.

False Claim 1: There are mutually exclusive types of words for what we call objective and subjective justification.

The denial of objective justification is intimately tied to a hermeneutical misunderstanding of justification. The inheritors of the *intuitu fidei* error, most popularly known in English in the works of R.C.H. Lenski, separate justification from other language and imagery of the gospel in Scripture in order to justify their false doctrine. The public teaching and writing of Walter A. Maier II, professor at Concordia Theological Seminary, clearly show the core of this hermeneutical error. He justifies a denial of objective justification by positing that the word *justification* is never used for a universal act of God but only a personal one.

⁴ In this phrase, the NU Text omits “and on all.” **Majority Text:** εἰς πάντας καὶ ἐπὶ πάντας, **NU Text:** εἰς πάντας

In the 1983 public defense of his false teaching, “A Summary Exposition of the Doctrine of Justification by Grace through Faith,”⁵ Maier claims that there are two categories of words found in Scripture, those that depict “the work Christ accomplished for all persons in all ages of human history, objectively” and those that describe it being applied to “individuals among mankind [who] come to know, believe, and benefit from it in terms of personally obtained salvation.” He makes these distinctions based on etymological categories, arguing that the imagery of a word is either inherently objective or subjective. For instance, he claims that the “λύτρον family” of words (ransom) is inherently objective, while the “δικαίω family” of words (justification) is inherently subjective.

He separates all of God’s language for salvation into two categories,

Objective	Subjective
The meritorious work of Christ	An individual’s forgiveness of sins
ἀπολύτρωσις (ransom)	δικαίωσις (justification)
ἐξαγοράζω (redeem)	ἀφίημι (forgiveness)
. . . and so on	. . . and so on

Thus, Romans 4:25 is reinterpreted outside of its plain reading to say rather that Jesus “was delivered up because of our offenses” (objective) but “raised because of our justification” (subjective), based on false blinders of preconceived notions of what different imagery in different words really means.

Paul’s inspired words in Romans 4:25 should be enough to refute this false dichotomy, but Isaiah 1 and Isaiah 2 make a vividly clear repudiation of the claim that one word cannot have both objective and subjective uses.

The Hebrew verb root כָּנָה is often translated “reason,” or “to come to a verdict/decision.” In Isaiah 1, the audience is the visible church of the nation of Israel of which the believers were only “a very small remnant” (Isaiah 1:9), but the verdict that God proclaims on account of all their sin is an objective

⁵ <http://www.wlsessays.net/bitstream/handle/123456789/3210/MaierJustification.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

declaration of righteousness: *“Come now, and let us reason (וְנִבְכַּחְדָּה) together,’ says the LORD, ‘Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool’”* (Isaiah 1:18).

In Isaiah 2, on the other hand, the audience is clearly that of the invisible church, since they say by faith, *“Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord”* (Isaiah 2:3). The same righteousness is declared to these believers using the same נִבְכַּח: *“And make decisions (וְהוֹרֵינִיח) for many people”* (Isaiah 2:4 AAT). The same word proclaims both objective and subjective justification.

There are no “objective justification” words, and there are no “subjective justification” words. There is just justification and that one justification can be applied to either an objective or subjective context.

How God uses the word is how God uses the word, and this trumps etymology in every case when it does not agree with the Holy Scriptures. To read into a text and make false categories based on etymology is eisegesis. Justification, objective and subjective in the same breath, as the chief doctrine and image of the gospel clarifies the matter conclusively.

False Claim 2: Justification as the chief image obfuscates other imagery God wishes to use.

There is a movement among unionistic confessional Lutherans,⁶ to find more novel imagery than justification to teach the gospel. The writing of John Kleinig, professor at Australia Lutheran College of the Lutheran Church of Australia, is popular in these circles and claims that an overemphasis on justification prevents Lutherans from seeing other images of salvation that God tries to use:

This judicial metaphor sets the basic framework for classical Lutheran theology. All aspects of the faith are related to it and seen in its light. Since this is so, Lutherans can at times fail to do full justice to other modes of expression in the Scriptures. The language of holiness, so central to Roman Catholic and Orthodox theology, is an example of this. Classical Lutheran theology tends to limit its teaching on sanctification to the life of moral renewal and good works that

⁶ Oxymoron intended

follows from justification, even though Lutheran worship and pastoral practice hint at a broader conception than this. By this limitation, the Lutheran dogmatic tradition can all too easily dissociate holiness from its proper liturgical context and give it a social setting that obscures some of its distinctive features.”⁷

In seemingly pious words, he finds fault with the Lutheran emphasis on forensic justification, saying there is something missing from the doctrine by which the Church stands and falls. He creates a false dichotomy between the image of justification and other language God employs in Scripture to express the same gospel. It is revealing how he posits that Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox theologians seem more apt to grasp these supposedly neglected insights on salvation by not teaching forensic justification.

