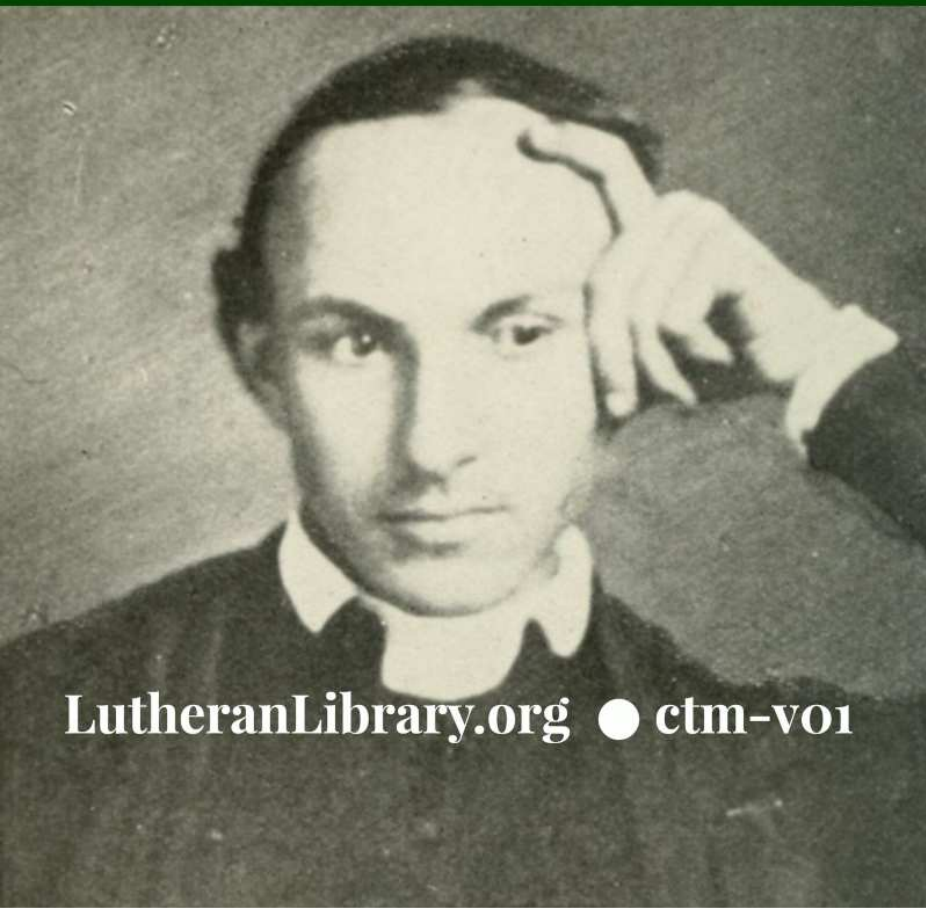


**Matthias Loy, editor**

**The Columbus Theological  
Magazine, Volume 1**



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"The history of the Church confirms and illustrates the teachings of the Bible, that yielding little by little leads to yielding more and more, until all is in danger; and the tempter is never satisfied until all is lost. – Matthias Loy, [\*The Story of My Life\*](#)

**Matthias Loy** was a zealous supporter of the Lutheran Confessions, and to that end founded and edited the *Columbus Theological Magazine*. Dr. Loy was Professor of Theology at Capital University (1865-1902), President of Capital University (1881-90), Editor of the *Lutheran Standard* (1864-91), and President of the Ohio Joint Synod (1860-78, 1880-94). Under his direction, the Ohio Joint Synod grew to have a national influence. In 1881 he withdrew the Joint Synod from the Synodical Conference in reaction to Walther's teaching about predestination.

"There is not an article in our creed that is not an offense to somebody; there is scarcely an article that is not a stumbling block to some who still profess to be Christians. It seems but a small concession that we are asked to make when an article of our confession is represented as a stumbling block to many Christians which ought therefore in charity to be removed, but surrendering that article would only lead to the surrender of another on the same ground, and that is the beginning of the end; the authority of the inspired Word of our Lord is gradually undermined.

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COLUMBUS

THEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE.

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A BI-MONTHLY JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF  
THE EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH.

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EDITED BY PROF. M. LOY. ,/

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VOLUME I.—1881.

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1881.

# CONTENTS OF VOLUME I.

## No. I.—FEBRUARY.

	PAGE.
Introductory.—The Burning Question.....	1
Missouri Retractions .....	29
The Divinity of Christ in the Old Testament..	33
Das Wort sie sollen lassen Stan.....	42
Locus de Predestinatione, Baier's.....	47

## No. II.—APRIL.

The Formula of Concord on Predestination.....	65
The Ultimate Ground of Salvation.....	88
The Status Controversiæ as formulated by Dr. Walther.....	94
Dietrich on Election to Eternal Life.....	107

## No. III.—JUNE.

The Formula of Concord on Predestination.....	129
Missouri on the Defensive.....	154
Zur Wehre.....	168
The Status Controversiæ and E. W. K .....	188
The St. Louis Monthly.....	204

## No. IV.—AUGUST.

Missouri Election Subversive of the Universality of Grace.....	209
Why is Election Particular? .....	232
Why so Angry and False?.....	239
Rom. 8, 28-30.....	251
Is Election Absolute, or in View of Faith.....	264

## No. V.—OCTOBER.

Election and Justification .....	273
The Lutheran Doctrine of Election. Its Scriptural Proof.....	289
Rom. 8, 28-30 .....	320
Election in Foresight of Faith .....	326

## No. VI.—DECEMBER.

The Necessity of Faith to Salvation.....	337
The Lutheran Doctrine of Election. Its Scriptural Proof.....	360
What, according to the Missourians, is the Cause of Election? .....	367

T H E  
COLUMBUS THEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE.

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Vol. I.

FEBRUARY, 1881.

No. 1.

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INTRODUCTORY.—THE BURNING QUESTION.

THE COLUMBUS THEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE starts upon its mission in troublous times. To the circumstances which make the trouble, it, in a large measure, owes its existence. For a number of years, indeed, the publication of an English theological journal, conducted on the basis of our Ev. Lutheran Confessions, has been the subject of conversation among individuals, and sometimes of deliberation in ecclesiastical conventions. There was a general feeling that while more extended essays on theological subjects are necessary for our ministers and the more intelligent among our laity, our periodicals designed for the people generally are not the appropriate vehicles for their publication. But much as the subject was discussed, insuperable obstacles always presented themselves to the execution of any proposed plans for the issue of a theological journal.

The difficulties in the way of such an undertaking have not vanished. On the contrary, they seem to us greater now than ever. But in the history of our Lutheran Church in this country we have reached a point at which the necessity is laid upon us to make the venture. A doctrine of more than ordinary intricacy has been thrust into the foreground of discussion within our own organization. We are not at liberty to ignore it: the trouble has come, and it must be faced. But the discussion of such a subject in a periodical designed for general circulation among the people is a precarious matter. There is danger that many will become e per-

plexed, disquieted, offended. We wish it were otherwise, but we see no way of performing what seems to us a duty, save that of establishing another medium of communication with those who are able and willing to study the doctrine now unhappily in controversy in the Lutheran Church.

Our purpose is not to limit our MAGAZINE to the discussion of that subject. Should we be sustained in our undertaking, we shall endeavor to render it such a theological journal as has long since been desired among us. But as the doctrine of predestination is that which furnishes the occasion of issuing it at the present time, a large share of our space will, at least in the first volume, be allotted to discussions pertaining to that "burning question."

It is not in any harsh and condemnatory spirit that we would enter upon the consideration of this mooted topic. That there are differences between us it would be useless to make any effort to conceal. That they are honest differences Christian charity requires us to assume. It is not antecedently probable that a body of intelligent Christians could make themselves and others so much trouble, and render dubious the realization of hopes which were dear to them as well as to us, without having a ground in conscience for their course. But whether they have not sadly erred is a different question, and that is the point to which earnest attention should be directed. That they have erred, and have troubled Israel by promulgating their error, is our sincere conviction. What, under such circumstances, can we do but lift up our voice against the evil, and help, with such strength as we possess, to protect the Church against its influence? If others have opposite convictions, they have a right to that respectful hearing which we claim for ourselves. Angry words are not arguments. Passion and prejudice may for a time sway the multitude, but truth alone is of permanent power. Conscious of no wish but that the truth may triumph, we are willing to hear all that may be said for the doctrine which we are constrained to reject, and our prayer is that God may protect us against the carnal desire to win honor for ourselves by triumphantly maintaining our position, instead of pursuing the earnest purpose to glorify our Lord by maintaining His precious truth.

There is, indeed, much on both sides that is fitted to arouse unkind feeling. The Missouri Synod claims that the doctrine of predestination which she has put forth is the very doctrine which is confessed in our Formula of Concord, and it is mortifying to its defenders that others who have subscribed that Formula are not willing to accept it, all the more so as that synod has been little accustomed to have her doctrinal statements challenged by those associated with her in the Synodical Conference. On the other hand, we are not wholly proof against the provocation to become indignant at the innovation which mars our visions of peace and prosperity in our general organization. But as it is disciples of Christ on both sides that are engaged in the controversy, we can trust in the grace of God that such influences will not be permitted to warp the judgment or to lead to expressions that will wound, but not convince. It would be disastrous if on either side the contest became a scramble for the mastery at the cost of brotherly love.

We trust that it will not be considered an attempt to take undue advantage of circumstances when we remark that the presumption, in the whole argument, is in our favor. There could be no fairness in judging the case without taking this into account. For three hundred years there has, by the admission of all parties, been in the Lutheran Church an established doctrine, which the Missouri Synod is now striving to displace. It is taught with one consent by all the prominent writers of the Church throughout that period. There was no other in vogue that claimed the Lutheran name. That is the doctrine which we maintain and defend. It is said, indeed, that prior to that time there was a different doctrine taught in the Church; that this different doctrine is set forth in the Formula of Concord; and that this original doctrine, from which the theologians are alleged to have subsequently departed, is that which Missouri is now trying to restore. But this assertion cannot change the presumption. It must be proved before it can have any weight against the antecedent probability involved in an admitted historical fact. Before we can be expected to believe that the Lutheran Church ever had any other doctrine than that which all her great teachers set forth since the time of

the Formula of Concord, it must be shown from the works of her representative men in that earlier period what that doctrine was and that there was some unanimity in teaching it. Not only has this not been done, but it will hardly be claimed that it can be done. Instead of such proof it is alleged that the Formula of Concord teaches the different doctrine, and that this teaching is authoritative. The confessional authority of this book we heartily recognize. On that point there is no dispute. But the proof adduced from the Formula itself in favor of the new doctrine is far from convincing. It is difficult for us to believe that any one who has not that doctrine in his mind before, will ever find it in the Formula. But this is a question for separate consideration. The point which we would here emphasize is the great improbability that our Confession sets forth a doctrine which can not be shown to have been previously the faith of the Church, and which can be shown not to have been subsequently the faith of the Church. The advocates of the new theory claim a Lutheran confessional doctrine which, so far as history exhibits the facts, virtually never had any Lutheran confessors. It would be a case of marvelous singularity if none of those great theologians who lived after that confession was published, some of them being among the original signers of the noble document, ever found the meaning which many now regard it as plainly expressing. Unquestionably the presumption is against the men who allege that only now, after the Formula has been accepted in the Church for three hundred years, within which period learned works have been written by great theologians to explain it, its meaning has been discovered at St. Louis. We mean no sarcasm; but in the interest of truth we must state things as they are, though they look like daggers.

The doctrine which has been taught in the Lutheran Church during these three centuries has been established by the Scriptures, and defended against all foes, to the satisfaction of a host of eminent theologians whose linguistic learning and whose logical acumen have not been surpassed in any church or in any age. They sifted evidence closely; they thought upon the subject profoundly; they defended their doctrine triumphantly. They were not ignorant of the



objections which could be urged against them. These objections were examined and refuted. The Calvinists against whom they had to contend were not intellectual pigmies; many of them were foemen worthy of the steel of our Lutheran giants. But never in the clash of arms were our warriors discomfited. Had they defended a cause so weak as their doctrine of election in foresight of faith is now represented to be, they could not have come forth victorious from the conflict with men so determined and so skillful. The presumption certainly is not that a house which stands unmoved when the floods come and the winds blow is built on sand.

Let it be observed that we do not give in these considerations as convincing evidence that the doctrine which our theologians teach and which we feel bound to defend is true. It might be false, notwithstanding these presumptions in its favor. That which we propose to adduce as proof is the solid argument which our theologians also adduced from the Scriptures. But we do claim that when there is so much to render it antecedently probable that the doctrine of our great writers is the unanimous doctrine of the Lutheran Church, and that it has good ground in Holy Scripture, it is not right, upon the authority of a few men, in these latter days, though these men have shown themselves to be learned and faithful, to abandon the old position without thoroughly examining the reasons for it; and least of all is it right to look with distrust, if not with scorn, upon those who will not, without a reason in conscience, forsake the old paths.

To make the points of controversy plain it will be necessary to state, as clearly as possible, the two forms of doctrine that are now placed in opposition to each other.

The theologians of our Church have, ever since the Formula of Concord was published, with one consent taught, that in the counsel of God it was determined from eternity to save our lost race through Christ by faith. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3, 16. This is the one decree of salvation, and there is no other. From this no man is excluded, and to this every man is referred. "Therefore in Christ we should

seek the eternal election of the Father, who in His eternal, divine counsel decreed, that besides those who acknowledge Christ to be His Son and truly believe on Him, He will save no one." The grace of God is universal and the redemption is also universal. Salvation is prepared and designed for all men alike. But when this salvation is brought to men, not all alike appropriate it. Some obtain the heavenly blessing, the larger portion of men rejects it. Only those who believe are adopted as God's children and made heirs of heaven. "As many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John 1, 12. But those who believe, when the merits of Christ are set before them in Word and Sacrament, are known to God from eternity. These He elected before the foundation of the world. Not a certain number were arbitrarily and indiscriminately drawn from the multitude of lost souls to be adopted as children of God and everlastingly saved, but "as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name," and "he that believeth shall be saved." What God according to His purpose accomplishes in time He has purposed from eternity. He gives the believer power to become the son of God, and to the believer who endures to the end He gives eternal life. The object of election is not man in his unbelief, but man endowed with faith. Believers are elected to sonship and salvation; and as God knew from eternity who would be believers, He from eternity elected them in foresight of their faith; as it is written, "Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." Rom. 8, 29.

Election in its strict sense is thus only a part of the general decree of salvation, not a co-ordinate factor that enters as a disturbing element. The purpose of God from eternity is to save all them that believe. By His foreknowledge He saw from the beginning who among the multitudes of men would become believers. These He elected. Our theologians therefore call foreknowledge the eye of election, without which it would be blind. It is not a cause of predestination, but simply the means of recognizing, humanly speaking, the persons whom it was God's purpose to adopt

and save, i. e. of discerning the faith which distinguishes the accepted in the Beloved from the rejected in their unbelief. Not even faith is strictly a cause. That which moves God to elect is His grace and the merits of His beloved Son: the former is the internal, the latter the external moving cause. Faith is merely the divine requisite without which, in the purpose of God, the causes of election could not be operative in the individual. "The text, Matt. 22, 14, 'Many are called, but few are chosen,' does not imply that God does not desire to save all men, but the cause of the damnation of the wicked is that they either do not hear the Word of God at all, but obstinately contemn it, closing their ears and hardening their hearts, and thus obstruct the ordinary means of access of the Holy Spirit, so that He cannot perform His work in them; or, if they have heard it, they again neglect and disregard it; of which neither God nor His election, but their own wickedness is the cause." F. C. Epit. XI., 12. As there are two moving causes, so there are also two directing principles of election. The primary and mediate principle is the purpose (prothesis), which here does not denote the antecedent will of universal mercy, but the purpose to save those who shall persevere in faith until their end. This purpose is declared where the Scriptures tell us that whosoever believeth shall not perish, but have everlasting life. The proximate and immediate directing principle is the divine foreknowledge (prognosis), by which those who shall thus believe in time are known to God from eternity, and are thus elected. The divine election takes place on account of the mercy of God and the merits of Christ as its cause, and according to the divine purpose and foreknowledge as its norm. God's mercy would save all men. The redemption which is in Christ Jesus renders that possible, but actual only in the believers. Those in whom the gracious will of God in Christ is realized are the "elect according to the foreknowledge of God." 1 Pet. 1, 2.

The distinguished Dr. A. Pfeiffer thus presents the doctrine in his work against Calvinism:

"Of the election of the true children of God we, on the sure basis of His Word, steadfastly teach that, in accordance with His gracious antecedent will, God will have all men to

be saved, and that He omits nothing on His part by which this His purpose may be fulfilled through the means which He has graciously instituted; wherefore also Christ actually acquired His perfect merit as a full ransom for all, and the Holy Ghost offers to all the actual enjoyment of these means, together with the powers to use them properly. But since God, with the eye of His omniscience, foresaw already from eternity that not all men would accept and savingly appropriate His grace extended through the Word and Sacraments together with the merit of Christ, but that most of them would rather despise and wantonly reject it, therefore, in accordance with His consequent will, and in foresight of each one's conduct toward His grace, He elected and predestinated to eternal life only those of whom He foresaw and foreknew that they would in true faith accept and employ the grace which was intended for all and, according to the prescribed order, offered to all men, and would constantly persevere in this faith unto their end. On the other hand, He rejected and determined to punish with eternal damnation, and to exclude from the communion of eternal life, those of whom He likewise foreknew that they would resist His gracious purpose directed to their salvation, refuse the proffered powers, not believe the Word of grace, or, if they should believe for a time, fall away again. Therefore the eternal election of the children of God to eternal life is to be considered, not an absolute decree or, so to speak, a blind grasp, but a truly deliberate election. For God did not decree absolutely, this man shall live, that one shall die, whether they reject or accept my grace; but He at the same time had regard to something which pleased Him, namely, to the merit and satisfaction of Christ Jesus, so that those who would accept and appropriate this should be saved, but that those who would reject it and deprive themselves of it should be damned. For God 'hath chosen us in Him' (Christ) 'before the foundation of the world.' Eph. 1, 4. 'Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.' Acts 4, 12. 'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' John 3, 16. But this

merit of Christ is, by virtue of divine foresight in election, viewed as it is received and retained by men in true faith. In virtue of this foresight of God, accordingly, it was already from eternity considered as accepted and savingly appropriated by the elect. For that the eyes of divine providence in the eternal election had respect to faith we learn from the words of the apostle in Heb. 11, 6, that 'without faith it is impossible to please God.'

Thus the election of the children of God to eternal salvation may properly be considered a syllogism in the thoughts and mind of God. Of this we must first find the major premise, the purpose of God, of which St. Paul also speaks when he calls the elect and those that love God 'the called according to His purpose,' Rom. 8, 28. Now this is the purpose of God: Every one that shall heartily believe on Christ Jesus and thus appropriate His merit, and also persevere in this faith unto the end, shall be elected and have eternal life; even as it is written: 'He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.' John 3, 18. 36. 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.' Mark 16, 16. 'He that endureth to the end shall be saved.' Matt. 10, 22. Therefore, too, the Lord exhorts and cheers His churches with the words: 'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.' Rev. 2, 10. The minor premise, then, is given by the divine *prognosis*, the infallible prescience or foreknowledge; for as, in virtue thereof, God knoweth all things and has beset us behind and before, Ps. 139, 5, and there is nothing hidden from Him, but everything was clear and manifest from eternity, so also He could foresee and foreknow who would believe and who would not believe; so that the minor premise in the divine decree of election is this: Peter, John, Daniel, Abraham, etc., will believe in Christ and persevere in this faith unto the end. This proposition, as was already remarked, is given by God's foreknowledge of all men's actions, which is so accurate and

infallible that everything has in this view been as certain from eternity as though it had already actually taken place. St. Paul, in treating of election, speaks of this foreknowledge, Rom. 8, 29, in these words: 'Whom He did foreknow (proegno), He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son.' Finally, since the required faith and its proper attributes are found in this one or that one, the conclusion follows: Therefore Peter, John, Daniel, Abraham, etc., shall be elected and saved. Such a proposition, then, is the eternal election of grace, by virtue of which God, indeed, separated some from the entire mass of the human race and elected them to eternal life; not, however, by an absolute decree, without any consideration of faith or merit, but in view of the fact that such elect would in faith accept and steadfastly retain the merit of Christ. On the other hand, however, the severe sentence upon the wicked, as it was spoken from eternity, likewise rests on a syllogism such as this: He that believeth not in Christ unto the end shall be eternally damned. The eternal foreknowledge, then, gives the minor premise, This wicked man will not believe; whence the conclusion follows, not absolutely, but through the given premises, Therefore he shall be eternally damned." —*Anti-Calvinismus*, p. 250–256.

Those who would thoroughly acquaint themselves with the doctrine which we advocate, need only refer to any of the standard dogmaticians of our Church. They explain it and defend it fully, so that no one need be at a loss to know exactly what is taught and upon what grounds it is maintained. To present the new doctrine which is promulgated by the Missouri Synod is not so easy a task. Indeed, in some of its aspects it seems yet in process of formation, and in regard to its principles, purposes and proofs, and therefore in regard to its formulation in detail, there is some diversity among its advocates. We can therefore not expect to satisfy all its adherents in our effort to state it. But we are conscious of no desire to misrepresent it, and shall hold ourselves in readiness to make any corrections that any of its friends may show us to be required by justice or charity.

In his carefully prepared Theses published last year in the *Lutheraner* Dr. Walther begins by confessing that God

created all men to salvation and earnestly desires that all men should be saved; that the Son of God redeemed the whole human race without any exception; that by the means of grace the salvation which our Lord secured and the power to appropriate it by faith are sincerely offered to all; and that no man is lost because God did not have the will to save him, but that men perish only because they obstinately reject the proffered grace which is designed to save them. He accordingly rejects and condemns the Calvinistic errors of a predestination to damnation, of a limited atonement, and of a restriction of the efficacy of the divinely appointed means of grace to a few arbitrarily favored individuals. So far all is well, and if this were consistently adhered to, there could be no reason or justification for the threatened rupture in the Synodical Conference. But all this, as we understand the theory now maintained by the Missouri Synod, has nothing to do with election in its proper sense, except so far as this universal will leads to the appointment of means for the execution of a particular purpose which is limited to a few.

The trouble begins just as soon as the conception of election is introduced. After these preliminary statements, which are perfectly proper when the subject is treated in the manner of our Lutheran dogmaticians, who assign to election a place subordinate to the general benevolence of God seeking the salvation of all men, but which seem to have no logical connection with the new form of doctrine, Dr. Walther proceeds thus: "We believe, teach, and confess that the objects of election or predestination are only the true believers who shall continue in faith until the end of their lives, or are then believers; we therefore reject and condemn the Huberian error that election is not particular, but that it is universal and pertains to all men." Probably without intending it, this is misleading, especially when taken in connection with the quotations from standard Lutheran writers. Of the Formula of Concord we will not speak at present, as the meaning of that is one of the disputed points. But there can be no question as to the meaning of Conrad Dietrich and of Quenstedt in the extracts presented. The former says that "election is the act of God by which, according to the purpose of His will, He has, out of mere grace and mercy in

Christ to the praise of His glorious grace resolved to save all those who shall steadfastly believe in Christ." Quenstedt says that "the second attribute of election is its particularity, or that it is particular; for not all are elected, as Samuel Huber falsely thought, but only some, i. e. those who believe in Christ until their end." It is not disputed that Dietrich and Quenstedt taught the objects of election to be believers, and that, as election took place before the foundation of the world, these believers were foreknown of God and were as such elected. As they contemplated election it was effected in foresight of faith, because the appropriation of Christ made the distinction in the eye of God between those whom He chose and those whom He did not choose. From his carefully chosen words it would seem that this is the doctrine which Dr. Walther teaches. We would gladly believe it to be so; we would rejoice to find him in harmony with these honored teachers in the Lutheran Church, if he only permitted us. But in other places he repudiates the doctrine that men were elected in view of their possession of Christ's merit by faith, and teaches that God chose some persons from the condemned mass of sinners, that He might lead them to faith. The object of the divine act of election is thus by no means believers, but sinners under condemnation, whom God purposes to make believers, and whom He selects for the very purpose of making them believers that they may be saved. Thus in *Lehre und Wehre*, (1880, p. 271) it is said "that God has predestinated us to faith, to sonship, to justification; that God, when He from eternity elected us to eternal life, at the same time resolved that He would by His Holy Spirit in time sanctify us and lead us to faith, and thus through faith bring us to salvation. From this it follows of necessity, that when God now, in time, by His Holy Spirit sanctifies, calls, converts us, i. e. makes us believers, He thus executes His decree of predestination, and that our call, conversion, justification, as well as our salvation are necessary consequences of our election and have their ground in this." The persons who are elected are not believers, but such as are ordained to become believers and through faith to obtain eternal life. Their election is the cause of their becoming believers. It is therefore only by anticipation that the object of election is



said to be those who truly believe. What is meant is that every elect person is led by the way of faith to salvation, and thus in virtue of his election necessarily becomes a believer, not, as the language would seem to imply and as the authors cited unquestionably teach, that from the mass of fallen humanity those who believe are chosen to sonship and salvation. The Missouri doctrine is that God elected some persons, not in view of the faith by which they appropriated Christ and by which they were thus distinguished from the rest as well-pleasing in His sight, but merely because it was the good pleasure of His will to sanctify and save these particular persons. If we ask why these and not others were elected, the answer is, not that these were seen in Christ and thus accepted in the Beleved, but that it so seemed good in His sight, we know not why: it is an unfathomable mystery.

They further teach that this election is unchangeable, so that the elect person cannot be lost; that it is indeed foolish and dangerous to seek the certainty of one's election by prying into the secret eternal decree of God, but that a believing Christian should seek to be certain of it from God's revealed will; and that the believer thus may have and should have the assurance of faith that he is among those whom God has definitely and irrevocably determined to save and who therefore must be saved.

What this election is, of which it is said that the individual may thus be said to be infallibly certain, is negatively defined in the declaration that it is not a mere divine foreknowledge of the persons who shall be saved; not the mere purpose of God to redeem and save mankind, thus making it universal; that it does not embrace those who believe only for a time; and that it is not a mere decree of God to save all those who will believe until their end. What it is positively has not been so explicitly set forth, but may be gathered from the various utterances which are found in the Missouri publications. These do not leave any doubt that, in their conception, it is an eternal act of God by which, according to His immutable purpose and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, He, out of His mere free grace in Christ, without any foresight of faith, chose certain persons to eternal life.

While the theologians of the Lutheran Church have con-

stantly taught one decree of God, according to which, by His infinite mercy, He would save men through Christ by faith, this doctrine places two divine decrees irreconcilably side by side. One of these is the general purpose to save all men through Christ; the other is the special purpose to save a few by giving them the persevering faith which alone leads to salvation. In exhibiting the doctrine its exponents, even by their own admission, meet difficulty after difficulty. Although, for a purpose which it is not easy to surmise, a long array of testimonies from Lutheran authors is presented in their writings, a specimen of which we have given above, they virtually admit that since the days of our Formula of Concord no standard Lutheran theologian has taught it. They appeal to this symbol of the Church as their warrant for promulgating a theory which now makes the disturbance, but they must admit that since the symbol was published the Church never so understood and so confessed it. They fall back on the Scriptures, but there too they meet with insuperable obstacles, admitting that their theory involves the Word of God in contradictions which it is impossible for man to reconcile, but which we are, for the benefit of their position, a priori to regard as reconcilable in the mind of God. Our loyalty to the Scriptures and to the Church will not permit us to go with them in their new departure. Faith and love leave us no choice now but to oppose them, and contribute what little may be in our power to preserve the purity of doctrine in our American Lutheran Church.

1. We are constrained to resist the new doctrine, first, because it is an outgrowth of philosophical speculation, and its acceptance in the Church as an article of faith would be a dangerous submission to the dictates of human reason. It is an effort by the finite mind to solve an insoluble mystery. God wills that all men should be saved, but only a few are saved in fact. Why, if God's desire is to save all men, does the greatest number perish? This is the tremendous problem of the ages. If He has the will, has He not the power? If He has the power, has He not the will? The denial of the will, or the denial of the power, furnishes an easy solution of the problem; but one is as unscriptural and as blasphemous as the other. Reason will never find a clue to the

mystery. All the light that we can have upon it must be derived from the Scriptures. They answer many questions in this regard; they answer all that for our peace and comfort need a reply; but they leave many queries which curiosity would dictate wholly unanswered. They teach us that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3, 16. That is a way of salvation provided for all. In Christ there is an atonement made for every man, and there is now nothing on the part of God to hinder the accomplishment of His merciful will in the whole human race. So far as God's righteousness is concerned, it is now possible for Him to save and therefore to elect unto salvation every perishing soul. Why is it not done? The Bible gives us the answer in the words: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." Matt. 23, 37. And our confession repeats the answer when it declares the greater number of men to be lost because they "obstruct the ordinary means of access of the Holy Spirit, so that He cannot perform His work in them." That explains as much as need be explained. With that the mind which humbly trusts in God can be satisfied. It is only proud reason that makes trouble by the cavilling questions: How, since faith is a gift of God, can any person believe unless God has absolutely resolved to give him faith? How could faith be that which in the eye of God distinguishes the person to be elected from the person not to be elected, when God must first decide on which individuals He will bestow faith and on which not? If God purposes to bestow faith on all men, what hinders Him from doing it? If He does not do it, is it not plain that He formed the purpose to save a few elect, and that upon these, because He elected them, He absolutely resolved to bestow faith that they might be saved? To escape an intellectual difficulty which is needlessly started in connection with the clear doctrine of Scripture concerning man's salvation, a theory is thus devised which cuts the knot and seems to make all easy, but which makes a hopeless rupture

in the divine plan. It is God's will that all should be saved: this is clear as the sunlight, and the glory and comfort of this incontrovertible truth dying men should not suffer to be obscured by any difficulties that may occur. He *will* save all who do not obstruct the Holy Spirit's ordinary way of access to the soul. If it be said that such a doctrine implies some human ability and makes the soul's salvation and election rest ultimately upon man's power, our reply is, first, that, whatever it may imply, it is the doctrine of the Scriptures and of our Confessions, and, secondly, that it involves only the ability to reject the grace of God which bringeth salvation to all, and such ability even the advocates of the new theory have so far not denied. All that do not obstinately resist the proffered grace will surely be saved, and in view of their possession of Christ's merit through the faith of the operation of God they were from eternity elected to salvation. If it be said, further, that the means of grace are not placed within the reach of all, or all are not induced to use them, so that they might have an opportunity to be saved, and the question be asked, How can the fact that a man or a people never hears the Word be reconciled with God's will to save them? our answer is that the ways of God are past finding out: we do not know, and do not care to know; God knows, and that is enough. We cannot accept as a solution the philosophical speculation about a special plan of salvation, called the decree of election, which determines who shall really and inevitably be saved, and which is placed alongside of the revealed general plan of salvation to render it practically nugatory.

2. We are in conscience constrained to oppose the new theory because it is damaging to the revealed doctrine of God and His attributes. In their publications the Missourians say that the non-elect have no right to complain that God did not give them the measure of grace which leads to actual salvation, because He does not owe them anything and is not bound to give it; and that if any one should make such an objection, the answer is contained in the Scripture words: "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil because I am good?" We wish we could say that this does not reveal the animus of the new

doctrine. When every appeal, on the basis of theology in the narrow sense, is met with the declaration that "God will have mercy on whom He will have mercy," the other clause of the passage, "and whom He will He hardeneth," not being so frequently cited, the effect is, at least for the moment, to render us speechless, not from perplexity, but from sorrow. Does God then really so treat His miserable creatures, that when in their anguish they look up to Him for some crumb of comfort, He closes the door upon them with the cold rebuff that He owes them nothing? Truly, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table! And is that really the divine goodness to which the text cited refers, to give salvation to a few, and withhold it from others because He owes them nothing? He owes us nothing; that is unquestionable. He would do us no injustice if He sent us all into outer darkness; we have all richly deserved it. On that ground we admit all that Missouri can claim. On that ground no election is possible, except so far as divine justice is satisfied through the atoning blood of Christ; on that ground we go a step farther, and maintain that no election of an individual is possible, except as he has appropriated by faith the merit of Christ, without which he is and remains a child of wrath. But that is not the point which we have now in view. God's justice would not be violated by selecting only a few out of the wretched mass and giving them eternal blessedness: He owes it to none, and therefore wrongs none by declining to save them. But the new theory claims that God, now that a universal redemption is effected, can elect to salvation whom He will, without the possession of faith in fact or in foresight, and that He elects those whom He proposes to save, and gives them faith unto salvation because He has elected them to salvation. If there is no obstacle in man that hinders a universal election, why does He not elect all and give all faith unto salvation? The reply made is that such captious questions must not be asked, but must be crushed in their birth as presumptuous meddling with God's counsels. But it is not so. God tells us that He has the will to save all men, and that the reason why not all are saved is the resistance offered by the greater number to

the Holy Spirit when He comes to execute the divine will. When this ground of divine revelation is abandoned and another plan is devised and promulgated, we have a right to challenge it with such questions and show that it runs to ruin. The new theory claims that God resolved to save men without any reference to their acceptance or rejection of Christ; that those who actually are saved obtain eternal life in pursuance of such a resolve, faith being not at all taken into account in the election to which their salvation must be ascribed; and yet that He resolved to save only a few, though He might easily have saved all. Does that present to our souls the God of boundless mercy whom the Scriptures reveal? If a rich man sees a score of famishing persons lie in their agony before him, all moaning in the pangs of gnawing hunger, he may select two or three and furnish them with bread. He does not owe them anything, and those who are left to perish can reproach him with no injustice. Is it not lawful for him to do what he will with his own? But what manner of heart must he have, if he could easily help them all, and yet confines his pity and his help to the few? If he furnishes bread for them all, and in their weakness carries it to their very mouths, he can do nothing but pity them if they refuse to eat, and thus die in their obstinacy. But his refusal to give them bread, on the simple plea that he owes them nothing, would stamp him as a monster of cruelty. God is love; let not such thoughts enter our hearts respecting Him! A doctrine of predestination that makes Him a being that is willing to let His miserable creatures perish everlastingly, though He could save them from perdition, misrepresents our merciful God, who has no pleasure in the death of the sinner.

3. Nor can we see how it would be possible for us on the judgment day to answer for our conduct, if we consented to the exegetical principles and practices by which the adherents of the new theory endeavor to render it plausible. They teach that God has an antecedent general will to save all mankind, and an antecedent special will to save a comparatively small portion of mankind. They teach that this latter alone is of such a nature as to accomplish its purpose: "God has from eternity elected a number of men to salva-

tion," they say; "He has resolved that these shall and must be saved; and as surely as God is God they will be saved, and not a soul else." (West. Ber. 1877, 24.) They admit that to the human mind, regenerated as well as unregenerated, this involves a contradiction, but urge that we must leave that to God who is able to reconcile it. They warn us not to draw conclusions. We must not say that God has an efficacious will to save a few and an inefficacious will to save all. We must not say that in His gracious purpose of salvation He passed any by, or that He had any purpose not to save a portion of mankind; but we must say that those whom He resolved to save will as surely be saved as God is God, and no others. They tell us that God gives grace to all men sufficient unto salvation, but that it suffices to save only in the case of the elect: these are saved because He elected them, and no others are saved. They tell us that God comforts the souls of the elect by rendering them sure of their election, and therefore of the inevitableness of their salvation; and that He does this not by a special revelation to each individual, but by calling them and working faith in them, so that by these signs they may infallibly know their election; and yet they admit that many are called, but few are chosen, and that of those who believe some are not elected and finally fall away: in other words, we are to draw infallible inferences from fallible signs, reach apodictic conclusions from contingent premises, and rest our eternal hopes upon such palpable fallacies. They tell us we must not think in regard to their theory, for that runs it into irreconcilable contradictions; they tell us, when the theory is to be applied, that we must think, else no inferences could be drawn, but that we must think falsely, else the inference would not be comfortable. We have gone to the precious evangelical school of the Lutheran Church too long to learn this new language and these new methods now, when our pilgrimage is approaching its end and the celestial city seems so near. True, the Missouri teachers do not say that their speculation is the rule according to which all our thinking must be ordered. They tell us that these statements which seem so irreconcilable with each other and which lay such an extraordinary tax upon our minds, are drawn from the Word of God,

and that they only ask us to subject our reason to divine authority. They would not be Christians if they consciously set up a humanly devised scheme, and required brethren to stultify themselves by accepting it. But where are all those strange and contradictory things written which they ask us to believe? They can be brought into the inspired record only by adopting a principle and applying a process that would revolutionize and ruin biblical exegesis. They tell us that when the Scriptures speak of men's being called according to a divine purpose, we must not think of God's will and decree to save men through Christ by faith, of which the Scriptures speak in so many passages, but of a special resolution formed with regard to a few who shall and must be saved, and in whom therefore faith must needs be wrought, although of the existence of such a resolution there is no account in Scripture and its assumption is in direct opposition to Scripture. They tell us that when the Holy Spirit says that "whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate," though we may think of the predestination to sonship, as that is mentioned in another passage, we must not think of the foreknowledge of faith, as that, although the Scriptures do say that "as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name," is not expressly said in regard to election. They tell us that when the Bible declares us to be chosen in Christ and to be predestinated unto the adoption of children by Him, we must not here keep in mind that only to those who believe, God gives power to become His children, and that we are and can be in Christ Jesus only by faith; but that we are to consider the passage, as the seat of this special doctrine of election, independently of all others, and must therefore understand the expression "chosen in Christ" to mean "selected for His sake" from among the mass of men, though in that sense all men are in Christ and an election is inexplicable. They tell us that "predestinated unto the adoption of children," must refer not to believers, but to men in their unbelieving state, because it is not here said that in the mind of God they were viewed as believers before they were predestinated, although the Scriptures do elsewhere say that only believers are accepted in the Beloved as dear children.



We cannot have part in any such treatment of the Holy Scriptures. We prefer to abide by the safe old hermeneutical rule that as the Bible has one Author and reveals one harmonious truth, it is consistently self-interpreting. Nor does the new hermeneutical rule help the new theory of election. It, in fact, defeats itself. If the doctrine is to be derived from the *sedes doctrinae* alone, without any light from other passages, it is impossible to prove that there is any election to eternal life at all; for these passages tells us that we are "predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren," Rom. 8, 29, and that "God hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself." Eph. 1, 4. 5.

4. The new theory endangers the great central doctrine of justification by faith, and thus threatens to revolutionize our whole doctrinal system. "The just shall live by faith" has lost none of its importance since Luther's day. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." Salvation is through Christ, by faith in His name: not through Christ without faith, not by faith without Christ. The great commission reads: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16, 15. 16. That is the clear and consolatory way of salvation which our Church has inscribed upon her banner and which she has carried triumphantly, as the peace and joy and hope of millions, through the centuries. She never for a moment entertained the unworthy thought that man's faith could be a merit, on account of which God grants eternal life as the believer's due. How could she harbor such a fancy, when it is destructive of all that makes the doctrine of justification so precious? If faith were saving as a good work under the law, we would still, because of the imperfection of all our works, including faith, be under the curse. But it is the divinely ordained means of embrac-

ing Christ, and as such it does put us in possession of a merit and righteousness which renders us pleasing in God's sight, as those are not who do not believe and have not that righteousness. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Heb. 11, 6. But now comes a new wisdom proclaiming a new way. It tells us that justification by faith is all well in its place, but its place is that of subordination to the great gospel of election. It declares that God does lead men to salvation only by leading them to faith which appropriates Christ's merits, but that He leads only those to such a saving faith whom He has purposed to save, and that this purpose extends over only a comparatively small portion of our lost race. It claims that the distinction between the men that are saved and the men that are not saved is not made by the fact that the former embrace Christ by faith and are accepted in the Beloved, while the latter reject the proffered salvation by unbelief and are rejected, but that it is made by a simple decree of God ordaining the salvation of the few to whom faith is given in consequence, "who shall and must be saved, and no others." The theory is that God elects without taking faith into account at all. Faith is not necessary to salvation in the mind of God; He elects to salvation without reference to it. Do those who teach the theory mean that God blindly plunges His hand into the writhing mass of miserable men and draws out at random such as may happen to come within His grasp? They shrink from such a doctrine, as a horror creeps over us while we write the thought which their speculation suggests. Do they mean that God finds nothing pleasing in any of the ruined race, but arbitrarily takes from the accursed multitude as many as may fill the number decided upon by His pleasure, so that He may render them pleasing? We would fain think not; for wherein does that differ from such a wild grasp as that described, and how could such a chance draught of part of a multitude in any proper sense be called an election? Do they mean that certain persons were found pleasing in God's sight, and that He therefore singled them out from the rest who were displeasing to Him and whom He could therefore not elect according to His good pleasure? But the Holy Spirit tells us that without faith it is impossible to please God; and if a portion of men was

pleasing to Him without faith, why should not the others be pleasing to Him without faith also, and why should faith be necessary to render any man acceptable to God? The adherents of the new theory may seek to rescue it from opprobrium by alleging that they teach the election to be made only in Christ. So it is; without all controversy, so it is. But do they mean by this that men are accepted of God and adopted as dear children in view of their possession of Christ's righteousness by faith? Then all is well. But then God accepts believers only, whether this acceptance be viewed in time, or whether it be viewed as the act of God before the foundation of the world was laid; in other words, then as only he who believes can be accepted as a child of God, only he who was in the eternal vision of God a believer could be elected as a child of God. And this is the election in foresight of faith which our Church has constantly taught, but which the new departure of Missouri rejects. What do they mean then by urging their admission that election is "in Christ"? They mean that for the sake of the redemption effected by Christ for all men, some few are chosen, without any reference to the appropriation of His merits by the individuals thus favored. But if God could decree that certain persons, without any regard at all to their faith or unbelief, their appropriation or rejection of Christ's merits, shall and must be saved, what should hinder His decreeing this in regard to all, since the redemption avails for those not elected as well as for those elected? And what use can there then be for such a doctrine as that of justification by faith, except as an appendage to the doctrine of election, showing how the foregone conclusion with regard to a few favored mortals is executed in time, and serving as a comfort of dubious morality to those who can persuade themselves that they are among the select few? That sun and centre of our whole theology, and, what is more, of all our life and hope—who will blame us if we cannot consent to be a party in obscuring it and finally putting it out?

5. We are constrained to oppose the new theory, furthermore, because it undermines the precious biblical doctrine of the means of grace, which the Lutheran Church so purely and so fully confesses and which she has always held so dear.

Its advocates do not, indeed, say that grace is not offered to a large portion of mankind, even when they are recipients of the means; they do not say that the grace is irresistible in the other, comparatively small portion. But they do teach that God has determined to save a definite number, and that as surely as He is God these and no others shall be saved. These must obtain the salvation to which He has unalterably ordained them. But God accomplishes His purpose by His ordinary means. He has resolved that the chosen ones shall and must be saved through the Word and Sacraments. What then does the theory imply in regard to the efficacy of these means? The question is not whether they actually produce the designed effect in all. About that there can be no dispute. A large part of mankind does remain in its sin and condemnation, notwithstanding the offer of salvation; and the Lutheran Church, in full accord with Holy Scripture, declares the reason of this to be that such part contumaciously rejects the gracious offer, so that the Holy Spirit cannot perform His work in them. But the question is whether, according to the new doctrine, it was possible that it should be otherwise according to God's own ordination, than that only such part should be saved through the appointed means. Its advocates say, indeed, that God's general will is to save all men, and that the means of grace, under this general will, are efficacious in all cases, whether the persons to whom they are brought are elect or non-elect; but they say also that God has fixed the unalterable decree to save a few, and that these and no others will be saved. Accordingly, when the means of grace are brought to an elect person, the purpose of God, which no power can frustrate, *must* work faith in him and bring him to the Savior. He shall and must be saved, according to the divine decree; and he *must* be saved by the grace of God working its will, without possibility of defeat. In other words the grace of God, in the case of the elect, works *irresistibly* through the means; or, if this be denied, the only alternative is that His grace works *irresistibly without* the means. One way or other, the select few whom He has resolved under all circumstances to save, *must* be saved. But how is it in the case of those whom God has not thus resolved to save? Have the means of grace any

saving efficacy in their case? Missouri has not the hardihood to say explicitly that they have not. But by implication the new teachers do say it: They teach a saving efficacy that cannot save; not that does not, because the saving power is resisted, but that cannot. They declare that man's resistance has nothing to do with election; that the reason why any one's resistance is effectually overcome and he is brought to final salvation, is that he is elected. As no others but the elect are saved, the means of grace cannot bring salvation to any others but the elect. God has resolved that all resistance shall be overcome when an elect person is the subject of their administration, and therefore they *must* be rendered believers; He has not resolved that the non-elect shall be brought to faith and salvation, and therefore the means have not the saving efficacy when such persons are the subjects. The most that could be said in such a case is that the means still contain grace, but in the absence of a decree ordaining the salvation of an individual they are inoperative. The new theory departs from the clear and consolatory doctrine of the Lutheran Church and depraves the Lutheran system by introducing specifically Calvinistic elements. Indeed, offensive as the statement may be regarded, the new theory is only a modified form of Calvinism; and the modifications only render the system inconsistent without eliminating its horrors. It is in fact an absolute election, notwithstanding the strenuous efforts to save it from this reproach by explanations showing that the decree, absolutely formed with regard to the favored persons, is executed in a certain order; and the fixed and unalterable determination to save these favored persons implies that the means used must not only have the power to accomplish the end, but must in the case of such persons exert that power and attain that end, while in the case of others, in regard to whom God has formed no such purpose, the means, though they be still called efficacious, cannot exert power unto salvation, as the elect, and no others, shall be saved. The Calvinistic doctrine of the means of grace is therefore the necessary outcome of the Calvinistic decree of election; and sooner or later the new doctrine must work itself out into Calvinistic consistency, or be abandoned. All efforts to stop the evil working by telling people that

they must draw no conclusions, i. e. that they must not think, will be futile: error eateth as doth a canker. A remorseless application of the knife is mercy.

6. There is one more reason which we must mention for our opposition to the new Missouri doctrine. It is destructive of the comfort which the Gospel is designed to bring. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Rom. 15, 4. A doctrine which cannot abide this test must be rejected. It is true, the principal teacher of the new doctrine claims that it is especially consolatory. We have failed to see how this is possible, and many of those who have learned in his school and accepted his theory have failed to discover what he claims. We fear that those who find comfort in it are laboring under some strange delusion, and that when sharp conflicts come their comfort will forsake them. It not only can give no consolation, but it is well fitted to destroy such peace and joy and hope as the pure Gospel imparts. Let it be closely and calmly considered. God has resolved that a few persons, whom He has selected without any reference to their appropriation of Christ's merits by faith, shall and must be saved, and besides these few none are saved. The poor sinner belongs to either the one class or the other. If he could know that he belongs to those who shall and must be saved, there would be this consolation, at any rate, that whatever lack of mercy there may be towards others, whom God might have saved, as well as himself, if it had been His pleasure, he at least is among the singularly and inexplicably favored ones who are exalted above their fellows. But whether I am one of this select class I can know only by prying into the decree of God and extorting from Him the secret, or by a special revelation declaring to me that my name is recorded in the book of life, and that I shall, come what may, infallibly be saved. But the teachers of the new doctrine admit that in this way the secret cannot be found out. They admit even that it would be dangerous to attempt such a prying process, which would lead to Epicurean security on the one hand or gloomy despair on the other. In this aspect of the case there is no spiritual comfort in it and could be none.

But that, they say, is not at all the way in which comfort is to be extracted from the doctrine. It must be obtained by an experimental method, by an argument *a posteriori*. All those, they inform us, whom God has resolved to save, He leads to Christ by faith. His purpose is to save only in this way. Every one that believes therefore has the certainty of being on the way by which God leads the elect to eternal life, and may hence confidently conclude that he is one of the elect. But the theory is not yet sufficiently developed to make such an inference satisfactory to any soul that thinks. It presupposes some things which the advocates of the theory are not yet ready to admit. If only those whom God has resolved to save are effectually called; if the means of grace are efficacious only in the case of the elect; if only he whom God has predestinated to salvation ever becomes a true believer; if no one ever falls and is condemned who has truly believed in Christ,—then the fact that I am called and have faith legitimately leads to the conclusion that I am one of the elect. But if a person who is not elected may notwithstanding be effectually called, may be a sincere believer, and may finally fall away and perish, how can the consciousness that one believes in Christ furnish any assurance that he is one of the favored few? He may be one of those whom God has not embraced in His decree of election, and who shall perish notwithstanding all his efforts to be saved. Nay, though he be a believer, he must, if he lets the new theory become effectual in his soul, be through fear of death all his life-time subject to bondage, as his sin will convince him that he is a child of wrath, and nothing, with such a doctrine of election staring him in the face, can give him any ground of assurance that he will not be everlastingly damned as one whom the divine purpose of salvation did not include. But the Missourians may say, have we not the comfort of the general will of God to save all men, and must we not, if we believe the Word of God, believe the solemn declarations of God that He sincerely wills the salvation of all? Most assuredly we must. But that is the comfort which the Gospel, not the Missouri doctrine of election brings; and in order that this comfort may not be destroyed, we must reject the Missouri doctrine which finally falls helplessly and inconsistently back upon it. For

if we let that doctrine stand, the universal grace is so limited that we can not flee to it for refuge. The new doctrine would have us believe that there is saving grace only for the few embraced in God's purpose of election, and draw comfort from this on the ground that God will have mercy not only on these few, but on all men, we belonging to the few on whom He will really have mercy unto salvation because we belong to the many on whom He has mercy, but whom His mercy does not save unless they belong to the select few. We must turn our cup of salvation upside down to receive some special manna on the under side, then turn it up again, with all its contents spilled out, dropping the special gift also in the process, and having nothing, absolutely nothing, as the result of our maneuver. We shall, by the grace of God, be neither enticed nor driven into such folly, but shall abide by the old and well-established doctrine of the Church, that God desires with equal sincerity the salvation of all men, and that He saves, and has elected unto salvation, all those who do not obstinately resist the saving work of the Spirit. This gives us the sure comfort that God loves all of us, that He does everything necessary to save all of us, and that if any one is not saved it is because he would not come unto Christ that he might have life. The grace of God unto salvation that is for all men is also for me. What power could deprive me of that comfort, and what more could I want?

We have written with no consciousness of ill-will or bitterness towards those who advocate the new doctrine. We have labored together with them for many years, and have felt ourselves in harmony with them in the confession of Gospel truth and in loving devotion to the great work which God has called the Lutheran Church to perform in this favored land. But for the very sake of that faith and love which has hitherto bound us together we cannot go with them in their new departure. Rather, with more self-sacrifice than any reader has the means of knowing, we begin this new publication mainly to oppose their error, and to defend the old truth.



## MISSOURI RETRACTIONS.

There is nothing surprising in the fact that the theological organ of the Missouri Synod has recently contained articles designed to explain, correct, or retract expressions which had been used in exhibiting the doctrine of predestination promulgated by the leaders of that body. What is new must find adequate terms for its expression, and first efforts are not likely to be in every respect satisfactory. It is no disgrace to a man that, when he sets out upon an unbeaten path, he fails to make that path as plain to others as the accustomed highway, or that he sometimes deviates from the straight course. Nor is it at all unmanly to correct or revoke expressions which experience has shown to be unsuitable to the purpose. When a man has led his followers astray, the noblest thing he can do is to apprise them of his mistake and retrace his steps. The retractions made in the *Lehre und Wehre* do not, as mere retractions, prejudice in our mind the doctrine in whose interest they are made, except so far as they imply its novelty. This, in the nature of the case, must raise in candid minds a presumption against it.

But there is something more in these explanations than the mere fact that expressions were used which were found untenable. Their matter and their manner both merit scrutiny. While our chief controversy is with the substance of the new doctrine, which we are constrained to reject in whatever form it may be presented, a brief examination of the points embraced in the retractions will not be unprofitable.

1. First comes the proposition that "in God there are no conditions." It had been stated in the Minutes of a Missouri District Synod and repeated in the *Lehre und Wehre* that "there are no conditions in God, but such are ascribed to Him when it is alleged that He elects in view of faith." Of this Dr. Walther says that it was designed merely to reject the error that faith is the cause which moved God to election, but that, although it is defensible, it should be avoided in speaking of predestination, because it might lead to the belief that this is regarded as unconditional or absolute. Thus one stumbling block seems to be removed. But what is gained for truth when the expression is revoked and the

sense is urged anew? Those who look at mere words may be conciliated, but the error, not merely the words in which it is couched, is what offends those who stand in awe of God's Word. And that error is not abandoned. It stands out as boldly after the retraction as before. It is not said that election is unconditional, because that is a Calvinistic expression that has a bad odor to Lutheran nostrils; but it is maintained still that God, without reference to anything but His own good pleasure, elects to eternal life absolutely whom He wills.

To some this may seem an unjust imputation, inasmuch as the Missourians have expressly denied it and given reasons for their denial. Let us see. They do say that the election is "in Christ," and in this respect conditioned. But this does not mean that certain persons, having been led by the Holy Spirit to appropriate Christ's righteousness, are in foresight of this chosen to be God's dear children. They say that election is not in view of faith, but is the cause of faith. Hence God could not have regard to Christ appropriated by the individual in electing. To what did He have regard? To Christ as the Redeemer of the whole world? That could lead to no election of individuals, for as a cause considered independently of any circumstances in the objects it would lead to the acceptance of all, not the selection of a few. To what then, according to this theory, did God have regard in making a choice out of the equally condemned and equally redeemed multitude? To nothing whatever but His own good pleasure. The election is absolute.

But Dr. Walther exclaims: "How can an election be absolute, and thus unconditional, which is conditioned by the merits of Christ and by the faith which God has resolved to give the elect!" Very easily. How is it conditioned by faith? God ordained that whosoever believes shall be saved, and He elected every one unto salvation in whom He foresaw this condition to be fulfilled. That is conditional. Is that what Dr. Walther means? Far from it. He denies not only that faith is a condition under which the causes of election are productive of their results, but even that in the mind of God faith is prior to election. It is therefore utterly misleading when, in his doctrine of predestination, faith is repre-

sented as a condition. Not only is the language somewhat singular, when it is said that an act of God is conditioned by something which God intends to do, but the words used in this connection are confusing, befogging. What he means is simply that the election was coupled in the mind of God with the determination to lead the elect to their goal by the way of faith. The election was made without any conditions: there was no condition foreseen to be fulfilled, and there was no condition yet to be fulfilled. The election is represented as unconditional, although it is justly maintained that God pursues an established order in executing it. Dr. Walther's condition comes in after the eternal election is accomplished in the mind of God. But its introduction there would only render the execution of the divine decree hypothetical, which he cannot but consider absolutely certain. There is a mist hanging around the matter which the retraction has not dispersed, but rather made more dense.

2. In the *Lehre und Wehre* it was said, some years ago, in connection with the doctrine of election, that God's "grace removes the natural resistance, nay more, it overcomes even the most wanton contest and struggle against it, and bestows and preserves faith." Objections were raised against this as inculcating the Calvinistic error of irresistible grace. It is difficult for any candid mind to find in it any other meaning. The whole thesis of which it forms the first part sets it out as an unfathomable, awe-inspiring mystery, that God overcomes all resistance in some whom He purposes to save, and in others the resistance is not removed. It is part of a theory of predestination which makes it depend absolutely on the will of God who shall and must be saved, and therefore not only by logical necessity, but also by natural effect and practical result, who shall not and can not be saved, much as the right is denied to draw such logical consequences and see such natural effect. Is the theory now retracted of which the objectionable passage forms an indispensable part? If it were, thousands of sighing hearts would be made glad. But the retraction, as before, pertains only to the offensive language, and the revocation of that pacifies many because they innocently assume that the offensive thing is thus put out of the way. Dr. Walther merely admits that the words were not

sufficiently explained to guard against offense and misunderstanding, and that, as they may appear offensive even to faithful Lutherans, they should be revoked.

But this, too, is done in a way that is not perfectly frank and assuring. In the first place, it is denied that the words cited involve the doctrine of irresistible grace; "for," it is argued, "have not thousands who for a time opposed to grace a very wanton contest and struggle, been finally overcome and converted by that grace." The force of the argument is not apparent. The question is whether the doctrine that the most wanton struggle against grace is overcome implies that grace in such cases is irresistible. It is unfairly shifting the question to argue that the overcoming of resistance which was quite wanton for a time does not prove the conquering grace to be irresistible. That form of the question leaves two openings for escape. First, it leaves room for the position that the wanton resistance was not of the "most wanton" sort, and therefore does not require an irresistible grace to overcome it. Secondly, it gives a chance of evasion by assuming that the resistance which for a time was most wanton and would have required an irresistible grace to overcome it, subsequently ceased to be so, and was then overcome by a grace that was not irresistible. But the true question leaves no room for such evasions. It speaks of the "*most* wanton struggle and contest against grace." If grace is not resistible by the highest degree of resistance that man can place in opposition to it, it is simply irresistible. What could "irresistible grace" mean, if not that? Without shifting the question and thus misleading the careless reader, the whole argument is a pure begging of the question. That is exactly the point in dispute, whether grace overcomes "the most wanton struggle" against it in one man or in thousands, and whether, if it does, that grace is in such cases not irresistible.

In the second place, it does not tend to advance the cause of truth, though it may in the minds of some men screen the teachers of the new doctrine from some reproach, to say, in defense of the obnoxious expressions, that "God, if He chose to depart from His established order and to use His omnipotence, could convert all men." As to the substance of

this statement we have nothing to say. It is better not to presume too much on the wisdom of human speculations about God: it is wisdom not to be wise above that which is written. But what has this subtle question to do with the matter in hand? That God *could* resort to an irresistible grace, if He chose to depart from His established order, surely does not prove that He *does* depart from His established order in converting the elect, or that, assuming that He abides by that order, He *does* overcome the most wanton struggle against grace and thus, in their conversion, *does* use the irresistible grace which He *could* use if He departed from His own order. How can the cause of truth be subserved by thus mystifying the matter? Nor is the case rendered any more conducive to confidence by referring to the cases of extraordinary conversion, even granting all that is claimed for those cases. Is it designed to teach that the elect shall and must be saved by an irresistible grace without means, in order to escape the odium of teaching that they shall and must be saved by an irresistible grace through the appointed means? If that is not what is meant, what have these cases to do with the expressions revoked? It would be a better and a safer course to say that the expression, turn it and twist it as we may, implies the Calvinistic error, and therefore to retract this as well as the language in which it is couched.

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## THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

BY PROF. GEO. H. SCHODDE, PH. D.

The proper understanding and appreciation of the Old Testament requires a method of investigation which makes Christ the center. As Christ is the center of our faith, so He is also the center of the source of our faith, of the Word of God in both Testaments. The same God reveals them both for one single purpose, to show fallen humanity the way back to lost glory through the one Redeemer, Jesus Christ. He then must be, and is the burden of all revelation; and he who attempts to expel Christ from Moses and the prophets

strives virtually to deprive them of their main contents and to reduce their books to the level of merely human productions. This character of the Old Testament is clearly taught by our Lord in John 5, 39, where under the circumstances only the books of the old covenant can be meant; and whatever difference there may be between the utterances of the holy men in this regard before and after the time when the Word became flesh, must be a difference not of character and kind, but only of degree. That this difference of degree really exists no sane man will deny, and Augustine's dictum holds good here: *In Veteri Testamento Novum latet, in Novo Vetus patet.*\* Hence arises the interesting and important question as to the extent to which the person and offices of Christ were revealed before His appearance in the flesh. He was God and man. That His human nature was clearly foretold by the prophets of old seems to require no proof, as the prince of the house of David, i. e. Christ according to the flesh, is the perpetual and joyful burden of their preaching. Unanimous as investigators are on this subject, their divergence is equally great on the question as to whether His divine nature was also foretold. The old Church, to a man, answered this question affirmatively; the voice of modern investigation, with almost equal unanimity, says no. As a proper answer is of the utmost importance, an examination of the matter will not be without interest and profit.

The antecedent probabilities favor the old traditional views. The majestic and grand opening of the fourth Gospel: "The word became flesh," shows what stress revelation itself lays on the divine nature of the Savior, and furnishes in it the key with which to unlock the secrets of God's plans for the redemption of man, and of Christ's ability to perform this work. Christ as a man only would not be Christ the Savior of mankind; and as the Jehovah of the Old Testament reveals Himself to the chosen people as prepared to succor and save them through His Messiah, the probabilities would be that He would reveal those characteristics of the One to come by which alone He could perform the work for which He was sent. Revealed to Israel in His divine nature, His person-

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\* In the Old Testament the New is concealed, in the New the Old is revealed.

ality would be a sure voucher for them that His mission would not fail, and thus remove all doubt as to the sincerity of God's purposes. If, as is really the case, we find special events in His life predicted, such as the wonderful birth, traits of character, trial, crucifixion and death, it is more than probable that that characteristic which alone made these special events important to the heart of the prophet and to mankind, namely the divine nature, was also taught in the old covenant. If there is any uniformity in God's plans and revelation, then we must expect that under the old dispensation too not only Christ the son of David was revealed, but Christ the Son of God also.

This probability is made a certainty by the explicit statements of the Savior. Whatever doubts modern investigators may entertain as to the extent of the revelations in the Old Testament regarding the divinity of Christ, the Lord Himself entertained no such doubts, but distinctly claims His divinity as a fulfillment of prophecy. In Matt. 22, 41-45, He adduces Ps. 110 as an evidence that His claim to divinity was foretold by David, and the sophistic exegesis of the Pharisees by their silence allows this evidence to be incontrovertible. This proof is not broken by the dictum of modern criticism that this Psalm is not a production of David, but rather the work of one of his contemporaries and addressed to him; for this dictum is simply an assertion, and when it comes to choosing between the views of modern theology on the one hand and those of Christ on the other, a Christian can not be in doubt what leader to follow. Certainly the best commentary on the Old Testament is the New, and the best exegetes of Moses and the prophets are Christ and the apostles. When therefore the Lord interprets this Psalm as referring to His divine nature, and as being by David, this must be conclusive for us. Cf. Mark. 12, 35 ff. and Luke 20, 14 ff.

Having thus prepared the way we can proceed to the examination of the Old Testament books themselves with the expectation of finding frequent references, direct and indirect, to the divine nature of the Messiah. Nor will this hope be disappointed if the search is conducted in an unbiased spirit. We can feel no sympathy with the liberal school of investigators, headed by such men as Kuener, who attempt in every

possible way to rob the Old Testament of its supernatural and inspired character, to eradicate providence out of the annals of Israel, and deprive prophecy of its crown, which is Christ. By this method the Old Testament loses its religious importance, and becomes the human history of a narrow-minded and bigotted people, and is no longer a revelation from on High. The holy men of old spoke as they were moved by the Spirit of God, and with this distinct understanding must we examine their writings, if we would fathom their meaning. As the prophets of God they declared His will, and did not leave their readers in doubt as to the precise nature of their Messiah, but repeatedly and plainly stated that He would be divine and the Son of the living God. Not always was this done in the same way, or with the same degree of clearness, but clearly enough to remove all reasonable doubt on the subject. This a brief summary will show.

The religion of the Israelites was purely monotheistic, not only theoretically but practically also. This latter truth must be emphasized over against the opinion now so fashionable, that the mass of the people regarded Jehovah only as the national God of Israel. No true follower of Moses ever imagined that Kamosh was to the Moabite and Baal to the Phenician what Jehovah was to him. If Moses inculcated one doctrine without reservation or doubt, it was that Israel's God was the one and only true God, whose deeds were well known and concerning whose attributes revelation had clearly spoken. When then in the course of Israel's history the names, characteristics, attributes, and work of this only true God are ascribed to another person, and apparently without injury to strict monotheism, there can be no doubt whatever that the writers meant to speak of a person who is true God. The deep mystery of the Trinity does not burst upon the New Testament reader so entirely unexpected as many may believe, but was contained in its germs already in the Old. While throughout the Old Testament the oneness of God in His nature is taught with entire unanimity, the oneness of person is nowhere declared; but the evidences are sufficient that the pious men of old distinctly knew of at least two persons having divine attributes. In the period of the establishing of the Theocracy, God at various times



appeared to the patriarchs, not always personally, but frequently through His angel, whose official title is "the angel of Jehovah," or "the angel of the Lord." The description of this angel indicates that He is not one of the general class of ministering spirits, but *sui generis*. From His first appearance to Hazar, Gen. 16, 7, to His last in the prophets He stands forth conspicuously, and by His words, deeds, and history shows that He is a divine being. This angel identifies Himself with God, by claiming divine attributes and doing divine deeds. Cf. Gen. 22, 12; 16, 10; 17, 20; 13, 16; 15, 4. and especially Ex. 3, 6 ff. And, on the other hand, He is regarded by those to whom He appears as identical with Jehovah, and worshiped as such. Cf. Gen. 16, 13; Jud. 6, 15. 20; 13, 19 ff.\* A nation so jealous of the purity of its Monotheism as the Israelites, who saw in the Polytheism of heathendom a crime of most flagrant character, could never have thought and spoken thus of a created angel, but regarded this peculiar "Angel of Jehovah" as equally divine with Jehovah Himself. That they did not regard Him as Jehovah appearing in the form of an angel, is clearly indicated by the very title "Angel of Jehovah," by which their personalities are separated. He is sent in the same way in which Christ is sent in the New Testament in obedience to His Father's will, and is even called "the Apostle of God." Heb. 3, 1. Whether appearing as "the Angel of Jehovah," as He generally does in the earlier history, or as "the angel of His presence," as in later prophecy, the idea always remains the same. He is a being identical with God as to nature and attributes, but different from Him as to personality. That the New Testament also regarded Him in this light is negatively clear from the fact that after the appearance of Christ in the flesh, this angel disappears entirely; for although frequent references are made to *an* angel of the Lord, this specific angel, the Revealer in the Old Testament, ceases to appear,—a valuable hint of the identity of this angelic Revealer with the revealed Word. Positively we have the evidence of John's Gospel. He assumes the existence of the Logos from the beginning of the world, and this announcement he does not consider as en-

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\* Cf. discussion of these and other passages in the English translation of Hengstenberg "Christology of the Old Testament." Vol. IV. p. 282 sqq; and in Bibliotheca Sacra, Oct. 1879 p. 593 sqq.

tirely new, but as evident from the words of the prophets. Judging from the light the New Testament writers throw on the subject; guided by a fair interpretation of the passages bearing on the subject; and considering the basis of the unity of God's plan and revelation in both Testaments, impartiality must claim that the divinely endowed and adored "Angel of Jehovah" of the Old Covenant is He who appeared in the New as the "Word that became flesh."

An appeal to the Jewish literature of the times between Malachi and Matthew furnishes sufficient evidence that this is not transferring the New Testament ideas into the Old. While laboring under Syrian and Roman tyranny the pious of the chosen people turned their eyes to the Promised One of whom the prophets had spoken, and in all the literature of that time there is scarcely one book that describes the Messiah as a mere man. He is the divinely ordained Redeemer, divine in person and power, who shall save the people. Thus these minds, trained only by the ideas of the Old Testament and educated in the strict monotheistic and legalistic school of Ezra and his followers, did not regard it contrary to the writings and traditions of the fathers to place by the side of the one and only true God, another co-equal divine person that was to fulfill the purposes of God among His people. The Targumin, the Septuagint, such works as the *Psalterium Salomonis*, *Assumptio Mosis*, and especially the Book of Enoch and the "Logos" of Philo, bear ample testimony to the truth of these statements.\*

But not only do the appearances of a second person in the one Godhead during the time of the development of Israel's history indicate a divine being, but this is done also by the prophecies concerning the future Messiah. Unlike other nations of antiquity, the Jews looked not to the dim past for their golden age, but to the future; the consummation of all their vivid hopes, the perfecting of all that was imperfect, the sanctification of all that was unholy, was looked for in the time when the Anointed of the Lord should appear. For

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\* The writer has discussed this topic at length in an article in the "Lutheran Quarterly" July, 1879, entitled: The Messianic idea in Pre-Christian apocalyptic literature. Cf. Langin, *Judenthum in Palestina zur Zeit Christi*, and Schuerer, *Neutestamentliche Zeitgeschichte*, *passim*.

although Jehovah Himself is the Father of the chosen people, and it should be His work to lead them to future glory, yet this should all be done through the agency of the new King, through the Messiah. It was this idea and hope that sustained an almost despairing people, and taught them to look up, from the darkness of almost hopeless reality, with longing eyes to the first rays of the rising sun of righteousness. If there is one hope that fills the hearts of all the prophets, it is the glorious advent of the Messiah. And as the object of such fervent hope and prayer it is no more than natural that God should have spoken often, through His servants the prophets, of the person and office of the Redeemer, and have thus given them a clear idea of what He was to be, so that, when He would arrive, there would be no doubt in reference to His identity. This He did, and accordingly we find the Messiah portrayed with such vividness as only inspired vision could see; and what we hear of Him is plain enough to make the simplest soul understand that this being would be divine. Brevity will permit us to point to only a few striking passages in this connection—to those which can be called the *sedes doctrinae*. An important hint is already furnished by those utterances which speak of the Messiah as preexistent, especially in Micah 5, 2, where it is said of the Messiah that His “goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” True, the word “everlasting” (Hebrew: *Olam*) is occasionally used in a limited temporal sense, as it literally means time hidden from view (from *alam*, to hide), but wherever not modified by surrounding words, it is used in the absolute metaphysical sense of eternity, as modern language employs it. In this sense it is used here, and thus teaches the preexistence in eternity of the Messiah. Hand in hand with this passage, and teaching the same lesson, goes Dan. 7, 13, where the one who is like “a son of man” (not, “*the* son of man,” as the English version has it) is evidently regarded as having existed long before his appearance with the Ancient of days. This idea of preexistence in the Old Testament need not strike us as strange, for it is one that is met with occasionally, e. g. in Prov. 9, 22-30, where personified wisdom speaks of itself as preexistent; and from these passages it was transferred into later apocalyptic and church literature. But a preexisting per-

son is more than human, is divine, and hence the preexisting Messiah must also be divine.

The higher nature of the Messiah is further indicated in the much disputed passage Is. 7, 14, where His birth from an "Alma," a virgin, is a proof that His nature is above the human. And as the kernel of the sign is that His name shall be Immanuel, "God with us," the name shows that through His person and work, God is brought nearer to fallen mankind. All doubts on this subject must be removed by a comparison of Is. 9, 5 f. where the Messiah bears such names as only a divine being can have. Of especial importance is here the name "The mighty God" (el-gibbor) by which the Messiah is clearly called a God, for the same title is frequently applied to Jehovah Himself. Cf. Deut. 10, 17; Jer. 32, 18; Neh. 9, 32; Ps. 24, 8.<sup>1</sup> The Messiah is here a divine being, and this is stated so clearly that there is no "mysterious indefiniteness" about it, as Oehler, in Herzog IX. p. 415, assumes. Add to these passages those that describe His personal characteristics of absolute righteousness, sinlessness, justice, wisdom, and the like, which are so frequently found in the writings of the prophets, and we will see how accurate Christ was when He claimed that His divinity had been predicted. For that Christ was none other than the Messiah of the prophets admits of no rational doubt, and is, in fact, conceded even by the liberal school.

This view derived from the predictions concerning the natures of the Anointed is corroborated by the prophecies concerning His work. If the work to be performed by the Messiah is such as is possible for a human being to perform, then we would have some reason to believe that He was to be merely a human being; if, however, His work surpasses that which is human, then His nature too must be superhuman. The prophecies concerning Him amply testify that the latter is the case. No understanding of the Old Testament can approach completeness without due appreciation of the importance it lays on sin. Human depravity and loss of the sonship of God is the idea underlying all its revelations, hopes, and fears. Deeply religious, Israel sought above all

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Delitzsch in his Commentary on this passage.

things deliverance from the just wrath of God, and found this deliverance in the Messiah. We must not allow our vision of the prophets to be dimmed by the misinterpretation of the contemporaries of Christ, who imagined that they predicted only a King of glory in a carnal sense. True, they did predict a King of glory, rising from humble origin and developing into a mighty sovereign, but it was the King of peace, of that peace that surpasses understanding, of the peace between God and man. They could therefore consistently unite with this resplendent vision, the idea of a suffering, and necessarily, the idea of an atoning Messiah. Were the Messianic idea simply a natural production of Israel's life and history, then the combination of these two apparently contradictory characteristics in the person of their hero would be surprising; but as that idea is a product of revelation and not of national development, the strangeness is only a seeming one. Not one of the works of the Messiah is more clearly defined by the prophets than His suffering and vicarious atonement. The idea of an innocent one suffering for the sins of the transgressors runs through the whole Old Testament, and is concentrated in the picture of the "Servant of Jehovah" in the second part of Isaiah, chapters 40 to 66, and in some of the latter prophets, especially in Zech. 9 to 12, as also in the Messianic Psalms. Modern criticism may see in this servant a collective idea of the faithful in Israel; we will be content with Christ's interpretation that it refers to Him personally. So plain is the picture of the future Messiah and the redemption of mankind through Him, especially in Isaiah 53, that the two states, the vicarious death, and the threefold office, are drawn with such vividness as if the prophets had the historical Christ before them.\* The idea is that the transgressions of the people are cast upon the innocent shoulders of the Servant of Jehovah, that He takes this burden willingly, endures insults, tortures and death for His people, and thus brings the long hoped-for freedom and deliverance. With the deep consciousness of sin that the pious of Israel had, as is evident in Moses, the Psalmists, and the prophets, it is clear that they could not ascribe this work of atonement to a

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\* Cf. especially Delitzsch on these passages, and Hengstenberg, l. c. p. 332, sqq.

human being; nay, they often explicitly state that it was beyond the ability of men, even of the patriarchs, to save themselves, and hence could not ascribe the redemption of the entire people to a mere human being. But they do ascribe it to the Messiah, and in such confident words, that they apparently entertained no doubt whatever about the matter. In ascribing to Him a superhuman work they, *eo ipso*, predicate of Him a superhuman character.

A closer study of the passages referring to the subject, which are found in abundance throughout the Old Testament, will testify to the truth that has been here summarily stated. The two Testaments are intimately interwoven, and the greatest revelation under the new dispensation, the Word made flesh, and the redemption through the sufferings and death of our Lord, was not hidden from the pious souls of the old. To this belief the Church, following the examples of Christ and the apostles, has always clung; and here too, as in many other respects, an impartial examination shows that the traditional views are correct, and that modern rationalism, in its attempt to separate the two Testaments and, so far as possible, to drive Jehovah and Christ from the Old, is following not true hermeneutics and exegesis, but only preconceived notions and unproved assumptions. Christ is the Savior, not only of those under the new dispensation, but also of those under the old; and as such He was revealed by God to them with sufficient clearness for them to understand His person and His work.

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### “DAS WORT SIE SOLLEN LASSEN STAN!”

BY PROF. C. H. L. SCHUETTE, A. M.

There are published in this and other lands theological magazines which show forth diversities of spirits no less than diversities of gifts. Attention is called to this simply as a matter of fact; and not to pass judgment upon that class of publications, but to express the hope that the Columbus Magazine will not prove itself to be of that order; rather, that it will be characterized by diversities of gifts in one and the same Spirit, even the Spirit of truth and of God.

In our day, perhaps more than ever, men would exalt themselves and occupy the very place of God. "They speak loftily." Nothing can be, unless they can comprehend it; things inconceivable to the mind of man are for them simply nonentities. Since there is no room for God in their brains, there is no God. What they please to perceive and pronounce to be true, that is truth, and there is none other. They consider it to be their prerogative to determine what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what bad. It occurs to them, in some way and for some reason, that between the mythologies of the far past and the Christian theology of the present there is none but a formal difference; both are the creations of an idle fancy: they say so, and so it must be; only fools will think otherwise. On the other hand, it is the very sum of wisdom, they say, to worship self as the thing supreme, to look upon reason as the unerring and all-sufficient light of man, its achievements as his glory, and the object of life to be to provide for the flesh and—to fulfill the lusts thereof.

And what is the attitude of Christians in view of this garish reign of reason and lust? They stand in opposition, indeed, but not firmly; they fight, indeed, for their Lord and His kingdom, but not valiantly. Many there are among them who do not see that times are evil, and that the fight against the evil is not well fought by thousands. Because the world, in many respects, has adopted the form of godliness, they think that it has likewise submitted to the power thereof—that Christianity in its conquest is making rapid strides just now, and that soon the kingdoms of this world will all be the kingdoms of God's Son, so that throughout this earth righteousness and peace shall kiss each other, and all men shall be as perfectly happy as they shall be perfectly holy. Looking at the Church and the world through their chiliastic spectacles, all is well. "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" Luke 18, 8. But let not appearances deceive us. If ever the powers of darkness were bitter in hatred of God and man; if ever they were well organized and determined to overthrow the Lord's kingdom; if ever they were great in craftiness and rich in resources,—that day is now—now that reason and its

accomplishments find so great favor in the eyes even of many professing the Christian religion. Then, also, let us but acknowledge it, the spirit among Christians generally is not one of hearty and bold confession, but that of blind and ignominious concession. To deny unto the Lord the things that are the Lord's, and concede them unto men; to reduce, as much as possible, to a common level the omnipotence and omniscience of God and the impotence and foolishness of man,—such is the order of the day in modern Christianity. He who ventures to protest is said to be behind the times and is set down as a bigot.

There was a time when to believe and confess that the Bible is God's infallible Word was but to confess the common faith of Christendom. Those who dissented were pronounced heretics; and such heretics then were few. But now, the Bible is said to be God's Word more or less; and the advocates of the old doctrine are stigmatized as heretics; and would to God that of such there were more! For says the Spirit: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3, 16. 17. According to this clear and pertinent testimony of the Spirit of God concerning His own organ of communication, the Scriptures are God's Word; and that not in part, but wholly. He, therefore, who says that God's Word is in the Bible, speaks the truth, but not the whole truth. The whole truth, as here taught, requires him to say that the Bible, the whole Bible, is God's Word. Indeed, to say that the Word of God is in the Scriptures, as do most of the clergy and divines of our time, is stating the truth in a way calculated only to do mischief. A species of eclecticism is thereby introduced which, if followed, is nothing less than a complete surrender of all revealed truth. For who is to decide which passage is and which again is not inspired? Each man for himself? If so, according to what rule? A rule of his own device it must be, for God has given nothing of the kind. What good then can it possibly do him, since he can have no certainty of its correctness? Thus all certainty as to what is and what is not divine truth is taken away; and if we have no better foundation of faith than the one furnished us by the vague



statement that somewhere in the Scriptures truth is revealed of God, we might as well have no foundation at all. Nay, rather than lose our faith and give up the peace of soul and hope of life it yields, let us hold fast to the old truth that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." Sufficient unto us is the witness of the Spirit in our hearts that therein we are not deceived.

But why is it that the true and fundamental doctrine concerning the inspired Word is thus mutilated and denied by so many in Christendom? It is not for us to judge the motive, but it is our right and duty to inquire into and examine the reasons assigned. So doing the rationale presenting itself is this, that between truth and truth, whatever be its source, there can be no conflict; that all truths must constitute one harmonious whole. But now the results of philosophy and of the speculative sciences are found, in many respects, to oppose the plain statements of the Bible; ergo, the latter must be wrong and cannot be wholly inspired. Modestly to suggest that the results of human speculation may be wrong and that the Bible may be right after all, is said not to be a philosophical and scientific way out of the difficulty, and therefore out of the question. Everybody now has the right to question and doubt biblical statements; but woe to him who ventures to express distrust as to the dicta of the great and godlike master-mind of man. And thrice woe unto him who so does on grounds of the Christian faith and doctrine! The spirit of the age demands that every thing, call it God, God's work, or God's Word, must submit itself to the test of the all-seeing, all-fathoming, all-grasping, and all-judging and adjusting reason of man. Has it not invented the steam-engine, the telegraph, the telephone? Is it not reason that commands the lightning and assigns to the sun and moon and stars their course? Is not all literature its sole product? Aye, and what are the miracles of creation and redemption, if such there be, as compared with things such as these? It is to this arrogant and blasphemous spirit that we find the pew and the pulpit of many a church surrendered. It is this spirit that the laity and clergy have learned to fear and love more than the Lord God, whom they say they serve. It is in this way that thanks are returned to the Creator for the gift

of the mind, and to Providence for His gracious direction of the mind, that it might accomplish something for the common good of man. In truth: "Undank ist der Welt Lohn!" and Christians would seem to follow the ways of the world.

A blind and an inordinate regard for human abilities and accomplishments, coming little short of worship here and there, is the reason we assign for the departure from the doctrine that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." In order not wholly to sacrifice all ground for Christian doctrine and faith, these would-be Christians compromise with the rationalistic spirit by saying, as we have seen, that the Word of God is in the Scriptures. If we ask them where, the ingenious and sophistical theory is set up that whatever in the Scriptures pertains to man's redemption and regeneration is inspired; and that all statements appertaining to history, science, and philosophy are of questionable origin and import. By palaver such as this they attempt to quiet the conscience, to save the faith, to insure the Lord's cause, and at the same time to appease and satisfy the ruling spirit of the day. This frets and scolds because things are revealed and taught in the Bible which man is thought to be able to discover and learn by a light of his own. No doubt, the above theory will meet the approval of all those who object to the Bible because it teaches the creation of the world in six days, that Adam is the progenitor of our race, that the world is but a few thousand years old and that it shall not long endure, that Christ turned water into wine, etc. But the proposition can not satisfy an enlightened and consistent believer in Christ, for the simple reason that in fact it propounds an impossibility. There is nothing in the Bible which does not pertain to the redemption and regeneration of man. The distinction suggested, if it exists, can not here be drawn. What after all is to determine the purely ethical and religious, and separate it from the purely rational, so long as both the fact and extent of inspiration are matters of dispute? Or is reason to decide what is ethical and religious? If so, we might as well bid farewell to all true morality and religion at once, for there will be none left. No, Christ is the sum and substance of the Bible; its every line points to Him, as from Him it has proceeded. And not only does the Spirit

declare that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God;" but He further says that All Scripture "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Besides, the very fact that the Scriptures contravene the perverted reason of man at all times and in all places, and that it condemns the lusts of the flesh, is a strong evidence that they are not the product of man, but the revelation of God. Rather therefore than conspire with reason and pander to lust where they oppose the Word of God, Christians should, for that very reason, cling more firmly and cherish more dearly the words opposed.

Let him who will, laugh at those who receive all the Scriptures as God's own precious Word; these have the assurance that the Word they believe is able to save their souls, that it is a sure Word and a light above all lights, and that it shall endure forever, even as He endures who gave it, and as does the salvation which it brings.

"The Word of God they shall let stand,  
And not a thank have for it."

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## PREDESTINATION.

Translated from Dr. J. G. Baieri *Compendium Theologiae Positivae* by  
Prof. C. A. Frank.

§ 1. *Whom and in what manner God in time leads to salvation, those and thus from eternity He decreed to lead to salvation in time. To this the terms predestination (b) and (c) election refer.*

a) *For God does nothing in time, which to do in time He has not decreed from eternity. And thus the acts which God performs in time are related to God's eternal decree as its execution; and therefore the precise agreement between both must be recognized. But concerning those eternal decrees which perhaps otherwise would remain hidden, we can be best informed by learning from the revelation, what and in which manner God works in time. Hence, having learned from His Word the manner and way, in which God leads men in time*

to salvation, we shall so much the more easily learn the eternal decree concerning the saving of men.

b) In Greek *proorismos*, according to Eph. 1, 5; Rom. 8, 29. 30. There is, however, in this passage denoted a destination of an object to a certain purpose, and by virtue of the particle *pre* it signifies a destination of an object before this object exists. Treading in the footprints of Scripture, which nowhere uses the term predestinate, respecting men, in a bad sense, we take predestination for the foreordination to eternal life only.

c) In Greek *ekloge* acc. to Eph. 1, 4; Rom. 8, 33. Respect is here had to the number of those who are saved, and have therefore by a divine decree been destined to salvation, who, indeed, are but few *selected from* a great number of men and set apart from the rest. Some qualify this election by calling it an election to *glory*, distinguishing it from that which they call election to *grace*, or to the means of salvation. But according to the custom received by our churches, the term *election*, absolutely so used, denotes that election which has in view eternal life itself. And thus *election* is substantially the same thing as *predestination*; although on account of the diversity of that which they imply; namely, the latter implying the antecedence of ordination, the former implying the promiscuous mass of sinful men, a certain distinction may be admitted.