When Kleinig disconnects holiness imagery from justification, he makes the unclear image of holiness master over the clear image of justification rather than servant to it, and this opens the door to error. For instance, he has a consistent theme of using language like holiness being “communicated by the Word of God” and even “communicated by His presence,” rather than the clear language of righteousness declared. The devil delights when justification is obfuscated into such vagueness. The preaching in such circles, unsurprisingly, lets the natural religion of man creep into justification, focusing on a devotion to the Sacraments as good news and abstractions like Christ’s presence being life. Such deviations from forensic justification are “another gospel.”

The dangers of denying objective and subjective justification as a hermeneutic are clear. Implementing it frees the Christian to see how God proclaims the gospel in His own words.

All Words for Justification Are Both Objective and Subjective

All of the imagery of salvation has both an objective and subjective aspect. It is one justification objectively to the world and also subjectively to the believer: *“For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe”* (1 Timothy 4:10).

⁷ http://www.ohnkleinig.com/files/6113/3299/3619/Luther_On_Holiness.pdf

Over time, common usage has made some of these words seem to be more subjective, but none of the words of justification are exclusively subjective. This tendency to assume a word is just for the individual believer in the moment probably comes from the natural affinity the believer has for the gospel personally applied to him as a natural fruit of faith. But every personal application of salvation is inherently objective by virtue of it being a benefit of Christ's atonement for the sins of the world, and every objective proclamation of this gospel is inherently for the individual.

Compare the subjective *"Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin"* (Romans 4:8) to the objective *"God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them"* (2 Corinthians 5:19). Likewise, the subjective *"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors"* (Matthew 6:12) to the objective *"Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins"* (Acts 13:38). There is objective and subjective imputation. There is objective and subjective forgiveness.

Objective and subjective justification as a hermeneutic gives confidence to accept how God uses His own words.

Practical Application to the Sacraments

There is no doubt that reception of the Sacraments is a subjective context as Luther points out in his Small Catechism, "for the words 'for you' require *altogether believing hearts*."⁸ But these words cannot be disjointed from the scriptural use of the word justification as both objective and subjective because by virtue of the Word, the Sacraments are but the same gavel of the Judge.

It is not that Jesus on the cross is objective justification and baptism is subjective justification. The same root for Savior, σωτήρ, *"He who saves"* (1 Timothy 4:10), is used for the Sacrament, σῶζει *"now baptism saves"* (1 Peter 3:21).

To be sure, there is an urgency to receive the Sacrament of Baptism on account of the command and promise of God, but if someone is going through an instruction class, it is not as if all is lost if he dies before receiving

⁸ The Sacrament of the Altar, The Small Catechism, *Concordia Triglotta*, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO, 1921, p. 557.

Baptism. Even King David still had hope in the objective justification of the sinner leading to eternal life when he lost his son before the eighth day: *“I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me”* (2 Samuel 12:23).

Likewise, it would be wrong to think of the Sacrament of the Altar as if one did not have forgiveness from God until the moment of receiving it. The Lutheran church has rejected this false overemphasis on the subjective aspect of justification in the sacraments by confessing that through them we receive the assurance of forgiveness. This is said by virtue of objective justification, which guarantees that the justification of the sinner is complete before and apart from the moment of reception, *“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus”* (Romans 8:1) and again *“Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies”* (Romans 8:33).

At the same time, however, it would be wrong to overemphasize the assurance of forgiveness to deny that forgiveness is actually given and received in the Sacrament because it is *“for the remission (ἄφεσιν) of sins”* (Matthew 26:28). Luther adds, *“namely, that in the Sacrament forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us through these words.”*⁹ The assurance of forgiveness comes from the fact that forgiveness is given. The assurance comes from the Word of the Sacrament. The Word declares the one justification of the world to the sinner in the moment.

An analogy may be made to a legal document absolving you of a crime. You were previously declared innocent. The document is clearly on file somewhere. You received a copy sometime in the past. However, a false accusation right now prevents you from getting a job. So, you go to the court to receive an official copy of the document proving your exoneration from the crime, declaring you righteous. You were already proven innocent, but the document in hand makes the doubters cease doubting.