§ 2. *By the terms predestination and election* SOMETIMES the decree concerning THE WHOLE WORK (a) of leading men to salvation is denoted, SOMETIMES in a peculiar sense (b) the decree CONCERNING CERTAIN MEN, who are assuredly to be saved, and are known to the divine intellect under a certain relation.

a) This is the *wider* use of the terms, wherein, so to speak, the *whole* of God's process in the work of salvation, as it shall take place in time, is conceived to have been decreed from eternity; in which sense *predestination*, or *God's eternal election*, is said to perceive the salvation of God's children and to arrange the things thereto pertaining. See the Formula Concordiae Article XI, § 4. And certain grades are enumerated, in which election or predestination should consist. See the Solida Declar. Art. XI.

b) Thus writes the sainted G. Gundisius in his notes to

the Compend of Hutter, LXIII. Q. V. § 1 p. 797: "The term predestination is taken either in a wide or in a narrow sense. When it is taken in a wide sense, it embraces the whole preparation of the means of salvation; in this sense the Formula of Concord uses this very word in the Solid. Declaratio Art. XI. In the narrow sense this term signifies the ordination of believers to salvation which has been made according to God's purpose. And in this way the *prothesis*, or purpose, and *proorismos*, or predestination, must here be considered as distinct from one another." This use in a narrower sense also the sainted Balth. Meisner acknowledged when he writes in his Anthropol. § 71: "First God ordained the means for all; but because not all were willing to accept them, He did not elect all. Thus the decree concerning the means is in order prior to the decree of election, and therefore the merit of Christ embraced by faith and considered from eternity, is not the means of the decree, but its cause. But more shall be said concerning this hereafter.

§ 3. *In order to know the decree of predestination, so far as it pertains to the whole work of saving man, we must diligently observe THE ORDER (a) of the divine acts, as in the image of reason, (b) according to the divine revelation, (c) one follows the other.*

a) To this pertain those grades of which predestination consists, according to the Formula of Concord in the passage quoted, and which we shall soon consider.

b) For as to the thing itself we must confess, that on account of the most perfect simplicity and immutability of God there are in Him no such acts of the intellect and will as are really distinct and follow one another.

c) For it is not allowed to imagine either the acts themselves, or their series and order, according to our mode of thinking; but we must consider what God Himself teaches us concerning the acts of His intellect and will, and how, according to Scripture, one act presupposes another, but not the reverse; especially must we be careful lest we ascribe to God one act in such a manner as to exclude or to subvert another which ought to be recognized no less, yea as the prior.

§ 4. *Because God in His infinite goodness (a) loved men, not*

only when He created (b) them in the first man after His divine image, but also follows them, viewed in the fallen Adam as sinners, with such love (c) that to procure their salvation He gave to all His Son as a Redeemer (d): we must also know that, although God had from all eternity (e) foreseen that men would become corrupted by sin, He nevertheless, to procure their salvation, DECREED TO GIVE HIS SON, who should pay the price of redemption for ALL (f).

a) By which He is good not only in Himself, but also towards others, toward His creatures, and desires to lead them to the end to which He has created them.

b) As His work, being very good, and not yet defiled or corrupted by the fall.

c) For thus Paul testifies 1 Tim. 2, 4: "God will have all men to be saved." "All men," for whom the believers are to pray; all, I say, and every one that exists, not in the state of integrity, but after the fall, and are therefore sinners, no one being excluded, not even the tyrants under whom they lived, nor Nero himself, who never was converted." "Will," He not only signifies by the external Word, as if He willed, but He wills in truth and seriously. "To be saved," to attain to the true and eternal salvation.—Otherwise we should not call that will, indeed, which aims at the salvation of all, a decree, properly speaking: for the term *will* has a broader meaning. And here, too, belongs that distinction between the *antecedent* and *consequent* will.

d) To this must be referred the saying of Christ, John 3, 16: "So", (with such a great, serious, and efficacious love,) "God so loved the world," (the whole multitude of earth's inhabitants, which embraces the *believers and unbelievers*, as it is afterwards, v. 18, divided into these two classes; but here "the world" is viewed as the antitype of that promiscuous multitude of Israelites, who of old were afflicted by the bite of fiery serpents on account of their rebellion against God, and were at the point of death, according to v. 14. 15), "that He gave His only begotten Son" (namely, to that very world, or human race, which must otherwise perish, He gave His Son as the antitype of the brazen serpent to be lifted up on the cross according to v. 15), that it might not be necessary for sinful men to perish, but that (rather) the world might be saved through Him: or that all men in the world might have some

One, through whom in the serious intention of God, loving them most sincerely, they might be saved; and those would actually be saved, who should not resist; likewise as the brazen serpent had been lifted up for the benefit of all the wounded, that all might have the means to be healed, according to v. 14. 15. 16. Compare Rom. 8, 2. 3, where it is said that *God* had seen it to be impossible for men to be saved through the law, because through their *carnal* birth and original depravity they had become unfit to fulfill the law; and that therefore God, willing to succor them in their weakness and in order that the defect might be supplied, had sent His own Son, who in place of wretched men fulfilled the law and in the likeness of sinful flesh made satisfaction to the law.

e) For God knew from eternity all things which should come to pass in time, however contingent they may be, and he knew them immediately in themselves. Assuredly the will of God to send men a Redeemer from sins, supposes a knowledge of the sins of men.

f) Nor did the act of the will, which looks to the sending of the Redeemer, begin in God only in time; but it must be confessed, that God, who sent the Mediator in time, sent Him according to His eternal decree. And thus, since of a certainty He sent Him for the benefit of all sinful men, it must be confessed, that it was decreed from of old that He should be sent, not for the benefit of a few who were selected from some mere good pleasure, but for the benefit of all.

§ 5. *As God in time proclaims, that those will actually receive salvation through Christ's merit who (a) believe in Christ; moreover as God Himself, that all might be able to believe in Christ, has so promulgated the doctrine (b) of faith that it could reach the hearing and hearts of all (c): so it must also be acknowledged, that God from eternity willed that (d) all men should believe, and (e) decreed to offer, by promulgating the doctrine concerning Him to all for reception the Mediator, whom He had resolved to send.*

a) To this pertains that John 3, 16. *the love of God* is so applied to all men, that still the actual delivery from destruction and the obtaining of eternal life is limited to the

*believers*: because, after men have been divided in the following 8th verse into *believers* and *unbelievers*, it is said of the former that *they shall not be condemned*; of the latter, however, that on account of their own unbelief they are liable to *damnation*.

b) According to the passage: "*How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?*" Rom. 10, 14. "*Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.*" 10, 17.

c) To make the call universal it is certainly not necessary, that the doctrine of the Gospel should be announced to all and every one publicly and directly by special heralds sent by God; but it suffices, that the doctrine is so promulgated or has been so promulgated, as to enable all, (who are obligated to search for the true and saving religion and are able by applying their reason rightly to know a certain and saving religion to be extant somewhere) to obtain the knowledge thereof; not, however, that some are prevented by God, by reason of an absolute good pleasure (which is not pleased to place them within reach of that doctrine and denies them every way of obtaining knowledge thereof).

d) For although it may be rightly said, that God willed all to be saved, *if they believe*; yet it must also be stated, that God willed *that all should believe*, or *that all should come unto the knowledge of the truth* (or of the true doctrine divinely revealed) which He Himself testifies to be His will. 1 Tim. 2, 4.

e) Of course we do *not* call that will, according to which God wills that all should believe (as likewise that according to which God wills that all should become saved: concerning which see Note c, § 4) *a decree*. But this act of the divine will, by which God resolved upon promulgating the doctrine of the Mediator between God and men in such a manner, that it might come to the knowledge of all and all might obtain faith, is correctly called *a decree*.

§ 6. *As God in time connects with His Word divine power, through which the assent of supernatural faith to be placed in this Word, and thus faith in Christ, may be kindled, and is kindled whenever man receives the Word itself without malicious resistance (a): so it is certain that God from eternity decreed to concur with the Word to be preached in time,*



*powerfully and graciously to produce (b) the disposition of faith, in order that no one should remain without faith, unless he condemn the means by which faith or grace itself is bestowed.*

a) To this pertains the passage, 1 Tim. 2, 4: “*God will have all men to come unto the knowledge of the truth,*” through which they become saved and in the same measure come to saving faith. Whence it follows by all means, that God, so far as He is concerned, is ready and willing to confer the power of coming to that saving knowledge, or the power of believing, so that no one is excluded by God out of a mere, absolute good pleasure of His; and that therefore, on the other hand, the cause and fault, why some do not obtain the same, rests necessarily with them. And thus also Christ expressly teaches, Matt. 22, 36, that it is not an absurdity, but happens *very* often (although it is a sad occurrence) that those whom He seriously *desires to gather to Himself*, or, as much as rests with Him, to bestow upon them conversion and faith, by which they might be united with their Mediator and obtain grace and salvation, *refuse to be converted*, and hinder and exclude that faith which they otherwise would obtain.

b) For if God voluntarily gives faith in time through the Word to all who do not resist, and gives it according to an eternal decree of His will, it must be confessed, that this eternal decree of God has for its end the bestowal of faith in time through the Word upon all who do not resist.

§ 7. *Furthermore, as God in time justifies all who believe in Christ and, unless they expel faith and the Holy Spirit (a) by sins against conscience, renews them more and more, or sanctifies them and preserves and strengthens faith itself to the end of their life: so it must be acknowledged, that God from eternity (b) decreed to confer upon all those who would be believers in Christ in time the grace of justification and renovation, and furthermore to sanctify them when they use the means aright, and to preserve their faith and to confirm it unto the end of their life.*

a) Which they, indeed, can do.

b) For since God in time justifies, sanctifies all believers, and preserves and confirms faith in all who continue to use the means of grace, and because He does this of His

own will and according to His eternal decree: it must be confessed, that this very eternal decree of God has for its end the justification of all believers, as well as the renovation of all the justified who will continue to use the means of grace aright and are as such foreseen, and the final preservation and confirmation of faith in them all.

§ 8. *Finally, as God in time actually saves (a) all those who believe in Christ till their end, there must also be acknowledged an eternal decree (b) of God assuredly to save in time all those who will perseveringly believe.*

a) Or, as others express themselves: "He glorifies" from Rom. 8, 30.

b) For God gives blessedness willingly in time to those who persevere in their faith, and this by virtue of an eternal decree, according to Matt. 25, 34, and therefore His eternal decree to save certain men pertains to them as such who will believe to their end.

§ 9. *And because God from eternity foresaw (a) which men would believe to their end, and decreed to save these as such (b), the eternal decree of imparting eternal salvation to those who persevere in faith, was made in foresight of Christ's merit and of faith in Christ, and is, precisely considered, called in a special (c) sense predestination or election.*

a) By virtue of His omniscience, by which He knows all things, also those that happen contingently, immediately in themselves.

b) According to the preceding §.

c) Here consider what we have said under §2. Note (b).

§ 12.\* *To the causes of election in the so-called (a) stricter sense, to the causes that are virtually (b) causative, pertains I. the efficient (c) cause, which is God (d) the triune. (e)\*\**

a) For this must now be considered more distinctly. And although we could assign to election, taken in a wider sense, also some causes: it is nevertheless certain that in the consideration of the causes of election in the schools a

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\* §§ 10 and 11 treat of reprobation, and are here omitted.

\*\* A cause is *formally* causative, when it possesses all the conceptions and relations of a cause; *virtually* causative, when it possesses only the power of efficacy without the material part of a cause. TRANS.

stricter signification of the term is employed, as will become more manifest from the following.

b) For the acts of the divine will, and such a one is election, do not differ in reality from the divine essence: and likewise as the divine essence itself is not produced, so also they are not produced in reality, nor do they know any causes of themselves, so called in their exact meaning, or causes that are *formally causative*, which makes another thing to be what it is. Thus also our fathers taught formerly against Conrad Vorstius, for instance the sainted *John Gerhard* Exeg. L. II. de Not. Dei § 277: "God does not produce in Himself new actions of the intellect or will, as men or angels do, which are accidental and distinct from His essence, but the act of His intellect and will is God's very essence.

The distinction between the cause that causes formally and that causes *virtually* has also been used in this subject by the sainted *Scherzer* in his System. L. XVIII p. 511. 512. Nor must those be considered unnecessarily subtle, who here retain the term of a cause according to a manner of speaking received in our Church till now, who at the same time, however, and from a necessity of distinguishing the wholesome doctrine from the error of Vorstius and the Socinians, and also from the sophisms of the Reformed, who feigned our opinion of the cause of election to be related to the errors of Vorstius and the Socinians: who, I say, rightly point out that here we must not understand a cause which views that which is caused as something really distinct from the infinite and unchangeable essence of God, which would be required in a cause formally and rigorously so called. Now, whoever acknowledges that the simplicity of God's essence evidently does not admit the specific differences between causes and effects, must also needs acknowledge that between those acts which are one in reality with God's essence and God Himself there can be no such difference between causes and effects, on account of the same simplicity. And when the term *causè* is taken in its *purified sense*, in so far as it may be applied to God, we must of course return to the very thing that has been said concerning the cause that *virtually* causes. Nor must we neglect the distinction between the *immanent* acts, for instance predestination, and the *transitive* acts, for instance

the call and glorification of men. For the latter, inasmuch as they signify something really produced in the creatures external to God, certainly admit a cause, causing them formally; the former do not so admit this.

c) To whom, as the agent, election or predestination is attributed, so that hence we may call Him the predestinating or electing Cause.

d) Just as God is otherwise called the Cause of the acts of His will.

e) Eph. 1, 5 our predestination or election is, indeed, ascribed to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, but the other Persons are not excluded; for since they are one in essence, so, too, the acts of their will belong to them all in like manner. There is, however, in the passage quoted, the electing placed in special reference to Him, in whom He elected, as we shall soon set forth.

§ 13. *The moving (a) internal cause is the goodness, or the compassion and gratuitous (b) favor of God. (c)*

a) Causing not *formally*, but *virtually*; or as the reason a priori, which, according to our mode of perception, in the genus of the moving cause exhibits itself in relation to the act of the divine will as a cause, so that if the act should be caused, or in reality produced, this would stand forth truly and in fact, in the genus of the moving cause, as the cause of that act.

b) In the same manner in which Paul, 2 Tim. 1, 9, connects *the purpose and grace* of God, in opposition to our good works, and says that the grace *had been given us before the world began*. And when he writes to the Ephes. 1, 5, 6, that God *predestinated us to the praise and glory of His grace*, he manifestly indicates that predestination proceeded or takes its origin from that *grace* of God as its cause or moving reason. And because the act by which the believers are saved in time exhibits the grace of God to be its moving cause, we must confess, that also the decree of saving the believers rests upon the same reason or moving cause. Compare what we have set forth, § 1, note (b), and what we shall state more fully in the following §.

c) Or that antecedent will, which is called the fountain and origin of our salvation.

§ 14. *The external moving cause (a), and that the principal (b) moving cause, is the merit (c) of Christ. (d)*

a) Causing virtually, as we have shown in the notes to §§ 12 and 13.

b) Which in virtue of its own dignity, perfection, and power, is related to the decree of predestination as the impulsive reason, in view of which God decreed from eternity to give us eternal life. Sometimes it is called *meritorious*, because by reason of a *merit* it moves the will of God to decree our salvation: in which very relation, however, it must be perceived as a cause, or a moving reason, conveying a two-fold relation; *one to the thing merited, the other to the will of the efficient or decreeing cause.*

c) For this is taught to be the moving cause both of "*every spiritual blessing*" bestowed upon us by God, and of our predestination or election to life eternal, Ephes. 1, 3, 4, where it is also expressly said that God *elects us in Christ*, and this "en" (in) is placed for "dia" (through), which means to say that God elects us *for Christ's sake*, or in view of Christ as the moving cause. That this explanation alone is in harmony with the context, and that all other current explanations are either forced or, rightly understood, agree therewith, is shown at length by the sainted Masaeus, Dissert. Inaug. Ch. V. § 74 and foll. Here belongs also particularly the argument drawn from the execution, in this manner: *Whatever is the (moving) cause, why God bestows salvation upon us in time, this is also the cause why God elected us to salvation. Now the merit of Christ is the (moving) cause why God bestows salvation upon us in time. Therefore the merit of Christ is also the cause why God elected us.* The major, or first proposition, may be proved not only a *posteriori*, or because we are accustomed commonly thus to judge concerning those things which are done from a preceding decree of the will, and because we do not doubt the moving cause of the decree whenever we are certain concerning the moving cause of the execution, since the moving causes are known to be the same in both cases: but also a *priori*, or from the nature and formal relation of the moving cause, through which it exhibits a relation to the will of the efficient cause, by leading or moving it (formally and virtually) to the act of volition, or decreeing to do that which it is said to do by

its impulse. Thus he who concedes the moving cause of the execution, and denies the same to be the cause of the decree, must needs commit a contradiction, because evidently the decree corresponds exactly to the execution, and the latter to the former; nor does any change intervene either on the part of the object or on the part of the will of Him who decrees and executes. The *minor*, or second proposition of the argument is confirmed by such passages of Scripture as teach that we are saved for Christ's sake, and thus, as they teach the merit of Christ to be the meritorious cause of salvation to be actually conferred: so they also teach the same to have, in respect to the divine will, the relation of a moving cause.

d) The acceptance of the merit of another does not contradict this, that election is ascribed to the grace of God. See 2 Tim. 1, 9. Especially if we call to mind in what manner God Himself gave us the Mediator who should pay for us what we owed. Rom. 8, 3. John 3, 16. And the merit of Christ, though acquired in time, could notwithstanding, in respect to the eternal decree of God, have the bearing of a moving cause. For it suffices to have been present objectively, or as foreseen by God as something to be acquired in due time.

§ 15. *The cause (a) that moves as the external less principal (b) cause to the decree (c) of election, is faith (d) in Christ (e) and this (f) final.*

a) Virtually causing, or *as a reason a priori*, as we said, that the term must be taken also in the causes before mentioned.

b) Or that which, according to our mode of thinking, is prior to the decree of election; and to this it is related as that in view of which we were elected, so that we may suitably answer the question: *Why those who are saved (accurately, no others) have been elected to life from eternity*, by adducing or setting forth that in view of which we were elected (namely, here *faith*, as we shall see). *This, however, has not merit of its own, an own excellence, worthiness, and perfection, by which the will of the agent or electing person is moved to act or elect, but being elevated by the merit, excellence or perfection of another, namely of the moving principal cause, or in virtue of another's merit, excellence, or worthiness, it exhibits itself as the reason in view of which God's will determines*

*itself to decree unto us salvation, and has determined itself ~~from~~ eternity.*

c) To the *to decree itself*, I say, or to the act of election, respect is here had, which is manifest from the relation of the formal moving cause. See Note c) to § 12. Here, however, is understood the moving cause or reason, not in respect to the decree concerning the whole process or work of procuring our salvation, or concerning predestination taken in the *wider* sense, but in the *narrower*, as we have already remarked under § 10.

d) For the merit of Christ viewed *in itself absolutely*, without respect to men who appropriate it to themselves through faith, is universal and extends also to the reprobates; it moves however to the decreeing of salvation to certain men in so far as it is embraced by these in faith. And so faith also must here be considered, *not in itself*, as a habitus or supernatural act; (for even if it have in this respect *an own worthiness, it does not, however, through this, observe well, to any extent move* God to decree salvation to us), but *in relation to the merit* of Christ, which it embraces and includes after the manner of an object.

Some of our theologians, indeed, have said that faith in Christ is the *instrumental cause* of the decree of election;\* others, that it is its *condition*; some, that it is the *condition on the part of the object of election*; others, that it is *a part of the order of predestination*; but in the same sense with each other, and with those who call it the moving less principal cause. For all acknowledge that faith is not a mere condition which exercises no causality; but, as towards the act of saving, so it exhibits itself towards the act of decreeing salvation as a cause (virtually causing salvation), as that in view of which we have been elected; not, however, that itself by its worthiness could have moved God to elect us, so that it would be the principal cause. Hence, when faith is otherwise regarded under the figure of a hand or an organ, by which, as a cause of salvation, the grace of God electing and the merit of Christ are apprehended, and, in this manner, is also here usually called an *instrument*; yet here the relation of faith to the decree of election itself must be shown: where our theo-

\* With these the translator sides.—TRANS.

logians do not say, that it is of the manner of an instrument, which the efficient principal cause, God, in electing, employs to produce the act of election by a real influx. But those who have called it the *instrumental moral cause* cannot understand anything else than the *moving less principal cause*. Again, when faith is called a part of the order of predestination, there must be added, what kind of a relation (within those considerations, which the whole order of the acts of predestination in the so-called wider sense contains) it has to the act of decreeing salvation to certain men, namely to those who shall believe to the end. Therefore, then, this formula of speaking remains, by which faith is called the moving cause or reason in relation to the act of election itself; yet not the chief or principal, but with the addition, for the sake of avoiding ambiguity, of *less principal*. And those who in olden times refused to say that faith is the impulsive cause of election, had respect only to the impulsive principal cause, not thinking of the less principal impulsive cause. The sainted Scherzer in his System. LXVIII. p. 488 ff. presents the argument drawn from the execution of the decree of election precisely in the same manner, and urges not only "*that the merit of Christ is the impulsive external principal and meritorious cause of the decree of election, but also that faith is the impulsive external less principal and organic cause*. Yea, also the sainted Balthus. Meisner, in his Anthropol. Dec. II. disp. IV. numb. III. § 36, after having said: "*When faith is called the cause of election, we must not understand the principal, impelling, or meritorious cause, but only the instrumental, and, indeed, not of the whole decree, but rather of a part, namely, of the merit of Christ, which faith apprehends. For because it is the cause of a part of the decree, hence after the common manner of speaking it is called the cause of the whole decree;*" and after adding: "*It is, however, MORE proper to call faith either a condition of election, lest it be imagined to be absolute, or a part of the order of predestination, to which God had respect from eternity, not less than to the merit of Christ;*" he concludes in this noteworthy manner: "*That seems MOST proper, not to consider faith separately, as a peculiar cause of election distinct from the merit of Christ, but jointly, together with the apprehended merit of Christ itself, so that both united constitute one moving cause of election. For neither did the merit without application, nor did faith in itself move God to election, but both united in the fore-*



sight of God; that means, the merit apprehended by faith, or faith apprehending the merit." This, indeed, agrees exactly with the opinion of the sainted *Musar*, Dissert de Elect, anno 1668, ch. II. § 18 and § 63. For thus, undoubtedly, the relation of faith to election is such as the impulsive cause or reason has to that whose cause it is said to be; not, however, in so far as it is separately considered, or absolutely in itself, but in so far as it is considered in respect to the merit of Christ: so that the *merit of Christ and faith* are in relation to the decree of election not as joint or partial causes (if thus we dare to speak here), but as *subordinate* causes, and through the manner of the principal and the instrumental cause, (which, as they in the genus of the efficient cause produce an effect by one influx, although they are otherwise distinguished one from another: so in the kind of the impulsive cause they, so to say, move by one impulse the will of the agent to will the action or decree.)

e) That faith is the impulsive less principal cause of the decree of election is proved by an argument obtained from the execution in this manner: *That, in view of which, as the impulsive less principal cause or reason, God saves us in time, is also that in view of which, as the impulsive less principal cause or reason, He decreed from eternity to give us salvation in time. Now faith in Christ is that in view of which, as the impulsive less principal cause or reason, God saves us in time. Therefore faith in Christ is that in view of which, as an impulsive cause or reason, God decreed from eternity to give us salvation in time.* The major, or first proposition, rests upon the same proof on which the argument for the moving principal cause of election rests, as we have shown in Note e) under § 12. For as respects the agreement of the decree with its execution there must needs be on both sides the same relation, not only on the side of the impulsive principal, but also on that of the less principal cause or reason. The *minor*, or second proposition, is proved from those passages of Scripture in which we are said to be saved by faith, from faith through faith, Rom. 3, 28. Eph. 2, 8, where a causality, in respect to our salvation, is ascribed to faith: and this *not* of the principal, efficient, or impulsive cause, but of the less principal; not, however, of the physically efficient, but of the impul-

sive, or, because God, who saves, is moved to this that He wills to save through faith, viewed of course not in respect to its own worthiness: for we are not said to be saved *on account of faith*, but inasmuch as it apprehends Christ, that thus in view of it God wills to save and saves. Compare the sainted Musæus and Scherzer in the places quoted. But faith has the relation of an impulsive cause in respect to the eternal decree of election, not because it *existed* from eternity, but because in God's foresight it *was foreseen* from eternity. To this pertains the passage Rom. 8, 29: "For whom He did foreknow, (as such that would be in Christ Jesus through faith, according to verse 1.), He also did predestinate. Whence, otherwise, the prevision of the merit of Christ which must be apprehended by faith, or the prevision of faith in Christ, is said to be the reason or impulsive cause of the decree of election.

f) As we are not saved unless through persevering faith.

§ 16. *The object (a) of predestination are sinful men (b), but such as believe to their end; all (c) these, and these alone. (d)*

a) Others call them the *subject* of election. This would coincide with the *finis cui*.

b) For the predestination of the angels, as it was not made in Christ, so it does not belong to the present subject.

c) As the impulsive cause or reason of election extends to all these.

d) Because, namely, the merit of Christ does not move to save us, or to decree salvation unto us, except so far as it is apprehended by final faith, or is to be apprehended: therefore the decree of predestination does not extend to those men who are without persevering faith.

§ 17. *The proximate end (a) of election is salvation itself (b) to be bestowed upon the elect in time; the ultimate end, however, is the glory of the divine goodness. (c)*

a) Or that on account of which the decree of election has been made, after our mode of understanding, from eternity.

b) See Matt. 25, 34, where the faithful are called upon to "inherit the kingdom prepared for them," or destined by a di-

vine decree, "from the foundation of the world," and, therefore, destined to attain it in the course of time.

c) See Eph. 1, 5. 6, where we are said to have been elected by God to this end *that the glory of His grace may be praised.*

§ 18. *The decree of election is, according to what has been set forth, therefore, certain to be (1.) particular (a), (2.) immutable. (b)*

a) Undoubtedly, because not all men were predestinated or elected to salvation, as is evident from § 14 and § 15 note (e), the term *election*, which denotes that a few have been selected or separated from many, also points out the particularity.

b) Or *irrevocable*; so, however, that not an *absolute*, but only a *conditional* immutability ought to be asserted. For as those, who were elected in view of persevering faith which was foreseen, might not have believed perseveringly, so they might not have been saved, but been rejected. But since they were foreseen by God and thus elected as believers to their end, and inasmuch as they can not be at the same time such as believe to their end and such as believe not to their end—so, after they have been elected, they, from a conditional necessity, can not be not elected. And on account of the immutability of the divine will it happens, since the object is not changed and God foresaw that it would not be changed, that the elect are necessarily saved, although, absolutely speaking, they might fall from grace. Whence it follows that although the elect can not only fall from the grace of God, but also do fall away sometimes, yet none of the elect falls away finally.

§ 19. *Election or predestination in the wider sense (a) may be defined to be the eternal decree of God (b) according to which God (c) decreed from His infinite compassion (d) to send all men, concerning whom He foresaw that they would fall away into sin, the Mediator, and to present Him through the universal preaching as Him who must be embraced; to bestow also upon all, who would not resist, faith through the Word and the Sacraments; to justify all believers and to renovate them by the continued use of the means of grace, and to preserve faith in them*

*to the end of their lives, and finally to save (e) them after persevering in faith to their end to the glory of His goodness. (f)*

a) Because it respects the whole work or process of our salvation according to § 2.

b) This is the genus of the subject defined.

c) Who is the efficient cause.

d) This is the impulsive cause.

e) Thus the very acts to which the decree of predestination has respect and the object which changes according to the diversity of the acts, are indicated at the same time.

f) Which is the final cause.

§ 20. *In the narrower sense (a) predestination or election may (b) be defined to be the eternal decree of God, in which God (c) decreed from His (d) infinite compassion to bestow upon all those men, (e) and upon those alone, of whom He foresaw that they would persevere to their end, on account of (f) the merit of Christ to be apprehended by persevering faith (g) and so foreseen, — to bestow, (h) I say, eternal salvation, for their salvation (i) and His glory.*

a) See § 1.

b) The common genus is the same.

c) The efficient cause, according to § 12.

d) The moving internal cause. See § 13.

e) The object of election. See § 16.

f) The impulsive external principal cause. See § 14.

g) The impulsive external less principal cause. See § 15.

h) Which is the very act, in which this decree formally consists.

i) This sets forth the end, according to § 17.

# T H E COLUMBUS THEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE.

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VOL. I.

APRIL, 1881.

No. 2.

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## THE FORMULA OF CONCORD ON PREDESTINATION.

There was, prior to the adoption of the last of our confessions, no grave public controversy on the doctrine of election. There were some differences in the use of terms, and probably some differences in the doctrine entertained; but there had been no public dissensions and divisions among our theologians. With the statement of this fact the eleventh article of our Formula of Concord begins. "Concerning the eternal election of the children of God," it says, "no public, offensive, and extended controversy has hitherto arisen among the theologians of the Augsburg Confession. But since in other places this article has been made a subject of serious contention, and since it is somewhat agitated among us also, and has not always been set forth by the theologians with uniformity of expression, we have therefore, by the grace of God, in order to prevent disunion and dissension among our posterity, so far as lies in our power, desired to insert an explanation of the subject here, that it might be known to all what our unanimous doctrine, faith, and confession are concerning this article."

In his Introduction to the Symbolical Books of our Church, Dr. Carpzov remarks on this statement: "The question here is not concerning private variances, but about public dissensions. For it cannot be denied that many of our theologians, by speaking improperly and figuratively on the subject, and by not accurately distinguishing always between the antecedent universal will of God concerning the salvation of all

men, and the consequent divine will concerning the election of believers, gave occasion for the Huberian controversy." *Isag. in lib. symb. p. 1625.*

The fact here stated is undeniable. Expressions were used which, if taken in their strict sense, could be pressed into service as proof that all men were regarded as elect. In opposition to Calvinistic particularity our theologians maintained the universality of divine grace. The antecedent will of God to save the whole human race was placed over against the figment of an antecedent will of God to save only a favored few. So far as the will of God is concerned no man is excluded from eternal life, and none could therefore be excluded by a divine decree. In this sense "the election of grace" was sometimes referred to all men. On the other hand, with regard to the consequent will of God expressions were used which, if applied to the antecedent will, would involve the Calvinistic error of an antecedent particular election. It is important to notice this difference in the application of the term. Because our Confession fully recognizes the universality of divine grace, some have imagined that it gives countenance to the Huberian vagary of an election independently of faith in Christ and embracing all men. Because it recognizes with equal distinctness the particularity of divine election, some have imagined that it countenances the Calvinistic fancy of the antecedent particularity of divine grace, and the limitation of election by an absolute decree to but a comparatively small portion of our race. In either case the error is reached only by neglecting the import of the language employed and following preconceived opinions.

Our older theologians had no difficulty in understanding their Confession. Whilst they generally employed the terms predestination and election in a strict sense and treated the subject accordingly, they recognized the wider acceptation and taught well because they distinguished well. With them, as with earlier writers, election occupied a place subordinate to the great doctrine of man's redemption through Christ and of his justification by faith; and although they separated it in conception from the other doctrines with which it is connected and upon which it is dependent, they

never lost sight of the fact that the term could be used and was used in a wider sense. Therefore they did not apply their strict definition to the words of the Confession, and thus misunderstand it by referring to a special act what was said of the whole series to which it belongs. As an example of their mode of viewing it we adduce the words of Dr. Baier: "By the words predestination and election is denoted sometimes the decree concerning the whole work of bringing men to salvation; sometimes especially the decree concerning certain persons who, being known in a certain mode to the divine mind, shall certainly be saved. The former is the wider sense of the words, according to which, so to speak, the whole proceeding of God in the work of salvation, as this shall take place in time, is conceived to be decreed from eternity. In this sense it is said that predestination, or the eternal election of God, procures the salvation of His children and appoints those things which pertain to it. See Formula of Concord, Epit. XI. 4. Certain grades are also enumerated in which election or predestination consists. Form. Conc., Sol. Decl. XI. So Cundisius says: 'The word predestination is used either in a wide or in a strict sense. Where it is used in a wide sense it comprehends the whole provision of the means of salvation. In this sense the term is used in the Formula of Concord, Sol. Decl. XI. In the strict sense the word signifies the ordination of believers to salvation according to the purpose of God. In this case *prothesis*, or purpose, and *proorismos*, or predestination, are to be regarded as distinct.' The same strict sense is also recognized by Meisner when he writes: "First God ordained the means for all. But because not all would accept them He did not elect all. Thus the decree of the means precedes in order the decree of election, and so the merit of Christ, apprehended by faith and taken into consideration from eternity, is not the means, but the cause of the decree." Comp. part. III. cap. 12. § 2.\*

For centuries the great theologians of the Lutheran Church were content to read and adopt the Formula of Concord in this light. But recently a doctrine has been promulgated which requires a different explanation of our Confes-

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\* For a further explanation of the distinction in the use of these terms see Quenstedt, Theol. Did. Polem. III. cap. 2. th. 5. and Hollaz, Ex. Theol. Acr. III. § 1, cap. 2, qu. 5.

sion. It is claimed that God, without any reference to man's foreseen acceptance or rejection of the merits of Christ offered in the Gospel, from eternity formed a decree of salvation embracing only a portion of our lost race, and that this is the decree of which the whole XI. Article of our Formula of Concord treats. In this way our Confession is made to explain the mystery, why some men—only some—are led to believe and to persevere in faith unto salvation, by alleging that God elected these—only these—to eternal life, and to teach that each one of these favored persons, for his comfort and joy, may know himself to be among them.

Notwithstanding all that has been said in favor of the new interpretation, and all the arguments that have been adduced to show that the old is untenable, we must continue to walk in the old paths in which our fathers walked. This is not only because we find ourselves in better company while we continue in companionship with them, but because they can render the better reason for their course. Whether our Confession teaches the doctrine claimed for it by the new departure of Missouri, or whether it teaches what the Church ever since its publication understood it to teach and heartily believed, let a candid examination of its contents decide.

I. After referring to the fact that predestination is a subject of which the Scriptures speak in various places, and that it should therefore not be ignored in our public teaching, the Formula, in the first place, sets forth the difference between foreknowledge and election. Epit. § 2-5; Decl. § 3-8. This difference is twofold. First, foreknowledge "extends to all creatures, the good and the bad," while predestination refers "only to the children of God, who were elected and ordained to eternal life before the foundation of the world." God foresees everything, whether it be good or bad, but He ordains only the good. Secondly, foreknowledge is merely an act of cognition, not involving any activity of the divine will causative of that which is foreknown, while election is an act of the will effecting that which is ordained. "The foreknowledge of God foresees evil also, but this is not to be understood as if it were His gracious will that it should take place." "But the eternal election of God not only foresees and foreknows the salvation of the elect, but through His



gracious will and good pleasure in Christ Jesus is also a cause which procures, works, facilitates, and promotes our salvation and whatever pertains to it." The Calvinistic error, which virtually denies all free acts of the creature and makes foreknowledge dependent on foreordination, so that God foresees all future things simply because He has predetermined them, is thus set aside. Only what is good is of God; what is evil is of Satan and wicked men; but God foresees both.

The strongest argument which the defenders of the new interpretation have urged is derived from this first section. In the comparison between foreknowledge and election two distinctions are made. In the first place, foreknowledge "extends to all creatures, the good and the bad," while election "does not pertain to the good and the bad, but only to the children of God who were elected and ordained to eternal life." § 4. 5. Secondly, the foreknowledge of God foresees the evil also, but is not its cause, while "the eternal election of God not only foresees and foreknows the salvation of the elect, but through His gracious will and good pleasure in Christ Jesus is also a cause which procures, works, facilitates, and promotes our salvation and all that pertains to it." § 6-8. From this the argument is drawn, that our Confession could not, in its presentation of the subject, have meant the word to be understood in a wider sense, because that is entirely inapplicable when it is said that election pertains only to the children of God; and if it is used in its strict sense in the beginning, it can not be used in a wide sense in the progress of the discussion, especially not in the second of the two distinctions made between foreknowledge and election. The argument has plausibility, and many are no doubt led by it to put a construction on our Confession which, according to our firm conviction, does the Church injustice. In reply we submit to candid readers the following considerations:

1. The Formula by the connections in which it uses the word clearly indicates its signification. It speaks of the subject in a way that is preposterous if the wide sense be set aside and the proposed narrow signification be substituted. It tells us that "in Christ we should seek the eternal election of the Father, who decreed in His eternal divine coun-

sel, that besides those who acknowledge Christ to be His Son and believe in Him He will save no one," and that "He has not only in simple words promised this gracious election, but He has confirmed it with an oath, and sealed it with the holy sacraments, which we can remember and by which we can be consoled in our greatest trials, and with which we can quench the fiery darts of the devil." Epit. § 13. It tells us that "Christ as the only begotten Son of God, who is in the bosom of the Father, John 1, 18, has revealed the will of the Father unto us, and consequently also our eternal election to everlasting life; namely, when He says, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.' Mark 1, 15. Again He says, 'This the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on Him may have everlasting life,' John 6, 40. And furthermore, 'God so loved the world,' &c. John 3, 16. These declarations the Father desires all men to hear, in order that they may come unto Christ. But Christ will not cast from himself those who come; for it is written, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.' John 6, 37." Sol. Decl. § 67. 68. It tells us that "the Word of God leads us to Christ, who is the book of life, in which are written and elected all those who shall be eternally saved; as it is written, 'According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world.' Eph. 1, 4. Now Christ calls to Himself all sinners and promises them rest; and it is His earnest desire that all men should come to Him and permit themselves to be helped." Epit. § 6. 7. It tells us that "the text, 'Many are called, but few are chosen,' does not imply that God does not desire to save all men, but the cause is that they either do not hear the Word of God at all, but obstinately despise it, closing their ears and hardening their hearts, and thus obstruct the ordinary means of access of the Holy Spirit, so that He cannot perform His work in them; or, if they have heard it, they again neglect and disregard it; of which neither God nor his election, but their own wickedness is the cause." Ib. § 12. *Can* election in such passages mean a divine decree by which a few persons only, without any consideration of the relation in which they would stand to the proffered grace in Christ, were set apart to unconditional salvation? Fair-

minded men should recognize that to be impossible. If it meant that, our Confession would be an amazing document. It would then say that "in Christ we should seek the eternal election of the Father," but of course no one can find it unless he belongs to the select few; that "besides those who acknowledge Christ and believe in Him He will save no one," but that has nothing to do with our election, which takes place without any regard to such recognition and faith and which is the cause of such recognition and faith; that Christ revealed to us our eternal election when He said, "This is the will of Him that sent me, that *every one* which seeth the Son and believeth on Him may have everlasting life," but of course the glad tidings must be limited to the favored few; that Christ calls all men to Himself as the book of life in which all the elect are written, but of course this must be restricted to the select few whose names God for some inscrutable reason chose to write in that book without any reference to their seeing the Son and believing on Him, and who alone can be saved; that He has promised us this gracious election and confirmed it with an oath and sealed it with the holy sacraments that we might have assurance and comfort, but of course only those whose election is sure without any consideration of their believing the promise can have the right or the power to appropriate it. Can the authors of our Formula be fairly charged with such dialectic vaulting? Their meaning is plain. They speak, as our old theologians understood them to speak, of election in its wide sense as an ordination of means for all men, by the proper use of which they might be brought to Christ and made accepted in the Beloved, and as an ordination to eternal life of those persons who believe in the Redeemer of the world and thus are recorded in Him as the book of life. The gracious election is designed for all, but only those are elect who receive Christ—elect according to the foreknowledge of God from eternity.

2. The Formula itself expressly declares in what sense it uses the word and desires it to be understood. It tells us that "if we would discourse correctly and with advantage upon the eternal election or predestination and ordination of the children of God to eternal life, we should accustom our-

selves not to speculate upon the bare, hidden, secret, inscrutable foreknowledge of God, but to meditate on it in the manner in which the counsel, the purpose, and ordination of God in Christ Jesus, who is the right and true book of life, are revealed unto us in the Word. Therefore, the whole doctrine concerning the purpose, the counsel, will, and ordination of God, belonging to our redemption, call, justification, and salvation, should be comprised together." § 13. 14. "And in this counsel, purpose, and ordination God has *not only prepared salvation in general, but has mercifully considered also each and every person* of the elect, who will ultimately be saved through Christ, has elected them to salvation, and decreed that, in the manner now mentioned, He will, through His grace, gifts, and operation, bring them to this salvation, assist them in it, promote it, and strengthen and preserve them. *All this, according to the Scriptures, is comprehended in the doctrine concerning the eternal election of God to the adoption of children and to everlasting salvation, and should be understood in this article; it ought never to be excluded or omitted when we discourse of the purpose, predestination, election, and ordination of God to salvation.*" § 23. 24. How is it possible, if such words are read without prejudice, to find anything else in them but that the Confession means by the term election the ordination of means to salvation and the choice of the persons in whom these means have accomplished that whereunto they were sent? It would be difficult to find a form of words which would say more clearly that the term is used in a wide sense, embracing a result together with the means by which it is reached.

3. If the authors of our Formula, notwithstanding their repeated reference to the latitude in which they use the term, still applied it in a way inconsistent with their own definition, that is not creditable to their accuracy, but it does not change the fact that "in this counsel, purpose, and ordination God has not only prepared salvation in general, but has also considered each and every person of the elect," and decreed that in the way mentioned He will bring them to this salvation. To say that our confessors simply meant to point out the necessity of considering the ordination of means also, when considering the decree of election, may be

to some a satisfactory way out of the difficulty in which their theory involves them, but the words remain against them. Is there any such difficulty when the meaning of the words as explained by the Formula itself is kept in mind? The advocates of the new doctrine would have us believe that the first section, if the word is understood in the wide sense, is a bundle of confusion. Let us see. Election is the decree of God to prepare the means of salvation for all men and to give eternal life to those in whom those means accomplish the desired end. Before entering upon the further discussion of the subject the Formula shows how election differs from foreknowledge. This difference is twofold. It pertains first to the subjects, and secondly to the question of causality. Foreknowledge extends over all creatures; does election also? Of course it must, says Dr. Walther, if the term be taken in its wide sense, else there would be confusion in the presentation. But as election in its wide sense includes the ordination of persons to eternal life, would it not be misleading to say that all persons are elect, even keeping distinctly in mind that the election, so far as it is an ordination of means, is really designed for all men? The elect are only those in whom the process has culminated in that which is its aim. This is so obvious that there was no need for a special mention, when persons are had in view, of a distinction between those for whom the means are designed, and who might be called elect in that sense, and those in whom the means have accomplished their purpose, and who are elect in the proper sense; just as when we speak of salvation as embracing the whole provision of God to bring us to life eternal and the actual bestowal of this life upon believers, it would not be necessary to make any explanation if we said that only believers are saved, notwithstanding that the provision of means embraced in the salvation is intended for all. But when it is said that foreknowledge is not causal of that which is foreknown, while election is a cause of our salvation and all that pertains to it, the connection renders it just as obvious that election, not as decreeing the salvation of some persons, but as ordaining the means of salvation for all persons is had in mind. The doctrine set forth throughout the whole Formula is, not that God singled out certain persons

and prepared salvation for these, resulting in a limited atonement, an effectual calling only for the favored few, and other figments of Calvinism, but that God prepared salvation for all and elected those who believe. That this is the doctrine set forth will appear more fully as we proceed; here we merely call attention to the decisive words: "In Christ we should seek the eternal election of the Father, who decreed in His eternal divine counsel, that besides those who acknowledge Christ to be His Son and truly believe in Him, He will save no one." Epit. § 13. When the Formula speaks of election as the cause of salvation, Lutherans should have no difficulty in understanding this as referring to the ordination of means, and our fathers had no difficulty. Probably if the authors of the Formula could have had any anticipation of the new departure of this nineteenth century, in this western land, they would, have still further guarded their expressions against any Calvinizing misconstructions.

4. It must be kept in view that when the double difference between foreknowledge and election as to subjects and causality are to be pointed out, the relation is not the same. For the very purpose of making the distinction clear, the elect persons must be viewed in the one case from the end, in the other case from the beginning, of the electing act. Keeping in mind that election, as the Formula presents it, is the divine ordination of means and the divine ordination to eternal life of those in whom these means attain their end, only a confused mind could find confusion when, in designating the subjects, the view is confined to the persons in whom the purpose is attained, but in designating the power of election the view is transferred to the starting point and thus to the means by which the persons are made such elect children of God—accordingly to election as a cause of salvation. While this accords with the whole doctrine as subsequently explained in the Formula, it involves no difficulty not equally attaching to the new doctrine which is inconsistent with that explanation. For Dr. Walther too must, when election is said to pertain only to the elect children of God, conceive the act as already accomplished in the segregation of certain persons, while, when it is said to be a cause of our salvation and all that pertains to it, he must consider it

as an act of which the mass of miserable mankind is in some singular sense the object and which results in the separation of the elect children of God from the non-elect. For he surely can not mean that the elect are such in the mind of God before the election which is said to be the cause of their salvation. He too gets "between two fires," as he expresses it. If he says that election pertains only to the children of God who were ordained to eternal life from eternity, then how could election be a cause which procures their salvation, since its objects are, by the very terms of the definition, already in a state of salvation? If he says that election contemplates men yet in a state of damnation, who, by the very act of election, are to be brought into a state of sonship and salvation, how then can it be said to pertain only to the children of God, since its objects, by the very terms of the proposition, are not children of God at all? It is easy to confuse people's minds by logical diversions, but our Confession has no responsibility in the matter. Its authors had reason to rely on the fairness of Christian men, assuming that these would not, when it is explained in what sense the word election is used, make a difficulty, and on the ground of this deny that it could be meant in that sense. All that is necessary to remove the difficulty is to observe the difference in the point of view between the designation of the subjects and of the causality of election, and this must be observed in any interpretation that may be given. Even in the wide sense of the term election, when the persons are viewed with reference to the terminus ad quem, as it is natural and right to do in defining the subjects embraced, it pertains only to the children of God. If any one should, in this case, prefer to say that the wide sense is actually abandoned and the narrow substituted, we would differ, but we would not quarrel with him on a mere rhetorical question. We would differ with him; for we can not concede that when, e. g. sanctification is spoken of as embracing the calling, illumination, conversion, justification, and renovation of man, it would be natural and right to say, when the subjects are to be named, that because the call is universal, all men are sanctified; on the contrary, as the acts culminating in renovation must be taken conjointly, only those who are justified are sanctified. But we would not

quarrel with him; for whether it is called the wide or the narrow sense, the description itself shows that not the objects upon whom the electing act begins or for whom it is designed, is meant when election is said to pertain only to the children of God, while the context renders it equally obvious that, when election is said to be the cause of salvation, the persons are conceived not as already elected, as in the former case, but as persons upon whom the electing act is to exert its causal power that they may become elect children of God. The result is the same in either case, and the difference lies only in maintaining, in the latter instance, that the authors of the Formula did not forget the strict sense of the term, but applied it where circumstances seemed to require, the circumstances that required it also making it perfectly plain that then the strict sense was meant.

5. Before we pass to the next section there is one other point to be noticed. Supposing that our Formula did not, in this first division, intend to use the word in the greater latitude in which it is afterwards explained, what right would any person have to put a Calvinizing construction upon the statement that election is a cause which procures our salvation and all that pertains to it? Assuming that the wide sense is used only after that has been plainly set forth as its signification, and that in the section pointing out the difference between foreknowledge and election the latter term is used only in its strict sense, would it then follow that election is meant to be represented as absolute, i. e. as a divine decree determining the salvation of only a few favored persons because God so willed it? The Formula expressly rejects the notion that "the Lord would institute a certain military review, saying this one shall be saved, that one shall be lost; this one shall persevere to the end, but that one shall not persevere." § 9. Therefore, even if election is meant in the narrow sense when it is said to be "a cause which procures, works, facilitates, and promotes our salvation and all that pertains to it," the subjects of this causal action could not be considered as a favored few who are not differentiated from the others; for such a lack of distinction would make it impossible to determine the action of the causality. They must be regarded as elect before the elec-



tion can be a cause of salvation in these definite persons. If election itself makes the difference between the saved and the lost, and actually effects the salvation of the few forming the first class, it is not only a cause, but the only great cause of salvation, to which any other causes could be only auxiliary, and it would be in the most emphatic sense a military review, in which God says, this one shall be saved, that one shall not be. Our Formula could not mean anything else, if the term election be used in a strict sense when it is called a cause of salvation, than this, that God has foreseen who would believe and persevere, and these he elected to sonship and salvation, this election being a cause again, subordinate to the causes which render us children of God, to promote the salvation of these elect persons. In other words, the eternal decree would be a cause of its execution in time. In no case could the new doctrine be found in the Formula.

II. In the second section, Epit. § 6-9, Decl. § 9-24, our article proceeds to show how this predestination is to be contemplated. There are two modes of viewing it. One is that which endeavors to look into the mind of God and ascertain the secret of His foreknowledge and eternal decree with regard to individuals; the other is that which looks at the eternal purpose as it is revealed in the Scriptures for our learning, and as it is executed in the provision of means for the deliverance of all men and the actual salvation of all that believe. The former way has no profit and comfort in it; the latter is the way of light and peace.

“This predestination is not to be sought out in God’s secret counsel, but in the Word of God, in which it is revealed.” Epit. § 6. There are secrets respecting it, which are subsequently mentioned; but they do not concern us, nor is their knowledge at all necessary for our comfort. All that we need for peace here and blessedness hereafter is revealed, and any thoughts that need information beyond that to quiet them, or any efforts to soar beyond it and discover the secrets of God, are evil and dangerous. “This eternal election or ordination of God must not be contemplated nakedly in the secret, inscrutable counsel of God, as if it comprehended nothing more, or required nothing more, or as if nothing more were to be taken into consideration, than the fact that

God has foreseen what men and how many will secure salvation, and what men and how many shall perish forever, or as if the Lord should institute a certain military review, saying, this one shall be saved, that one shall be lost, this one shall persevere to the end, that one shall not persevere. For from this opinion many derive and adopt strange, perilous, and pernicious thoughts, which produce and confirm either security and impenitence, or discouragement and despair." Decl. § 9. 10. It is certain that God does know who will be saved and who will perish, for He unquestionably knows who will die in Christ and who will die in his sins. But into this secret we are not to pry, and from that point of view we are not to contemplate predestination. If we did, the result could only be such thoughts as these: "Even if I commit every manner of sin and shame without repentance, even if I do not regard the Word and Sacraments, nor concern myself about repentance, faith, prayer, or piety, I shall and must nevertheless be saved, because the election of God must stand; but if I am not predestined, it will avail nothing even if I do adhere to the Word, repent, believe, etc., for I can neither hinder nor change the predestination of God." § 10. And it is very properly remarked that "such thoughts may arise in the minds even of the pious," especially "when the individual takes into consideration his own weakness, and views the examples of those who persevered not, but afterwards fell away." § 11. That such a contemplation of the doctrine can not be the correct one is proved by reference to the purpose of Scripture. "In opposition to this false opinion and to these perilous thoughts the following most firm position should be taken, which is sure and cannot deceive our expectation, namely: It is certain that 'all Scripture is given by inspiration of God,' not to contribute to a feeling of security and to impenitence, but to be 'profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.' 2 Tim. 3, 16. It is certain also that all things in the Word of God are prescribed to us not to drive us into despair, but 'that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.' Rom. 15, 4. Wherefore it is without any doubt that *that* in no way is the sound sense or the right use of the doctrine concerning the eternal pre-

destination of God, by which either impenitence or despair is excited or confirmed." § 12.

Having shown which is not the scriptural and consolatory way of viewing predestination, the Formula proceeds to point out the right way. Besides the predestination of certain definite persons to eternal life, namely those whom God from eternity sees as believers in Christ and who are saved through faith in His name, but whom we cannot know, there is much in predestination that we can know, and to that we must in the main confine ourselves in considering the doctrine. God foreknows who shall be saved, but practically we have nothing to do with that; our concern must be to pursue the way of salvation, that we may thus be assured of being among the number eventually saved and accordingly predestinated in Christ. "Wherefore if we would reflect and discourse correctly and with advantage upon the eternal election or predestination and ordination of the children of God to everlasting life, we should accustom ourselves not to speculate upon the bare, hidden, inscrutable foreknowledge of God, but to meditate upon it in the manner in which the counsel, the purpose, and ordination of God in Christ Jesus, who is the right and true book of life, are revealed to us through the Word; to wit, that the whole doctrine concerning the purpose, counsel, will, and ordination of God, belonging to our redemption, call, justification, and salvation be comprised together. For in this manner Paul treats and explains this article, Rom. 8, 29. 30; Eph. 1, 4. 5, and Christ also in the parable, Matt. 22, 1-14; namely, that in His counsel and purpose God ordained:

1. That the human race should be truly redeemed and reconciled to God through Christ, who by His innocent obedience, suffering, and death has merited for us that righteousness which avails before God, and eternal life.
2. That this merit of Christ and His benefits should be offered, administered, and distributed to us through His Word and Sacraments.
3. That by His Holy Spirit through the Word, when it is preached, heard and considered, He will be efficacious and active in us, to turn our hearts unto true repentance and to preserve us in the true faith.

4. That He will justify all those who in true repentance embrace Christ in genuine faith, graciously receive them, and adopt them as children and heirs of eternal life.

5. That He will in sincere love sanctify those who are justified by faith, as St. Paul, Eph. 1, 4, testifies.

6. That He will defend them in their great weakness against the devil, the world, and the flesh, will govern and lead them in His ways, and, if they should stumble, raise them up again, and comfort and preserve them in trials and temptations.

7. That He will strengthen and extend in them that good work which He has commenced, and preserve them unto the end, if they adhere to the Word of God, are diligent in prayer, persevere in the grace of God, and faithfully use the gifts received.

8. That He will finally render those whom He has elected, called, and justified, eternally happy and glorious in everlasting life. Decl. § 13-22.

The view of predestination taken by our Confession is thus plainly set forth. We are not to regard it simply as a decree of God, naked and absolute, with regard to certain persons singled out indiscriminately from the perishing multitude, just as little as we are to consider it a mere divine foreknowledge of those who, by some fatality or by an exercise of natural power, shall acquire eternal blessedness. It does not consist merely in God's foreknowing who will live and who will perish, nor in His determining that this one shall be saved and that one shall be lost. It embraces the divine decrees establishing the order of salvation for all men, as well as the decree securing sonship and salvation to those who believe and persevere in faith. The eight points are *not* introduced as bearing upon election merely because the elect are saved in this order. Such an interpretation is impossible without doing violence to the words. In the first place, it is not true, as the men of the new Missouri departure must themselves admit, that God first elected His favorites and then "ordained that the human race should be truly redeemed and reconciled to God through Christ," so that a practicable way might be provided to save these favorites already absolutely predestinated to salvation. In the second

place, these eight points involve conditions which present an insurmountable obstacle to the theory that they are meant merely to show the order of salvation with reference to those who are previously elected. The election in the narrow sense, as limited to the persons of the elect, cannot fail; for it embraces only those who, according to the infallible foreknowledge of God, will certainly be saved. But in the counsel and purpose of which the Formula speaks God has ordained "that He will justify *all those who in true repentance embrace Christ in genuine faith, graciously receive them, and adopt them as children and heirs of eternal life,*" and "that He will strengthen and extend in them that good work which He has commenced, and preserve them unto the end, *if they adhere to the Word of God, are diligent in prayer, persevere in the grace of God, and faithfully use the gifts received.*" The Missourians are imposing a burden which thoughtful Christians cannot bear, when they ask us to believe that the authors of the Formula were speaking of election in the narrow sense when they made such statements, and that thus, because they declare election to be the cause of our salvation and all that pertains to it, they meant to make it the cause of the redemption through Christ, while, on the other hand, the elect themselves would be preserved unto the end and saved only hypothetically, "*if they adhere to the Word of God.*" Such interpreters, for the sake of finding a foothold in our Confession for their antecedently particular decree of election, make it virtually teach a limited atonement; but the very process by which they strive to accomplish this takes away the whole foundation from under their feet, as it renders the very foreknowledge of God, together with election in the strict sense, entirely hypothetical.

The Formula manifestly can not mean that election is to be viewed as preceding, in the mind of God, the whole order which is set forth in the eight decrees, as if these were introduced merely to show how the absolute election of certain individuals is to be executed. On the contrary, they show how persons become elect through the ordained means, thus describing the whole process of election which results in the decree of eternal salvation to persevering believers. It is thus the cause of salvation in the persons in whom the

means accomplish their purpose. God sent His Son, gave His Word and Sacrament, and sends His Holy Spirit for the salvation of all. Not for a few persons whom He had for some hidden and inscrutable reason previously selected from the miserable mass of mankind did Jesus shed His precious blood. Not for such a select few were Word and Sacrament instituted and appointed to be efficacious, so that they would convey saving grace, provided the persons to whom they are brought are among the elect. Not in the case of such an arbitrarily chosen few only is the Holy Spirit to accompany the means, so that only to them the call extended would be sincere and effectual. As surely as God will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth, so surely these means of salvation are provided for all men. Neither can the rest of the eight points refer only to a few who are alleged to have been previously elected. They show, not how a small number especially favored are led to salvation, but how a separation takes place in the multitude, all of whom it is God's will to save and for all of whom these means of salvation are ordained. Besides decreeing that the human race should be redeemed through Christ, that the Redeemer's merit should be offered to all through the Word and Sacraments, and that "through the Word, when it is preached, heard, and considered, He will be efficacious and active in us to turn our hearts unto true repentance," God in His counsel and purpose has ordained that He will justify all who believe, that He will sanctify those who are justified, that He will preserve them unto the end if they adhere to the Word of God, and that He will finally glorify those whom He has elected, called, and justified. The Formula clearly points out the way of salvation for the purpose of exhibiting the way of election. This we are not to seek in the secrets of God's foreknowledge, but in the revelation of the Gospel. We have a Savior, we have the means of grace, we have the Holy Spirit's power to work faith. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John 1, 12. Such persons as are sons of God are called elect, God "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself." Eph. 1, 5. But election in its complete sense has

reference also to the final salvation of the believer; and this too will be secured, IF we "adhere to the Word of God, are diligent in prayer, persevere in the grace of God, and faithfully use the gifts received." The whole process of election as it takes place in time is thus described. But as the whole proceeding was known to the mind of God from eternity, He does not elect the individuals only when they become believers, or when they have continued steadfast in the faith until their end, but in foresight of their faith and of their perseverance in it, He has elected them from eternity. They are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God." 1 Pet. 1, 2. "Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren." Rom. 8, 29. Our Confession analyzes the decree of election into a series of decrees, the result of whose operation is the separation of certain persons, i. e. those who receive Christ by faith, as the elect children of God. The eight decrees are not introduced to show how certain persons who are elect beforehand are saved, but to explain election by showing how it takes place, and accordingly how individuals are elected.

Therefore the Confession does not stop when the eight points showing the way of predestination have been set forth. Something more is necessary to set forth the doctrine. Election refers to persons as well as to the means by which men are to be saved. "In this counsel, purpose, and ordination," our Article continues, "God has not only prepared salvation in general, but has mercifully considered also each and every person of the elect who will ultimately be saved through Christ, has elected them to salvation, and decreed that in the manner now mentioned He will, through His grace, gifts, and operation, bring them to this salvation, assist them in it, and strengthen and preserve them." § 23. The Latin copy has the words: "God in His counsel, purpose, and ordination not only in general procured the salvation of those that are His, but also mercifully foreknew each and every person of the elect who are to be saved through Christ, elected them," &c. From these words it has been inferred that our Formula meant to teach an absolute predestination, i. e. an election of individuals without any reference to their

reception of Christ by faith or rejection of Him by unbelief. It is imagined that in saying He made provision for "them that are His," it implies that He had previously selected some individuals to be the recipients of His grace, and that to these only the ordination of means can be referred. But this is forcing into the language a sense that conflicts with the whole scope of the discussion. That would imply not only, as those who urge it design it to imply, that only these should by the Holy Spirit be led to believe and to persevere in faith, but also that only for these Christ died, only for these have the means of grace efficacy, only for these is there a sincere call to salvation. Such a doctrine the Confession expressly repudiates. If that be possible, the Latin text is even less capable than the German of being so perverted with any plausibility. It says that God *foreknew* (*praescivit*) every one of the elect. To suppose that our confessors would carefully point out the distinction between foreordination and foreknowledge, and then use the latter as synonymous with the former, is imputing to them a degree of obtuseness which would discredit their whole work. God prepared salvation for all men, and as He foreknew them that are His, it was natural, in speaking of these especially, that our confessors should mention them explicitly in repeating the general ordination of means which refer to all men, including the elect. These He foreknew, and decreed that in the way of salvation prepared for all men, not in a different way, He would save them. This appointment of special persons to salvation is the second part of predestination as conceived by the authors of the Formula. It embraces, first, the ordination of means for the salvation of all; secondly, the ordination of those persons to eternal life in whom these means attain their purpose.

What could be more clear than this presentation of the doctrine in its twofold aspect? "We should accustom ourselves not to speculate upon the bare, hidden, secret, inscrutable foreknowledge of God," in which we can find no comfort because we cannot know whether we are embraced in it or not, but are "to meditate upon it in the manner in which the counsel, purpose, and ordination of God in Christ Jesus, who is the right and true book of life, are revealed to



us through the Word; to wit, that the whole doctrine concerning the purpose, counsel, will, and ordination of God, belonging to our redemption, call, justification, and salvation be comprised together." The same double import of the doctrine is repeated, after the first part has been explained, when the second is introduced. "In this counsel, purpose, and ordination, God *has not only* prepared salvation in general, *but has also* mercifully foreknown each and every person of the elect who will be saved through Christ, elected them to salvation," etc. And that every possibility of misapprehension might be excluded, the Confession, after setting forth both parts, sums up the whole by saying: "*All this, according to the Scripture, is comprehended in the doctrine concerning the eternal election of God to the adoption of children and to everlasting salvation, and should be understood in this article; it ought never to be excluded or omitted when we discourse of the purpose, predestination, election, and ordination of God to salvation.*" § 24.

The theory which would limit the conception of election as set forth in the Formula only to the second part referring to the persons, making it consist in the absolute foreordination of certain favored persons who are then to be saved in the way indicated, is a Calvinistic error which the Confession condemns. If that were received, not only absolute election, but absolute reprobation as well must be regarded as the doctrine confessed. No, "this eternal election or ordination of God to everlasting life must *not* be contemplated merely in the secret, inscrutable counsel of God, as if it comprehended nothing more, or as if nothing more were to be taken into consideration, than the fact that God foresees what men and how many will secure salvation, and what men and how many shall perish forever, or as if the Lord would institute a certain military review, saying, this one shall be saved, that one shall be lost, this one shall persevere to the end, that one shall not persevere." § 9.

III. The next section (Epit. 6-11; Decl. 25-33) shows how we may know the elect, which serves as a farther explanation of the doctrine and a guide to its salutary use. As the question of our salvation is of paramount importance, and only the elect, whose names are recorded in the book of

life, shall be saved, it must be of great concern to us to know whether we belong to the elect. § 25. How shall we know this?

The Formula answers first negatively. It tells us: "In reference to this point we should not judge according to our reason, or to the law, or to any external appearance; nor should we attempt to scrutinize the concealed, hidden depth of the divine predestination." § 26. Reason cannot lay down a rule according to which a separation of the elect from the non-elect is to take place, neither can it penetrate into the mind of God to ascertain His ways and workings. If we judge according to reason we shall, on account of our blindness, fall into the pit of recklessness or despair. Nor can we judge of our election by the law, for the simple reason that by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified. Not by conformity to the commandments of God, but by faith in Jesus are souls saved; and that which can furnish no assurance of salvation can certainly not lead to certainty of election. External appearances, too, afford no reliable basis for judging of our predestination. It does not follow that one is chosen of God because he fares sumptuously every day and is not afflicted like other men. It may seem all well with a man when in fact it is all ill with him. Finally, the effort would be all in vain to pry into the secret counsel of God. He does indeed from eternity know who will believe and persevere in faith until death, and these He has, according to His own rule that he that believeth shall be saved, elected before the foundation of the world. But who these are is a secret which He has not revealed, and all endeavors to penetrate into His hidden counsel will be futile.

But the Confession gives also a positive answer. In order to ascertain whether we are among the elect "we should attend to the revealed will of God; for 'He has made known unto us the mystery of His will,' and brought it to light that it might be preached. Eph. 1, 9-11; 2 Tim. 1, 9, 10." § 26. What is the import of this revelation? It is that God calls those whom He has predestinated; that this call is not without means, but through the Word; that "as the preaching of repentance is universal, so also is the promise of the Gospel, that is, it extends to all persons;" that the

gracious call extended to all men through the Word we should in no case, as the Calvinists do, "regard as pretended and unreal, but we ought to know that through it God reveals His will; namely, that in those whom He thus calls He will operate through the Word, so that they may be enlightened, converted, and saved; for the Word, through which we are called, is a ministration of the Spirit, which imparts the Spirit, and through which the Spirit is conferred, 2 Cor. 3, 8, and is the power of God unto salvation." § 27-29.

The sincere desire of God to save men is thus distinctly set before us. But this is not yet the whole of that which our Confession has previously pointed out as the first part of the divine decree of predestination. So far the election, even as it regards individuals, would seem to be universal, while the article expressly says that it pertains only to the children of God. Something more is therefore necessary to place the doctrine in a clear light before the mind. The purpose of God to save men is not executed irresistibly. We are not to conceive of election as an absolute decree with reference to a few, who are then by an exercise of God's omnipotence brought to Christ and to salvation in Him, while in regard to the rest the needful grace and strength to come to Him is withheld. The promise of the Gospel, as has been shown, is universal like the call to repentance, and is in all cases alike sincere and efficacious. Hence the Formula proceeds: "Since the Holy Spirit will be efficacious through the Word, strengthen us, and administer power and ability, it is the will of God that we should receive and believe the Word and be obedient to it." § 29. This, too, is part of the divine will in election; and it is here that obstacles intervene which renders the antecedent universal a consequent particular will of God. God would have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth, but the smallest number of men "receive and believe the Word." "Hence the elect are thus described: 'My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life,' John 10, 27. 28. And Eph. 1, 11. 13. we read that those who, according to the purpose, are predestined to an inheritance, hear the Gospel, believe in Christ, etc. Thus the Spirit bears wit-

ness unto the elect that they are the children of God." "The Holy Scriptures moreover testify, that God, who has called us, is so faithful that when He has begun a good work in us He will also maintain it unto the end and accomplish it, if we do not turn ourselves away from Him, but hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end, whereunto also He has promised us His grace." § 30-32.

"With this revealed will of God we should occupy ourselves, and follow it, and study it diligently, since the Holy Spirit, through the Word by which He calls us grants grace, power, and ability for this purpose; and we should not pry into the abyss of the secret predestination of God." § 33. Again we are admonished not to pursue the way of darkness and despair by fixing our gaze upon the unrevealed mystery of God's foreknowledge and striving to wrest from Him the secret as to which persons are embraced in the decree of election, but to attend to the plainly revealed way in which men are saved. He has prepared salvation for all, and we are only to see to it that we receive and believe the Word and be obedient to it. For as God elects those who are in Christ and continue in Him, we can be sure that while we are in Him the comfort of election is ours, whilst we may be equally sure that if we refuse to hear His voice we are not His sheep. It is useless trouble curiously and bootlessly to inquire into the secrets of God's foreknowledge and counsel, when we have in the plain Gospel rule, "he that believeth shall be saved," all that we need for our comfort.

*(Conclusion in next number.)*

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## THE ULTIMATE GROUND OF SALVATION.

It would be idle to make any attempt to conceal the fact that a difference of far-reaching import has become manifest in our Synodical Conference. A public controversy is upon us, and already the members are familiarizing themselves with the thought of separation. That is a sad prospect. Such outward organizations are indeed not necessary for the existence of the Church, nor even under all circumstances

for its well-being; but all who love Zion would deplore a violent rupture with its attendant criminations and recriminations. Such reflections lead some to think that silence on the whole subject in controversy would be the most conducive to the glory of God and to the welfare of our suffering Church. If there were no cause of controversy in the consciences of those concerned, undoubtedly that would be the way of charity and of peace. Were it possible for the leaders in the new departure of Missouri to withdraw the theory of election by which Israel has been troubled, or for the opponents to let it pass unchallenged as a harmless speculation that would have its little day and die, peace could be restored at once. But that from present indications is impossible. The advocates of the new doctrine claim such warrant for it as renders its retention and defence in their estimation a matter of conscience; and those who see in it a departure from the old form of sound words which they have learned and in which fidelity requires them to continue, cannot be moved by high human authority and old friendships to treat with silent indifference what in their inmost souls they believe fraught with danger to the Church. There seems no way left for Christian men to pursue but that of open controversy.

In such a conflict it is of prime importance to understand the exact import and bearings of the doctrines placed over against each other. The way to accomplish this is of course the diligent study of the propositions and explanations of their advocates. But sometimes an incidental remark will go far towards revealing a writer's view. This seems to us to be the case with the following statement introductory to the discussion of predestination in the Western District Synod of Missouri, 1877: "The doctrine of the election of grace concerns, as it were, the *ultimate foundation* of the great, incomprehensible mystery of our salvation, into which the angels desire to look, but which they cannot fathom."\*

On this it is to be remarked, in passing, that it is a mode

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\* "Die Lehre von der Gnadenwahl betrifft gleichsam den *untersten Grund* des grossen, unerforschlichen Geheimnisses unserer Seligkeit, in das auch die Engel zu schauen geluestet, ohne dass sie es doch ergruenden koennen."

of speaking about election that is not customary in the Lutheran Church. Taught by the Holy Scriptures that "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. 3, 11. and that the saints are "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone," Eph. 3, 20. her children cannot readily adapt themselves to such phraseology. They sing with bounding hearts and cheerful voices, "Now I have found the firm foundation," but "Where else but in my Savior's wounds?" That is the ultimate foundation, and those who would point us to a still deeper ground of our salvation in the eternal election of the children of God, making the redemption through Christ and the mission and operation of the Holy Ghost merely a means of bringing the elect to the salvation to which they had been eternally predestined without any consideration of their relation to the foundation other than which no man can lay, speak a language with which the members of Calvinistic churches are familiar, but which Lutherans had heretofore not learned.

It is true, the passage does not say emphatically that the doctrine of election is the ultimate foundation of our salvation. It only says "that the doctrine concerns as it were the last ground;" and could any Lutheran, it might be asked, even if he abhors the new doctrine, justly find fault with the declaration that the doctrine of election concerns itself about the last grounds on which our inheritance of eternal life rests? Is not that the great question, whether back of all the revelation of God's gracious will to mankind and of the redemption of our race through the blood of Christ, there is not a decree of the divine will which determines the final destiny of every man? And if that is the question in dispute, is it not mere cavilling to represent the simple statement quoted as involving a great error?

The advocates of the new doctrine give such painful prominence to erroneous tenets that we could have no motive in raising objections to statements which are harmless. But there is a grave question here involved. Does the doctrine of election really concern the last grounds of our salvation? We presume that all who read the words cited will agree, that in the estimation of those who used the words it does.

If the passage averred that the point in debate between us and the Calvinists is, whether it does concern the ultimate ground of our salvation or not, no remark upon it would be necessary. As it is, the passage affords some aid in understanding the position of its authors.

If God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life; if the Holy Spirit is truly present with the means of grace and works efficaciously in the Word and Sacraments wherever they are brought; if as many as receive Christ have the power given them to become the sons of God, even they who believe on His name; if it be true that election itself is caused by the mercy of God and the merits of Christ,—then election is not the ultimate foundation and last ground of our salvation, but is merely a link in the gracious order of salvation and needs the foundation which is Jesus Christ to support it. In that case the elect are such according to the foreknowledge of God, taking into account men's reception or rejection of the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, and accordingly whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.

If, on the other hand, God looked upon His fallen creatures with a partial pity, determining to save some from the perdition in which all lay alike, and predestinating these to eternal life while all the rest were left in their condemnation and helplessness; if in pursuance of His purpose to save these He established the whole order of salvation, so that these chosen ones might be led to faith and preserved in it unto eternal life; if the whole work of the Holy Ghost on earth is to find and to bring the great salvation to these elect few; if the whole administration of the means of grace and all Christian activity in the Church have meaning and potency only as directed to this divinely favored class of sinners,—then election is the last ground of salvation, and the doctrine of election concerns that ultimate ground—as it were!

That seems to us one of the great questions in this controversy. If election occupies such a dominant position, underlying and controlling the whole order of salvation, the

revolutionizing of our whole dogmatical system must be merely a question of time. The honesty of those who, while they adopt the new doctrine, still profess to hold the universality of divine grace and of the redemption through Christ, the sincere will of God to save all and the efficacy of the appointed means of grace, the antecedent election without a corresponding antecedent rejection, is not for a moment questioned. But in the nature of things glaring inconsistencies must sooner or later give way. Either there must be a return to the doctrine as consistently developed by our great Lutheran dogmaticians, or a gradual adoption of Calvinistic consequences. There is no use, for instance, in saying, that God has indeed selected only a few from the condemned mass of mankind and provided for their salvation, but that He has not rejected the rest, or that His will is still to save them. The fact still remains that in the divine economy there is, according to the theory, no possibility that they should be saved.

It does not relieve the matter a particle when it is said, that the reason why any person is lost is that he rejects the salvation which is in Christ for him as well as for the elect. The advocates of the new doctrine are by no means willing to contradict the express words of our confession in so grave a matter. Many of them admit that the reason why the many are not elected is that they wantonly resist the grace of God. How, then, they ask, can they be justly charged with teaching a doctrine that leads to the Calvinistic heresy of absolute reprobation? True, if no one is rejected except in consequence of his rejection of God's gracious and efficacious call to the salvation which is secured for all men alike, the atonement need seemingly not be limited to the elect, neither need the offer of salvation through the Gospel be a mere pretence. But the difficulty, though somewhat veiled, is not removed. The reason why some are not elected, it is admitted, is that they wantonly resist the proffered grace that would save them. But those whom God purposes to save, the theory says, He elects without any reference whatever to men's reception or rejection of the righteousness of Christ. He elects them not as persons who believe, but that they may become believers and by faith be saved. Their election is prior to all



consideration of man's conduct in reference to the grace and salvation offered: election is the ultimate ground of their salvation. But when this election takes place those who are not elected are simply not elected. They are passed by. That, the advocates of the new theory may say, does not mean that they are rejected and doomed. But what can it mean else, when some are selected out of the lost multitude to be brought unto Christ and salvation, and the rest God does not purpose to save and does not choose unto eternal life? What possibility can remain for their salvation, when God passed them by in selecting those whom He purposed to save? It is easy to say that the reason why the majority of men are not elected is that they maliciously resisted the Holy Spirit's call and gift, but in such a theory this reads like irony. If it be alleged that the means of grace are brought to them and God sincerely desires that they should believe and be saved, the fact stares us grimly in the face that their doom was virtually sealed before. They are not elected and cannot be saved. Whatever efficacy there may be supposed to be yet in the means of grace when brought to them, by the terms of the theory the purpose to save does not pertain to them, and no means can save them.

But as the election is said to be prior to all consideration of man's faith and unbelief, how could the non-election be subsequent to such consideration? If the elect are conceived as first singled out from the multitude unto salvation, and then salvation is offered to those who were not embraced in God's purpose to save and were thus excluded from the election, obviously it must be an empty offer, as God could not be supposed to change His eternal purpose. If the offer is conceived as being made to all alike, and those are not elected who reject the offer, it is impossible to conceive the election as taking place prior to the division of men, in the foresight of God, into the two classes of believers and unbelievers, as there could be no elect without implying the non-election of those who remained. If the election was prior to all consideration of men's relation to Christ, so necessarily was non-election. In any view of the case, the theory which makes election the last ground of salvation makes it practically decide the final destiny of all men. The elect must be saved and the rest must perish.

## THE STATUS CONTROVERSIÆ AS FORMULATED BY DR. WALTHER.

BY PROF. C. H. L. SCHUETTE, A. M.

The unity of the Spirit, in which we of the Lutheran Church have prayed and labored together in the Lord's cause, is now disturbed and seems to be departing from us. Contention has taken the place of holy peace, and the cry for war is now raised by lips which but yesterday pronounced words of love and good will toward those whom now they declare their „Gegner.“ Than to trouble God's people and to prevent the coming and prosperity of His kingdom, there is no greater sin. The Church is God's own institution. He has established it at a great cost; the blood of His own dear Son is its price. By His gracious will He has made us to be its members and is pleased to use us for its edification. By His strength and according to His direction we are to do His work, and He commands us to be faithful. Therefore, to destroy the Lord's work, or even in any way to hinder it, is to subvert the very object of our lives and to endanger the salvation of souls. Of this atrocious sin men are guilty when they by false doctrine bring divisions into the Church. Against such the anger of God is indeed great. “But there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.” Gal. 1, 7. 8.

As to the new controversy now thrust upon the Church, that threatens to disturb its peace and impede its work by causing divisions, let all concerned examine themselves in the fear of God, and beware lest they incur the woful displeasure of the Most Holy One. Primarily, of course, the responsibility rests upon those who attempt the introduction of new and false doctrines; but secondarily it will rest also upon those who will not resist their introduction, and upon those who, though they defend the truth, do not do so in a Christian manner.

Confident that the doctrine of our Church on the subject

of predestination is true and that therefore it is our duty to defend it as best we can, our first concern must be thoroughly to understand the new doctrine which it is proposed shall take the place of the old and true. A full knowledge of the error is all important for its defeat. Besides, we must have such information in order that we may guard against the sin of imputing opinions unto others such as they do not mean to promulgate. For this reason we are thankful to Dr. Walther for his attempt to formulate the status controversiæ. At the same time, to be candid, we can not be thankful for the result of his efforts in this direction. He has given us, we are sorry to say, not a plain and fair statement of the existing differences. His side of the question he is, of course, at liberty to formulate as he pleases; but we can not accord him the liberty to do so for the other side. We claim that whoever essays to state the position of his adversary, is in justice bound to give the termini and phraseology of the latter. In this, Dr. Walther, in our humble opinion, has transcended the limits of common equity. The result is, as already indicated, a vague and incorrect definition of the doctrines as held by his opponents. Inasmuch as this may appear simply a charge, we shall attempt to make it good; and this for no other purpose than that we may come to a full understanding, if possible, of the points of controversy; for thus only can we hope to have unity and peace restored.

On page 54, *Lehre und Wehre*, February 1881, we read: „— so erklären wir für den eigentlichen Status Controversiæ, oder für den eigentlichen Streitpunkt in dem gegenwärtigen Lehrstreit das Folgende: Fließt der von Gott vorhergesehene Glaube aus der Gnadenwahl, oder fließt die Gnadenwahl aus dem vorhergesehenen Glauben? Beruht die Gnadenwahl allein auf Gottes Barmherzigkeit und Christi Verdienst, oder auch auf dem von Gott vorausgesehenen Verhalten des Menschen? Kann und soll ein gläubiger Christ seiner Wahl und darum seiner Seligkeit gewiß werden und sein, oder kann und soll er derselben nicht gewiß werden und sein? Dieses, und natürlich zugleich Alles, was damit nothwendig zusammenhängt, und nichts Anderes erkennen wir allein für den Dissensus an der gegenwärtig zwischen uns und unsern Gegnern in Abficht auf die Lehre von der Gnadenwahl vorliegt.

.... Von welcher Seite aus und wie immer man uns fernerhin angreifen wird, so werden wir daher von nun an nichts, als die Affirmative des angegebenen Status Controversiæ, vertreten und durch Gottes Gnade aus Gottes Wort und dem Bekenntniß vertheidigen; . . ."

This, in a faithful literal translation, reads as follows:

We therefore declare the Status Controversiæ proper, or the real point of controversy in the present doctrinal strife to be the following: Does the faith foreseen by God flow from election? or does the election flow from the foreseen faith? Does the election rest only on God's mercy and Christ's merit, or also upon the demeanor of man foreseen by God? Can and should a believing Christian become and be certain of his election and therefore of his salvation, or can and should he not become and be certain thereof? This, and of course also everything necessarily connected therewith, and nothing else, do we recognize as the *Dissensus* existing at present between us and our opponents in view of the doctrine of election. . . . From whatever side and in whatever manner we may be assailed in the future, we will espouse nothing but the affirmative of the Status Controversiæ as above given, and by the grace of God defend it from God's Word and the Confession; . . ."

Such then is the Status Controversiæ according to Dr. Walther's wording and declaration. The position of *Lehre und Wehre*, therefore, authentically and briefly stated, may be resolved thus:

- a) The faith foreseen by God flows from election;
- b) The election rests only upon God's mercy and Christ's merit;
- c) A believing Christian can and should become and be certain of his election and therefore of his salvation;
- d) Everything necessarily connected with the above—it will defend.

It is no doubt presupposed that the affirmative side of the question, as it is here rendered, is to be interpreted in the light of all that has of late years appeared on the subject in the publications of the Missouri Synod, including, of course, Dr. Walther's late restrictions. If not, the formulation would be far from being complete and satisfactory. Nevertheless, we would have been glad to find in this connection a defini-

tion of terms and phrases used; e. g. such as "election," "certain of," "can and should become," "flows," "rests," etc. This we much desire to have seen done, not as though such definitions had not heretofore been given, and not as though the Missourians had thus far given out an uncertain sound, but because a new and formal beginning is here made in the controversy; then also because Dr. Walther here declares that henceforth they will defend "*nothing else* but the affirmative" of the question as he states it. For this reason a question or two suggest themselves here in the very outset of the discussion.

In the first place: Why is faith spoken of as foreseen? Or does the foresight of faith, after all, enter as a factor into the act of election? If so, in what way did this foresight affect the act? If not, why speak of a faith foreseen? Since *Lehre und Wehre* looks with horror upon the place assigned to the foresight of faith by the great dogmaticians of our Church, yea, as we verily believe, by our Church itself, it is of great interest and importance to hear of what service, if any, it was to God in the decree of election. In the second place, what is meant by the question whether election rests only upon God's mercy and Christ's merit? To our knowledge, not one of the "opponents" in the Synodical Conference has ever denied the foundation named, or attempted to add another. And yet, such is the charge implied. But more of this anon.

Questions and objections such as these are prompted by a sincere desire to know exactly what is and what is not taught by the affirmative, in order that we may not wrong them inadvertently and from want of adequate information. We do not wish to misunderstand and misrepresent the doctrines we oppose; and we hope to God that in this respect we may be more fortunate than is Dr. Walther in his attempt to state the position of his "opponents." These, as he states it, teach that:—

- a) Election flows from foreseen faith;
- b) Election rests also upon the demeanor (*Verhalten*) of man;
- c) A believing Christian can and should not become and be certain of his election.

Having set forth the status controversiæ the venerable Dr. refers, by way of self-application, to the Confession of Augustine: "Forte non digne *volo*, quomodo dicendum est; nec sic tamen *possum* dicere, quomodo *volo*; quanto minus, quomodo *dicendum* est!" Nevertheless, we can not wholly excuse him for so sadly misstating the doctrine as held by the negative. Considering that these teach as taught the dogmaticians of our Church for three centuries, and considering further his thorough acquaintance with the Fathers, he surely must know better how to define the position maintained over against his own. Certainly, not the least evidence can be furnished from which it might be made to appear that we teach in a manner *new* concerning the doctrine of predestination.

The status controversiæ is pointed out in a series of questions, artfully (we hope not designedly so) constructed. They partly present alternatives in such a manner as if none other were possible. For example, we deny and reject as false the opinion of *Lehre und Wehre* that election, in its proper and narrow sense, is the source of the Christian's faith; but does it follow from this that we teach conversely, i. e. that faith is the source of election? That were as bad logic as it is bad theology. The Formula of Concord teaches that the election embraces only the children of God. In this both parties concur. The election therefore is personal and limited, and hence particular, and not universal. This *particular* act of election, Missouri declares to be the source of faith. "Does the faith foreseen by God flow from election?" Dr. Walther says, yes. We say, no. We hold that *universal* grace is the source, the only source, of faith. We believe and teach that faith flows, and flows only, from that grace of God by which He "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. 2, 4. The Missourians teach—and so do Calvinists—that God has infallibly predestinated some people unto faith and passed by all others. Ask you why? They answer that such is to us a marvel and a mystery. We say that God has predestinated unto faith one man no more than another; that He is no respecter of persons: that He will, earnestly and equally will, have all men to believe in Christ and by faith in Him receive everlasting

life. To us the marvel is that divine grace is so great and alike great over all. That it is alike great over all, the Missourians deny. Then, that not all men apprehend the grace of God is to us the mystery. This our opponents solve by adopting the Calvinistic expedient, that those who believe and continue to believe do so by virtue of a particular and inevitable decree of God. So while they would do away with one they introduce another mystery, a mystery repugnant to all the gracious nature, word, and work of God.

Again, we repudiate the imputation that election flows from foreseen faith. We hold that the infinite mercy of God, as it is in Christ Jesus, is its only source. Faith, we say, is not a merit which moves God to ordain unto salvation, but is the mark which distinguishes those whom alone God can ordain unto life eternal from those whom He can not so ordain. As in time faith constitutes a man a child of God, so in the mind of God from all eternity. As in time the Lord distinguishes His children from all others by looking upon the mark of faith peculiar to them, so has He done from eternity. What He now sees that has He always seen; whereby He now knows His own thereby has He always known them. Between God's present sight and His eternal foresight there is no difference, and His will concerning us is unchangeable. His gracious will, plainly revealed, is that we believe in Christ our Savior and thereby become His children, and as such be blessed evermore. Not as though our faith in any way merited sonship in the Father's kingdom; by no means! but by faith we embrace Christ and receive the sonship which He has wholly purchased for us. Though not the manner, yet this is the sense in which all the great teachers of our Church treat of faith as connected with the doctrine of predestination. Not one of them ascribes merit unto faith as such. They never speak of it in such a way as if by any supposed intrinsic value it could obligate and move God to reward it, in a primary and proper sense of the term.

When, therefore, Dr. Walther inquires: Does election rest only upon God's mercy and Christ's merit, or also upon the demeanor of man? and thereby makes the impression quite probable that we place the demeanor (*Verhalten*) or faith of man, *alike* with divine mercy and merit, as a part of the

foundation of election, he indeed puts his side of the question in the most favorable light, but he fails to fairly represent the position of his opponents. We do not, and never did our dogmaticians, place Christian faith as a ground of election either contradictory to, or co-ordinate with, God's mercy and Christ's merit. It is true that some of our dogmaticians speak of faith as a subordinate cause; but no one knows better than Dr. Walther in what sense and with what careful limitations they do so. They never speak of faith as a cause or foundation of election in the sense in which the mercy and merit of Christ are such. This the Missouriians know full well. When, therefore, at the session of the Western District in 1877, they wished to show that nothing in man, not even his faith, can cause God to elect him unto salvation, they appealed to the dogmaticians of our Church in their support. But our position and that of our great teachers are identical. How then can Dr. Walther make it appear, as he does in his manner of questioning, that we teach concerning the „*Verhalten*“ of man in a way contradictory to God's grace and Christ's merit? We protest against all imputations of that kind.

The question, Does election rest only upon God's mercy and Christ's merit? we do fully affirm and as firmly defend as do the Missouriians. Here then we agree. But in our conceptions concerning the mercy and merit which constitute the foundation of election, we radically differ. We differ, namely, first as to the *object* upon which that mercy is directed; and, in the second place, as to the *manner and time* in which that merit becomes available in the decree of election. The Missouriians teach, if we at all understand them correctly, that the particular grace of election takes hold of the sinner *as such* and ordains him unto faith, and by this faith, as a means, unto salvation. We teach that the particular grace of election takes hold of the sinner, not as such, but *as already a believer* by virtue of the grace universal, and ordains him unto salvation. They teach that the grace in question has for its object man as without faith and therefore as being outside of and without Christ. We teach that it has for its object man with faith and therefore man in and with Christ. Election to them is an infallible ordi-



nation unto faith as a means of salvation. To us it is an infallible ordination unto salvation only, faith as the means of embracing it being already otherwise provided. Hence, as to the merit of Christ, they make the mere fact of its existence available in the determination of those who are to be saved; we make it available thereto only in so far as it is apprehended by faith. In other words, and perhaps more plainly, they teach that when God from mere mercy and for Christ's sake selected from among men those who shall verily be saved, He had no need to inquire and He inquired not whether they had faith in Christ, because His purpose was *first to select* those who should be saved *and then*, that His purpose might be accomplished, he resolved to give them the needed faith. We say that when God from mere mercy and for Christ's sake selected from among men those who shall verily be saved, He inquired who, by virtue of His universal grace, would apprehend Christ's merit; and that He decreed unto salvation those whom He thus foresaw in Christ by faith.

And when we thus place the foresight of faith as *necessarily antecedent* to the act of predestination, we do not, as falsely alleged, make the faith foreseen a cause or foundation of election. We do this no more than they who place it consequent upon that act. We so place faith as a normative factor—as a factor, namely, not *causing* God to ordain, but *indicating* those to be so ordained in conformity to His plan of salvation. We do teach sincerely that God's infinite mercy and Christ's gracious merits are the only and all-sufficient cause of a man's election, but at the same time we hold that that cause is not all that is indispensably necessary for his election. A cause, though in and of itself, all-sufficient to produce a certain effect, does not, for that reason only, necessarily produce the effect, unless the cause be absolute. Even so it is in the economy of divine grace. The same mercy of God and the same merit of Christ are alike for all men, and they are all-sufficient for their salvation; and yet all are not saved. A sufficient cause must therefore not be confounded with an unconditional and therefore irresistible cause. But now, according to the Scriptures, the mercy of God and Christ's merit are a conditional and not an absolute cause of

our election and salvation. How so? Answer: God of His mercy will have all men to be saved. This is precious Gospel truth; but it is not the whole truth. God in His mercy will have all men to be saved alone for Christ's sake; this again is the same precious Gospel truth, only more complete; and though it sets forth the *entire cause* of our salvation, it yet is not the whole truth. God in His mercy will have all men to be saved alone for Christ's sake on the condition that they believe in Christ and by faith continue in Him. This again is the same precious Gospel truth, but still more complete than the former statement of it. And though it is not yet the full Gospel truth, it nevertheless states all we here purpose to consider. We see from this that besides *the cause* of our salvation a *condition* is included in God's plan of saving sinners. And though the condition is not a cause, yet God Himself has established it and it is in consequence indispensable. Again, this condition must be complied with *before* God can actually bestow salvation upon us. But what is a condition of our salvation must also be a condition of our election, since ordination unto salvation and the actual bestowal of salvation are in effect the same. And hence, as God is pleased not to bestow salvation upon man unless he first be in Christ by faith, so will He and does He not ordain to salvation any man unless He first foresee him to be in Christ by faith. Were divine grace, as the only source of faith, irresistible, and consequently faith itself a matter of course, then were there no such necessity for God to inquire whether a man believe in Christ or not; then could He ordain without a special foresight of faith, for then all men would in time believe in Christ. But such is not the case. Therefore, we say over against the Missourians—and Calvinists likewise—that the Lord *first* ascertained who in time would come to Christ and abide in Him to their end by faith, and that thereupon He ordained to salvation all whom He so foresaw to be and continue in Christ by faith—faith, the work and gift wholly and solely of grace universal.

What then is our attitude as to the question: "Does election rest . . . also upon the demeanor (*Verhalten*) of man as foreseen by God?" In the first place we object to the words „*oder auch*“ (or also), for the reason that they bring man's

„*Verhalten*“ (demeanor) into co-ordination with „*Gottes Erbarmen und Christi Verdienst*.“ In the second place we object to the word „*Verhalten*“ itself because of its ambiguity; since it may refer either to man's faith or the fruits of faith; man's unbelief and fruits of unbelief. But the question, independently put, Does a person's election unto salvation depend at all upon his having faith in Christ? we answer in the affirmative. For by this we mean to say that no one can be saved except by faith in Christ; and that God has foreordained no one unto salvation in whom He has not first foreseen faith. And this, we say it again, not because faith in and of itself could make that person worthy of the grace of election, but simply and solely, first, because Christ alone can make him thus worthy; and, secondly, because only by faith can he appropriate Christ and thus become worthy. With us, Christian faith is an indispensable *pre*-requisite to election because Christ, its Treasure, is an indispensable *pre*-requisite. With the Missourians faith is a requisite merely and indispensable only to carry out the decree of election in time. For, as we have seen, they teach that God predestinates unto faith, whereas we teach that God predestinates the believer unto salvation. Not for the decree of election, but only for its execution, do they claim the necessity of faith; and they are thus led to declare the decree itself to be the cause or source of faith. This, in our mind, constitutes the bone and marrow of the kite they are flying, not to say of the beast they are riding. Nichts für ungut, Brethren.

Our answer to Dr. Walther's third alternative, to wit: Can and should a believing Christian become and be certain of his election and therefore of his salvation, or can and should he not? must of necessity be hypothetical. If the question means absolutely certain, we say no; if conditionally certain, yes. Again, if it means perfectly certain, without respect to time and circumstances, we say no; if relatively certain, we say yes. From this it already appears that an injustice is done us when we are represented as teaching that a believing Christian can and should not become and be certain of his election and salvation. Conditionally certain of his election, we say, a Christian can and should be at all times; unconditionally certain of it he can not become until

the day of his happy consummation. Of his being a child of God the believer can be and is certain, but as to his continuing a child of God to the end of his days, he can have none but a conditional knowledge until the day shall declare his fond hopes all realized. When now it is objected that a conditional or relative certainty is no certainty at all, we answer, so be it. But the more fallacious and dangerous must we then consider the position of the affirmative, and the more faithfully will we then oppose it, and teach as did Luther, Bugenhagen and Melancthon, to wit: "We are not required to ask beforehand, whether we are elected, but it is sufficient that we know that he who continues in repentance and faith to his end, is certainly elected and saved, as Christ says: he that endureth to the end shall be saved." Luther's W. Erl. Ed. 55, p. 164. Our answer then is that we teach a conditional and relative certainty as to our election before time and as to our salvation after time. And if any one will make himself ridiculous by charging us with teaching doubt instead of faith, of disturbing the peace of souls instead of establishing them in saving grace, let him so do and answer for it before God.

We have thus attempted, not to discuss the merits of the positions respectively occupied by the contending parties, but to determine and set forth as best we could the points of difference. We have done so with no ill-will or feeling of disrespect to any one of the brethren we think in error, but with the sincere desire to aid in the search for truth and the restoration, if possible, of godly peace and unity. Conscious of this, we have been plain and fearless, and here and there even somewhat aggressive, perhaps, but only with the view of bringing out clearly the Dissensus. Yet, if in any way we have failed correctly to understand and hence fairly to represent the opinions of the other side, we shall be both sorry and glad: sorry for having wronged brethren; glad for the fact that they err not as grievously as we think they do.

In the following we make bold to offer

#### THE STATUS CONTROVERSY RECONSTRUCTED.

a) *Does the faith foreseen by God flow from election in the strict sense, or is that faith wholly and solely the work and gift of the universal grace of God?*

b) Does the election rest only upon God's mercy and Christ's merit?—AND is the election at all dependent upon the faith foreseen by God?

c) Can and should a believing Christian become and be infallibly certain of his election and therefore of his salvation? Can a believer become and be conditionally certain of his election and final salvation?

*Answer:* The Missourians affirm the questions in the first form, we the questions in the second form; and *in so far as* this our position conflicts with that occupied by the Missourians, we stand in opposition—and may victory crown the truth!

There yet remains to be considered what we have, for convenience sake, denominated as point d. of the affirmative. "This, (points a, b, and c. of the stat. contr.) and of course also *everything necessarily connected therewith*, and nothing else, do we recognize as the *Dissensus* existing," etc., says Dr. Walter. These words we would take to mean that the affirmative is willing to accept and defend whatever may be logically involved in the position they have taken, did we not know from other sources that such is not their intention. They seem to be fully aware that their side of the question, consistently developed, must lead to the most rigid predestinarianism; and hence that the doctrine, as they teach it, involves many doctrines in conflict with the plain Word of God. To say, for example, that God ordains unto faith a certain number of people, passing by all others in this act, is almost a literal denial of the doctrine of the universality and equality of saving grace. But wherever such unscriptural deductions would seem to be inevitable, we are told not to draw conclusions, but to curb our reason and with St. Paul to adore the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. This is all very well. Yet, before we can follow this advice, sound and good as it is in its place, we are constrained to demand of our opponents that they furnish us the incontrovertible Scripture proof of the correctness of their opinions; for it may be possible that their opinions, since they can not be brought in harmony with some plain teachings of the divine Word, are false. Before this shall have been done

we must not be asked to stop thinking and begin adoring, in view of the doctrine of predestination as they teach it.

But, as we have seen, point d. is not to be taken fully as it stands. It is therefore of the utmost importance that we be informed in how far the affirmative accepts the doctrines involved in and deducible from the position they have engaged to defend. Of the more important points of doctrine which, in our mind, stand in close connection with the present controversy, we append the following, with the sincere desire to learn in how far they are affirmed or denied by the brethren of the opposition. All but one are suggested by the *Status Controversiæ* as now before us. The last question is asked in view of some expressions heretofore used by the other side.

1. Is the mercy of God, according to which He will have all men to be saved, equally great over all? or does it, for some reason to us unknown, discriminate between man and man as yet in sin?

2. Is the particular grace exercised by God in the decree of election and in its execution more efficacious than the grace of God extending over mankind generally?

3. Can and do some people truly believe for a while and then fall, never to return to faith?

4. Is the efficacy of the means of grace invariably the same, or does God add thereto or subtract therefrom, as far as we can know?

5. Is the Christian's faith created and preserved by the ordinary means of grace only, or in part by some divine operation independent of these means?

6. Is the comfort derived from passages such as Philip. 1, 6; 2 Thess. 3, 3, etc., a comfort provided by the particular grace of election and for the elect only, or is it provided by the mercy of God as over all and for all?

7. Are the expressions, "to be in grace," "to have been elected," "to be finally saved," identical, so that certainty of present grace is of necessity certainty of past election and future salvation?

8. In view of the divine plan of salvation as it is and is revealed, can God justly condemn all men? and can He mercifully save all men, just as He please?

## CONCERNING THE ELECTION TO ETERNAL LIFE.

Translated from Dr. Conrad Dietrich's "Institutiones Catecheticae," published in 1613.

BY PROF. GEO. H. SCHODDE, PH. D.

*I. In order that the matter of the gratuitous election to eternal life of those who truly believe may be better understood, I wish you to explain to me what election is.*

Election is the act of God, by which, according to the purpose of His will, from mere grace and mercy in Christ, He has determined to save all those who will perseveringly believe in Christ, to the praise of His glorious grace. Eph. 1, 4, etc.; 2 Thess. 2, 13; 2 Tim. 1, 9; Rom. 8, 30 and 9, 11.

Here is defined what election (Greek, *ekloge*) is. It signifies I., in a general sense, a segregation for a certain end or use; namely, 1. for a calling or office. For this reason the apostles are said to be elected, Luke 6, 13, including Judas, John 6, 70, namely, to the apostolate. 2. The selection of a certain race to be the people to whom God communicates the mysteries of His Word and will, and whom He adorns with wonderful excellencies. In this sense the people of Israel are said to be elected. Deut. 7, 6; 10, 5; 14, 2; 26, 18; Rom. 9, 4; Ps. 132, 13; 147, 19. 11. In a special sense it means the predestination of the children of God to eternal life, which, by reason of the efficient cause, is called an election of grace, Rom. 11, 5; and metonymically it is sometimes used for the elect themselves, Rom. 11, 7. Thus election and predestination are synonymous terms, because they are used interchangeably, Rom. 8, 30; Eph. 1, 4, 5. Predestination is so called from the destined end. "To destine" is to direct a thing by a firm decree of the mind, through certain means; "to predestine" is to ordain a thing to a certain end, before it exists. The Greek is *proorizein*, from *oros*, which signifies an end or limit.

Hence the following axioms: I. Predestination embraces both the end itself (namely salvation and eternal life), as also the means leading to this end. II. Therefore predestination is only to life and not to death; for otherwise the means for

death would also be from God, and God would thus be the author of sin. If otherwise, why is it that this word is never used in the Scriptures in reference to the reprobates? In what manner election and predestination differ from foreknowledge and foresight, you can see in the article on "Providence."

The genus of this definition is an act, namely, an act of God, because predestination is described with words that signify an action, as "For the elect's sake whom He hath chosen," Mark 13, 20; "He hath chosen and predestinated us," Eph. 1, 4, 5; "according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things," etc., v. 11; He inscribes them in the book of life, Rev. 20, 12.

The form or specific difference is described under the heads of efficient cause, mode, object, and end: I. The primary efficient cause is the grace and mercy of God, and this alone. Election does not take place according to works or the foresight of works. This against the Pelagians and Papists. See Question 7, concerning eternal life. II. The mode is designated 1. according to the efficient meritorious cause, since it is said that the election is made in Christ, Eph. 1, 4, 11; in His beloved Son, v. 6; as in the only foundation of salvation, Acts 4, 12; through Jesus Christ, v. 5; as in the only author of life and salvation, the Redeemer, Acts 3, 15; in which sense He is also said to have elected us, John 13, 18, and 15, 16, and thus we are also said to be justified in Christ and through Christ, and that He is our justification. Hence the following axioms: a.) Outside of Christ there is no room for mercy towards the sinners. See above, concerning justification. b.) Christ is the foundation and rule of election. c.) Outside of Christ there is no election. Therefore the Calvinists err, who by false reasoning refer the expression "in Christ," only to the end of election, in this sense, that we may be in Christ and in Him and through Him as a leader we may be saved, etc. (Piscator, *Schol. in Eph.* 1, 4. p. 96; and *Observat.* 1, p. 102), or when they say that He elects us for the purpose that He may sanctify us through Christ, and thus lead us to eternal life, (Cf. the same, *contra Schafmanthes.* 95. p. 91), so that thus Christ would not be the cause, but the effect of election. But the apostle does not say "unto



Christ," or "to Christ," but "in Christ," by which He distinctly says that the foundation and meritorious efficient cause, as well as the norm, of our election is in Christ, outside of whom there is no election. 2. The mode of election is designated when it is said to be made according to the purpose ("good pleasure," Eph. 1, 9; "purpose," Rom. 8, 28) of God's will, Eph. 1, 5; 2 Tim. 1, 9. Here the following axioms must be noted: *a.*) This purpose of God has indeed been formed in Christ, before the foundations of the world were laid, Eph. 1, 4; 2 Thess. 2, 13; but it has been revealed to us in time through the Gospel, John 6, 40: "And this is the will of Him that," etc. *b.*) Therefore it is not a subject for the scrutiny of the acumen of human reason (for it is a mystery hidden from the beginning of the world); and it is not to be rashly sought in God immediately (for no one has ever seen Him, John 1, 18, whose ways are unsearchable, Rom. 11, 33), but mediately and only in the revealed words of the Gospel. This against the Rationalists. *c.*) This purpose of God embraces the complete order, all the causes and means of our salvation; namely, grace through Christ manifested to us in the Gospel, 2 Tim. 1, 9. This consists in this that we hear Christ in the Word, Matt. 17, 5; receive faith by hearing, Rom. 10, 17; by faith believe in Christ and obtain eternal life, John 3, 16. 18. Concerning this more will be said in the following, when we come to speak against the defenders of an absolute decree and against the predestinarians. *d.*) Purpose, good pleasure, will and plan of God are not simply election itself, but the election is made according to the purpose, good pleasure, etc., of God, Eph. 1, 5. 9; Rom. 8, 28. This against Beza (*Lib. Quaest. et resp.* vol. I., p. 683; *Piscat. Disp. contr. Schaffm. Thes.* 99. p. 102 seq. and on Rom. 8, 28, p. 157, vol. I., p. 93. *Huber. Act. Huberian.* part II., p. 58 seqq.) III. The object of election is mankind (not the angels), and this not every one, indiscriminately, whatever may be his behavior, but those who will believe in Christ perseveringly; which description of election is taken from the intermediate causes, namely faith, and Him to whom this faith refers, i. e. Christ, and the subjoined perseverance to the end. But in this there is presupposed, as the principal efficient cause of faith, the Holy Ghost, and as means the minis-

try of the Word, through which He enkindles faith in the regenerate. IV. The highest end of election with respect to God is the praise of His glorious grace, Eph. 1, 6. 22. In this is embraced also the end with respect to the elect, namely justification, salvation, and glorification, Rom. 8, 32. An intermediate end is that they be sanctified and unblameable before Him through love, Eph. 1, 4. 7.

*II. What is the character of this purpose and good pleasure of the divine will, according to which He has decreed to save those who believe in Christ?*

It is not absolute, but so determined in a certain order, that it embraces all the causes and means of our salvation.

*III. What are these causes and means of our salvation?*

1. The infinite mercy of God, which earnestly and anxiously seeks the salvation of the whole human race.

2. The infinite merit of Christ, whom He destined to be the Mediator and Redeemer of the whole human race.

3. The ministry of the word and of the sacraments, by which He wishes to offer to the whole world the benefits obtained by the merits of Christ.

4. Saving faith, which He enkindles in the souls of men through the mediating ministry of the word and of the sacraments, through the operation of the Holy Ghost, and by which He has determined to justify and save all.

Therefore the Calvinists err, who teach that only certain men are predestinated to eternal life by an absolute decree of God, i. e. by His mere, sole, simple, bare and fixed will, preceding, in respect to order, all the causes and means of salvation and damnation, for which no cause can be given or assigned, without any regard to the merits of Christ or to faith in Christ; and that, as a consequence, for these alone the means of salvation, namely the Redeemer Christ, the preached word, and faith are destined to be efficacious; but that all others, simply from themselves and on account of themselves are distinctly destined to the eternal punishment of damnation (Beza, Quest. et respons. Vol. 1. fol. 687 seqq., the same, Resp. secunda ad Acta Colloq. Mompelg. praef. p. 7. 8. and p. 160. 191. Gryn, orthodox. doct. clas. 1, thes. 13. Admonit. Neostad. p. 19. Piscat. Disp. advers. Schafm. thes.

47. p. 37; the same, Respon. apolog. Bert. p. 8. and often elsewhere. See Admonit. de Iren. D. Sigwart. c. 3. l. 3. art. 7. p. 434 seqq., where you can find more of such strange expressions. Rennecher. in Aurea Salutis Catena, p. 36. 37. 126 and others *passim*.)—This absolute decree contradicts: 1. The absolute foundation of our faith, namely the Word of God, to which it is entirely unknown. 2. It leads us away from the Scriptures to empty speculations. 3. It accuses the gospel of imperfection, as if it had not manifested to us the will of God plainly and completely. 4. It makes our salvation uncertain and doubtful, and hence, 5. It leads either to security or to despair. Finally, 6. If it is a secret decree, by what tradition has it been revealed to them?—It is no valid objection that: 1. The Scriptures make mention of the good pleasure, purpose, decree of the divine will. (Hub. Sturm. de prædest. th. 5. p. 70. 71. Piscat. contra Schafman. Thes. 132 seqq.) For if an absolute good pleasure and purpose is inferred from these, more is inferred than is contained in the premises, since these include the ordinary means. 2. Rom. 11, 33 is not in the way, (Piscat. last observation on this passage, p. 377. Beza. Resp. alter. p. 163. 168.) We too acknowledge here the great depth of the divine riches, Ps. 36, 6. But it is a false conclusion to say that the will of God is hidden. Furthermore, the will of God revealed to us in the Gospel is called hidden only in a certain sense; namely with reference to reason and mere human knowledge, 1 Cor. 2, 8. This same will is said to be manifest in the Gospel, John 1, 18, revealed unto babes, Matt. 11, 25.

*IV. In order that we may treat more fully of these matters singly I wish you to demonstrate by the firm testimony of Scriptures, I. That God according to His purpose seriously seeks and desires the salvation of all men?*

Ez. 33, 11. "As I live, *I have no pleasure* in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked may turn from his way and live." See Ez. 18, 32.

John 3, 16. "For God so loved the *world*, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Rom. 11, 32. "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon *all*."

1 Tim. 2, 4. "Who will have *all men* to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

2 Pet. 3, 9. "The Lord is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that *any* should perish, but that *all* should come to repentance.

Therefore the Calvinists err, who contend that God does not wish *all* to be saved, but only certain ones, namely, those absolutely elected, or all those who really are saved. (Calvin. lib. 3. instit. c. 21. s. 5 seqq. p. 589. 591. 592. Zanch. de natur. Dei lib. 5. c. 2. qu. 4 et c. 4. qu. 9. t. 2. col. 280. 281. 485. Piscat. disp. contr. Schafman. thes. 14. p. 179.) Vain is the subterfuge which they here adopt; namely, 1. That the word "*all*" does not only denote the individuals of the kinds, but very frequently the kinds of individuals, and that God does not wish all individuals to be saved, but all kinds (nicht alle, sondern nur allerlei) without regard to sex. (Beza Colloq. Mompelg. resp. 1. ad thes. 7. de predest. p. 510; the same, Respons. 2. ad colloq. Mompelg. p. 193. Piscat. contr. Schafman. thes. 49. p. 39.) But this hair-splitting distinction is proved to be untenable by the undoubted circumstances of the texts. For in Rom. 11 not only the elect are concluded under unbelief, but all, also the reprobates. Therefore the Calvinists infer the rejection of the reprobates from this very passage. According to 1 Tim. 2, 4, He wishes all to be saved, for whom He commands, v. 1., that prayers should be made. But prayers are to be made for all men, according to the same verse, also for an impious government, v. 2., Jer. 29, 7, for enemies, Matt. 5, 43, and for persecutors, according to Christ's example, Luke 23, 34. The legitimate conclusion is clear. In 2 Pet. 3, 9, the discussion is concerning the unbelieving and impenitent transgressors, whom God, by His patience, invites to penitence. See Rom. 2, 4. Hence this does not refer to the elect alone. This the antithesis also shows: He does not wish that *some*, or *certain* ones shall be lost, but that *all* shall repent. In regard to the other passage let the judgment be the same. 2. Vain is also the subterfuge that the word "*world*," in John 3, 16 is not to be understood as meaning all men in the world, but only the elect in the world. (Beza Colloq. Mompelg. p. 544. Piscat. schol. in John c. 3, 17. p. 63. et observ. 11, p. 70).—But, first, nowhere is the word "*world*"

used in Scriptures for the elect in the world alone. Secondly, in v. 18, the world is divided into believers and unbelievers, who have been judged. Thirdly, by "world" those are to be understood who love darkness rather than light, v. 19. What has this to do with the elect? See John 2, 2. 3. Vain is the subterfuge taken from Ez. 33, for here the Lord speaks not concerning all the impious, but of those who have been converted. (Beza, lib. de predest. cont. Castal. vol. I., p. 353 seq. Zanch. lib. 3 de nat. Dei c. 4. qu. 4. t. 2. col. 280.) The words c. 18, v. 31, also speak against it: "Why will ye die? For I have no pleasure in the death of *him that dieth,*" v. 32. But he who dies in sin, is never converted, but perishes eternally. What Piscat. contr. Schafman. th. 57. p. 41. 42, says concerning the difference between "have pleasure," and "will," is of no moment. For the Hebrew word signifies both. Add to this that we have pleasure only in that which we will, and not in that to which we are opposed. 4. Vain is the subterfuge that there is a distinction between the will of the sign, revealed in the Word, by which will God externally offers salvation to all, and the will of His good pleasure, or the secret and hidden will, by which He denies salvation to the most. (Beza, resp. 2. ad Colloq. Mompelg. p. 173. Tossan. thesib. hist. didasc. de Pelagianis, thes. 144. For, first, the Scriptures know nothing of this distinction, which originated among the scholastics (see Thom. 1, 9. 19, art. 11.) Secondly, to it we oppose the infallible axiom: In God there are no contradictory wills. And thus, thirdly, no other will of good pleasure can be admitted, than that which is in Christ, and which is revealed to us through the Gospel, Rom. 16, 26; 1 Cor. 2, 7. According to the distinction alleged by the adversaries there would either be two contrary wills in God, or the one will of God would at the same time will two contraries, one openly, the other secretly. In this manner God would be guilty of hypocrisy, deception, and wicked guile. But even to *think* this of God is absurd, blasphemous, impious, and is even contrary to human uprightness and integrity, Matt. 5, 37: But let your communication be, Yea, yea, etc. That Luther made this same distinction does not militate against us. (Kimedont. lib. 2. de redempt. gen. hum. c. 16. p. 306. and de predest, c. 4. p. 478 seqq.) For this was done in an-

other way and for another end. "The will of the sign," he says, "is the one which God has revealed to us in His Word and Sacraments, and this we must observe, if we wish to know God's will. The will of good pleasure is the bare majesty, which is God Himself, from which the eyes must be drawn; for in this respect He cannot be apprehended. See c. 6. Gen. t. 1. Luth. Witteb. f. 117. a. He therefore advises simply to receive this will. See the same place. Compare also what we have touched on above concerning the beneficent will of God. This one thing must here be noted: A distinction must be made between the inclination of the divine will towards saving, and the effect and act of this inclination and salvation itself. Between us and the Calvinists the question is concerning the inclination. But most of the arguments they have adduced against us refer to the act of the inclination. It is therefore illogical to say that God has mercy only on a few, and not on all, and that He predestinates, calls, justifies, and sanctifies only a few, and not all, and that therefore He does not wish to predestinate, call, sanctify, etc., all. (Piscator. disput. contr. Schafman. thes. 6, ad 20. p. 23. 24. 25. 26.) False deductions! The antecedent speaks of an act, the conclusion of an inclination. Furthermore the will to save does not cover the same ground as salvation itself. And lastly, the bare and simple will, is not the only cause of predestination, but the other causes and the means already mentioned are required. "It is necessary to believe and to confess most sincerely, that God wishes all men to be saved, etc. The fact that nevertheless many of these perish is the fault of those that perish; but that many are saved is a gift of the saving God." (August. ad artic. sibi fals. impos. art. 2. t. 7. col. 1353. B.) Of this more below.

V. *Demonstrate II. that according to the purpose of God Christ died and made satisfaction for the sin of all men without exception.*

Is. 53, 6. All we, like sheep, have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on Him (Christ) the iniquity of us *all*.

John 1, 29. Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the *world*.

1 John 2, 2. Christ is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the *whole world*.

1 Cor. 15, 22. For as in Adam all died, even so in Christ shall *all* be made alive.

2 Cor. 5, 15. One (Christ) died for *all*.

1 Tim. 2, 6. He gave Himself for *all*.

1 Tim. 4, 10. Christ is the Savior of *all* men, especially of those that believe.

Here belong all those utterances of the Scriptures which extend the merit of Christ to all, and accordingly to the whole world, and which speak of the general will of God, of the universal proclamation of the Gospel and offer of the divine benefits, of their contempt and rejection, and of the punishment of those who treat them with contempt. Therefore the Calvinists err, who assert that Christ died only for the elect. Of these they are impious, false and blasphemous who, with Beza, declare that it is impious, false and blasphemous to say that Christ, both in reference to the purpose of God and to its effect, should have died and made satisfaction, no less for the sins of the damned than for the sins of Peter, Paul, and all the saints. (See Colloq. Mompelg. p. 547. and resp. 2. Beza, ad acta, p. 219. 221.)

It is folly 1. to restrict the cited passages to the universality of the elect. For then, first, only the elect would be erring sheep and had died in Adam. Secondly, then the grace of Christ would not abound, contrary to Rom. 5, 20. Against it is also, thirdly, the conclusion for the minor to the major: not for our sins alone—i. e. of the faithful of both the Jews and the Gentiles,—but for those of the whole world,—i. e. of all men in the whole world, to all of whom and not to the Jews alone, this general epistle of John was written. Opposed to it are, fourthly, the clear passages which assert that Christ gave satisfaction also for the sins of the most wicked. Thus it is said that He has bought those who deny the Lord, 2 Pet. 2, 1, 2; those who tread Christ under foot and profane the blood of the Testament through which they are sanctified, Heb. 10, 19; those who were enlightened and had tasted of the heavenly gift, and have again crucified the Son of God, Heb. 6, 6. But can all this be referred to the elect alone? By no means!

It is folly 2. to understand these expressions according to the opinion or judgment of love, but not as applying to the thing itself and to the truth of the fact. (Piscat. contr. Schafman. thes. 68. p. 55. 56.) For Peter distinctly says, 2

Pet. 2, 18, that they were *clean* escaped, truly and in reality, not seemingly (as Beza in his annotations to this passage remarks), and not according to opinion only. Further it is said that they have escaped the pollution of the world, not according to the judgment of love alone, but through the knowledge of Christ, v. 20, and of the way of righteousness, v. 21. Then they are said to have *again* become entangled v. 20, and to have turned from the holy command, 21, to have returned to the mire, to have devoured their vomit, that it was worse with them than it was before, v. 22. How could these things be said of them, if they had never in reality been purged from their sins? In this way Heb. 6, 6 and 10, 29 must be judged. For if they had never in reality been sanctified, how could their punishment on that account be increased? How could they crucify Christ again, if He had not been crucified for them before? Add to this that here the sin against the Holy Ghost is spoken of, which presupposes a manifest contention against known truth.

It is folly 3. to make the distinction that Christ's death was sufficient for all, but efficacious only for the elect. (Pareus, Irenic. c. 24. p. 142. Kimedontiüs de redempt. gen. hum. l. 1, c. 11. p. 63. seqq.) For, first, this distinction is not drawn from the Scriptures, but from the brains of the scholiasts. Secondly, it is manifestly contrary to the cited passages. Thirdly, it has been rejected by Beza and others as a mere sophistic and silly subterfuge. (Respons. 2. colloq. Mompelg. p. 217. 218. 221. Piscat. in his analysis of 1 Tim. 2, p. 31. It is not approved by Pareus himself; see Apologia biblior. Neostad. fol. 97.) Fourthly, it is insulting to God Himself and to the merits of Christ. For how could He truly suffice for all, if God did not send the Son for all, and did not will to have compassion on all? It is just as if you would say that all the hungry are sufficiently satisfied when the rich have sufficient food to satisfy every one, which however they are never willing to distribute among the hungry. Fifthly, this difference is illogically and impertently applied here. For the question is not, whether the death of Christ is sufficient for the sins of the reprobates also, if God so wishes it; but, whether God really did wish that it should suffice, and whether He really did give satisfaction for them. What therefore has this distinction to do with the thing itself?



One thing must here be noted: for the proper dissection of the arguments of the Calvinists a distinction must here be made between the death of Christ itself, and the benefits and fruit thereof, as also the application, which is accomplished through faith. The question is concerning the death and merit of Christ themselves, whether they have been accomplished and secured for all men. All the arguments of the Calvinists reach a conclusion in reference to the salutary fruit and application of the same, which is accomplished through faith, and thus they play with a proof drawn from four terms. The death itself has been accomplished, without any consideration of faith, for enemies, sinners, etc. Rom. 5, 6. 7. 8. 10. But the fruit of this death can be applied to none save believers, because faith is the instrumental cause of this appropriation. They conclude falsely then when they argue thus: Christ made satisfaction for the elect, the brethren, the sons, the sheep, the church, the saints, His people, as also for many; therefore not for all. (Piscat. de praedest. thes. 58. seq. p. 43-49. Pareus, Iren. p. 42 seq.) Did He therefore satisfy for the elect *alone*? By no means! For then there is more in the conclusion than in the premises. For, first, the restriction "only" is nowhere found in the Scriptures. Secondly, it is one thing to die for the elect, another to die for the elect *alone*. Thirdly, would it be logical to say that the faithful *alone* will arise, because the faithful will arise. But if the faithful alone will arise, then the unbelievers will not arise. Fourthly, the word "many" has a double meaning. But here it is used not segregatively, but collectively, for the whole multitude, or for all. Rom. 5, 19: "For by one man's disobedience many were made sinners." Dan. 12, 2: "Many shall awake," that is, "*all*," according to Christ's explanation, John 5, 28. The word "many" Matt. 20, 28 is explained by "*all*" in 1 Tim. 2, 6. Further the Scriptures use "many," or "the multitude" as opposite to the fewness of the elect. Matt. 20, 16. Therefore "many" and "elect" are not one and the same. What the opponents adduce concerning the intercession and the prayers of Christ for the elect, has been explained above when treating of the sacerdotal office of Christ; which see.

VI. *Demonstrate III. that according to the purpose of God*

*this universal merit of Christ must be offered to all men without exception through the preaching of the Gospel.*

Matt. 11, 28. Come unto me *all ye* that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Matt. 28, 19. Go and teach *all* nations.

Mark 16, 15. Preach the Gospel to *every* (rational) creature.

Acts 17, 30. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth *all* men every where to repent.

1 Tim. 2, 4. God will have *all* to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

The same thing follows from the universal will of God, from the redemption through Christ, and from the punishment of him that despises grace. The Calvinists err, who insist that the evangelical promises, by which we are called to the participation of the benefits of Christ, do not have reference to every one indiscriminately, but that in reality they refer *only* to the elect. (See Beza resp. 2. ad colloq. Momp. p. 222 seqq. The same, lib. de predest. vol. 1, p. 421. The same, quaest. et resp. vol. I, p. 685 seq. and others *passim*.)

It is frivolous 1. that they again restrict the universality of the promises to the elect alone. For this is contradicted by those passages which offer these promises to the impious and unbelieving also, and that with the serious purpose of communication. "How often would I have gathered you, but ye would not." Matt. 23, 37. "I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people," etc. Is. 65, 2. "I have called, and ye refused," Prov. 1, 24. "Ye did not answer," Is. 65, 12. The same follows from the parable concerning those, who when invited, were not willing to come, but slew the servants, Matt. 22, 3. 6.

It is impious 2. to understand by this promise only an outward token or a simulation. (Piscat. disput. de praed. thes. 8. p. 66.) For "if it were thus, what would be more untruthful than God, since even a wise and honorable man is not guilty of such a thing." (Lactant. lib. de ira c. 4. p. 335.) Then the king would not have been in reality incensed on account of the contempt of his invitation, contrary to Matt. 22, 7.

It is profane 3. to say that the call is efficacious only in the case of the elect, but inefficacious in reference to the rest. (Beza, resp. 2 colloq. Mompelg. p. 93. Explic. Christianism. vol. 1, p. 201 seq. Piscat. contr. Schafman. thes. 93. p. 87.) Whence is this distinction proved? From the Scriptures? Why is it inefficacious? Is it by the counsel and intention of God? This would argue God a hypocrite. Or is the Gospel the cause? In this way they break the efficacy and virtue of the Gospel. Or is it, lastly, derived from man? Thereby nothing is gained for the adversaries, since this is not controverted.

Against this does not militate the fact that the Gospel is not actually preached always. (Beza, resp. 2. colloq. Mompelg. p. 169. seq. Lib. quest. et resp. vol. 1. p. 685. For, first, this does not break the will and command of God that all should be called. For this has been carried out in the times of our first parents, of Noah, and of the apostles, who went out to all the world, Rom. 10, 18; and preached the Gospel to every creature, Col. 1, 2. 3. Secondly, it takes place from the circumstance of the ingratitude of men, on which account God visits the iniquities of the parents on the children, Ex. 20, 5; takes away the kingdom, Matt. 21, 43; removes the candle-stick out of its place, Rev. 2, 5. With this not conflict 2) Ps. 147, 20. (Piscat. contra. Schafman. thes. 16, p. 25.) For that "God hath not dealt so with any nature" is not owing to an absolute decree of reprobation, but is on account of the forefathers and their own ingratitude. Nor, 3) Matt. 10, 5. (Piscat. ad l. p. 311). For it is unwisely concluded from this passage that the preaching of the Gospel pertains only to the elect, because the prohibition: "Go not into the way the Gentiles, etc.," was temporal, which ceased after the resurrection, Matt. 28, 19. Nor 4) Acts 16, 6. (Beza, resp. 2. colloq. Mompelg. 170. Zanch. lib. 5. de nat. dei c. 2. qu. 4. col. 486.) For that it "was forbidden to preach the word in Asia" is not done absolutely, but for the reason that the Lord knew that they could first preach it in Macedonia with greater fruits. But afterwards the word was preached in Asia and Bithynia, 1 Pet. 1, 1. Acts 2, 9. 10. For the refutation of their arguments, a distinction must be made between the promise itself, which is common both to the be-

lievers and the unbelievers, and the promised thing or the fruit and use of the promise, which belong only to the believers. To this latter the arguments of the adversaries refer, but the question is concerning the first. Here also they deceive with proofs from four terms.

VII. *Demonstrate finally IV. that God, according to His purpose, wishes that all should be saved by faith.*

John 6, 40. And this is the will of my Father, that every one which seeth the Son and *believeth* on Him, may have everlasting life.

2 Thess. 2, 13. God hath chosen us from the beginning to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and *belief* of the truth.

James 2, 5. God hath chosen the poor of this world rich in *faith*.

1 Cor. 1, 21. It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that *believe*.

The same thing is proved by 1. All those testimonies of Scriptures which promise eternal life to the believers. 2. A proof is also our justification, which does not take place except by faith. Hence the axiom: As God has from eternity decreed us to be saved and to be elected to eternal life, so in time He justifies and saves us. But He saves us in time through faith, Eph. 2, 8. Therefore, etc. And hence: As is the execution of the divine decree, so is the decree itself, and the converse. See the apostle's (not Rennecher's) Golden Chain of Salvation, Rom. 8, 29. 30. Concerning similar cases the same holds good. 3. A proof is our adoption as children, which does not take place except by faith, John 1; 12; Gal. 3, 26. But we are "*predestinated*" unto the adoption of children of God, Eph. 1, 5. 4. A proof is the character of the instrumental cause offering us salvation, namely the Gospel. For everything that is offered us in the Gospel for our salvation requires faith, John 20, 31. But the grace of God in Christ, through and on account of the merit of Christ to eternal life, is offered us in the Gospel for our salvation, 2 Thess. 1, 11. 12. Therefore, etc. But what is the universal grace of God without the merit of Christ? There is none: hence no justification, hence no salvation, hence no election. But what does the merit of Christ profit unless it be appro-

propriated? But it cannot be appropriated except through faith. Therefore, etc.

Hence the Calvinists err, who entirely remove faith from election, which they imagine to be entirely absolute, and claim that in the cited passages the execution only of election, which is accomplished through the medium of faith, is spoken of; and that indeed the opinion of those who defend the opposite, is more blasphemous against God, than the doctrine of the Pelagians and of those sophists who teach that predestination is effected from foreseen faith and foreseen works. (Zanch. 1, 5. de nat. dei c. 2. qu. 3. t. 2. col. 484.) But from what passage of Scriptures is this distinction drawn? For us the causes of election and of the execution thereof are entirely the same. Let them prove the contrary from the Scriptures!

The following assertions prove nothing against us: 1. That faith comes into existence in time, and that accordingly the election has been made from eternity simply and absolutely, and without any condition whatever. (Zanch. l. c. col. 483.) For although faith comes into existence in time, yet the election was effected from eternity through the foresight of this faith, 1 Pet. 1, 20, with respect to which foresight of God there is no future, but all things are from eternity present to Him, 2 Pet. 3, 8. 2. That faith is the effect, the fruit, and consequence of election. (The same, l. c. col. 484.) For it does not follow from this, that it cannot be the cause thereof, since it is rather both, but in different respects. It can be called the fruit of election on account of the purpose of God, insofar as He has decreed in the decree of election to enkindle faith through the preaching of the Gospel; but the *cause* thereof, insofar as God decreed to elect those of whom He foresaw that they would receive faith through the preaching. 3. The passage, Acts 13, 48.) See the same, c. 2. qu. 4. t. 2. col. 486 seq.) For here a false deduction is made. "As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed," not however by an absolute decree, but destined by a certain order established by God. But this order takes into consideration the divinely instituted means, through which the Holy Spirit enkindles faith in men who follow that order. But those who despise them remain in their unbelief. 4. That

the election is gratuitous, and thus cannot include faith. (Zanch. l. c. 5, c. 1. qu. 3. col. 484. 513.) For grace is the opposite of works, Rom. 11, 6, but not of *faith*; faith is subordinated to grace, that faith may apprehend grace in Christ. Furthermore, our election is not effected on account of faith as the impelling and moving cause, but in faith, from faith, and through faith, in the very same sense as we are also justified by faith, by imputation and not by merit, instrumentally, because it apprehends the grace offered in Christ, not causatively, or by effecting that God elects us, insofar as it is a work, or dignity, or virtue by us or from us. Those who assent to this latter are partakers of the errors of Pelagianus. "The elect are not those who are elected, because they have believed, (as through their own merit and dignity) but those who are elected that they believe." (August. de *praedest. sanct.* c. 17. t. 7. col. 1254 A.) Whoever accuses us of Pelagianism in this connection is a calumniator.

VIII. *But if God through the means mentioned seriously wills that all should be saved, how does it happen that not all men are in fact saved?*

If God would will absolutely that all men should be saved, then they would necessarily be saved; but because He wills this in a determinate way, namely in this order, that through the Gospel they shall come to the knowledge of the truth and be justified by true faith in Christ, 1 Tim. 2, 4. it follows from this that only the believers are saved, Mark 16, 16; John 6, 40, and that but few are elected, Matt. 22, 14.

Therefore all the arguments of the adversaries which are adduced against the orthodoxy of our assertion, as well from the will of God as from the sufficiency of the merit of Christ, lose their force, as soon as the distinction is made in the will of God (which indeed in the nature of its essence is simple, but as to the act of willing, by which the will becomes effective on creatures, is diverse); 1. As a simple or *absolute*, and 2. As a *determinate* will. Whatever God wills simply and absolutely, that also takes place simply and always and invariably. "He hath done whatsoever He pleased," Ps. 115, 3. "For He spake, and it was done," Ps. 33, 9. "He calleth those things which be not as though they were," Rom. 4, 17. But in this wise He does not will our salvation. But what-

ever He wills in a determinate way, under a certain condition, that is not effected unless the condition be fulfilled. Thus God wills all to be saved, but under this condition, that through the medium of the word they believe, and appropriate by faith the merit of Christ; and if this condition is omitted or neglected or not applied legitimately, then by the just judgment of God the opposite takes place. Others, after Damascenus (lib. 2. de orthodox. fid. c. 29. p. 150.), distinguish between the *antecedent* will, according to which He wills that all men, without exception, should be saved by faith in Christ which is offered us through the preaching of the Gospel; and the *consequent* will, according to which He saves only those who believe in Christ, but justly condemns the unbelievers, John 3, 18; 6, 40; Mark 16, 16. The antecedent will therefore regards 1. The intention and purpose of God concerning our salvation, and thus 2. The order of the causes or of the means appointed to attain this; such as, first, the principle cause, the universal love of God, John 3, 16; secondly, the meritorious cause, the universal merit of Christ, 1 John 2, 2; thirdly, the instrumental offering cause, the general call through the Gospel, Matt. 28, 19. The consequent will regards the application of the means to men, which is accomplished through the receiving instrumental cause, namely faith, which comes from the hearing of the word, Rom. 10, 17. From this follows the particular election of the believers, and from the opposite, namely neglect of and contempt for the word, the condemnation of the unbelievers. Hence the following 1. Both kinds of will, the antecedent and the consequent, are determined by a certain order of means. 2. Therefore neither is absolute and unconditional. 3. One is subordinated to the other. 4. And hence they are not contradictory. 5. The election is of the believers, and accordingly is a particular one. "Few are chosen," Matt. 22, 14. "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, and few etc.," Matt. 7, 14. "I have chosen you out of the world," John 15, 19 and 17, 6. "Thou hast revealed them unto babes," Matt. 11, 25. God hath chosen the foolish, the weak, the ignoble, 1 Cor. 1, 27. "The Lord knoweth them that are His," 2 Tim. 2, 19. 6. Accordingly it is not a universal election of all.

Therefore those err, who assert that properly all men, without exception, are elected (Acta Huber. p. 1. p. 32, 62. p. 2, p. 31.) These the word "election" alone, which denotes a certain segregation, convicts of error. Furthermore, this word is always used in Scriptures only of those who will actually attain salvation, and thus, when it is applied to all promiscuously, it is a contradiction in itself. Against this avails nothing the universal merit, by which all are received into Christ, Rom. 5, 19 (see the same place, part 2, p. 124). For in parallel of Christ and of Adam the causes themselves of our guilt and of righteousness are compared, but not the effects. Different is furthermore the circumstance that the Adamic guilt has passed over unto all immediately, through the natural generation from Adam; but the merit of Christ is appropriated only mediately to the believers through faith. The other arguments, which are drawn from the universality of the love of God, of the call, and of the Gospel promises, are easily refuted by noting the distinction in the will of God. For they form the conclusions from the antecedent will, which is not the only cause of election, but reaches its end through its means. Therefore it is illogical to form a conclusion from that alone in reference to election itself.

*IX. But what are the causes that not all and every one, to whom the Gospel is preached, receive faith from it, believe, and are saved?*

The cause is in no manner in God, who seriously and earnestly wished all to come to the knowledge of the truth, 1 Tim. 2, 4, nor in the preached word of the Gospel, which in itself is a power of God for the salvation of every one that believes, Rom. 1, 6, a savour of life unto life, 2 Cor. 2, 16; but the cause is found solely and alone in the will and wickedness of men, who either despise the word entirely, or do not hear it, and thus in various ways themselves resist the operation of the Holy Spirit; as the parables concerning the great supper, Luke 14, 16, concerning the marriage, Matt. 22, 3, and the land, Luke 8, 12, show.

Here the following passages of Scriptures apply: "Ye would not," Matt. 23, 27: "Ye refused," Prov. 1, 24; "Ye did not answer," Is. 65, 12; They would not come, Luke 14, 18. But they who hear the Word in various ways hinder the



fruit of the divine seed through hypocrisy, stubbornness, pride, laziness, dreaming, unbelief, preconceived opinions, voluptuousness, desires, and innumerable other sins, Acts 7, 51; reject the counsel of God against themselves, Luke 7, 30; put the Word of God from themselves, and make themselves unworthy of everlasting life, Acts 13, 48. And thus "if God has not governed all, it is their own fault and blame." (Chrysost. hom. 7, in Matt. c. 2. t. 2. col. 70. C.) "That they persist in the darkness is not occasioned by the nature of the light, but by their wickedness, since they of their own will make themselves unworthy of so great a gift." (The same, hom. 7, in John. c. 1. t. 3. col. 48. C.) See on this topic the very elegant explanations of Chrysostom (hom. 45, in Matt. c. 13 c t. 2 col. 391. D, in *our* analysis of the Gospel for the 'Sunday Septuagesimae, observation 7, vol. I., col. 453.) The objection is not valid, that it is not in our power to hear the Word with fruit. "For that the hearer hears, is voluntary," says Chrysostom, (hom. 17, in cap. 1, John t. 3. col. 98. A,) and the external study is left to our abilities. We can hear the external Word, and listen to it, as the Athenians did, Acts 17, 20, and indeed attentively and anxiously, like Sergius, Acts 13, 7; gladly, like Herod, Mark 6, 20; with desire of learning. We are also able to remove certain external obstacles, as stupor, levity and security. But through this external hearing, as through the ordinary and efficacious means (not as if it were our merit), the Holy Spirit works and produces the internal hearing, namely the understanding and assent of the heart, faith, and conversion. And he who, against the truth, accuses us of Pelagianism in this connection, speaks calumny.

X. *But what is the reason that most men become reprobates and are condemned?*

Here too the fault is not in God, who has no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, Ez. 18, 32; 13, 11; and does not rejoice in the destruction of the living, Wis. 1, 13; but the fault lies solely and alone in the impenitence and unbelief of men. For he that believeth not shall be damned, Mark 16, 16; and the wrath of God abideth on him, John 3, 36. See v. 18 and John 6, 40. Here all the reasons under the preceding question apply. For if men, of their own will, repel the

Word of the Gospel from themselves, and judge themselves unworthy of eternal life, Acts 13, 46, then certainly their reprobation and condemnation must be attributed to their own fault, according to the expression, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself," Hos. 13, 9.

Therefore the Calvinists err, who teach that the greater part of mankind is destined and created for eternal punishment by an absolute and simple decree of God, whom God never did will, or does will, or shall will to save. (Beza resp. 2. colloq. Mompelg. p. 7. col. 194). To this all Scriptures are diametrically opposed. It is without foundation when they distinguish between *reprobation*, which takes place absolutely and alone by the good pleasure of God, and *damnation*, of which unbelief and sin is the cause. (See the same, p. 158 seq.) This distinction is destitute of all scriptural testimony, since this absolute reprobation cannot be proved by a single word of Scripture. Furthermore, this doctrine contradicts itself. If God is the cause of reprobation, He is also the cause of damnation. For whatever is the cause of a cause, is also the cause of that effected by the latter cause, according to the hypothesis of the Calvinists themselves. (See the same, p. 177 seq.) And again, God does not will the proper end of reprobation, that is damnation itself. Hence He does not will that which is ordained for this very end. Therefore He does not will reprobation, which is ordained for this very end. Moreover, as the election is not absolute, but determined by a certain order, so is also reprobation. The norm of the former is: whosoever believes in Christ will be saved; of the latter: whosoever does not believe, will be damned.

Against this the assertions are of no avail: 1) That God is the cause of election, and therefore also of reprobation and damnation. (Beza l. c. p. 166.) The false reasoning lies in putting these two on the same basis. God is the cause of election, both with reference to the end as also with reference to all the means leading to this end. But the meriting cause of reprobation and condemnation, impenitence and unbelief, must be ascribed not to God, but entirely to men. 2) Rom. 9, 21, the parable of the potter. (Beza l. c. p. 163. seq. Lib. de praedest. contr. Castell. vol. 1, p. 342.) For this does not suit; Because, first it is said that God has patiently en-

dured the vessels of wrath; hence He has not *made* them such. For what God has made, He approves, Wis. 11, 25. He does not approve the vessels of wrath, but endures them. Secondly, the preparation is falsely understood. The vessels are to have been prepared, but was this by God? The apostle does not say so. Thirdly, the argument is wrong in regard to the end. God did not will that there should be vessels of wrath, in order that He might declare His glory, but because they are such, He has willed to use them for the declaration of His glory and power. Fourthly, there is a false opposition. God has prepared certain ones for honor, therefore He has preparèd the others for dishonor, that is to be vessels of wrath. For it is their own fault that they are left in their innate dishonor. 3) Rom. 9, 13: Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated. (Beza l. c. p. 162. lib. de prædest. contr. Castell. vol. 1. p. 342). For this does not belong here, as first, it does not treat of eternal reprobation, but of an external prerogative, which by right of primogenitive belonged to Esau. By this the apostle teaches that the election does not rest on any prerogative of birth or race, as the Jews thought, nor on the works of men, but depends entirely on the grace of God in Christ. Secondly, because it does not speak of the persons of Esau and Jacob, but of their posterity. "Two nations, etc.," Gen. 25, 23. Thirdly, Esau himself never served Jacob. Fourthly, Esau is never spoken of as condemned by the Scriptures. Fifthly, the word "hate" does not always signify an inimical spirit, but at times an act by which one is placed after another who is favored. See Luke 14, 26: "Who does not hate his father and mother," i. e. love me more than them. Matt. 10, 37. What then has this to do with an absolute hatred of Esau? 4. Prov. 16, 4. (See the same, resp. 2 colloq. Mompelg. p. 175.) For God does not make the impious that he be impious, but because he is impious by his vices, God makes him for a day of evil, namely by punishing him justly. The other passages which are adduced against us, such as Rom. 9, 15, 18: "He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth;" Matt. 11, 25. "Revealed to babes," Jude 4, "men of old ordained to this condemnation," etc., treat of the consequent will of God. Against the reality of the case, they are put over against the antecedent will, and thus the argument

is fallacious. Of hardening, blindness, etc., we have spoken above, under the cause of sin.

*XI. Here this one thing must yet be asked: Can those who truly believe and who are elected, deprive themselves of, or lose faith and the grace of the indwelling Holy Spirit through mortal sins?*

Certainly they can; but one in this way, the other in that. The elect can do this totally, but not finally; the regenerated both totally and finally.

Here a threefold distinction must be noted, although in the ordinary way of speaking it is not observed. If we wish to speak accurately, we must say: 1. Of the believers some are regenerated, others elect. The regenerated are properly those who, being in reality born again through the Holy Spirit, believe for a time, but again fall from faith through impenitence. The elect are those who are also born again through the Holy Spirit and for a time falling into sin lose faith, do not however persist in this to the end, but by repentance again arise from their fall. Hence the regenerated are to be estimated according to final faith. Therefore the regenerated are not, by that fact alone, elect, nor are all the elect always and at all times regenerated. For there are regenerated persons who are nevertheless reprobate on account of their foreseen final impenitence; and there are elect persons, who, on account of the sin into which they fall, are regenerated. 2. The casting aside and loss of faith and grace, is either a *total* one, in which justifying faith and the gift of renewal are entirely lost, and thus a child of grace becomes a child of wrath; or a *final* one, namely when faith is not only lost, but can never again be regained, so that the departure from this life is taken in unbelief. The elect, through the mortal sins in which they indulge, as long as they indulge, shake off faith and grace entirely, but not finally, because at last, at the end of life, they return through true repentance. Those regenerated only shake them off both totally and finally, because they never return to a better condition, but depart from life in final impenitence. 3. Sins are either mortal or venial. Mortal sins shake off faith and grace; venial sins exist in connection with faith, but are controlled by it, and are remitted by the grace of God through Christ. See above on sin.

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# COLUMBUS THEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE

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Vol. I.

JUNE, 1881.

No. 3.

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## THE FORMULA OF CONCORD ON PREDESTINATION.

(CONCLUSION.)

IV. The fourth section of our Confession (Decl. § 34-42, Epit. § 12) considers a difficulty that may occur to the mind in view of the preceding exposition. If predestination, as an ordination of means, refers to all men alike, how does it come that not all men, but comparatively only a few, are elect? Are we not forced to account for this by assuming that, after all, it is not seriously and earnestly the will of God that all men should be saved? Must we not admit, if we still insist upon the universality of the redemption, that the Gospel brings saving power to some, but not to others, and that the call, though given to all alike, is sincere and efficacious in some cases and not in others? This would be a necessary resort, indeed, if the doctrine set forth were that of a dark decree which, without any reference to man's appropriation of the merits of Christ by faith or rejection by unbelief, has selected from the lost race but a few for the manifestation of divine mercy.\* But one must have read with his imagination instead of his eyes if he has found such a doctrine in our Formula. We have seen that it declares the will of God to be on the one hand that, as Christ has died for all, the salvation shall be seriously offered to all in the means of grace, and the Holy Spirit shall be active in all; and, on the other, that all should receive and believe the Word and be obedient to it. The call is seriously given to all, but not all men receive and believe it; and therefore not all are His sheep, but only those

who hear His voice. "That many are called and few are chosen, Matt. 20, 16, is not owing to the character of the divine vocation which takes place through the Word, as if the meaning of God were: 'Externally, through the Word, I call you all indeed to my kingdom unto whom I give my Word, but in my heart I do not intend it for all, but for a few only; for it is my will that the greater part of those whom I call through the Word should not be enlightened and converted, but remain damned, although I have declared myself otherwise toward them through the Word by which they are called.' In this manner it would be taught that God, who is the eternal truth, contradicts Himself, while at the same time God punishes such insincerity even in men, when a person declares one thing and means and intends another in his heart, Ps. 5, 9 and 12, 23." § 34. 35. Such a doctrine would be fraught with evil. It would undermine the organic foundation of our faith, and deprive us of all assurance in regard to the infallible authority of the Word; it would thus rob us of the consolation offered in the Gospel promise, sealed by the sacraments, and personally applied in absolution; it would result, finally, in the subversion of the ground of our faith, that the Holy Spirit is truly present when the Word is preached, heard, and considered, and will be efficacious and operate through it. Hence we must not suppose that any of those are elect who despise the Word and will not receive and believe it. "For even as God has ordained in His counsel that the Holy Spirit shall call, enlighten, and convert the elect through the Word, and that He will justify and save all those who receive Christ through true faith, so has he also decreed in His counsel that He will harden, reject, and condemn those called through the Word, if they resist the Holy Spirit who desires to be efficacious and to operate in them through the Word, and persevere in this course. And thus many are called, but few chosen." § 36-40.

What is the plain import of all this? Does it teach that God, prior to all consideration of men's relation to Christ, selected a few persons, whom He purposed to convert, sanctify, and save, and that the Holy Spirit by the means of grace infallibly effects His gracious purpose in these, while all the rest are left helplessly and hopelessly to perish? It is hard

to believe that any person can find such a doctrine in an elucidation that has for its express object the rejection of essential features in that Calvinistic hypothesis. How does it come that while many are called but few are chosen? That is the question which the Formula, in the section under consideration, proposes to answer. What is the answer? It is not that God has arbitrarily chosen some to salvation from among the lost, and has given means which should be effectual to accomplish His purpose in them, while no such purpose is formed with regard to the rest and therefore no effectual provision is made for their salvation. This theory is not only expressly rejected, but pronounced subversive of the foundation of our religion. The answer is that when the Word, which offers equally to all the salvation which is wrought out equally for all, is preached to men, some "receive and believe it," while the majority reject it, *and thus* many are called, but few are chosen. "For few receive the Word and obey it. The greater part despise the Word and will not come to the marriage feast. The cause of this contempt of the Word is not the foreknowledge of God," though He certainly foreknew from eternity who would receive and who would reject it, and on this basis, before the foundation of the world, elected the sheep that hear His voice, "but the perverted will of men, which rejects or perverts the means and instrument of the Holy Spirit offered by God through the call, and which resists the Holy Spirit desiring to be efficacious and operative through the Word; as Christ says, Matt. 23, 37: *How often would I have gathered you together, and ye would not!* Thus also many receive the Word with joy, but afterwards fall away, Luke 8, 13. But this occurs, not because God would not grant His grace unto perseverance to those in whom He has begun this good work; for this is contrary to the declaration of St. Paul, Phil. 1, 6; but because they contumaciously turn away again from the holy command, grieve and offend the Holy Spirit, entangle themselves in the pollutions of the world, and garnish the habitation of their hearts for Satan again. The latter end with these is worse than the beginning. 2 Pet. 2, 10. 20; Luke 11, 25. 26; Heb. 10, 26; Eph. 4, 30." § 41. 42. •

The doctrine thus set forth undeniably is that God in

His predestination has appointed an order of salvation for all men alike, and has the earnest and sincere purpose that all men shall have the benefit of it, instituting His means to be efficacious for all, giving His Spirit to be operative in all, and promising His gracious help to all believers alike unto perseverance and final salvation; that when this great salvation is presented to men in the Word and Sacraments, the Holy Spirit being equally present and operative in every case, some by His grace believe and accept the gracious offer, and some obstinately resisting His grace disbelieve and reject it; that those who believe are accepted in the Beloved, and are thus the elect of God, whilst those who reject it, though called with the same sincere purpose to save them as the others, are not chosen, and that, accordingly, the election of persons as it took place before the foundation of the world, not after the acceptance or rejection of Christ was consummated in time, was in view of the faith foreseen from eternity. So our great Lutheran writers have taught ever since the Formula was published, and this doctrine they have triumphantly maintained in opposition to the absolute predestination of Calvinists.

Let it not be said that our Confession could not, in consistency with its doctrine of man's impotency of will, teach a doctrine which takes into account man's appropriation of Christ by a faith which man can not originate, and that it must, to be in harmony with its teachings respecting human inability, inculcate the doctrine that as many as God earnestly desires to save He actually does save. It must teach what it says, not what it denies. It teaches that God's will is the salvation of all men through faith in Christ; it denies that His grace, which is universal, is irresistible when it comes to man in the Word. It teaches that the reason why not all are saved is, not that God would not save all, but that when He would have gathered them together, *they* would not. It teaches that the reason why many are called, but few are chosen is, not the foreknowledge or predestination of God, as if He had determined beforehand that this one shall believe, that one shall not, this one shall persevere, that one shall not, but the fact that "few receive the Word and obey it, the greater part despise the Word and will not come to the mar-



riage feast," though He gives to all alike the grace needful to this end. It teaches, in short, that the rule according to which the election of persons takes place is the acceptance or rejection of the salvation embraced for all in the ordination of means; that God "will justify and save all those who receive Christ by true faith," which He has not first rendered impossible to the many by limiting His efficacious grace to the few; and that "the text, Matt. 22, 14: 'Many are called, but few are chosen,' does not imply that God does not desire to save all men, but the cause of the damnation of the wicked is that they either do not hear the Word of God at all, but obstinately contemn it, closing their ears and hardening their hearts, *and thus obstruct the ordinary means of access of the Holy Spirit, so that He cannot perform His work in them*; or, if they have heard it, they again neglect and disregard it; of which neither God nor His election, but their own wickedness is the cause. 2 Pet. 2, 1; Luke 11, 49-52; Heb. 12, 25." Epit. § 12. Thus a clear and consistent doctrine is set forth, fully in harmony with the teachings of the Confession elsewhere in regard to the universality of divine grace, man's ability to resist it, and justification and salvation by faith alone; but a doctrine which is irreconcilable with the theory that God first singled out, without any reference whatever to their faith in Christ, the few persons whom He purposed to save, and who alone, in pursuance of His purpose to save them, are brought to the faith which saves.

V. Having shown the cause of the election of persons in the divine decree appointing means which look to the salvation of all, and set forth the way in which the elect may be known, as taught in the Scriptures, this being the way of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, thus explaining also why the election that is universal in regard to the means is particular in regard to the persons, the Formula goes on to exhibit the utility of the doctrine taught. § 45-51. "Thus far the mystery of predestination is revealed to us in the Word of God, and if we continue in these bounds, and rely upon this Word, this doctrine is very useful, salutary, and consolatory." § 43.

In the first place, the doctrine confirms the article that we are saved alone by grace for Christ's sake, inasmuch as before the foundation of the world God beheld us in Christ by

faith and elected us in Him by His pure grace, so that the election took place before our existence, when certainly we could have done nothing good; and it overthrows all false opinions concerning the powers of our natural will, since from eternity God decreed that His Holy Spirit by the Word should work in us all that belongs to our salvation. There is no merit and no health and strength in us. Because God is gracious did He provide a way of salvation in Christ for all men; because He is gracious did He give His Spirit in the means to apply that salvation: we can do nothing to redeem our souls from death, and nothing to make that redemption our own. On His decree ordaining the means of salvation all depends, and the purpose of His grace is executed in all who do not obstinately resist. The power of resistance is all that we have, and because that is exercised by so many, but few are chosen. These are chosen only in Christ, on the ground of His merit apprehended by faith. Hence the doctrine of man's merit and spiritual power is entirely set aside by the doctrine as revealed in the Scriptures. § 43. 44.

Secondly, this doctrine affords us great consolation, because it certifies us that God was so concerned about our salvation that before the foundation of the world He in His counsel prepared it, and ordained the way in which He would lead me to it and preserve me in it; and because, in order that it might not be lost through the weakness of the flesh and the wiles of the devil and the allurements of the world, He secured my salvation by an eternal decree which cannot fail, placing it into the omnipotent hands of our Savior, out of which no power shall be able to pluck us. § 45-47. The ordination of means is absolutely sure, depending on no contingencies whatever, and Satan has no power to render them invalid; and the ordination of persons, on the basis of the revealed plan of salvation, is also certain, and there is nothing in earth or hell which can prevent the execution of the divine decree that "he that believeth shall be saved." It is manifestly doing violence to the Confession when it is construed to mean that God has in His eternal counsel, without consideration of anything, elected a few persons, who *must therefore* be brought to faith in Christ as the ordained way in which those few shall be saved, and who *cannot* fall because

God has decreed that they *shall not*. Aside from the fact that this would be no comfort because no one could pry into the secret counsel of God and ascertain whether he is among the few so singularly favored, and from the other equally important fact that we are to seek assurance of our election in the revealed decree that whosoever believeth in Christ shall have everlasting life, the Formula expressly says, not that some are elected and therefore *must* submit to the Holy Spirit leading them to faith in Christ as the way of executing the divine decree, but that many, by refusing to hear the Word of God, "*obstruct the ordinary means of access of the Holy Spirit, so that He CANNOT perform His work in them,*" and again explicitly states, not that those who are led to believe *must*, because God so decreed, abide in faith and holiness as the path prescribed for His elect, but that "He will strengthen and extend in them that good work which He has begun, and preserve them unto the end, *if they adhere to the Word of God, are diligent in prayer, persevere in the grace of God, and faithfully use the gifts received.*" Our comfort is, not that we are preferred sinners whom God has resolved inevitably to save, but that the salvation in Christ is infallibly sure and that he that believes it has it, so that it is not dependent on our unprofitable works and imaginary merits, but on the unfailing grace of God and the all-sufficient merits of Christ.

Thirdly, the doctrine taught furnishes sweet comfort in the manifold tribulations through which Christians must pass before they enter the realms of glory. It assures us of a gracious God, who will not only enable us to bear our burdens and give us patience under their groaning weight, but who cheers us even under the cross with the consoling certainty that all our trials and afflictions are but so many subsidiary means which He uses to bring us into conformity to the image of God, and that all of them must therefore work together for our good; wherefore St. Paul draws the certain conclusion that "neither tribulation nor distress," "neither death nor life," "shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Knowing that by faith we are in Christ Jesus, and that in Him our gracious God is leading us, according to His purpose, to everlasting glory, we know also that all the events of our life must, un-

der His tender care, be subservient to that end. No cross, however severe, can separate us from that love which is revealed to us in Christ Jesus and which has called us to the salvation prepared in Him. § 48. 49.

Fourthly, "This article also affords us a noble testimony that the Church of God will remain and resist all the powers of hell; and it teaches, likewise, which is the true Church of God, so that we may not stumble at the great power of the false Church. Rom. 9, 24. 25." § 50. If the continued existence of the Church depended on the power of man, the gates of hell, which have been making vain assaults upon it ever since its institution, would long since have prevailed against it; but the ground of our salvation is indestructible and the heathen are impotent in their rage against it. The Lord is the strength and the stay of those who put their trust in Him, and in Him they are safe, whatever storms of persecution may beat upon them. That which renders them secure is not any ability which they possess as of themselves, but the power of God which is certified to us according to the revealed purpose of our salvation. The little flock of believers has the promise of the kingdom; and the pomp and pageantry of false churches, with their numbers and wealth and power, cannot disturb the quiet confidence of those who regard the revealed counsel and purpose of God to save men through faith in the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.

Finally, "from this article very serious admonitions and warnings are deduced; as, 'They rejected the counsel of God against themselves,' Luke 7, 30; 'I say unto you that none of those men who were bidden shall taste of my supper,' Luke 12, 24; 'Many are called, but few are chosen,' Matt. 20, 16. and 22, 14; 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear,' and 'Take heed how ye hear,' Luke 8, 8. 18. Thus the doctrine of this article can be employed in a useful, consolatory, and most profitable manner." § 51. That the authors of the Formula kept constantly in mind, throughout this section, the conception of predestination explained in the outset, without any traces of that vacillation between the Calvinistic theory and the doctrine subsequently taught throughout the whole Lutheran Church, which some have imagined it to

contain, is made incontestably clear by this closing paragraph. How could the doctrine set forth be the basis of the serious admonitions and warnings cited, if that doctrine were that God has elected some few persons for unknown reasons and determined to save them—only them—in the order set forth? What would be the use of reminding men that come rejected the counsel of God and were rejected, if only a few chosen ones receive grace to do otherwise? Of what profit could it be to any one to direct his attention to the fact that “many are called, but few chosen,” if in any case not those who hear and believe, but only those who are especially favored are chosen, and who, because so chosen beforehand, are made to hear and believe, while the rest, though called, are inevitably lost? What good could it do to admonish people to hear and take heed how they hear, if the effectual hearing were possible only in the case of a few whom God had arbitrarily elected for the purpose? Turn it as people may, the practical result of such a doctrine would be not solicitude about the proper use of the means of salvation to the end that they might be saved, but utter indifference to the whole subject as a useless speculation, or, if made a subject of reflection, recklessness in the thought that they are chosen and *must* therefore be saved, God seeing to it that everything necessary to execute His irrevocable decree comes to pass in due time as it absolutely must, or despair in the thought that they are doomed, and nothing that they can do or leave undone can give them a share in the privileges of the elect. But the doctrine which the Formula teaches is that God has “decreed that without faith in Christ He will save no one,” but that whosoever believeth shall be saved; that the salvation is prepared for all men and applied by the Spirit to all through the means; and that some, when the Spirit comes to them, by His grace believe in the Savior, in view of which they are chosen, while others place impediments in the Spirit’s way, so that He cannot accomplish the good and gracious will of God in them, in view of which they are rejected. On this basis the “serious admonitions and warnings” have solemn import, are seen to be necessary, and are rendered impressive.

VI. Frequent reference has been made in the course of

the discussion to features of the subject which are secret and inscrutable, and into which no one is to search in considering the doctrine of predestination. Some have been led by Calvinistic predilections to regard this as a manifest intimation that the revealed way of salvation through faith in Christ is not the rule according to which the election of individuals took place in the divine mind before the foundation of the world, but that God, in selecting the persons whom He proposed to save, proceeded according to a method and rule which He has not been pleased to reveal to men. This, and the reconciliation of this with His revealed counsel and plan, is conceived to be the inscrutable mystery into which we are not presumptuously to search. But our Formula recognizes no secret as regards the way of salvation. Predestination, as the ordination of means to that end, and the choice of the persons in whom they attain that end, it claims to be clearly and distinctly revealed in the Scriptures, and any notion about a plan or way or method or rule to save men, other than that or different from that which is revealed in the Scriptures, it utterly repudiates. It does, however, recognize some secrets in regard to the doctrine under consideration, and these it proceeds to set forth in § 52-64.

“A very accurate distinction must be made between that which is expressly revealed in the Word of God in reference to this matter and that which is not so revealed. For, besides these things which we have thus far said, and which are revealed in Christ, God has also concealed and kept secret many things concerning this mystery, and reserved them for His own wisdom and knowledge alone; into which things we ought not to search, nor indulge our imagination in regard to them, nor curiously pry into them or speculate upon them; but we should adhere to the revealed Word. Respecting this mystery this admonition is in the highest degree necessary. For our curiosity always occupies itself with these things rather than with those which God has revealed unto us in His Word on this subject, since we are unable to reconcile them in our minds, which indeed we are not commanded to do.” § 52, 53. Secrets are thus plainly recognized, and secrets too which it gives us trouble to reconcile with what is revealed. Does that mean that the Formula recognizes the revealed counsel

of God to save all men and at the same time a secret purpose to save only a few favored persons, for whose salvation alone therefore the means of grace and the work of the Holy Spirit avail? So some, coming to the Confession with certain errors prejudicing their minds, have labored to make men believe. But this would be a contradiction, not a difficulty; and a contradiction which has already been expressly renounced by condemning the theory which makes God say: "Externally, through the Word I call you all indeed into my kingdom unto whom I give my Word, but in my heart I do not intend it for all, but for a few only; for it is my will that the greater part of those whom I call through the Word should not be enlightened and converted, but be and remain damned, although I have declared myself otherwise towards them through the Word by which they are called? *Hoc enim esset Deo contradictorias voluntates affingere*, that is, in this manner it would be taught that God, who is eternal truth, contradicts Himself, while at the same time God punishes such insincerity even in men, when a person declares one thing and means and intends another in his heart." § 35. Such a contradiction is not only not mentioned as belonging to the hidden secrets of predestination, but could not be, unless the authors of the Formula were willing to forfeit all claims to intelligence or sincerity; for it would be claiming in one place what was fully and explicitly denied and denounced in another.

What, then, are the secrets respecting this doctrine, into which we are not inquisitively to pry? The Formula leaves us in no doubt as to what is meant. It says: "Thus there is no doubt that God foresaw precisely and with the greatest certainty, before the world was made, and He knows still, who among those that are called will believe or will not believe; also, who among the converted will remain steadfast and who will not remain steadfast; who, if they fall back into sin will return, and who will be hardened. Nor is there any doubt that the number of those who will be saved and of those who will be lost is known and seen of God. But since God has reserved this mystery unto His own wisdom, and has revealed nothing of it unto us in His Word, much less commanded us to search it out with our thoughts, but has earnestly restrained us from the attempt, Rom. 11, 33, we

should not draw inferences in our minds, nor indulge in useless inquiries in reference to it, but we should adhere to His revealed Word, to which He has referred us." § 54. 55. This then is the great mystery that is meant in the frequent reference to that which is inscrutable in divine predestination, the contents of which we are not to make attempts to fathom with our poor thoughts, and to which the words of the apostle, so often abused in the interest of absolute predestinarianism, are applied: "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" Not this is the inscrutable mystery, that God has from the mass of mankind, made unspeakably miserable by Satan and sin, selected only a few whom He proposed to save, though He could easily have saved them all, and that He is infinitely merciful to all men notwithstanding. That is no mystery at all, but a bald contradiction. This is the inscrutable mystery, that God, who ordained means for the salvation of all and seriously desires that they should result in the salvation of all, knew from eternity that only a few would avail themselves of the offer, and knew precisely in which persons His gracious end would be attained. Into this the curiosity of man is disposed to pry instead of concerning itself about the revealed way of salvation; and many imagine that they have found out God's secret so far as they themselves are concerned, and dream that they have read their names in this secret book of God's foreknowledge, some deriving thence the false comfort that they are inevitably saved, others the false terror that they are inevitably lost. But when persons plunge presumptuously into this abyss of divine foreknowledge and secret predestination they speculate not only upon their own destiny, always unprofitably, often to their own eternal discomfiture, but also upon the ways of God, and that with results as deplorable as the presumptuousness of which they are the consequence. If God knew from eternity that the great majority of men would, when the salvation in Christ is offered them, reject it and forever perish, why did He still create them? or why does He adhere to a way of deliverance which He knows will in most cases be rendered ineffectual by man's persistent resistance to His gracious will? With



questions such as these proud man is prone to exercise his mind. They are questions upon which men have often proved their ingenuity, but which they cannot fathom, because God has not been pleased to give us in this life all the light that is needed for their complete elucidation. He has shown us clearly what we must do to be saved, and has certified us that that way will lead all to everlasting glory. To this we must address ourselves, and not in overweening pride of reason presume to call our Maker to account for His work. He that believeth shall be saved; faith comes by hearing; he that hath ears to hear, let him hear. About this there is no secret; with this there can be nothing inconsistent in that which is secret.

“Thus too God knows, without any doubt, and has appointed the season and time of each one’s call and conversion; but since He has not revealed these things unto us, we understand that it is enjoined upon us to occupy ourselves continually with the Word of God, but to commit the season and time to God.” Acts 1, 7. § 56. Does this mean that God has determined to lead one soul to salvation by the means of grace and another not, and that the time when these means, which shall never convert the latter, shall be efficacious to work faith in the former, is absolutely fixed, so that then, by reason of this divine decree, he *must* be converted and could not be at any other time, however attentively he might hear the Word? The Formula pronounces it “false, odious, and blasphemous” to say “that *when* God calls us it is not His earnest desire that all men should come to Him,” or that the means of grace have efficacy only when applied to persons whom God has especially decreed to save. God unquestionably knows the time when each saved person shall be converted, as all things are present to Him from eternity, and that which He foresees will of course come to pass precisely as He foresees it. But what is here set forth as a mystery has nothing to do with any supposed efficacy of the Word at one time and not at another. Of such a variable power in the means of grace our Confession knows nothing. It is the providential dealings with man that is a secret, not the purpose and means of God to effect their salvation. When a man will be induced to hear or read the Word

which is always efficacious, or to give it the proper attention in hearing or reading it that it may influence His heart, God knows, but we do not. Our duty is to occupy ourselves continually with that Word, meditating upon it and bringing it to others, whether they will hear or forbear, assured that He who will have all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth, will not let our labor be in vain in the Lord.

That it is this general dealing of God's providence in giving or withholding the means of grace, not any variability in the Spirit's operation in the order of salvation, that is meant to be indicated as the mystery, is still more evident from § 57-61. "In the same manner, when we see that God gives His Word to one region, but not to another; that He withdraws it from one people, but allows it to remain with another; or that one man is hardened, blinded, and given over to a reprobate mind, while another, though equally guilty, is converted to God, it is our duty, in such cases, to remember that Paul, Rom. 11, 22. 23, has assigned certain limits to us, beyond which we are not allowed to inquire. For he instructs us to consider the judgment of God to be just in the case of those that perish." § 57. It is then shown to be righteous dealing when a people that despises the Word is deprived of it, and a needful warning to us not to neglect or reject His Word, as well as a wholesome admonition to praise Him for the unmerited goodness shown us in giving us the means of salvation. § 58. 60. "For those who suffer punishment and receive the wages of their sins are not dealt with unjustly. But in the case of those to whom God gives and preserves His Word, by which men are converted, enlightened, and saved, the Lord commends His boundless grace and unmerited mercy. § 61. Beyond all question, what is here had in view is the wonderful providence of God in giving His Word to people and withdrawing it. Even the statement that one man is hardened while another equally guilty is converted has no reference to any difference in the gracious will of God, but to the difference in the condition and conduct of the two persons, one of them being disposed to close his ears against the Word, so that he cannot be converted, while the other, equally born in sin and naturally resisting,

is disposed to hear, so that faith can be wrought in him by the Spirit. The whole context shows that the Confession is speaking of the mystery of God's foreknowledge as related to His providential dealings in giving or withholding the means of grace, not at all of a wonderful will to save some and not others, to make the means efficacious in some and not others, to convert some and not others. In such providential dealings with respect to the bestowal of the means ordained in predestination and the persons to whom they refer there is a mystery; and about this, too, proud man is inclined to have presumptuous thoughts, inquiring why, if God wants all men saved, He ever withholds or takes away from any the means by which alone they can be saved, or why He does not place all equally in circumstances in which they will be induced to hear the preaching of the Word and, when they do hear it, give it the attention necessary to experience its power. These are things which lie beyond the limits of our comprehension, and we must not curiously pry into them; leaving them to the wisdom and goodness of God who understands it all and will make it all clear when we reach the inheritance of the saints in the light of glory. Most of all let us guard against the horrible solution that it is all owing to God's purpose to save only a favored few.

The secrets to which the Formula refers are thus clearly set out. Who the elect are and how many there are, God has not been pleased to tell us. He knows, but it is not His pleasure to let us know. The time when the Word shall be brought to each person, and when one shall be converted, He knows also, but we cannot know it. How to explain His governmental dealings with men, giving the Word to some and withdrawing it from others, leading some to hear the Word while others either have no opportunity or are not inclined to embrace it, God knows right well; but to us it is a mystery. These are the things which our Formula points out as the secrets about which we are not to concern ourselves in predestination, as they lie beyond our calling and our powers. We are to concern ourselves not about these, but about the way of salvation prepared for all men alike and revealed to us in the Word. That is sufficient for profitable thought about predestination, and that will minister true

comfort. "When we proceed thus far in this article, we remain in the right path, as it is written: 'O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help.' Hos. 13, 9. But whenever our thoughts would transcend these limits in this investigation, we should immediately repress them, as St. Paul does, remembering the declaration: "O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" Rom. 9, 20. For that we neither can nor should search out and fathom all that is contained in this article the great apostle Paul testifies. For, after having largely discussed this article agreeably to the Word of God, as soon as He is led to speak of those things which God has reserved unto His hidden wisdom concerning this mystery he desists, and at once closes with these words: 'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord?' Rom. 11, 33. 34, that is, besides and above that which He has revealed in His Word." § 62-64. How we are to be saved, and how, accordingly, we may know that we are elect, is not among these things. This is clearly revealed. He that believeth in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved, and as Christ is the book of life they are the elect children of God whose names are there recorded. Beyond this we need not care to go, and should not dare to go. All that is secret lies outside of this and does not concern us.