In the same way, receiving forgiveness in the Sacrament gives assurance of forgiveness in that it makes the doubting soul cease its doubting.

The question, *“Does the Sacrament give the actual forgiveness of sins or does it give the assurance of the forgiveness of sins?”* is based on a false premise. It is similar to asking if a word for justification is the word for

⁹ *Concordia Triglotta*, p. 557.

subjective justification or the word for objective justification. There is only one justification.

In the Sacrament, God declares you righteous to give assurance that you are righteous before Him. You receive the forgiveness of sins for the assurance of the forgiveness of sins.

Conclusion

Scripture teaches the doctrine of objective and subjective justification. It is how God speaks to man. Find both objective and subjective justification wherever the gospel is found, and preach it in your pulpits because you yourself have been *“reconciled [to God] Himself through Jesus Christ, and [have been given] the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to [you] the word of reconciliation”* (2 Corinthians 5:18-19).



Imputation of Righteousness

John V. Klatt

It often happens in the sleepless hours of the night. All is dark and quiet, and there is nothing to distract us from our thoughts. It is then especially that our conscience attacks us with an onslaught of accusations: You have been inconsiderate to your spouse and inattentive to your children; you have been a poor steward of what the Lord has entrusted to you; you have been lazy and selfish; you have allowed your mind to be a home for evil thoughts; you have been a poor witness for Christ to your neighbors.

Thoughts such as these can take us to the brink of despair. We may think, “How can I claim to be a disciple of Christ, a child of God, and an heir of eternal life when my life shows so little evidence of it?” We take no comfort from whatever good works we could point to in our life for we know that they do not merit anything from God. We imagine ourselves standing before God for judgment and wonder how God could do anything but condemn us.

But it is then that we remember the gospel. “Yes, I am a sinner,” we confess, “I can’t pretend to be otherwise. But I have a Savior who shed His blood for me on the cross and took away my sins. I am forgiven. God Himself assures me of these things in His Word.”

But our comfort is not only in the assurance that our sins have been taken away, it is also in the knowledge that the perfect righteousness of Christ has been imputed to us. It is this most comforting gospel truth which, together with the forgiveness of sins, takes away our fear of death and divine judgment. So that we may think of it and be comforted by the imputation of righteousness at all times, it is most helpful that we review this truth as it is clearly taught in the Bible.

When we speak of the righteousness of Christ that is imputed to us by faith, we are not talking about His righteousness as the eternal Son of God. As God’s eternal Son, Christ was righteous, possessing all the divine attributes from eternity together with the Father and the Holy Spirit. This was the glory of which Jesus spoke in His great prayer on the night of His betrayal—the glory that He had had with the Father “*before the world was*” (John 17:5).

Rather, here we are talking about the righteousness of the incarnate Christ who was perfectly righteous also in His *human* nature. It was necessary that

our Savior be true man so that He could take our place and give to God the perfect obedience to His holy law that He requires of us—the perfect obedience which we cannot give to Him because of our sinful nature. For this purpose the Christ was *“born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law”* (Galatians 4:4-5).

That there should be born into this world an inherently righteous man who could render to God perfect obedience to God’s holy law on behalf of the fallen human race was seemingly impossible, for the guilt and corruption brought upon the human race by the fall of Adam was universal. David, speaking by the Holy Spirit, gives this as God’s own judgment concerning the human race: *“They have all turned aside, / They have together become corrupt; / There is none who does good, / No, not one”* (Psalm 14:3). Yet, out of the dry and barren ground of this fallen world, God brought forth as a tender plant (Isaiah 53:2) a man with a sinless human nature.

The sinless, righteous character of the Christ is proclaimed even before His birth. When the angel Gabriel tells the virgin Mary about the Son that she would conceive and bear and give the human name *Jesus*, he calls Him *“that Holy One who is to be born”* (Luke 1:35). The angel explains to Mary that she would give birth to such a unique Son without knowing a man because the Holy Spirit would come upon her and the power of the highest would overshadow her.

The apostles testify to the righteousness of Jesus Christ both in what they record of His life and in what they say about His character. The portrait of Jesus that is drawn by all four of the gospels is that of a perfectly righteous, sinless human being. We see it in the one recorded incident from Jesus’ childhood in which He both showed the holy desire to be about His Father’s business and yet, in obedience to the Fourth Commandment, went back to Nazareth with Mary and Joseph and *“was subject to them”* (Luke 2:51).

We see Jesus’ righteousness in His steadfast trust and reliance on the Father as shown in His rejection of the devil’s suggestion that He satisfy His hunger with bread made from stones (Matthew 4:3-4). We see it in His completely unselfish and loving behavior toward other people—He was always serving, teaching, helping. When He showed anger, as He did when He drove the money-changers from the temple, it was righteous anger, born of zeal for God (John 2:17).

The apostles who were witnesses of Jesus' holy life testify to it as such. Peter writes that Jesus is the Christ "[Who] committed no sin, / Nor was deceit found in His mouth" (1 Peter 2:22). In his preaching, Peter describes Jesus as "the Holy One and the Just" (Acts 3:14). John says of Jesus, "in Him there is no sin" (1 John 3:5). The writer to the Hebrews says that in Jesus we have a High Priest who is human like we and can sympathize with our weaknesses, but who endured all His temptations without sin (Hebrews 4:15).

Most importantly, God the Father testifies to the righteousness of Jesus. At His baptism and again at His transfiguration, the Father's voice was heard from heaven saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17; 17:5). Jesus was also confident of the Father's approval and spoke of His unbroken unity and fellowship with the Father. He could say, "I and My Father are one" (John 10:30), and "I am in the Father, and the Father in Me" (John 14:10).

Even Pontius Pilate serves as a witness to Jesus' righteousness with his proclamation, "I find no fault in Him at all" (John 18:38).

All of this gives us full confidence concerning Jesus' offering of Himself as the sacrifice to atone for our sins. We know that His sacrifice was completely acceptable to God. It was the offering of the Lamb without blemish and without spot whose blood cleanses us from all sin. God assures us of this most wonderfully by telling us that Christ's perfect righteousness is actually given to us so that we have it as our own personal possession. To express this amazing gift the Scriptures use words commonly translated *impute*, *credit*, *count*, *account*, *regard*, *reckon*.

The passage that expresses this truth most fully is 2 Corinthians 5:17-21. There Paul describes the one who believes in Christ as a "new creation." Then he shows the source of the newness that characterizes the believer. It is the reconciliation that God accomplished in Christ.

Paul teaches us that this reconciliation is objective. It is something that God accomplished completely on His own. "[A]ll things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ" (2 Corinthians 5:18). It is universal, encompassing the whole world of sinners. Paul speaks of it in terms of God "not imputing their trespasses to them." What this means is explained ably and scripturally by Francis Pieper:

Scripture teaches the *objective reconciliation*. Nineteen hundred years ago Christ effected the reconciliation of all men with God. God does not wait for men to reconcile Him with themselves by means of any efforts of their own. He is already reconciled. The reconciliation is an accomplished fact, just like the creation of the world. Romans 5:10: "We were reconciled to God by the death of His Son." When Christ died, God became reconciled. As Christ's death lies in the past, so also our reconciliation is an accomplished fact. 2 Corinthians 5:19: "God was in Christ, reconciling" (namely, when Christ lived and died on earth) the world unto Himself," The *καταλλάσσειν* of Romans 5:10 and 2 Corinthians 5:19 does not refer—let this fact be noted—to any change that occurs in men, but describes an occurrence in the heart of God. It was God who laid His anger by on account of the ransom brought by Christ. It was God who at that time already had in His heart forgiven the sins of the whole world, for the statement: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself" means—and that is not our, but the Apostle's own interpretation—that God did "not impute their trespasses unto them." And "not imputing trespasses" is, according to Scripture (Romans 4:6-8), synonymous with "forgiving sins," "justifying" the sinner.¹

God is perfectly reconciled to all men and with every individual among them. No man need henceforth do or suffer anything to reconcile God to obtain righteousness and salvation. . . . Nineteen hundred years ago God reconciled the world unto Himself. We know what it means to be reconciled to someone. A person is reconciled to someone when he has dismissed from his heart all wrath against him. Now, just so God has for Christ's sake dismissed from His heart all wrath against men, with whom He was angry because of their sins. . . . Hence, according to Scripture, the reconciliation between God and men, their justification, took place before they came to faith.²

¹ Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Volume II, Concordia Publishing House, 1953, pp. 347-348.

² *Proceedings* of the Southern District (Missouri Synod), 1883, quoted in *Christian Dogmatics*, Volume II, p. 348, footnote.

The reconciliation between God and man also has a subjective or personal side. Individual sinners are reconciled to God when they hear the gospel and believe it. Paul calls the gospel the “word of reconciliation”—God’s announcement that He is reconciled to the world of sinners. This word God has given to His church for the “ministry of reconciliation”—a ministry accomplished through preachers of the gospel in which God pleads with sinners to be reconciled to Him.