VII. What remains of the discussion in our Confession is virtually a recapitulation, with some further elucidations. Now, after the distinction between those things which are hidden and those which are revealed has been pointed out and the character of the secrets more fully defined, attention is again directed to those things which are revealed, and to their necessity for our comfort and salvation. The section embraced in § 65-75 gives a succinct view of the whole order decreed for man's salvation, and sets forth both what God has done and does, § 65-69, and what in accordance with the good pleasure of His will is to be done by man. § 70-75.

"Accordingly, the eternal election of God must be considered in Christ, and not apart from or without Christ." There is no absolute predestination of a select few, for the execution of which a plan of salvation is devised, but a desire to

save all, to which end there is an ordination of means that are of universal application. The division between the sinners saved and the sinners damned, the elect and the reprobate, is not made by an antecedent will of God that some should be saved and others damned, but takes place upon the offer of salvation to all in Christ, some through grace accepting and others wilfully rejecting Him. Not the execution of an election previously made and irrevocably fixed is that which "must be considered in Christ," as if the election were absolutely made without any reference to Christ, except as a means of carrying out that which is determined, and without any consideration of men's relation to Him. It is the election itself that must be considered in Him. He is the book of life in which the elect are inscribed. Only in view of their relation to Him are men unchangeably elected or rejected. This election was made, indeed, before the foundation of the world, because God from eternity foreknew who would believe in Christ and who would not, and in this view the decree of predestination is also executed in Christ at the proper time. But the election itself is made in Christ, and must be considered in Him, not only its execution. As he that believes unto the end shall be saved, so he who was from eternity foreseen thus to believe was chosen to salvation. "For *in Christ*, as the holy apostle Paul testifies, we were chosen before the foundation of the world, Eph. 1, 4, as it is written: 'He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.' Eph. 1, 6." This election is not a hidden thing, about whose contents and procedure we can know nothing. It is "revealed from heaven through the preached word when the Father says: 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him.' Matt. 17, 5; Luke 3, 22. And Christ says, Matt. 11, 28. 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' And concerning the Holy Spirit Christ says: 'He shall glorify me, for He shall receive of mine and show it unto you,' John 16, 14. So that the entire Holy Trinity, God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, directs all persons to Christ, as the book of life, *in whom they are to seek the eternal election of the Father*. For this was decreed from eternity by the Father, that those whom He would save He would save through Christ, as Christ Himself says: 'No man cometh unto the

Father but by me,' John 14, 16; and again: 'I am the door, by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved.' John 10, 9." § 65. 66.

"But Christ, as the only begotten Son of God, who is in the bosom of the Father, John 1, 18, has revealed the will of the Father unto us, and consequently also our eternal election to everlasting life, namely, when He says: 'The kingdom of God is at hand, repent ye and believe the Gospel.' Mark 1, 15. Again He says: 'This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on Him may have everlasting life.' John 6, 40. And moreover, 'God so loved the world,' etc. John 3, 16. These declarations the Father desires all men to hear, in order that they may come unto Christ. But Christ will not cast from Himself those that come; for it is written, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.' John 6, 37." § 67-68. The eternal election of God is thus declared to be revealed in such texts as set forth the will of God that all who believe shall be saved. It consists fundamentally in ordaining the way of salvation which is prepared for all men alike. As Christ came to save all men through faith, so all men are elected who believe in His name. The predestination of means for all results in the predestination of persons through the acceptance of the great salvation which those means set forth. And lest any one should say that, while our Formula teaches a universal salvation in Christ, it limits the application of this salvation to a few persons only, thus making it ostensibly universal but really particular, it goes on to say: "Now in order that we may come to Christ, the Holy Spirit works true faith in us through the hearing of the Word, as the apostle testifies when he says: 'So then, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God,' Rom 10, 17." § 69. Not for certain favored persons only is the Word given and the Spirit with it, but to all men, that all may believe and have everlasting life; and those who are in Christ by faith, according to the passages in which the election is said to be revealed, are the elect children of God.

On this basis all may have the comfort of election; and that the whole sweet truth may be clearly before our souls, the Formula sets out the order also which it is God's will that man should pursue by the power of the Holy Ghost.

“Wherefore whoever desires to be saved should not trouble or harass himself with thoughts concerning the secret counsel of God, whether he is also elected and ordained to eternal life; by which anxieties Satan is accustomed maliciously to disturb and torment pious minds; but he should rather listen to Christ, who is the book of life and of the eternal election of all the children of God to everlasting life, and who testifies to all men without distinction that God desires all men who are burdened with sins and heavy laden to come unto Him, in order that they may have rest and be saved.” “According to this doctrine of Christ we should abstain from sin, repent, believe, and rely wholly and entirely upon Him. But since we are unable to do this by our own powers, it is the will of the Holy Spirit to work in us repentance and faith through the Word and the Sacraments.” § 70. 71. That we may persevere in this way we should fervently pray for grace, not doubting that He will hear us according to His promise. § 72. And as the Holy Spirit dwells in the elect and is active in them, they should abound in all Christian graces, thus giving diligence to make their calling and election sure, and having the less doubt the more they experience the power of the Spirit in themselves; for the Spirit bears witness to the elect that they are children of God. § 73. But if in strong temptations they can no longer feel the presence of the Spirit within them, they should still trust in the mercy of God and call confidently upon Him for support. § 74. And should they stumble and fall, they will be received again, if they only repent and return to God; for their election rests not upon their holiness, but upon the merit of Christ and the unchangeable will of God, so that they can be assured that His mercy fails not. § 75. Thus we have a sure ground of comfort and a never-failing source of peace and joy and hope. From this ground and source not a soul is excluded. The doctrine is not that we have such a ground provided we can in some way know that we are elect in the secret counsel of God; such a knowledge we cannot have, and the assumption that that is what is meant would deprive every soul of true comfort, because no one could be sure of it. But what is set forth is the consoling truth that the mercy of God and the merit of Christ avail for all men; and that whosoever be-

lieveth in Christ has the promise of salvation and is a child of God and an heir of heaven. This is all the election he needs for peace on earth and glory in heaven, and he has no reason to trouble himself about the secrets of God's foreknowledge. His concern is that he may be found in Christ, and he is quite sure that God has foreseen just what the facts are. As for a decree that is not based upon these facts, but that irresistibly makes the facts according as they were secretly decreed, so that one could not know, even if he believes in Christ, whether he is not one of those whom God was pleased not to include among the elect—our Formula knows as little of such a Calvinistic dream as does the Bible.

VIII. But here again difficulties present themselves to the mind, and these our Confession proceeds to obviate. § 76-85.

In the first place, the thought readily occurs that God may intend salvation only for a small part of our race, who for some inscrutable reason are preferred as the elect, and that when the time comes to apply the foreordained means of salvation their efficacy is accordingly limited to these peculiarly favored persons. Do not the words of our Savior, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him," John 6, 44, suggest such an uncomfortable thought? A few even of our Lutheran writers, prior to the preparation of the Formula of Concord, fell into the error of supposing that, as few are saved and no man can believe except by the power of the Holy Ghost, only a few elect are effectually drawn by Him. But our Confession gives a clear and decided answer to the question by declaring that this drawing takes place in the ordinary means of the Word and Sacraments, not otherwise, and that "to the preaching of this Word each miserable sinner should betake himself, hear it diligently, and not doubt the drawing of the Father; for the Holy Spirit with His power will accompany the Word and operate through it: and this is the drawing of the Father." § 76. 77. The means are for all, and they bring the same grace with the same energy to all men alike.

Secondly, but why is it then that some are not saved, as we know that vast multitudes are not? Our Confession replies that the reason "is not found in God's unwillingness to



bestow salvation; but they themselves are in fault, because they hear the Word, not to learn, but only to scorn, to blaspheme, and to profane it, and because they resist the Holy Spirit who desired to operate in them through the Word, as was the case of the Pharisees and their adherents in the time of Christ." There are indeed vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. But "the apostle clearly asserts that God endured the vessels of wrath with much long-suffering, but he does not say that God made them vessels of wrath." "It is the fault of the devil and those persons themselves, and not of God, that they are fitted to destruction." God has no pleasure in sin or the sinner's death, how then could He be the cause of any one's damnation? He would save all; He has made no vessels of wrath; for "St. Paul testifies in definite terms that out of vessels of dishonor vessels of honor may be made through the power and operation of God." Of the vessels of mercy "he asserts clearly that the Lord Himself has prepared them for glory; which he does not say in reference to the damned, who themselves, and not God, have made themselves vessels of damnation." § 78-82.

Thirdly, whence then is it that some are hardened, if God did not prepare some vessels of wrath for destruction? The Formula answers: "It must also be carefully observed, when God punishes sin by sin—that is, in the case of those who had been converted, on account of their subsequent security, impenitence, and wanton sins, punishes with hardness of heart and blindness of mind—that this is not to be so understood as if it had never been God's gracious will that such persons should come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved. For this is the revealed will of God: first, that God will receive all those in grace who repent and believe in Christ; secondly, that He will also punish those who wilfully turn away from His holy commands and entangle themselves again in the pollutions of the world, 2 Pet. 2, 20, garnish their hearts unto Satan, Luke 11, 25, do despite unto the Holy Spirit, Heb. 10, 29, and that such, if they persevere in these things, shall be hardened, blinded, and eternally damned." § 83. This is illustrated in the case of Pharaoh. He did not perish because God would not grant him salvation, or desired that he should be lost; for God is not willing

that any should perish. His obduracy was a punishment of the sins committed against his own conscience. "Inasmuch as God caused His Word to be preached and His will to be declared to him, and Pharaoh nevertheless wilfully rebelled against all these admonitions and warnings, God abandoned him, and thus his heart was hardened and God's judgment was executed upon him; for he deserved nothing else than hell-fire." "It is by no means the meaning of Paul that God would not grant him or any other man salvation, nor that in His secret counsel He had ordained him to eternal damnation, so that he could not be saved." § 85. 86. Even in the case of the reprobate the fundamental truth remains that God would have all men to be saved.

IX. Again, as in paragraphs 43-51, the practical import of the doctrine is set forth. § 87-92.

In the first place, the doctrine as thus confessed gives all the glory of our salvation to God alone, as it shows that we are saved by the grace of God in Christ, without any merit of ours, there being nothing in us on account of which we could have been elected. § 87. 88. That which makes the difference between the elect and the non-elect is just as little the worthiness of one and the unworthiness of the other as it is the absolute will of God. The cause of election is the mercy of God and the merit of Christ. Those who do not persistently reject the grace of God offered in the Gospel have something on account of which God could look upon them with favor. They have the righteousness of Christ and the possession of that makes the difference between them and other sinners. Our Savior's merit could not be the cause of a sinner's election to sonship apart from the faith which embraces it; if it could, all men would be elected, as God's mercy extends over all and Christ's merit avails for all. Therefore he that believeth shall be saved and is elect, not because he has any merit of his own, but because he is by faith in possession of Christ's merit. He is accepted in the Beloved. All glory is given to the Lord, who provides salvation and works the faith which embraces it.

Secondly, this doctrine does not lead to reckless presumption on the one hand nor to discouragement and despair on the other, as is the case with the Calvinistic doctrine of an

absolute decree. It does not inculcate the belief that God absolutely wills some to be saved and others to be lost, so that a person might conclude it to be utterly indifferent what he does, as that could not in any way affect his fate: if he is predestinated to be saved, he will be saved in spite of his wickedness; if he is doomed to be damned, he will be damned in spite of his faith and piety. Such a doctrine could minister no grain of comfort to a troubled soul, and is condemned by the simple scriptural test: "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Rom. 15, 4. How could a soul be comforted in its fear that it does not belong to the elect, when it is taught that God in His election has no reference to faith in Christ, but is simply moved by His arbitrary will to elect some and not others? If the trembling sinner be directed to Christ, the answer is ready in his agony, that only the elect are saved through Him, and that is just the cause of his trouble, since he has no assurance of being elect. If it be answered that his very desire to be saved is an evidence of faith, and the presence of faith is a safe mark of election, the answer is again ready, that God in His election has no regard to faith, so that its presence can be no infallible sign, especially in view of the fact that some believe for a time without being elect. But the doctrine which our Confession teaches affords the surest consolation "when people are taught that they must seek eternal election in Christ and in His holy Gospel, as in the book of life. For the Gospel excludes no penitent sinners, but calls and invites all poor, all afflicted sinners to repentance, to the acknowledgment of their sins, and to faith in Christ; it promises the Holy Spirit for their purification and renovation." Thus our salvation and election rests in Christ, and we are safe: if we only come to Him, He will in no wise cast us out, and no power can pluck us out of His hand. A doctrine that deprives us of this comfort is "not according to the Word and will of God, but according to mere human reason and the suggestions of the devil." § 89-92.

The Formula of Concord thus sets forth a doctrine as widely removed from the comfortless heresy of Calvinism as heaven is removed from earth. It treats the subject in its

practical bearings, as it is always set forth in Scripture, and only in that respect differs from the mode of treatment which afterwards became customary among our dogmaticians. It embraces under the term predestination the decrees by which means are ordained for the salvation of all as well as the decree in reference to the persons in whom these means attain the end of their appointment. In the former aspect predestination is the cause of faith and everything that belongs to our salvation; in the latter it takes into account the faith by which alone persons are united to Christ, in whom the election takes place. In the former aspect it is plainly revealed in the Gospel, as that tells us the whole divinely ordained way to be saved; in the latter, so far as the persons are concerned, it is a secret, since we cannot know in whom the saving purpose of God will be accomplished, though God has foreknown it from eternity and accordingly predestinated whom He foreknew. In the former aspect it is an inexhaustible source of comfort to us, as the plan and purpose of God to save sinners shall not fail and cannot be foiled; in the latter we are not to concern ourselves about it, as God has revealed what we need for our temporal peace and our everlasting salvation.

It is a mere caricature of the doctrine of election in foresight of faith, as taught by our most eminent dogmaticians, to represent it as ignoring the work of God in the conversion of the soul. Our great theologians were neither blockheads nor Pelagians. They knew as well as the wisest and best of modern professors that grace alone can save the soul, and that the work of this grace does not begin only after the helpless sinner, who cannot by his own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ or come to Him, has already become a believer. But they preferred to use the word election in a sense that did not cover the work of grace prior to the faith of the operation of God, which the Scriptures lay down as indispensable to salvation. They found a warrant for this in such declarations of the Holy Spirit as that "Whom He foreknew He also did predestinate." Taking election in its highest sense as having for its goal eternal salvation, and regarding elect persons as those who shall infallibly attain that goal, they could not otherwise than take into account as a pre-

requisite the faith by which alone eternal salvation can be attained. If without faith no one can please God and be saved, no one without faith, in foresight or in fact, can be so pleasing in God's sight as to be predestinated to the salvation to which faith is indispensable. The Formula of Concord, with precisely the same doctrine, adopts a different and, we are free to confess, in our estimation a better mode of presenting it. It uses the word as embracing the whole process by which God leads the soul from death to life — to spiritual life here and everlasting life hereafter, not overlooking the twofold goal of election which the Scriptures present. Thus there can be no thought of man's choosing God first, in order to be afterwards chosen by Him, at least not in any such synergistic sense as some are now so ready to put upon the presentation of the doctrine in the manner of our dogmaticians. God comes to the sinner with His grace and chooses Him as a subject of its operation before he can have any power to embrace His Savior. In such wide sense election is causal of our salvation. But one must be ignorant indeed of God's ways as revealed in the Scriptures to assume that when God comes to a sinner with His saving grace, such sinner, though chosen as one to whom grace is to be offered, is on that account elected to eternal life. The Formula of Concord, in full accord with the Holy Scriptures, does not always presuppose that one even who is brought to faith by the grace of God, and who is thus elected to be a child of God, will necessarily reach the glory of heaven. A person who is a child of God, and is in this sense elect — "predestinated unto the adoption of children" — may still fall, and thus not be among those who are elected unto eternal life. Hence the warnings and conditions in the Formula of Concord, which would be utterly inexplicable on the assumption that it is speaking of an irrevocable and infallible ordination of persons to everlasting glory in heaven. It does not indeed ignore election in this sense, but it treats it as practically unavailable for man's comfort. The great trouble nowadays is that men, learned in theology though they may be above other men, are guilty of the strange folly of trying to make the scriptural presentation of the doctrine of election, as presented in the Formula of Concord, fit to the definition of the word as applied by

dogmaticians, who were thinking of the predestination of persistent believers to eternal life, while the authors of the Formula were thinking of God's gracious decree providing salvation for all men, accepting as sons them that believe, and actually saving them that remain steadfast in faith unto the end.

The Formula of Concord sets forth a doctrine that commends itself to the experience and consciences of Christian men, and Lutherans should guard it against Calvinizing interpolations devised to serve a theory. "To this simple, perspicuous, and profitable explanation, which has a good and sure foundation in the revealed will of God, we adhere; we shun and avoid all refined, curious, and useless speculations; and whatever is contrary to these simple and profitable explanations we reject and condemn."

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#### MISSOURI ON THE DEFENSIVE.

The mode of controversy adopted by the St. Louis men constrains us to say, once for all, that we do not consider our person, nor the persons of our assailants either, for that matter, of sufficient importance to trouble the Church with a war about the question as to who shall be greatest. But we recognize the duty of giving a respectful hearing to men who, in a Christian spirit, take exception to the matter or the manner of our teaching, and therefore owe a reply to some strictures offered.

Before entering upon particulars we would make the general remark, that if we have failed rightly to understand the doctrine of predestination which Missouri teaches, or inadvertently stated it in a way that exposes it to misapprehension, we recognize the Christian duty of making the necessary corrections as soon as the mistake is made apparent. Having no interest in the whole painful controversy that troubles our Synodical Conference but that of maintaining our Lutheran faith, why should we not give our opponents the benefit of all which they can justly claim? But we cannot allow others

to do our thinking for us, and are therefore not ready at once to say that we were mistaken simply because some body is moved to say so. If men are not willing to accept what is logically implied in their propositions, they should renounce or modify their statements, not find fault with those who hold them responsible for what they themselves declare.

Past. Huegli directs some remarks against the first of the six points which we made in our introductory article. But before he enters upon the point itself he has much to say on the historical aspect of the subject, taking special exception to our application of the epithet "new" to the doctrine of Missouri. With others in his synod he would fasten the fault of the present troubles in the church upon those who oppose Missouri's present teaching. He endeavors to make it appear that that synod has always taught as it does now, from which it would follow that those who oppose it have made the innovation. But that is a hopeless undertaking. There are enough plain facts before the world to convince all fair-minded men, if they will only give the subject attention, that it is otherwise.

In the first place, the publications of the Missouri Synod refute Past. Huegli's claim. The books which in former years were issued by the synod, and those which were recommended to the ministers and congregations by its leaders, so far as they set forth a doctrine of predestination, contain, with but few exceptions known to us, and even those questionable, the doctrine for which we contend and against which Missouri is now marshalling its forces. Considering that nearly all the books which the ministers of the Missouri Synod used in studying the doctrine, teach an election in foresight of faith, the probability is very strong that to a large majority the doctrine against which voices of warning were raised some years ago and the persistence in which has brought on the present distress, was entirely new, as it certainly was a novelty yet to many when the Bericht of 1877 appeared. Past. Huegli knows as well as we that some in the Missouri Synod, as well as in other synods, were startled at the doctrine there proclaimed, that some opposed and still oppose it, and that many had to change their convictions in order to remain in harmony with the synod; and probably he knows also that many,

even now not yet convinced that the old doctrine is an error, are marching in Missouri's ranks with heavy hearts. It is not a secret that in the Seminary at Addison the school-teachers were instructed by the lamented Dir. Lindemann to teach the doctrine which is now rejected by the synodical leaders. It would be inexplicable if, under such circumstances, another doctrine should be that which was generally proclaimed in the churches and schools of the Missouri Synod. Moreover, the theological organ of that synod in its earlier years set forth a doctrine which is manifestly not the doctrine which it sets forth now. It may be that the young theologians who are now mainly managing that periodical on the vexed question of election, will be ready with a bold denial of the fact; but we have confidence enough in Past. Huegli's candor to be assured that he will not deny it, as Dr. Walther does not deny it. True, the latter declares that such articles as those of Dr. Sihler and Past. Fuerbringer were not properly the voice of the synod. But that is a matter of opinion about which men will take the liberty to differ. These articles appeared in the theological organ of the synod; there was no dissent from their doctrine expressed; they went out with such authority as attaches to the *Lehre und Wehre* in other cases. Nor was there any other doctrine of predestination taught for years in that periodical. So far as the doctrine of a synod could be learned at all from its theological organ, the doctrine of the Missouri Synod formerly was that whom God did fore-know as believers in Christ He also did predestinate to the salvation which faith alone can apprehend. In view of all this, it must have cost Past. Huegli a struggle to express it as his conviction that "the Missouri Synod has to-day no other doctrine than that which it had from the beginning." The only explanation we can find for the singular phenomenon of a sincerely entertained opinion that is so irreconcilable with the plain facts, lies in Past. Huegli's tacit assumption that Prof. Walther is virtually the Missouri Synod,—an assumption which we do not admit, and which we have no right to regard that synod as admitting. Could such assumption be granted, there might be some possibility of proving that it has the same doctrine now that it always had, although the ungracious remark must even then be appended, that in earlier



years it had the doctrine in the mind of Dr. Walther without knowing that it had it, and with the innocent belief that it had a different one.

In the second place, Past. Huegeli's proofs as drawn from his manuscript go against his allegation. His extracts show that Dr. Walther did not teach in the St. Louis Seminary 25 years ago the doctrine which Missouri teaches now. What he states as his recollection of the professor's remarks on Baier, and on extracts alleged to contain the mode of expression belonging to the so-called first tropus, is not called in question. But it is not reasonable to suppose that what a teacher dictates is what he does not teach, and that what he merely cites or remarks without dictating is what he really teaches and expects his students to believe and to teach. The manuscript will necessarily be more authoritative than the memory. More recently yet Dr. Walther dictated instead of § 9 in Baier the following: "By the word predestination or election, precisely taken, is designated the eternal decree of imparting eternal salvation, in view of the merit of Christ and foreseen faith in Christ, to those who believe until their end."\* Baier's § 15 he dictates in this form: "Faith is the external less principal impulsive cause of election.†" There is nothing in the dictation, excepting the remark on the wide sense of the Formula of Concord, to show that a doctrine different from that contained in Baier's Compendium, which was used as a text-book, or in Quenstedt, from whom most of the citations were made, was taught then by Dr. Walther. This accords too with his own statement, made in the presence of many witnesses, that while he years ago held the doctrine which he now teaches and defends, he did not formerly inculcate and expound it, but only slightly touched it, thus gradually paving the way for its subsequent introduction and exposition. But if Past. Huegeli insists that the doctrine contained in the citations which he prints, and in the whole manuscript as dictated by Dr. Walther, is the doctrine which Missouri now teaches, he would do the church a great service

\* Predestinationis aut electionis nomine praeclasse appellari decretum eternum de impertienda finaliter credituris salute eterna intuitu meriti Christi at praevisae eternam electionis fidei in Christum.

† Fidem esse causam impulsivam externam electionis minus principalem.

by inducing his synod distinctly to say so and to act accordingly. If that is what Missouri now teaches we have no further quarrel with that synod. Nay more, it is our honest conviction that if this is still her doctrine, she need only publish that manuscript as her confession on this point, rejecting whatever conflicts with it, whether uttered by Missourians or others, to put an end to the unfortunate controversy which has arisen among us. It would well be worth Past. Huegli's while, if he has the least hope that Missouri would adopt that as her doctrine, to make an effort for the restoration of peace on that basis. He has utterly misapprehended the whole question of controversy if he supposes that such explanations as he quotes concerning the causality of faith in election excite any opposition in the Synodical Conference to Missouri's teaching. Such insinuations are frequently made, but they are made to divert attention from the real point in dispute, and at the same time to cast odium upon men who cannot accept the new theory, as if the fact that a man prefers to abide by the old Lutheran doctrine, and not to follow Missouri in new paths, rendered his orthodoxy suspicious.

The doctrine now taught by the Missouri Synod is not only new relatively to that body, but is a novelty in the Lutheran Church generally. We have seen no reason to change a single statement in our introductory respecting the historical aspects of the question. The doctrine of election in foresight of faith, which Missouri is striving to displace, was the recognized Lutheran doctrine from the days of the publication of the Formula of Concord down to the present—taught by men who themselves were signers of that document and continuously set forth as the faith of the Church by all her standard writers. If in the first decennium after the last of our confessions was given to the world, there were still traces of the differences in expression which prevailed prior to that time, it is a fact which cannot be successfully controverted, that the doctrine of our great dogmaticians was the only one which could lay any claim to being the settled doctrine of the Church. And if in the past century there were departures from this doctrine by theologians who in evil days were still called Lutherans, we must not forget that the same could be said with regard to other well established doctrines

of our Church. We presume that no good Missourian would be willing to say, e. g. that the doctrine of Christ's person, or of inspiration, as taught by our old writers, was not the Lutheran doctrine for the last three hundred years, because in the past century some who were styled Lutherans rejected these doctrines. Wriggling and twisting to get rid of the force of facts will not be of any permanent advantage to a cause. Dr. Walther pursues the better course when he says: "Our opponents can bring into the field against us a whole long series of good men, even within our Church, while we can introduce but few great names (though the greatest in our Church, to wit, Martin Luther and Martin Chemnitz) as our vouchers."\* Whether they can justly appeal to Luther and Chemnitz is a question for separate consideration, about which there is much to say on the other side. But it is the admission that concerns us now. There was good ground for the statement made by Dr. Musaeus in 1680: "In the article concerning predestination the theologians of our Church unanimously agree and teach with one consent against the Calvinists, that the decree of predestination is not absolute, but that as in time we are justified and saved by faith, Rom. 3, 28, through faith, Gal. 2, 16, out of faith, Eph. 2, 8, so God from eternity, in view of foreseen faith, elected and ordained to eternal life all who in time by faith are justified and saved."† Dr. Hollaz repeats the same declaration in substance when he says: "Our theologians are in complete harmony as regards the subject itself, when they explain the eternal decree of predestination, with one consent teaching that God, to whom the future too is objectively present, by the infinite light of His intellect foresaw from eternity the faith of certain persons fallen into sin, and elected them to eternal salvation in foresight of foreseen faith in Christ."‡ As to the question whether the doctrine which is now taught by Missouri was the established doctrine of the Church prior to the Formula of Concord, we did not suppose that any man of respectable learning would affirm it. The only doctrine that was taught in our Church with any degree of unanimity was that of which Musaeus and Hollaz speak. That before the publication of our

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\* Lutheraner, Vol. 37, 10.

† Hist. Sync. 1041.

‡ Hollaz. Ex. Theol. Acr. III. § 1. cap. 2, qu. 9.

latest confession there were other forms of teaching on the subject, no one has denied; but if one has the boldness to allege, in opposition to the statement of our Confession, that there was a doctrine taught with an unanimity such as that with which the doctrine of our dogmaticians was taught after 1580, let him show what the doctrine was and adduce the proof for his allegation. Least of all is it likely that Missourians would undertake to prove that the theory now in vogue among them is that more ancient doctrine of the Church. The very effort would be a triumphant refutation of their charge that we impute to them tenets which they repudiate. There are writers between the time of the Reformation and the Formula of Concord who use expressions similar to those now in vogue among the Missourians. This is admitted. But in connection with this fact two things deserve notice. In the first place, they did not set forth the unanimous doctrine of the Church during that period, so that those who taught differently could have been charged with departing from the settled Lutheran faith on that point, as any deviation from the doctrine of election in foresight of faith could be charged afterwards with departing from the accepted form of sound words. Secondly, in connection with such expressions as the Missourians now use there were others which they are shy about adopting, showing that the writers in question cannot be adduced in proof of an earlier Lutheran agreement in such a doctrine as is now advocated at St. Louis. If they mean that predestination in the strict sense is the cause of faith and of unbelief; that God, while He elected some, resolved to leave the rest of fallen men in perdition; that those who are not elected never had true faith,—let them say so, and there will not be so much difficulty in settling the point of controversy: if they do not mean it, let them be more careful in dealing with history, and less haughty in dealing with men who endeavor to make honest account of it.

We would not take undue advantage of the historical presumption against the doctrine of Missouri; but Past. Huelgi will readily see why we referred to the novelty of the theory taught in his synod. He will see too that, whether Missourians like it or dislike it, we cannot desist from speak-

ing of the unhappy course which Missouri has taken as a new departure, and of the doctrine which it teaches as an innovation in the Church. The truth or falsity of the doctrine does not depend upon the decision of the historical question; but the facts must be taken as they are, not as we would like to have them, and due weight given them in the argument.

But it is time that we pass over to the point which Past. Huegli purposes especially to examine. His reply is of a kind, both in matter and manner, which is well calculated to inspire a hope that the gulf between us is not as wide as it would seem. There certainly is much which we hold in common with Past. Huegli—so much, indeed, that it would appear strange if we could not, by the grace of God, eventually be joined together in the same mind and speak the same thing. But that desirable consummation is not yet attained. Where the difficulty lies a closer examination of Past. Huegli's reply will evince.

In our introductory we mentioned as our first reason for declining to accept the doctrine of Missouri that it is an effort to solve a mystery which the Scriptures have left unsolved, and declared that we could not accept as a solution the philosophical speculation about a special plan of salvation, called the decree of election, which determines who shall really and inevitably be saved, and which is placed alongside of the revealed plan of salvation to render it practically nugatory. Past. Huegli gives our objection in this form: "You Missourians teach a divine plan of salvation which is universal, declaring it to be God's will that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth; but besides this you teach an election of grace, according to which God from eternity elected those who are saved and predestinated them to be His children, whom He thus graciously wills to call, to render believers, and eternally to save." To this he adds: "It is true, so we teach." This looks like a frank admission of the Missouri doctrine as we gathered it from published statements and as we presented it. But it has a fault which has occurred with remarkable frequency on that side. It states the truth, but in a way that hides the point of controversy. This may have been done unwittingly, but it is un-

fortunate. That God elected those who are saved is admitted on all sides: about that there is no dispute. He therefore has easy work to make it appear that the theory which he defends is "no philosophical speculation, but the clear Word of God." It never entered our minds to call the doctrine, that those who are saved were eternally elected, a mere speculation; nor do we suppose that Past. Huegli ever thought of charging us with doing so. What then is the trouble? It is this, that what is a speculation is concealed from the reader in stating the question. Missouri does teach what Past. Huegli says, and so do we. But Missourians teach something else, against which alone our objection lies. They teach not only that those who are saved are elected, but that God from eternity has elected, without any reference to their relation to Christ by faith, certain persons whom He resolves to save, thus in His eternal purpose limiting the salvation to these favored few. That would explain the mystery why only a small portion of our ruined race is rescued from eternal woe; but the explanation is a mere speculation, which has no foundation in the texts which Past. Huegli quotes, nor in any other portion of God's revelation.

But the point comes more fully into view when we consider the second item in Past. Huegli's reply. He says, secondly, that the doctrine which we oppose is not such as renders nugatory the plan of salvation in its universality. "This charge," he remarks, "could be made against us with justice if we taught either: 1. That God desires to save or saves the elect in some other way than that in which He desires to save all men; or, 2. That God does not offer to the non-elect fully sufficient grace for the attainment of salvation. But we teach 1. That God does not wish to save and does not really save the elect in any other way than that in which He wishes to save all men." "We do not teach, 2. That God does not in the Word and Sacrament offer to those who are not elect and are thus not saved fully sufficient grace for the attainment of salvation." On the first of these points it is not necessary to enlarge, as the second contains all that directly affects the question. We merely remark, in passing, that the plan of salvation would certainly be rendered nugatory, as pertaining to all men, if there were a decree of election that limited its

application to but comparatively few, even though it should be affirmed that these few are saved only according to that plan. It would be the substitution of a particular grace for the universal, notwithstanding that all the means are used which would, but for that divine limitation, have been universal in their efficacy. It is the second point, however, that contains the substance of the controversy, and to this our attention must be chiefly directed.

Past. Huegli maintains that our objection would hold only if Missouri taught that "God does not offer to the non-elect fully sufficient grace for the attainment of salvation;" but, he alleges, Missouri does not so teach. The matter requires ventilation. It is deplorable that the new Missourians are so hard to understand, and that seemingly no intelligible representation of their doctrine is recognized as correct and fair. The claim is here again put forth that according to their doctrine God really offers to the non-elect sufficient grace in Word and Sacrament to save them, and that He really wills their salvation. Our opponent is entitled to the full benefit of his assertion. In the absence of any proof to the contrary, men must be regarded as sincerely meaning what they say. But what is it that is said in this case? Do they mean that God gives grace unto salvation to all men alike through the appointed means, so that, as far as God's work is concerned, salvation is within the reach of all equally? Then the separation between those who shall be saved and those who shall be lost is made by the wanton resistance of some to the grace by which God would save all and actually does save all to whom the means are brought, except those who, as the Formula of Concord states it, "block up the ordinary way of the Holy Ghost, so that He can not perform His work in them." But that would simply be the doctrine of our old dogmaticians, who represent God as choosing from the mass, unto sonship and eternal life, those who, by the grace of God bestowed in the means, appropriated the merits of Christ, whilst those who obstinately resisted the Spirit's operation and remained in unbelief, were passed by, and that simply because the saving work of God could not be done in them. In other words, that would be the doctrine of election in view of faith, against which Missourians especially direct

their batteries. What then do they mean? They teach that election, in the strict sense, is a cause of salvation; that this election is particular; that the comparatively few who are elected will and must be saved, and no others. Although there is so much denied in that quarter, notwithstanding their language that seems to others so plainly to allege it, we presume that no one will dispute their doctrine to be that God, without reference to their faith, elects those whom He purposes to save. The gracious election of God, as they view it, selects certain persons from the sinful mass that they may be saved. These, in virtue of their election, are brought to faith and eventually to salvation; the others are not elected and are not saved. Now, if a favored few are thus singled out unto salvation, God having formed the irrevocable purpose that these shall be saved, while the others are not embraced in that purpose, what must be the meaning of such words as those which declare that God still offers to the others fully sufficient grace to save them? We accept Past. Huegli's language as meant in all sincerity; but in connection with the system which he professes to advocate his words cannot mean that in any possible case a person whom God had not included among the preferred few could be saved. The offer of sufficient grace to save such unfortunates must therefore be an offer that can under no circumstances be of any avail. If there is still efficacy in the Word and Sacraments, it is an efficacy from which these persons are debarred by the very decree of God unchangeably determining that the select few shall be brought to faith and salvation. What must, in such a state of the case, inevitably become of the rest, it is easy to see. God has formed no purpose to save them; He saves only those who are included in His gracious purpose; they cannot save themselves. Their doom is sealed just as effectually, according to the theory thus devised, as if that theory were completed by adding the decree of absolute reprobation.

The case is too plain to justify, on the plea of inscrutable mystery, any wilfull closing of the eyes upon its sadness. If the new Missourians mean to teach that God has revealed a plan of salvation according to which all are intended to be saved and all men can be saved, but that he has an unre-



vealed plan of salvation according to which only a few are designed to be saved, and that this contradiction is the unfathomable mystery which believers are unquestioningly to adore, why not set it out with that fearlessness which belongs to faith, and which accepts the consequences with the unshrinking confidence that He whose infinite wisdom can reconcile the fundamental contradiction can reconcile the contradictions also which are its logical outcome? Missourians may now shrink from drawing the consequences involved in their premises, but they will be drawn, and some will be driven to say that as God has irrevocably decreed the salvation of only a small part of our lost race, who "shall and must be saved, and no others," as Dr. Walther expresses it, the means employed will irresistibly accomplish that salvation, and can by no possibility accomplish it in the non-elect. Since it is maintained that sinners are elected unto faith and salvation, not, as the Lutheran Church has taught for centuries, that believers are elected to sonship and to the eternal inheritance of God's children, people will learn freely to declare what the theory so manifestly implies, that the so-called faith which is not a result of the particular electing grace is no faith at all, and that one in whom true faith has been wrought by the Holy Ghost can never fall. And this will be done all the more boldly and emphatically as the claim is put forth that one can know himself to be one of those favored few who are elect according to the unrevealed purpose of salvation, and who therefore "shall and must be saved," while the teachers of the new doctrine themselves admit that such knowledge can be had only on the assumption that every one who is a believer is one of those who, in the secret counsel of God, is elected *unto faith* and hence unto salvation. It would simplify the question very much if Missourians would frankly admit what their theory implies. But that would make it evident that what we have to contend against is the same human speculation against which our dogmaticians contended centuries ago. If they reply that such consequences are unscriptural, that is an admission that the doctrine which involves them is unscriptural also.

We beg of Past. Huegli to reconsider the whole subject, in the hope that he will see how such a doctrine of the divine de-

crees renders nugatory the plan of salvation for all men. If the doctrine is sincerely held and made practical account of, that God's grace is universal, that Christ redeemed all men, that the means of grace bring the merits of Christ to all, the doctrine of an antecedently particular grace which extends only to a few and leaves others hopelessly to themselves must fall, and the old doctrine of our Church, which is in complete harmony with the whole revealed plan of salvation, must stand. But if it be held that God has antecedently elected but a select portion of our race that they might become believers and brought to salvation, and that these must be saved while no others can be, the revealed plan of universal salvation is rendered nugatory. What use can there be in teaching that grace is offered to the others also, and even fully sufficient grace to effect their salvation, when it is taught at the same time that there is a secret divine decree which limits its operation to the elect and thus renders the salvation of these others impossible? Or does Past. Huegli think that there are others, besides those who are included in God's eternal decree of election to salvation, that *can* be and are saved? If so, he differs with others of his synod, and should not delay in telling them how it can be accomplished. He no doubt sees as well as others that if God has selected a certain number whom He resolves to save, that number "shall surely be saved, and no others." But that is just what renders the plan of salvation nugatory in its universality and makes it antecedently particular. The problem is solved by alleging that but few are saved, because God determined to save but few; that as He has determined to save these, no resistance on their part can prevent the accomplishment of His purpose; and that as He has not determined to save the rest, no power can compass their salvation. But such a solution!

We hope Past. Huegli will not allow himself to be deceived by the transparent sophism that our doctrine of election in foresight of faith involves the same difficulty and is open to the same objection. Certainly we also teach that there is a divine election of persons, and that only those who are included among the elect will be saved. We even openly declare, what the Missourians are getting very scrupulous about saying, that God passed all others by. But that which

renders them very timid about the latter statement, should lead those who are earnestly desirous of having and holding the truth to see the difference. Beyond all controversy, those who are not elect will not be saved. In that we presume there is an agreement among us. But why? Our answer is, that while God desires all to be saved and makes effectual provision for the salvation of all, He elects to the adoption of sons only those who believe, and to the eternal glory of heaven only those who persist in faith until their end, according to His clearly revealed purpose and plan. Those who block up the ordinary avenue of the Spirit, so that He can not accomplish His saving work in them, He does not and cannot elect to the sonship and salvation which are obtainable only through faith. The election which in God's antecedent will is universal, is rendered particular in the consequent divine will by man's wilful rejection of the proffered grace that is alike for all men. The election to salvation, taking election in the strict sense, can pertain only to believers, because only believers, according to the Word of God, can be saved. The cause of its particularity lies not in God, but in man. This will explain, we may remark in passing, why we did not scruple to speak of man's conduct as being necessarily taken into account in predestination, though the possibility of misconstruing the word has been pointed out in our own Magazine, and though Dr. Walther regards it as embodying synergistic errors. But that is a subject to which more space must be given at another time. What it is necessary here to observe is that the faith which the Holy Ghost works in the soul is necessary before one can be a child of God or inherit eternal glory in fact, and therefore necessary in the eternal foresight of God before one can be predestinated to sonship or salvation, as those who block up the Spirit's way, so that He can not perform His work in the soul, can not be saved and can not be predestinated to salvation. How could the fact that God foresees the success of the Holy Spirit's work in some, who are accordingly chosen to salvation, while He foresees that others will wilfully resist the grace that is irresistible in no case and therefore does not elect them, be so construed as to render nugatory the plan of salvation for all men? The provision made for the rescue of our race from

death is put into execution, and all are rescued whose own conduct does not exclude them from the great salvation and thus render their election to its enjoyment impossible. "How often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not," says our blessed Savior. But how different is the Missouri theory! That assumes that God has selected the persons—not all men—whom He purposes to save by leading them to faith and sonship and salvation, and that these and no others are saved. Why? The divine election has decided which persons shall be brought to Christ and receive life in His name, and the others, whatever grace may be said to be offered them, are not included in the decree and can not be saved. That makes the universal grace and redemption and call practically nugatory. May God help sincere men to see it!

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"ZUR WEHRE."

BY AN OLD LUTHERAN.

[We deem it proper to state that the following article, whose author correctly surmised that we would ignore such an attack as that to which it refers, at least so far as temper and manner are concerned, was sent us without any solicitation on our part. It is deplorable that the St. Louis men seem determined, if possible, to divert attention from the grave subject in controversy by endeavoring to reduce it to a petty personal squabble.—ED.]

Under the above heading the New Missouri\* authorities at St. Louis have indulged in strictures upon Prof. Loy's introductory article in the first number of the COLUMBUS THEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE which are of such a character that a proper regard for a dignified discussion of the points at issue in the present controversy on the doctrine of election would seem to debar its author from taking any notice of them.

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\* We speak of *New Missouri*. We are not attacking the Missouri Synod, or speaking ill of her. She has not adopted formally the St. Louis doctrine, and we feel convinced those wrong our beloved Synod who represent the St. Louis doctrine as the doctrine of the Missouri Synod. The laity, the congregations, have not been heard from at all, and we think that they should have something to say in this matter.

But a mere spectator or neutral party in that cause may, perhaps, be allowed to say a word in reply without seeming to sanction a violation of the rules of common decency and decorum in conducting theological discussions. The St. Louis men have been flattered and cajoled till they have been made to believe that they are perfect paragons and walking encyclopedias in theological lore. It has therefore become a habit with them, when they come in contact with men who do not look through their spectacles, to treat them with supercilious contempt as ignoramuses. And whilst this thing was always odious and not to their credit, it was yet bearable, as a great human weakness, as long as it was claimed only for Prof. Walther, with whom there was at least some ground for this felt superiority, as he is really a man of great acquirements in theological knowledge. But when his present colleagues, especially the mere stripling who was elected some years ago to a tutelage, with the view that in the course of years and through a long training, after the Professor's demise, he might be able to take his place, already disports this claim, whilst he is yet lying in his theological swaddling clothes, the thing becomes intolerable and disgusting. And yet this is the *animus* with which the strictures in question were written. But mere boast and Falstaffian swagger are not arguments, and can convince none except those who will follow without conviction. Aside from the bantering and swaggering brandishing of the sword, the article is made up of what had been said over and over again by its author's teachers, and contains but little that is worthy of notice. But merely to show the reader who has not seen the article in question, what manner of warfare is carried on in St. Louis, we propose to pass some of its points in review.

Prof. Loy had regarded it as presumptive proof against the doctrine of the St. Louis men, that it was not taught with any degree of unanimity by the representative men of the Lutheran Church in the period of the adoption of the Formula of Concord and prior to it. Prof. Piper is enraged at this allegation, and challenges Prof. Loy for the proof. Indeed, he is so full of fight that he sets out to prove the opposite in advance. And if a mere index knowledge of the writings of the men in question would suffice to carry his

point, he would have succeeded. A large collection of these authors at his hand affords him an opportunity of a cheap display of learning in this respect. But unfortunately for him, it is not enough to quote these authors. They must be understood and made to harmonize with themselves. And it is here that he ought to have shown his mastery and acumen.

We are referred to *Lehre und Wehre* and the *Lutheraner*, where the proof with regard to Luther is said to have already been given. We cannot now put our hands upon the number of the *Lutheraner* referred to. *Lehre und Wehre* contains the well-known passage from Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans: "In the 9, 10, and 11th chapter he (Paul) treats of the eternal predestination of God, whence it originally comes, as to who should believe or not believe, who should be delivered from his sins and who should not be delivered," etc. But Prof. Walther has lately declared concerning the latter clause of this passage, that namely predestination determines as to who *should not believe*, that he is uncertain with regard to Luther's meaning. But if he is not certain that he understands Luther's meaning with regard to the latter clause, is he certain, or can he be, that he understands him with regard to the former, which suits his theory? Has he any right to insist on the first clause and leave the second in doubt? Indeed, this very fact ought to make him suspect that he is on the wrong track and is misinterpreting Luther. Certainly, if the passage is relied upon to teach that predestination determines who *should believe*, it must be taken also to say, that it determines who should *not believe*. We cannot adopt one and reject the other. If the passage is taken as speaking of predestination in its broad sense, it is all plain; but if taken in the limited sense, in which Prof. Walther takes it, it would teach Calvinistic reprobation, of which Luther never was guilty.

Our professor says furthermore, that Luther in his commentary on 1 Pet. 1, 2 makes the *election unto obedience* refer to the *obedience of faith*. True, but let us take this in connection with the whole as Luther gives it. He remarks that we are not to heed such thoughts as though we werenot elected, and as though the number of the elect was small. Neither are we to inquire why God has done this or that, and why

He has done this so and not differently. We are not to presume to fathom the depth of divine predestination with our reason. For if we do, we will be confounded, and either driven to despair or become reckless. But we are to hold fast the promises of the Gospel. They will show us that Christ is God's Son, that He came into the world to bless all nations, that is, to redeem them from sin and death, and to justify and save them, and that He did this in obedience to the counsel and gracious will of His Heavenly Father, who so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believed in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3. If we follow this advice, we will not doubt that we are of the elect.

Does Luther thus ascribe any power or influence to the divine predestination of persons *in bringing the sinner to Christ and converting him*? Does he not rest everything upon the *order of salvation*? Does he say that election has anything to do with the sinner's believing, or does he not rather exclude this idea? Is not the above the way and order of salvation, aside from any consideration of election? Does Luther in any way intimate that election, in addition to the means of grace, determines whether a man shall be converted, which certainly he must have done, if faith is the result of election in its limited sense? Does Luther not expressly say that we are not to look to predestination and trouble ourselves about it, as far as our faith and conversion are concerned? And if so, does he not mean that the former is not causative of the latter? If we at all understand human language, this must be Luther's meaning.

This, it seems to us, appears beyond all gainsaying, when Luther continues: "You (the elect, to whom the epistle is addressed and who already believed,) you are elect of God, and are *now* sanctified, not that you should remain in your sins and former Gentile walk, but that you should *henceforth* be obedient and obey the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which declares to you that you have been sprinkled . . . with the precious blood of Christ." What else, we ask, can this mean, than that the order of salvation and election agree, are in perfect accord, that to that whereunto the Gospel calls and brings the sinner, God also predestinates him, without how-

ever making nugatory or influencing the former by the latter. They run parallel, but the order of salvation is no mere carrying out or execution of predestination as pertaining to individuals. This is also the doctrine of the Bible, as we will presently show, and of Chemnitz, and of all our great orthodox dogmaticians from Luther down to the present day, including also all the authors of the Formula of Concord.

We will here confine ourselves to the great Chemnitz, upon whom New Missouri relies as her mighty champion. In his Enchiridion he says: "For the divine election does not follow our faith and righteousness, but precedes it, as its effective cause." In the same connection he says: "For election and the purpose of grace are the effective cause of all of that which pertains to salvation."

If election is the effective cause of *everything that pertains to our salvation*, it certainly must include the merits of Christ and the provision of the means of grace. For without these there can be no salvation. The election here spoken of must, therefore, be predestination in its broader sense, which includes the sending of Christ and the provision of the means of grace, through which faith is wrought and produced, and in this sense predestination is certainly a cause of faith. But Prof. Walther claims that Chemnitz cannot here have spoken of predestination in this sense, because he says further on: "He hath called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace." 2 Tim. 1, 9. Hence, Paul also says, 2 Tim. 2, 19, that this is the seal: "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Hence it appears as a certainty, *that not one of the elect will remain, as it is called, in final impenitence and unbelief*. But he evidently misinterprets his author, or fails to get at his meaning. The persons elected are included in election in its comprehensive sense, and thus Chemnitz always treats it. Hence he makes it comprise everything pertaining to salvation. But election in its broad sense, *when applied to individuals*, certainly has for its seal and evidence, that these individuals repent and believe. We must seek for the elect, not among the impenitent, but among believers, and among believers that continue unto the end. There are no other elect in the strict sense.



That this is actually the meaning of Chemnitz appears from his other utterances on the subject. In his *Examen*, his master work, he replies to the objection of the Papists that we cannot be certain of our salvation, because that is dependent upon the predestination of God, into which we are not to pry. Let this *scopus* be noticed! Does he argue as Prof. Piper would in such a case? He could then only argue from election in the narrow sense, that election namely is a cause of faith, etc. But Chemnitz, after he has warned us against presuming to pry into the secret counsels of God, proceeds thus: "We are to look at election not from the standpoint of reason, or of the law, but of the Gospel. But the Gospel speaks of election not as the poets do of the fates, that some are assigned to life, others to death, from which we never could know, whether we were of those who are to be saved or of those who are to be lost. But the doctrine of election sets forth the decrees of God, formed from eternity, but afterwards revealed in the Word, about the CAUSES and mode of salvation and damnation: namely, 1. The decree concerning the redemption of the human race through the obedience and sufferings of Christ the Mediator; 2. The decree concerning the call through the ministry of the word, both of Jews and Gentiles, unto fellowship in the merits of Christ unto salvation; 3. The decree of God that by His Holy Spirit He would work in the hearts of men through the word that they repent and believe in the Gospel; 4. The decree of God that He would justify and save those, who, when they felt the wrath of God and their sins, would seek refuge at the throne of grace and embrace Christ the Mediator as set forth in the promises of the Gospel, and that He would damn those who would reject and spurn the word and not embrace the promises."

This is the sense and analysis of the doctrine of election as revealed in the Word of God, etc. (*Ex. part I. p. 171.*) Let it be noted that this is Chemnitz's reply to the question with regard to personal election. And is it possible that the man who wrote that it is the fourth decree of God that *those who believe* should be saved, and that this faith should be wrought by the Word of God offered to all alike, should have added a fifth decree in his *Enchiridion* making nugatory or

superfluous these last three, in consequence of which God would emphasize the Word and give it an additional power to convert the elect? Is the matter spoken of in the Enchiridion a fifth decree that shall determine as to who should believe? The former attribute faith to the Holy Spirit alone, working in all alike through the Word; the other, according to Prof. Piper's explanation, brings in an additional factor to the Holy Ghost through the Gospel, namely election. The identity of the same Gospel to all, and that Gospel emphasized through election, or as having election behind it, as a factor, are contraries, or rather contradictories. Are we to suppose that Chemnitz was such a penny-a-liner as Beecher is in our day, who now teaches one thing and then the opposite? God forbid! The passage from the Enchiridion must be taken as a parallel to the doctrine of election, as here analyzed, as coinciding with the second decree here spoken of, and as further explaining it; namely, that God decreed to call men unto fellowship in the merits of Christ through the word of the ministry, which fellowship is through faith. In this sense, and in this sense alone, is predestination a cause of faith.

Let us for a moment look at the Bible doctrine which Chemnitz follows so closely, and which settles the point. The passage Rom. 8. is indeed a summary of the manner in which the elect are saved. Even if we should concede that *prognosis* is equivalent to predestination, which, however, we do not concede, it would in its connection still express no causality of the call, of justification and glorification. The passage refers to persons and to what has been done with them. It declares that those whom God has elected (conceding, for the sake of argument, the above meaning) He has also called in time, justified, sanctified, and glorified. But whether predestination is the cause of the call, and of justification, or *vice versa*, or whether they stand in any relation of *cause* and effect, is not said, and must be put into the words in order to find it there. No causality whatever of the one with regard to the other is predicated. Hence the controversy is quite lively, as the passage stubbornly refuses to say what the contending parties would make it say. Or does the relation of cause and effect follow from the collocation of the

words? Are the Baptists right in contending, that every person baptized must first be taught, because in the apostle's commission teaching stands before baptizing?

But let us look at other passages. "*God hath chosen you to (eis) salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and through (en) faith in the truth.*" 2 Thess. 2, 19. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through (*en*) sanctification of the Spirit, unto (*eis*) obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. 1, 2. "Having predestinated us unto (*eis*) adoption of children by Jesus Christ." Eph. 1, 5. Now, let this difference *en* faith and *eis* faith be noted! That sanctification of the Spirit, faith in the truth, obedience of faith, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, either include or imply justifying and saving faith is generally conceded, and we here take it for granted. But why are these different prepositions put before the same words, especially in the first passage, where the apostle says that election is *eis* salvation, but *en* faith in the truth? We protest against the egregious trifling and forced explanation with which Rev. Stoeckhardt tries to break the force of this passage. He remarks: "We will be more certain of getting at the meaning of the apostle, if we reject the interpretation, *unto* sanctification of the Spirit and *unto* faith in the truth." And yet at the close of his investigation he observes: "It is all the same, whether we say that God has predestinated to save all and every individual of the elect through (*en*) faith, or whether we say, God has predestinated all the elect *unto* (*eis*) faith, salvation only being looked at from a different position." It would have been well if he had clearly stated what these different standpoints are. The apostle evidently scrupulously distinguishes between *unto* (*eis*) salvation and through (*en*) faith in the truth, but the learned man of St. Louis tells us that he means the same thing, as though he had said *unto* faith.

Now we take it that because the apostle evidently and purposely says a different thing, he also means a different thing. And by the Word we will abide. If our election in Christ means that God in the act of election had regard to Christ as a meritorious cause, our election *in* faith must also mean that he had regard to faith as its instrumental cause, which only it can be according to its nature. But if *in Christ*

means *unto Christ*, then *in faith* of the truth may also mean *unto faith*. If in Christ means that God would make Christ the Redeemer of mankind, then *in the faith* may also mean that He would work faith in the hearts of the elect. But if election *in Christ* means, as it certainly does, that God had regard to the Mediator as a meritorious, impulsive cause, then election *in faith or sanctification of the Spirit* must mean that election took place in regard and in foresight of faith. In this sense Gerhard also uses the passage in question. And as this election was made *unto salvation*, it must be first faith, not faith in general, but *final faith*, through which alone we can obtain eternal salvation, that is meant.

But undeniable as this fact is, the other is equally certain, that God also elected His children *unto faith, or sanctification of the Spirit*. These are not contradictories, although they are different. For that which God sees in the *order of salvation* as accomplishing, and upon which personal election rests, also becomes an object of predestination. Election is *from faith to faith*. Faith to which God had regard, in electing His children, also becomes an object to which He elects them. The order and way of salvation and election are not opposites, but they harmonize and converge at the same point, namely the salvation of the believer—just as it is no contradiction that God, in the Gospel, requires faith and imparts faith, that He imparts full forgiveness of sin in Holy Baptism, and also offers the same through the Lord's Supper. In like manner, God's election is sure, and yet we are bidden to make it sure with us. It is certain that God's elect can not be lost, and yet the final dreadful days are shortened that they may not be deceived. Prof. Walther ridicules the idea, that God should predestinate a thing which by His foresight He sees accomplishing, but it is His way to do abundantly for us in order to save us. He gives line upon line and precept upon precept and mercy upon mercy. He is already most merciful toward us, and yet we are to ask Him for His mercy daily in prayer. He has already absolved the whole world, and yet He justifies the sinner upon believing. He has given us an *order of salvation*, and sanctions and confirms it by an eternal decree—but He does not alter or change it by that decree, as Prof. Piper would make us believe. Thus

we will see why and how some of our theologians could make faith a condition of election, and yet also speak of election as an effective cause of faith. The Bible does both and they do both.

2. Prof. Piper regards it as a complete refutation of Prof. Loy's statement that the orthodox Luther theologians of our Church for three centuries had with great unanimity declared election to take place in foresight of faith, that these theologians were not in full accord as to whether they should term faith an instrumental cause of election or give it some other name. But is not this a sophism, invented to divert attention from the point of dispute? This matter has nothing to do with the other, in which they were all agreed, that election, namely, was made in view of faith. But Prof. Piper, in his superhuman logic, thinks that these other differences, which are not at issue at all in the present controversy, overthrow Prof. Loy's position and refute his statement. It is often the part of a sophist, whether conscious or not, that he tries to disprove a point which is not at issue, in order to make it appear as though he had disproved the real point in dispute. And what are we to say when Rationalists, supernaturalists, and modern development men are referred to as not holding the doctrine advocated by Prof. Loy, in order to show the want of unanimity in the Lutheran Church? Since when have these men become orthodox teachers in our church? We had always looked upon them, and were always so told in St. Louis, as having no just claim to any standing in our community, and now we see them figure in our midst as Lutheran teachers, when they are to serve a purpose!

Neither is Prof. Piper's other point well taken, that namely these later theologians, since the adoption of the Formula of Concord, held and taught erroneous views concerning *the Lord's Day* and *the civil powers*. For this is altogether a different thing. These were not then points of general denominational controversy, and hence such aberrations and loose teachings could well take place, without attracting any particular attention. But the doctrine of election was considered a sterner thing, was actually a matter of denomina-

tional contest, a *casus belli* between contending churches. And is it probable, we will say is it possible, that a universal apostacy could have taken place on the part of its theologians, without the church's noticing it, and raising its voice of protest against it? We think not.

3. Prof. Piper disports himself as a master of masters. It had been stated, as presumptive proof for the correctness of the doctrine on election generally held in the Lutheran Church, that it was successful in the hands of its great dogmaticians against the Calvinists. Prof. Piper concedes the point. But he gives us his *ipse dixit*, that the success of those great men would have been still greater, and their victory much easier, if they had fought with his weapons and according to his strategy. Strange, that those men of such great acumen in other matters, were so blind as not to see these weapons, though they were placed before them, as it is claimed now, in their own Confessions which they were sworn to support! And he thinks it was no fight worth speaking of, and that they had no foe worthy of their steel. With the mere brandishing of his sword at St. Louis he could have routed them, horse and rider! If a man were to tell us that the Germans were, indeed, successful in the late Franco-German war, but if they had known and followed his strategy, their victory would have been easier and more complete, he might be right. But we would rather take the *tried* method, which gave proof of its availability by the success which attended it, than adopt the grand strategy which some shelf-general had hatched out, and for which he claimed such wonderful things. He might after all be mistaken, especially if he had never given any practical proof of his strategical ability. And so we have concluded to stick to the old tried battle cry and mode of attack and defense, which wrought such mighty results in the days of our fathers, although it is already intimated at St. Louis that this is no longer possible, since they have taken the matter in hand, and it has been made a point of controversy. Prof. Piper's theory has not been tried, of which he makes such egregious promises. His shield might turn out to be one of paper, and his spear one of wood, and his panoply a mere shadow.

Whatever else Prof. Piper has to say really concerns only

one point. All hinges upon it, and we propose to treat it under this head. As there have been so many assertions and retractions on particular parts of the new doctrine, and as the whole matter is involved in so many inconsistencies, it is really difficult to see what is actually held and taught at St. Louis. For any quotations taken from their publications and any statement based upon them, they can easily find a counter-statement, and thus make it appear as though they had been slandered. And besides, Prof. Piper always flies the track, and evades the point, when he is about to be pushed on it, and then declaims about misrepresentations and criticisms that miss their mark. *Lehre und Wehre* formerly teemed with quotations from various authors to show that God could have converted and saved all men, if He had so chosen, in order to make room for the St. Louis theory of election. But God has chosen not to do it, and we know not why. And in the same line of argument Prof. Piper tells us now, that God bestows larger portions of converting grace upon some men, than He does upon others, favoring sometimes even those that are lost, whilst He stints it to others, sometimes even the elect, as was the case with the citizens of Chorazin and Bethsaida of the former, and the Ninevites of the latter.

Now all this to our ears sounds strange. We had always thought and taught, that there is an established way and order of salvation, and that the overtures of mercy through the Gospel and the gift of the Spirit, were alike rich to all, whether accepted or rejected. That the Almighty by His infinite power *per force* could convert all men, we are not disposed to deny, if He had established a different order of salvation; but that He could convert them by the established order of salvation, and will not, is new to us. That God sends His Word to some, and withholds it from others, is no proof of this point. We agree with Prof. Walther, as he expressed himself in former years in his Gospel-Postill with regard to this matter. He there says (p. 53): "There is, therefore, no doubt, that if God had known that the Gentiles, walking in the darkness of heathenism, would suffer themselves to be made to accept His Word, He would have had it preached to them, even if it had to be done, as was the case with Cornelius and the Macedonians, through the instrumentalities of angels from heaven. Acts 10, 3; 16, 9-10."

But all this has nothing to do with the *order of salvation*. Or is the influence and efficacy of the means of grace dependent upon a separate and special will of God, as to who, where the Word is preached, shall be converted among those that hear it; as to who shall be regenerated in time; and as to who shall receive forgiveness of sin in the Lord's Supper? Prof. Walther had formerly said, that with the elect God emphasized His Word or its power; he subsequently retracted it. But the old notion continues to loom up. It would even seem, according to Prof. Piper, that frequently it takes less grace to convert an elect person than one that is not elect. But do these means of grace, through which God converts men, and to which we are always directed, offer a larger amount of grace to some than they do to others, and do they work according to a special will of God, outside and separate from them, and as pertaining to separate individuals? This seems to be the new theory taught at St. Louis, and by Prof. Piper. But this is the most unscriptural view of Calvinism, against which our Church has always protested aloud. For the Gospel is the same power of God unto salvation to all, whether accepted or rejected. Hence, too, Prof. Piper finds a mystery where there is none, or one which God has solved for us. He thinks it is a mystery that God earnestly desires the salvation of all men and yet all are not saved. Christ tells us not that God could save them, but chooses not to do it, but that they will not come unto Him that they might have life. The mystery lies somewhere else. But the reason why Prof. Piper cannot see the solution, is because his Calvinistic theory of election is in his way; namely, that faith is a result of election.

And what does Prof. Piper mean when, in order to refute the charge that the new doctrine endangers the attributes of God, he writes: When miserable creatures are always ready to ask the question, why God did not elect all, then, and only then, we say to such fellows (with Paul, Rom. 9, 18), that "God will have mercy upon whom He will have mercy." Why does he not quote the whole passage? Would it have shown him that he was misapplying it?

These utterances show, that the evil leaven of the false doctrine of election is leavening the whole lump. It



is true, prior to and aside from Christ, we have no right and claim upon God's mercy. But after Christ's perfect redemption and the absolution of the world through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, John tells us that God is not only merciful, but "*righteous and just* to forgive us our sins," etc. What was a matter of mercy, has now become a matter of justice also, since the perfect righteousness of Christ has been acquired for all men. And if God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, will He not freely with Him also give us all things? Who are these *us*? The same for whom Christ was delivered into death. In Christ every sinner has a claim upon God's mercy, that inasmuch as He gave His own Son for him, He will also give him grace unto faith and salvation. Let him only claim his right by faith. Can the question now be, after God has already shown mercy unto all in giving them His Son—the larger mercy, as to whom He will grant the smaller mercy of bringing him to believe? Hence Prof. Piper's answer to such *fellows* is no answer at all; yea worse, it makes the mediation of Christ to mean nothing. As God's love and mercy are alike to all in the gift of His Son for all, so His grace, *that has already been purchased equally for all*, must be alike to all. If the sinner is not saved, it is his fault. Every theory of election that talks of special mercy to some, in bringing them to salvation, that talks about God's showing mercy to whomsoever He pleases, as if it were only to some, makes the redemption of Christ of none effect. The only reason why God cannot convert and save all, is also the reason why He cannot elect all. There is no mystery in election that is not in conversion. And to say that God does not convert all and bring them to faith, because He will have mercy upon whom He will have mercy, is to make a mock of the perfect redemption through Christ and the Holy Spirit's work through the means of grace. In Christ every sinner has a right to ask, why God should withhold that grace from him, which Christ has bought for him with so great a price. But alas for the St. Louis men! How are the mighty fallen!

May the reader forgive us if we are wordy here. Our heart is too full—we cannot let go of the subject. And it shows, how the false doctrine of election has already vitiated

large portions of the theological system at St. Louis. The mediatorial work of Christ has already shrivelled and dwindled sadly through the blighting influence of their erroneous notion on predestination. Although Christ has actually not only redeemed all men generally, but also purchased saving grace for all—the gift of the Holy Ghost, indeed all that sanctification includes as treated in the third article of the Apostle's Creed equally for all, and although the heavenly hosts at the Savior's advent on earth sang of the Father's good will to men through Him, these "*fellows*," who insist on all this, are told that God will now have mercy upon whom He will have mercy!

And to show that we are doing the St. Louis men no wrong, we here present Prof. Piper's view of conversion. He remarks: "What induces God to convert a man? His mercy and the merits of Christ—two general causes. . . . All are dead in trespasses and sin equally. And yet only a part of those who hear the Gospel are converted. General causes (God's mercy and the merits of Christ) and the equally corrupt condition of all men, and yet a particularity of conversion! Why are the others not converted? We reply, on account of the wilful and persistent resistance which they offer to the influence of the Holy Ghost. . . . But why are the others converted? Whilst we presuppose something in them, by which they are advantageously distinguished from the others—a gentle assent or desisting from their wilful resistance! Nothing of the kind. *This is the Holy Spirit's influence, which this WILFUL RESISTANCE IS MADE TO CEASE.*"\*

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\* We mean not to misrepresent Prof. Piper. The word "*unterbleiben*," "*unterlassen*," is sometimes taken to mean, *that a thing is not done at all, and sometimes that it ceases to be done.* According to our lexicons it means *to quit, to omit, to cease, to desist, not to do again.* And Prof. Piper says (p. 116) "*that man cannot of his own strength desist from wilful resistance.*" That is the Holy Spirit's work. He holds, if we understand him aright, that all men are not only dead in trespasses and sin, full of enmity to God, unwilling, and averse to the Gospel, but they all *wilfully* resist. But as all wilful resistance becomes persistent when continued in, and as the Holy Ghost is not even given to these latter, the fault of their non-conversion, according to this dreadful theory, would lie with God for not having removed it in time. Where is it taught in our symbolical books that God also removes *wilful* resistance in its proper meaning? This doctrine, whether acknowledged and seen or not, can only be carried out by confessing a grace that works irresistibly. Man can then not only do nothing toward his conversion (which is scriptural), but he

Here then we have it in a nutshell—this showing of mercy to whom God will show mercy. God earnestly desires the conversion of all. But in those that are converted, He removes wilful resistance (or does he convert them without it?) in the others he does not, (or does He remove this wilful resistance and still leave them unconverted?) He may earnestly desire their conversion, just as earnestly as that of those who are actually converted, but in those who are converted He removes their wilful resistance, or causes it to cease, and in the others He does not. For surely if He did, they would be converted. Missouri's pulpits formerly resounded every Sunday with the truth, that all who, when they hear the Word of God, do not wilfully resist, will obtain faith. God then, according to this theory, may be compared to a physician, who in the case of two patients earnestly wishes them both to recover, but to the one he administers the right medicine and to the other he gives an ineffectual remedy of powdered chalk!

Or does our professor make a distinction between *wilful*, and *wilful and persistent resistance*, as different in kind? We suppose so. But it seems to us, that all wilful resistance becomes persistent if continued in, and is *persistent* just as long as it is con-

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also cannot hinder it. Does salvation by grace alone require or involve man's ability to resist wilfully and persistently? The Calvinistic theory of election requires this, but certainly not the Bible nor our Confessions. Hence it has been argued at length by the advocates of the new doctrine, that as election is by grace alone, faith could have had nothing to do with it. And we are prepared soon to hear, that as justification is by grace, God in justifying the individual cannot require faith—cannot make the verdict of justification dependant on faith also. May Prof. Piper desist and retrace his steps from the evil way upon which he has set his feet. If not, his new system must soon work out its legitimate results and expose itself in all its nakedness, turning the universal love of God, the full redemption of Christ, and the saving efficacy of the means of grace, into a shrivelled, meaningless thing. His old Calvinistic charges of synergism or Semipelagianism can frighten no one, who knows what these terms mean. In popular discussions it is quite common already to hear from that side of the house that salvation by grace alone is not full and exclusive, if the sad power of successfully and finally resisting converting and saving grace is left to man. He could then on the day of judgment still say to himself, that he goes to heaven he owes to himself in fact, that namely he could have wilfully and pertinaciously resisted and did not. But that is as though a man would claim some reward of us because he could have set our house on fire and abstained from it. The Calvinistic *gratia irresistibilis* is the natural and necessary result of the St. Louis doctrine of election and is directly implied in Prof. Piper's theory of conversion. Without this the whole structure must at once fall to pieces. That would be the "*compelle intrare*" with a vim.

tinued in. And if the Holy Ghost causes wilful resistance to cease, a *wilful persistent* resistance never could arise, and then no reason could be assigned at all, why not all the hearers of the Gospel are converted. The Bible and our Confession teach, that in conversion God makes the unwilling willing, takes away men's resistance and aversion to the truth or grace of God, but that He also removes *wilful* resistance, is a different thing and could only be effected by a *gratia irresistibilis*. If a man is not converted according to this theory, it is God's fault. For evidently, if the Holy Spirit does not only remove man's natural repugnance, enmity, unwillingness, and resistance to the Gospel, but also his *wilful* resistance, all men would be converted. If God takes away *wilful* resistance, there could be no *wilful persistent* resistance, for the latter is only a continuation of the former, and if God took the former away in time, it could not become persistent. Verily, these are theories that call upon all sincere Lutherans to gird on the sword and do battle for the truth, that these baneful errors may not spread in our Church. It matters not how much of good men may have done for the Church and in it—it cannot atone for the deadly effects of this Upas tree which they seek now to plant within its borders. And the unionistic whine of the "*Zeuge*" that men should keep silent, in order not to destroy the good work that has been accomplished, is out of place altogether. Who is destroying it—those who choose to continue to walk in the old ways, by which this good has been accomplished, or those who are introducing this new spawn?

The Bible and our Confessions clearly teach, not only that man is dead in trespasses and sin by nature and that he can do nothing whatever toward his conversion, cannot accept the grace of God when offered him, but is also full of hatred and enmity and resistance to that grace. All this the Holy Spirit must remove, before the sinner can believe in Christ truly. But this is far different from what is taught at St. Louis. It is true, a man may wilfully resist to-day, and be converted to-morrow. Many who have wilfully resisted have been converted, but not *as long as they thus resisted*. Our Confession teaches that the Holy Ghost is not even given to those who wilfully and persistently resist; for He makes the

unwilling willing. Consequently if God took away wilful resistance, there would be no persistent resistance.

And Prof. Piper's exegetical axioms or theories, are equally at fault. That every doctrine must be *fully* stated and fully drawn from the passages considered as the *sedes doctrinae*, is utterly untrue. Where is the passage that teaches the full doctrine of the Trinity? Can he point it out? And if he thinks that taking into account what is taught in other passages in regard to matters involved in the doctrine set forth in the *sedes doctrinae*, though not expressly mentioned there, is the modern theory of the development of doctrine from certain germs and roots contained in the Bible, he as evidently does not know what this theory is, as it is manifest that he has not comprehended the argument which he criticises.

But our professor excels himself in his efforts to teach Prof. Loy the elements of logic. We think it is a fault of his head, however, and not of his heart, when he so grossly misunderstands and misrepresents his opponent in order to make him refute himself. He seems to be able to do anything else rather than to think clearly. If he could see straight, he would have perceived that Prof. Loy's premises in the doctrine of election are far different from his own. For the faith which God foresaw in the elect was not forced upon them by predestination as Prof. Piper's is, but was one which they could have hindered. And that makes all the difference. It seems to us a child could see this difference, which the St. Louis professor cannot see. Hence he says: "Because none but the elect are saved, the means of grace can save only the elect, and no others. Prof. Loy, according to his doctrine, maintains the premises, therefore he must also maintain the inferences, if he argues correctly. . . . When the means of grace are brought to an elect person the divine purpose, which no power can hinder, must beget faith in him and bring him to Christ. He must be saved according to the divine counsel, and he must be saved through the grace that *must* prevail," etc. What special pleading? As our professor does not see it, we must tell him, that the faith which God foresaw, was not wrought irresistibly, and hence it cannot be wrought so in time. If God had foreseen a kind of faith wrought by irresistible grace, it would have to be actu-

ally wrought in this manner in time, but not otherwise. Can he still not see the point?

And so it is with his other instances. He finds the following cases parallel. The Christian can only know his election and final salvation from God's general promises. And God gave His Son for all—therefore He will with Him give the Christians of Rome all things. In the latter the apostles would say, that if God has given the greater or all He will surely with the greater give us the less, namely salvation. A parallel to this would be, if God had elected all or promised to elect all, we who are a part of the all, could draw the inference that He had surely elected us also. For we would be included in the premises. Surely our professor teaches poorly, because he distinguishes poorly. His theory brought into the form of a syllogism reads thus: Among those who believe some are not elected; Thomas believes; therefore Thomas is one of the elect. St. Paul's syllogism is: God delivered up His Son for all (redeeming grace); The Christians at Rome were a part of these all; therefore God would with Christ, as included in Him, also give them saving grace. It will be seen at a glance that while the Missouri syllogism is supremely absurd, the apostle's commends itself to the soul as in accord with sound logic. And yet our St. Louis professor finds the two exact parallels!

Prof. Piper thinks that the Lutheran doctrine of election as taught by Prof. Loy is practically of no avail to the troubled Christian, because it must remain a mystery to him whether God foreknew his persevering faith to the end. But does not the same objection apply to his own theory? As only those are elected who continue in the faith unto the end, and as many who once believed actually fall away again, they can only know that they are of the elect, if in their dying gasp they find themselves standing in the faith, when the battle is already over and this knowledge can do them no good. The one in this respect is exactly as long as the other is broad. But in another respect the two are very different. According to Prof. Piper's theory, who makes faith a result of election, the Christian, whenever he is directed to the Word of God to recur to it, will find that his retreat is cut off by the allegation that if he is not elected he cannot believe; not the Word,

but his election or non-election determines all; faith in his theory comes from election, and not simply by preaching. For if it came simply by preaching, election could have nothing to do with it; and if it comes by both taken together, how can he know that he is one of those to whom these two factors apply? The Christian in times of inward conflict, with this theory of election in his heart must, when directed to the Word, be haunted with the idea that the Word, if he is not elected, will do him no good. But the general Lutheran doctrine which makes the means of grace alone to determine everything, leaves the Word and promises unshackled, full and free. What God has foreseen the believer cannot know, neither is he to care; but what God has promised he can know, and is to know and hold fast. And we are persuaded that Luther, Chemnitz, and our Confessions, pointing us to the order of salvation and the general promises of God for consolation in our distress, are conclusive against the new doctrine. How could they point us to these in order to find out our election, if they were not on the same line, different indeed, but parallels? The order of salvation, and election in its broad sense, declare that those who believe shall be saved. And is personal election to reverse this and say, those who are elected shall believe, or must it not rather view the former process as accomplished, and thus sanction and confirm it? Shall personal election introduce a new factor which entirely changes the others? And if so, how could we learn our election from the order of salvation since that election includes a new factor? Where would this new factor come in? Let the reader pause and consider this thoroughly! The order of salvation is the carrying out of election in its broad sense; hence we can learn all about the latter from the former. But the new doctrine of election in the limited sense brings in a new factor altogether, and yet we are directed to the first to learn all about it. Is this possible? If election in the narrow sense is the sanction and confirmation only of the first as accomplished, we may also learn all about it from the first. But if it is what the St. Louis men claim for it, the order of salvation can give us no clue to it. It makes faith dependent upon two things and ultimately only upon one—upon personal election—about which the order of salvation tells us nothing. Hence with

the great Chemnitz we say to our troubled heart again and again: "In this manner we are not to doubt, but take assurance from the promises. Phil. 1. He who has begun the good work in us will also perfect it unto the day of Jesus Christ. We are called unto eternal fellowship with Christ, not that He will presently cast those away whom He has joined to Himself, but (as He says) they shall never perish—no one shall take them out of my hands. He will confirm us unto the end. Ex. I. Pars. p. 172.

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## THE STATUS CONTROVERSIÆ AND E. W. K.

(AN OPEN LETTER.)

*My Dear Friend K.*!—Your article on the Status Controversiæ in the May number of *Lehre und Wehre* touchingly reminds me of the good old times. Of course, you and I, as usual, do not agree; that is, at first. But that you will agree with me in the end is only a question of time. History, you know, repeats itself: and our past is history. First of all, let me thank you for kindly remembering old times and old friendship; also for manifesting so much anxiety about my personal welfare. I cannot but say that throughout all your criticism a spirit of good will is evinced toward your humble opponent. That you "make a wit" now and then at my expense does not offend me, since it seems to afford you pleasure. I will also overlook the fact that your language is, here and there, just a little abusive; I know that you mean well; and besides—the circumstances, the surroundings, and bad examples, in part excuse you. However, before entering upon a discussion of the questions before us, just a word or two. When you say that I falsely accuse the Missourians, you express the hope that it is done in ignorance. Here suffer me to say, more by way of kindly admonition than by way of reproof: do not fall into the bad habit of *Lehre und Wehre*, which seems to assume that every dissent from its "we say so" must be the outflow either of ignorance or of malice. Is it not just possible at least that *Lehre und Wehre* may err



in spite of its good intentions? Again, is it not just possible that *Lehre und Wehre* may not be always just fully clear and perfect in diction and logic, in spite of its profound learning? I do not assert facts, but merely the possibility of facts. Must others then necessarily be ignorant or malicious, if they for conscience' sake lift up their voices against what they hold to be erroneous in *Lehre und Wehre*? Please consider these suggestions, which I offer you in the most kindly spirit. Again, you repeatedly speak of „nachschreiben“\*; you even state I have been extremely thoughtless in this that I have copied, without due investigation, things which your „erbitterter Gegner† in Madison” has set afloat about you and your friends. Now, to say the least, this is a very ungenerous insinuation on your part. You deserve a rebuke for this, and—since there are others besides you who thus exercise prerogatives not their own—I will proceed to administer the rebuke in a way perhaps somewhat singular and general, and yet so that you will understand. If there is to be found any synod which may be likened unto a comet, of which one man constitutes the nucleus and many men the tail, so that the slightest turn of the former communicates the most astounding wag to the latter, that synod is—*not the Synod of Ohio*. And, my dear K., to know this, few men have had better opportunity than you. Doch lassen wir nun Person und Personen so viel als immer möglich aus dem Spiele‡; we will then be the better able to serve the cause of sacred truth.

In your animadversions upon my article you engage to defend, over against me, Dr. Walther's formulation of the Status Controversiæ. First you accuse me of charging Dr. W. with falsification, which is not the case; then you proceed to show that I ought to be satisfied with his way of putting our side of the question; that you of the opposition all acknowledge it to be a plain and fair statement; and that I fail to give any reason for thinking otherwise, etc. And what have you to say in support of these your assertions? Simply this, that we have really used the very expressions in which Dr. W. is pleased to word our doctrine over against your own; and that

\* Copying after others.

† Exasperated opponent.

‡ Let us avoid personalities as much as possible.

is all you offer in proof. Why, my dear friend, glad as I was when lately I heard that you were growing physically strong, I now fear that you are getting morally weak and mentally dull. Please pardon me for so frankly expressing my deep concern. Now what would you say were we to formulate your side of the question in a manner such as you now endorse and defend? Let me give you an example: The Missourians teach concerning the eternal election of God that from thence it originally flows who shall believe and who shall not believe, who can be loosed from sin and who can not be loosed from sin, etc. How would you like that to stand as the first point of your affirmation? Judging from late developments, not very well, I trow. O, no! you would say: Prof. S. is not giving a plain and fair statement. And why not? Certainly not because the Missourians have never used these words; for again and again have they cited (and grossly misapplied) these very words of Luther in support of their doctrine that faith flows from election. But on what grounds then would you raise your objections? On these, I venture to say, that this passage from Luther is somewhat obscure, may stand in need of explanation, is liable to be misunderstood, etc., and is therefore not available either as a thesis or anti-thesis of doctrine. Such grounds were indeed well taken; and were I to disregard them and persist in formulating your doctrine in the above objectionable manner, I would be committing a great wrong. In this, I hope, you will concur. Then please draw your own conclusions and tell me whether it is right for you to insist that we must pronounce as plain and fair Dr. W.'s status as worded for us, just because we, *in certain connections and with limitations*, have used the words he employs in stating our side?

On the other hand please note that we in good faith do accept and will defend each and every expression you quote as having been used by us; such as: faith is an indispensable prerequisite to man's election; a man's election depends upon his faith; faith is a normative factor in the decree of election; election takes place *intuiti fidei*, in consequence of, or on the ground of, foreseen faith, or of the foreseen conduct of man. All these expressions and more you may condemn, and you may condemn all who have in time past and who

now use them; as for us, we are ready to defend them, however *only in the sense and in the connection we or our dogmatists have used them*. But, which of these forms, if any, we choose to set over against your false doctrine that faith flows from election, or that some men are from eternity ordained unto faith and others not, it is for us and not for you or any opponent to determine. Therefore it is still my humble opinion that he of the opposition who assumes to dictate to us in this matter transcends the limits of common equity. And now, my dear K., let us turn our attention to more serious matters; I mean the threefold falsification of the affirmative, i. e., of your side of the question whereof you accuse me.

*First*: You say, „Und nun erheben wir unsrerseits gegen Herrn Prof. Schütte die Anklage, daß er unsere Affirmative—wir hoffen aus Unwissenheit—gefälscht und uns eine Lehre angebichtet hat, die wir je und je als eine gottlose verdammt haben.“\* Further on you proceed to show wherein this alleged perversion is to consist. You quote from my article the words: The Missourians teach that God has infallibly predestinated some people unto faith and passed by all others. Ask you why? The answer is that such is to us a marvel and a mystery. (We say that God has predestinated unto faith one man no more than another; that He is no respecter of persons; that He will, earnestly and equally will, have all men to believe in Christ and faith in Him receive everlasting life.) To us the marvel is that divine grace is so great and alike great over all. That it is alike great over all, the Missourians deny. (Then, that not all men apprehend the grace is to us the mystery.) This, you positively assert, is the falsification of which I have made myself guilty in the first place. Now, what do these words say when fully quoted (the words in parentheses you omitted) and properly considered? This: the Missourians teach that God infallibly predestinated some people unto faith, *and others not*, i. e. passed by all others in this act of predestination; and thereby deny

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\* And now we on our part prefer against Prof. Schuette the charge that he has falsified—we hope in ignorance—our affirmative, and that he has imputed to us a doctrine which we have over and over again condemned as godless.

that the grace of God is alike great over all. This is what I say. Now what do you make me say? This: The Missourians teach that God has infallibly predestinated some people unto faith and passed by all others, *that is, has for these no saving grace at all—* „mit seiner rettenden Gnade vorübergegangen sei,“ as you put it. Now, my dear friend, you must either show that the Missourians do not represent God as ordaining some people unto faith and others not, or you must plead guilty to a perversion of my language and to a misrepresentation of a friend. What is to be thought of the latter I leave you to learn from the May number of *Lehre und Wehre*, pp. 178 and 209–210. And will you be able to show that the Missourians do not teach a predestination unto faith of some and not of others? Let us see. In your own article you say: “*The eternal decree of God, therefore, in time to call us, just us and with us His entire Holy Church, and to enlighten us with His gifts, to sanctify and to preserve us in the true faith and finally to save and glorify us—that and nothing else is the eternal election of God,*” etc. What then is election, as you here teach it? An eternal decree of God; that is, an act of God’s will which shall and must inevitably be accomplished. And what shall and must be so accomplished? that just you and the Church be brought to something. And brought to what? in short to faith and thereby to glory. And what must you here understand by “us” and the “Church.” Certainly not you as a believer, not the Church as the body of believers, for then you would say that God resolved to bring believers to faith! No, you mean you and the Church as yet unbelievers and therefore in no way distinct from the mass of sinful mankind. Here then you yourself declare the eternal election of God to be a foreordination of *some* people unto faith and salvation; and if of some, then certainly not of all. Hence, by your own words I am fully justified in maintaining that the Missourians teach election as being an infallible ordination of some men unto faith and an act in which God passed by all others. Hence, your first charge of falsification is without foundation.