Here also the objective character of the reconciliation is taught, for the gospel is the “word of reconciliation,” that is, a message of reconciliation offered to sinners as an accomplished fact. God pleads with them to believe and accept this message of reconciliation as applying to them individually and personally.

The gospel is the proclamation of an accomplished reconciliation. It is not a potential reconciliation that the sinner has some part in bringing to its completion. We see the same thought expressed by Paul in Acts 20:32, where he calls the gospel “*the word of [God’s] grace.*”

Just as Paul teaches the reconciliation as an objective fact that is received by faith, so he also teaches the imputation to the sinner of Christ’s righteousness. He states it first in the negative by saying that the reconciliation consists of God’s “not imputing” sinners’ trespasses to them. The Greek word λογίζομαι that is translated *impute* means to count or reckon, to put something down to a person’s account. Because of Christ’s sacrifice on behalf of the world of sinners God does not count their sins against them, does not put them down to their account. Paul does not say that God chose to overlook their sins. They were put down to Christ’s account when He suffered the passion and death of the cross, when “*He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us*” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

This (reconciliation) God effects, not by overlooking the trespasses of men, for His mercy cannot be vindicated by injustice, but by *not reckoning* their trespasses to them. There is a reckoning of sins; they are reckoned, however, not to the sinner but to Christ, the sinner’s substitute. In the truest sense, for the man in Christ old things have passed away; his sin and its judgment have been borne by Jesus the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).³

³ Philip E. Hughes, *Paul’s Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1962, p. 209.

Our sins were imputed to Christ when He was “*numbered (λογίζομαι) with the transgressors*” (Mark 15:28), when “*the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all*” (Isaiah 53:6).

But God does yet more than assure us that He for the sake of Christ does not impute our sins to us. He tells us that in place of our sins He imputes to us the very righteousness of Christ. “*For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him*” (2 Corinthians 5:21). This is taught in other places in Scripture including Old Testament prophecy, in which Christ is called by the name “*THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS*” (Jeremiah 23:6). We find it also in these verses: “*By the obedience of one many shall be made righteous*” (Romans 5:19). “*[Christ Jesus] became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—that, as it is written, ‘He who glories, let him glory in the LORD’*” (1 Corinthians 1:30, 31).

As the reconciliation is ours by faith so also the righteousness of Christ is ours by faith. This is revealed already in Genesis 15:6 where God tells us that Abraham’s faith was accounted as righteousness. The importance of this passage is shown by the fact that it is quoted three times in the New Testament (Romans 4:22, Galatians 3:6, James 2:23).

Paul teaches in Romans 3:21-22, “*But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.*” And again in Philippians 3:9 where Paul says that it is his desire “*to be found in [Christ], not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith.*”

The following quotation is a good summary of the precious gospel truth of the imputation of Christ’s righteousness:

The chief benefit of Christ’s vicarious obedience is the perfect righteousness obtained by Christ for all mankind, the acquisition of which God accepted as a reconciliation of the world to Himself, imputing to mankind the merit of the mediator—general or objective justification; and inasmuch as faith is the actual acceptance of this imputation announced in the gospel, or of the righteousness imputed and offered in the gospel, it is justifying faith, and God in His

judgment graciously and for Christ's sake holds and pronounces the believer actually and by personal application fully absolved from all guilt and punishment while in the state of faith—individual or subjective justification.⁴

Martin Chemnitz treats the subject of imputed righteousness extensively in his *Loci Theologici*. In the chapter titled, "The Word 'Imputation'" (pp. 528-531), he defends the biblical doctrine against Roman Catholic theology. All that now follows is a summary of that chapter.

Paul attributes the imputation to grace rather than works in Romans 4:4-5. He takes it away from works and puts it in opposition to a debt. Chemnitz speaks of imputed righteousness as opposed to inherent righteousness. He argues against the Roman Catholic understanding of imputed righteousness as "[f]aith formed by love and other virtues is imputed for righteousness; that is, God accepts the works, which in themselves are not worthy, as being worthy in believers for the sake of Christ." He says that the Jesuits taught something somewhat different: that "God considers the faith found in man to be worthy, and to this faith is given and conferred the inherent righteousness through which we are saved."