Here I might rest the case of your first accusation, were the matter in question not so all important. For this reason I can not as yet dismiss it. Du, lieber R., und die Missourier

sollen einmal recht Farbe bekennen, und zwar wie es sich für Männer schickt.\* Please tell me, if you have any anxiety to have the readers of *Lehre und Wehre* know the point at issue between us, why did you in your quotation omit the words that, according to our doctrine, God has predestinated unto faith one man no more than another; that He is no respecter of persons; that He will, *earnestly and equally will*, have all men to believe in Christ, etc.? If our doctrine is so evidently false and damnable as you seem to think, then here a good opportunity was offered you to say to your readers: "See, that is what our opponents teach over against us!" Verily, you seem to be afraid to let even your educated clergy know what we really believe and teach.

Again, my dear friend! Not until you subscribe the doctrine that God in and of Himself has ordained unto faith no one class of sinners in preference to another class equally sinful, can I believe you when you assert, though it be with great solemnity: "We condemn the doctrine that God's grace is not alike great over all!" The doctrine, the most precious of all doctrines, that God's grace is alike great over all men, stands in such obvious contradiction to the doctrine, that utterly false and comfortless doctrine, that God in and of Himself has predestinated some sinners in preference to others unto faith, that if you accept the former you must reject the latter. I say that the antecedent or universal grace of God is the *only* source of faith, and that *alike* for all men, for the elect no more than for the non-elect; if some do not derive faith from this its only source, the fault is their own, and they alone are the cause of their condemnation. When others do derive faith from that source, their faith is from beginning to end altogether God's gracious work and gift, and His is all the glory. So we believe, for so God teaches us. What say you? In answering, please to distinguish between the grace of God and the means of grace—sonst befürchte ich, daß ein einfältiger Christenmenschen keine Auseinandersetzungen nicht verstehen wird.†

*Secondly.* Another charge you prefer against me is based

\* You, my dear K. and the Missourians, I insist upon it, must show your true colors as it behooves men to do.

† Otherwise, I fear, a simple-minded Christian will not be able to comprehend your explanations.

upon the following words from my Article, which I will here give in full, you having omitted what I shall put in parentheses: "The Missourians teach, that when God from mere mercy and for Christ's sake selected from among men those who shall verily be saved, He had no need to inquire and He inquired not whether they had faith in Christ, because His purpose was *first to select* those who should be saved *and then*, that His purpose might be accomplished, He resolved to give them the needed faith. (We say that when God from mere mercy and for Christ's sake selected from among men those who shall verily be saved, He inquired who, by virtue of His universal grace, would apprehend Christ's merit; and that He decreed unto salvation those whom He thus foresaw in Christ by faith.") Mag. p. 101. ("With us, Christian faith is an indispensable *pre-requisite* to election, because Christ, its Treasure, is an indispensable *pre-requisite*.) With the Missourians faith is a requisite merely, and indispensable only to carry out the decree of election in time. (For, as we have seen, they teach that God predestinates unto faith, whereas we teach that God predestinates the believer unto salvation.) Not for the decree of election, but only for its execution, do they claim the necessity of faith; (and they are thus led to declare the decree itself to be the cause or source of faith.") Mag. p. 103.

In these words, you say, "Prof. S. commits the second falsification of our doctrine." Does he indeed? Let us see. What is the subject treated in the above quotation? The decree of election in so far as it is the act of God whereby He, in eternity, *selects* from among men those surely to be saved. Again, what do I say concerning the subject under discussion? This: the Missourians teach that God performed this selection without any inquiry as to whether men had faith or not, because God resolved to give faith unto all whom He might select. We teach that when God made the selection, He did inquire whether men believed or not, and according to His finding He selected the elect. And in what sense does faith here—*and in all this controversy*—come into consideration? Not so much as a means of salvation, but rather as a rule according to which God determined upon the particular number of persons to be saved. And now, how do you, my dear K., interpret (?) the

above quotation? Thus: „Mit diesen Sätzen begeht Prof. S. die zweite Fälschung unserer Lehre\* . . . We condemn the doctrine that God *first* elected some persons to eternal salvation and *then* took counsel concerning the manner how He would bring them unto salvation, and that therefore faith does not belong into the decree of election. Such is our immovable position, which the Missouri Synod, by the grace of God, has always occupied, and to this her publications bear witness again and again. Consequently it is plain and evident, that we rightfully say Prof. S. has falsified our affirmation.” Such is in toto, my good friend K.’s interpretation, accusation, substantiation, and condemnation. Now say, are you not ashamed of it? Again I must fear that you are getting mentally dull and morally weak! Come now, do you honestly think that we hold the Missourians to teach an election and salvation without faith; or that they teach an election prior to God’s general plan of salvation? If we so thought our fight full soon were ended. Ober glaubst du wirklich wir würden uns mit solchen groben Calvinisten und Fatalisten herumschlagen? Da irrst du dich sehr. But you may say: do not your words, “God first . . . and then” excuse me for charging you as I have done? Let us see: In *Lehre und Wehre*, June No., 1873, p. 168, we read: “It is quite different whether I say, God has elected *intuiti fidei*, or to say, faith is taken into consideration for the reason that without it no apprehension of salvation is possible. It was also remarked: a distinction is also to be made between the eternal action of God’s election itself, and the simultaneously predestinated order in which this election is to be consummated. God has in the first place”—note well, in the first place—“predestinated the salvation of the elect in Christ, and”—note well—“in the second place also (God has predestinated) that He would give to them (the elect) all that which worketh it (salvation) according to the order of salvation.” Now, then, when I say: not for the decree of election, but for its execution do the Missourians teach the necessity of faith, or rather the foresight of faith, I understand by this decree not the predestination of the order of, but of the persons unto, salvation; in other words, the eternal act of God whereby He singles out

\*With these words Prof. S. commits the second falsification of our doctrine.

from the mass of mankind those who shall surely be saved. And furthermore, I charge the Missourians with teaching that, although the persons so singled out are to be saved only by faith, yet, the act itself of singling them out was performed by God without reference whatever to the conduct of man—in short, they deny the doctrine of election in foresight of faith. Predestination excludes all reference to the conduct of man. Foreseen faith, the Missourians say further, is neither a condition nor a supposition precedent to the act of election. See *Lehre und Wehre*, 1880, Aug. No., p. 232.

All then that is said in the words, constituting the basis of your hasty and unfriendly charge against me, is briefly this: The Missourians teach that in the eternal election of God, faith came into consideration *only* as the ordinary means whereby the elect are to be saved; and this over against our position that, just because faith is the means, the indispensable and only means whereby men can apprehend salvation, this faith foreseen must also serve another purpose in the act of election, namely it must be and is *the norm* according to which God selects those to be saved from those not to be saved. This normative use of faith in election the Missourians reject as a false and dangerous doctrine. And you? you come and severely censure me for saying that they find no room in election for faith as a rule; for saying that they deny, that when God determined upon the exact number of persons and selected the persons to be saved, *He was not guided by the sweet Gospel He Himself has given*: He that believeth shall be saved! And how do you go about this your sorrowful business? First you pervert the correct meaning of my words, and then you say that it is evident Prof. S. has falsified our affirmative. But, unless you have very much changed for the worse since you have gone West, I know that you are sorry by this time for so abusing a friend and the good cause of truth, and I am ready to forgive. And thus, with mutual good feeling, let us proceed to

*Thirdly.* This, your third cry of falsification is the most inexcusable of all. You do not think it worth while even to try to show that you have the least ground for it—simply because you can not. I will here faithfully copy all I said on this point as far as it pertains to the Missourians. It was as



follows: "Our answer to Dr. Walther's third alternative, to wit: Can and should a believing Christian become and be certain of his election and therefore of his salvation, or can and should he not? must of necessity be hypothetic. If the question means absolutely certain, we say no; if conditionally certain, yes. Again, if it means perfectly certain, without respect to time and circumstances, we say no; if relatively, we say yes. . . . When now it is objected that a conditional or relative certainty is no certainty at all, we answer, so be it. But the more fallacious and dangerous must we then consider the affirmative, and the more faithfully will we then oppose it, and teach as did Luther, Bugenhagen, and Melancton," etc. Now, ask any fair-minded man whether I even engage to say for the Missourians what kind of a certainty they teach? also, whether in any way they are misrepresented by my words? But what do you say? "Alas, here again we must accuse our opponent of a falsification of our affirmative, though it may not be intentional. He smuggles into it (our affirmative), as though it were a matter of course, the little word absolute." "It may not be intentional!" how generous you are to me, a poor culprit. It is indeed difficult to say which is the greater marvel: whether the generosity of your heart or the acumen of your mind. But it would not be difficult here to show how meanly you treat a friend and how unfairly you present the position of your opponents to the readers of *Lehre und Wehre*. However, I forbear to do so; but simply advise you once more to read *Lehre und Wehre* of May, p. p. 178 and 209-210, in the hope that it will do you good.

Let us turn to another point. "Prof. S. again and again appeals to the Consensus Patrum in the doctrine of predestination." Do I though? Why, dear K., I simply say that we desire to teach and do teach as did the great teachers of our Church during the past centuries. And wherefore doeth that fact so exasperate thee, my friend? What are the books and papers of the Missouri Synod if not largely republications of the fathers' learning? Expunge from them the fathers' wisdom, and how much is left? And now, when I merely point you to them, an entire page, and more, of *Lehre und Wehre* is wasted to show the utter vanity of naming even their hon-

ored names. Surely men and manners do change and, alas, not always for the better! But you say the suspicion is nigh—(wie heißt doch das achte Gebot?\*)—that we of the opposition combine a synergistic sense with the seemingly synergistic forms of speech employed by the fathers. Accordingly we are under suspicion, and on suspicion we are the opponents, the adversaries, the enemies of Missouri. Indeed, my dear K., now I am really alarmed about your moral and mental condition. Therefore I pray you do no longer trouble yourself about us—not for a while at least. Instead, see to yourself and those of your friends who openly confess that they can not go with the fathers; we will yet awhile remain in their company, for we find it good to be there.

*Fourthly.* You present for my special instruction two definitions of predestination as taught in the Missouri Synod. Perhaps you are surprised to hear me say two definitions, whereas you no doubt think that you have presented but one, or, at most, two forms of one and the same thing. We will see. On page 181 (*L. u. W.* '81, May No.) you say: "What do we understand *eternal election* to be? Answer: *It is that eternal act of God in which He before the foundations of the earth were laid, already accomplished in His heart and thoughts all that which He in time has done, does, and will do for us, His Christians, for the Christian Church.*" Having so defined, you proceed to show what God does and what moves him so to do; and then you propound the question: "Where is the Lutheran who will dare to question this fundamental truth and attempt to establish a third cause of conversion?"—i. e. a third besides the two named, the mercy of God and the merit of Christ. To this I make bold to answer that such a Lutheran is to be found neither here nor elsewhere, unless it be in Missouri. As for me, no man can more sincerely and heartily endorse every word of your definition (as of predestination in the wider sense) as also every word of its explanation, than do I. At the same time no man can more emphatically object than do I, to the false meaning you attach to your precious words; and more sincerely deplore the abuse to which you yourself subject them. You continue: "*The eternal decree of God, therefore, in time to call us, just us and with us the entire holy Church,*

\* How readeth the Eighth Commandment?

and to enlighten us with His gifts, to sanctify and to preserve us in the true faith and finally to save and glorify us—that and nothing else is the eternal election of God, which, therefore, as its execution in time rests upon nothing but His own mercy and Christ's merit." Now here again is the abominable doctrine of the Missourians as shown on a preceding page; and you wish to palm it upon me as identical with the beautiful and comforting definition you gave on page 181. O, for shame! Tell me, my poor friend, whence does this decree of God come so suddenly—the DECREE namely to bring to faith and by faith to glory "us, JUST us," and therefore not all? Da sieht man plötzlich wieder den Missouriischen Hferbefuß vor sich und man weiß nicht wie, doch wohl woher er fommt, und wohin er gehört.\* Ah yes, we are told that this divine "election is that wonderful mystery which hovers over certain persons." (*L. u. W.* '80 May No. p. 147). We must not even as much as ask for scriptural light as to the mysery that there is such a divine decree whereby God is to have determined that you and you and you, and just you, shall and must believe. Da soll man die Hand auf den Mund legen und ein erdichtetes, schriftwidriges Geheimniß anbeten; und—aus dem "en" will durchaus kein "eis" werden—(See *L. u. W.* 1880, Aug. No. p. 234)—und doch bringt man's dazu weil man's will.† But, to come back to your own definition, you may want to point me to the Formula of Concord, and say: does not that teach the same thing? Let us see whether it does. It says "that God in His purpose and counsel has decreed. . . 3. That He by His Spirit, and through His Word, when preached, heard and pondered, would be („wölle"—"velle") efficacious and active in us, to turn the hearts to penitence and to preserve them in true faith." Mueller p. 708. You will notice that between the decree taught here and the one taught by you there is just a small formal, but at the same time a great material difference. The Formula teaches a decree according to which God determined the *willingness* to work faith in the manner named; whereas you teach a decree

\* Here again protrudes the cloven foot of the Missourians and we hardly know how it puts in so sudden an appearance; but we well know whence it is and whether it belongs.

† And here we are to keep mum and worship a fabricated and unscriptural mystery. And the "en" stubbornly refuses to become an "eis"; and after all it turns out to be an eis, because it shall whether or no.

according to which He is to have determined to give and preserve faith itself, and that without fail. Again, the former says "*in us*" and leaves room for all to come in, as it really does include all; but you say "*us, just us, and with us the entire holy Church,*" and thereby you necessarily exclude some. In short, you here again teach the predestinarian fallacy that God *ordained the few unto faith* and by faith unto salvation; whereas the doctrine of the Scriptures and of our Confession is that God *wills to work faith in the hearts of all men*; however, that such His gracious will is not irresistible; further, that in some and not in all the purpose of His will, to give and preserve faith, is accomplished; then, lastly, foreseeing those in whom His gracious purpose will be accomplished, He elects them unto salvation. Say what you will: your position is Calvinistic, and there is no legitimate room for it, neither in our theology nor in our Church. And here, please not to overlook the fact that "*It is the same*, whether we say, God has decreed by faith to save each and every person of the elect, or whether we say: God has predestinated each and every person of the elect unto faith and salvation." See *Lehre und Wehre* '80, Aug. No. p. 235. The former way of putting it, at first sight, seems rather unobjectionable; but, by your friend's concession, it means just what is said in the latter; and that again means, in plain words, that God has decreed without any reference to any thing more than His own will in Christ, that few, the elect, shall and must believe. Let me also, in a few words, point out to you the deceptive argumentation resorted to to show that the Scriptures likewise teach such a particular predestination unto faith. We are asked: "Does the Word of God teach that the elect shall and must be saved?" Of course, we all answer, yes. Again: "Does the Word of God teach that the elect shall be saved only by faith?" Of course, we all answer, yes.

"Why then," the questioner concludes, "God must also have ordained the elect unto faith, as we say." Indeed, an artful conclusion this is, but not necessarily as correct as it would seem; for is it not just possible that predestination unto salvation comes in between the already given faith and the salvation to be given? The possibility of this must be granted; and that granted, it must be conceded that the

above would-be sure conclusion is no longer what it first seemed to be. If then your above reasoning is to be conclusive, you must first prove from Holy Scriptures that the objects proper of the eternal election are not believers in Christ, but sinners as yet without Christ. Und das werdet Ihr ewig bleiben lassen.

Here also allow me, my dear K., briefly to show wherein really is to be found the unhappy point of difference which now so grievously troubles our dear Church. The question between us is

a) *Not*: what does move God from within to predestinate any one person to salvation? for here we both answer: Alone the unspeakable mercy of God moves Him so to do.

b) *Not*: what enables and induces God from without to predestinate any one person to salvation? for here both answer: Christ and Christ's merit alone enable and induce God so to do;

c) *Not*: what is the means on the part of man whereby he must apprehend the salvation of God? for here also both answer: faith in Christ is the one and only means whereby man can apprehend the salvation of God;

d) *Not*: whose work and gift is saving faith? for here we both answer: saving faith is altogether the work and gift of God.

e) *Not*: is saving faith in itself such a work and good that it merits the salvation promised it by a merciful God? for here we both answer: faith is not such a work and good which can in the least degree whatever merit salvation. But the question is

f) *Whom* did God, in His eternal election, ordain unto salvation: the unworthy sinner as yet in unbelief and therefore without Christ, or the unworthy sinner as already having faith and therefore, by that faith, as already in Christ? and then

g) *What guided God* in selecting one person to be ordained to salvation, and leaving another not to be so ordained—His mercy being alike great over all, Christ's merit being alike for all, and all men being alike in sin and condemnation?

To question f) the Missourians answer that God elected to salvation man as yet an unbeliever and therefore as yet

without Christ; over against this we answer that God elected man as already a believer, and therefore as already in Christ. According to them election is an ordination unto faith and salvation: whereas we say that election is an ordination not unto faith, but of the believer unto salvation.

To question g) the Missourians answer that they do not know whereby God may have been guided in the separation of the persons to be elected from those not to be elected; that such to them is a "wonderful," a "godly mystery." Over against this we make answer that God was guided by His own Gospel as to us revealed, to wit: "He that believeth shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned." And so have answered—excuse me for saying it, my dear K.—the great dogmaticians of our Church. Now, if you do not know, as you say, what may have been the rule according to which God elected some and not others; if all this is an inscrutable mystery to you, on what grounds will you deny the correctness and validity of the rule in question? Certainly, it is scriptural in itself and in its application. For, since *in time* faith is the only mark which, in the eye of God, distinguishes His children from the children of the world, why should it be wrong to believe and teach that, *in eternity also*, faith foreseen served as such a mark of distinction? You would make people believe that by so teaching the doors are opened unto synergism, Pelagianism, and the like. As to the former you have already put us on "suspicion"; for which you may answer before our common Judge. But, my dear friend, do yourself the favor and please apply to our doctrine the most searching and rigid rules of correct logic and see whether, by so doing, you can possibly land it in synergism. Do the same with the doctrine of election as you teach it, and see whether you can possibly escape predestinarianism in a most forbidding form. Your very doctrine that God ordains to faith some men and not all is already in itself a flat denial of the Gospel that God will, equally will, have all men to be saved. Please consider my propositions. Do not treat them as you did the questions propounded in my article. Neither they nor these are drawn up to catch you. I want a plain and full confession of your faith, so that, finding it correct, I may rejoice with you; finding it false, I may do all I can, little though it be, to correct you.

*In conclusion*, and after the manner of old times, let me tell you a story. I have dreamed a dream. There were arrayed before the vision of my mind two armies, what say I? no, an army to the left and a little band of men to the right. Ah, how unequal in number were the forces drawn up! The field of battle seemed familiar—it was near a well-known seat of learning. And O what a difference in the appearance of the men! They to the left, boastful, because of past conquests; bold, because of their great number; eager for battle; thirsty for blood. They of the little band to the right, modest, cool, brave, confident, while a sad yet sweet and holy peace spake from the eye of each. Indeed, my heart had failed me in view of the unequal strife, had I not just then bethought me of David's going forth in holy trust to slay the great Goliath, and how that the God of Israel gave victory to his hands. And how strangely unlike the weapons were with which these men were armed! The swords of the men to the left were curved, too long to be wieldy, it seemed to me; and from much hard usage they were dull, some even were broken; and, though many were of modern make, rust had corrupted all; yet beheld I that the letter "C" did mark them all; upon some this "C" of hidden meaning was tastefully engraved while to others it was fastened as if by force. Not so the swords of those with whom my heart would sympathize. Their weapons, though made in days now long gone by and crowned with many a victory, yet even bright from very use and keen of edge, while the letter "L" shone forth from each in lustre as of purest gold. Within me hope gave way to fear and fear gave way to hope, while waiting for the battle and its issue so fraught with weal or woe. So waiting in fear and hope for the opening of the strife a fearful sound from those upon the left awoke me, and I heard in a distance a voice as that of mighty thunder, saying: „Wir verdammen die Lehre unserer Gegner bis in den untersten Abgrund der Hölle!!“

My dear K., such was my dream. It too may do something toward bringing you back to me and to the old truth and faith, wherein are peace, joy, and glory.

So praying and so hoping, I remain, with most kindly greetings, your friend,

C. H. L. SCHUETTE.

## THE ST. LOUIS MONTHLY.

BY PROF. F. W. STELLHORN.

A new "Theological Monthly" has made its appearance, published at St. Louis, and edited pro tem. by Rev. Prof. C. H. R. Lange. Its avowed purpose is to combat the COLUMBUS THEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE, whose editor is charged with having betrayed the trust put in him as the defender of "the interests of our common faith within the bounds of the English Lutheran Church." Against this personal charge our friend may, and no doubt in due time will, defend himself. But another charge is made against him by the new "Monthly," and not only against him, "our adversary," as he is called, but also against all "his adherents." And as we have the best of reasons to take it for granted that this epithet, if it means anything, refers also to us, we will here say a few words concerning this second charge.

In truth, a nice set of men we must be, if what the "Monthly" says about us is really so. We are described as treading in the footsteps of the old General Synodists and of the Iowaans, that is, as giving way to the temptation "to disregard and finally abandon the Confessions of the Church of the Reformation." The General Synodists, our grandfathers, so to say, "half a century ago, formed a sort of Lazzaroni among the Christian denominations." The Iowaans, our immediate ancestors, "unfolded the principle," that "the doctrine of the Church depends on her agreement as exhibited by her teachers, and that those doctrines in her Confessions as to which her teachers are unanimous, must retain their binding force; those, however, in regard to which there is no unanimous consent of her teachers, are open questions." Of course, you cannot expect much good from the progeny of such men. Accordingly, we cannot at all be surprised to learn from the "Monthly," that our "directing principle" is "alike preposterous and dangerous." And, if we may trust the "Monthly," it is nothing but this: "The doctrine of the Church is exhibited in the teaching of her great teachers. The Confessions must be interpreted in the sense agreed on by her teachers subsequent to their establishment as rules of faith."



Now, who would have imagined this, my dear fellow-“adherent?” Who of us had known this before? Surely, if the “Monthly” had not found this out and told us, we would never have known our own “directing principle.” But, I hope, our new friend will not take it amiss, if we, curious and inquisitive people that we are, take the liberty to ask him how he found this out. As far as we know, nobody from our side ever told him. If we know anything about logic, he cannot have found it out by way of deduction from anything the “adversary” and “his adherents” ever have said. Nothing short of an extremely fertile imagination can possibly have been the means of this astounding invention. Or should, really, something else be its source? We would fain not believe it to be anything like an artful device or stratagem to gloss over and thus, at least to some degree, get rid of the undeniable fact, that all our great theologians, without a single exception, as far as we know, understand and interpret the Formula of Concord exactly as we do. Of course, it vexes and irritates the “Monthly” and its “adherents” that we are conscious and glad of this circumstance. But just think how they would feel and act, if the reverse were the case—if they could truthfully say that all our great theologians since the publication of the Formula of Concord were on their side! How would they rejoice, and make use of this circumstance against us! Surely, then we should hear a great deal of talking about the arrogance, and superciliousness, and self-sufficiency of such men as fancy themselves to know better how the Formula of Concord is to be understood and interpreted, than those pious and learned theologians of old who lived at the time of its publication, and themselves subscribed it, and valiantly and successfully defended it against all enemies, especially against the Calvinists! Nor do we at all deny that we are very glad of the fact that these eminent men of God are all of them decidedly on our side. And why should we not? But does that show and prove to any unprejudiced and fair-minded man that we understand and interpret the Formula of Concord as they do, *because they do so*? Or does it even prove that we have the “directing principle” that we *must* interpret it as they do, *because they do so*? Assuredly not!

And, furthermore, what shall we call it, when this new "Monthly" gravely and unblushingly avers: "The origin of the present trouble is peculiar. One man, nurtured and honored by the Missouri Synod, thinking he owed that body a grudge, as he himself explained, found an object suiting him." Whether there exists such an abominable person as this "one man" is described to be, we will not here investigate. The Divine Author of the eighth commandment, that for some persons does not seem to be in existence with regard to "adversaries," may at His proper time have something to say to this oft-repeated, but as yet never proven "atrocious charge." But we ask, In what relationship does that iniquitous person stand to the COLUMBUS THEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE? How did its editor and his "adherents" come to espouse his cause? Would they not have trodden the paths of the General Synodists and the Iowaans, if it had not been for this man with a grudge? What is the causal connexion between him and their "directing principle?" Does it not seem, as if this invention respecting the "origin" had a grudge-like smell about it?

But still another discovery is made by our enterprising young friend, the new "Monthly." Here is what he has found out about our interpretation of the Formula of Concord. This "is represented" (viz. by us unhappy men) "as exhibiting two predestinations at the same time, a predestination of all men, which they" (we) "call predestination in a wider sense, and a predestination of those only whose persevering faith God has foreseen, which they call predestination in the strict sense" (p. 16.) Now, will the "Monthly" please tell us, who ever has said or taught this, and where, and when? We really think it ought to know better. At Chicago already this was fully explained, as may be seen on page 42 of the published proceedings of the Conference held there, not to speak of the explanation of Baier, Hollaz, and other dogmaticians of our Church centuries ago. If the "Monthly" thinks it necessary and proper to complain of "misstatements, reckless deductions, and delusive declamations, with which our opponents make head against us," it ought at least be on its guard, not to commit the same sins in such a glaring manner. It ought to know what we believe and teach. For we do not teach anything that has not been taught in our Lutheran Church, to say the least, since the days of Hunnius, Hutter, Gerhard, etc. Not one essential statement can be pointed out that we have said or written concerning the doctrine of predestination that is not found, and in the very same sense, in the writings of our theologians,

since the controversy with Huber and the Calvinists with regard to the proper place of faith in election sprang up. We defy the "Monthly" and all our "adversaries" to show that what we here say is not so.

And so, we maintain, they ought to know exactly what we believe and teach, for they ought to know the doctrine of our great theologians, whether they approve it or not. That and none other is our doctrine. Or is it only by distorting our doctrine that they can hope at least externally to gain the victory?

But while we can justly say to them, You ought to know and must know what we teach, they cannot say the same to us, even if we should really have misunderstood them and their statements, which as yet has not been proven. For it has been shown and demonstrated that they have not in their divers publications always given essentially the same answer to exactly the same question. Quite a number of contradictions are found in their enunciations about the most vital points of the doctrine now being controverted. If the "Monthly" should wish it, we can and will give it a list of some of these contradictions. And we even know, and do not betray any confidence when we say, that the "Monthly" itself knows this to be the case. In the circle in which it has had its origin, and in which it moves and is fed and fostered, the confession is not so very seldom to be heard, that especially in the "Synodalbericht" of 1877 and 1879 there are real contradictions, that the first and the second tropus, as they call it, or in other words, their doctrine and ours, are mixed up and confounded there. We have, furthermore, seen at Chicago, and know it from other reliable sources, that they are not agreed among themselves in most essential points, e. g., what is the cause that most men have not been elected; whether it is foreseen pertinacious unbelief or not, how those eight points or decrees of God named by the Formula of Concord are to be looked upon, whether as an integral part of the definition of predestination in the sense in which the Formula of Concord takes it, or only as something that should also be mentioned when we speak about election, though it properly does not form a part of it. In public, indeed, they have hitherto managed to veil or gloss over these self-contradictions and dissension among themselves. But they are, nevertheless, in existence, and do not help others to see what the St. Louis men really believe and teach. This is a thing they ought not to forget.

That some public talking and writing concerning this question has been done among them that ought not to have been done, is also apparent by their retractions, scanty and unsatisfactory though they be. And how long did it take them to make some of these retractions or modifications, and to admit that things have been said by them that were liable

to be misunderstood even by Lutherans that are orthodox according to their own standard! Their attention had been called to these statements long ago, but they did not retract or modify and explain them, until some of their recent friends even could and would not bear them any longer. Then there came explanations and modifications. Why did they not appear sooner? Was lack of clearness or of humility and honesty the cause? Or what was it? And how can we be sure that the very same thing will not be repeated after some time, especially if the rumor be true that even their new friends are not satisfied with such retractions? Does it seem impossible in the light of the past, that a time may come when they will feel compelled to acknowledge that those very assertions that we are now accused of distorting ignorantly or wilfully are, alas, of such a nature, that even irreproachable Lutherans might misunderstand them? How, then, can they have the face to make such "atrocious charges," of ignorance or dishonesty against us, as now even the youngest and most untried among them are in the habit of making against men that have grown gray in the service of the Lord?

Yes, we really think, this ought to stop now. Let these men first become of one mind and of one speech among themselves, before they get up to find fault with men like Hunnius, Hutter, Gerhard, and a host of other eminent theologians of our Church, yea, the whole Lutheran Church, in regard to the correct understanding and interpretation of the Formula of Concord. Then, let them plainly and consistently say what they think they must say. That is the only way possible to come to an understanding and agreement. But let us have no more of those self-righteous "atrocious charges" against men who honestly and conscientiously cannot as yet find and believe, that the right understanding and interpretation of the Formula of Concord in regard to the doctrine of predestination, has never been found in our Church, as far as can be shown, until the latter decades of the nineteenth century, when the new light has suddenly risen in St. Louis; who cannot as yet find and believe that in the most essential and momentous point of the doctrine of predestination, viz., the answer given to the question, Is election *antecedently* particular, or not?—that in regard to this point the Calvinists were right, and our fathers were wrong; who, in short, cannot find and believe that essentially and specifically Calvinistic theories and statements are the true Lutheran doctrine. If we really do not understand the St. Louis men and their statements this is, according to what we have shown above, at least a pardonable offence, and ought by them to be treated as such. Give us in that very improbable case half the time it has taken them to get, at least publicly, where they are now, and we shall probably understand them.

T H E

# COLUMBUS THEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE

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Vol. I.

AUGUST, 1881.

No. 4.

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## MISSOURI ELECTION SUBVERSIVE OF THE UNI- VERSALITY OF GRACE.

Against the doctrine of predestination which the Missouri Synod has recently been promulgating it was urged from the start, that it conflicts with the biblical doctrine of the universality of God's grace in Christ. That, as the matter presents itself to the human mind, there is an irreconcilable opposition between the two doctrines, it is not denied by Missourians. But when we urge that the one overthrows the other, that the special election determining, aside from the question whether a person has faith or not, who shall be saved, renders practically nugatory the doctrine of grace and salvation for all men through faith in Christ, they deny the allegation. Some fling the charge of rationalism and synergism against us, and ring the changes upon the railing accusation with a persistency that, considering what ground there is for the charge, must to many seem amusing. Some men would appear to be laboring under the delusion that unless one is willing to be irrational he must be a rationalist, and that unless one is ready to accept fatalism he must be a synergist. As far as we are concerned, we are not in the least disturbed by such accusations, and never did a controversialist shoot wider of the mark than did the St. Louis champion who imagined that we Columbus men are too "mad" to think. It is true, we are not willing to parry every thrust that is made at us, but prefer, when it is wild and wide of the mark, to smile at its swaggering im-

potency.\* But the subject in dispute is one that is of great significance, and a difference exists which it is worthy of any Christian's earnest effort to remove. Past. Huegli wrestles with it in manly wise; and as we are constrained still to adhere to the conviction, expressed in the first number of this *MAGAZINE*, that the Missouri doctrine undermines and renders nugatory the plan of salvation for all men in Christ, we shall calmly consider the argument, as given in the July number of *Lehre und Wehre*, by which he endeavors to disprove our charge.

Past. Huegli has the Christian candor to admit the main points which have given rise to our controversy, so that the question, as between us, is rendered less complicate. He correctly gives our position when he says that we maintain: "If God chose a definite number from the lost race of mankind and ordained them to salvation, so that they are brought

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\* Even Dr. Walther, whom we shall continue to honor though he unjustly smite us again and again, does himself the wrong to attempt striking Brobdignagian blows with Lilliputian clubs. Past. Huegli quoted from his lectures to show that the Missouri doctrine of election is not a "new departure." We quoted from his dictation at even a later period to show that then the new doctrine was not yet taught. This, in a way not very complimentary to Past. Huegli, whose proofs we simply rebutted by proofs from the same source, he calls "Klatsch-Polemik." He does not deny that he did teach what was given in the text from his dictation, but quotes the Latin, given in a foot note, of a sentence that not only had several typographical errors—though in *Lehre und Wehre* there is one which was not in the *MAGAZINE*—but which somehow had got badly tangled, having two superfluous words, repeated at places and put in forms which render it impossible, as Prof. W. correctly says, "for any man to construe it." We have reason to be ashamed of the bungling work. But the fact that we had given a translation might have shown that the sentence as contained in the dictation was capable of being construed even by one who makes no great pretensions to Latin scholarship, and that the former student whose copy we used, and who still honors his former teacher, is not necessarily an "Esel." He is in fact one of whom, in Latinity as in other respects, Dr. Walther need not be ashamed. After dealing out his compliments to two former students, both of them estimable men, as we think, representing the one as a gossip, the other as a, let us say mule, he shows his horror of the babbling business by retailing some real gossip, for which it is not even pretended that any dictation from the person referred to, whoever that may be, could be adduced in evidence. Truly, the lion "roars small."

to faith, preserved in faith, and finally saved, and if it is maintained that only these persons are saved and none else, it follows that God cannot have an earnest will to save the others, whom He has not elected, and that the doctrine of a universal plan of salvation and of a divine will that all should be saved and none should be lost, is a mere pretense, as no one can be saved but the elect, and for those who are not elect there is no possibility of salvation." He quotes our words, as given in No. III. of this MAGAZINE: "If it be held that God has antecedently elected but a select portion of our race that they might become believers and brought to salvation, and that these must be saved while no others can be, the revealed plan of salvation is rendered nugatory. What use can there be in teaching that grace is offered to the others also, and even fully sufficient grace to effect their salvation, when it is taught at the same time that there is a secret divine decree which limits its operation to the elect, and thus renders the salvation of these others impossible?" It indicates the honesty of his purpose when he says, in reference to this, that the argument is reasonable, and that "reason cannot, according to its own principles, judge otherwise." The matter is obvious. If God has determined that a certain portion of sinful mankind shall be saved, and He saves only that portion, leading only them to faith and perseverance in it, there is no help and hope for the rest. They cannot save themselves, and as God has not embraced them in the number whom He will endow with faith unto salvation, they can not by any possibility be saved. Past. Huegli does well in admitting the conclusiveness of the argument before the forum of human reason.

But this does not convince him that we are right and he is wrong. The reason of this will be found in a twofold error into which he has fallen.

In the first place he misapprehends the matter, and therefore shifts the question when he says: "If the ground of any man's salvation lies *alone* in God, it follows that when a man is not saved it must be because God had *not the will* to save him, did not wish him to have salvation. If a hundred hungry beggars are found in the courtyard of a wealthy gentleman, and the ground for the preservation of their lives lies

solely and *alone* in the conduct of the rich man, it must follow that should the most of the poor fellows perish, the rich man had not the will to save them." The example given shows where the error lies. To say nothing of the point in which the illustration halts, as all illustrations of heavenly things by earthly must, the rich man may, supposing his ability sufficient, have found such resistance as would render all his mercy unavailing. And that precisely is the case in the matter intended to be exemplified. The lack of will is not at all the difficulty. The Scriptures make this plain when they set forth our Lord's words: "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and *ye would not.*" Matt. 23, 37. And our good Scriptural confession does the same when it says: "That many are called but few chosen does not mean that God would not save every man, but the reason is that either *they will not* hear God's Word at all, but wantonly despise it, harden their ears and heart, and thus block up the ordinary avenues of the Holy Spirit, so that He *can not* perform His work in them, or, when they have heard it, again renounce it and give no heed to it, the fault of which is not God or His election, but their own malice." Form. Conc. Epit. IX. § 12. That explains why not all are helped and saved. It is not at all because God *would not* help the others, but because by their own conduct they wantonly blocked up the way so that He *could not*. If that, in the eyes of Missourians, is synergism, they may make the most of it. We shall adhere to it, however they may rave and rage. From the fact that God alone saves it does not at all follow that God does not want to save them who are not saved; because there is this other alternative, that the Lord of hosts says: "I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard, and I have called unto them, but they have not answered." Jer. 35. 17. "*Ye will not* come to me, that ye might have life." John 5, 40. Past. Huegli is entirely mistaken when he supposes the contradiction which lies in the Missouri theory to lie in the Scripture doctrine, that salvation is of God alone, and yet that God wants all men to be saved without actually effecting the salvation of all.

The contradiction lies between the divine declaration, on



the one hand, that God would have all men to be saved, and the mere human invention of Missouri, on the other, that God would, for some unaccountable reason, have only a few select persons, called the elect, to be saved, who are therefore alone brought to faith and preserved in it unto eternal life, though they are no better than other folks. What Missouri really means is illustrated by an example given at a Conference by one of its prominent ministers. He said that if numerous beggars presented themselves before a rich man, he would help as many as he pleased, and no one could complain of injustice, since he owed none of them anything. Has not God power to do what He will with His own? Does not the Holy Spirit say that "He will have mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth?" making this mean that He has mercy on some and hardens others, merely because it is His right and pleasure to have mercy on some and not on others.

In this spirit it was said in *Lehre und Wehre*, 1871, p. 172: "Reason can not reconcile these two things: God says on the one hand that He is good to all and earnestly desires the salvation of all men; on the other hand He vindicates for Himself the full, unabridged right to have mercy on whom He will, and to harden whom He will. And experience proves too that from many millions of men He does not remove the resistance to His Word, though He could remove it in them as easily as in the elect, since all by nature lie in the same depths of depravity, and the latter are no better than the former. When we thus contemplate God He is indeed a hidden God and quite incomprehensible." In further elucidation of this a number of extracts are presented from the book *de servo arbitrio*, of which we give a few specimens: "Hence you perceive how deeply wickedness lies imbedded in the heart. That God saves sinners without merit and graciously accepts those who merited other treatment, does not lead reason to say that God is unrighteous; on this account it does not contend and murmur against God, though it is entirely unjust when measured by reason. But why does it not complain here? Ah, it is sweet and suits reason, hence it is all right and good. But when God condemns those who have not deserved it, or ordains some to

damnation before they are born, reason, because the thing is bitter and distasteful and does not suit it, complains that it is unjust, quarrels and murmurs and blasphemes." "According to the judgment of man God goes too far on both sides and is an unjust God, but in Himself He is just and true. For how it can be right that He saves sinners and those who have not merited it, is now incomprehensible; but we shall see it when we shall get where faith ceases and we see face to face. So too how it can be right that He condemns those who have not merited it, is also now incomprehensible; but we believe it, until the Son of man shall be revealed from heaven." P. 174. It was manifestly thoughts like these which led to the statement of the Northern District Synod of Missouri in 1868 that "the pure doctrine of predestination is such that reason is shocked at it, and cannot judge otherwise than that God is a terrible tyrant."

Such statements do indicate an underlying contradiction in the assumed theory of predestination, but one which all attempts to saddle upon our Lutheran Church must prove in vain. It assumes that God's will is to save all men, and yet that His will is to save only some men, i. e. those whom He from eternity resolved to single out and save as His elect. The contradiction is thus absolute; God is made to will the salvation of all, and yet represented as saving only a few, while He could, if He would, save all. Our Church has rejected the whole contradictory theory thus set out, and has expressly declared, with reference to the very point under consideration, that the reason why there are but few chosen from among the many who are earnestly called to salvation, is that the many block up the ordinary avenues of the Holy Spirit, thus rendering it impossible for Him to accomplish the work which He would, if He could, equally perform in all.

Accordingly our great systematic theologians knew nothing of such a contradiction in the doctrine of predestination, but set it forth in perfect harmony with the Bible doctrine of the universality of grace and of the redemption in Christ. With one accord they teach what Gerhard thus expresses: "Thus it is established that the merit of Christ is the cause of our election. But as the merit of Christ profits no one without faith, we say that the consideration of faith is also

included in the decree of election. With full voice we declare our conviction, that God found nothing good in the persons to be elected to eternal life, and that He did not have regard to good works, nor to the use of free will, nor even to faith itself in such sense that He was moved by these to elect, or on account of these elected certain persons. But we say that it was only and solely the merit of Christ whose worthiness God regarded, and that out of mere grace He formed the decree of election. But because the merit of Christ is not in man's possession except by faith, we teach that election took place in view of the merit of Christ apprehended by faith. Hence we say that all those and only those are by God from eternity elected to salvation of whom He foresaw that by the efficacy of the Holy Spirit, through the ministry of the Gospel, they would truly believe in Christ the Redeemer and remain steadfast in faith until the end." Loc. Theol. VIII. § 161. This is in full accord with the doctrine confessed in the Formula of Concord, which declares: "Thus far a Christian should occupy himself about the article of God's eternal election, as it is revealed in the Word of God, which places before us Christ as the book of life, which is opened to us and declared in the preaching of the holy gospel, as it is written, 'Whom He did predestinate, them He also called;' in whom we are to seek the eternal election of the Father, who in His eternal, divine counsel has decreed, that aside from those who know His Son and truly believe in Him He will save no one." Epit. Art. XI. § 13.

We have here not the contradiction which Missourians endeavor to palm off as Lutheran doctrine, but a statement of the article on predestination with which the doctrine which they advocate is itself in irreconcilable contradiction. Their rejection of the uniform doctrine of our dogmaticians, that election is in view of faith, which removes the contradiction between the universality of grace and the particularity of election, places them in opposition to the whole historical current of the Lutheran Church. It is vain for Missourians to raise the hue and cry of synergism against those who defend the "intuitu fidei" doctrine, as their condemnation involves all the great Lutheran theologians from Aegidius Hunnius onward. After Missouri has done so much to bring

these sterling writers again to the knowledge of the Church, it has reason to "hasten slowly" in bringing them into disrepute as teaching fundamental error in regard to the way of salvation.\*

Missouri writers endeavor, indeed, to make the impression that our doctrine is different from that of our old theologians, but they have never shown wherein that difference consists. Even in regard to the "conduct" of men as bearing on the question of predestination, they are not in harmony, but in open conflict with the old theologians. For example, about twenty years after the publication of the Formula of Concord a confession of faith was published on the doctrine of predestination, signed by the ministerium of Dresden, the ministerium and theological faculty at Leipzig, the ministerium and professors of theology at Wittenberg, and others, among them the most eminent Lutheran theologians of the times, including Polycarp Leiser, Matthias Hoe, Paul Laurentius, Balthaser Meisner, Cornelius Becker, George Mylius, Solomon Gesner, Leonard Hutter, and numerous others, in which they say: "Over and above all this we believe, teach, and confess, that Almighty God knew perfectly and foresaw from eternity that not all men would pursue and avail themselves of this His order unto salvation, but that the greater part would wantonly despise such order and continue in their blindness unto the end; that therefore, also, Almighty God from eternity determined in respect to both parts what rela-

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\* Gradually, it seems, this is to be done. In the July issue of *Lehre und Wehre* it is said of our old writers: "By their unhappy development of the doctrine of predestination they have robbed it of its sweetest and strongest consolation, of course without desiring it. For what comfort can a poor sinner who is troubled and terrified by the devil, the world, and his wicked flesh, find in the doctrine that God elected after foreseeing that a person would remain steadfast in faith until his latest breath? That is exactly the troublous question, whether he would remain steadfast in faith until the end. The old Adam may find it very flattering to hear that God elected after He had seen that men would be faithful unto death; the new man finds not a drop of comfort in it." P. 351. We do not wonder at all that our Missouri friends regard us as simple noddies, but do they really imagine that our giant theologians were men who needed the tuition of the "thoroughly theologically educated faculties" of our day and land to enable them to read the Bible and find Christ in it with His comfort and peace?

tion He would sustain to them. We reject the opposite doctrine, when it is taught either that the Lord God from eternity knew nothing of man's conduct in reference to His sacred order instituted for their salvation, or that, though He foresaw that some would avail themselves of this order, while others, and that the greater part, would despise it, He had no regard to this and determined nothing with respect to it. Both views we consider unchristian and heathenish.\* This is in exact accord with the declaration of the Formula of Concord, that as God has decreed "that He would justify and save all those who by true faith receive Christ, so He has in the same counsel resolved that He would harden, reject and condemn those who, when they are called by the Word, put it from them and persistently resist the Holy Spirit who would be efficacious and operate in them; and thus many are called, but few are chosen." Muell. p. 713, § 40.

By rejecting the consideration of faith as an element in election and making the merit of Christ its cause, without any reference to the question whether that merit is appropriated by faith or rejected by unbelief, the Missourians have placed themselves in antagonism to the whole conception of the subject as set forth by our Church. They say that when our Confession declares the grounds of election to be the mercy of God and the merits of Christ, and denies that there is any ground of election in us, the meaning is that God elects whom He pleases, without regard to faith or unbelief, making believers of the chosen ones because He has resolved to save these particular persons. Our Confession says: "Whenever mercy is spoken of it is to be understood as requiring faith, and this faith it is that makes the difference between those who are saved and those who are damned, be-

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\* Wir verwerfen die Gegenlehre, wo fuergegeben wuerde, dasz Gott der Herr von Ewigkeit her entweder nicht darum gewisst, wie sich die Menschenkinder gegen seine heilige und ihnen selbst zur Seligkeit gemachte Ordnung verhalten wuerden, oder, da ers zuvor gesehen, dasz etliche sich dieser Ordnung gebrauchen, etliche und die meisten sie verachten wuerden, dasz er sich dessen nichts angenommen und dessenhalt nichts beschlossen habe. Beide Stueck halten wir fuer unchristlich und heidnisch." Bericht D. Pol. Leisers, p. 81. 82. See also Luther Erl. 2, 86. Consider, too, the common distinction between the antecedent and the consequent will of God.

tween the worthy and the unworthy. For eternal life is promised to none but the reconciled in Christ. But faith reconciles us and makes us just before God, when and at what time we by faith apprehend the promise. And through our whole life we should pray God and give diligence that we may obtain faith and increase in it." Muell. 144. That which makes the difference between the saved and the lost is, according to Missouri doctrine, the election of the former to eternal life, which is the cause of their salvation and, of course, of theirs only. That which makes the difference, according to our Confession, is the faith through which we appropriate the righteousness of Christ and are thus justified and saved—justified and saved by faith. Missouri brings about a contradiction by teaching what the Scriptures and the Church do not teach, representing God as desiring and providing for the salvation of only the elect, and yet representing Him as desiring and providing for the salvation of all men. The Scriptures and the Church teach that God has earnestly willed the salvation of all men, and amply provided for the execution of this will in regard to all; that election occupies its place in the general plan, not limiting this to a favored few and thus rendering it nugatory in its universality, but separating believers and decreeing their sonship and salvation; and that it is not owing to God's election that few are saved while salvation is offered to all, but to the conduct of men who wantonly reject the Savior by their unbelief.

Past. Huegli presents three reasons why he cannot regard the Missouri doctrine of election as rendering nugatory the doctrine of the universality of divine grace. Let us candidly examine them.

His first reason is that the Scriptures, while they clearly teach a particular election, also clearly teach a universal plan of salvation. The trouble to prove that there is mercy and help for all he might have spared himself, as that is exactly what is urged against his doctrine of election. That doctrine is that God selects some persons from the lost multitude in order to bring them to faith and salvation. Missouri sets up a doctrine in diametrical opposition to another doctrine recognized as Scriptural. But they argue that when God reveals two

things which conflict with each other, the one cannot nullify the other, because God means them both and therefore both must stand, whatever the human mind may judge as to their consistency. The abstract principle thus laid down is admitted. If God's Word, for example, should teach us that two and two are four, but also that two and two are five, we might let the two propositions stand as reconcilable in the divine mind, though they are absolutely irreconcilable to minds constituted like ours. Practically the one destroys the other. We could be governed only by the one or by the other, not by both. Under such circumstances no intelligent Christian would be likely to charge us with rationalism, if we, seeking and finding a way by which the second could be explained in consistency with the first, adopted that explanation. The case is an extreme one, but it makes plain the point in controversy. We have no difficulty at all in conceiving that to the infinite mind of God many things are perfectly plain which to us are utterly incomprehensible. But that is not the point in question. The revelation given in Holy Scripture is designed for men, and therefore for just such minds as men have. They cannot utilize a doctrine in regard to which there are contradictory statements. They may recognize as amply sufficient the authority upon which the statements are made, but they can make nothing of them as contradictories, and therefore true reverence for the authority will either prompt them to seek some clue which may lead at least so far toward a reconciliation as to enable them to make practical account of the revelation, or induce them to confess that on the subject in question they know nothing and can teach nothing.

But Past. Huegli says that, after all, there is no real contradiction in the Missouri doctrine of election. What he means, as we understand his words, is that in the mind of God there is no contradiction, though to our finite minds there is.\* He says: "The case is the same as that of other

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\* That a contradiction is meant which not even the enlightenment of the Holy Ghost removes, is clear from the statement that it will be cleared up only in heaven. The same is said in *Lehre und Wehre* of 1880, p. 308: "We cannot possibly with our reason mediate between the two scriptural doctrines of a particular election and of universal grace, and bring them into harmony. Not even the light of grace can reconcile the conflict; only by the light of glory can this be done." But is not this

passages of Scripture which seem to contradict each other. Take as an example the doctrine of the body of Christ. The Scriptures say that Christ has a true human body. According to the laws of reason a true body can at one and the same time be only in one place. And yet the same Scriptures which tell us that Christ has a true human body tell us also that Christ's body is present in the Holy Supper and in many places at the same time. . . . Here we judge thus. When the Holy Scriptures reveal to us two doctrines which seem to contradict each other we receive both, because we know that in reality there are no contradictions in God's Word. And this we shall in due time comprehend in heaven, where everything will be clear to us. We shall see that what seemed to us contradictory in God's Word was no contradiction. . . . So it is also with the doctrine of election and the doctrine of God's universal grace. Both are contained in the Scriptures. We believe both doctrines, the one as firmly as the other." P. 317.

Let us look at this matter. In the first place, when reason objects to our Lord's words, "This is my body," on its principles pronouncing it impossible that His body should be in different places at the same time, it intrudes where it has no call and presumes to judge where it understands nothing. But do the Scriptures make statements on this subject which to finite minds on earth are necessarily contradictory? They do tell us that Christ has a true human body, and that His body is present in the Lord's Supper, which implies that it is present in different places at the same time. But nowhere do the Scriptures say that *Christ's* true human body can be present only at one place at one and the same time, placing this in contradiction to another statement, that His body can be present at different places at one and the same time. We feel quite sure that of the two contradictories Past. Huegli does not "believe both doctrines, the one as firmly as the

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opinion, that what is to us on earth not merely an unexplained mystery, to understand which requires more knowledge than we possess here below, but an irreconcilable contradiction, itself merely the result of an a priori operation of that very reason against which it is meant to be directed? Where is it written that the laws of thought will be different in heaven?



other." The former is merely a presumptuous error of reason, into which it falls because it will not give heed to what the Scriptures do teach about Christ's body. The example of Past. Huegeli's own choosing should make plain to him his mistake on the subject. Instead of explaining the passages of Scripture which treat of election, in harmony with the many plain passages which treat of the universality of grace and of the redemption in Christ Jesus, as our theologians have done, just as they explained the texts treating of Christ's body and of Christ's bodily presence in the Eucharist in harmony with each other, the Missourians place two classes of passages in irreconcilable contradiction, and that, as is abundantly shown by our standard writers, without any necessity.

Furthermore, it is but small comfort to refer, in such a case, to the light of heaven to reconcile the contradiction which so greatly concerns us here. For the special plan of election, as Missouri teaches it, standing in conflict with the universal plan of salvation in Christ, makes the whole subject dubious. It is easy to say that, when two doctrines are recognized as contradictory to our minds, we believe them both, the one as firmly as the other. But when it comes to the application, one or the other, from the very nature of the human mind, gives way. We cannot make practical account of both. If the Scriptures teach a doctrine of predestination, according to which our reason cannot otherwise than regard God as a terrible tyrant, and at the same time teach a doctrine which represents Him as a God of love, one or the other, not both, will take hold of the soul, and as both are represented as having divine authority, it will depend very much on human circumstances which will become effectual. If it be taught that God equally loves all, redeemed all, desires to save all, but at the same time that He has selected a few whom His mercy desires to save, whom He has resolved to save, and who alone can therefore become believers and be saved, both can not become a power of God in the soul. The contradiction, supposing it were taught in the Scriptures, might be reconciled by an infinite mind and might appear reconcilable to our minds in a state of glory, but where we are now, down here, where we need all the light and comfort which the Gospel affords, that will avail us nothing. If we

believe that God wants to save us all and has made ample provision for the salvation of us all, believing the word and promises which concern us because they concern us all, happy are we! Who is he that shall then condemn us, seeing that we have a mighty Savior, who is able to save unto the uttermost, and whose salvation extends to all, and therefore can by no possibility exclude us, chief of sinners though we be! But if we believe that God has selected only a few from our condemned race, that on these few He will have mercy, that of these He makes believers that they may be saved, and that these few He preserves unto eternal life, He who alone can preserve them—that He has elected, without any reference to faith or unbelief, a few unto salvation, and that these, and no others, shall and must be saved,—how shall we know whether we are among those favored few, especially when we see ourselves to be the unworthiest of all?\* Are we not called, Missourians may say, and

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\* There is, in our estimation, a great deal of thoughtless talk or rationalistic reading into Scripture of mere human inference and fancy on the subject of ascribing all to divine grace and nothing to human merit. The insinuation that opponents of Missouri are more concerned to rescue some honor for man than to maintain the Gospel of grace unto salvation for all men, is unworthy of notice. As far as that is concerned, we can pity persons in their weakness, while we scorn their presumptuous judgments. But when men talk about us as if—when we refuse to accept a doctrine which seems to us consistently to run into Calvinism with all its horrors of fatalism, and to make God, at least negatively, responsible for the damnation of the great majority of men, as He might save them, if He only would, thus representing Him as a “terrible tyrant,” saving or damning as He pleases—our object were to detract from the glory of God’s grace by claiming some merit or worthiness in man, we cannot but direct attention to the weakness of human beings, which, though the doctrine they embrace ostensibly gives all the glory to God, yet leads them to feel not a little elated that God singled them out to be saved. They may easily be led to confess that they are no better than the rest, and yet have much complacency in view of the fact that God, for some reason or other, preferred them to the rest of mankind. They are XXX men, anyhow, though they claim no merit. Whether it does not tend more to meekness and humility to believe one’s self elected in view of Christ in us apprehended by faith, in which the grace of God and the work of Christ really receives all the glory, let men of experience judge. It is a point that is not capable of being urged in the way of argument, but we call attention to it when so much wild assertion is made to disparage men who know in whom they believe.

can we not know from the fact of our call that God means to save us? According to the doctrine of the Scriptures and of the Church we can, but not by your doctrine, we must reply. "Many are called, but few are chosen." How then could the fact that we are called be a sure evidence that we are among those whom God designs to save? If we accept the doctrine that God would save all, and that whosoever believeth shall be saved, then we can be sure that the call comes to us as an infallible indication of the divine will to give us eternal salvation. But if we hold that God designs to save only a few persons, and that many are called who are not among these favored few, how is it possible for us to be assured that we are among the few? But we believe, they reply, and that makes us sure. It does, according to the doctrine of the Scriptures and the Church, but not according to the doctrine of Missouri. Believers have the promise of eternal life. If election is in view of faith, then there is nothing to disturb their peace, because election is subordinated to the universal plan of salvation, and there is nothing to cast doubt upon its application to every believing soul. But if election takes place without reference to faith, and is a particular divine decree determining who shall believe and be saved, as Missourians teach, then the possession of faith can give as little assurance to the troubled soul as the fact of the redemption, because as there are many redeemed who are not saved, so there are many who for a time believe, though they are not among the favored ones whom God resolved to save. The Calvinists evade the difficulty by teaching that no believer ever falls from faith, as they explain the difficulty in man's conversion by teaching that to those whom God determines to save He comes with an irresistible grace. But for such a solution Missouri is not prepared. It adopts Calvinistic premises, but shrinks from Calvinistic consequences. Therefore its theory is not only in conflict with the universality of grace, which is also boldly rejected by the Calvinists, but carries its contradictions from point to point. So Missourians admit that they cannot overcome the difficulty which the Scripture doctrine that there are some who are merely temporary believers places in their way.\* They must

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\* Missourians pursue a plan that is novel in defending their new

admit that such persons are, according to their theory, not elect. Their thoughts, as we gather, run somewhat thus: A man can know himself, by the fact that he believes—seeing that men are elected unto faith—to be one of the select few whom God has elected, but he can also know himself not to be one of those who merely believe for a time, because he is one of the elect. It does not require much acumen to see the lack of all ground and therefore of all real comfort in Missouri's position.

Supposing, however, that the two doctrines—the one setting forth the antecedent divine will to save all men, which the Scriptures really teach, and the other alleging an antecedent divine will to save only a favored few, which the Scriptures do not teach—were entertained, as Past. Huegli claims to believe both with the same firmness, what practical account could be made of the contradiction? Which of the two contradictory statements contains the truth which is to be practically applied and according to which the experience of the individual is to be regulated? If one would comfort himself with the blissful assurance given in the Word of God that His grace is over us all and that His dear Son died for us all, so that there can be no doubt that he is embraced in the Father's mercy and the Son's merit and the Holy Spirit's work, here comes the other Missourian doctrine, that God has resolved, after all to save only a few, and that, "as surely as God is God these shall be saved, and no others," to prove his comfort vain. For how can he appropriate the consolation of the Gospel when he believes that God has meant its salvation only for a few, and that even some believers are among those for whom it is not meant? Turn it as we will, the Missourian special plan of election renders the divine universal plan of salvation practically nugatory. Even the poor comfort

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theory. When they cannot answer an argument they refer us to the light of glory for a satisfactory reply, and meantime broadly hint that we are rationalists for troubling them. By the same method Pelagians, on the basis of James 2, might argue that we are justified by our own merit through works, as well as by Christ's merits through faith, leaving it to the future world to reconcile the contradiction. By this plan they could escape every argument used against them by orthodox Christians at least as effectually as the Missourians evade the arguments of our theologians against their predestination theory. It is an easy method for any sect to remain undisturbed by argument.

which Calvinism, in its consistency, ministers to its votaries is spilled by Missouri, as it refuses to recognize even in the existence of faith an infallible mark of belonging to the favored ones whom God purposes to save, while Calvinists at least hold that a believer, as he has been irresistibly brought to faith, will also irresistibly be preserved in it and necessarily saved.

Such contradictory teaching is condemned, both in the principle and its application in the case before us, by our Formula of Concord when it says: "That many are called and few are chosen (Matt. 20, 16), is not owing to the character of the divine vocation which takes place through the Word, as if the meaning of God were, 'Externally, through the Word, I indeed call all of you, to whom I give my Word, into my kingdom, but in my heart I do not intend it for all, but for a few only; for it is my will that the greater part of those whom I call through the Word should not be enlightened and converted, but remain damned, although I have declared myself otherwise to them through the Word by which they are called.' In this manner it would be taught that God, who is the eternal truth, contradicts Himself, while at the same time God punishes such insincerity even in man, when a person declares one thing and means and intends another in his heart. Ps. 5, 9. and 12, 23." Sol. Decl. XI. § 34. 35. The Calvinists endeavor, by false interpretations of Scripture, to make it appear that God has resolved to save only a small portion of mankind, consigning the rest to their just doom, and that when others than the elect are called, the vocation is not seriously intended, because the purpose of God is to save only these elect. Our Confession answers that this can not be true, because it would involve God in a contradiction with Himself. That is regarded as decisive, and justly so. The Missourians say that God has indeed the will to save all mankind, but that He has, notwithstanding, resolved to save only a certain elect portion of mankind, endeavoring to render the latter plausible by misinterpreting certain passages of Scripture and attempting to overthrow the customary exegesis of Lutheran theologians. We reply, with our Confession, that their election theory can not be true, because it

would involve God in a contradiction with Himself, making Him say that He has the will to save all men, and yet that He has the will to save only some men. They admit that it is a contradiction which human reason cannot reconcile, but make reply that in the light of glory it will appear otherwise. Do they not see that Calvinists by the same subterfuge could evade the argument of our Confession? They, too, could say, and with the same justice, that to represent God as calling men and thus seeming to mean their salvation, and at the same time to represent Him as having no purpose to save some of the called, is contradictory indeed, but in heaven it will be seen that there is no contradiction in the case. Applying the principle of Missouri, they might even feign horror of the rationalistic presumption which would judge God according to the poor standard of our finite reason and would draw the conclusion that God must be dishonest because He does not deal according to our notions of what honesty and sincerity requires. Indeed, the Missouri doctrine involves the very contradiction which Calvinism sets out and our Confession condemns. It only places the contradiction in the fundamental proposition, and then proceeds to harmonize the subordinate tenets by showing their agreement with the contradictory foundation. Calvinists say that God has not the will to save all, but bring Him into conflict with Himself by saying that He calls some to salvation whom He has not elected, and therefore not resolved to save. Missourians say that God has the will to save all, but also the will to save only some, and therefore, though He calls some whom He has not elected, i. e. not resolved to save, He is not in conflict with Himself, because He has also the will to save all. What will not harmonize with one member of the contradictory statement harmonizes with the other. But the contradictory wills in God remain, and the argument of our Confession holds against the error in one form as well as in the other.

The second reason which Past. Huegli gives for not admitting that the Missouri doctrine of election renders the doctrine of universal grace practically nugatory is, "because according to our (Missouri) doctrine also a real possibility for all men to be saved remains." The argument simply begs the question. That is what he affirms and we deny. Mis-

sourians do still speak of grace as extending to all men, but they teach a doctrine of election of which they themselves confess that it contradicts that universality of grace.

The difficulty is not where Past. Huegli would appear to locate it. He says: "It is indeed quite certain that so far as a person, in the infallible omniscience of God, is once known as elected or rejected, there can no change be made. . . . . When I consider the elect *as elect* and the non-elect *as non-elect*, and represent them to my mind *as such*, I must say that no longer any change is possible, there is no more hope for the non-elect." With this we fully agree, and such a doctrine is certainly no "new departure." It is what has always been taught in our Church. God knows all things, and He makes no mistakes. What He sees as future will come to pass as He sees it. About that there is no dispute. But that places us on ground which, if we had not confidence in the uprightness of Past. Huegli's purpose, would seem to us to be chosen rather to divert attention from the point in dispute than to give a clear view of it. He does not mean that God knows who, when the grace of God is presented, will believe and be saved and who will disbelieve and be damned. That of course would leave a possibility for every soul to be saved, as whoever would not wantonly reject the proffered grace would by that grace be led to eternal life, which is the will of God in regard to all. But between the two sentences quoted above stands this other sentence: "This too is quite certain, that the elect are elected *unto* faith, they are brought to, continue in faith, and if they should fall are again brought to repentance, and certainly are eventually saved through faith: all the others will not be saved." That is *not* "quite certain," and that is where the trouble lies. That changes the whole face of the matter, and renders the other statements entirely irrelevant. What has God's omniscience, and the impossibility that anything should take place otherwise than as God knows it, to do with the question in this form? God elects certain persons to salvation, not in view of the faith which embraces Christ and which makes the difference between the godly and the ungodly, but to the end that He may give them faith and through faith save them. "The others will not be saved." How *could* they be? They could be saved only if

God had elected them, but He has not been pleased to elect them. It is folly, with such a theory before us, to say that they too might have been saved. God elects *unto* faith, and how could they obtain that faith which is necessary to salvation if it was God's inscrutable pleasure not to give it to them? If God has resolved to save only a favored few, these alone can be saved. For the rest there is no hope whatever, not because things will be as God sees them from eternity, as the connection of Past. Huegeli's words might lead some to understand him, but because God has resolved that just those whom He has chosen for the purpose shall be saved. The rest are unfortunates who must either save themselves, which of course is out of the question, or remain forever unsaved.

In view of this Past. Huegeli says: "The question here is whether the doctrine of election precludes or renders doubtful my salvation, or that of any person on earth, as long as the time of grace lasts; whether one human being in this world has reason, on account of the [Missouri] doctrine of election, to be disheartened." This question, he says, must be answered by the Scriptures, not by reason. We are thus brought back to his first argument. He says that we decide according to reason, because we draw the conclusion that if God has resolved to save only certain definite persons, only these can be saved, and no others. The Missourians themselves have drawn the same conclusion. Even Past. Huegeli says: "All the others will not be saved." How does he know? If it be just as true that God wants all men to be saved as it is that He has resolved to save some men, how can he know that the latter will be executed and not the former? Probably it is, after all, by an exercise of his reason, which testifies to him that if God has determined to save only a small portion of our race, that portion, and not a soul else, can be saved. We exercise our intelligence also, and conclude, precisely in the same way, that the doctrine which represents God as determining to save only a portion of mankind, renders the doctrine of universal grace practically nugatory, because no others can be saved.

But Past. Huegeli alleges that if it were right to draw such conclusions nearly all the doctrines of Scripture would be overthrown. He is mistaken. The examples which he fur-



nishes evince this. He says: "In that case the Unitarians would be right, who argue that because there is one God He cannot be Triune; or the Trithetists, who argue that because there are Three Persons there cannot be but one Divine Essence." We fear that our friend has not well considered what he says. He concedes what the Church, in all ages, has refused to concede. Reason, rejecting the light of revelation, makes contradictions in such mysteries as that of the Trinity. But where do the Scriptures say that there are three Gods, and yet only one God? Does Past. Huegli accept the argument as valid: There is but one God, therefore there cannot be three divine persons? To make the argument valid it must run thus: There is but one God, therefore there cannot be three Gods. Does Past. Huegli not admit this? The Church admits much that is incomprehensible, but it has not admitted contradictions. When two propositions seem contradictory, the best that we can do is to let both stand and seek for the truth that reconciles them; but meantime practically they are not available. If a man believes that God has made provision, by a special plan of election, for the salvation of only a limited number of sinners, who alone shall be saved—"who will and must be saved, and no others"—how can he, in the present constitution of the human mind and in the present state of existence, believe also that many others may be saved? He may still speak of the universality of grace in Christ, because the Scriptures speak of it, but so far as his election theory has become a power in his soul this universality has been set aside by the accepted particularity. The Missourians admit this when they say that not even by the light of grace can the two doctrines be reconciled. That is as much as for our purpose need be urged. For the human soul, with which we have to do, and on this earth, where we live and move, the theory of a particular election grace, without reference to faith, renders the doctrine of salvation in Christ for all men through faith "practically nugatory." If one's heart should be troubled with the question whether he is one of the select few who are to be saved, and he should point to the abounding grace that embraces all men and seeks the salvation of all, his very theory would banish all hope from that source, as in its very nature it forbids the belief that there is

saving grace for any others than those few elect. As soon as the universal grace is made available the Missourian election theory is virtually abandoned. Past. Huegli has shown from the Scriptures that there is grace for all, but he has utterly failed to show that his theory can stand if this truth be accepted, or how this truth can stand if his theory be accepted.

But he has a third argument to prove that his opinion does not render the doctrine of universal grace practically nugatory. It is this: "Because the Gospel of Christ Jesus, as a revelation of election, forbids us so to understand election as if God did not earnestly desire the salvation of all men." On this point we can be brief. It in fact concedes that for which we contend, and overthrows Past. Huegli's whole argumentation. Any doctrine which contravenes the Gospel of the grace of God to all men is false. That is what we maintain. That is exactly the reason we have urged against the Missouri theory. It undermines the doctrine of universal grace in Christ. Past. Huegli admits that the two doctrines stand in irreconcilable contradiction—irreconcilable at least to the human mind in this mundane sphere. His third argument, put in another form, simply is, that it would be unscriptural so to understand the doctrine of election as to bring it into conflict with the clearly revealed doctrine of universal grace. The inference which he would have the reader draw is, that the Missouri doctrine is not rightly understood when it is thought to stand in such conflict. But he and other Missourians admit the contradiction between their doctrine and this Bible doctrine of universal grace. The legitimate inference therefore is that they have understood the doctrine in a way which the Scriptures forbid. Instead of teaching that God's mercy is over all men alike, that Christ died for all, and that all men are called with equal earnestness unto salvation by the Gospel, letting election occupy its proper place in subordination to the general plan of salvation, that he that believeth shall be saved, they set up a special plan of salvation through election, without regard to faith, making the former nugatory by claiming that only the latter is effectual unto salvation. Such a doctrine cannot be accepted, for the reason which Past. Huegli states. If he will closely examine his

third argument he will find that it overthrows his other two, and necessitates the rejection of the Missouri opinion in order to preserve the Biblical doctrine.

It is difficult to believe that the learned theologians of Missouri can satisfy themselves by the expedient, that inasmuch as they still admit men to be rejected only because of their unbelief, their theory leaves open the possibility for the salvation of all men. We will say nothing now of the difference which has manifested itself among them in regard to the question why so many are not elected. But taking the most favorable view which has appeared in their publications, we can find only this to be their doctrine, that God has resolved to save some, and the rest are lost. Those whom He has resolved to save, He actually does save, and no others. Election is said to be that by which God brings us into the way of salvation, preserves us in it, and leads us to glory. Whoever is saved at all, is saved by divine election. The decisive question for every individual therefore must be, not whether he is redeemed, but whether he is elected to enjoy the benefits of the redemption. If he is not so elected, he must be lost: nothing can save him, as God means to save only God's elect. Of what possible use can it then be still to talk about a universal grace and a universal redemption and a universal call, when just as soon as the new doctrine of election is received into a soul as an object of faith, that soul holds it as divine truth that, while there was a plan formed for the salvation of all, this special plan of election limits its operation to a select few?

Missourians are wont to complain that we wrong them by thus representing their doctrine. We have endeavored to give it fairly as they themselves present it. They do, indeed, at least the most of them, allege that those who are lost are not elected because they reject the salvation offered them. But does not every man who will think, at once see, that if election is the divine act which selects from the mass of sinners the persons who shall believe and be saved, the destiny of all mankind is thus decided from eternity? Those selected will believe and be saved, because they are elected; but what becomes of the rest who are not thus favored? The doctrine may still be permitted to stand in the Bible and in

the Confession, that there is salvation for all men and that it is seriously offered to all in the Gospel, but the ghastly fact remains, that if the election theory which is promulgated be true, only those can believe and be saved whom God has selected for the purpose. The others must be lost. It does not in the least help the case to say that they are lost because they reject the proffered grace. How can they do otherwise, when God has not included them in the decree which determines who shall believe and be saved? If it be replied, that God did not elect them just because He foresaw that they would not believe, then the theory of an election *unto* faith falls to the ground; for how could a person's not believing be the reason why God passed him by in selecting the persons whom He would enable to believe? The doctrine as the Lutheran Church has taught it is consistent and clear; the Missourian doctrine is a bundle of contradictions, as every effort to blend truth and error must be. The clear doctrine of Scripture that there is salvation in Jesus for all, can tolerate beside it no doctrine that antecedently limits this salvation to a favored few.

As regards the historical aspects of the question, we are willing to submit the case to candid minds as we have presented it. That there is a "new departure" in the Missouri Synod it is utterly vain to deny. Missourians know this better than we do, and to their memory and conscience do we appeal. But that is not the important feature of the controversy. The great question is whether Missouri, in departing from the old ways on the question of predestination, has not departed from the word of the Lord and entered upon paths that dishonor Him and endanger souls. That it has done so is evident from various considerations, not the least of which is this, that it has set up a theory which renders the doctrine of universal grace in Christ practically nugatory.

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### WHY IS ELECTION PARTICULAR?

Between us and the Missourians there is no difference in regard to the causes of election. There are no causes why God chose persons to sonship and salvation but His bound-

less mercy and His dear Son's merits. In this both parties are agreed. Between us there is no difference either in regard to the particularity of election. Both agree that not the whole human race, but only a comparatively few of mankind are chosen. So far there is no controversy.

But to the reflecting mind it must seem especially noteworthy that these causes are universal, while the effect is particular; that is, the mercy of God embraces all men and the merits of Christ pertain to all men, but only a small portion is elect. Why are the causes of election universal while the effect is particular? Here the difference between us comes to the surface. Those who are elected are elected upon no other ground than that of God's mercy and Christ's merits. But why, since these grounds are universal, embracing all men and therefore leading to the conclusion that all men must be elected, is the election particular, embracing only a small number of those whom God wills to save?

We have heard Missourians reply, in their embarrassment, that the question is not apposite, because election, in the very nature of the thing designated by the word, is particular. If there is an election at all, it must single out some from among the others. It is not a selection, if all be taken. That seems a safe position. But that is an evasion of the question. Election is particular. Suppose it would not be an election if it were not particular. Still, why, since the causes of that which we call election would, in the ordinary course of cause and effect, result in a universal salvation, in a predestination of the whole human race to the eternal inheritance, is the effect the choice of but a few of those to whom the causes apply? That the word connotes particularity as an attribute does not explain why the divine act came to be of such a kind as to apply only to a few, while the causes moving to it warrant the expectation that it would embrace all mankind. If the mercy of God is so great as to move Him to save one sinner, it is great enough to move Him to save all sinners. There is, on God's side, no difficulty in the way of saving all that does not exist equally in the case of each individual. If the merit of Christ could be accepted as a substitute for human merit in any one case, it could just as well be so accepted in all cases. It is suffi-

cient for all, and must, so far as God decides without reference to created wills, result in the salvation of all men alike. Universal causes in God, if they are unconditional, must produce universal effects. Why then, in election, are the causes universal and the effect particular? The very question should lead unprejudiced men to the conviction that where these universal causes are assigned for election, this word must suggest something more than a mere selection of particular persons from a mass, who, so far as the motives for their selection is concerned, would all be accepted indiscriminately.

The case may be illustrated by an example. A rich man invites the whole village to a great feast. He has provided every thing that is needed to have all proceed according to his wish. The table is supplied, and the dress in which he desires his guests to appear is furnished. Every thing is ready, and he wants them all to come on equal terms. He chooses them all. But when the time arrives, some are not admitted. He wants them all on an equal footing, and therefore supplies all with the same garment. Some refuse to let his servants dress them as he desires. They can furnish their own garment; they do not want to appear as beggars; they are rich enough to get something even better than the host has provided; they will not appear in his garments. He is kind to all, and wants them all as his guests. But on his terms some will not enter the dining hall and will not eat, and on other terms he will not admit them and will not permit them to eat. He chooses those in whom his pleasure is executed; the others he rejects. He makes a selection. What makes that choice particular? His kindness moved him to desire that all should come and have the enjoyment of his hospitality. He made everything ready for all alike. What was it that led to the execution of his generous purpose only in the case of some and not of others, though it embraced the whole of them? That which confines the choice to a few is the obstinacy of the many.

Our Formula of Concord sets forth election in a way that might lead to the inference that all men are elected. The causes which it assigns for the act and the means which it represents as embraced in its conception are of universal

application. This might lead to the expectation that all men would be regarded as its subjects. Indeed, it has been seriously argued that the Formula could not contain such a wide conception of election, for the very reason that the application is limited to the children of God. But why is it so limited? The truth is set forth that Christ has redeemed all, that the benefits of the redemption are to be offered to all through the means of grace, in which the Holy Spirit would be efficacious to work repentance, and that in His counsel and purpose God ordained "that He will justify all those who in true repentance embrace Christ in genuine faith, graciously receive them, and adopt them as children and heirs of eternal life." That explains why the decree that antecedently contemplated all, actually in the foreknowledge of God embraces only a small portion of the human race. Our Confession shows how the divine election became particular. The cause is not in God. His provision is perfect for the salvation of all, and if His counsel were not hindered in its execution, the result would be the actual salvation of all. That this result is not attained is due not to God's election, but to man's obstinacy. The reason why but few are chosen, though many are called, is not that God did not desire to save all, but that the many reject the counsel of God. "Not God or His election, but their own wickedness is the fault," says our Confession. The cause of election is in God, but the cause of its limitation to comparatively few, i. e. the cause of its particularity, is not in God.

But, Missourians will tell us, God elects, and elects whom He pleases. Very well. With whom is He pleased—whom is it His pleasure to accept? The Scriptures tell us of Enoch that "before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased God, but without faith it is impossible to please Him." Heb. 11, 5. 6. Has God changed since then? Who are pleasing in God's sight and accepted as His own dear children? The Holy Spirit answers that as many received Christ "to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John 1, 12. That is God's unchanging truth—as true now as it was 1800 years ago. Men are accepted in Christ, and not otherwise. It never was otherwise, and never can be. God elects them that

please Him. The election is according to His good pleasure. But "without faith it is impossible to please Him." That "word they shall let stand, and not a thank have for it." The good pleasure of God is that "he that believeth shall be saved." Such are pleasing in His sight because of the merits of Christ, whom they have appropriated.

Luther says on Matt. 20, 16: "Some conceive other thoughts and explain the words thus: 'Many are called'; that is, God offers His 'grace to many; but 'few are chosen,' that is, but He imparts that grace to few, for only few are saved. That is an ungodly interpretation. For how would it be possible, if one did not think and believe otherwise of God, that he should be anything but hostile to God, whose will alone is the fault that we are not all saved? But if this opinion is compared with that which is entertained when Christ has first become known, it will be found to be mere Satanic blasphemy. Therefore the scope of this passage, 'Many are called, but few are chosen,' is entirely different. For the preaching of the Gospel is general and public, so that whoever will may hear and receive it; and God has ordained that it should be preached so generally and publicly, that every one might hear, believe, and accept it, and be saved. But what is the result? It is as the Gospel says, 'Few are chosen'; that is, few so conduct themselves toward the Gospel that God is pleased with them. For some hear it and pay no regard to it. Some hear it, but do not cling to it, and are not willing to make any sacrifice or suffer anything on account of it. Some hear it, but are more concerned about money and goods and pleasures. God is not pleased with such persons, and does not accept them. This Christ calls not being chosen, that is, not so conducting themselves that God can be pleased with them. But those are elect and well pleasing to God who diligently hear the Gospel, believe in Christ, show their faith by good works, and suffer on account of it what is laid upon them." Erl. ed. vol. 2, p. 85. 86.

The mercy of God and the merits of Christ are offered in the means of grace, which are efficacious for all men alike. God's will is as earnest for the salvation of one as of the other, and the Holy Spirit with His regenerating power is present wherever these means are dispensed. Luther's words show



why it is that there are many called, but few chosen. The causes and the means of salvation apply to all. There is nothing in God that could restrict it to but a few. The assumption that there is a secret will which singles out only a few to salvation with an unconditional purpose to save them, has not a word of warrant in Scripture and contradicts numerous explicit passages declaring that God wills the salvation of all men. Why then is election particular? The Scriptures answer: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often *would I* have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but *ye would not.*" Matt. 23, 37. "*Ye will not* come to me that ye might have life." John 5, 40. That is the reason why not all are saved, and why not all could be elected. Some rejected Christ's merit when it was graciously brought to them, and therefore He rejected them.

It would seem as if the St. Louis professors were laboring hard to divert attention from their predestinarian error by raising the cry of Synergism against those who adhere to the old doctrine of our great Lutheran teachers. Missourians who call that Synergism are making a new departure in this regard also, and are guilty of using words as our fathers did not use them, of introducing confusion into language, and of troubling consciences and wronging children of God by misapplying terms. That the reason why election is particular, i. e., confined to but few, is to be sought not in God, but in man, is what our Church, faithful to the Scriptures always, has constantly taught, though she has never failed to condemn what she understood to be Synergism. For she has declared in her Confession: "Few receive the Word and follow it; the greater part despise the Word and will not come to the marriage. The cause of this contempt is not God's predestination, but man's perverse will, which renounces or perverts the means and instrument of the Holy Ghost set forth in the call, and resists the Spirit who would be efficacious and active in the Word, as Christ says: How often would I have gathered you together, but ye would not! Matt. 23, 37." Sol. Decl. XI. § 41.

What have the Missourians to say when the Scriptures

and Symbols are thus adduced against their new theory of election? Only this, that God elects whom He pleases, and He pleases to elect without any reference to men's relation by faith to Christ and the salvation which is in Him. They teach that God chooses who shall believe, and that accounts for the limitation of election to a few. The Bible knows of an election that is particular, but it knows nothing of an election that is particular because God antecedently willed it so. The Symbols know of an election that is particular, but nothing of an election that is so because God antecedently so wanted it and therefore so made it. If the Missourians say that God is not the cause of the particularity of election, they concede the most essential point in the controversy between us; namely, that all would be saved, and consequently also elected to salvation, were it not for their wilful resistance to the Holy Ghost on the part of many. That would be admitting that what makes the difference between men and thus determines their election or rejection, is faith. If they say that election is particular because it pleased God to make it so, without any reference to man's conduct, there is no essential feature of Calvinism that their saying does not involve. The point of controversy will then be reduced to this, whether God has determined to save only some men from among the lost multitude, and whether these are saved by an irresistible grace, while the others not only are not, but cannot be saved, because God will not save them, and themselves they cannot save.

The irresistibility of God's grace has always been regarded as one of the tests of Calvinism. Missouri will not accept some of Calvin's speculations and explanations. Is grace irresistible in their theory? The leaders still deny it, although there are some among them who, while they are unwilling to use the offensive expression, are convinced that it is useless to deny it. They hold that whether man shall be saved or not depends upon nothing but God's own pleasure; that no man can do anything, whether by nature or grace, that would in any wise change his destination or doom as God has fixed it; that when any one is saved, it is because God had resolved to save him; that resistance or non-resistance to the proffered grace and salvation has nothing to do

with the actual possession of the saving gift; that all men naturally resist, but God has resolved that in some the resistance shall be overcome, while as regards the rest He has formed no such resolve, and accordingly it is not overcome; that where He has resolved to overcome it, the soul will and must be converted; that, in short, the grace of God is irresistible in the elect, and powerless unto salvation in the non-elect.

What the Missouri Synod years ago, when it was more bold in its utterances, openly declared, to wit, that the pure doctrine of election is such that according to it human reason cannot otherwise than regard God as a terrible tyrant, is precisely what Luther condemns when he says that a person can not otherwise than be inimical to God when he believes that He is the fault that not all are saved. When it is taught that God elects to faith, so that only those whom He selects for the purpose become believers, the cause why so few are saved is placed in God. Against that we cannot cease to protest.

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## WHY SO ANGRY AND FALSE?

BY VERITAS.

If this present controversy on the doctrine of election, with all its attending evils of offending the weak and of confusing the minds and consciences of men, which St. Louis has wantonly provoked and over which it rejoices and glories (West. Synb. 1880) is to result in any good, the animosity and acrimony with which the St. Louis men are carrying it on must cease. A comparison of the polemics of both parties will show where, and on what side, the controversy is conducted in a Christian spirit and in the love of truth on the whole, and where it is conducted in the gall of bitterness and with hatred and rancor. The champions in this evil work are Prof. Pieper, Mr. Kaehler, and particularly a certain A. W., whose article in the last number of *Lehre und Wehre* surpasses anything in this line that we have ever had the mis-

fortune to meet. It is a positive disgrace to any religious periodical, and in its coarseness and bitterness would scarcely be tolerated in the partisan political press of the land. It presumes to judge the motives of its opponent, ridicules his conscience, and intrudes itself into the office of God in judging the hearts of men. If St. Louis must fight with such weapons—weapons that are steeped in the gall of bitterness—their cause must be deplorable. We hope Prof. Stellohorn will not descend to reply to such an effusion of all that is detestable. Indeed, it is our conviction that all controversy with St. Louis should cease, and that the Lutheran doctrine should be simply presented in its truth and beauty.

Prof. Pieper has told "Old Lutheran" that he would not reply to him a second time. We wonder who has asked him to reply! Was it not enough that Prof. Walther took him under the shadow of his protecting wings? And if he cannot be truthful in the representation of his opponent's views he certainly would better not reply. For truth and the love of it is a very first prerequisite in religious controversy. He that is devoid of it, ought not to meddle with such a sacred matter. We had hoped all along that an understanding between the contending parties was still possible, and we could hope so still, if human passion, pride, and vanity were separated from the discussion, and if the enlightening and conviction of the opponents was the object, rather than their reproach and disgrace. May God, in mercy, grant this!

Prof. Pieper in his reply to "Old Lutheran" shamefully misrepresents him. He had said, "*There is no mystery in election which is not in conversion,*" and "*The mystery lies somewhere else;*" namely, as the context shows, not in this that God could convert all men, but for some reason will not. Yet Prof. Pieper bluntly says of him, "that the writer of the article, from which the above words are taken, knew nothing of a mystery in conversion." Well, if Prof. Pieper can afford to make such statements, we suppose "Old Lutheran" can stand it. False statements cannot long injure him, nor the truth.

But to the point at issue, or to the fundamental difference between the Semi-Calvinistic theory of conversion of the St. Louis men, and that of the Lutheran Church. According to the former the reason why some men are converted and

others are not, lies in God. He could convert them all, if He were so disposed. But the reason why he does not is a mystery. The doctrine of the Lutheran Church is, that some wilfully and pertinaciously resist the offered grace in the Gospel, and that the established plan of salvation does not include such conversions. It is an evidence of "Old Lutheran's" right position, that Prof. Pieper finds it necessary first to falsify and caricature it, in order to make himself easy work in its overthrow. Now, if he likes the sport of first setting up men of straw in order to show the keenness of his steel in decapitating them, we suppose that no one will find fault. There is no disputing about taste.\*

His paraphrase or caricature is this: "A man resists wilfully to-day and is not converted, but through the night he musters all his strength, exerts all his natural powers, and overcomes his wilful resistance," etc. But is not this nonsense, and does it not argue complete ignorance of all the laws of psychology, and still more of what *wilful* resistance is? Think of the idea of great exertion to overcome a wilful act!! Why, it is the wilful act and resistance that require this exertion of all the evil powers to enact it, to bring it about. If a man commits wilful murder, it would have required his utmost exertion not to commit it! If a man in trying to swim exerts himself to the utmost to keep above water, it would require the exertion of all his powers, according to Prof. Pieper, not to swim, to sink. The idea of a man's exerting all his powers not to do a *wilful* act!!†

It is evident that Prof. Pieper understands something altogether different from what the Bible and our Confessions do with regard to *wilful* resistance. This appears also from his effort to refute "Old Lutheran." He quotes a passage from the Formula of Concord which treats of man's *natural resistance*, and then says that he has refuted "Old Lutheran." And because the latter says that in conversion God makes the *unwilling willing*, he asserts that he has refuted himself. He evidently takes an unwilling compliance with divine grace for wilful resistance to it. Otherwise his argument

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\* See Remark 1 at the end.

† See Remark 2.

would really be silly. And is it not a strange argument of his, after all, which amounts to this, that because a man cannot change his evil heart, he cannot abstain from open, actual, and wilful murder, and that if he has once committed it, he must always commit murders, unless he is converted. Upon this principle it would be a crime to hang a man for murder.

But this is Prof. Pieper's argument. He asserts: "If the sinner only through the influence of the Holy Ghost surrenders his resistance and enmity to God, he will not desist from *wilful* resistance by his own strength." But this is begging the question. The first is not in dispute, but the second is. And if the one follows from the other—the overcoming of wilful resistance from the overcoming of natural resistance—the two would have to be exactly equal. For otherwise, how could he argue from the one to the other? Or does he perhaps hold, that because God saves those that believe, He will also save those that believe not? Would he argue that because the Germans vanquished the French army, they would vanquish the whole world? Such logic!

If Prof. Pieper could discriminate between an act and a condition, he would have no difficulty where he now flounders about. An act, a *wilful act*, ceases with itself, and because it is a wilful act it is not persistent, but a state or condition remains. The very term of *wilful* implies this. But, of course, this remittance of *wilful* resistance—the ceasing of the act—does not make a man a saint, or even change his condition in the least, or abate his enmity against his God, just as little as the mere *outward* hearing of God's Word, for which the natural man has the ability even according to Prof. Pieper. And yet without that outward hearing, there can be no inward hearing and no conversion, as faith comes by hearing. From this it would follow that Prof. Pieper is Semi-Calvinist and Semi-Pelagian at one and the same time. For does not man in this way contribute toward his conversion, if he can outwardly hear God's Word? To-day he will not go to church, but through the week he musters all his natural powers and by the time Sunday comes he has vanquished his natural antipathy to church-going and he goes, from some cause or other—and lo! he is converted. Is not

Prof. Pieper a Synergist, who holds this view! And now one converted man boasts, saying: True, I could not convert myself, but I came to church of my own accord and there divine grace converted me! And when he gets to heaven he will say that his being there is due to himself, to his going to church and outwardly using the means of grace! This is Prof. Pieper's Synergism. And is it not equal to what he charges on us. If we are entangled in the Synergistic web, is he not likewise? Indeed, he much rather. For through the mere desisting from wilful resistance no man has ever been converted. But the going to church, even for a mere external consideration, has been the occasion of many conversions.

But if Prof. Pieper will from the Bible and our Confessions and in *explicit* declarations prove, that God in conversion removes *wilful* resistance, he will have vanquished us on this point. But we want no inferences from natural resistance—no assertions of his own, no mere declarations of his convictions—for these convictions in St. Louis make rapid somersaults—but God's *clear* and *explicit* Word. We have in vain asked for it before. Let it be forthcoming now. Assertions of his conviction and of his belief that the Bible teaches it, we have had enough; now let us have the evidence—the facts.

But let us see from the Formula of Concord what the resistance is that God does not take away: "That they either will not hear the Word of God at all, but *wilfully* despise it, harden their ears and hearts, and thus block up the way of the Holy Ghost, so that He cannot have His work in them; or, if they have heard it, again make light of it and pay no heed to it." Muell., 305. This Word the unconverted and unregenerate can hear externally, and read it—for in these external things, as remarked above, man since the fall in Adam has a free will to some extent, that he can go to church, hear the Word, or not hear it. (329.) Now, can man, as the first passage says, desist from that wilful despising of the Word and come and hear it and thus put himself within the sphere of its influence? We say yea. "But if a man will not hear the preaching of the Word, but despises the Word and the Church of God, and dies and perishes in his

sins, he can obtain no mercy." (P. 329.) "And because God does not compel men to become pious, for those who always resist the Holy Ghost and who persistently resist *the acknowledged truth* (which is wilful resistance) as Stephan says of the *hardened Jews* (Acts 7), *are not converted.*" (350.)

Why not all believe that hear the Word of God is "because they hear the Word of God not to learn it, but only to despise, to reproach, and to ridicule it, and because they resist the Holy Ghost, who through the Word desires to do His work in them, as was the case with the Pharisees and their followers at the time of Christ." (390.) This was wilful resistance.

And our Confession says furthermore: "We reject the following error: When it is said without explanation that the Holy Ghost is given to those who resist Him." (332.) How can He take that resistance away if He is not given them?

"That He (God) will punish those, *who wilfully turn away from the Holy Spirit* and are entangled again in the things of this world." (391) Does the Holy Ghost take away that resistance?

We also quote Prof. Walther (Syn. B. 1877, p. 78): "This is true, on account of the wilful, pertinacious resistance, some men are lost, but the others are not saved because of their not resisting" (does he mean wilfully?) Again: This is true, of course, that wilful resistance is the reason why some men are damned." Now, does God take away this *wilful* resistance? How could they, then, be lost on account of it?

Again: "Man is so far from being able to do anything towards his conversion, that he has also the fearful power of resisting, which we all do when we are converted! Only we must distinguish between *natural and wilful and malicious* resistance. *The former God removes*—but as long as we continue in the latter we are not converted." (71).

We ask Prof. Pieper, why must we distinguish, if God removes the one as well as the other? And what does it mean, *that as long as we continue in this, we are not converted?* Does it mean, that as long as a man is not converted he is not converted?

Gerhard says: "Original blindness and malice must be



distinguished from natural pertinacity and blinding. The former is equally in all the non-regenerate—the latter not. The unconverted can hear the Word of God, speak of it, meditate upon it, whilst others contumaciouly neglect it and resist God." (De elect. § 39). Again: "The will of man can resist the Holy Spirit and hinder the work of conversion, for God does not produce conversion with absolute, but with ordinary power (that contained in the divine ordinances). . . Therefore, in conversion the will of man is so acted upon of God, *that it can act, or not act*; that is, when the Holy Spirit begins the work of conversion, the human will, pertinaciously resisting, can hinder it, (conversion) and, alas! too often does hinder it! For the Holy Spirit does not introduce any compulsory power into man, that is to be converted (we speak of the ordinary way) but he makes the unwilling willing; that is, to those who do not will, and by nature cannot otherwise *than not to will*, He gives the capacity, that by grace they are able to will, and to will aright; but those who pertinaciously do not will, that is, who resist the operations of the Holy Spirit by actual pertinacity, He ordinarily (through the means of grace) does not convert." But Prof. Pieper tells us that the Holy Ghost removes this wilful or pertinacious resistance. Who is right, Gerhard or our St. Louis Professor? Of course, Prof. Pieper all the time?!

Prof. Pieper has already gone far beyond Prof. Walther, who, as regards *wilful* resistance and natural resistance makes a distinction, as we have seen; but Prof. Pieper does not, as far as conversion is concerned. He teaches, if we at all understand him, that in some—the elect—God takes away wilful resistance, in the others He does not; and then he pretends to talk of equal love and grace to all! But the reason why some are saved on this theory is, because God treats some differently from others; in some He removes wilful resistance, in others He does not. So we have saving grace procured equally for all through Christ, but meted out differently to different men. What a horrible doctrine—as horrible in reality as the worst form of Calvinism. For it makes a mock of God's love, the redemption of Christ, and saving grace for all equally, in portioning it out differently to different men. And Prof. Walther makes no secret of it. He says: "Hence

it may happen, that God follows one man a long time, till He has gained him, whilst in the case of another He only knocks a few times and then passes on. God does not allow any one to prescribe to Him the measure of His grace. He gives to every one enough grace to be saved, but He does not give to all equally." We ask, where is this said in the Bible and our Symbolical books?\*

But we are perfectly agreed with Prof. Walther when he says (Syn. Ber., 1880, p. 58 and 59): "Here is the real and actual difficulty. Here are two men of equal guilt—the one is converted, the other is hardened. Whence is it? They are both equally corrupt—the same Word of God is preached to them—who can explain it?" Yea, that is the difficulty. And that is our objection to St. Louis, that it presumes to solve it by its doctrine of election and its theory that God treats one differently from another. And that does solve it. But how?! The Christian shudders, who knows a Savior that loved all men alike, and redeemed them alike, and purchased saving grace for them alike. And it is only through the infatuation of the hour, that this Calvinistic spawn can find a place in the Lutheran Church. The foreign graft cannot grow on the Lutheran tree!

This, then, is the fundamental difference between St. Louis men and the Lutheran Church, that they make God treat sinners differently, and thus explain the salvation of some and the perdition of others, whilst the Lutheran Church makes God treat them all alike, and is content not to explain it. God will show us that in heaven.

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REMARK 1.—The present controversy has brought together strange bed-fellows at St. Louis—Calvinistic phraseology and Lutheran theology. As it is claimed, Calvinistic arguments are there used against the Lutheran doctrine of election, Lutherans plow with Calvinistic heifers. And to explain the singular phenomenon of Lutherans dancing to the Calvinistic piping, the old adage is repeated ad nauseam: *Si duo dicunt idem, non est idem*. According to this principle you must always take a man to mean something different

\* See Remark 3.

from what he says, so that when the St. Louis men walk arm in arm with Calvin and his followers in many respects, we must take it to mean something else; and when in turn they denounce their strange bed-fellows, we, according to the announced rule, must take them to mean something else again. For the rule is, always to mean the opposite of what you say. This beautiful axiom they are now applying to their opponents. When they use orthodox Lutheran terms, the St. Louis leaders tell their rank and file that they must take them to mean something else. And when these opponents do not use Synergistic language, you must presume them to mean Synergistic errors. The rule seems to be good, for it works both ways—on their side in teaching Lutheran doctrine with Calvinistic language, and on the side of their opponents in teaching Synergistic doctrines with Lutheran terminology. In short, they tell us that if you understand a man to mean the opposite of what he says, you will be about right, and be pretty sure of getting at his meaning. This rule is sure to work a complete revolution in theology, in diplomacy, in jurisprudence, and in every sphere of life. We are certainly standing on the threshold of a new era in the world's history. Now, men can

“ Confute, change hands, and still confute.  
They'll run in debt by disputation  
And pay with ratiocination,  
All this by syllogisms true  
In mood and figure they will do.”

In obedience to this rule of contraries, we suppose, Dr. Walther is now writing articles on the Synergistic Pelagian doctrine of election, or rather culling from our Lutheran theologians to show what it is. First New Missouri damns their doctrine on election into the deepest depth of hell, and then refers to them again, when it has a purpose to serve, as to orthodox writers! Indeed, at their hands we do not wish to learn what Lutheranism is. They have forfeited all right of appealing to our theologians in their behalf.

But what has Prof. Walther succeeded in establishing by these our authorities as the true Lutheran doctrine? Just what his “opponents” hold and teach. He seems to feel this

too. Hence his amusing notes, by which he tries to make his authorities say what they refuse to say. When the language of Synergists differs *toto coelo* from ours, he remarks, that the meaning is still about the same, or that we are shy about expressing ourselves, etc. He will have a hard task of convicting us of Synergism, for so far we agree with everything that his *Lutheran* authorities say against the Synergists, with the exception of one disconnected line. We join them in condemning every form of Synergism, as they have stated it. Let him, therefore, keep on in his work; it has at least some historical value. The most amusing of all, however, is his effort to show "that if our great dogmaticians had not had Huberians and Calvinists as their opponents, *but teachers such as these are*, against whom our opponents now contend, (Is not this modest?) they would not have hesitated a moment to extend to them the hand of brotherly fellowship." We ask, why should they not, after "*these teachers*" have consigned their doctrine to the lowest pit of hell? Dr. Walther must count largely upon the credulity of his readers, and surely he has reason to. He knows his followers. We could relate some facts in illustration—but we forbear. Let the venerable doctor deal in that, as he does in the last number of *Lehre und Wehre*, after he had declared himself against it with regard to Prof. Loy. Prof. Walther namely seems to hold to the morality of the Hamburg fish-woman, that when you are abused or imagine yourself wronged or abused, you have a right to indulge in abuse by way of retaliation.

REMARK 2.—What Prof. Pieper means by inward converting grace we do not exactly understand. Does he mean a direct impulse or influence of predestination? We know of no converting grace except that which is in the Word, attaches to it, and is inseparable from it. He seems to regard the Word as a dead letter, which the Holy Ghost uses and through which He exerts His influence, as He might use any other means. We regard that Word as His organ, as being spirit and life, and as in itself the power of God unto salvation. Hence every wilful opposition to converting grace is opposition to that Word. And this wilful opposition we conceive to be expressed by our Confession in these words: "They will either not hear the Word of God at all, but *wilfully despise*

it, harden their ears and hearts, and thus block up the ordinary way of the Holy Ghost, that He cannot conduct His work in them, or that when they have heard it, again make light of it and pay no heed to it."

Now we hold that man can by his own natural strength desist from this wilful despising of the Word so that He will not even hear it, but he can read and meditate upon it, and thus, without wishing or knowing it, put himself in the ordinary way of the Holy Ghost to be converted. Is this of no importance? And again. We see from the above quotation from Gerhard, that in conversion a point is reached when the sinner *can act, or not act*. If he acts and accepts Christ, it is by grace; for grace has brought him to the point that he can act, as He enables him to act. If he does not act, chooses not to act, it is not through his sinful condition simply, for the Holy Ghost has set him free, has offered and given him the power to act; if he does not act, it is through *wilful* resistance (not his general corruption) and this, Gerhard tells us, God in His order of salvation does not take away. Why one man, at that point of which Gerhard speaks, acts and accepts Christ by the given grace and strength, and another, who by grace had been brought to the same point, does not act, but remains in sin, is a mystery which we cannot explain, neither are we bound to explain it. As God's children in this dark vale, we have neither the call nor duty to explain the mysteries of God's kingdom. We stop when we are at the end of the way. St. Louis cuts the knot, *essentially* as Calvin did, by its doctrine of election. Faith comes from election—the elect will and must be saved—the non-elect can at least only believe for a while, but they will and must (not by a divine decree, but by the circumstances in which they are placed) perish. Calvin says, God decreed that they should perish—St. Louis says, in election God from some unknown reason passed them by. But their doom is sealed in one case as certainly as in the other. Surely a *mysterium horribile!*

REMARK 3.—It is no answer to this to say that God gives His Word to some nations and not to others, etc. That is a different sphere. But formerly Dr. Walther knew how to solve this differently, when in his Gospel Postil he wrote (p. 53): "There is no doubt but that if God had known, that

those living in the darkness of heathenism, would have permitted themselves to be made to accept His Word, He would have caused it to be preached to them, even if it had to be done, as in the case of Cornelius and the Macedoneans, through the instrumentalities of angels sent from heaven." And he correctly quotes Acts 22. to prove this, where Paul is bidden to leave Jerusalem in haste, because they would not receive his testimony. But what does he say now under the infatuation of his election doctrine?

West. Syn. Ber. 1877, p. 103, he states, that some men assign as a reason, among others, why God has not given His Word for centuries to some nations, "*that the Gentiles did not receive the Word of God because God foreknew that they would not believe it.*" He replies: "*These are all nothing but human ideas! Our Lutheran Church will have nothing to do with them! She will not mix up the Word of God with human thoughts.*" What was once Bible doctrine, is now declared to be a human device! O, where will this infatuation cease!

In Vol. 19, p. 173, *Lehre und Wehre*, it had been said in a communication: "God's Word declares that grace removes natural resistance, yea overcomes even the most pertinacious contention and resistance against it, and produces faith and preserves it." Prof. Walther replies in Vol. 26, p. 301, *Lehre und Wehre*: "It is asked whether this is not evidently the Calvinistic doctrine of irresistible grace? We reply that it by no means follows. For have not thousands at last been overcome by grace who for a time actually and wilfully contended and resisted against divine grace? Hence not all wilful resistance ends in eternal death, but only that which is persistent. But we here willingly concede, and we doubt not our contributor will do the same, that that expression, in order not to offend and to cause misunderstanding, was not sufficiently explained at other places, yea that it might seem offensive to true Lutherans and should be retracted." The reader will notice, that what was then retracted is now reiterated boldly.

Another specimen: "May God not, in order to be just, give more grace to one man than to another, although He gives enough grace to all to be saved? Must God, in order not to appear partial, force His grace of perseverance upon

them who wilfully and pertinaciously resist preceding grace, or the grace already effective in them?" And on the same page: "God certainly gives to all men a certain amount of grace, namely enough to be saved, but that nevertheless many are not saved has its cause in their wilful and pertinacious resistance." Vol. 27, p. 53, *Lehre und Wehre*.

But we are told now that God removes wilful resistance. How comes it that they are not converted. We suppose this is another mystery. The St. Louis doctrine of election contains at least a dozen of mysteries, or rather of flat contradictions, which are there taken to be mysteries. The doctrine of the Trinity and of the Person of Christ are plain and simple in comparison to this doctrine of mysteries and contradictions.

But let the reader notice, that in the face of the above extracts Mr. Kaehler declares, "that they, (the New Missourians) teach at least just as decidedly as their opponents, that God is no respecter of persons, that His *love and grace extends in an EQUAL MANNER to all sinners,*" etc. (*Lehre und Wehre* 1881, p. 332.) Is not this a positive falsehood? Is it worth while to argue with such opponents, who to-day positively deny what they asserted yesterday, without retraction? But we suppose this is another mystery—we must believe both—that God treats men differently and that He treats them alike! The truth is one, but error and falsehood is manifold and full of contradictions. And this is about all this new doctrine is made up of. It bears its falsehood upon its very face in its endless contradictions.

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ROM. 8, 28-30.

BY PROF. F. W. STELLHORN.

The above named passage of Holy Writ, according to the Formula of Concord and the general acceptance of Lutheran theologians, is one of those places where the Holy Spirit professedly, as they say, treats of the doctrine of Election or Predestination; or, in other words, it is one of the "seats" of

this doctrine. It is, therefore, of course of the utmost importance to know what the meaning and sense of this passage and especially of some of its most significant words and expressions is. Our intention in this present article is, by the help of God, to contribute something to this right and correct understanding. May our endeavor not be in vain!

The *first word* in our passage that especially ought to be noted and understood, is "*purpose*," v. 28. In the original Greek of the New Testament it is "*prothesis*." The principal significations are: "A *placing before*, e. g. of a letter at the beginning of a word; also a *laying out*, as of a corpse; a *public notice*; the *statement* of a question to be discussed; a *purpose, end proposed*." The latter meaning is, of course, the only one to be considered here. It occurs in the following passages of the New Testament: Acts 11, 23; 27, 13; Rom. 8, 28; 9, 11; Ephes. 1, 11; 3, 11; 2. Tim. 1, 9; 3, 10. In all the other passages where it is used (Matth. 12, 4; Mark 2, 26; Luke 6, 4; Heb. 9, 2), the "*shew-bread*" is called literally "the bread of the *laying out*," viz: before the face of the Lord.

In Acts 11, 23; 27, 13; 2. Tim. 3, 10, the word is used of *men*, and the meaning is clear, what purpose is meant, being easily understood from the context. In the remaining five passages it denotes the *purpose of God*. About this there is, and can be, no doubt at all. Nobody denies this. But now the difficulty comes in. For the next question is, *What purpose of God is meant?* Let us see if we cannot decide this question by looking accurately and closely at every single passage.

The *first* is Rom. 8, 28. From this we see at a glance that the word "*purpose*" here denotes the purpose of God to *call* men, viz: to repentance, faith and life everlasting. In the *second* passage, Rom. 9, 11, it is called the "*purpose of God according to election*." In order that this "*purpose of God according to election* might stand, it was said unto her" (Rebecca) "*The elder shall serve the younger*." What, now, is meant by this expression, "*purpose of God according to election?*" *Philippi*, the justly esteemed Lutheran commentator of the epistle to the Romans, says, it is a purpose "*in connection with which an election takes place*." Bengel calls it "*the elective purpose of God*," and adds in explanation, "Only in the most free



election the purpose has its reason and cause." Balduin, the celebrated expositor of the epistles of St. Paul, paraphrases the expression by saying, "God disposed so *according to the most free purpose of His will.*" Calov in his *Biblia Illustrata* expresses the same opinion. Cremer translates it "*der erwählungsmaessige Vorsatz*"—"the purpose that is in *accordance with an election*"; Grimm, "*decretum ex delectu factum*"—"the decree made *in consequence of an election,*" The purpose of God is hereby designated as a *most free one.* For he who has the choice to do this or that, he is really free in his decision, as the purpose he forms is really a free one. So, when God formed His purpose, He was not bound by anything or anybody outside of Himself to form just this purpose and no other, but He *chose* to do so. He, according to His love, justice and wisdom, chose a certain way to bring fallen man to heaven, and, accordingly, to bring no others, but infallibly to bring all those to heaven who, by the grace and strength conferred by Him, should walk this way, or, rather, suffer themselves to be led upon it. According to this His free choice He formed His purpose to do in time what He now has done and still is doing, for the salvation of mankind. By giving this explanation we do not forget the fact, that according to our Lutheran theologians the Apostle does not in this passage treat of election or predestination *to life eternal in the first place,* and that the history of Esau and Jacob is not to be looked upon as an *example,* but only as a *type* of election to salvation.

The *third* place where we find the word "purpose" in this sense is Ephes. 1, 11. Here the apostle says, that we have been "*predestinated*" or "*foreordained*" according to the "purpose of Him who worketh all things," viz. of God. The "*purpose of God*" is, therefore such that *predestination* or *preordination* is dependent on it, or is a consequence of it. "Purpose" and "predestination," "prothesis" and "pro-orismos," are, therefore, *not* synonymous or equivalent terms. The *fourth* passage is Ephes. 3, 11, where the purpose of God is called "the *eternal* purpose which He purposed *in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" From this we learn, first, that this purpose of God was *already formed in eternity*; secondly, that it was "*purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" What does this expression "*in Christ*"

*Jesus*" mean? According to its general signification in the New Testament *not only* this, that Christ is the *foundation* and *cause* of this purpose, *but also* that *only in union and communion with Christ by faith* this purpose is, and can be, realized; that the *ultimate* objects of this purpose, those who attain its end and its benefits, are, and can be, only those who are and remain "in Christ," in union with Him by faith. Therefore Christ is here called "*our Lord.*" For He is here to be considered not only as the second person of the Godhead, the Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; not only as the Savior and Redeemer of all men, irrespective of their accepting Him, as such; but also as being acknowledged as Lord by faith. Only those who do this are, and shall be, ultimately benefited by this purpose of God. The purpose is, therefore, as our old theologians say, *limited* and *conditioned*, viz., by being "in Christ Jesus our Lord." God never formed a purpose to save man without this limitation and condition. His *antecedent* will already is limited and conditioned by faith in Christ. And we know from other passages of Holy Writ that this *could not be otherwise.* "*Without faith it is impossible to please God,*" says the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. 11, v. 6. This is declared to be *the general, universal rule*, without any exception whatever. Whether it be in eternity or in time, no one can please God without faith. For whoever wants to please God, must be holy and righteous before His all-seeing and just eyes. Now, no one can be so without having accepted the holiness and righteousness of Christ by faith. And surely, he whom God already in eternity has purposed to save and to take into heaven, he must have pleased Him, he must have been holy and righteous before His omniscient eyes, him He must have seen in Christ by faith.

The *fifth* passage having the expression "*purpose*" of God, is 2 Tim. 1, 9. Here the Apostle says that God "*hath saved us, and called us* with a holy calling, not according to our works, but *according to His own purpose* and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." According to these words the "*purpose*" of God is such that *His having saved and called us* is dependent on it and a consequence of it. To "*save*" here includes *all that God in time has hitherto done for us Christians*, viz. the sending of Christ to suffer and

die for us and Christ's doing this, and also the communication of the merit of Christ to us in our conversion. We do not here exclude the *latter*, and surely nobody has a shadow of right to exclude the former. For already the first passage of the New Testament where this verb is found, viz. Matt. 1, 21 ("Thou shalt call His name *Jesus*, for He shall save His people from their sins,") shows conclusively that the suffering and death of Christ are to be included in the verb "to save." Therefore Balduin says rightly, in his notes to this passage, "(The words 'having saved us') comprehend the *whole work of our salvation*, which (salvation) consists in the forgiveness of sins and eternal righteousness (complectitur totum opus salutis nostrae, quae in remissione peccatorum and justitia aeterna consistit)." He "hath saved," says the apostle. Calov explains this as follows: "Although some acts pertaining to salvation remain yet to be done, conservation in faith, deliverance from evil by death, and from death by the resurrection, and the introduction into life everlasting, yet he says, 'He hath saved us,' because 'He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.'" The Weimar Bible inserts after the words "hath saved" this explanation "by His dear Son Jesus Christ," necessarily including thereby His suffering and death. These, therefore, have also taken place according to that purpose of God.

And how must we, now, after having diligently looked at all the passages where this word occurs, define that "purpose" of God? It is that *eternal act of God, based upon and emanating from*, nothing but *His own choice or most free will*, but by Himself bound and limited in its realization by Christ and the union with Him by faith; according to which act salvation, including the suffering and death of Christ, the calling or the preaching of the Gospel, and also predestination or pre-ordination, have taken place. This "purpose" cannot, therefore, pertain only to the elect few, but must extend to all men without exception, though, as we have seen, it is conditional. It must, consequently, be the *universal counsel of grace*, or the *determination of the common way of salvation for all men*, or the *first part of predestination in its wider sense*, as the Formula of Concord takes it, or the *ordination of means*.

The second word in Rom. 8, 28-30 that is especially to be

noted, is found in v. 29. It is the word "*foreknow*." It occurs in five places of the New Testament, viz: Act 26, 5; Rom. 8, 29; 11, 2; 1. Pet. 1, 20; 2. Pet. 3, 17. Besides this the noun derived from it, "*foreknowledge*," is found in two places, Acts 2, 23; 1. Pet. 1, 2.

The verb "*foreknow*," in Greek "*progignosko*," or, in later Greek, and so in the New Testament, "*proginosko*," is, in Greek as in English, a compound verb, consisting of the preposition "*pro*" (*before, fore*), and the simple verb *gignosko, ginosko*. The latter has the following principal significations: "*To learn to know, to perceive, to mark, and in past tenses, to know; also to discern, distinguish; to observe, and so to form a judgment, to judge, think so and so (Passive, to be pronounced, of a sentence or judgment); to judge, determine, decree cum acc. et infin.; to know carnally.*" These are all the principal significations of this verb in classic or profane Greek writers. According to *Grimm* (*Lexicon Graeco-Latinum in Nov. Testam.*, 1879) this simple verb has the following significations in the New Testament: *To learn to know, to perceive, to know; to know carnally.* According to some, *Cremer* included, this verb is sometimes used in the New Testament as it is used nowhere else, viz. meaning to *stand in a certain (intimate) relation to somebody, or, to enter into such a relation.* This is said to be the case Matt. 7, 23: "I never knew you;" John 10, 14: "I know my sheep, and am known of mine;" 1 Cor. 8, 3: "If any man love God, the same is known of Him;" Gal. 4, 9: "After that ye have known God, or rather are known of God;" Phil. 3, 10: "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings;" 2 Tim. 2, 19: "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His;" 2 Cor. 5, 21: "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin." *Cremer* adds to these Heb. 13, 23: "Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty;" but this is evidently a mistake that ought not to be found in a second edition. In Phil. 3, 10, we cannot only not see any need of departing from the common meaning "*learn to know*," viz. by experience, but we cannot even see how the new signification could be applied here. For what a notion would that be, "to stand in, or enter into an (intimate) relation to

the *fellowship* of His sufferings?" Evidently *Cremer* did not perceive that the latter words are also the object of to "know." In the remaining six passages the new signification would, no doubt, give a good, suitable sense. But the question is, whether this new meaning is necessary to make out a suitable sense of these passages. If this be not the case, no man has a right to adopt the new signification, but by every law of sound hermeneutics and exegesis he is bound to hold to the old and known meaning. Some, indeed, say that when *God* or *Christ* is said to know *somebody*, the verb "to know" *always* has the new signification. But this does not agree with John 2, 24, where it is said, "Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, *because He knew all men.*" What would the application of that new meaning make out of this so very simple and clear sentence! Nothing but the sheerest nonsense: "He did not trust Himself to them, *because He stood in an (intimate) relation to all men!*" The advocates of this new signification try also to strengthen their position by appealing to the Hebrew of the Old Testament, and asserting that the Hebrew equivalent of to "*know*"—*yada*—has the same meaning where it is attributed to *God*. How is this, now?

The venerable *Stock* says in his *Clavis Linguae Sanctae V. T.*: "(*Yada* signifies) by *metonymy*, besides *knowledge*, also *various emotions, affections, and effects that follow knowledge.*" But this is not only the case when *God* is the subject of this verb, but also when *man* is, e. g. Psalm 55, 14 (13): "my acquaintance"=*intimate friend*; Gen. 39, 6: "he *knew* not aught he had"=*he did not concern or trouble himself about it*; Exod. 1, 6: "(the new king) *knew* not Joseph=*did not want to hear anything about him—did not like him*; Prov. 12, 10: "A righteous man *regardeth*"—literally "*knoweth*"—"the life of his beast." Of *God* it is thus used, Psalm 1, 6: "The Lord *knoweth* the way of the righteous"=*loveth, protecteth, etc.*; 31, 8 (7); 37, 18, etc. But it is not true that *whenever* *God* is the subject of the verb to *know* (*yada*), this verb has such a pregnant signification. For example, in Deut. 31, 21: "I *know* their *imagination*," and Psalm 69, 5: "O *God*, Thou *knowest* my *foolishness*," this is surely not the case. From this we see that

it depends wholly and merely upon the *context*, and upon the *object*, whether "*yada*" have such a pregnant meaning or not; whether it be a "*nosse cum affectu et effectu* (to know with affection and effect), or a simple "*nosse*" (to know). And the same applies to "*ginosko*" in the New Testament, as Stock again observes. In the Old as well as in the New Testament, therefore, to "*know*" may denote such a *knowledge* that is *followed by*, or *combined with*, *love, mercy, kindness, protection, etc.* But this depends entirely upon the context, and gives no new meaning to the verb "*to know*" itself; though, for the sake of clearness and brevity, you may sometimes take a new signification that *includes* love, etc.

This signification suffices also for all those passages that are cited by Cremer and others as requiring a new one. "I never knew you," viz. as such who can rightfully call me "Lord," and therefore expect to enter heaven with me, or, more briefly, as my disciples. "I know my sheep," viz. as being *my* sheep, "and am known of mine," viz. as being their own shepherd. "If any man love God, the same is known of Him," viz. as being His beloved and therefore also loving child. "After that ye have known God," viz. as He in reality is, as your loving Father in Christ, whom alone you ought to serve in filial love; "or rather are known of God," viz. as His children. "The Lord knoweth them that are His," viz. as such that are His own. Christ "knew no sin," viz. as we do, as His own, as being committed by Himself. What the object is known to be by the subject, must and can be seen from the context. And this context shows, whether the knowledge of the object is combined with *love* towards it, or not.

Thus, then, the matter stands with regard to the simple verb "*ginosko*"—"to know." Now, let us look at its compound "*pro-ginosko*." In two of the five passages where it is found in the New Testament, it has, as is conceded by every one, undoubtedly the signification that is the common one in profane Greek, viz. to *know, perceive, learn, or understand beforehand or before*. This is the case in Acts 26, 5: "Which *knew* me *from the beginning*," and 2 Pet. 3, 17: "Ye *know* these things *before*." Here it is said of *men*. In the other three passages *God* is the subject of the verb. As we have seen with regard to the simple verb "*ginosko*," that it matters not,

respecting the signification of the verb, whether the subject is *God* or *men*, we will not be likely to fall into a mistake if we take this to be the case also with regard to the compound "pro-ginosko." This difference, of course, must stand, that as the knowledge, so also the accompanying or following love, kindness, mercy, etc., of *God* far surpass those of *men*. There are three passages in classical Greek writers, and these are the only ones, where the best Dictionaries and Commentators attribute to "pro-ginosko" another meaning than "to know before." In one of these, Demosth. 861, 23, they translate it "to judge beforehand," and the object is a *person*; in the second, Thuc. 2, 64, some take the same signification, some translate "to decide, or resolve, beforehand;" in the last, Xenoph. Cyrop. 2, 4, 11, some take the latter translation, some give it by "to provide." And in these two latter cases the object is no person, but a *thing*. No other signification is known in classical Greek.

Let us now examine the passages of the New Testament, where some give to this verb a new and peculiar signification, similar to the one they give to the simple verb. 1. Pet. 1. 20, we read: "(Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:) Who verily was *foreordained* before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." In the Revised Edition of the New Testament, published some time ago, instead of "*foreordained*" we find "*foreknown*." And this justly so. For there is no need at all here to depart from the first and common signification. The sense of the passage is perfectly clear. Christ was "manifested" to men only "in these last times" as the "lamb without blemish and without spot" that was to "redeem" us with His "precious blood." But *God knew Him* as such *before, already in eternity*. That *God also foreordained Him* as such, is true enough; if He had not *foreordained Him*, He would also not have *foreknown Him*. But from this it does not follow that *foreknow* is equivalent to *foreordain*. The latter is here presupposed. So also Bengel and Calov translate and explain

this passage. And as the first and common signification suffices, we have no need, *and no right even*, to take a new one.

The next is Rom. 11, 2: "God hath not cast away His people which He *foreknew*." "Foreknew" as what? The *context* gives the answer, "*as His people*." As such He *knew* them; as such, of course, He *loved* them *already in eternity*; therefore He cannot be supposed to have cast them away. So this passage is understood by the authors of the Weimar Bible, by Balduin, Calov, Philippi, Meyer, Grimm, and a host of others, ancient and modern. There is also here no necessity at all to invent another signification, and therefore no right either.

Rom. 8, 29 is, now, the third and last place where we find this verb "*proginosko*." "For whom He did *foreknow*," the apostle says. "Foreknow" as what? The *context* answers "as such who would *love God* and thereby prove that they are truly *believers in Christ*." But do you not thereby make *love* or *good works* the *cause* of election? perhaps a timid person, made more timid yet by the present controversy about predestination, will ask. But do not be scared, my friend, by the cries and insinuations of men who are more "orthodox" than the Word of God itself, and who, we fear, would brand many a passage of it as flagrantly and undeniably Synergistic and Pelagian, or at least Semi-Pelagian, if it were not found in these very same words in the Bible, but were first uttered by us. By the above interpretation we do no more make love or good works the *cause* of election than Christ in Matt. 26, 34 sq. makes love or good works the *cause* of *salvation*. Compare Balduin: "Here (the foreknowledge of God) is to be taken in a limited sense, namely, according to the subject treated of, as the foreknowledge of the elect, who are in Christ, *who love God*, and to whom all things work together for good." Grimm interprets it in a similar manner. By our interpretation the sense is just the same as if we together with most of our Lutheran theologians would supply: "as such who would believe in Christ to their end." As little as they thereby intend to make *faith* the *cause* of election (*cause* understood in the now usual strict acceptation—efficient—effective—or meritorious cause), as little do we make *love* such a cause. They and we make nothing the cause of election but the mercy of God and the merit of Christ. The latter is



the only meritorious cause. Where God saw it, there He elected. But it can be in no man without faith, and faith can be nowhere without love of God. Whether therefore you say, "God foreknew those who *have the righteousness of Christ,*" or "those who *believe in Christ,*" or "*who love God,*" is the very same thing, if you only do not attribute to faith or love *any merit whatever,* but consider faith only and merely as the God-given hand and instrument that is absolutely necessary to appropriate and accept the merit of Christ, and the love of God only and merely as the absolutely necessary companion, effect, and token of that faith, which truly and really accepts the merit of Christ. Ultimately and after all it is nothing but the merit of Christ that is meant. It is the only *cause.*

And so we see that "proginosko" can be taken in its original and usual signification, even in those three passages in which by some it is said to have a new and peculiar meaning. Our conviction that this first and common signification suffices for all the passages of the New Testament where the verb "proginosko" if found, will not be shaken when we finally look at the two passages where the noun derived from it, viz. "prognosis," occurs. The first is Acts 2, 23. Here Peter says in his Pentecost sermon: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and *foreknowledge* of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Christ was delivered by Judas to the Jews, and by the Jews to Pontius Pilate. And this was *not done accidentally,* or against the will and counsel and foreknowledge of God, but, on the contrary, in accordance with these. According to His will or counsel God had determined *that* Christ should die in our stead, and this His will and counsel was fixed, determinate; and according to His foreknowledge He knew exactly *how* this would be done and come to pass. Without this counsel and foreknowledge of God Judas and the Jews could never have delivered Christ unto death. The adjective "determinate" does not belong to "foreknowledge," because this noun cannot be qualified by such an adjective. And this is also the reason why the article is not repeated before "knowledge," which ought to have been done, and would have been done, if the sense did not already sufficiently show that such a connection is not appropriate. And, being an abstract

noun, "foreknowledge" does not require the definite article before it, even though its sense be definite. The second passage is 1. Pet. 1, 2. Here Peter calls the Christians to whom he addresses his epistle, "elect according to the *foreknowledge* of God the Father." Why here the word "foreknowledge" should not retain its original and usual signification, we cannot see.

But we are told (*Lehre und Wehre*) 1880, p. 198 sq., that "the most recent and, as is universally acknowledged, most versed and clever philologists" (die allerneuesten und anerkanntermassen gewiegtesten Sprachforscher") are opposed to our interpretation of "proginosko." And who were these? Hofmann and Cremer are mentioned. Since when the former, notoriously the most fantastic and arbitrary commentator of the New Testament among all modern "Lutheran" and "believing" exegetes, also in regard to the philological side of interpretation—since when he is such a model of a philologist, we do not know. Nor would *Lehre und Wehre* have given him such praise, if he had not, in this one essential and most important point of its doctrine of predestination, chanced to give them some support. We do not acknowledge von Hofmann as an authority in such a question. We, indeed, never imagined or heard that he was a philologist ("*Sprachforscher*") at all. The second of these model philologists is Cremer. Him we can, in a certain sense, acknowledge as such. But if he is an authority to *Lehre und Wehre* in regard to "proginosko," why not also in regard to "eklegesthai"—"elect?" Here it repudiates his "philological" teaching, while it there sets it up as an authority. For his teaching is in the one case just as "philological" as in the other, or rather just as little.

And what, now, is the new wisdom brought forth by these model philologists who entirely cast into the shade such men as Meyer and Philippi? Hofmann says, and *Lehre und Wehre* adopts his statement as its own: "True knowing is an *appropriating doing*, hence such an one as has for its object knowledge of, or connection with, something that is related or akin" ("ein aneignendes, also Bekanntschaft mit Verwandtem bezweckendes Thun.") This, then, according to that model philologist, von Hofmann, is the true meaning of "yada" or "ginosko." When, therefore, Christ says, "I know my sheep," this

is thus to be understood, "I appropriate my sheep, hence I aim at becoming acquainted or connected with them as creatures that are related or akin to me." If you comprehend and understand this, my dear reader, we may proceed, and learn what "proginosko" means. It is quite easy and intelligible! Here it is: "It is a doing that has directed itself to an object of knowledge, before it existed, so as to appropriate it, a doing that has, in advance, made it the object of a knowing, just as something related and similar is known" ("ein Thun, welches sich auf den Erkenntnissgegenstand, ehe er war, aneignungsweise gerichtet, ihn im Voraus zum Gegenstande eines Kennens, wie man das Verwandte und Gleichartige kennt, gemacht hat." And Cremer says: "Proginoskein (to know before) denotes the divine ginoskein (to know) as existing already before its appearance in history, in the divine counsel of salvation; the union of God with the objects of His counsel of salvation, which union is already contained in such counsel, and therefore already existing before the execution of the latter." ("Prog. bezeichnet das goettliche gin. als schon vor seiner geschichtlichen Erscheinung im goettlichen Heilsrathschluss vorhanden, die in dem Heilsrathschluss gesetzte, demgemaess schon vor seiner Vollziehung vorhandene Verbindung Gottes mit den Objecten desselben.")

We have not now time or space to follow or criticise the application of these definitions by *Lehre und Wehre*, but must leave this to every reader who is interested in it. Only this question we will yet append: Supposing, but not conceding, the above signification of "proginosko," as it is given by Hofmann, Cremer, and *Lehre und Wehre*, were tenable, could God, according to His holiness and justice, in eternity enter into such a union with any man without presupposing and foreseeing in him the merit of Christ accepted by faith? Could God enter into such an intimate relation with any man without this man's pleasing Him? And could any man please Him without faith (Heb. 11, 6)? We will close our already somewhat lengthy article by paraphrasing the passage whose two most important expressions we have hitherto considered. According to our conception the sense of Rom. 8, 28-30, is this: "We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, and therefore truly believe in Christ and

are the children of God, and this because they are called according to God's purpose. For according to this purpose (Eph. 1, 10 sq.) He has already in eternity foreordained them, as those whom He already in eternity in grace knew as His own beloved and loving children, to be conformed to the image of His Son also in regard to glory (as well as they here on earth have to partake in His afflictions), in order that He may have many brethren and companions in His glory. And those whom He already in eternity has foreordained thereto, those He in time leads now thereto upon the only possible way, preordained by Himself, viz. He calls, justifies, and glorifies them. And to these belong also those that are mentioned, v. 28, viz. those that love God. Consequently no affliction can do them any real harm; on the contrary, all must work together for their good. For the purpose, according to which they are called, is immutable."

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### IS ELECTION ABSOLUTE, OR IN VIEW OF FAITH?

Translated from Dr. H. G. Masius' "Brief View of the Difference between the true Ev. Lutheran and the Reformed Doctrine."\*

VII QUESTION. Whether Election took place from eternity, according to the arbitrary will and absolute counsel of God—without respect to faith and to the merits of Christ? The Lutherans say *Nay*; The Reformed say *Yea*!

That God, according to His mere will and pleasure, regardless of faith founded on the merits of Christ, did elect certain men, has ever been a persistent doctrine of all the Reformed, who bind themselves to their symbolical Books and subscribe to the Canons of the Synod of Dort. And

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\* This excellent little work was published in 1691 at Copenhagen, where the author was court preacher and professor, and where he died in 1709. Dr. Walther said of the book, years ago, in *Lehre und Wehre* that it is the best of its class among the older works, and that "as well on account of its earnestly mild spirit of truth in love as on account of the clearness and solidity of its proofs it is far preferable to many other similar works."

though some indeed admit that gracious election did not take place entirely regardless of the merits of Christ and of faith, still they do not mean that God from eternity elected those of whom He foresaw that they would believe and accept the merits of Christ, but that He elected some few according to His purely absolute will, that they might believe in time. Hence they do not look upon faith as conditioning the election of grace, but merely as a necessary result of such election. Concerning which see Canons of the Synod of Dort, pp. 342 and 524. Molinæus in Synod Dordac. Sess. 141 p. 936. dryly says: "I know of no election of grace with respect to faith, whether faith be placed as a cause of election, or as a preceding condition. God did not elect us because we believe, but that we might believe. (*Deus non eligit nos ex fide, sed ad fidem.*) Massonius part 1. C. 42, p. 1514: "Because faith is the gift of God, therefore He did not foresee it in us, and base His election upon it." And that we may see, more clearly still, the opinions of the Reformed, I will quote the words of the Heidelberg Cat. p. 577, where it reads as follows: "Why does God elect one before the other, Isaac before Ishmael, Jacob before Esau, when they are alike depraved by sin?" The answer immediately follows: "We can show no reason except God's good pleasure, will, design, and because it so pleases Him. See Rom. ix, 15, 16, 18, 21. 'I will have mercy,' &c. And it is but just that we should exclaim with the apostle, Rom. xi, 33: 'Oh, the depths of the riches,' &c. See also Exodus xxxiii, 19; Matt. xi, 25-26, and xx, 15; Luke xii, 32; John v, 21, and xv, 16, 17. Eph. i, 5. 'Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will'; v. 9-11 and chap. 2, 8." Soon after the question is asked in the Explan. of the Heid. Cat.: "Is not a something in the elect, a respect to faith, or obedience, or conversion, or perseverance, or something of the kind, a cause, or a preceding condition, upon which God elects?" Answer, *Nay!* Acts xiii, 48: "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Rom. viii, 30; Eph. i, 3-4; 2 Tim. i, 9. "Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." From this the

reader will again see, that this verily is the doctrine of the Reformed.

The passages however which they adduce we shall soon answer, after having first substantiated by God's Word the true doctrine.

#### PROOF OF THE LUTHERANS.

The Lutheran doctrine is this, according to the Scriptures: That God indeed has compassion upon all men, that Christ died for all, that the means of grace are likewise offered unto all, but that God has also foreseen who would believe in Christ and persevere in such faith unto the end; these He has determined for Christ's sake to save, and these are they whom the Scriptures term the elect. But those of whom God foresaw that they would willfully remain in impenitence and unbelief unto the end, He resolved to punish, on account of this their impenitence, with eternal damnation, and these are they whom we term reprobate.

From this then we see that God has rejected none out of absolute hate and an unconditional decree, but on account of unbelief; and that He, on the other hand, has elected none out of mere good pleasure and will—but with respect to faith in Christ Jesus.

That now election did not take place regardless of any consideration whatever, but with respect to faith in Jesus Christ, we prove by the following passages and reasons.

1.) Eph. i, 4. 5: God "hath chosen us in Him (Christ) before the foundation of the world." If we then are chosen *in Christ*, then are we not chosen without faith, for whoever is without faith is not *in Christ*, but out of Him. If we are chosen in Christ, then we are chosen in consideration of His merits, for without the merits of Christ we are out of Him. Verse 5 reads: "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children." The adoption of children however is founded on the faith that apprehends Christ, as St. John teaches, chap. 1, 12: "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name;" so also Ephes. i, 5, God "predestinated us by Christ Jesus to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will." The good pleasure, however, of God by

Christ Jesus includes faith. For thus saith our Savior, John vi, 40: "And this is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life."

2.) 2 Thess. ii, 13: "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." Here behold it explicitly stated, that we are chosen through belief of the truth. See also James ii, 5; Titus i, 1.

3.) 1 Pet. i, 2; Rom. viii, 29, it is stated that we are predestinated according to the foreknowledge of God. But what else did God foresee in us, than faith? (For our good works had no merit in His eyes, but "the just shall live by his faith." Habak. ii, 4.)

4.) Heb. xi, 6. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." In election God hath now had pleasure in some before others: hence He assuredly must have foreseen faith in them;

5.) By grace God "hath made us accepted in the Beloved," Ephes. i, 6. But the grace of God finds no room with sinners, as long as satisfaction has not been rendered to the righteousness of God: therefore is all grace founded in Jesus Christ; and hence it follows, that election did not take place without Christ, but in Him, and in consideration of His merits apprehended by faith. Had God chosen any one unto eternal life, without respect to any satisfaction whatever for sin, which Christ has rendered and grants us through faith, then would the righteousness of God have been violated, for this suffers no sinner to be received into favor without satisfaction. But that which the sinner has not in himself he finds in Christ, as the propitiation for our sins, and apprehends by faith the ransom in His blood; and in consideration of this, election took place; yea, by virtue of the righteousness of God it could not have taken place otherwise. For if God, without violation of his righteousness, regardless of the merits of Christ, could have chosen to life, then He also could have saved men without the merits, sufferings, and death of His Son, and Christ's sufferings would not have been necessary.

6.) Finally, we may likewise note this incontrovertible conclusion: The same cause that induces God to save men in time, likewise induces Him to save, that is elect them, from

eternity. Now God, however, does not save men in time simply on account of His good pleasure, but through faith in Christ; therefore He must likewise, on account of faith in Christ, have chosen them.

The first member of the above proposition is certainly correct; for as God in time acts, so He beforehand determined to act, and He could not otherwise have determined to do than He does, since He is unchangeable in His being and will. The second member, that God in time saves men through faith in Christ, is equally evident: Mark xvi, "He that believeth shall be saved!" It therefore follows, that God elected with respect to faith.

#### OBJECTIONS OF THE REFORMED.

We have above, from the Explan. of the Heid. Cat., cited the principal objections of the Reformed, which we shall now briefly answer:

1. *Objection.* Rom ix, 15-18, we read: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy. Therefore hath He mercy," etc.

*Answer.* This passage is not opposed to us. God certainly has mercy on whom He will. "And this is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life," says Christ. John vi, 40. It is true, no man merits God's mercy, no man with works can acquire God's grace; but it therefore does not follow that the grace of election should exclude faith as well as works. On the contrary, God hath chosen none from eternity, of whom He has not foreseen, that they would persevere in faith unto the end.

Yea, sayest thou, man of himself cannot believe, God must give him faith.

*Answer.* True; and therefore God also gives the means of faith; but man can reject such means and resist the Holy Spirit, as, alas! most men do. But concerning the words, "He hardeneth whom He will," it has already been shown above, how these words are to be understood; and when it is here stated, "He hardeneth whom He will," it does not follow that God, according to His antecedent will, or mere good



pleasure hardens any one; but He, according to His consequent will and righteous judgment, withdraws His grace from the evil and obstinate. As to the example of the potter, the conclusion is this: Hath a potter power out of one lump to make a vessel unto honor and another to dishonor, then should not God have power to break the vessels of wrath? (which He did not prepare, but which became vessels of wrath by their own wickedness and Satan's power,) and yet He endures them with much long-suffering, v. 22. Here we find not a single word indicating that God, *ex absoluto decreto*, according to His mere good pleasure, chooses one and rejects the other. Here it does not state that God fits a vessel of wrath, but that He *endures* the vessels of wrath with much long-suffering. Were God Himself to make the vessels of wrath, then they would be no vessels of wrath, or worthy of punishment; for at that, which God Himself makes after His own good will, He cannot be angry, nor can He punish it. But because the whole 9th chapter unto the Romans is so badly abused by the Reformed, we shall more fully consider it further on, and clearly set forth the true meaning of the apostle.

2. *Objection.* Rom. xi, 33, reads: "O, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; how unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!" Therefore no cause can be shown in man, why God elected the one and rejected the other.

*Answer* 1. The words of the apostle treat not of election or of the work of salvation, not of the revealed will of God, but of God's hidden will in His divine judgments, which of course is unknown to us. But in that which pertains to the work of salvation, God has assuredly revealed His will, concerning which Christ says, John xv, 15: "All things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you;" and Paul, Acts xx, 27: "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." The counsel of God however consists in this, Mark xvi, 16: "He that believeth shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." According to this, then, the apostle's exclamation does not refer to the will of God concerning our salvation, (much less to an absolute decree, for he declared in verse 32. that God has

mercy upon all) but to the hidden will of God in His holy and unsearchable judgments. 2. By this, however, we would in no wise deny that in the particulars of the divine vocation to man, there are many things incomprehensible to us. For example, why God has called this one in a more glorious manner than the other, shows more favor to one people than to others. Here we must truly lay our hand upon our mouth, but at the same time confess, that God hath appointed sufficient means of salvation unto all men, and that He in election and reprobation kept in view who would accept and who would reject these means.

3. *Objection.* Ephes. i, 5: "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Christ Jesus to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will," verse 9-11; chap. ii, 8; 2 Tim. i. To which they also add: Exod. xxxiii, 19; Matt. xi, 25, 26; xx, 15; Luke xii, 42; John v, 21, etc.

*Answer.* We do not deny, that God predestinated us according to the good pleasure of His will. We however have learned from the Scriptures what His good and gracious will is; namely, as Christ says, John vi. 40: "This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life." We reverse the argument; because election took place according to the good pleasure of His will, therefore it did not take place without respect to faith, since "without faith it is impossible to please God," Heb. xi, 6; and only those please Him who are in Christ Jesus, as the beloved Son, in whom He is well pleased, Matt. iii. 17. In addition to this, since it is said in the above cited place, that we are predestinated unto the adoption of children, therefore predestination in no wise took place regardless of faith, because the adoption of children is only through faith. If election took place according to faith, then it did not take place at random—according to a blind, inconsiderate decree.

But, they say, what was not, God could not consider in gracious election; human faith now did not yet exist, when He from eternity elected, therefore God could not have looked upon faith.

*Answer.* Although faith is not yet actually present, still it was as it were present unto God's foreknowledge. There-

fore Peter says: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God," 1 Peter i, 2. Even as the elect themselves were not yet present, when God elected them before the foundations of the world were laid, so also not their faith; however, they, as well as their faith, were present unto the foreseeing eye of God.

4. *Objection.* It is said, Acts xiii, 48, "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed."—Hence, say they, is faith not a cause or condition of election, but on the other hand, election is the cause of faith, faith being rather the necessary result.

*Answer.* 1. In the above quoted words not a letter is adverse to us, for we willingly grant that those who are elected unto eternal life, certainly become believing in time; but we likewise teach that God from eternity saw their faith, as Paul teaches, Rom. viii, 29. 30; "For whom He did foreknow, (namely as such who would perseveringly believe,) He also did predestinate," call, choose, justify in time. 2. The words: "As many as were ordained to eternal life" may likewise read: As many as stood in the order of the means of salvation, and accepted such means, who resisted not the divine order, but received the word with joy. Such ordained, or such as obeyed the order of God, are opposed to those who, verse 49, rejected the word and counted themselves unworthy of eternal life.

5. *Objection.* In 2 Tim. i, 9, it is stated that God saves us "not according to our works, but according to His holy purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Hence He elected us without respect to faith.

*Answer.* Although God, in His gracious election, did not look upon our works, He nevertheless did look upon faith; even as also in justification we are not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Christ Jesus. As God justifies none in time except through faith, so also He has elected none except in view of faith.

6. *Objection.* If God in gracious election had looked upon faith as a motive for election, then man would have elected Christ, which is opposed to the words of Christ, John xv, 16, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you," and against

1 Cor. iv, 7: "Who maketh thee to differ from another, and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?"

*Answer:* Did we teach that God, in gracious election, had looked upon our works and merits as a meritorious cause, then this objection might have some weight; but since faith is not our work nor our merit, but the gift of God, therefore the praise of election redounded to God alone, who by grace adopted us to sonship; and as we in justification, in which God saves us through faith alone, have nothing whereof to boast, as though we had preferred ourselves, so likewise all our glorying vanishes, though God in election did look upon our faith; for faith founds itself not upon us, but upon the merits of Christ.

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THE great Lutheran theologian, Dr. Leonard Hutter, writes as follows:

"Do you therefore state that God has elected men with respect to foreseen faith? What else should I state, when the Holy Scriptures with exceeding clearness declare the truth? The apostle affirms, Eph. 1, 5, that God has predestinated us unto the adoption of children. But now Christ gives the power to become sons of God, not to those who have been born of blood, or the will of the flesh, or of the will of man, but of God, i. e., according to the interpretation of John, those 'who believe on His name.'" John 1, 22. Hence the Savior, describing the elect, says: 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.' John 17, 20. 'God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.' 2 Thess. 2, 13. In 1 Tim. 1, 16, the apostle speaks of the elect as those 'which should hereafter believe on Christ to life everlasting.' 'Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith?' James 2, 5. Hence the *Épitome* of the Form of Concord correctly infers that God in His eternal counsel has decreed to save none but those who confess His Son Jesus Christ, and truly believe in Him. Form. Conc., Sol. Dec. 11, 67." Comp. Theol. Art. 13. qu. 27.

# T H E COLUMBUS THEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE

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Vol. I.

OCTOBER, 1881.

No. 5.

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## ELECTION AND JUSTIFICATION.

Missouri teaches that God elected unto faith, not in view of faith, those whom He purposed to save. If this meant merely that God seeks lost souls and through His appointed means works the faith in those who believe, as He desires to work it in all, no objection would lie against it. No Lutheran denies that whenever a soul has been led to believe, the faith was wrought by God alone. But what is meant is that God by His eternal decree of election singles out those whom He purposes to save, and that in regard to these He unalterably decrees that they shall believe. He selects from the ruined mass certain individuals, and these, Dr. Walther says, "shall and must be saved, and no others." The doctrine of our great theologians, that God foresaw the faith wrought by the means appointed for all men alike, and that the decree of election pertains to those who thus stood before His omniscient eye as believers, according to the revealed rule, "He that believeth shall be saved," is rejected, and for it is substituted the doctrine that God, according to the good pleasure of His will, selected some whom he chose to save and in whom accordingly He resolved to work faith. The decree of election is placed before faith, as well in foresight as in fact, and is declared to be the cause of faith. Missourians deny, indeed, that they, like the Calvinists, teach election to be absolute, because they place the redemption first, as the ground upon which alone any soul could be saved. But practically the difference is not great between saying that

God selects certain individuals whom He is resolved to save and whom therefore He redeems, calls, justifies and glorifies, and saying that God selects certain individuals from the redeemed race whom He is resolved to save, and whom He therefore calls, justifies and glorifies. If election is *unto* faith, and all consideration of man's conduct over against the grace when offered in time is rejected as synergistic error, the sovereign will of God must determine all. He who is chosen unto salvation must become a believer, and He who is not chosen cannot be saved.

It is worthy of earnest inquiry whether such a theory does not materially change the doctrine which our church, in plain accordance with Holy Scripture, has ever taught in regard to the necessity of faith unto justification and salvation. The Missourians have repeatedly protested that they do not teach an election without faith, although their language is not always assuring. They allege that when God elects an individual to salvation He also resolves, at the same time, to give that individual faith in Christ. Without such faith, they are willing to say, no one can please God. So far it is well enough. But that does not yet settle the matter. If God can, without any consideration of the appropriation of Christ by faith, decide that a person shall infallibly be saved, so that he is elected to salvation before, in the eye of God, he possesses faith, the decree of election being the cause of his faith, the appropriation of Christ cannot be a necessary prerequisite for salvation, as it was not a necessary prerequisite for the election to salvation. Dr. Walther virtually admits the correctness of the argument when he says: "The doctrine, according to which God ordains sinners to salvation without Christ and without faith, certainly does overthrow the whole Gospel of Christ, without whom there is no salvation, and of faith, without which there is no good pleasure of God in men."\* Missourians do not indeed say that election took place without any regard to Christ. They expressly say that we are predestinated in Christ. But they give themselves no little trouble to make it appear that this scriptural expression does not mean that those who are elected were seen in Christ by faith. Their view is rather this, that the whole

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\* Lehre u. Wehre, Vol. 27, 357.

human race was redeemed by our blessed Lord, and that in virtue of this redemption it was possible to save those whom God pleased to elect—to save all, indeed, if He had been pleased to elect all. When we maintain that God could definitely and infallibly declare only of those who did not pertinaciously resist the grace of God unto salvation, or, as our dogmaticians generally express it, who, by the grace of God, were led to believe in Christ, they denounce us as synergists. The fundamental thought which runs through their publications is that God by His sovereign authority determines who shall be saved, and therefore who shall be made believers, and that every appeal to the fact that men have something to do with the matter, according to our Lord's words, "Ye would not come to me that ye might have life," is Pelagian error that detracts from the glory of God. But if God, independently of any opportunities that may be given to men to resist the Holy Ghost or by grace to receive Christ, and therefore merely by His sovereign will, determines which of those who are alike redeemed by the sacrifice of Christ shall be saved, the appropriation of Christ, though it follows upon the decree of election, is not necessary to salvation, because it is not a prerequisite to the infallible ordination to salvation. If God can promise and infallibly guarantee eternal life to one who is yet in his eye an unbeliever, there is nothing to hinder His bestowal of eternal life upon that unbeliever, even though he should remain in his unbelief. He is already justified in God's sight when God declares that He shall and must be saved. According to the Scriptures he is doomed to die. Grace may be offered him to salvation, as it is the will of God that all should be saved, but the promise of eternal life is only to those who believe. To unbelievers as such only death is declared. "He that believeth not is condemned already." John 3, 18. Christ did indeed bear our penalties and redeem our souls from death, but not in such wise that all or any are thus freed from condemnation without faith. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3, 16. Without the faith that appropriates the merits of Christ it is impossible to please God. If He guarantees salvation

to an individual, that individual must have all that is necessary to salvation. If He guarantees salvation to one who is yet an unbeliever, faith is not necessary to salvation. He is in the decree of God saved already, and the claim that faith must be bestowed can be put forth only to meet the requirements of Scripture, which, if God decrees that souls that are yet in unbelief shall be saved, have lost all meaning, and remain but a form. Justification by faith becomes justification by the arbitrary will of God, who resolves to save or not to save whom He pleases, even though it be taught that He leads to faith those whom He has before resolved to save, and who therefore before possessed everything that in His sight was necessary to salvation.

The words of Luther are well worthy of close attention in this connection. He says: "Others entertain different thoughts and thus explain the words: 'Many are called,' that is, God offers His grace to many, 'but few are chosen,' that is, but He bestows His grace upon few, because few are saved. That is indeed an ungodly interpretation. For how would it be possible, if one thus thinks and believes, that he should not on this account be an enemy of God, whose will alone is the fault that not all are saved?\*" But when this opinion is compared with that which is entertained when we have first learned to know Christ, it will be found to be nothing but satanic blasphemy. Therefore the sense of the passage, 'Many are called,' is quite different. For the preaching of the Gospel is general and public, for any one that wants to hear and receive it; and God provides for its general and public proclamation that every one may hear, believe and accept it, and be saved. But what takes place? What the Gospel afterward states, 'Few are chosen,' that is, but few so conduct themselves towards the Gospel that God can be well pleased with them; for some hear but do not heed it; some hear but do not keep it, and are unwilling to

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\* That the Missouri doctrine is, or at least was recently, that which Luther here so earnestly condemns, must be evident to every unbiassed person when he reads in the minutes of the Northern District of the Missouri Synod of 1868 the words: "The pure doctrine of predestination is such that reason is shocked at it, and cannot judge otherwise than that God is a dreadful tyrant."



make any sacrifice or endure any suffering for it; some hear it, but care more for money and goods and the pleasures of this world. But this does not please God, and He does not accept such people. This Christ calls not being chosen, that is, not so conducting themselves that God could have pleasure in them. But those are chosen persons that are well-pleasing to God who diligently hear the Gospel, believe in Christ, show their faith by good fruits, and suffer on this account what is laid upon them."\* Those who please Him God elects. "But without faith it is impossible to please Him." Heb. 11, 6. Only of those that believe has God declared that they shall be saved. Justification and salvation are by faith. But this whole doctrine is overthrown when it is taught that God, prior to the contemplation of the sinner as a believer and without any regard to faith, selected an individual from the mass of condemned sinners and decreed his salvation. Such a person must have had, before his salvation could be unalterably decreed, all that was necessary in God's sight unto such salvation; and as faith was not yet present in the divine view, but the election was that of a sinner *unto* faith, the appropriation of Christ's merits by faith could not be a prerequisite to eternal life. The only place that faith can occupy in such a system is that of a stage through which the saved must pass on their way to glory, just as they are appointed unto good works and tribulations. In such a theory faith has no more to do with our salvation than works; both are required, and for both provision is made in the chosen ones; but that which determines the individual's salvation is only the divine election, made without consideration of faith as well as of good works.

It is only an effort to mislead the unwary when the cry is raised that grace is disparaged when stress is laid upon faith as indispensable to salvation. There is no such opposition between grace and faith as there is between grace and merit or works, because faith is the only means of appropriating the only merit which can avail for our justification. "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." Eph. 2, 8. 9. In these words the apostle sets

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\* Werke, Erl. 2, 85. 86.

before us a truth of vital importance. Any doctrine that ascribes the salvation of the soul to man's power or merit undermines the Gospel and gives to man the glory which belongs to God alone. Divine grace and human merit are opposites. If we are saved by grace, it cannot be by our merit; if we are saved by our merit, it cannot be by grace. Hence if our salvation is the gift of grace alone, the glory of it belongs to God alone; if it is by merit, the glory belongs to man who has merited that salvation, and in the degree in which he has merited it. Grace is God's unmerited favor.

But it is necessary to observe that the opposition is not between grace and faith, but between grace and works. The apostle does not say that we are saved by grace and not by faith, but "by grace are ye saved through faith." It is "not of works, lest any man should boast." The argument is: "If by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work." Rom. 11, 6. If God bestows His gifts upon us by His gratuitous favor, we cannot have merited them by our works; for what we have thus merited cannot be bestowed upon us gratuitously, that is, without any claim on our part. But if the gift is imparted because of our meritorious work, it cannot be bestowed by the mere unmerited favor of God; for if it were, the work could not be the means of securing it. If God bestows salvation gratis, He cannot bestow it because, on account of our works, He owes it to us. But that which is said in regard to the opposition between grace and works is not said and does not hold with regard to grace and faith. This will be clearer still if we look at the apostle's argument in another passage. He says: "If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the Scriptures? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. Now, to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Rom. 4, 2-5. Abraham was a man of many virtues and might well be called a just man. But in the best case that would give him something to glory in before men. Before God he could have no right to glory,

since the Lord sees imperfections and blemishes in the best of human works. That which was counted to him for righteousness was not his work, but his faith. If it had been his work, then it would have been a mere act of justice, not of grace and mercy, to pronounce him justified. The reward would have been a debt, and he could justly have claimed it. But it was of grace, not of debt, because his faith, not his work, was counted to him for righteousness, inasmuch as that faith embraced the promised Messiah with all His righteousness acquired for man. Justification is by faith in the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and therefore can not be by human work or merit, but is by grace. That is the ground of the sinner's comfort in view of sin and death and the judgment. He can do nothing to render himself acceptable in God's sight and must, so far as he fixes his gaze upon his own powers, be in perpetual dread of death. But as he holds to the perfect righteousness of Jesus by faith, he has the assurance that there is no condemnation to him, since the blood of Jesus cleanses him from all sin.

There is nothing plainer than that the Son of God came into the world to save our whole lost race, and that those actually are saved who believe on His name. They are saved by the faith which apprehends the merit of Christ and makes it their own personal possession, so that they have that righteousness which avails before God. The rest are not saved because they have not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God, and therefore have nothing wherewith to appear before Him but their own unrighteousness, on account of which they are already condemned. This is the burden of all Scripture teaching. Salvation is secured in Christ for all men, but it is a treasure which only those possess and realize who believe. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16, 16. "This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life." John 6, 40. It is needless to multiply texts in proof of a doctrine which is set forth on almost every page of Scripture, but it is needful to bring this doctrine clearly and fully before the mind in order to form a correct estimate of the theory brought to view in Missouri publications. Espe-

cially should it be observed that the doctrine of salvation by faith is set forth as the opposite of salvation by human work and merit. We are saved through the merit of Christ, not through our own merit; that which avails for us before God is our blessed Savior's righteousness, not our own; and this merit and righteousness are ours by faith. Hence salvation by faith excludes all creature merit and cuts off all boasting on the part of the sinner, as it is salvation through Christ alone and therefore by grace alone. "Now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference: for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God: to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness, that He might be just, and the justifier of Him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay, but by the law of faith." Rom. 3, 21-27. It is precisely the fact that salvation is wrought out by the obedience of our Savior as our substitute under the law, fulfilling all righteousness for us and bearing the penalty of our transgression, and that this salvation is through the righteousness of another, which is imputed to us by faith, not through our own righteousness, that all merit on our part and therefore all reason for boasting is excluded. "The promise that he should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void and the promise of none effect: because the law worketh wrath; for where no law is there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham." Rom. 4, 13-16. The apostle argues that the promise cannot rest upon any merit secured by man under the law, because if men are saved by their own righteousness, the righteousness

of faith apprehending Christ in the promise is set aside and the promise is made of no effect; for what need could there be for a gracious promise of salvation in Christ, without any merit of ours, if we could have a righteousness of our own under the law, the impossibility of which, moreover, is manifest from the fact that the law only condemns us as transgressors? "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace." According to the Scriptures there is not only no opposition between grace and faith, as there is between grace and works, but there is such a relation between them that the one always implies the other. If salvation is by grace, it must be by faith, which alone embraces Christ's merits, so that we can be justified without any merit of ours; if it is by faith, which puts on Christ and appropriates His righteousness, it must be without any merit of our own and therefore by grace.

Unquestionably, if faith itself were represented as a work which carries with it, by its own inherent virtue, the righteousness which avails before God and secures our justification in His presence, the whole representation would be unscriptural and false. We cannot persuade ourselves that the Missourians have any thought that our old theologians had any such belief, and we are sure that they have had no reason to impute such notions to us. When they reject the doctrine of our Lutheran theologians, that election is in view of faith, they do so in full view of the fact that faith is always regarded as embracing Christ, and that the question is not whether a soul must by its own strength believe and thus acquire some righteousness of its own before God can decree its salvation, but whether Christ must first be embraced before God can look upon a person as His child and heir. When the Scriptures say that a person is elected unto sonship and the eternal inheritance, so that such elect person must infallibly inherit everlasting life, the question is whether it is true that "as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name," John 1, 12, or whether this order must be reversed, so that God from eternity elects His children and in such election singles out those who shall accept Him and believe on His name. The latter Missouri sets forth as the gospel, and thus undermines the doctrine that only when the righteous-

ness of our blessed Savior is made ours by the faith of the operation of God can we be justified and saved.

That the doctrine of justification by faith is thus placed in jeopardy is plain to the view. According to God's revealed order of salvation He cannot eternally save the soul that has not the righteousness of Christ, which is appropriated only by faith. But the Missouri doctrine of election claims that He selects those whom He designs to save, and infallibly decrees their salvation, without any foresight of faith. The divine declaration, "He that believeth shall be saved," is translated into the proposition, He whom God pleases shall and must be saved. True, it is admitted that whom He pleases to save He pleases to save only in the way of faith and holiness. But He has determined to save them. That, when His omniscience looks out into time, He may see some stubborn wills resisting the Holy Ghost, is not to be taken into account. Dr. Walther insists that it is synergistic to maintain that any "consideration of man's conduct in reference to the grace and salvation offered" precedes the decree of election. If his mind had not been unduly warmed and warped by the heat of controversy, he would no doubt see that in his anxiety to make us appear synergists he blocks up his own way of escape from Calvinism. What if, when the means of grace are brought to men, some of the elect, whose conduct in reference to the grace offered was not taken into consideration in the formation of the decree, should be among those of whom the Savior says "ye would not?" Of course they could not be, it will be answered. But why not? Does the decree of election render it impossible for any one to whom it pertains to resist? So say the Calvinists. Missouri does not like the language; but when it declares that election takes place without any consideration of man's conduct in reference to the grace and salvation offered, what is left but that God determines who among the lost shall be saved and who shall not? The baldest Determinism is thus involved in the Missouri theory, and the doctrine that we are saved by grace through faith apprehending the merits of Christ is changed into the doctrine that we are saved by the absolute will and almighty power of God.

Dr. Walther says: "As little as, e. g. the doctrine that the

call is not given intuitu fidei conflicts with the doctrine of justification by faith alone, but as truly, on the contrary, as these two doctrines, notwithstanding that the call does not take place intuitu fidei, are in the fullest harmony with each other and the one rather presupposes and confirms the other, —so little does the doctrine that election does not take place intuitu fidei conflict with the doctrine of justification by faith alone, but so surely are these in the fullest harmony with each other and presuppose and mutually confirm each other.”\* That sounds well and seems reasonable. But it is deceptive. Certainly no one would think of claiming that the gospel call is given in view of faith, whether foreseen or actual. When one is called it is that he may come to Christ. He is called to salvation, and that not because he is a believer, but that he may come to faith and by faith be saved. So one may be elected to become a believer, and by faith be led to everlasting salvation. The analogy seems perfect, and the case seems decided against the intuitu fidei. But only hasty readers who do not reflect are misled by such pretended analogies where none exists. The cases are totally unlike, and the whole thing is a tissue of sophistry. Let any reader consider a moment and this will be apparent. The call to faith and salvation is not intuitu fidei. Why? Because the call is designed for all men, and is an act of God by which He would bring all men to that which is designed for all. One may be called, but reject the call and be lost. Faith is not necessary in order to be called, because the call is meant to bring them to that which is necessary for salvation, and many are called who are not saved. The call makes no distinction among men; it is universal; and one need not have faith to be one of the human race whom God calls to salvation. Is the same true of election in the sense in which Dr. Walther uses the word? If so, we have no controversy with him. As soon as he grants that election, like the call, embraces all men, we shall grant at once that, in that sense, election can not be intuitu fidei, simply because faith is not necessary in order to be a man. But when he says that election embraces only a comparatively small portion of the race, and maintains that all the elect, and no

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\* *Lehre und Wehre*, Vol. 26, 353.

others, are saved, a Bible reader can not help asking the question: Why does God make such a difference between men who are alike under condemnation by nature and alike redeemed by the blood of Christ? Why does He elect one and not the other? And he finds in his Bible the answer that "he that believeth shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." The believer shall be saved, the unbeliever shall not; hence the believer can, according to God's revealed plan, be elected to salvation, the unbeliever can not. God can not, without reference to faith, secure to a man by an irrevocable decree a thing which, according to His own Word, is not obtainable otherwise than by faith. If faith alone obtains it, faith must be in a person, either in fact or in foresight, before God can unchangeably ordain that it shall be his. A foresight of faith is not necessary to call a man, because the call does not imply any decision of the question whether the called person shall be saved or not. He may pertinaciously resist the call and be lost. Whether he shall be saved or damned is, humanly speaking, yet to be decided—because, though he has not in himself the power to believe, he has the power to resist, and the call is the means which leads to the decision. Many are called, but not all the called are chosen. How then could faith be necessary in order to be called? But with election the case is entirely different. It does not refer to all; it applies only to those who shall infallibly be saved. But only those shall infallibly be saved who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. According to the divinely revealed plan salvation is by faith alone. How then could God decree that this or that man shall infallibly be saved without regard to the faith which He Himself declare to be absolutely necessary to salvation? We know the Missouri answer. God can choose unto salvation whom He pleases, and give faith to whom He chooses. But the Bible teaches that He wants to save all men and that whosoever believeth shall be saved. He will justify and save no one but the believer, because no one else has the righteousness that can avail before Him. A called person may be lost, and therefore does not, in order to be called, need the faith which is absolutely necessary to salvation; an elect person is one whose salvation God has decreed, and He could not have de-



creed it in opposition to His own revealed purpose that only "he that believeth shall be saved." Dr. Walther is acute and learned; we have been accustomed to regard him as honest and earnest; but his fallacy, whatever may have led to it, is transparent. The unbelieving sinner may be called and still be lost, and therefore there is nothing inconsistent with the gospel plan of salvation by faith in saying that faith is not necessary as a prerequisite; but the unbelieving sinner can not be elected to the infallible attainment of that salvation from which unbelief excludes, and therefore there is a contradiction to the Gospel in saying that he can be elected without any regard to faith. It is merely Calvinistic error to say that God determines first who shall be saved and then executes His decree in spite of all resistance. And even this refuge does not save the doctrine of justification by faith, as Dr. Walther himself admits.

Rightly considered, there is a close analogy between the relation of faith to justification on the one hand and to election on the other, not a great difference, as Dr. Walther would have us believe. God can not declare the individual personally justified without reference to faith, because faith is the only means by which man can appropriate the only righteousness which avails before Him. Without faith he is condemned, notwithstanding the general justification proclaimed to all men in the Gospel, which he has not appropriated. Faith is indispensable to his personal and actual justification. But as God cannot justify the condemned individual without first bringing him to faith, so that he may possess the righteousness which forms the only ground of his justification, so He cannot elect an individual, that is, irrevocably determine that such an individual shall and must be justified and saved, without regard to that which He Himself has declared to be necessary for such justification and salvation, and which He has not arbitrarily declared so, but which is necessary to render it possible, according to His whole revealed plan of salvation. If God can elect a person to salvation, so that such person's salvation is infallibly secured by the election, without reference to the question whether he has embraced the merits without the appropriation of which salvation is impossible, He can also save that

person without any reference to this question. Who shall be saved and who not can then no more be decided by the rule, "He that believeth shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned," but must be decided by the arbitrary will of God, which chooses to save one and does not choose to save another. Look at it from what side we may, the Missouri theory always leads to the same uncomfortable point where the bad odors of Calvinism sicken the soul.

Our great dogmaticians have therefore uniformly argued that because faith is necessary to justification the foresight of faith must also be necessary to election. Thus Aegidius Hunnius wrote in the year 1597: "The eighth proof is drawn from a comparison of the decree of predestination confirmed from eternity and the execution of the same in time, namely thus: God in His decree of predestination from eternity determined to save none other than those whom He saves in time. But He saves only believers in Christ. Therefore also in that decree of predestination He did not decree or determine to save, or what is the same thing, to predestinate to salvation, any others but believers in Christ Jesus." That prince of scientific theologians, John Gerhard, writes: "Without Christ no one is predestinated. Sinful men, without taking their faith into consideration, are without Christ. Therefore sinful men, aside from the consideration of faith, are not predestinated. Hence, as St. Paul says that God has chosen us in Christ, Eph. 1, 4, so he says that God has chosen us through faith, 2 Thess. 2, 13, because we could not be predestinated in Christ except in view of faith apprehending Christ. Without faith it is impossible to please God. . . . Justification, which takes place in time, is a reflection of the predestination which took place before all time. We are elected, justified, glorified in a certain order. We are justified in the order of present faith; we are glorified in the order of persevering faith; therefore we are predestinated in the order of future faith which is to be conferred and which is foreseen." Our principal theologians with one accord insisted that as justification and salvation could not take place without faith, so there could be no decree of God either that any one should be justified or saved unless he had faith.

Dr. Walther argues that if faith is not the means of appropriating election, it cannot be necessary to election at all. Again he is dealing with paralogisms. Must we deny, e. g. that faith is necessary to renovation, because renovation is not a thing to be appropriated? Is it false to say that faith is necessary to receive the adoption of sons, because the adoption of sons is not an object which the hand of faith can grasp? Or, as we are elected to sonship and Dr. Walther maintains that election does not presuppose faith, so that he might charge us with begging the question when we assume faith to be necessary to sonship, must we say that faith is not necessary to eternal glory in heaven, since eternal glory is not a present object which the hand of faith can seize and enjoy? Those who possess Christ and His righteousness are heirs of all their Father's wealth, and as children receive many a blessing which is not directly appropriated by faith, but of which the righteousness appropriated by faith is the necessary condition, so that they cannot have it unless they are believers. We appropriate Christ's merits by faith, and these merits entitle us to the mansions in our Father's house, so that we cannot reach these without faith, although they are not, like Christ's righteousness, objects to be appropriated by faith, unless this be understood merely potentially. But precisely that is the case with election. It cannot, in its strict sense, be directly appropriated, because, like glorification, it is an act of God with reference to particular persons. No one can be glorified without faith. Where eternal glory is promised, it is not absolute, but under the condition of faith which appropriates Christ. Without this no one can please God or enter heaven. If it were spoken of absolutely, it could be only on the supposition that the condition has either in foresight or in fact been fulfilled. He shall infallibly be glorified who dies in Christ. So he is elected to eternal glory who, in the omniscience of God, is one who is known as a believer to the end. God can not, without a contradiction, make the eternal glory dependent upon the possession of Christ's merits, and then infallibly decree that certain persons shall be glorified, without any reference at all to the question whether they are in possession of Christ's merits or not. Faith is necessary, in the mind of God, to pos-

possess the treasures of salvation, and He cannot, without first doing away with His order, decree from eternity, independently of all consideration whether a man has faith or not, that any man shall have all these treasures. To say that He will save whom He pleases and elect whom He pleases to such salvation, and whom He pleases He will not elect, is to preach another Gospel than that which we have heard, and which declares to us that "He that believeth shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." Whether election is an object to be appropriated by faith or not, no one can be saved without appropriating Christ, and hence no one can be decreed to be infallibly saved without regard to the question whether he has appropriated Christ or not. It is a simple sophism to say that election can not be appropriated, and therefore God can determine to save a man without asking whether He by faith embraces Christ or by unbelief rejects Him. The attempt to screen the theory from Christian reproach by saying that God will provide that the person elected shall be brought to believe, may seem to some a good way of escape, but it only shows the Calvinistic cloven foot which Lutherans abhor. God has provided for the salvation of all men, and decreed that whosoever believeth shall inherit everlasting life. It is subversive of this precious Gospel of universal grace in Christ to teach that God has antecedently decreed the salvation of only a small portion of mankind who are called the elect, and that these are necessarily made believers because God has determined to save them. That limits to a few what the Gospel extends to all, and declares these few heirs of heaven without faith either in foresight or in fact. Such a doctrine of election makes justification by faith a mere appendage to the divine decree which determines all, and which leads the favored few to faith as it leads them to holiness, not because it is necessary to salvation, but because God pleases thus to lead them.

THE LUTHERAN DOCTRINE OF ELECTION: ITS  
SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE AND PROOF.

BY REV. P. EIRICH, HOBOKEN, N. J.