The question is this: is the righteousness that believers have before God imputed righteousness or in some way inherent righteousness? To answer this question we look at what Paul means when he uses the word *imputation*. He explains this in Romans 4:4-5, "[T]o him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness." Paul speaks of two kinds of imputation, the one has its basis in one who works. It takes place in terms of debt not grace. The other kind has its basis in the grace and mercy of God who justifies the ungodly.

This is taught in 2 Corinthians 5:19. The grace of God, for the sake of Christ, "does not impute against us the sins inhering in us, and imputes to us (as though it actually did inhere in man) the perfect righteousness which does not inhere in us and which is worthy of eternal life."

Chemnitz makes the point that when Abraham was justified by faith, and righteousness was imputed to him by faith, he did have a kind of inherent

⁴ A.L. Graebner, *Outlines of Doctrinal Theology*, Concordia Publishing House, page 218.

righteousness—through the renewal of the Spirit, he had been adorned with many outstanding virtues and works. But this was not the basis on which Abraham was righteous before God. Abraham’s inherent righteousness was not perfect, for sin still dwelt in the flesh of Abraham. If God would enter into judgment with him, he would be condemned.

Chemnitz examines two words in the Bible that are translated *impute*: the Hebrew כִּשְׁפָה and the Greek λογίζομαι. There are examples in the Bible where these words establish that the basis for imputing is not in the one to whom something is imputed—whether for good or for evil—but in the relationship, that is, the thinking, the judgment, and the will of the one who imputes.

Genesis 31:15 — The daughters of Laban say that they were **accounted** as strangers by their father because of his conduct toward them.

Numbers 18:26-27 — The Levites who did not have a threshing floor from which to offer firstfruits could offer a heave offering which would then be **accounted** or **reckoned** as an offering of grain from the threshing floor.

Leviticus 17:4 — “[T]he guilt of bloodshed shall be **imputed**” to one who has broken the law.

Psalms 144:3— “LORD, what is man, that You take knowledge of him? / Or the son of man, that You are **mindful** (take account) of him?”

Mark 15:28 — “He was **reckoned**⁵ with transgressors.”

Romans 2:26 — “Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be **counted** as circumcision?”

Romans 9:6-8 — “For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, ‘In Isaac your seed shall be called.’ That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are **counted** as the seed.”

⁵ “Reckoned” is the Chemnitz translation of λογίζομαι. The New King James Version reads “He was numbered with the transgressors.”

Therefore, in order that the promise of imputed righteousness may be sure, its “basis” is not located in the qualities inherent in us but in the judgment and thoughts of God, which are infallibly true.

If a human judge accounts the guilty as righteous without a basis it is an abomination to God as in Proverbs 17:15 and other places. “Some people will reply that God is a completely free agent and that He can justify whom He wills and in any way He wills. But God has revealed His will in the Law and this cannot be annulled (Matthew 5:18).” God does not impute righteousness to us sinners without a basis. The basis is not in believers but in Christ who made satisfaction by keeping the law and by offering Himself as sacrifice for sin: He was made righteousness for us by God (1 Corinthians 1:30). “[S]o also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous” (2 Corinthians 5:21), “By the obedience of one many are accounted as righteous” (Romans 5:19) and “[I]n the LORD are righteousness and strength” (Isaiah 45:24).

To this the Jesuits objected saying that it would be as if “Crassus would be greeted as a rich man when he was loaded down with someone else’s copper,” because imputed righteousness does not have a basis inherent in us. But imputed righteousness has a solid foundation in Christ who was “born under the law” (Galatians 4:4). His perfect satisfaction for us is the firm, solid, and immovable basis for the imputation. It is not “an inane fantasy,” as some say, but the thinking and judgment of God.

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Book Reviews

David T. Lau

Timothy Schmeling, Editor: *Lives and Writings of the Great Fathers of the Lutheran Church*, Concordia Publishing House, 2016, paperback, 320 pages.

The “great fathers” presented in these pages are not Martin Luther, Philip Melancthon, John Brenz, Martin Chemnitz, and Nicholas Selnecker, and others who labored mostly in the sixteenth century, but rather twenty-one theologians, hymnists, and devotional writers of the seventeenth century, the so-called age of orthodoxy. The interesting and informative chapters of this book were written mostly by members of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), although the editor is a professor at Bethany Lutheran Seminary in Mankato, affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS).