## ARTICLE I.

The boast of New Missouri has been long and loud that their novel doctrine of election is the doctrine of our Symbolical books, and is plainly, explicitly, and to the letter taught in the Bible, and that they believe, teach, and confess it, because the Bible teaches it. It has, therefore, already been raised to the dignity of an article of the pure doctrine and of a test of a "*reiner Lehrer*," and all who deviate from it are declared and denounced as Synergists and Pelagians of the grossest sort. Prof. Walther is claimed by his adherents to have been a kind of second Luther to the Lutheran Church, who dug out the pure gold of this doctrine from the colossal mountain of rubbish which our pious and great dogmaticians had heaped upon it. These men were great, it is thought, but our American Luther is greater still. The Formula of Concord, it would thus seem, was drawn up and adopted only to be misunderstood and misinterpreted, as not a single writer of eminence can be shown since that time who found the Missouri doctrine taught there. They are considered to have all been wrong and, as Prof. Pieper words it, "*to have made confusion a principle in their interpretation*" of the Formula, by holding that it treated of election in a wider and a narrower sense. Thus the dark ages again settled down upon the Lutheran Church and continued uninterruptedly for three centuries, till Dr. Walther discovered the new doctrine, as he had already succeeded in discovering a new doctrine of usury, but had let it drop and be forgotten, perhaps because it was found that the churches would make a vigorous resistance. And to show that the new doctrine was the doctrine of our last symbol, writers were appealed to, *who flourished prior to its adoption*—a novel method, surely. For this very Confession states that it was drawn up in order to remove "*the conflicting articles, concerning which the theologians of the Augsburg Confession had disputed for many years and some*

had erred, and grievous controversies had arisen," (Muel. 392) "controversy had commenced and our theologians had not always expressed themselves in the same way." These loose and erring utterances were seized upon with a vim—utterances that were often not in keeping with the sound doctrine which their authors really held, and were used to show, that the new doctrine was the doctrine of the Lutheran Church at that time!!

After, by this legerdemain, the new doctrine had been foisted upon the Formula of Concord and upon our sainted forefathers, who till their dying gasp contended against it in their whole teaching, and the memories of their legitimate successors had been outraged by the attempt to convict them of fundamental error, the shout went up, that this new doctrine was also the clear and explicit doctrine of the Bible, and that we must believe it, because it is there taught. The Waltherites claim that their fight is a fight for divine truth and for God's Word. But the proof has so far been wanting, or where an attempt has been made to furnish it, it was done by maltreating the Scriptures, by putting them on the Procrustean bed of human prejudice and doing violence to their literal meaning. But the attempt even has not kept pace with the wild and senseless boasting, much less has the performance. For where is it expressly said in the Bible, that faith comes from election, that the Holy Ghost in conversion also overcomes and removes *wilful* resistance, that God could convert all men, but from some unknown reason chooses not to do it—that the reason why some men are converted, and others not, is simply because God removes wilful resistance in some and in others He does not—that He bestows larger measures of grace upon some than upon others, etc.? Where are these and other similar things which New Missourians now hold, set forth? Not a shadow of proof has been furnished for any of them. And yet they are all boldly declared to be Bible truths and parts of the "*reine Lehre*," just as the Papists claim their tenets to be contained in the Bible, being slow, however, to adduce the evidence. Indeed, the St. Louis men's reticence in producing the proof and their inordinate boasting of being in possession of it, makes the whole thing look suspicious, and stamps it as an imposition. But this is

the bitter fruit and legitimate result of almost implicit trust in human authority. When the new doctrine was first broached it produced consternation even in the Missouri Synod, but now the ministers have one after another wheeled into line. In the absence of argument the terrorism resorted to at Fort Wayne had its effect. O that the admonition of the immortal Wynecken had been heeded when he wrote: "*Away with all saints from the Church, whether living or dead.*"

And, surely, if the St. Louis men were right they would have convicted the Lutheran Church of having held and taught fundamental errors for the space of three centuries and since the completion of its Confessions, and would have shown that she is not the true visible Church of God on earth, for which Dr. Walther once furnished proof. But, alas, what a change! Once there was an apostacy which ended in an immoral scandal, now we have one with a doctrinal error in that body. How sad and distressing! Let the reader join us in prayer that this infatuation may cease!

This apostacy has lately cropped out fully, as was to be expected that it would, and as Prof. Loy in his introductory article in this Magazine predicted, that namely the new doctrine, if adhered to, would revolutionize our whole theology. It was formerly argued and still is, when it serves a purpose, that the reason why God did not elect all men, did not elect those that perish, was simply because they would not believe, and this seemed to give the new doctrine a fair appearance, and to divest it of its most objectionable features. But, of course, this was only feathers and show. For if faith comes from election and has election for its cause, how could any believe without and prior to election, so that in election they had to be rejected because they had no faith? If the object of election is to give men faith, how can any man be expected to believe before he is elected? Hence, this talk about men not being elected because they believed not, was only an artifice, and an attempt to mislead those who will not think and who know not the Scriptures. For where is this said in the Bible that God elects to faith? Will the St. Louis men point out the passages? It is not there. What is there is that God has elected us unto salvation *through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.* 2 Thess. 2, 13. 1 Pet. 1, 2, 3.

But that this non-election on account of the want of faith in those that are lost has no real place in the new system, has become evident from their explicit declarations. Thus Dr. Walther quotes Koerner with approbation, who says: "*His (God's) judgment, in consequence of which God elects this man and saves him, but does not elect another and save him, no man in any way can fathom, or search out with his ability*" (Beleuchtung, p. 41.) Furthermore, "*When it is asked, why God does not convert all men through His Holy Spirit (which He certainly could) we are to say with the apostle: How unsearchable, etc.*" And we could quote pages from his writings to the same effect. Let it be understood then, that Dr. Walther expressly teaches, that we do not know why God did not elect all, and does not convert and save all—the matter simply lies with God. We only ask, does not the Bible tell us why men are not converted? and does it make their non-conversion dependent upon God's not acting, not converting them? Past. Stoeckhardt cites Augustin approvingly from Gerhard: "*In heaven we will know, what is now hidden, why God elected one and reprobated another.*" *Lehre und Wehre*, 1881, p. 375. Again: "*The judgments of God are hidden, why he converted Paul, but did not convert Caiphas, again accepted fallen Peter, but left Judas to despair.*" (P. 374.) Mr. Kaehler remarks: "Is there a moment in conversion, if only like a lightning flash, in which the *subjectum convertendum* is in a neutral state and can decide for or *against converting grace?*" And he denies both, not only that man can decide *for*, but equally that he can decide *against* converting grace, although he says in a note that men can decide *against grace*, which, however, seems only to mean, against grace in general, but not against *converting grace*. It is, read in the light of his system, only put there as a ruse to beguile the unwary. *Lehre und Wehre*, 1881, p. 186. Dr. Walther writes: "In this way they (his opponents) imagine . . . that they can maintain with good reason that the *difference*, why some are converted and *others not*, why God has elected some *and others not*, is found in man, namely, in the last instance, in the free decision of man's will, *not in God alone.*" (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1881, p. 411.) Let it be understood then, that Dr. Walther teaches that the cause why some men *are not converted and not elected* lies in *God alone*. As



this was always implied in his new doctrine, it is now also clearly set forth. Thus he has taken the last step to Calvinism. That he tries to cloak this horror, which makes God responsible for men's perdition through their non-conversion, is exactly what all Calvinists have always done. They teach that God decreed to reprobate men *on account of their sins*. (See Note 1.)

The St. Louis men will doubtless say, that some of these quotations are from old orthodox writers, and that if they are Calvinists, those men must have been such likewise. But that is not the case. A stray passage of this kind, whilst their whole system was evangelical, does not make them Calvinists. But the St. Louis men build their whole theory upon such stray, isolated passages. And that is a different thing altogether. We see, Dr. Walther understands Luther now, when he says that it comes from election as to who should not believe and not obtain forgiveness of sin, although some time ago he did not, as he confessed. And ere long we expect to see Luther quoted also, when he remarks: "The eternal divine will of majesty according to His *purpose* passes by, rejects, and damns some." (De Serv. p. 135.) "Thus He (God) does not desire the death of the sinner according to the will which He has revealed in His Word, but He desires it according to His hidden, unsearchable will." (De Serv. p. 128.) We say, we expect to see such stray utterances, made when the great Homer nodded, quoted to prove Luther an advocate of the St. Louis doctrine, although Luther a thousand times taught the opposite. But these other passages do not suit just now—especially not that in which Luther says that the shibboleth of Missouri, Rom. 11, 33, does not refer to election at all.

Let it then be borne in mind: The reason why the majority of men are not converted and saved, according to Missouri teaching, *lies in God*. He could convert them all according to the revealed plan of salvation, but from some unknown reason does not. In some men whom He desires to convert, He removes wilful resistance to converting grace, but in others He does not, although He could just as well. If this is not the very marrow and substance of Calvinistic teaching, we would like to know what is. And how differ-

ently Dr. W. taught formerly! In his Church Postil (p. 91) he says: "Our reason cannot conclude otherwise than that, as all men are equally corrupt by nature, and God must work all good in them in its beginning, progress, and completion, the cause must be in God, if some men are not converted or do not persevere unto the end. God cannot desire it. But what says the Bible? The Lord declared to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, when they refused to turn to Him, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, etc. . . . . Observe that the reason why the inhabitants of Jerusalem were not converted is not that Christ had not the will that they should be converted, but that they refused. For, although all men are equally sinful by nature, and God must remove their resistance from them, yet no one is now lost on that account; for when God brings His Word, He also brings His Holy Spirit to take away *natural resistance*; but those who not only oppose this *natural* resistance to the influence of the Holy Ghost, but resist *wilfully* (*hartnaeckig*) and pertinaciously, *God Himself cannot help*. For God will force conversion on no man—a forced conversion is no conversion." It will be observed that according to Dr. Walther then, God could not convert such men, but he tells us now that he can. How great the lapse from the truth formerly confessed!

And only a short time ago, Dr. Walther published Baier's Dogmatics with notes, in which the following paragraph occurs (p. 439, Berl. Ed.): "We must distinguish between *malicious repugnance* (which some term *morose, voluntary, habitual, pertinacious*) and *natural*, which by some is called *inborn*. Of these the latter flows directly from the corrupt nature of man and is common to all mortals. But the former results from the guilt and acquired deeds of particular men and has been contracted by voluntary malice, and is greater and more pertinacious in some and in others becomes less and less pertinacious, as the acquired malice itself varies. The natural repugnance in conversion is gradually diminished by grace connected with the Word of God, and then overcome, and, strictly speaking, does not itself hinder conversion. But the other, as malicious resistance, *which is superadded to the natural*, as it is not equally common to all the unregenerate, *so men can abstain from it by the powers of their free will, or, if they can-*

not now abstain, after the vicious habit has been contracted, yet before, if they had been rightly educated and habituated to virtue they could, to a certain extent, have kept free from it." We see, that the very thing, that man, namely, *can abstain from wilful resistance*, for saying which we have been called a Rationalistic Synergist, was taught by Baier and we may say by Dr. Walther, who lately had his work republished with notes. Besides, the expressions, *permitting ourselves to be converted, to allow faith to be given us, etc.*, which Dr. Walther now declares grossly Pelagian, he uses times without number in his Postil. If we are now Synergists, we have been taught so by the Professor himself. And if he does not retract these his former statements, and continues to teach what he now does, he will force men to doubt his honesty.

We also cheerfully and openly confess, that whilst we hold all men to be by nature equally sinful, corrupt, and dead in sin, unable to do anything good in the sight of God and to contribute anything toward their conversion, we also hold that they can hinder it by wilful resistance, and that whoever resists it wilfully is not converted, as long as he so resists. We shall abide by the Formula of Concord, whatever Missouri may do, which declares that the reason why many are called, but few chosen, is not that God would not have all men to be saved, but that they either will not hear God's Word at all, but wilfully despise it, so that God cannot perform His work in them, or, if they have heard it, again cast it away. (Epit. XI. § 12.) A man must have lost his senses, or must be ignorant of the meaning of terms, who denies this. The cause, then, why some men are not converted lies not in God, but in man's wilfully resisting converting grace. If this is Synergism we are Synergists, and all the prophets and apostles, as also Luther and our divines generally, were Synergists. But if we are asked why, with the same sinful heart, one man wilfully resists and thus makes his conversion impossible, and another does not, we reply that we cannot explain it. We only know that God's grace is alike rich over all, but that some men, for some to us unknown reason, wilfully resist converting grace and are not converted, whilst others do not, and are converted. This was also the doctrine of St. Louis formerly, as we have seen,

though it is now reprobated and denounced. Verily, error eateth, as doth a canker. The St. Louis chariot, having once reached the inclined plane, has irresistibly rolled downward into the Calvinistic abyss, which, however much they may try to cloak it, as Calvinists have always done, makes God the author of man's perdition. The apostacy seems complete. (See note 2.)

After these somewhat lengthy preliminary remarks we shall endeavor to show in the following, that the New Missouri doctrine, as it signalizes the falling away of its votaries from the pure Lutheran doctrine, is unscriptural throughout, runs counter to the analogy of doctrine, destroys the comfort of the Gospel, and does defiance to the passages especially treating of election. Before entering upon the discussion of the subject in its scriptural aspect, we will first state it in the form of a few theses, taken almost literally from the Formula of Concord, and then subjoin the Biblical evidence and proof.

I.—God in His eternal counsel and decree determined to redeem the *human race*, and reconcile God through Christ, who by His innocent suffering and death procured the righteousness that availeth with God and eternal life for us—for all men. Sol. Decl. § 15.\*

II.—He also in His counsel decreed to offer, present, and distribute to us (to all men) these merits and benefits of Christ through His Word and Holy Sacraments and thereby to beget faith in their hearts. S. D. § 16. 17.

III.—He furthermore decreed to justify, graciously to receive, to adopt as His children, and to confer eternal life upon all those, who, by sincere repentance and true faith, would accept Christ, and to damn those who would repudiate the Word, resist the Holy Spirit, and continue therein. S. D. § 18 and § 40.

IV.—The former, those who would believe unto the end, "*as election foresees and foreknows the salvation of the elect,*" S. D.

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\*That the expression of our Confession "*be redeemed*" means, that it *should be done*, appears from the fact, that God only decrees future things, and not things of the past. And the "*us,*" spoken of in this and the following paragraphs of the Formula, refer to the *human race* mentioned in the first clause of § 15; for otherwise the redemption of the human race and the procuring of righteousness and eternal life for the elect would be two separate things.

§ 8, as God “*decreed to justify and give eternal life to all those who by faith would embrace Christ,*” S. D. § 40, and as men become “*vessels of honor, elect, by purging themselves,*” (2 Tim. 2, 21), S. D. § 82, God elected and predestinated unto eternal life, through faith.

V.—The only cause which prompted God in the act of election was His mercy and the merits of Christ, conditioned by the requirement of faith, which He Himself in foresight had fulfilled in His believers. S. D. § 88.†

VI.—Election was made in eternity, before the world began, before the foundation of the world was laid.

VII.—Election is unto obedience, the sprinkling of blood, holiness of life, adoption, salvation, and is thus a cause of our salvation by confirming and sanctioning the final faith foreseen.

VIII.—None of those elected *unto eternal life* can ever be lost. They will all reach the end of their faith, namely, life eternal, although they may fall from grace temporarily.

IX.—Christians should strive to obtain certainty of their election, but this certainty is that of the promises of God, as accepted and held fast by faith.

X.—Election is a doctrine of great comfort when rightly used.

### I., II. and III.

The first passage which we will adduce in establishing our first thesis is Acts 2, 23. The same Jesus Christ, says the inspired writer, whom the Jews with wicked hands had slain, had been delivered “*by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,*” as the English version gives it. The Savior’s crucifixion and death had not been compassed by human craft and wickedness, the Evangelists would say, but was the result of a predetermined counsel and of the foreknowledge of

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† That faith was a condition of election appears from the Formula of Concord beyond all gainsaying, as it declares that the doctrine of election greatly confirms the doctrine of justification. But as the “*articulum justificationis*” (not merely justification) includes faith, and personal justification follows faith, so must it be with election, otherwise the doctrine of election could not confirm that of justification. To exclude faith from the former and allow it a place in the latter would destroy the parallel and also the proof.

God. The primary cause of the propitiatory death of Christ included two things—God's determinate purpose or counsel, eternally formed, that Christ should become incarnate and suffer and die to effect an eternal redemption, and His foreknowledge. The object of this foreknowledge is not expressly stated and can therefore only be supplied from other portions of Scripture. But as Christ was sent to redeem a *fallen* race, to redeem sinners, we have reason to assume that this foreknowledge had respect to man's fallen condition and needs, from which that death should be a complete deliverance. The inspired penman would then mean to say, that the chosen purpose or counsel was not formed blindly or arbitrarily, but in connection with divine intelligence and with a knowledge of the fall in Adam. This would be directed by anticipation against the error, which all along the history of the church has so extensively prevailed, that Christ would have become incarnate and died even if man had not fallen. But we willingly acknowledge that here, as in many passages of Holy Writ, it cannot be positively determined what is to be supplied. This, however, certainly gives us no right to give a foreign or new meaning to the word *prognosei*.

But before we proceed we must institute an enquiry into the meaning of the word *proegno* and *prognosis*; for upon its import the present controversy on the doctrine of election largely turns, the St. Louis men denying *in toto*, in the interest of their novel theory, the correctness of our English version, or that those words mean to foreknow, or foreknowledge.

To refer to dictionaries or authorities in fixing the import of the terms can render but little aid, as they are not agreed among themselves, although the preponderance of their number and weight of authority is largely in our favor, who hold that the rendering in our English Bible of the words is correct. We maintain then, and shall presently prove, that the above terms in the New Testament simply mean to *foreknow*, or *foreknowledge*, and never anything else. Where they *seem* to convey a different or fuller idea it lies not in the words themselves, but in some attending circumstance—either in the subject that foreknows, or in the manner in which a thing is foreknown. And these circumstances re-

quire to be taken into account in ascertaining the meaning of the terms in question. This will appear from the very first step in the argument of our opponents, who try to show that the words mean to *foreknow* with will and affection, and are equivalent substantially to the words to *choose*, to *elect*, etc. They say they mean this when predicated of God. We will concede that God foreknows things differently from what this could be said of man, even if man had the faculty of foreknowledge. For certainly God acts, works, loves, and knows differently from human beings. But that by no means changes the natural meaning of words predicated of Him, otherwise no human language could apply to Him, and a new language would have to be created with which to speak of divine things, which, however, no mortal could understand here below. But it has pertinently been observed that it is a part of the Holy Ghost's condescension to speak to man of divine things in the frailties and imperfections of human language, through which of course we can here only know in part and as through a glass darkly. (1 Cor. 13.) But this language must be accepted and explained according to the ordinary rules of lexicography and grammar. In determining the meaning of *prognosis* Prof. Graebner published an article in the March number of *Lehre und Wehre*, 1880, which is a curiosity in this line, and which goes to prove that *Lehre und Wehre* is fast losing its prestige for sound learning and good sense. He makes no effort to develop its import etymologically, or to show from the passages where it occurs what its force of meaning must be. This seemed too tedious and laborious a way for him. He takes a short cut across the fields and misses his goal completely. He finds that Christ in Isaiah 40, 1, and in Luke 9, 27, is called God's *Elect*, and that the passion of Christ is represented as necessary; he can discover no term anywhere else, which in the history of the Savior's sufferings corresponds to that term; and he jumps to the conclusion that it must be found in Acts 2, 23, and indeed in *prognosei*. He also sees that to render *prognosis* in this passage by *election* makes sense, and indeed very good sense, and he has made out his case. This is the kernel in his bushel of chaff.

We think it will be conceded that this is a new principle

of Biblical hermeneutics. To give Prof. G. an opportunity of testing his principle, as an expert, we would ask him to show the exact words in the prophets where it is predicted that Christ should be called a Nazarene. (Matt. 2. 23.) And the idea that because Christ is called the Elect of God the word *prognosis* in Acts 2, 23. must express it! Can there be anything more arbitrary than this! Moreover, if election is tantamount in meaning substantially to predestination, as it is argued, why may not this election of Christ be found in the *te orismene boule*? Do we need anything more? And if in self-contradiction to his whole argument, as far as there is any, Prof. G. also takes the expression as referring to Christ, *in whom God is well pleased*, as meaning the Savior's election, it would follow that not only Christ was elected, but that all men are elected, as the chorus of angels sang at the Savior's birth of the *good will* of God to men, to all men. *Eudokia* to men here and *eudokes* in Christ there. No, such arguments may satisfy at St. Louis, but certainly nowhere else!

Let us now direct our attention to Past. Stoeckhardt's series of articles in *Lehre und Wehre*. They are so extensive that possibly some points may escape our notice, but we shall try to find them all. He first calls attention to the history of the exegesis of the words *prognosis* and *proginoskein*. He remarks that Luther translates the words by the German *versehen* where they refer to an eternal prerecognition of God. The Formula of Concord, he adds, makes the same words to mean, whom God has *versehen*, *chosen*, and *ordained*. But that Luther, the Formula of Concord, and its contemporaries understood by the divine *prognosis* a counsel of the divine will, he alleges has been shown previously.

We have neither time nor space here to examine the truth of this assertion as far as Luther and the Formula of Concord are concerned, remarking only, in passing, that Luther often uses predestination and foreknowledge as synonymous, and so does the Formula of Concord, notwithstanding the distinction there made between the two terms. It translates at least the term *versehen* by *praescientia*. Chemnitz, the main author of the Formula, in his *Locis*, vol. I., p. 394, translates the passages in which *prognosis* is predicated of God by *praescire*, and then on the same page tells us what he



understands by *praescientia*, which he thus defines: *Praescientia vero simpliciter notitiam significat, et tam de bonis quam de malis accipitur*, h. e., praescience simply denotes knowledge, and applies both to good and evil. The passages referred to and in which Chemnitz translates *prognosis* by *praescire* are Rom. 11, 2; Rom. 8, 30; 1 Pet. 1, 2 and 20, and Acts 2, 23—the very passages in dispute. From this it will appear how much truth there is in Past. Stoeckhardt's assertion about the contemporaries of the Formula of Concord's understanding of the word *prognosis*. Our later dogmaticians, it is further stated, understood the terms in question to mean the foreknowledge of God, adding as its object the conception of faith. Some modern exegetes have followed them, as for example Mayer and Philippi. But, observes he, "*the most modern, clever and weighty* have returned to the interpretation of Luther and the Formula of Concord." Hofmann and Cremer are mentioned among these. And in a note it is remarked, that even modern theologians who repudiate the doctrine of personal election are yet constrained to acknowledge the true meaning of the disputed word in their interpretation of certain clauses and phrases.

But this is utterly misleading. The very reverse is the fact. For these "*most modern theologians*" construe the passages containing the word *prognosis*, or its equivalents in relation to election, as applying to the *whole plan of salvation, and to mankind as such*, and hence the disputed terms must be forced to mean "*foreknowledge accompanied by love, or an act of the will*," otherwise there would have been no motive for redemption. Evidently if the object of the *prognosis* be conceived to be the *human race in Christ*, as these men take it, the terms must be made to mean "*that God put Himself in loving relation with mankind in order to redeem them*." It is then equivalent to: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." See Hofm. Schriftb., Vol. I., p. 237. Is Past. Stoeckhardt so obtuse in understanding as not to see this?

These authorities, then, do not weigh a feather. And when Past. Stoeckhardt renders their term *Heilsrathschluss* by *predestination*, in his sense, in order to make these authorities do service in his cause, he either ignorantly or wilfully

makes himself guilty of a direct falsification. *Heilsrathschluss*, in the minds of his proteges, means something very different from what he understands by predestination. And the object of these men in their interpretation is so palpable that it has no weight whatever concerning the terms in question. In reality, Past. Stoeckhardt is left almost without any company in his strange exegesis among modern linguists, but this does not discourage him—a new doctrine also requires a new mode of interpretation. But to the law and the testimony!

Past. Stoeckhardt is of opinion that it needs no long argument to show, that the simple verb *gignoskein* in many passages of the Bible means “a certain act of God towards certain objects, an act of God referring to certain persons.” Hence, when it is said, Matt. 7, 23: “*I have never known you,*” the Savior intends to say, I have never recognized you as my own. Now let it be noticed that in the construction of the very first passage Past. Stoeckhardt finds it necessary to supply a clause in order to make sense. But does it follow, that by *gignoskein* God makes men His own, or not rather that He simply recognizes a fact. For otherwise the Savior would have made Himself directly responsible for the perdition of these workers of iniquity. He would then have meant to say to them, that the reason why they perished was simply that He had never made them His own by an act of His will. Will any Lutheran accept such an explanation? God forbid! The recognizing is the recognizing of a fact already existing, but not the making of that fact, as the passage incontestably proves. Those wicked men perished on account of their wickedness, and the Savior could never recognize them as His own, because they had refused to be made His own through the means of grace. (See note 3.)

So John 10, 40: “*I know my sheep and am known of mine; as the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father.*” Past. Stoeckhardt paraphrases, “I know mine own, and they know me and love me as their shepherd.” But the reader would doubtless like to know where he gets all this. His own authorities go against him. Grimm defines the word in question: “To regard one as worthy of our fellowship and love.” Past. Stoeckhardt seems to feel this. Hence he adds,

this must be understood to mean that God by this recognition makes and creates this worthiness. He thus manufactures his authorities. It is just this addition that we cannot accept. This is the point in dispute, namely, whether it is a recognition simply of a fact or whether it brings this fact about. And we cannot allow him to foist his meaning upon his authorities and then represent them as holding his own views. 1 Cor. 8, 3 we read: "*If any man love God the same is known of Him,*" and Gal. 4, 9: "*Now ye have known God or rather are known of God.*" Past. Stoeckhardt again expatiates upon the relation of God's children to their heavenly Father and says, they that love God are known of God, are accepted of God, are received into His fellowship—which is all very true, only that it is not expressed in the word *gignoskein*. Those that love God are known of Him as His own; but how they were made His, is said at other places, but not here. That we read in words like these, "*ye are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*" Gal. 3, 26. "*But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in His name.*" John 1, 12. To teach that God recognizes any one as His, His child or His sheep, without faith in Christ, perverts the whole Gospel and is contrary to the whole analogy of faith. Faith then becomes a performance of God's children, like every other good work, although it be claimed that it is wrought by grace. This is the dreadful heresy of this theory, that after the plan of salvation had been divinely devised, God can be pleased with man and can make Him His own by mere recognition and performance of His will. It fails to see and make account of the horrible and damnable nature of sin in the sight of God, whilst it ever chatters of exclusive grace.

2 Tim. 2, 9 we read, "*The Lord knoweth them that are His.*" Past. St. again enlarges, "this is the immovable ground upon which our faith rests, that God has known, recognized and made us His own"—which is all very well, only that it is not all contained in the word *gignoskein*. And is it not enough to be assured that God knows us to be His, His own—was that ever mistaken?! Of course, merely to be certified that God knows who and what and where we are, is no comfort. but to be assured that He knows us *as His own* is a source

of great consolation. This meaning appears from the clause following: "*Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity.*" The apostle intends to say that no one can deceive God—He knows His own, and because He knows them and cannot be deceived, let the workers of iniquity depart from their sins!

From all this it is more than probable that the compound of the word under consideration, consisting of the preposition *pro* and the verb *gignoskein*, means to foreknow when God is the subject and man the object, but never, as Past. Stoeckhardt contends, "*that God in advance, and indeed through this foreknowledge, has received certain persons as His own, and appropriated them.*" The idea of God making some His own and accepting them as His children by foreknowledge is absurd. It is an "Unbegriff," as the Germans would say. But let us investigate the passages where the word in question is claimed to have this meaning.

One is Romans 11, 2. Paul there writes, "God hath not cast away His people whom He *foreknew*." Did Chemnitz translate correctly, when he says, *quos præsescivit*? Past. Stoeckhardt's oracle declares, "The short, terse sentence, *whom He foreknew*, shows that a divine act of the will is meant." But how the fact that the sentence is short can show that a divine act of the will is meant, goes beyond our comprehension. That would be a new rule of grammar, that brief, terse sentences express an act of the divine will. And why, *whom He foreknew*, should be a relative idea and should require the supplying of something, is also beyond our ken. Neither can we see why the naked sentence, *whom God foreknew*, should make no sense. "We are also desirous of ascertaining," says Past. Stoeckhardt, "what it is that God foreknew." Why! the passage tells you, we respond; only drop your leather spectacles; it tells you, He foreknew His people. We may paraphrase: God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew as His own. We need supply nothing, however. The emphasis of the sentence is on *autou*, on *His* people, to which the relative refers. He foreknew them as His people—never knew them in any other relation unto the end, in this respect. How can He cast them away, after He had foreknown them as *His* people? Is not this

ground enough that He will never cast them away? Does God, who is faithful, ever cast His people away, whom He had foreknown as such? God's foreknowledge cannot err, neither does He Himself destroy, what He has wrought and foreseen. Indeed, God had chosen them, had *made* them His people, etc.—this is said at other places, but not here. Does Past. Stoeckhardt expect the apostle to say everything concerning God's relation to His people, and the manner in which it was brought about, in every passage in which He speaks of them?! And why the divine foreknowledge can not be a reason why God has not cast away His people, we cannot even surmise. Past. Stoeckhardt must hold that that foreknowledge might err. But what God has foreseen is just as certain of coming to pass, as though He had predestinated it. His foreknowledge is never at fault. Past. Stoeckhardt's quotations from Hofmann we will pass by, connected as they are with his utterly erroneous notion of election as pertaining to the *whole human race*.

1 Pet. 1, 20. Christians are told that they have been redeemed with the precious blood of Christ as of a Lamb without blemish, "*proegnomenou* before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." Something is here predicated of Christ, with whose blood we have been redeemed, namely that He was *proegnomenou* before the world began. But Past. Stoeckhardt thinks that to translate *foreknown* of God, the Father, is a most unsuitable rendering. In his general analysis of the passage and context we agree with him, but that is all. He only shows that his rendering of *proegnomenou* by *predestinated*, gives a kind of sense, which we do not deny. But it does not give as good a sense as to render it *foreknown*, which is its proper meaning. Bengel, in his commentary on the passage, hits the nail on the head when he says: "*Manifestati autem-prascientia penes solum deum fuerat.*" That is the opposition here. Christ had only then been manifested, made known to Peter's readers, but to the Father He had been known from eternity. Indeed, *phaneronthentos de* requires this rendering. But suppose we translate the word here as Past. Stoeckhardt does at other places. We would then obtain the singular idea, that God the Father

had in eternity *accepted Christ as His own, had made Him His own.* But he prudently here renders, *had predestinated.*

Acts 2, 23 is the passage of which we have already spoken. Past. Stoeckhardt asserts, that *te orismene boule kai prognosei tou theou* conveys but one conception, *boule* and *prognosis* standing in the same relation. But that the two nouns constitute but one idea appears not from the conjunction *kai*, as he supposes, but from the predicate. Thus two very heterogeneous subjects may be connected, when something in common is predicated of them. They may differ very much in other respects, but agree in the one thing predicated of both. In that case the predicate is in the singular number.

That the attribute *orismene*, as he holds, also qualifies the *prognosei*, there is no evidence. There is no grammatical necessity for so understanding it. Where two nouns are joined together by *kai*, the attribute put in connection with one noun is not always understood of the other, as he holds. And on the ground of this his erroneous notion of grammar he observes, "that *orismene prognosei*, as fixed and predeterminate foreknowledge, is a nonentity." His argument is a *petitio principii*. Only if prognosis means predestination, for which so far he has furnished no proof, can the adjective *orismene* also apply to *prognosei*. But this he must prove, not take for granted. And his further remark, that otherwise the object of the *prognosis* would have to be guessed at, is of no force. Is it absolutely necessary that we should know it? Is it not enough to be told that the deliverance of Christ into the bloody hands of the Jews was not arbitrary, did not take place without foreknowledge or intelligence, without the foreknowledge of what would come to pass and what the case of our lost race demanded? Does Past. Stoeckhardt always alter the natural import of words where there is an ellipsis and a word must be supplied? And besides, if the counsel was simply that Christ was to be delivered into the hands of the Jews, is it superfluous to say that it was also done in accordance with God's foreknowledge—the foreknowledge of the Jews' own innate wickedness, that we might not suppose God to have also predestinated that wickedness? How necessary to say *both*, that Christ's crucifixion took place in consequence of a divine determinate counsel, and also *of the*

*foreknowledge of God*, as regards the wickedness of the Jews, which was not predestinated. We may well say that *prognosis* cannot possibly have the meaning of predestination here, and to so interpret it is to cramp and curtail the manifold wisdom of God. O, when will men be content simply to learn the wonderful wisdom of God's Word, instead of forcing their pet theories and contracted notions upon it! And let the reader just think of it! The passage according to Past. Stoeckhardt's rendering reads thus: Christ was delivered by a determinate counsel and *prerecognition, acceptance, and appropriation*. (P. 205). Prerecognition of what? of Christ? Would that be a motive for His deliverance? Or must we supply a whole sentence? namely, "that God *by an effective act of His will had made His Son to become the Redeemer of the world?*" No, the simple statement of this interpretation is its own overwhelming refutation. It needs no more. And then this man boasts of clinging to the Scriptures, after he has tortured and interpolated them! O, how often, in the Church's history, has such boast been made without even a shadow to rest upon!

Rom. 8, 29. "*For whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.*" Chemnitz translates: "*Quos praescivit, hos praedestinavit, vocavit, justificavit.*" Bengel gives it by "*praenovit,*" and observes: "He (the apostle) declares who these are, whom God foreknew; namely, those that are conformed to the image of His Son." And if in predestination God foreknows what He Himself is about to do, as then it says, we would have the idea, that whom God foreknew that He would call, justify, glorify, *in the ordinary way*, and by the means of salvation, these He predestinated. This is the doctrine declared in the Formula of Concord, that election namely *foresees and foreknows the salvation of the elect, and also is a cause of it*. But it all amounts simply to this: "That whomsoever God foreknew with final faith, He predestinated," only worded differently, and better perhaps. Past. Stoeckhardt has some very whimsical observations on the passage in question. He says, "*that to foreknow persons, any one, is a singular expression.*" And he thinks it is an awkward way of expressing one's self to translate *whom*

*He foreknew* He also "predestinated." But we fear his taste is over-refined. Has it ever occurred to the reader that it is an awkward form of speech to say: "*I know this man, I knew him before?*" It is so far from being awkward, that there is no other way of saying the same equally well. Neither need we supply anything, or guess at what is to be supplied, and thus lose our foothold, as Past. Stoeckhardt thinks we must, unless we translate, *whom God had made His own by an act of His will—made His own by an effective recognition.* Such a recognition is an absurdity; hence, as we have seen, Past. Stoeckhardt was compelled to correct his own authorities. If we recognize a friend, does that recognition make him our friend, or does it not rather take notice of the fact that he is a friend? And if God had already *made* us His own by an act of His will, of what use would predestination be, as they are wont to ask at St. Louis? But God makes men to be His own by an *effective act of His will*, and then He predestinates them to be His own! Why, predestination, vocation, justification, and glorification would be mere show and ceremony in that case! Will Past. Stoeckhardt accept this argument against his theory, which Prof. W. applies to the Lutheran doctrine of election in order to make it seem laughable?

Past. Stoeckhardt has two meanings for *prognosis*—one is, to make a person one's own by an effective will, and the other is to *elect, to predestinate*, which in substance, he says, means the same thing. If he is pushed to the wall with one meaning, he quickly presents the other, and after the contest is over, he comes with his old assertion, that the two meanings substantially agree. He is like a soldier who, when a charge is made, drops out of ranks, but when his company returns from battle, quickly falls into line, as though he had always been there. Not that we consider Past. Stoeckhardt a poor soldier. He is not responsible for his misfortune. His colleagues, having gotten themselves into a hopeless position, where surrender would be honorable, have pushed him into the breach to do impossibilities; and he has undertaken them, without apparently being aware of it.

Past. Stoeckhardt asserts that the parallelism of *predestinating, calling, justifying, and glorifying* requires that *prognosis-*



*kein* be also taken to mean *an act of the divine will*, which, formed into a rule, would read, "that only words expressing an act of the will can be joined together"—a new rule, certainly. St. Louis must have a new grammar by which to get its new doctrine into the Bible. A sentence like this: "My sheep hear my voice, *and I know them, and I give unto them eternal life,*" as our English Bible has it, is, according to Past. Stoeckhardt, a violation of all grammar, because to know does not express an act of the will and to give does! This is too nice a distinction for us. So he remarks on Acts 2, 23, that if *prognosis* means foreknowledge it ought to stand before *counsel*; we suppose for the reason, that logically we know before we resolve. But will not Past. Stoeckhardt have to correct the apostle when he says, 2 Tim. 1, 9, that God hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, inasmuch as calling comes logically before saving? We let the mere statement of these curiosities suffice for their refutation.

But let us return to the passage itself, after this short digression, noticing its context. A large portion of the chapter in which our passage occurs, and immediately preceding it, treats of the afflictions and sufferings that had fallen to the lot of the Christians at Rome. The apostle tells them that our salvation is by hope—we must hope for deliverance. And these sufferings are light compared with the weight of glory that is in store for us. Besides, all our sufferings must work together for our good, who love God and are called according to His purpose. "*For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate.*" Now, if we translate *proegno* by *foreknow*, does it accomplish what the apostle designed, namely, strengthen and comfort the Christians at Rome in their distresses? Most gloriously! For the apostle would tell them that God had foreknown them with all their surroundings; had foreknown their conversion, faith, perseverance; had foreknown them unto the end, and had in addition predestinated it—they and their call, justification, etc. And God's foreknowledge cannot err. He had foreseen them as Christians in their whole career unto the end, and upon that had based their predestination, so that His foreknowledge and predestination guaranteed their final success and triumph. Could anything give them greater assurance! And yet the

St. Louis men tell us, that such an explanation robs this passage of all its power of consolation!!

Such, then, as were the Christians at Rome God foreknew—as the context shows—and such He predestinated. And as faith was that which distinguished them from the Gentiles around them, it was certainly faith which God foreknew, although the *quos* refers to those who in faith love God and to whom all things work together for good, and, as Bengel says, who are to be conformed to the likeness of Christ. Predestination, then, only pertains to the children of God. But all this cannot be better expressed dogmatically than as our dogmaticians have expressed it; namely, that election took place *intuitu fidei*.

1 Pet. 1, 1. 2. The consideration of this passage will close our investigation on this point. St. Peter tells his readers that they were elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. Past. Stoeckhardt regards it as forcing a foreign meaning upon these words, when faith is made the object of *prognosis*. But is his explanation better, when he supplies *certain persons* as the object of the *prognosis*, whom God “*through an effective act of the will made His own?*” He declaims against interpolations, whilst he slyly pushes in his *certain persons*, and then acts as though nothing had been done. Now, if he has a right to supply his *certain persons*, the strangers here, whom God by His *prognosis* had made *His own*, have we no right to supply faith? Is this supplying of words and ideas a right which he claims exclusively for himself? Yea, we will supply the same words, only differently connected; namely, those whom God foreknew as His own (and He knows only believers as His own) He elected, and we have the right sense. Peter would tell his readers that their election had taken place according to God’s foreknowledge of those that are His, of His children. Chemnitz translates, “*secundum praescientiam.*” Past. Stoeckhardt’s authorities here quoted are again useless, as they hold the election of the human race, and understand by the *prognosis* of God the counsel of salvation. We will not be deprived of the universal grace of the Gospel to all, of the comforting invitation, “*come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden,*” and election, as based upon it in foresight of those that be-

lieve, to sanction and confirm their salvation by faith. We think we have fairly met every argument of our opponent, and have shown that the new doctrine has not even a shadow to rest upon. It can be put into the Bible only by supplying liberally what the innovators would make it say. This has, we trust, become apparent to unprejudiced minds. What remains will be a still more easy task, as the reader will see, if he will have the patience to follow us.

Acts 4, 27-29, the whole number of the apostles declared to God: "Of a truth against Thy Holy Child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered for to do whatsoever *Thy hand and Thy counsel determined before to be done*"—*cheir sou kai e boule sou proorise*. God's own hand and counsel had predetermined all that was to be done to the Savior, and that He was to suffer for His enemies for the accomplishing of human redemption. Hence, too, the Messiah so often speaks of His sufferings as absolutely necessary and unavoidable. His prayer in Gethsemane was: "If this cup cannot pass away from me except I drink it, Thy will be done." And when, on the night of his betrayal, He sat at supper with His disciples, He declared: "The Son of man goeth as it was determined." (Luke 22, 22.) Pilate could have had no power over Him, if it had not been given him from above. (John 19, 11.) In like manner He said to His two disciples on their way to Emmaus: "Ought not (or must not) Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" Luke 24, 26. But this divine purpose has its ground and source in God's love toward the world, in virtue of which He gave His only begotten Son (John 3, 6). He had elected Christ, not from among others, but to be the propitiation for our sins, the Mediator. In keeping with this, God the Father had said of Him (Isaiah 42, 1): "Behold mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon Him," etc. And Christ Himself referred to this as applying to Himself (Matt. 12, 17, 18), saying that He was God's chosen servant, His beloved, in whom His Father's soul is well pleased, and in whose name the Gentiles should trust. Hence, at His transfiguration, when He was about to enter upon His suffering, a voice was heard from the cloud

declaring, This is my beloved Son, the elect, as the best manuscripts give it. (Luke 9, 35.) We thus see that Christ was ordained by an eternal divine decree, and elected for the great office of Mediator, Redeemer, and Savior, and that consequently His office and work were of divine election and are properly so-called.

Paul (Acts 20, 27) includes the whole scheme or plan of human redemption and salvation in the counsel of God (*pasan ten boulen*). For this he evidently means, when he declares to the Ephesians that he had not shunned to declare unto them the *whole counsel of God*, saying, verse 20, that he had kept back nothing that was profitable unto them, testifying repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. The whole plan of the redemption of our race, the means of grace, and the mode of saving men, as Chemnitz says, is a direct result of an eternal counsel of God. The Bible frequently also uses the word *purpose* (prothesis) to express the cause from which the redemption and salvation of man resulted. In consequence of this eternal counsel which God formed in Christ, Paul preached among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see the fellowship of the mystery which had been hid in the beginning, but was then made known to the Church. (Eph. 3, 8-11.) It is the same purpose according to which, as Paul writes to Timothy (2 Tim. 1, 9), men are saved and called with an holy calling, and which is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior and by His abolition of death. All this was done in accordance with that purpose and in consequence of it. And if this one purpose includes redemption and salvation and the preaching of the Word among the Gentiles, it must be the same purpose according to which the elect are called (Rom. 8, 28). As it has become a custom, a real malady at St. Louis, to criticise our great dogmaticians, Past. Stoeckhardt also thinks that they without any ground assumed that there was only one purpose of God concerning redemption, salvation and election (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1880). For to construct his new doctrine of election he needs a purpose of God concerning human redemption and salvation and another one concerning personal election, as a separate one, the two running counter to one another. At least it is

acknowledged that they cannot be reconciled. But this is a human invention, a fiction of idle brains. For if human redemption, if the calling through the Gospel of Jews and Gentiles, and the making of all men see the mystery in Christ, consequently of the elect and non-elect, results from one eternal purpose, where is the right and necessity of inventing another? Hence St. Paul, as we have seen (Acts 20, 28), calls everything pertaining to human salvation one counsel, the *whole counsel* of God. But according to the new doctrine he ought to have said, the two counsels of God—the one of redemption, and the other of election. This dualism is the fundamental error of the new doctrine.

As there is but one purpose and counsel concerning human salvation, there is no counsel or purpose of reprobation. This is a fiction of Calvinism, of which the Bible knows absolutely nothing. Some men, indeed, are lost and damned, but not because God eternally purposed it, or passed them by in personal election; not because, although He could have converted them according to the purpose and scheme of salvation, for some mysterious He reason would not; but because this purposed scheme of salvation excluded them on account of their persistent unbelief. It being a scheme of *salvation*, it would in so far only include believers who are saved through faith. This is what the Formula of Concord means, when it says that God has *decreed to save no man except through Christ*, (p. 389) and that Christ has proclaimed to us our eternal election unto everlasting life by telling us to repent and believe the Gospel. . . . *This is the will of Him that sent me, that he that seeth the Son and believeth on Him hath eternal life. God so loved the world*, (p. 398). And we have seen why our Confession could say that this is a revelation of *our election*; namely, because God has chosen this way and these means as a part in His purpose of saving men.

How it comes that this purposed scheme of election does not include all, we are told, is, that men reject God's counsel of salvation. The pharisees and lawyers, when they refused to be baptized by John, are said to have rejected the counsel of God with regard to themselves, to wit, as far as redemption and the means of grace are concerned, and were therefore not included in the election to eternal life. (Luke 7, 30.) They

dropped out of the scheme. For that scheme, which God had purposed unto actual salvation, only included, as our Confession says, those that would by sincere repentance and true faith accept Christ. These He would justify, graciously receive them, and bestow on them adoption and eternal life. (F. C. Art. IX. § 18).

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NOTE 1.—Past. Stoeckhardt remarks: “As with these everything, faith and salvation, are dependent upon God’s free mercy, we cannot understand why God, who is so rich in mercy and whose power excels everything, has only had mercy upon these in such a manner as upon Isaac and Jacob, why He only elected these, converted and saved them, whilst He allowed and permitted others, to whom He also showed His full grace and long-suffering, to gainsay, to fortify themselves in unbelief, and by their unbelief draw upon themselves the judgments of hardening and damnation. The apostle also does not solve this enigma.” *Lehre und Wehre*, 1881, p. 371. True, the apostle does not solve it there—but the Bible solves it elsewhere. Again, he quotes with approbation: “God has mercy upon whom *He will* have mercy, and this volition is free, and why He wills or *does not will* we must leave to His secret counsel, and not desire inquisitively to discover it.” P. 373. Again: “The question why God does not kindle faith in all to embrace Christ . . . belongs to the mysteries (*arcana Dei*) of God, which we are not to and cannot search out. . . . It is revealed to us, that God is willing only to save those who believe in Christ, and that unbelief comes from us. But the judgments of God are hidden, why He converts Paul, but does not convert Caiaphas, again accepts fallen Peter, but leaves Judas to despair.” Further: “Why God elects one, calls and regenerates one man, and permits another to harden himself, recalls one who had forsaken Him, and does not change the will of another, God has reserved for His secret counsel,” etc. P. 374. Lastly: “Gerhard knew very well, neither had he forgotten it for the time being, when he recorded those words, that all who are rejected are reprobated on account of their unbelief. But he also knew the other, that *this known answer does not solve all the secrets of*

*God. Why God elects one of free grace, and leaves another in his unbelief, so that he is reprobated on account of his unbelief, this he neither desired, nor was able, to comprehend,"* etc. P. 375.

Now if this does not let the Calvinistic cat out of the bag, we know not what could. The theory then is this: God did not elect some men on account of their unbelief. That is the known and revealed reason; but behind this, there is the real unrevealed reason which decides everything. Furthermore, men perish on account of unbelief, but why God does not convert them, which He could if He would, we do not know. The cause of their non-conversion lies in Him, in God alone, in the last instance. Where does the Bible teach this? Nowhere. It tells us, the reason of men's non-conversion lies not in God, but in man himself. It tells us that He would, but they hinder Him. But of course Calvinism is not satisfied with this. When God tells us that it is His will that all men should be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth, we, according to this theory, are to hold, that behind this revealed will there is a cause in *God*, why He does not convert them. The ultimate cause then why men are not elected and converted, is in God. Whether with Calvin we presume to know this cause, or whether we simply hold, that the cause is with God, although unknown, makes very little difference. We are glad that this new theory, which has been trying to palm itself off as Lutheranism, at last shows the cloven foot. It is a relief to return from this sandy desert to the utterances of our Norwegian brethren, who, although some of them believe themselves to be following Missouri, state, that the *only* cause of men's non-election and non-conversion is in man. They say in their last proceedings, § 6: "The power of these means is not different in respect to different persons" —(there is therefore no "emphasising of the word some"); § 7: "The saving power of these means can be resisted by *every one*;" § 8: No one can by his own strength accept God's call; § 9: Every one *naturally* resists the call; § 10: *This* resistance can only be overcome by the power of God through the means of grace; § 11: It is the earnest will of God to overcome *natural resistance in every case*; § 14: Faith is given to all, *who do not wilfully hinder (resist) the Holy Ghost*; § 15: When a person does not obtain faith, the cause must be sought *solely in man.*"

These are the points in which all the Norwegian brethren are agreed. We extend to them the hand of fellowship, although one party states the doctrine of election in a way which we do not consider the best. Yet with these safeguards thrown around it, it cannot do much harm. Strange, that New Missouri does not denounce them for holding that God in conversion only removes *natural resistance*, and that where there is *wilful resistance*, conversion does not take place. This is exactly our doctrine. On the doctrine of conversion there is evidently no difference between them and us. The doctrine of election is then clearly only a difference in *form*, which cannot cause much trouble. Thus the Missouri party among them is clearly more in accord with the opposite party, than they are with St. Louis. May they soon see eye to eye with the brethren of their synod and raise their voice unitedly against Missouri's Calvinistic doctrine of conversion, which claims not to know why *God* does not convert all, holds that with some God takes away wilful resistance and with others He does not, and talks of a secret of God lying behind the revealed fact, that He did not elect some because they believed not, and does not convert them because they resist wilfully; in short, who tell us that God alone makes this difference among men, whilst *they* find it in mere natural and wilful resistance.

NOTE 2.—The most nonsensical of all is the argument of New Missouri that the Lutheran doctrine of election, as we hold it, is not sufficiently mysterious, or that we divest the doctrine of its mystery. They hold that this is *prima facie* evidence, that our doctrine is not that of the Formula of Concord, which concedes it to contain mysteries. But do we deny the mysteries there named? Not one of them. Four are named. The first is, the number and the persons elected. We do not presume to know them. The second is, the time and hour of the call and conversion of every person elected, which we do not profess to know. And as election is according to God's foreknowledge and is the sanction and confirmation of the effects and results of the means of grace, and most certainly causes them to come to pass, we see how the conversion of every elect person should be predetermined. We know the same to take place in God's providence generally, of which, Gerhard says,



election is a part. Thus God foreordained the mode and time of the sufferings and death of His Son, and the instrumentalities, although He did not ordain the wickedness of the instruments who brought it about. Having foreseen their wicked purpose, He foreordained the time and manner in which it should bring about the death of Christ. How considerably our fathers spoke in saying that *the time of the call and conversion* is predestinated, but not conversion itself. Third, the fact that God gives His Word to some nations and withholds it from others, continues it to some and takes it away from others, etc. All of this we do not profess to know in detail, for the ways of His providence are to us past finding out. We only see in general that where men desire to hear His Word and will hear it, like those of Macedonia, when preached, God will send it. And fourthly, it is stated as a mystery to us, that some are hardened and blinded and others, although equally guilty, are again converted. We are here again constrained to admire the consideration and wisdom with which our fathers speak of this mystery. Let it be noticed, that they do not say, as Missouri reads them, *that God hardens, blinds, and perverts some, whilst He again converts others*, nor that they were in the same *sin*, but only in the same *guilt*. The guilt of one sin may be and often is greater than that of another, although it does not prevent conversion. Thus one man with a corrupt heart and with great guilt upon his conscience wilfully and maliciously resists converting grace, and thus makes his conversion impossible, whilst another equally great sinner does not thus resist and is converted. But we are totally unable to explain why it is so. It is a mystery to us. Thus it appears that we, according to our Lutheran doctrine of election, cannot and do not presume to explain a single mystery which is stated in the Formula of Concord. Let New Missouri take notice of this, and not fight men of straw all the time, which it sets up and with which we have nothing to do. Thus we leave all the mysteries of our Formula of Concord without casting ourselves into the arms of Calvinism, whilst New Missouri attempts to explain them. It has left no mystery there. Their doctrine of election explains it all — those that are elected are then converted, as faith comes from elec-

tion; those that are not elected, cannot believe, or, if they believe, they will fall away again and perish. In short, they have completely solved all the mysteries mentioned in the Formula of Concord and thus have shown that their doctrine is as foreign to it as heaven is to earth. How they can yet talk of mysteries is a marvel to us. Their doctrine of election given, and all becomes clear as day-light, but as flat as the most sterile Rationalism can possibly make it. Their mysteries lie on altogether another field from that where our Formula of Concord puts them. Indeed, theirs are not mysteries, but contradictions—mysteries of which the Formula knows nothing. We will state some. God has the will and power to convert all, but does not do it. God treats all men alike, and yet treats them differently. He could not elect some, because they believed not, and yet election precedes faith and produces faith. Christ purchased the same grace for all, and God portions it out differently to different men. Without faith it is impossible to please God, and yet some men pleased Him so that without it He predestinated them to life upon the way of faith, faith coming from election. On account of wilful, pertinacious resistance God damns men, and yet in conversion removes this resistance. God damns men for wilful resistance to His grace, and yet neither could they help it nor would God remove it. He thus damns them on account of something which He could have removed and did not, and which they had no power to desist from. Justification is by faith, though exclusively by grace, and yet, if it is held that election is also by faith and yet of grace alone, it is an error and faith is made a matter of human merit. The doctrine of justification by faith is confirmed by the doctrine of election, and yet faith must be excluded from election, as preceding it in *signo rationis*, although faith in justification precedes it. God would have all men to be saved, and men, even with wilful resistance, cannot hinder it, and yet He does not save all, so that He does not carry out His will and we cannot rely upon His carrying out what He declares to be His will. Equal causes produce unequal effects. Behind God's equal love to all men in giving even His Son for them, there is a great secret in Him, depending only upon His will, by which He makes a difference among men,

electing and saving some, and permitting others to perish, although Paul has said that with Christ God will give us *all things* freely. This dualism of a revealed will and secret counsel running counter to one another, it will be seen at a glance, upsets the whole Gospel and robs it of every comfort—it makes the Word of God a falsehood.

NOTE 3.—That the Greek word *gignoskein* means to know, and nothing more nor less, is evident from the following passages: The tree is known by its fruit (Matt. 12, 33); Know ye not, brethren, for I speak to them that know the law (Rom. 7, 1); And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew Him, (which, according to Pastor Stoeckhardt, would be a squinting, awkward expression), (Mark 6, 54); Henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth we know Him no more (2 Cor. 5, 16); But there standeth one among you whom ye know not (John 1, 26); But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you (John 5, 42); And the world knew Him not (John 1, 10); And yet hast thou not known me? (John 14, 9). So when it is predicated of Christ. But I knew you, that ye have not the love of God in you (John 5, 42); Ye are they which justify yourselves—but God knoweth your hearts (Luke 16, 15); But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all—for He knew what was in them. (John 2, 24–25). Is it not a falsifying of the Scriptures, when Past. Stoeckhardt contends, in the face of all these passages, that *gignoskein*, when predicated of God, means to appropriate, to know and love, etc.? Did the Savior love the wickedness that was in these men? No, without a new dictionary Past. Stoeckhardt cannot get his new doctrine into the Bible. Is it nothing to him to falsify the Savior's words and to make Him a lover of sin? So when God, Acts 1, 24 and Acts 15, 8 is called *kardiognostes* (literally, knower of hearts), Past. Stoeckhardt, in conformity with his definition, must render: God, who with an effective act of His will, makes hearts His own, or who knows and loves hearts! Will he, in the face of all this, stick to his misinterpretation? It would almost seem like wilful blindness.

## ROM. 8, 28-30.

BY PROF. F. W. STELLHORN.

A certain E. W. K., in the September No. of *Lehre und Wehre*, has come forward to combat our exposition of the above passage in the foregoing issue of this MAGAZINE. He fondly hopes that we now wrathfully will turn against him. We are sorry to say that we feel constrained to disappoint him in this hope. A man who can plaintively exclaim in *L. u. W.* p. 324: "We repeat that it is our conviction that from our side the discussion of the controverted doctrine in writing must and will soon be broken off, if our apponents do not assume another tone in their polemical writing," and who, then, can write in such an arrogant and contemptuous manner as he does in *L. u. W.* for September, must either, by some organic fault, not know to-day what he solemnly declared yesterday, or he is a hypocrite of the worst kind. And with neither can we or will we have anything to do. Such a person is even beyond our "wrath." His conduct is simply pitiable and ridiculous, or contemptible, especially when we know a person, as we do E. W. K. Let him "tarry at Jericho until his beard be grown," before he gets up to cure other men of supposed wickedness by "drastic" remedies. We should think it would take all his time and leisure to sweep "drastically" before his own door. Him least of all we would acknowledge as judge of heart and motives. By his indecent mode of warfare he has forfeited all claim upon an answer to his article. We, therefore, pass it by, as if it were not written at all.

We will now give here, in a literal translation, the exposition of the above passage by the celebrated Lutheran exegete, F. Balduin. From it the reader will see that in all essential points his interpretation is the same as ours. "The ninth argument of consolation is the final termination of our tribulations, which, according to His promises, will be exceedingly blessed. *We know*, he says, *that all things work together for good to them that love God*, v. 28. He commends, therefore, the providence of God, who never would inflict any evil upon His believing children, if He could not elicit any good from it, salutary to the believers themselves and useful to the

state. For this reason he uses the compound verb "*synergei*": they "work together." For they work together with God, who uses this means, though it be rather hard and disagreeable to our flesh. For by means of the cross our lascivious flesh is curbed, the impetuosity of sin is broken, our patience, hope, and faith are tried, and our spirit is excited to more ardent prayers. But he describes those to whom all things work together for good by a three-fold mark: 1) for they are such as *love God*, that is, truly children of God; for love is a mark of the children of God; 2) that they are *called*, namely through the Gospel, unto the communion of the Church; for outside the communion of the called no children of God are found, but only children of wrath; 3) that this call has taken place "according to His purpose." It is not expressly said here whether this *purpose* be that of God, or of men. Accordingly Chrysostom and Origen, and also Augustine (lib. de corr. and grat. cap. 9) referred it to the firm purpose and constant will of man to obey God. But this is contrary to the sense of the apostle, who shows, chap. 9, v. 11, Eph. 1, 11, and 2 Tim. 1, 9, that he speaks of the purpose, counsel, and will of God, according to which it has pleased Him to recall to Him those who by sin have fallen away from Him. By this word, consequently, the gracious call of God is denoted that has taken place without the intervention of any merits whatever, of which call the apostle speaks 2 Tim. 1, 9. And from this the apostle goes over to the tenth argument, which is taken from the *eternal predestination* of God, upon which the salvation of man depends. Therefore it cannot be prevented by any tribulations.

Namely, after having said that to those who love God all things work together for good, he adds immediately v. 29: "*For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified.*" The following argument of consolation is taken from these verses: All those who, not by any accident, but in consequence of the singular foreknowledge and destination of God, have been subjected to

the cross, that they might not degenerate from the condition of Christ their Head,—those, indeed, have no reason for greatly fearing the tribulations of this world. For He who, in consequence of His peculiar counsel, has made them subject to the cross, has also by an eternal and immutable decree destined them to salvation and glory. But such people are all believers. Therefore, etc.

In the same manner as this argument is in other respects eminent because of its majesty, so it is memorable also for this reason, because it shows in an elegant gradation that order in which God procures the salvation of His elect. But, that we may not err in regard to the true sense of this gradation, we must *first* of all know that the apostle, by a mode of expression familiar to the prophets, speaks of future things as if they had already taken place, because they are surely to take place. *Then*, he does not speak promiscuously of all men, but only of those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk after the flesh, but after the spirit, who have not to fear any condemnation, who are led by the Spirit of God, who are children of God, heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ, loving God, in one word, he speaks of believers. Wrongly, therefore, this passage has been interpreted as teaching a universal predestination of all men to life. *Furthermore*, it is to be noted that here the order is taught in which God finally realizes His eternal election, partly in this present time, by His call and justification, partly in another, future life, by eternal glorification. Consequently, the first members of this sentence must be interpreted in accordance with the last, so that those who are to be glorified are also those who are justified, and those who are justified, are also those who are called, and those who are called, are also those who are predestinated and foreknown. Wherefrom it follows that those who are foreknown, predestinated, and called, are to be understood as being only those who attain the end of their predestination, viz. eternal glorification, which is the most sure result and effect of predestination.

Having premised this, we will now in order look at the several stages (grades), as they are denoted by the different words.

The first word is the "*purpose*" (*prothesis*) of God, which

excludes all chance and accident from the work of our salvation, and simply refers the latter to the providence of God. That "purpose" of God is not to be looked for in the abyss of divine secrets, but in His revealed Word, especially in the doctrine of the Gospel, as the apostle Paul testifies in various places (Rom. 16, 25; 10, 7. 8; Eph. 3, 5; 2 Tim. 1, 10; 1 Cor. 2, 7; Acts 20, 27.) For as our sainted Luther excellently says in his explanation of the 25. chapter of Genesis, as far as God has not revealed Himself, we can have no faith in Him, and can not know anything about Him. But that word "purpose" does not include only the will, but also the counsel and decree of God concerning our salvation. This purpose in God makes our election and the whole business of our salvation, as regards us, merely and purely dependent on grace. For it took place in eternity, when men did not yet exist. Therefore it is called a "purpose" to do something in the future. And it is described in such a way in Scripture that we may understand it thus: 1.) No man whatever has been excluded from this purpose, counsel, and decree of God. For God has concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all, Rom. 11, 32; He commandeth all men everywhere to repent, Acts 17, 30; He gave His Son for all, John 3, 16; 1 John 2, 2; He will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth, 1 Tim. 2, 4. 2.) This purpose is not simulated or hypocritical, but serious, because God affirms with an oath that He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live, Ezek. 33, 11. But because not all men accept this counsel and will of God, therefore the will of God, that in itself and in its nature is one and the same, and the most simple, obtains a twofold respect; and in accordance with this also the purpose in God must be considered in a twofold manner. For, first, God has made this declaration in His Word that He wills the salvation of all men, even of those who perish; and this will of God extends over all, none excepted, although it does not attain its object with all. In the schools it is called the *antecedent* (foregoing) will, according to which God purposed, that is, seriously resolved to save all men. But because this will of God is not simply unlimited, but on the contrary bound to certain means, viz. to the Word and to

faith, therefore this purpose of God extends also universally to those means. For God proposed to send His Son for all, to give His Word to all, to bestow faith upon all by His Word, and to grant salvation to all by faith in Christ, also to those who despise His Son, will not hear His Word, and who have not actually faith, nor are actually saved. And because this purpose of God is serious, we must condemn to hell those impious expressions of the Sacramentarians, as if God only externally had called some, and laid before them salvation in His Word, whilst He really in His heart had from eternity rejected them and had not willed that they should hear His Word. For such a simulation and hypocrisy is not even to be tolerated in man, much more is it contrary in the highest degree to the most truthful promises of God, and to His most sincere affection towards men. But because not all follow this serious will of God, therefore that malice of men, which was known to God in eternity, causes another respect in the will of God, which is usually called the *consequent* (following) will; and this, so to say, divides men into two classes, believers and unbelievers, and lays before us the purpose and decree of God, concerning both, considered separately. Concerning the believers there is this purpose of God: He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. Concerning the unbelievers there is, again, another purpose: He that believeth not shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. Both are to be found John 3, 36. And thus it is with the "purpose" of God. What order it includes, follows now.

The other word, therefore, is "*foreknowledge*" or *pre-science* (*prognosis*). This is used of God humanly speaking. For in Him is nothing but a simple knowledge, and all future things are to Him as present as possible. This knowledge of God belongs to the essence of God, and is otherwise general, extending over all things that exist in the world. But here it is to be taken in a limited sense, according to the subject matter, viz: as the foreknowledge of the elect, who are in Christ, who love God, and to whom all things work together for good. For also the word *predestination*, that is added, shows that the apostle does not speak of the absolute foreknowledge of all things, but of that of the elect or predestinated. In this sense they are called the elect according to the foreknowl-



edge of God the Father, 1. Pet. 1, 2, where Luther explains "foreknowledge" by "ordination," because God in election had respect to the order constituted by Himself, in which order not our works, but Christ, together with all His merit, is included. Contrarily, the interpretation of the Calvinists is false, who interpret this "foreknew" by "recognized as His, loved, elected." For then there would be no difference between foreknowledge and predestination or election, whereas they here must be accurately distinguished one from the other, as distinct steps in procuring our salvation.

The third word is "predestination" (*proorismos*). This word, again, is not to be taken absolutely, but with a manifest limitation. For it is restricted to the conformation to the image of Christ, which in part consists in the communion of His afflictions, in part in the participation of His glory; with this difference only, that Christ be the first-born, that is, that He have His prerogatives and His eminence, in the degrees of passion and glory, over all His brethren. For not a conformity of quality, but of similarity, is here pointed out. This predestination, however, does not simply denote a counsel of God, but a determination of the divine will, by certain means, to an end or object that has been previously fixed by God to Himself. This is the reason why in Acts 13, 48 the elect are called the "ordained to eternal life." *Predestination* differs from *foreknowledge*, not in regard to time, not in regard to its objects, but 1.) in regard to the *act* in God; for *foreknowledge* denotes only the divine *knowledge* of things, whilst *predestination* denotes the *cause* of salvation in the elected; 2.) in regard to the *order*; for *foreknowledge* indicates that our predestination has taken place not absolutely, but in a certain order; viz. because God knew from eternity who would be implanted in Christ by faith, therefore He predestinated these to life, passing by the others, not in consequence of an absolute decree, but because of their incredulity, that could not be unknown to the omniscient God. And this is revealed to us in the Gospel wherein the execution of this decree, agreeing with the decree itself, is contained; viz. He that believeth shall be saved; therefore also he that believeth has been foreknown and predestinated. Consequently, what Paraeus writes about this chapter is false; viz. that here "foreknowledge"

is put for election itself. Election, however, can not be without foreknowledge. For eternal election takes regard 1) to the future fall of man in time, 2.) to the future merit of Christ, 3.) to the annunciation of this merit, 4.) to the sheep of Christ who would believe in time. And this God did in *eternity*, in promising the salvation of men. In regard to *time*, the third word follows, viz. the *calling*. For outside the number of the called no elect are to be found. The calling is done by means of the Word. But because not all who are called, follow, but some, on the contrary, reject the Word and despise the counsel of God against themselves, we must know that the apostle here speaks of that call which attains its proposed end. For he speaks of those who are also justified and glorified, whom he also describes in other places (2. Tim. 1. 9); and these are the same as those who have been predestinated. This only is the difference that predestination takes place in eternity, the call in time.

The fourth word that constitutes a step of our salvation, is *justification*, of whose causes we treat elsewhere, and which is nothing else than the execution in time of the predestination that has taken place in eternity. Lastly, follows *glorification*. This is the last act concerning the elect, and this they will attain only in the world to come, as the object and end of their faith and predestination. Of all this he speaks in the past tense, partly on account of the certainty of the event, as we have said above, because the election of God is not fallible, and those who are predestinated to glory, will also surely obtain it; partly because here he only speaks of the justification, calling, and predestination to life of the elect.

Thus Balduin, and with him all our celebrated Lutheran exegetes agree in all essential points. And this goes far in consoling us for the disagreement of that theological and moral model, E. W. K.

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### ELECTION IN FORESIGHT OF FAITH.

For the twofold purpose of showing how distinguished dogmaticians of the Lutheran Church set forth the relation of faith to predestination, and of exhibiting the biblical argument for the doctrine that God has elected men in foresight

of faith, we propose to give, in this article, some extracts from prominent older theologians whose praise is in all the churches. That this will lead to repetitions of the same points and arguments is evident; but this will only serve to impress the truth more firmly upon the mind, while it will show with what unanimity our principal writers advocated the same form of doctrine. We begin with Hutter, whose Compendium was published only about thirty years after the Formula of Concord. He writes thus:

*"In whom is the election made?"* In Christ alone. Eph. 1, 4. God hath chosen us in Christ before the foundations of the earth were laid. He hath made us accepted in the Beloved. Hence the entire Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, leads all men to Christ, the book of life, that they may search and find in Him the eternal predestination of the Father. On this account Christ Himself has said, 'No man cometh unto the Father but by me.' John 14, 6. 'I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved.' John 10, 9. Form. Conc., Sol. Decl. XI, 66.

*But as Christ is the Redeemer of all men, and as election is made in Christ, dare we not say that all may have been elected in Christ, and consequently that election is universal.* In the decree of election Christ is considered not only as universal Mediator, but also as men apprehend Him by an act of faith. For He Himself announces the will of His heavenly Father, and our election to eternal life, in these words: 'Repent ye, and believe the Gospel.' Mark 1, 15. In another place He says: 'This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life.' John 6, 40. And elsewhere: 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' John 3, 16. *Ib.* 67." Comp. Theol. Art. 13, qu. 25. 26.

Nicholas Hunnius, whose Epitome appeared about ten years later, presents the subject as follows:

"We must inquire, secondly, what it was that God considered in determining His election of grace, thus preferring one individual to another, electing to eternal life a certain number, but not the whole of mankind. With respect to this subject it is to be remembered: 1. That God, in the act

of election, has regard only to the Lord Jesus Christ, as can be proved by the Bible passages Eph. 1, 4, 5; 2 Tim. 1, 9. All men are reconciled to God, through Christ. 2 Cor. 5, 19. 'Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.' John 1, 17. God has made us 'accepted in the Beloved,' that is, in His Son. Eph. 1, 6. 'Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus. Acts 4, 12. 2. God in this act regarded the Lord Jesus Christ not only so far as He has suffered for all mankind and borne their sins; for in this case there would be no difference between the two classes and no possibility of an election, since Christ has equally borne the sins of all. It is therefore to be kept in mind, 3. That God in this act regarded the Lord Jesus Christ in so far as He has been accepted by men. For he, to whom God has shown special grace and in whom He has manifested His great love, has undoubtedly received and appropriated the Lord Jesus, by whom he has been reconciled and led to grace, not only so far as He has merited salvation, but in deed and in truth. Now the election of grace is a divine act, in the performance of which God manifests His great love towards the elect, thereby testifying that they have indeed been reconciled unto Him; from which it follows that the elect of God have received and accepted the Lord Jesus Christ. 4. It is also to be observed that the Lord Jesus can be accepted by men in no other way than by faith. The nature of this we shall have occasion to explain hereafter; for the present it may suffice to observe, that faith is the firm conviction, on the part of man, that God is mercifully inclined unto him, and that He has forgiven him his sins and purposes to make him an heir of eternal life, because His own beloved Son has borne the sins of all men in His own body, paid a ransom for them, and cleansed them with His blood, so that man, being reconciled unto his God, might henceforth approach Him without fear and trembling. Whoever has such a confidence, lays hold of the merciful promises of God as well as of the merits of Christ. This is the faith by which the Lord Jesus is received into our hearts and dwells in them, Eph. 3, 17; and it is on this account that the Apostle Paul says, 'Without faith it is impossible to please God.' Heb. 11, 6. Want of

faith makes a man a castaway, as Paul and Barnabas declared to the hardened and stiff-necked Jews of Antioch, saying: 'It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you, but seeing ye put it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.' Acts 13, 46. 5. God had therefore, in the act of election, regard to no other circumstance but that of the reception of the Lord Jesus with His merits and righteousness into the hearts of some men; and these men having become entirely reconciled to Him, He has elected them unto eternal life. On the other hand, He saw that in some men no faith would be found, who must accordingly be said to have rejected the Lord Jesus in unbelief, and that they would not partake of His righteousness and merits, and would therefore still remain in their sins and under the burden of the divine wrath. These being found without Christ, have therefore not been elected unto eternal life. This is what constitutes the difference between those whom God has elected and those whom He has rejected; namely, that some have been found in Christ, which has not been the case with the rest; just as the same properties constitute the distinction between those that are saved and those who are damned. 'He that believeth on Him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already.' 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.' John 3, 18. 36. 6. Thus God, in that He elected the believing among mankind and rejected the unbelieving, had regard especially to man's faith. This is not to be understood as if this faith could, in itself, give unto any man a dignity and worthiness by the considering of which God could be induced to the work of mercy and thus to the election of this individual. No, faith is to be considered only as a means, by the exercise of which the Lord Jesus Christ is united with man, in consequence of which union Christ's innocence, righteousness and merits, which we have shown to be the only qualities which are considered in the act of election, are applied and appropriated unto man." Epit. Cred. chap. 14, 317-323.

Gerhard, the prince of Lutheran dogmaticians, who was born but two years after the publication of the last of our

symbols, and whose masterly *Loci* appeared about the same time as the Epitome of Hunnius, thus treats the subject under consideration :

“It is thus established that the merit of Christ is the cause of our election. But since the merit of Christ is of no profit to any one without faith, we say that also the consideration of faith is included in the decree of election. We distinctly confess our conviction, that God has found no good in the persons to be elected to eternal life, and that He has not had respect to good works, nor to the use of free will, nor therefore even to faith itself in such sense that He was moved by these, or that He elected certain persons on account of them. We maintain that it was only and solely the merit of Christ to whose worth He had regard, and that He formed the decree of election from pure grace. Nevertheless, because the merit of Christ is not in man’s possession except by faith, we teach that the election took place in view of the merit of Christ apprehended by faith. Therefore we say that those, and only those, are elected by God from eternity, concerning whom He foresaw that they would become true believers in Christ the Redeemer, by the efficacy of the Holy Spirit through the ministry of the Gospel, and that they would continue in faith until the end of life.

We shall briefly offer the reasons for this our conviction.

1. The election took place in Christ. Eph. 1, 1. In Christ we are only by faith. Eph. 3, 17. Therefore those who would believe are predestinated. 1. Tim. 1, 16.

2. Election is the eternal decree of God concerning the justification and salvation of man. But God in time justifies and saves men only through faith. Rom. 3 & 4; Gal. 2 & 3; Eph. 2., etc. Therefore He has decreed from eternity to justify and save only those who would believe, and consequently elected all those, and no others, of whom He foresaw that they would continue in Christ through faith.

3. Without Christ no one is predestinated. Sinful men, without taking their faith into consideration, are without Christ. Therefore sinful men, aside from the consideration of faith, are not predestinated. Hence, as St. Paul says that God has chosen us in Christ, Eph. 1, 4, so he says that God has chosen us through faith, 2 Thess. 2, 13, because we could

not be predestinated in Christ except in view of faith apprehending Christ. 'Without faith it is impossible to please God.' Heb. 11, 6.

4. The elect please God from eternity; because the heavenly kingdom was prepared for them from the foundation of the world. Matt. 25, 34. It could therefore not be otherwise than in consideration of faith apprehending Christ.

5. From this flow the usual descriptions given in Scripture of the elect. St. Paul says: 'That in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting.' 1 Tim. 1, 16. Our Lord says: 'I pray for them also which shall believe on me through their word.' John 17, 20. St. James asks: 'Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith?' The faith in Christ is called the 'faith of God's elect.' Tit. 1, 1.

6. The words of the apostle in 2 Thess. 2, 13, merit special attention: 'God hath from the beginning,' i. e. from eternity, 'chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.' Compare with this the words in 1 Pet. 2: 'Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.' From this we conclude: Those of whom God foresaw that, through the preaching of the Gospel (which is the sanctification of the Spirit), they would believe and be brought to the obedience of faith, He predestinated in Christ. Some object that the sanctification of the Spirit denotes the incipient holiness of life. But this is the cause neither of election nor of salvation. Moreover, this incipient holiness is the consequence and effect of faith, and would therefore more properly be placed after it. Therefore by sanctification of the Spirit we understand the ministration of the Gospel, that being called the ministration of the Spirit (2 Cor. 3, 8), who sanctifies us through the truth. John 17, 17. Hence we have here beautifully described the means which offer and which receive salvation: God offers it through sanctification of the Spirit, and we receive it by true faith, or by the obedience of faith, rendering us partakers of sanctification, (Rom. 1, 5,) since the Word preached does not profit when it is not mixed with faith

in them that hear it. Heb. 4, 2. Others object that the causes of salvation are described, but not the order of election. But the apostle refers the sanctification of the Spirit and the belief of the truth to election, not to the word salvation.

7. In Rom. 11, 20-23, it is said that the Jews because of unbelief were broken off from the olive tree; that the Gentiles, if they continue not in God's goodness, would be cut off; and that the Jews, if they abode not in unbelief, should be grafted in. Hence we argue: that, on account of which men are rejected in time, is that on account of which it was decreed from eternity that they should be rejected. On the other hand, that through which in time we are inserted into the body of the elect, is that through which we were from eternity decreed to be inserted; because there is an exact agreement between the decree and its execution. Now, in time men are rejected because of unbelief, and are added to the company of the elect through faith. Therefore also from eternity God made such a decree; namely, to reject those of whom He foresaw that they would remain in unbelief, and to elect those of whom He foresaw that they would continue in true faith.

To these arguments it is customary to reply that regard is not otherwise had to faith in the decree of election than as the means through which God has decreed to lead the elect to salvation. But we have shown that the consideration of faith enters into the decree of election itself. Justification, which takes place in time, is a reflection of the predestination which took place before all time. We are elected, justified, glorified, in a certain order. We are justified in the order of present faith; we are glorified in the order of persevering faith; therefore we are predestinated in the order of future faith which is to be conferred and which is foreseen. Faith is given in time by the grace of God who elects; but notwithstanding this the view of faith to be conferred in time through the Word enters into the decree of election formed from eternity." *Loc. Theol.* VIII. § 161-165.

Dr. Kromayer, in his excellent *Theologia Positiva Polemica*, published about half a century after Gerhard's great work, proves that election takes place in view of faith as follows:

"1. Predestination takes place according to the good pleasure of His will. Eph. 1, 5. But this good pleasure or purpose of the divine will includes faith. For thus says the Savior: 'This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life.' John 6, 40. This clearly informs us of the



will of God respecting our salvation. And the apostle says: 'It pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.' 1 Cor. 1, 21. Again we read: 'Without faith it is impossible to please God.' Heb. 11, 6. That we may rightly understand this argument we must observe that in election to salvation two things concur; namely, the purpose or pleasure of the divine will (prothesis), and the foreknowledge (prognosis), according to both of which election is said to take place. This purpose is the general decree according to which God wills to elect and save men; namely, this: Those who believe in Christ unto their end are elected to eternal life. Foreknowledge has reference to the individuals who believe until their end. Although reprobation takes place according to the will of God, because it is decreed, yet it is not His good pleasure, because this expression is never used in the Scriptures otherwise than in a good sense, as denoting some blessing to those, to whom anything is said to be decreed out of this good pleasure. The Scriptures sometimes say that election is effected according to the purpose, Eph. 1, 5, 11; Rom. 8, 28; 2 Tim. 1, 9; sometimes they say the purpose of God takes place according to election, Rom. 9, 11. But this is owing to the manifold use of the words 'according to' (*kata*), which signify either the cause, as when election is said to take place according to the purpose, or the object of the purpose, as when the apostle says, Rom. 9, 11, that the purpose of God which is according to election, or in election, or as it pertains to election, might stand.

2. Because the Scriptures expressly assert this. 'God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.' 2 Thess. 2, 13. 'Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him?' James 2, 2. St. Paul calls himself a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ 'according to the faith of God's elect.' Tit. 1, 1.

3. Because God does not save us in time otherwise than He has purposed to save us from eternity. If He did, the harmony between the purpose and its execution would be disturbed. But in time He saves us through faith, as can be proved by many passages of Scripture, and as the Calvinists themselves confess.

4. Because we are elected in Christ. Eph. 1, 4. But we are in Christ only through faith.

5. Because the election in Christ takes place in the same way as the blessing in Christ. Eph. 1, 3, 4. But the blessing is by faith. Gal. 3, 9.

6. Because the election is *kata prognosin*, that is, according to foreknowledge. But if election was absolute, there would be no need for such foreknowledge. In this foreknowl-

edge God has respect to nothing else than that, on account of which he purposed that we shall be saved, i. e. to Christ apprehended by faith. Concerning this foreknowledge the apostle says: 'Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate.' Rom. 8, 29. 'God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew.' Rom. 11, 2. St. Peter calls the predestinated believers 'elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.' 1 Pet. 1, 2. St. Paul says, 'The Lord knoweth them that are His,' 2, Tim. 2, 19, and describes the elect as those who should believe on Him to life everlasting. 1 Tim. 1, 16. Our Lord is said to have known from the beginning who they were that believed not. John 6. 54.

7. Because the grace of Christ is said to have been given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. 2. Tim. 1, 9. But the grace of Christ was not given to any one without taking faith into consideration.

8. Because the works of grace, as the forgiveness of sins, are obtained by faith. 'We have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand.' Rom. 5, 2. But election is a work of divine grace, and can therefore be ours only by faith. Theol. Pos. Pol. p. 386-388.

Quenstedt, one of the greatest of our dogmaticians, in his *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, published in 1685, writes thus:

"That the consideration of faith, in the view of the divine mind, preceded the decree of salvation, or, which is the same thing, that men who should continue in faith in Christ were elected, is proved:

1. By texts of Scripture: 1. From 2 Thess, 2, 13: 'God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.' The preposition through (en) in this place, in contradistinction to the preposition to (eis), shows that not the end, but the object of election is intended to be pointed out, so that the sense is that God has elected us through faith, i. e. in view of the faith to be bestowed and received. In the same way these particles are distinguished in 1 Pet. 1, 1. 2: "Elect according to the foreknowledge (not from the purpose, as Beza translates it), of God the Father through (en) sanctification of the Spirit unto (eis) obedience. In this sense the phrases through faith and by faith are also frequently opposed to the phrases through works and by works, denoting the same as in view of faith, to the exclusion of all consideration of works, as in Rom. 1, 17; 2, 26; 4, 16; 5, 2; 9, 30. 32; 10, 6. 20. By sanctification of the Spirit is not meant our inherent holiness, or the habitual holiness of our morals and life, but the ministry of the word through which God by His holy vocation, 2 Tim. 1, 9, and the word of truth, sanctifies us, John 17, 17, so that the means of bestowal on the part of God and the means of reception on our part are conjoined. Neither means, consid-

ered according to the foreknowledge of God, is subordinated to our election, but both enter into it, and in the mind of God and in the decree of election itself are first in order, as Feuerborn rightly observes: the foreknowledge of faith itself we assert to be prior. By 'the belief of the truth,' according to Hebrew usage, is meant true faith, or faith holding the truth, so that it is the genitive of the object. 'From the beginning' is by some understood as referring to the foundation of the world, as the fall took place immediately after creation, but it is more correctly regarded as a description of eternity, as the parallel passage, Eph. 1, 4. shows. 2. From 1 Tim. 1, 16, where the elect are called those 'who should hereafter believe on Christ to life everlasting,' and Tit. 1, 1, where faith in Christ is called 'the faith of God's elect.' Hence election takes place in consideration of faith. 3. From James 2, 5: 'Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith?' i. e. those of whom God foresaw that they, by the power of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel would believe. And that in Heb. 11, 6. it is said that 'without faith it is impossible to please God.' But those whom God elects to eternal life must certainly please Him; for election is the highest degree of divine love towards man. Hence not otherwise than in view of faith in Christ do they please Him, and consequently not without faith, but rather through foresight of faith are they elect. For faith is that without which preceding we cannot please God.'