Among the dogmaticians included are Aegidius Hunnius, Leonhard Hutter, Jesper Brochmand, Johann Gerhard, Balthasar Meisner, Johann Dannhauer, Abraham Calov, and Johann Quenstedt—all of them considered stalwart confessional Lutherans, although not always absolutely trustworthy in every aspect of doctrine. For example, Gerhard used questionable terminology in his explanation of predestination (*intuitu fidei*) and his explanation of the Third Commandment is definitely different from that found in Luther's *Large Catechism*. These dogmaticians were also polemicists, known for using their gifts in biblically based attacks on the false teachings of the Roman Catholics, Calvinists, and Socinians (Unitarians).

Some of the fathers included in this book are known to us today as the writers of familiar Lutheran hymns, men such as Philipp Nicolai, Johann Heermann, Johann Rist, and Paul Gerhardt, all of whom are well-represented in current Lutheran hymnals. Others are known chiefly as preachers or devotional writers, such as Valerius Herberger, Christian Sriver, and Heinrich Mueller. Georg Dedekenn and Friedrich Balduin were famous in their time for gathering material to help pastors deal with cases of casuistry in their parishes. Conrad Dieterich wrote an explanatory catechism that was used and imitated for over a hundred years. It was the standard catechism of the founders of the Missouri Synod.

The other men included in this volume are Johannes Rudbeckius, Swedish educator and bishop; Salomon Glass, a learned philologist; and Sebastian Schmidt, who was called the seventeenth century Jerome because of his translation of the whole Bible into the Latin that was current in his time. We must remember that Latin was the language of theology at that time and many of the theological writings of these German Lutherans were not written in German, but in Latin.

Perhaps that is the reason that most of the writings of these Lutherans have never been translated into English. In fact, eight of the men featured in this book do not have any of their writings available in English and many of the writings from the others have only recently been translated into English. In this book there are English translations of short excerpts from the writings of all twenty-one authors. Obviously, much more work needs to be done if the writings of these men are going to be of service to most of us.

Germany was devastated by the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), when most of these stalwart Lutherans were active. Their lives were marked by theological controversy, personal tragedy, and the experience of death from war, disease, and famine. For example, Valerius Herberger experienced three severe plagues during his time. We are told: "In 1613, soon after Pentecost, severe plague struck a third time, and some two thousand men died. One man counted 1,505 men borne away and 603 students and children too. . . . It was during this plague that Herberger, when not leading the carts of bodies to burial or visiting the sick, penned his famous hymn, 'Farewell I Gladly Bid Thee'" (TLH 407), (p. 87).

Many of these men outlived their wives and some of their children. Johann Gerhard's first wife died within a year of their marriage, and their infant son died also. Later he married a second wife and had ten children with her. Of Abraham Calov we are told: "He would outlive five of his total of six wives. They blessed him with thirteen children" (p. 249). "Scriver was married four times during his sixty-four years, with all of his wives preceding him in death and only two of his fourteen children surviving him" (p. 295).

In spite of all the hardships and heartaches these men endured, they were hard workers, and the volume of material they turned out was enormous. Most of these writers were also teachers or pastors with great responsibilities for the souls of sinners. God certainly worked through them, and we are glad to have a volume such as this as a small sampling of the spiritual benefits God provided through their strenuous efforts.

Mark Robert Anderson: *The Qur'an in Context – A Christian Exploration*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 2016, paperback, 341 pages, 19 preliminary pages.

This informative examination of the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam, is divided into four parts. Part I examines the origins of Islam and the world of Muhammad in which it originated. Part II examines the Qur'anic worldview on such matters as the attributes of Allah as compared with the Biblical God, Adam's fall into sin and God's response, and Islam's concept of sin and salvation according to the Qur'an. Part III compares what the Qur'an has to say about Jesus with what the Bible teaches us about Him. Part IV suggests ways in which Christians of today may be able to respond to Muslims with respect to the teachings of the Qur'an.

Mark Anderson is a student of both Christian theology and Islamic studies. He has studied and taught in Egypt and Jordan, Islamic countries. He seems to have a good grasp on the basic teachings of both Christianity and Islam and the vast differences between them. The similarities that are emphasized by many so-called Christian leaders in our day are mainly superficial. Anderson urges Christians to read the Qur'an so as to be able to converse intelligently with their Muslim neighbors. He also acknowledges that many of the current teachings of Islam are not derived from the Qur'an at all but from later writings and traditions.

If any of us needs to examine the Qur'an for pastoral purposes, this book can serve as a helpful guide, perhaps even as an essential guide. Anderson admits, "Most non-Muslims get no more than a few pages into the Qur'an before finding themselves hopelessly lost" (p. 1). One factor that makes the Qur'an difficult to read is that the chapters, or suras, are not arranged in chronological order like the historical sections of the Bible. In an introductory chapter Anderson says that the aim of his book is to "show where the teaching of the Qur'an and Bible are similar and where different. This is vital because the Qur'an often suggests more agreement with the Bible than actually exists" (p. 7).

In this brief review I want to point out only the most important contrasts and contradictions between the Qur'an and the Bible. Of greatest importance, of course, is what the Qur'an has to say about sin and salvation. Anderson provides ample proof from the Qur'an for this conclusion: "The Qur'an

designates spiritual guidance as humankind's great lack and itself as the repository of that guidance. Salvation is viewed as synergistic, requiring the individual's faith and good deeds in combination with God's mercy. The Bible's very different assessment of the human problem produces an equally different solution. . . . Unlike the Bible, the Qur'an never once speaks of God's revealing himself or the depths of his love for humankind. It also says nothing of humankind's need of a redeemer who bears the sins of the world" (p. 119). In other words, the Qur'an teaches us how we can save ourselves by following its guidance; the Bible teaches how God has saved us by sending His Son to be punished for our sins.

The Qur'an has its own name for Jesus. He is called 'Isa, and He is considered one of the prophets of Islam, the last prophet preceding Muhammad. There are ninety-three verses about Jesus in the Qur'an. What do they say about Him? Anderson summarizes in these words: "Though Jesus is indisputably one of God's great prophets, even the Messiah, he is emphatically not divine" (p. 213). "The Qur'an leaves no room for Jesus to be more than created" (p. 217). "Exalted though he is, Jesus is nowhere near as great as Christians imagine. . . . The Qur'an is eminently successful in exalting Jesus in just such a way as to guarantee his inferiority to Muhammad" (p. 219). "The Qur'an's purpose is ultimately to establish unqualified endorsement of Muhammad's prophethood" (p. 222). When did Jesus endorse Muhammad? This is how Q 61:6 quotes Jesus: "Children of Israel, I am God's messenger to you, confirming the Torah revealed before me and giving you good news of a messenger to come after me whose name will be more praiseworthy [ahmadu]" (p. 230). Muslims claim that "ahmadu" is an alternate name for Muhammad. No quotation like this occurs anywhere in the Christian Bible.

The Qur'an makes some ridiculous claims about Jesus as an infant. "Though just newborn, Jesus miraculously takes the lead. He comforts his exhausted and terrified mother by telling her where to find sustenance and silencing her accusers when she appears with a baby conceived out of wedlock" (p. 225). The Qur'an presents this tale in Q 19: 24-26, although Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John somehow failed to report this speech by the infant Jesus.

What does the Qur'an have to say about death, resurrection, and return on the last day? These events are crucial for our salvation, and much of the New Testament revolves around these happenings. Anderson says: "Most Muslims believe the Qur'an teaches that, instead of allowing Jesus to die, God supernaturally made someone else look like Jesus and die on the cross in his

place, while translating Jesus to heaven. They base this on Q 4: 157-158, a passage whose meaning is very obscure. For many reasons, however, the passage does not support the surrogacy theory at all, but rather historical death and resurrection, although with no redemptive significance. . . . By adhering strictly to the qur'anic text, Jesus simply died a martyr's death" (p. 239).

Apparently with respect to death and resurrection, Muslims do not accept what the Qur'an actually teaches. They explain this away in various ways. Anderson says: "Ahmadis believe Jesus did not fully die on the cross but swooned, was revived and died of old age in India. . . . Isma'ilis . . . believe that while body died, the 'real' spiritual Jesus never died but went straight to God" (p. 242). The helpful glossary explains that an "ahmadi" is a member of a Muslim sect that originated in India. An "Isma'ili" is a member of a branch of Islam that was powerful in the tenth to twelfth centuries.

Chapter Twenty, the last chapter of Anderson's book, is titled "The Bible and the Qur'an: So Close, Yet So Far." The closeness is that the Qur'an refers to creation, Adam, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, and even calls God (Allah) holy and merciful, as does the Bible. But I would say the farness greatly outweighs the closeness. In Anderson's words, the Qur'an "entirely omits the Bible's cosmic drama of redemption and makes salvation primarily a matter of human discipline in response to divine guidance. . . . While the Qur'an calls Jesus the Messiah and honors him in other ways, he is merely a prophet, emphatically not the eternal Son of God" (p. 305). The Allah of Islam is not the true Triune God of the Bible, and the alleged way of salvation in Islam is works, not grace alone.