II. By reasons derived from Scripture; and 1. From the agreement between the decree and its execution, or election and salvation. The execution of the election in time clearly informs us concerning the eternal decree of election. For the mode of being saved in time cannot be otherwise than as it is defined in the eternal decree of God. 'From no other source is it apparent to us,' says Dannhauer, 'what order, according to our modes of conceiving, the pure act of the eternal mind observes, than from the steps of the execution which are taken in time.' But God in time saves us through faith; therefore from eternity He decreed to save us through faith; or 'as faith is the actual cause of salvation, so also that faith foreseen is the cause of salvation predestinated,' as the same Dannhauer expresses it. The same condition and quality under which God forsees us to be justified is the condition and quality under which He foresees us to be elected. This is apparent from Rom. 8, 30. But He foresaw that we would be justified under the condition and quality of faith to be imparted, according to Gal. 3, 8: 'The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith,' etc. Therefore under this condition He also foresaw them to be elected. 2. From the foreknowledge of God. Election takes place according to foreknowledge, Rom. 8, 29. compared with 1 Pet. 1, 2. in which

places foreknowledge is plainly distinguished from purpose and predestination, as diverse from and prior to the latter. The object of this divine foreknowledge, which in order precedes the decree of election, is Christ apprehended by faith, or, which is the same in this connection, faith viewed as constantly embracing Christ. Hence this foreknowledge is referred in 1. Pet. 1, 2, to the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, which takes place by faith. Thus foreknowledge is here not taken indefinitely; for in this sense it applies to the evil as well as to the good; but determined in a certain mode and directed to a certain subject. I say it is called foreknowledge of faith in Christ, which foreknowledge is associated with the divine approbation of the individual, Eph. 1, 6. Hence arises the argument: If we are elect according to the foreknowledge of faith, faith must precede election in order; for the object must be prior to that which is employed about the object. 3. From the inclusion of Christ's merits. God has elected us in Christ., Eph. 1, 4. Hence the argument: Whoever is elected in Christ is elected through faith in Christ; but this, that, and the other person is elected in Christ; therefore, etc. The major rests upon the constant and indissoluble connection between faith and Christ. In matters of our salvation, where faith is, there is Christ. Indeed, according to the interpretation of Chrysostom, Theophylact, Jerome, Augustine, the phrase 'to be elected in Christ and through Christ' means the same as 'to be elected through faith in Christ.' 4. From our adoption: The means by which we are rendered children of God are the means also by which we are elected by God, Eph. 1. 5. But we are made children of God through faith as the divine means, John 1, 12; Gal. 3, 26; therefore, etc." III. cap. 2, § 2, qu. 4.

Among the great dogmaticians of the Lutheran Church, there is great unanimity in maintaining that predestination takes place in view of foreseen faith. It seemed necessary to teach this to guard the doctrine against Calvinistic error. Though all our writers did not use the same terms in designating faith as necessary to predestination, as Baier points out, yet they agreed in the substance of the doctrine, that God predestinated whom He foresaw in Christ by faith. Hollaz, whose celebrated work was published in 1685, says: "Our theologians in explaining the eternal decree of predestination, agree entirely as to the matter, teaching with one consent that God, to whom also the future is objectively present, by the infinite light of His intellect from eternity foresaw the faith of certain men, who had fallen into sin, and in view of their faith thus foreseen elected them to eternal life. They differ only in the mode of speaking and in the use of some technical terms." Exam. P. III. Sec. 1, cap. 2, qu. 9.

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# COLUMBUS THEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE

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Vol. I.

DECEMBER, 1881.

No. 6.

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## THE NECESSITY OF FAITH TO SALVATION.

God created man in His own image. But Satan marred what God had made. The creature who was made to enjoy his Creator's blessedness forever, fell into sin and its consequent misery. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. 5, 12. The wrath of God came upon the children of disobedience, and all was lost. "By the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Rom. 5, 18. Our ruined race, having turned away from God, the source of all good and all happiness, was doomed to everlasting woe.

As there was no strength in man to deliver himself from the dreadful consequence of his offense, and as the only possible Deliverer was the God against whom the offense was committed, all hope seemed lost. But the possibilities in God are not to be measured by human thoughts. He devised a way for our escape from the wrath to come. "Thou spakest in vision to Thy holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people." Ps. 89, 19. "When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Gal. 4, 4. 5. The only begotten Son of the Father took upon Himself our nature and fulfilled all righteousness in our stead. What God required of us He performed; what we had deserved to suffer

He endured. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us."

This redemption through the Son of God, who became incarnate for the purpose, was necessary. Without it man could not be restored to his original state of favor with God. He was lost, and only thus could he be saved. The wrath, not the favor of God, was upon the sinner. Nothing could be done to restore the miserable race to blessedness as long as that wrath remained upon us. We can be made pleasing in God's sight only through Him of whom He said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ," "in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Eph. 1, 3, 7.

The redemption through the blood of the Lamb is universal: it embraces all men. The blessings are designed to reach as far as the curse extended. "The Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all." Is. 53, 6. "We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again." 2 Cor. 5, 14, 15. "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." 1 Tim. 2, 5, 6. "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2, 2. Hence it is said that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten," and that He is "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." John 3, 16; 1, 29.

That it is His gracious will that all men should have the benefit of this redemption, effected for the whole world, the Bible leaves no room to doubt. He gave His Son to die for all that all might escape the death which He endured in their stead. "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. 2, 4. St. Peter expresses the same truth when he says: "The Lord is not slack concerning His promises, as some men count slackness; but is

long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." 2 Pet. 3, 9. Hence St. Paul says in another place: "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all." Rom. 11, 32. This is in full accord with the revelation of His mercy which had been given to the people of God in the Old Testament: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." Ezek. 33, 11. Christ died to save all men, and it is the meriful will of God that all men should enjoy the blessing.

Salvation is thus prepared for all men. But are all men actually saved? Much depends upon the reply to this question. To answer it satisfactorily a distinction must be made. It is really a twofold question, resolving itself into the inquiry, *first*, whether the wrath of God is thus removed from all sinners, so that all are restored to His favor through the redemption effected by His dear Son, and, *secondly*, whether all are in the enjoyment of the blessedness secured by the removal of God's wrath and the restoration to divine favor. How the twofold question is related to the theme under consideration will be readily perceived.

If by salvation we understand the enjoyment of that blissful inheritance which God confers upon His children, it would be folly to suppose it in any one's possession without faith. Such a thing would be psychologically impossible. The soul that has come to a realization of its condemnation could not have peace without believing that that condemnation has been removed, and that the wrath of Him, upon whose judgment all must finally depend, has been turned away. In the soul there must be unrest until it believes that the dreadful curse of the Judge eternal has been removed. Even those who believe this, though they, being justified by faith, have peace with God, suffer tribulations in the world, and must pass through these to the eternal glory. Full salvation, in that subjective sense, no man can have until he reaches the blissful abodes, "where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest." The cross must be borne on earth before the crown can be worn in heaven. Without all controversy, those who reach the goal of heavenly glory are comparatively few. "He that endureth unto the

end shall be saved." Matt. 10, 22. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. 2, 10. "Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Matt. 7, 13, 14. In the sense of the attainment of the everlasting bliss of heaven only few are saved, and these are the believers who endure to the end.

But there is another sense in which the word salvation is used. When the wrath of God is removed from the soul, so that it stands acquitted before its final Judge, it is saved. "Where there is forgiveness of sin, there is also life and salvation." Thus St. Paul writes: "After that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by His grace we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Tit. 3, 4-7. In this sense the same apostle says: "By grace are ye saved." Salvation thus considered is identical with justification. Hence our Confessions frequently speak of preserving our salvation, and guarding against its loss by unbelief and sins against conscience.

If by salvation we understand this acceptance into God's favor, so that objectively we are freed from the dreadful consequences of our sin, the question concerning the necessity of faith has a different import. Are we saved by the redemption through Christ Jesus in such sense that without faith we are delivered from the curse? God is willing to save us all; and, since full satisfaction is rendered to divine justice, He can save us all, so far as any obstacle on His part is concerned. But does He now hold and declare all men absolved from sin and delivered from death? If He did, the doctrine of the final restoration of all men to happiness would inevitably follow; for whatever might be men's attitude to the proclamation of the Gospel, they would be no longer under condemnation, and no punishment could be inflicted upon them by divine justice. But He does not pronounce all free



from condemnation. The righteousness of Christ is not imputed to all men. Not all are saved. The number of those who are personally in the court of heaven declared free from condemnation is comparatively small, as well as the number of those who enjoy the peace which flows from an assurance of such justification and who reach the eternal bliss of the glorified in heaven. Not only does not every one whom Christ has redeemed with His blood experience the blessedness of the sonship and inheritance which the redemption was designed to secure for us all, but not every one is accepted of God as a son and an heir. Considering that God ardently desires the salvation of every sinner, that seems strange. Did He not give His dearest treasure that there might no longer be an obstacle in the way of executing His loving will toward all men, which is the salvation of all? The Bible gives us ample light to explain the matter. It shows us clearly where the difficulty lies.

Why does God turn away His wrath from some individuals and lead them safely through all the trials of earth to the perpetual joys of heaven, while upon others His wrath still abides and they end their journey in the everlasting agonies of hell? He gave His Son as a ransom for all; His gracious will is that all alike should share the blessings which His Son acquired for all; He instituted means through which the Holy Spirit should be alike efficacious for every one's salvation, and gave the commission that these should be brought to all nations. There is no limitation of the redemption, or of the grace of God, or of the efficacy of the means of grace, to a special class or a select number. Why then should there be such a vast difference in the final result? Why are some men saved and others not? The Bible answers, and our Confessions again and again repeat the answer, that some believe and some do not, and that he that believeth shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.

It was a part of the divine decree from eternity that only believers should be saved. This does not mean merely that the sinner cannot, without believing it, in his consciousness realize the blessedness of his liberation from the curse and his acceptance into God's favor, but that the liberation and

acceptance do not take place without faith. He is not only not internally sanctified and blessed without faith, but he is not externally, before the tribunal of God, justified without faith. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, *that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish*, but have everlasting life." "Now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. 3, 21-26. It is needless to multiply passages on a point concerning which the Scriptures speak so frequently and so emphatically. Nothing is plainer in the Word of God than that God's eternal purpose was to save only believers, and that faith makes the difference between those saved and those lost. The same truth is in various forms reiterated in our Confessions. "God in His eternal counsel has decreed that besides those who acknowledge His Son Jesus Christ, and truly believe on Him, He will save no one." F. C. Epit. xi, 13. In His purpose and counsel He has ordained "that He would justify, receive into His favor, and adopt as children and heirs of eternal life all those who in true repentance through genuine faith accept Christ." Sol. Dec. xi, 18. "Whenever we speak of the mercy of God we are to understand that faith is required, and this faith makes the difference between those who are saved and those who are damned, between the worthy and the unworthy. For eternal life is not promised to any others but the reconciled in Christ. But faith reconciles us and renders us just before God, when and at what time we by faith apprehend the promise." Apol. Muell. 144. "Those who are reconciled to God are just before Him and are children of God, not on account of their purity, but on account of God's mercy, if they grasp and apprehend this mercy by faith." Ib. 103,

86. Sinners "are justified freely for Christ's sake when they believe." Aug. Conf. 4.

The point thus set forth is that justification, i. e. the imputation of Christ's righteousness and the forgiveness of sin, takes place only when the sinner believes. This is what, in accordance with the Scriptures and our Confessions, the theologians of our Church have always taught. Thus Hutter defines: "Justification is a work of God by which, out of pure grace, or gratuitously, He releases from sin the sinner who believes in Christ, grants Him forgiveness of the same, and so imputes the righteousness of Christ to Him, that being most fully reconciled and adopted as a son, he is freed from the guilt and punishment of sin, and obtains eternal blessedness." Comp. Art. xii, 2. "Justification," says Baier, "which immediately follows conversion, has a forensic signification, and denotes that act by which God the Judge pronounces just the man who is a sinner, guilty of crime and subject to its penalty, but who believes in Jesus." Theol. Pos. de just. § 1. "Faith," as the same writer expresses it, "is by nature first in order, and justification subsequent to it."

With the plain statements of the Bible and the witness of the Church before us, all testifying that faith is a necessary prerequisite to justification and salvation, we cannot hesitate to give to the question, Why are some saved and others not, the simple answer, Because some believe and others do not. We are aware that fault will be found with this answer. But we have no wish to be more orthodox than the Scriptures and our Confessions. That these teach justification by faith alone we have no lingering doubt. But do they teach that any one is justified and saved *because* he believes? If that means, Does God justify and save the sinner because his faith is a fulfilment of all the righteousness which God's holy law requires? we answer most emphatically in the negative. That would be making faith a mere work of the law, and we read explicitly in the Scriptures that "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified." Rom. 3, 20. So far as faith is a legal requirement of the first commandment, and is a virtue in man in accordance with that requirement, it does not justify and save. But that does not end the matter. The

Spirit of truth who tells us that we cannot be justified and saved by legal performances, tells us also that "a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law." Rom. 3, 28. It is still by faith, though it be not by faith as an act of obedience to a legal requirement. Of Abraham it is written: "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that what He had promised He was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness." Rom. 4, 20-22. Our Confession says: "Some, when it is said that faith justifies before God, perhaps understand this only of the beginning of justification, to wit, that faith is only the initiative or preparation of justification, so that not faith itself is to be regarded as that by which we please God and become acceptable to Him, but that we are acceptable to Him on account of love and of the works which follow, not on account of faith." Apol. 99, 71. Neither the Scriptures nor our Confessions scrupulously avoid all terms that express the causality of faith in justification, because, while there is no merit in faith, and it could not, in that respect, be a cause of our acceptance with God, it is the means by which alone we can apprehend the righteousness of our Lord. The reason why some are saved and others are not is that some believe and others do not.

The perfect obedience rendered by our Savior in our stead must be imputed to the individual before he ceases to be a child of wrath and becomes a child of God and an heir of heaven. "He that believeth on Him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." John 3, 18. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." John 3, 36. Christ has rendered satisfaction for us, and the Gospel makes proclamation of the general amnesty on the ground of His merits; but that does not settle every individual's account with God. He is willing, for Christ's sake, to forgive every sinner, but not every sinner is therefore released from punishment. Only the believer is justified; the wrath of God abides on the unbeliever. Faith is the indispensable condition of the impu-

tation of the Redeemer's righteousness and of the escape from the wages of sin.

But is faith not a work of God, and can He not give it to whom He pleases? It is His work, wholly and exclusively His work. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Eph. 2, 8. This gift He pleases to give to all, as it is His pleasure that all should be saved. Then why, if every barrier to the salvation of man is removed, does He not adopt all as His children and lead them to the inheritance of the saints in light? Every barrier is not removed by the redemption; many are lost notwithstanding that Christ has died for them. God's will is that all should be saved through faith in His beloved Son, whom He has delivered up for us all, and with whom He would freely give us all things; but many stubbornly refuse the gracious gift. "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life," says our Savior. John 5, 40. And again He says in sadness: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Matt. 23, 37. That is where the trouble lies. It is not in the will of God, who would have all men to be saved, but in the perverse will of man, who despises the riches of heavenly grace in Christ. So too our Confessions explicitly declare: "As to the declaration, 'Many are called, but few are chosen,' it is not to be so understood as if God were unwilling that all should be saved, but the cause of the damnation of the ungodly is that they either do not hear the Word of God at all, but contumaciously contemn it, stop their ears, and harden their hearts, and in this way foreclose to the Spirit of God His ordinary way, so that He cannot accomplish His work in them, or at least, when they have heard the Word, make it of no account and cast it away. Neither God nor His election is to blame if they perish." Form. Conc. Epit. XI. § 12. All help comes from God; but some pertinaciously reject all proffered help, and consequently remain under condemnation and receive the just reward of their sins in endless death.

It is idle captiously to ask the question, why God does not exercise His omnipotence and force faith upon every soul

to its ultimate salvation. The fact remains as it is, whether we can fully explain it or not. We know from the Scriptures that God, having endowed men with intelligence and will, has resolved in the work of salvation not to ignore the nature of His creature and to treat him as if he were a senseless thing. He deals with all things according to the nature which He has given them, and makes no exception in the case of man. Man has a will, and may resist the saving work of his merciful Maker. Hence the reproachful charge, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so did ye," Acts 7, 51; and hence the unanimous doctrine of the Lutheran Church that the grace of God is not irresistible. God's will is to save all, and the grace which He brings to man in His appointed means does work in them all and save them all, unless they obstinately resist the Holy Ghost.

The statement of our Apology that "faith makes the difference between those that are saved and those that perish," is therefore in exact accord with the testimony of Holy Scripture; as is also the other statement of our Formula of Concord, that the reason why many are not among the believers and thus not among the saved is that "they foreclose to the Spirit of God His ordinary way, so that He cannot accomplish His work in them." If that should seem to any one to be Pelagianism or Synergism, the precious truth will not be the less divine by being reproached by so odious a name. "God has in His eternal counsel decreed that besides those who acknowledge His Son Jesus Christ and truly believe in Him, He will save no one;" and no reasoning of men, and no imputations of error, will ever change it. Faith is indispensable to salvation.

The bearing of this upon the much controverted doctrine of election is manifest. Election, in the strict sense, is the act of God in eternity by which He ordains certain persons to sonship and eternal salvation. A distinction is thus made between men, some of them being assigned to salvation, others not; just as in time a distinction is made between those who are destined to the eternal inheritance and those who are doomed to everlasting torment.

Those whom God declares to be heirs of heaven in time

are at the moment of such declaration neither perfectly holy nor perfectly happy; but they stand in such a relation to God that death will be to them the gate of endless bliss. That which, in the good providence of God, they may have to do and suffer yet before they enter into rest, is not necessary for their salvation. What is necessary, then? Faith, only faith. And that they must have before God adopts them as His children and designates them as heirs of eternal life. Those who endure to the end in such faith obtain the inheritance and enter into rest. "Faith makes the difference," because the righteousness of Christ is imputed to the believer and he is saved; that righteousness is not imputed to the unbeliever and the wrath of God abideth on him. The one is justified and the other remains under condemnation.

In eternity God makes a distinction also. He decrees that some shall be saved, and does not thus decree of others. He chooses some to be heirs of heaven, and does not choose others. What makes the difference? Who, according to the Scriptures, shall be His children here and enjoy eternal life hereafter. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John 1, 12. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3, 16. "Faith makes the difference." The Scriptures know of no other. There is none other name under heaven given among men by which we can be saved, but that of our Redeemer, and there is no other way to obtain the blessing of that name but the way of faith. He that believeth shall be saved. Faith was just as necessary to salvation when the decree of election was formed as it is now. As God cannot now declare a person justified, and thus an heir of heaven, without seeing faith in him, since by this alone the saving merit of Christ can be appropriated, so He could not in eternity make a distinction between persons equally condemned and equally redeemed, without foreseeing faith in some and not in others; for only to believers could the righteousness of Christ be imputed to salvation.

Missouri teaches a doctrine totally diverse from this. In essential harmony with the Calvinists they teach that, with-

out any regard whatever to the question whether men believe or not, God decides which of them shall be saved. He makes a distinction, but not on the basis that "faith makes the difference." He selects from the condemned mass not those that believe, but just whom He pleases. They pay no regard to the words of the Holy Spirit that "without faith it is impossible to please God." Heb. 11, 6. In harmony with the Calvinists they teach an absolute election, although they still decline to adopt the term which is otherwise used to designate the thing. They do not deny that they regard election as deciding, without reference to faith in forming the decision, the salvation of those to whom it pertains. With them election makes the difference between those that are saved and those that perish; according to the Scriptures and our Confessions "faith makes the difference."

We are not at all forgetting that the doctrine of Missouri finds a place for faith. Its leaders say that election has for its goal the vocation, conversion, justification, preservation, as well as the salvation of its objects. Certain persons are elected to be called and converted and justified and preserved in faith as well as to be ultimately saved. According to one phase of their theory God, for some reason and according to some principle not revealed to us, selects certain individuals to become believers, and, without regard to the question whether they will "foreclose to the Spirit of God His ordinary way, so that He cannot accomplish His work in them," makes them heirs of heaven and decrees that they shall infallibly reach their inheritance. This makes it necessary for them to abandon the Lutheran doctrine and accept, in this respect also, the Calvinistic figment that grace is irresistible in the elect; for if faith is at all necessary for salvation, and men whom God desires to save have any power persistently to resist the Holy Spirit when He offers the gift of faith, how could God decide that any one shall be saved without taking into account the possible resistance of His grace? The favored person is, Missouri says, elected unto faith and unto salvation in one and the same divine act. God's Word speaks too frequently of the necessity of faith unto eternal salvation, else the doctrine might be set forth by Missourians that God's election to such salvation will be executed in the elect whether they be-



lieve or not, their resistance to the Spirit's work not being permitted to frustrate the absolute decree. As it is, the doctrine can only be that, as faith is said to be necessary, it can be bestowed and justification can ensue even where there is the most obstinate and malicious resistance to the Holy Spirit, since in the favored persons the end of election must be attained, whatever may oppose.

But the Calvinistic error of the irresistibility of divine grace is not the only pernicious feature of the new doctrine advocated by Missouri. If no resistance of man can prevent the bestowal of faith and salvation upon those whom God pleases to save, how does it come that He does not please to save all, and accordingly to endow all with that faith which is irresistibly imparted to those whom He pleases to save? The Bible says "ye would not," and that explains why not all are saved; the Confession says that men block up the way of the Spirit, so that He cannot perform His work in them, and thus adopts the Bible explanation. But Missouri throws the fault back upon God. He could have saved all, if He had pleased to do so; but He would not. Missourians may turn and twist as they will, their theory has no room for the universality of saving grace, though they formally admit its existence. Those whom God elects He elects to faith as well as to salvation, and they shall and must believe and be saved, while the others are simply not elected, and must see how they get faith and attain salvation. That under such circumstances these others never are saved is admitted by the Missourians, according to Dr. Walther's declaration: "God has from eternity elected a number of men to salvation; He has resolved that these shall and must be saved; and as surely as God is God they will be saved, and not a soul besides." Those whom God pleases to save He elects; and those whom He elects, and no others, He leads to His eternal glory. According to this theory God and His election are to blame that while many are called, few are chosen. It makes the election decide all before the vocation is given. Not those in whom the Holy Spirit's work, which men may thwart, is accomplished, so that they become believers and are contemplated as such in the decree of election, God elects; but He elects to vocation as well as salvation. The necessary

implication is the further Calvinistic figment of an effectual calling only in the case of those whom God has elected. The others could not be so called as to become believers who would persevere and inherit the kingdom, else they would by that fact belong to the elect, and not to the others. If by one and the same act we are elected to vocation and eternal salvation, that electing act secures the efficacy of the vocation to salvation in the case of the elect, and any vocation given to such as are not elect must, by the very fact that God has not elected them, be powerless to salvation.

Why God should have singled out certain individuals who are no better than all the rest to whom they are preferred, Missouri generally confesses its inability to tell us. "Faith makes the difference;" but that the advanced theology of St. Louis repudiates; and it can find nothing that will serve as a substitute for it. "God has elected us," it says, "according to the counsel and good pleasure of His will. So say the Scriptures. By this they at the same time forbid further speculation and investigation. This is the last point to which the word of revelation leads us. When we ask why God elected us, just us, who are no better than others, we are to know that thus it pleased God. All further questions and answers are sinful." *L. u. W.* 26, 228. If we were inclined to argue as the Missourians do against the alleged self-righteous tendency of the doctrine that "faith makes the difference," we might point to the proneness of our sinful hearts to make use of every opportunity of self-exaltation, and urge the fact that, if it simply pleased God to select A and B for glory from a condemned multitude, A and B would in this find abundant reason for glorying, even though no special excellency were explicitly claimed as the ground of the singular choice. But we pass that by. What we would here especially note is the confessed helplessness of the Missouri theory, which would refer all to the pleasure of God, and make no inquiries. Lutheran Christians have not so learned Christ. While they gladly acknowledge the duty of bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, they firmly assert the right, when men propound doctrines, to search the Scriptures whether these things be so. Those who will exercise that right, and not blindly follow whither men would lead them,

will find that the good pleasure of which the Scriptures speak is the good pleasure of God in Christ Jesus our Savior through faith, and that election is therefore not a blind, random, arbitrary apprehension of some without reason or rule, the rest being unfortunates who were missed in the grasp, but that God hath chosen us in Christ, faith making the difference before Him in eternity as it does in time. "He that believeth shall be saved." The redemption through Christ Jesus and the appropriation of His merits by faith have something to do with the good pleasure of God in regard to the individual's salvation.

Even the Missourians cannot wholly avoid taking into account some other elements of doctrine than the mere good pleasure of God. They would have easy work if the Scriptures and our Confessions said nothing more than that God was pleased to save some. Then there would be some plausibility in the doctrine that God selects some individuals to be saved, and that ends the matter: these are saved, whatever their conduct may be when the grace of God is offered, and the rest cannot be saved, because it did not please God to save them. But such a theory is in open conflict with the teaching of the Holy Spirit, which proclaims mercy for all and salvation for all by faith in Christ Jesus, and with the testimony of the Church, which repudiates an election after the manner of a military levy, and declares that God has decreed to save only those who acknowledge His Son Jesus Christ and truly believe on Him.

Missouri would like to have an election accepted that stands in no relation to the whole order of salvation, except so far as this is a means of executing the decree. With its teachers election is the last ground of salvation. Even the redemption, according to their interpretation of the Formula of Concord, must belong, as the first of the eight points, to the execution of the election already effected. But the whole theory stands in conflict with the Confession's mention of the mercy of God and the merits of Christ as the causes of election. Such mention of causes is inconsistent with the opinion, that God arbitrarily saves just whom He pleases, and that all questions as to the why and wherefore are wicked. He does save whom He pleases, but He pleases to save them

that believe in Jesus. That is exactly what the Missourians would like to have excluded, and that is exactly what our theologians for centuries have been contending for in their defence of election *intuitu fidei* against the Calvinists.

But while the St. Louis men maintain, on the one hand, that the election has taken place by the mere pleasure of God and pronounce it presumptuous to ask any questions as to the reason, they, on the other hand, do not hesitate, when it suits their purpose, to assign certain causes of election. Were they not men who openly maintain that, in theology, contradictories can both be true and may both be heartily believed, we should pursue the point before us no further. But while they denounce it as wicked to inquire into the cause of God's election, they at the same time, in view of the express words of Scripture and of our Confessions, assert that the cause of election is the mercy of God and the merit of Christ. They say: "Where the Holy Scriptures speak of the election of grace they by the term 'election,' 'elect,' designate an act of God, by which He has taken certain definite persons out from the multitude of fallen men." "The Holy Scriptures mention as the motive for this election the good pleasure of God and the merits of Christ." *L. u. W.* 26, 177. The mercy of God extends over all, and the merits of Christ were acquired for all, and these are the motives for taking out some distinct persons from the whole mass to whom the causes apply. The causes are universal, while the effects are particular. This is marvelous. But it is in exact accord with their argument for the comfort of their theory of election. They teach that election is to faith, and therefore every elect person becomes a believer, although not every believer is elect, since some for a time believe and afterwards fall away. Therefore every believer can know that He is elect. The syllogism is this: Some believers are elect; I am a believer; there I am infallibly certain of my election. Men who can rest their souls' comfort on conclusions so lame and impotent will not find great difficulty in arguing from the universality of Christ's merits to the particularity of election.

If Missourians have any distinct thought at all in connection with the merits of Christ as the cause of a particular election, it would be of some importance in the present

controversy to find out what it is. They deny that these merits are the cause of election so far as they are appropriated by faith. If, instead of denying, they accepted this, the greatest barrier between us would be removed. Then election would be in view of the merits of Christ apprehended by faith, and faith would be permitted to occupy the important place which the Scriptures and, in coincidence with them, our Confessions assign it. But they deny that election is in view of faith. Whatever may have been the reason why God was pleased to save some and not others, it was, according to their theory, following the Calvinists, not that some by the grace of God accepted Christ and appropriated His merits, while others rejected the gracious offer of salvation. Whatever may make the difference, they deny that "faith makes the difference." So far as the acquisition of Christ's merits are concerned, what difference would there be in their bearing upon the fallen race? How could these move God to single out "certain definite persons" for faith and salvation? All are redeemed alike, as all are condemned alike. How the merits of Christ acquired for all men should be the ground of making a distinction between men, is beyond all comprehension. The merits of Christ are the divine motive for saving all men; but is that what the Missourians mean by election?

When we endeavor to give ourselves any intelligent account of the Missouri conception, supposing that they really mean that the merits of Christ have anything to do with election, as an act of God's "taking out certain definite persons from the fallen multitude," the explanation suggests itself that the merits of Christ are supposed to be imputed to some individuals among the lost race, and these are chosen on the ground of His merits, while to others there is no such imputation, and therefore they are not selected to salvation. But then this imputation would be without faith, to which, in their theory, election is prior.

If God's election is not merely a "blind grasp," taking at random any upon whom the divine hand, plunged into the condemned mass, may fall, there must be a difference by which it is guided in making the distinction. That difference our Church says is made by faith, which God offers to all, though man's wickedness may pertinaciously resist the

offer. Election takes place in foresight of this faith, which apprehends Christ and thus puts the believer in possession of a righteousness which those who reject the divine gift have not. Although that does not remove all difficulty in the doctrine of election, which still involves an unfathomable mystery, it does make clear how the merits of Christ could be its cause, though it is particular. That God gives one the high title of a son and makes him an heir of His glory and bliss, while another receives no such distinction, is owing to the fact that the one has the righteousness of Christ while the other has not. That the merits of Christ are a cause of a selection from a multitude, for all of whom alike these merits were acquired, would be an absurdity, if these merits were actually imputed to all. Then all would actually be saved. But many are lost, notwithstanding that salvation was wrought out for all. What then makes the difference between those who are lost and those who are saved? Not this, that the mercy of God and the merits of Christ exist for the latter only, while for the former there is no salvation. The difference lies in the imputation, not in the acquisition. But the imputation is to those that believe, and therefore our Confession says that "faith makes the difference." Up to that point God treats all men alike. His mercy is equally over all, the Savior died equally for all, the divine means bear the same grace equally to all. Only where man's power of resistance comes in as a disturbing element does a difference come into view. The sinner's perverseness and obstinacy could not destroy God's infinite love, nor hinder its exercise in the mission of His beloved Son to save us. Neither could they prevent the Savior from enduring the agonies which our sins merited. "God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Rom. 5, 8. Nor could they hinder the gracious purpose of God by the means of grace to offer the benefits of Christ's death to our whole guilty race for the salvation of all. "I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people." Luke 2, 10. Whether men would hear or whether they would forbear, so far the saving plan of infinite wisdom and mercy is executed with respect to all. But man's pertinacious resistance to the Holy Ghost can stop it there, and pre-

vent the accomplishment of the gracious end. "The Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves." Luke 7, 30. The Lord is ready to save all, but His great complaint is "ye would not." God would receive all as sons and heirs if they did not foreclose to the Holy Spirit His ordinary way, so that He cannot accomplish His work in them. Only to believers is the obedience of Christ imputed, and therefore only believers can be saved. That is what our theologians mean when they maintain that election must be in foresight of faith. God cannot resolve infallibly to save any person before it is decided whether such person will not exercise his dreadful power of pertinacious resistance to hinder the work of the Holy Spirit in his soul. Only the believer *can* be saved, because only the believer has the righteousness which alone can avail for salvation: and God cannot unalterably resolve to give faith and through it salvation to those who pertinaciously resist His will: for then all would infallibly be saved, as the Scriptures assure us that God wills the salvation of all, and give our Lord's "ye would not" as the only reason why His saving will is not executed in all.

When Missourians reject this doctrine of election in foresight of faith, and still speak of the merits of Christ as the cause of making a distinction between men, what is implied in their doctrine? Not only does it necessarily involve the Calvinistic dream of irresistible grace, according to which it depends wholly upon God's sovereign will whether a person shall believe and be saved or not believe and be lost. That is horrible enough, as it fixes by a divine decree the eternal destiny of all men, whatever their hearts might desire or their course might be. But something more is implied. God, according to the theory, selects the individuals whom He will make subjects of His irresistible grace, leaving a large portion of our sinful race to perish in its sins. What is His motive for making the distinction? Missourians still use the words of our Confession, and say that the mercy of God and the merit of Christ are the cause of election. But would not the divine mercy and the Savior's merit move Him to give faith as well to one as to another? Let it be kept in mind that, according to the theory, the conduct of man has nothing to do with the result of the Holy Spirit's operation: He gives

faith just where He pleases, whatever men's conduct may be—whether they will hear or forbear, whether they stubbornly resist or not. He gives this blessing only to some, and He gives it for Christ's sake. Must not then, before the work of the Holy Spirit is done, the redemption in Christ stand in a different relation to those, in regard to whom it forms a motive for bestowing faith and salvation, from that in which it stands to those, in regard to whom it forms no motive for giving faith and salvation? The Missouri doctrine is that the merits of Christ are the cause why the salvation of certain definite persons is infallibly decreed; or, as its advocates think that is a different matter, the cause why the faith and salvation of these special individuals is infallibly decreed; while they are not a cause for the same decree in regard to other persons, who therefore never receive saving faith and are not saved. Election is unalterable; it is God's decision as to who shall be saved. What follows election is only the bestowal on the elect person of that which is already guaranteed him. So far as God is concerned, nothing more is required; what is lacking is altogether subjective, and is not necessary to the end that the elect person should be regarded as saved in the eye of God, but only that he should enjoy what is objectively settled forever. He that is saved in God's sight shall believe, and love, and hope, and live in holiness, and pass through trials to the eternal inheritance, which is irrevocably his from the outset. All this is necessary subjectively to fit a person for the enjoyment of the glory to which the salvation in Christ assigns him and entitles him, but not to the salvation itself as God's release from the curse which is upon him on account of sin. What we must pass through before we reach the blissful mansions of our Father's house is of some importance, but the main thing is that God, whom we have offended and who is our Judge, turns away His wrath from us and assures us of eternal freedom from the curse and of everlasting blessedness in heaven. Such salvation we have when we are elected to the eternal glory. Then we are safe. But such salvation we have and can have only when the merits of Christ are imputed to us. The Missourians teach that God chooses some individuals, without any reference to the question whether they believe or not, to such



salvation. He cannot, according to their theory, elect believers, because faith is one of the goals unto which the favored individuals are elected: election is one divine act which singles out the persons and unalterably predestines them to faith, perseverance, and final blessedness in heaven. Why does God single out these individuals? Because the merits of Christ move Him to do so. This the Missourians do not deny. But that the appropriation of these merits in faith by some and not by others makes the difference, and that the consequent possession of these merits by some and not by others forms the reason why God makes a distinction between men, choosing those who are in Christ by faith and passing by those who have rejected His merits and are therefore without Christ, they do deny. That is the doctrine of election intuitu fidei, which they condemn as an error. What then must make the difference? If the merits of Christ are introduced at all as a cause, the fact that election is particular stares us in the face. Those whom the merits of Christ have induced Him to select for eternal happiness must have been partakers of these merits as those who were not selected were not partakers. The righteousness of Christ was imputed for the salvation of some, as it was not imputed for the salvation of others. But faith did not make the difference: election did not take faith into account at all, but was unto faith as well as to salvation. What then did make the difference? The imputation of Christ's merits unto salvation must have been regardless of faith, although the Scriptures, in every way and manner, repeat again and again that righteousness is by faith, that faith is accounted for righteousness, that without faith it is impossible to please God, and that only he that believeth shall be saved. What then becomes of the cardinal doctrine of justification by faith? God imputes the Savior's righteousness to whom He pleases, without regard to faith, and justification by faith manifestly becomes justification without faith; for in this precisely does justification consist, that God does not impute sin to us, but does impute the righteousness of our Savior, so that in His sight we are saved. Such saved persons God will lead to the everlasting enjoyment of salvation. When He justifies the sinner, who is he that shall condemn? If the merits of Christ, apart

from their appropriation by faith, are a cause why God takes out of the condemned mass a sinner to lead him to everlasting blessedness in heaven, whilst another sinner, who is by nature in equal condemnation, but for whom Christ died also, is not selected, there must, without faith, be an imputation of these merits to the former. In that case faith is not necessary to salvation, although without it no one is led to the enjoyment of the everlasting inheritance, just as without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Heb. 12, 14. Faith may still, as the principle from which they all flow and thus as the condition of them all, occupy the chief place among the virtues which adorn the Christian character, but it will have lost its place as the only means of appropriating the righteousness of Christ, and thus as the indispensable prerequisite of the sinner's justification in the court of Heaven.

The question of the causes of election in the Missouri theory is worthy of more particular investigation. If they deny that the merits of Christ had anything to do with the selection of the persons who should be brought to the heavenly inheritance, then election is based upon the absolute good pleasure of God which, because it embraces only a part of mankind, must have been absolutely particular. That is Calvinism pure and simple. In that case the universality of the atonement has no more meaning than the universality of grace. If they affirm that the merits of Christ had something to do with the selection, those merits, as a motive leading to the acceptance and choice of some, while they did not lead to the acceptance and choice of others, must have been applied to the few chosen, to determine the choice, as they were not applied to the others. In that case the imputation of Christ's righteousness must have preceded the faith to which these few were elected, as it must have preceded the heavenly blessedness which is the ultimate goal of election. Look at it as we may, the Missouri theory of an election to faith pushes this out of its proper place, and involves a denial of its necessity to justification before God and thus to the sinner's salvation.

We cannot agree with those who speak of the pending controversy on predestination as if it were merely a difference in the mode of setting forth a doctrine, or turned only

upon difficult problems in theology. In our estimation it affects the very heart of the Gospel. We are aware that much which the Missourian system implies is not explicitly taught and openly accepted. Its advocates confess that their system involves contradictions, and that they accept the contradictory statements, alleging that the Bible is responsible for them, and not they. They even charge us with Rationalism for not taking their word for it that their contradictions are in the Bible, and try to fasten Synergism upon us for maintaining that God can elect only believers, alleging that if this were so, faith must be a work on account of which God elects. But if faith cannot be the necessary instrumental cause which is indispensable to the apprehension of the merits of Christ on account of which we are elected, neither can it be the necessary instrumental cause of the apprehension of the merits of Christ on account of which we are justified. If it is synergistic to maintain that we must, in God's sight, have the merits of Christ by faith before He can elect us and thus in eternity declare that we shall be sons and heirs, it is synergistic also to maintain that we must in His sight have the merits of Christ by faith before He can in time declare us sons and heirs. In both cases faith is the instrumental cause of embracing the merits of Christ, without which merits no soul can be saved; and in both cases it is the less principal cause, as many of our theologians term it, since it is that through which alone the merits of Christ, as the principal cause, become operative in the individual. Only those who are in Christ Jesus shall be saved, and only those who believe are in Christ Jesus.

Missouri's argument against election *intuitu fidei* holds equally well against justification by faith. It is a theory according to which the individual's salvation is decided by the will of God without regard to faith, and in which faith is only one of the steps of the way in which God leads those who are saved. The great question between us and Missouri is nothing less than this, whether God so loved the world that He gave His Son for the salvation of a small part of it, that part to be selected arbitrarily, or whether "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting

life." In regard to the proper answer we cannot hesitate a moment. The Scriptures everywhere declare that salvation is by faith. They say that it is by faith, not that some merit might be ascribed to man and he might be led to boast, but that it might be by grace, and boasting might be excluded. We cannot be disquieted by arguments designed to show that if faith have anything to do with it, it will not be by grace and men will become proud and boastful. Our Master knows better and has taught us better. All boasting is excluded by the law of faith. Only the believer can be saved, and his salvation by faith alone gives God all the glory. "God in His eternal counsel has decreed that besides those who acknowledge His Son Jesus Christ, and truly believe in Him, He will save no one." To that confession, as in perfect accord with Holy Scripture, we will by the grace of God adhere. Faith is necessary to salvation. It is necessary not only in such sense that without it no one can be fitted to enjoy the blessedness of heaven, which could be said of charity also, but in the more important sense that without it no one can escape the condemnation of hell and be declared by the Judge of all the earth to be an heir of eternal glory. To him that believeth God guarantees salvation. Him, and no one else, God pronounces free from the curse and infallibly brings to the enjoyment of such freedom. The Holy Spirit does not say that he whom God determines to save shall believe, but that he that believeth shall be saved, while upon him that believeth not the wrath of God abides.

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## THE LUTHERAN DOCTRINE OF ELECTION: ITS SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE AND PROOF.

BY REV. P. EIRICH, HOBOKEN, N. J.

### ARTICLE II.

We have seen, in a former article, that the whole scheme of human redemption is one of divine and eternal election or predestination. Christ, the Son of God, Himself was predestinated and elected to be the Savior of mankind. His suffer-

ings and death in all their minute detail were objects of divine foreordination. The whole plan of salvation was eternally devised and fixed by a free, but irrevocable divine decree, so that even the Savior's prayer in Gethsemane, that the bitter cup of anguish and death might pass from Him, could not alter or abrogate it. The means of grace, the Word and the holy Sacraments, were also comprised in the same scheme of predestinated salvation, and those who refuse to submit to their administration and application resist the counsel and resolution of God's eternal will. The presentation of the Word of God in all its compass, the way of salvation from beginning to end is, therefore, briefly called the counsel of God (Acts 20, 29). For this counsel of God, as we see from verse 21, included the testifying of repentance to God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, both to Jews and Gentiles, even to the Jews who were there not of the elect; for they caused the apostle many tribulations and tears. And when the same apostle says, Eph. 3, 9. that to him the grace was given *that he should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ and to make ALL men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world had been hid in God*, he declares in verse 11 that it was all done according to the eternal PURPOSE, which He (God) had made (epoiesen) in Christ Jesus: it was all predestinated. And when he writes to Timothy (2 Tim. 2, 9. 10) that God had saved us and called us with an holy calling, according to His purpose and grace which is given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but now revealed by the appearance of our Savior Jesus Christ, who had abolished death and brought life and immortality to light—we see that this was also predestinated, and was the result of divine prothesis. To confine this to the elect, as Calvinists and Past. Stoeckhardt do, is to maltreat the Scriptures. For the appearance of Christ took place for all men, the salvation which He procured and the Gospel through which it is revealed, are for all, as well as the apostle's office of evangelization. These pertained to Jews and Gentiles, were to make ALL see what is the fellowship of this mystery. And in speaking of His word and preaching (1 Cor. 2, 4-7) Paul styles it *wisdom with those that are perfect, and the hidden*

wisdom, and then declares that God had *foreordained* it before the world began for our glory. Not only its preaching, but the Gospel itself, this divine and hidden wisdom, God has foreordained or predestinated for men's glory. There is, therefore, not only a predestination of Christ and of men, but also one of means, of the Gospel and its preaching, although New Missouri speaks of this with scorn and ridicule. Of this general election or predestination, as a child must be able to see, our Formula of Concord treats, not only generally in the 8 points, from § 15-22, but also expressly when it says "*that Christ has declared unto us the will of our heavenly Father and our election unto eternal life in these words: Repent and believe the Gospel, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Mark 1, 15); and in another place, This is the will of Him that sent me, that he that seeth the Son and believeth in Him hath eternal life (John 6, 40); and elsewhere, God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life*" (John 3, 16). Now, do these passages refer only to the elect in the strict sense—did God love only them? Does He require only them to repent? So says Calvin. But has our Church ever said so? Our confessors, if they were not extreme Calvinists, must in these words refer to general election or predestination, out of which *personal* election grows and of which it is a result.

It is no small matter, surely, when the St. Louis men hold, that there is no other but personal predestination; for that denies what the Scriptures clearly teach and what our Confessions affirm, and makes the whole scheme of human redemption and salvation one of chance or fortuity. Besides, it is the very quintessence of out and out Calvinism to regard predestination only as personal, and to include the plan of salvation and the means of grace merely as instruments for carrying out its provisions. Hence this is a point of primary and fundamental significance. So long as St. Louis denies predestination in this general sense, denies that the Scriptures and our Confessions teach it, and claims to know of a predestination only of persons, but none of redemption and of the means of grace, and the proclamation and administration of these means, so long there is very little

use in discussing subsequent points—points that grow out of this.

Our fifth paragraph treats of personal election as a result of general election, setting in, in the divine mind, where the former ends. We have, therefore, to consider the terms which the Scriptures employ to designate this act and their meaning, and then the persons who are elected and why they are elected. Our paragraph reads: The former, those who would believe unto the end—as ELECTION foresees and foreknows the salvation of the elect, as God decreed to justify and give eternal life to all those who by faith would embrace Christ, and as men become vessels of honor, elect, by purifying themselves—God elected and predestinated unto eternal life through faith.

First, we will consider the word *eklegesthai*. The term, observes Gerhard, (de elect. § 24) “is used both of things and of persons. When employed with regard to things it conveys the idea of preferring a certain thing before others, or to designate it for a higher use. It is applied to Christ, to angels, and to men. Concerning Christ it means that He was especially beloved of the Father and was made the Redeemer of the world; concerning angels, that they were confirmed in goodness. When used of men it signifies generally that some one is elected to some public office, either in church or state. In its special or strictest import it means that God through His word has chosen a church for Himself and elected them for His peculiar people, and has chosen them members of the church, who by persevering faith would cling to Christ unto the end.” In summing up Gerhard remarks that election includes in its meanings the idea of separation, etc., but not that this is its only, or even prominent meaning, so that it always implies the conception of separation from the mass of men, as Past. Stoeckhardt would make him say. And we make bold to affirm, in opposition to Past. Stoeckhardt, that *eklegesthai*, when applied to the children of God, never has for its primary or leading signification the sense of segregation. That is a subordinate and secondary meaning. Neither the verb *legesthai*, nor the preposition *ek* prefixed, necessarily contains the conception of separation. This is clear from the fact that Christ is called the elect, where there surely was no number to select from. Nor can it by any possibility have the

meaning when angels are designated as *elect*. And in how many compound words has the preposition lost its original force in every language! Thus the preposition *ex* in the English words *expulsion*, *excommunication*, has its original import, but in *exposure*, *expose for sale*, etc., it is completely lost. Neither is it true that ancient and modern commentators are agreed that the term *eklegesthai*, when applied to God's children, means *only*, or even *principally*, to choose out from the mass of mankind.

Harless, who understands by the elect *all the redeemed*, can not possibly have had any such notion, although in one place of his commentary he expresses himself in that way. But that can only have been an oversight. For where could the mass have been to choose from? And Hofmann in his *Schriftbeweis* (Vol. I. p. 198) shows that *eklegesthai* has three meanings, to-wit, to prefer one before another, to select one from others, and to choose one for something. And such he says, is the passage Eph. 1, 4, where election signifies not to select from, but to choose for something. But Past. Stoeckhardt, who at other places counts Hofmann among the most weighty of modern Greek linguists, here ignores him altogether, and sweepingly asserts, that modern commentators are agreed that *eklegesthai* always means, when applied to the children of God, to choose from. His historical statements, as we have repeatedly seen, must be taken *cum grano salis*. With him the wish is often father of his facts. Bengel we have already quoted, and here we must add, that Past. Stoeckhardt grossly misrepresents him in his note on Matt. 20, 16, when he makes him to mean segregation from the world. We quote the whole passage which Past. Stoeckhardt has mutilated: *Electi) exquisiti prae aliis. Videtur hoc loco, ubi primum occurrit, non omnes salvandos denotare, sed horum excellentissimos.* "The elect are those sought out before others. By this term here, where it first occurs, seems to be meant not all those that are to be saved, but only the most excellent of them." It is evident that the term *prae aliis* in the first clause does not mean the unbelieving world, between whom and those that are to be saved there is a separation, but the less excellent of those that are to be saved. Hence, it is not a singling out from the world, but a singling out of the most excellent from the less



excellent, who all are to obtain salvation. But Past. Stoeckhardt, in his slovenly way, slumps everything together indiscriminately. We need not remark, that we do not accept this idea of Bengel, but refer to it only to show the manner in which our exegete manufactures his authorities.

Now, the passage especially appealed to in evidence, that *eklegesthai* means to *elect from*, proves the contrary. We refer to John 15, 9, where Christ says, that He has chosen His disciples *out of the world*. If the naked verb conveyed this idea, why does Christ say that He had *elected* them *ΕΚ του κοσμου*? Was this not done because the mere verb in itself does not *necessarily* bear this meaning? In order to convey the conception of electing *from the mass* of mankind the preposition *ek* is used. And if we will only consider the matter with candor for a moment, we will see the utter absurdity of Past. Stoeckhardt's argument. For in any election, what is the principal idea and object? To get the candidate separated from the rest? Not by any means, but to get him into the office and station for which he is chosen. If there is only *one* candidate, there still is an election for the office. According to Past. Stoeckhardt there could be no election in such a case, because there is not a number to choose from. Hence we have *Wahl* and *Auswahl* in German, and *election* and *selection* in English, which are by no means entirely synonymous. We do not wish to deny that there is a shade of meaning in the word election conveying the idea of separation, but that is subordinate and secondary. Being elected unto adoption and eternal life, we are, as a consequence, also separated from the number of unbelievers.

But let us look at the proof passages themselves. We will first take the *locus classicus* of Eph. 1, 4. The apostle here says, "Blessed be God—according as he hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world." In the *us* he doubtless comprises the Christians at Ephesus and himself. They are declared as true *believers in Christ Jesus* who had been *blessed with all spiritual blessings, kathos, sicut*, as He has chosen us in Him. All true believers are considered as elected. And the apostle tells the Ephesians that God had chosen them to be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestinated them unto the adoption of children. Their hav-

ing been made believers and having been blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ was done in the manner of their election—the two corresponded. The order of salvation and of election, which Missouri acknowledges not to be able to reconcile, the apostle thus says are not contradictory, but coincident. Now, we ask, is there anything said here showing that through election they were separated from the world? Not a word, not even a hint! On the contrary, it is explicitly declared that they had been elected *unto* holiness and unblamableness in love, and predestinated unto the adoption of children. True, the apostle does place his fellow Christians over against the unbelieving Gentile world, and shows the antagonism of heathenism and Christianity. But does it follow that this was the result of the act of election? Not by any means! Can we for a moment believe the apostle to mean, that all of those Gentile people were of the non-elect, because they were not yet converted, that they were all reprobates? Can we believe this, when in the following years churches sprang up among these very people? Such a notion refutes itself. That which distinguished them from the unbelieving world was their faith, and that had been wrought by the preaching of the Gospel, as the result of the redemption of all men through Christ and of the general commission to preach the Gospel to every creature. And according to that—not in contradiction, but in accordance with that—God had chosen them, not from something, but *unto* holiness and love. And only in so far was election a separation, as the adoption of children separated them from the mass who had not become children by faith.

The passage, Thess. 2, 13, is of like import. The apostle in this chapter speaks of some who would believe a lie and perish, and of others, the Thessalonians, who had been elected *unto* salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and faith in the truth. But he does not even intimate that this election had been a selection from the former, and that these latter were the residue, but says expressly that it was an election *unto* salvation. Where is it affirmed that election effected their separation, was a selection from the mass? Most certainly, if the Thessalonians had, through the Gospel, obtained faith, they were separated from the unbelieving world; but that

election had separated them is no where declared. For election was *unto* salvation, and that effected a separation from the lost. That was a result, not the primary signification of the word. The same applies to 1 Pet. 1, 2. The elect strangers had been chosen *unto* obedience and the sprinkling of blood; but where is it declared that they had been elected from the mass among whom they sojourned? Assuredly they were separated from those unbelievers, but not through election. He tells us in the following verses how this separation was brought about; namely, by being begotten again through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, with which personal election has nothing to do, to an eternal inheritance. Not by personal election, which is particular, but by the resurrection of Christ, which is general in its purpose and effect, they had been begotten again to an eternal crown of glory, and this distinguished them from the unbelieving many among whom they sojourned.

So when Paul writes to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 1, 4. 5,) "*Knowing your election, beloved brethren,*" and gives as a reason, that the Gospel had worked among them in power and in the Holy Ghost, so that even they had hope in our Lord Jesus Christ and waited for Him from heaven, the idea is not that this election was a separation, but that it was dependent upon the Gospel and its power, which made them followers of Christ. Again, when the *elect lady and her children* are addressed (1 John 1, 1); or when Paul says that he endures all things for the elect's sake; or when he salutes *Rufus, chosen in the Lord* (Rom. 16, 13); or when Peter addresses the scattered strangers (1 Pet. 1, 2), or says of the church at Babylon that it is *elected together with you* (1 Pet. 5, 13); or when Paul styles himself an apostle *according to the faith of the elect*,—the prominent, leading idea always is, that believers are elected, and that election is unto a higher object. The idea of a separation follows the actualization of that to which election entitles God's children, and is entirely subordinate.

We forbear protracting our argument. There is not a single passage referring to God's children as elected, which conveys the idea *primarily* of a choosing from the mass of men. All indeed show that the elect are not unbelievers, but that they are believers, and as such are separated from

the world, but that election has eo ipso effected this separation, not a single passage in the Bible says or even intimates. When Past. Stoeckhardt traces back to election all the blessings which the Ephesians enjoyed (1, 1-4) he interpolates. No causality is there expressed, but the facts are stated side by side: the Ephesians had been blessed, as they had been also elected.

That our Formula of Concord takes the term election in the same sense is evident from numerous passages. It uses the word as perfectly synonymous with predestination, explaining the one by the other. "Eternal election or predestination" (p. 383), "If we would consider election or predestination, or the ordination of God's children *unto* eternal life" (p. 384), "God elected those that should be saved in Christ—elected them *unto* eternal life" (p. 384), "Our eternal election *unto* eternal salvation"—"whether he has been elected *unto* eternal life"—"because our election *unto* eternal life," etc.

The Scriptures also employ the word *proorizein* to express substantially the same idea which is contained in the term election with different shades of meaning. But these do not, as Past. Stoeckhardt supposes, look to the end or goal in contradistinction from election as a selection from the mass, but express the certainty and divine necessity. The word to elect in itself does no more convey the conception of necessity than the word to call. But the word *proorizein* expresses this conception of necessity, of unerring certainty, so that whatever has been divinely foreordained must come to pass. For as far as the goal is concerned we are elected to *holiness* and *eternal life*, just as we are predestinated *unto* them. The word *proorizein* means to foreordain, to predestinate. Having chosen His children *unto* eternal life, God also predestinated them *unto* it, so that they must certainly obtain it. Hence those whom God foreknew He also predestinated *unto conformity to the image of His Son*. Rom. 8, 29. And to the Ephesians Paul writes, *that God has elected us being in Christ* by having predestinated us *unto* the adoption of children through Jesus Christ. (Eph. 1, 4). So we are predestinated that we should be to the praise of His glory, who had before trusted in Christ (Eph. 1, 11. 12). The term *tussein* has a different meaning in general, and especially Acts 13, 48, where we read: *And as many as*

were ordained to eternal life believed. In the first place, there is nothing said here that the persons who believed had been foreordained, and consequently it does not appear whether this ordination, or setting in order to eternal life, was predetermined eternally, or was done then by the Word, which the apostle preached to them. There is a divinely established way and order of salvation, and those who comply with it, or are put into this order, or ordered in this way, are ordered unto salvation; for this way and order leads to salvation. And those who complied with this order, who heard the Word and did not maliciously resist, believed. This appears also from the context. The Jews, of whom mention is made, v. 46, put the Word of God from them, and judged themselves unworthy of eternal life—they set God's order of salvation at defiance by putting the Word from them and judging themselves unworthy of eternal life, and hence the apostles turned to the Gentiles. And when they turned to them and told them, that they had been set to be a light of the Gentiles, that they should be for salvation unto the ends of the earth (v. 47), they were glad, and glorified the Word of the Lord; they extolled it, counted it precious, and accepted it. For it can be glorified only by believingly receiving it. And they became believers, or believed, who, or as many, as were ordered or were put in the order of salvation. Those, and as many as complied with the order spoken of immediately before, did not put the Word from them, as the Jews had done, but glorified it, received it gladly, and were made believers. *Tassein* never has the meaning of electing or destining for any purpose. 1 Cor. 16, 15. is no exception, where the same word is used and it is said that the house of Stephanus had *addicted themselves unto the ministry of the saints*. It would be a strange conception to predestine or ordain one's self unto the deaconship or ministry. The house of Stephanus had addicted, set themselves in the order of that service. That ministry or service is regarded as a certain sphere, as a certain bounded course, and they had put themselves into that order.

And this interpretation is not in conflict with the Formula of Concord, where it is said, § 8, "No man shall take my sheep out of my hand, John 10, 28, *and as many as were or-*

*daigned unto eternal life, believed*; and also, Matt. 16, 18, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." We have a parallel as to what is meant in § 8 where the case of Jacob and Esau is referred to (Rom. 9, 11), not as treating of election specifically, but as an example of God's free and unmerited grace, showing by this example that election is also purely of grace. So also § 28, where it is said that if we would usefully consider eternal election unto salvation, we must firmly and constantly hold, that not only the preaching of repentance, but the promises of the Gospel are universal, Luke 24, 47; John 3, 16, etc. Let it be noted that the Latin version has not *our* election, which we are to consider usefully in this way, but simply *election*; and that to consider election usefully is certainly not to consider it differently from what it is, but just as it is. Now, do the passages commanding to preach repentance in Christ's name *to all nations*, or declaring that *God so loved the world, etc.*, treat of personal election specifically? To so understand them would be the grossest Calvinism, as it would make them say that the world which God loved is the *elect* world, etc. But just as little as these passages treat of personal election in particular, do those of Matt. 16, 18, John 10, 28, and Acts 13, 48, in § 8. They all refer to the order of salvation and grace offered unto men exclusively through the Word, by which men are made believers and preserved in the faith.

To get the Missouri doctrine of election into our Formula of Concord you must take § 8 and strike out all the rest; or, if you allow it to stand, you must change what is there styled the *doctrine of election* into the *way of salvation*; and when it is said how we should *consider* election, you must take it to mean, that we should consider it *not as it is, but as it is not*—that the *doctrine of election* and the *consideration of it* are two different, opposite things. If ever a book was wronged, its natural sense grossly violated, its connection dis severed, its evident meaning trampled upon, and its whole contents turned topsy turvy, this has been done with our good Formula of Concord by the Missourians, its pretended friends. They are really the traitors to this excellent book, who have delivered it into the hands of the Calvinists, its bitter foes. Whilst they greet it with a kiss, they have their Calvinist mob behind them to put it in fetters. (See note 1.)

Our exegete also finds the act of election expressed in the term *prothesis*, purpose; but the passages adduced show nothing of the kind. *Prothesis*, when predicated of God, means a purpose, a determinate act of His will, a resolution, a determination formed of His free will and choice. Such a purpose will and must be carried into effect—it can never fail. It is about equal in import to the *counsel* of the divine will. Through a determinate counsel of the divine will Christ was delivered up (Acts 2, 22), through the same determinate counsel it was ordained what the Jews should do to Christ (Acts 4, 28). This divine *boule* includes the whole scheme of salvation (Acts 22, 27) and particularly the means of grace, and according to this counsel God works *all things* (Eph. 1, 12). The *boule* implies a conclusion of the divine will, and the *prothesis* a fixed purpose. As God does all things according to the *boule* of His will, redemption, salvation, and election took place in accordance with it. And as *prothesis* means the same and the Gospel call is made in accordance with it (Rom. 8, 28), and as foreordination took place according to it (Eph. 1, 12), there is certainly no reason whatever to suppose that *prothesis* is the rule according to which election only took place. But what is really absurd is the notion that the call with which the Christians at Rome were called was one different from the general counsel of God to call all men, and which is expressed in the commission to preach the Gospel to every creature. According to the New Missouri idea God, according to the counsel of His will, in virtue of which He works all things, calls all men, or has given the commission to call all men, and according to His *prothesis* He calls the elect, as He called the Christians at Rome; just as they hold, that because God has said that He has concluded all under sin that He might have mercy upon all, and again that He will have mercy upon whom He will have mercy, the latter means more than the former, i. e. the larger is contained in the less and limited by it. But the apostle includes the whole plan of salvation in the counsel of God and as the result of it. It must therefore also include personal election and all that pertains to it. If election has anything to do with man's salvation it must be included in that *boule* by which Christ was delivered up, by which the means of grace were given and

are presented, as those who reject them are also said to reject the counsel of God.

*Prothesis* is the same resolution of the divine will in accordance with which election took place, as we are expressly told Eph. 1, 9. This purpose includes, together with election, also redemption and salvation. One purpose may have a very manifold application, and it certainly does not follow, that because we were elected according to a divine purpose we were not also redeemed according to that same purpose. Many things may accord with it and have been brought to pass in consequence of it. Many things may be measured according to one rule. This purpose was doubtless the same by which the Christians at Rome were called and that was expressed in the apostles' commission to preach the Gospel to every creature. Or does Past. Stoeckhardt suppose that God had no eternal purpose of calling all men, or that He had one purpose of calling all, and another of calling some included in the all—the elect? 2 Tim. 1, 9 we are also told that God has called us according to His purpose and grace, which grace was given us before the world began. And Rom. 9, 11 we read, *that the purpose of God according to election might stand*, which does not mean, as Past. Stoeckhardt fancies, a purpose which is so formed that an election results, but a purpose which was made or formed by God's free choice, through His free will.

We thus see that there is a divine purpose according to which predestination was made; but predestination and *prothesis* are not identical, and *prothesis* is never used to designate election, but is stated as the norm according to which it was made. For if *prothesis* means predestination, because predestination was made in consonance with it, it must also mean *calling*, for we were also called in accordance with it. We thus see that *prothesis* is a much wider term than predestination, including much more; it is the ground and basis, the rule and norm of it. The purpose according to which a thing is done and the actual doing of it, are very different conceptions. The rule and measure by which an object is measured is not the doing and measuring itself. Consequently *prothesis* is not election itself, and is never used to designate it, but the rule and norm in consonance with which it took place.



After having ascertained the meaning of the term election and its equivalents, let us now inquire as to what regulated and directed the act of personal election or predestination, or of the *discretio personarum*.

As personal election or predestination, as distinguished from predestination in its entire compass, pertains only to God's children, and is not occupied with the procuring of redemption nor the means of grace, it sets in, in the *foresight of God*, where these terminate or have done their work. Hence the very word *election*, as we have seen, has for its *leading* idea, not the separation from others, but the choosing to a certain end, object or station, for which it presupposes fitness, consisting in the merits of Christ apprehended by faith. The passage: "Many are called, but few are chosen," in its context indicates that election depends upon the call and the manner in which it is received. And the Formula of Concord expressly says that the reason why many are not chosen is because they, when they were called through the Word, rejected it and resisted the Holy Ghost persistently (p. 386.) Of course, if all had done this, none would have been elected. God, therefore, elected only those who did not pursue this course toward the proffered grace—who did not block up "*the ordinary way of the Holy Ghost, so that He could not have His work in them.*" If it is said that those who believe not are damned, we are certainly to conclude that if all had believed not they would all be damned, and that those who are saved were not of those who believed not. But if election preceded faith, or the overture of the means of grace, in the mind of God, there could have been no election; for the cause, on account of which some were *not* elected, applied to all, and consequently all would have been rejected. The horrid doctrine of Missouri, that whilst God rejected some on account of unbelief, He accepted or elected others who were in the same condition, is absurd. If this were true, we could well hold, that although God condemns some men because they believe not, He might yet save some who are of the same class. In short, Missouri's singular doctrine, that the same cause which prevented God from electing *some* did not prevent Him from electing *others*, is contrary to the whole Bible, and our salvation would then not be by faith in Christ, but would be the

result of God's supreme will merely, rejecting some for one cause and accepting others to whom the *same cause* applied.

We see then that the act of election in God's foreknowledge sets in after the call and faith. Hence St. James (2, 5,) writes: *Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom?* According to Prof. Pieper's theory, who maintains that election precedes the call and faith, we would have to understand this as meaning that God hath chosen these persons that *they may become poor in this world* and obtain faith. So when Paul says (1 Cor. 1, 27-30): *But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, etc.* That persons are here also meant appears from the preceding verse. If Prof. Pieper is right, that election goes before faith in the sight of God and has faith for its object, we would have to understand the passage in question thus: *God hath chosen men to become foolish and to become weak and base and to come to naught, etc.* He supposes that, because in Rom. 8, 29, the terms predestination, calling, justification and glorification stand in this order, they must have been so in the eternal mind of God—a flimsy argument, surely! Then, of course, if in Eph. 1, 3, 4, the *being blessed with all spiritual blessing* stands before election, and election is only joined as a parallel and not as causative (*kathos, os*); and if in 2 Tim. 1, 9, the *being saved* comes before being called, the apostle saying that God has *saved us and called us*; and if Revel. 13, 16, *patience* comes before *faith*; and if in Gal. 5, 22, love, peace, etc., come before faith, as the fruit of the Spirit,—all these must have been in this order in the mind of God! (See his article, L. u. W., 1881, May and June.) Has he lost his senses! Bengel in his commentary on 1 Cor. 1, remarks: "Election is the *judgment of the divine grace in Christ*, having taken from the common ruin of men those who by faith have accepted the call. Every one called becomes an elect person, from the first moment that he believes."

The same is evident also from 1 Pet. 2, 3-10. To whom coming—unto Christ, namely who was chosen of God and precious—we are built a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, and Christ is precious to us who believe. And by coming to Him, or believing in Him, we are (or become) a *chosen gener-*

ation, a royal priesthood (v. 9.) As our royal priesthood results from and depends upon coming to Christ by faith, so must our election as a generation result in the same way and be dependent upon the same thing; for these are all perfect parallels, as the context clearly shows. Whilst those that stumble at the Word perish, those that come to Christ, and indeed by coming to Him, become God's people and obtain mercy (v. 10.) And precisely as they become God's people and a holy nation, so they also become a chosen generation. But as election took place in eternity it can only have been made in view of faith, through which we become a *chosen* people.

St. Peter, in writing to the elect strangers, tells them that they were elected *kata prognosin theou patros* (1 Pet. 1, 2), and Paul writes to the Romans, 8, 29, *Oti ous proegno, kai proorise*. What the meaning of the word *prognosis* is, according to which election took place, we have already ascertained, namely, simply *foreknowledge*—nothing more and nothing less. In fixing this meaning we did not indeed follow Calvin, as Gerhard says that those do who translate it by predestination, and as the St. Louis' authorities do, but Chemnitz in his *Locis* and Gerhard and our great dogmaticians generally, and particularly the authority of the Bible. We have seen no necessity of departing from the original and general import of the word in the passages in dispute, as Past. Stoeckhardt does. For it is always a dubious proceeding to try to establish a new meaning for a word from disputed passages. And yet this is the only ground upon which the St. Louis doctrine rests. Besides, if we with Past. Stoeckhardt would follow Calvin and render *prognosis* with predestination substantially, or with election, we would have to translate, "elect according to the election of God," and "whom God predestinated, He also predestinated!" But such tautology, as Gerhard says, the Bible does not commit.

Peter then writes that his readers were elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. *Kata*, with the accusative signifies in accordance with, according to, in conformity with. Past. Stoeckhardt thinks it is doing violence to the words to say, "according to God's *foreknowledge of faith*, as God foreknew your faith." Instead of that he gives the im-

port of the words, "You (the elect) were elected in conformity with the *prognosis* of God the Father, in the form and manner, that God the Father prerecognized *you*." He thus supplies "you," and makes it the object of the *prognosis*. But we should like to know where he gets his authority for supplying just this word, and why we may not as well supply faith, although we have no objection otherwise to the supplying of that word. But he is the man who protests aloud against supplying anything in Rom. 8, 29, says all such supplying is mere guesswork, and then in another similar passage does what he condemned; and yet he acts as innocently as though nothing had been done! Nothing is said of the object of this foreknowledge. Who gives him the right of supplying "*you*"? Is this a prerogative of St. Louis? May it not be just as correct, to say the least, to supply faith, making faith the object of the foreknowledge? But neither is said, and so we cannot be positive. This much, however, is expressly declared, that the election of individuals was not made arbitrarily, or simply because God so willed it, but according to God's foreknowledge. What this foreknowledge referred to we will learn from other passages.

Rom. 8, 29, we read: For whom God foreknew He also did predestinate, etc., *oti ous proegno, kai proorise*, etc. What does the relative *whom* refer to? Mr. Kaehler's whimsical remark that the relative cannot refer to those who love God, because the former sentence in which the relative occurs is connected with the latter by the conjunction *for*, is not worthy of notice. Hebrews 12, 6, where the apostle says, *For whom* God loveth He chasteneth, the *who* certainly refers to God's children in the preceding passage, although it is joined to the preceding sentence by the conjunction *gar*. And so in innumerable others. Thus in glaring self-contradiction Mr. Kaehler says that the relative refers to those who had been called according to His purpose. But is not the following sentence joined to this also by the conjunction *oti*? Such superlative nonsense! And then he observes that the relative refers "*to their having been called according to His purpose*"—hence to an *act*, and not to persons. *Whom* then would be a neuter relative! That is what is called sound exegesis at St. Louis! After the apostle had written that all things must

work together for good to them that love God, that have been called, etc., he adds by a causative conjunction "*For whom He foreknew, He also did predestinate,*" etc. He does this evidently for the purpose of comforting the Christians at Rome in their afflictions. For whom God foreknew, He predestinated and called, etc. They had been called, and through that call had been made to love God, and had been visited with afflictions in consequence thereof. "God's foreknowledge had regard only to the persons, and not to their condition," says Mr. Kachler, who had said previously that it had reference to their being called. Does he take God's call as synonymous with the persons called? But why try to refute such contradictions! The persons referred to by the relative are those that love God and who had been called, which calling had made them believers. These are the persons whom God foreknew. For it is beyond all gainsaying that the apostle must mean such persons as were the Christians at Rome, believers, otherwise there would be no proof in the passage. If the apostle did not mean them, and indeed in their present condition, there could have been no comfort to them in the fact that whom God foreknew, He also did predestinate. The sense then is, whom God foreknew as believers, as His children, and who had also to bear the cross, and who had been made His by His gracious call, He also did predestinate.

This also appears from the *object* of predestination, namely *conformity to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren*. This conformity to Christ was doubtless, primarily, in *suffering*. Whom then God foreknew, as believers, as loving God, as being made like unto Christ in suffering and, of course, also in glory—these and no others He also did predestinate. But the foreknowledge of these preceded their predestination. With this agrees perfectly the Formula of Concord when it says, *ELECTION not only foreknows and foresees the salvation of the elect, but from the gracious will of God in Christ is also a cause, etc.*, (Sol. Decl. § 8.) Election, therefore, consists of two parts—it foresees and foreknows the salvation of the elect, and is also a cause of their salvation. the foreseeing being first and predestination second. which the "*not merely, but also*" goes to prove.

But that believing Christians are meant as those whom

God foreknew, and that *kata prognosin theou patros* refers to them, appears beyond a doubt from 1 Pet. 1, 2 and 2 Thess. 2, 13. In the first passage we are told that election took place *en agiasmo pneumatos* and in the second *en agiasmo pneumatos kai pistei aletheias*. These passages, especially the latter, have been a real *crux interpretationis* to the St. Louis authorities. Dr. Walther says of the words in 2 Thess. 2, 13, we are elected *unto* sanctification of the Spirit and *unto* faith in the truth, and quotes 1 Thess. 4:9. (Syn. Ber. 1877, p. 30). Past. Stoeckhardt observes, that distinguished philologists dispute the use of *en* in the sense of *eis* in New Testament Greek and holds that Prof. Walther's instance, namely 1 Thess. 4, 7, furnishes no proof. And then, as he correctly remarks, the apostle explicitly distinguishes the particles *eis* and *en* in the passage under consideration. Hence he concludes that we will do better to reject the interpretation "*unto* holiness of the Spirit and faith in the truth." In this manner he refutes Dr. Walther. Then comes Mr. Kaehler and refutes both Walther and Stoeckhardt, saying that "the preposition *en* may be taken in both passages, namely 2 Thess. 2, 13 and 1 Pet. 1, 2 as instrumental and as meaning about the same as *dia*, through, as Luther translated it in 1 Pet. 1, 2." (*L. u. W.* 1881, p. 433). But Past. Stoeckhardt had decidedly protested against rendering the passage, "*through sanctification of the Spirit and faith in the truth.*" (*L. u. W.* 1880, p. 234.) In this way the St. Louis authorities are at logger heads, and have one another by the hair. But we suppose their followers take the three contradictory interpretations as a part of the *reine Lehre!*

Let us first determine the meaning of the phrase "sanctification of the Spirit," which occurs in both passages under consideration. The Scriptures often speak of Christians as saints, saints and believers, elect saints, etc., Rom. 1, 7; Eph. 1, 1; 1 Cor. 1, 2; Col. 1, 2. In the latter place the *saints* are styled the *believing brethren in Christ*. Phil. 1, 2. Paul writes to *all the saints in Christ*, and so in many other passages. The term *saints* is thus evidently used as synonymous with *believers*. Their state and condition is thereby expressed. Hence *sanctification, or rather sanctity, of the Spirit* must mean the work which the Holy Ghost effects and which is Christian and

true faith. The meaning of the phrase then is, that God elected us through the faith of the Holy Ghost, or which the Holy Ghost produces, and through faith in the truth. The first phrase shows the author of faith, namely the Holy Spirit, and the second shows the object of faith, namely the truth of the Gospel. Through these two, or rather one, through the faith which the Holy Ghost produces and which has the Gospel truth for its object, God elected His children.

We translate the preposition *en* here with *through*, for doing which we have the authority of Luther himself, who thus renders it in the same phrase in 1 Pet. 1, 2. And certainly if this translation is correct here, it must be also correct in the identical phrase in 2 Thess. 2, 13. Past. Stoeckhardt has done his utmost to becloud and befog these passages, and it requires some attention to see through his dust and smoke. But the interpretation which he advocates is impossible, and in trying to establish it he refutes himself completely. He holds that the clauses in question indicate the mode and manner in which election took place. In endeavoring to show this, he cites a number of passages where the preposition *en* is used before nouns without the article, as for instance in Rom. 15, 29, where Paul says that he would come *in* the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel, meaning that he would bring the full blessing of the Gospel. 1 Cor. 2, 7, the same apostle says, we speak the wisdom of the Gospel *in* a mystery, i. e. we speak it in the form of a mystery. Acts 17, 31, it is said that God will judge the world *in* righteousness—in a just manner. Col. 4, 5, walk *in* wisdom—wisely. He also cites the phrases, *en* the truth, truthfully—*en* craft, craftily, etc. He furthermore observes that in all these phrases the article is wanting. Hence, he understands the clauses in question to mean, “God has elected you unto salvation in this manner, that He at once included sanctification of the Spirit and faith in the truth.” (See L. u. W., 1880, p. 234.) But in thus summing up he abandons his whole argument. For his argument is that the clauses referred to are adverbial phrases, qualifying the act of election. If so, and according to the examples cited, it must follow that God in electing, in the act of election, Himself exercised faith in the truth and sanctification of the Spirit, but not that He would give it to

others. For an adverbial phrase qualifies the verb, or the act or state expressed by it, with which it is connected. This an analysis of the examples cited will show. Paul, when he spoke wisdom in a mystery, also himself spoke that mystery. God, when He judges the world in righteousness, will Himself exercise that righteousness. Paul himself will bring the fulness of the Gospel, Paul himself is the faithful and true teacher of the Gentiles. So to walk wisely qualifies the walking. If Past. Stoeckhardt is right, the sense in the passages referred to would be, God elected us to salvation by Himself exercising faith in the truth—elected us faithfully and holily!! For, we repeat, this is the nature of all adverbial phrases and also of all those cited by Past. Stoeckhardt. The interpretation is simply absurd.

The absurdity will also appear if we examine the turn which Past. Stoeckhardt gives to his argument subsequently and by which he abandons it completely; namely, that God resolved in election to save men through faith. Election a resolution! and a resolution to give men faith and save them by it! And all this he gets from those adverbial phrases! Then Paul who was a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity would mean that the Gentiles were faithful and true; God judging the world in righteousness would mean that the world is righteous, etc. But the thing is too glaringly absurd to need further refutation. No; faith, though the gift of God, is an act of man, and can therefore never qualify God's act of election.

We return to Luther's translation *through faith*, making faith an instrument. And in so far we agree with Mr. Kaehler, who says that *en* can be taken in both passages as instrumental (namely 2 Thess. 2, 13, and 1 Pet. 1, 2), and means pretty much the same as *dia*, through. But when he goes on to remark, "You believing Christians, you children of God, were elected before the world began unto salvation by this, that the Holy Ghost sanctified you and brought you to faith in the Gospel," L. u. W., 1881, p. 433, we dissent totally. For that certainly makes election to be nothing more than conversion. There is another way of refuting Dr. Walther and Past. Stoeckhardt without adopting the radical method of reducing election to conversion. Mr. Kaehler in trying to



topple over his antagonists himself falls into the ditch. The effort for him was evidently too great to keep his own balance. Our knight of the quill, who has long since been carrying a chip on his shoulder in the present controversy with the challenge to every body to knock it off, has unwittingly knocked it off himself! He seems to be the Falstaff of St. Louis, who can truthfully say: "These four came all afront and mainly thrust at me. I made me no more ado, but took all their seven points in my target." After laying out Professors Schuette and Stellhorn, he turns up another of his own colleagues "and their points are broken."

Through the faith, then, which the Holy Ghost works and which has for its object the truth of the Gospel, God elected us, faith being viewed as an instrument or means by which election was made. When election took place, faith in the foresight of God is viewed as already existing as an instrument on hand, to which God had regard and through which and by means of which he chose or elected the possessors of it unto eternal life. But faith is not regarded as a product of man, but of the Holy Ghost, and as having for its object or contents the truth of the Gospel, which is Christ. Thus every human merit is excluded, for the faith through which we were elected is the faith wrought by the Holy Spirit, and has Christ or the Gospel for its object and contents. Our dogmaticians justly illustrate this matter by referring us to justification by or through faith. Although the act of justification is declaratory and exclusively of God, it is yet done through faith, faith being regarded as the instrument by which the Gospel promises are apprehended, upon which the declaration of justification and the imputation of the merits of Christ follows. So faith here is the instrument by which the truth of the Gospel is embraced and upon which or through which our election is declared to have occurred. Upon this point the Formula of Concord is decisive. For it expressly says, "*That predestination powerfully confirms the doctrine, that we are justified and saved exclusively by grace, solely for Christ's sake, without any works or merit of ours.*" Certainly, then, if election confirms this doctrine, they must be similar. But justification takes place through faith and follows faith as a *declarative act* and as the imputa-

tion of the merits of Christ. Our Formula evidently intends to say, that as it is with justification, so is it with election, and vice versa. Hence too our dogmaticians constantly refer to this doctrine to illustrate the doctrine of election.

Prof. Walther makes light of this, indeed denies the parallelism. When this similarity was referred to at Chicago he first seemed to deny personal justification altogether, and to acknowledge only the general justification of all men through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, holding that all that was needed was to accept this and that no declaration of personal justification took place. He said that it is not true at all, that when a man has appropriated the objective righteousness (of Christ) a new act follows. The act has been done. By faith we already have that righteousness. God needs not afterwards to declare it as belonging to us. . . . On account of the *weak* justification is compared with an action in law, but the separate acts of it have no place here. And when Prof. Stelhorn insisted that personal justification is a forensic act of God which in idea follows the gift of faith and laying hold of Christ, he replied, *Not temporally*, as though this was not self-evident, inasmuch as all that God does has no reference to time. It is to be feared that the Dr. has also lapsed into error on this central doctrine. For certainly the Scriptures and our Symbolical Books as well as all our orthodox theological writers represent justification as a forensic, declarative act, acquitting only the believer, forgiving him his sins, and imputing to him the righteousness of Christ. Justification in *signo rationis* then follows faith exactly as election follows faith. They are perfect parallels in this respect. Our great Chemnitz, in his *Examen*, argues especially this forensic nature of justification against the decrees of Trent. Surely Prof. Walther's doctrine of justification needs examination and watching, especially also for the reason, that he can find no similarity between the doctrine of election and justification, holding that because from the former works are excluded, faith must be excluded likewise, from which it would follow, that justification is without faith also, because it is without works. See the Chicago proceedings p. 40.

Neither is the circumstance that the article is wanting be-

fore the phrases, *sanctification of the Spirit and faith in the truth*, of any particular weight, as Past. Stoeckhardt seems to hold. This an inspection of a few passages will go to show. Thus Paul tells Agrippa, that the Lord had sent him that those who heard his preaching properly should be sanctified *pistei eis me*. Does this not mean *by* or *through* faith in Christ, because no article precedes it? Thus in the 11th chapter of Hebrews the term *pistis* occurs more than 20 times, sometimes with the article, sometimes without it, without perceptibly changing its force. Indeed, after the apostle has recounted the deeds done by those holy men by faith (where the article is wanting) he sums up in the 39th verse and says that they all obtained testimony through faith, where the article occurs, showing conclusively that the terms have the same force. Thus John in his second Epistle to the *elect* lady writes, *whom I love en aletheia*, and all who have known *ten aletheian*. Here the same truth is certainly referred to and yet once it occurs with, and the other time without the article. 2 John 1, 1. And so in innumerable other passages. Consequently, if the phrases in question had the article it would not change their sense.

The correctness of Luther's translation of *en agiasmo pneumatos* and hence also the similar clauses in 2 Thess. 2, 13, by the preposition *through*, appears from many passages. We will quote a few. Paul says (Gal. 2, 20), "he lives *en pistei* of the Son of God." Does Paul not mean that he lived this life through faith in Jesus Christ? Or did he live in the way of faith or unto faith in Christ? 1 Tim. 1, 4 the same apostle exhorts Timothy not to give heed to genealogies which minister questions rather than godly edifying *en pistei*. This godly edifying could certainly only be effected through faith, as all edification comes through faith. 1 Tim. 3, 13, we read that "those who have used the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves great boldness *en pistei*," which is surely *through faith*. Titus (Tit. 3, 15) is to "greet all," says Paul, "who love us *en pistei*." Only through faith this love is considered to be exercised. So we are bidden to pray *en pistei* and not to doubt, where faith again is conceived as the means through which we are to offer up our supplications. James 1, 6, etc. Thus we perceive that our election is through faith.

faith in the foresight of God being the divinely fulfilled condition of election. And to exclude every vestige of human merit the apostle tells us, that the faith through which we were elected is the faith of the Holy Ghost, which the Holy Ghost produces and which is in no sense the work of man, and through the faith which has for its object the truth of the Gospel, or Christ, our righteousness. Only in so far and in this respect does faith here come into view. It has its value not as an act of man, but on account of its contents, which is the truth of the Gospel, just as it is said in justification that faith is imputed unto us for righteousness, where it is Christ apprehended by faith and His righteousness. Thus all beautifully harmonises and all is symmetrical. By faith we are elected, through faith we are justified, and through faith we are preserved unto the end. It is all through faith, for without it, it is impossible to please God. Before God can accept and elect the sinner as His child or unto adoption in *signo rationis*, he must have faith, and by faith be in Christ: out of Him all is damnation. And the Bible knows absolutely nothing of God's having predestinated any one unto faith more than another. He has concluded all under sin that He might have mercy upon all (Rom. 11, 32). Just as is the conclusion under sin, of all equally, so is the mercy to all equally. God makes no distinction among men—there is no respect of persons with Him; the distinction that exists is in men's deportment toward their God that they hear the Word of God differently, as we see from the parable of the sower and from that of the great supper (Matt. 16, Luke 14, 18). They are indeed all equally dead in trespasses and sin, but from some unknown reason some wilfully despise the Word of God and block up the Holy Spirit's way that he cannot have His work in them, says the Formula of Concord, and others do not. Here lies the mystery—a mystery which we cannot solve—that men with equally depraved hearts should act so differently, some *wilfully* resisting and the others resisting also, but not wilfully, so that the Holy Ghost can have his work in them. Gerhard correctly writes, *de elect.* § 139: "But you will say that the same corruption is altogether equally in all; when, therefore, strength is given to some unto conversion its cause must be sought in the mercy of God

alone, and on the other hand therefore when it is denied to others, there can be no other cause than that it is denied in consequence of some decree." Now let the reader mark how he responds! He observes: "We must distinguish between *original* malice and blindness and *actual* pertinacity and blinding. The former is equally in all the unregenerate, the latter not so. Man not yet renewed can hear the Word of God, learn it, meditate upon it, whilst others contumaciously neglect it and resist God, as the Scriptures in many places testify." And in proof of this he quotes a number of passages, such as Mark 16, 20; Acts 17, 7; Acts 17, 20; 24, 24; Luke 13, 24; Amos 8, 11; Rom. 8, 16, etc. (See Note 3.)

Shall we reject this explanation, which is so clearly taught in God's Word and in our Confessions, and adopt the St. Louis Calvinistic solution, that God alone makes this difference, doing in one sinner what He does not do in another, when the cases are exactly equal, and wait for the revelation of the true cause in heaven? God forbid! Why wait for the revelation of the cause of men's non-conversion, as existing in God, when the Bible tells us it is in mankind, and has already revealed it?

The same idea, only differently worded, we find contained in Eph. 1, 3-6, where Paul says that *God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places en Christo*, as He hath chosen us *en auto* before the foundation of the world was laid, that we should be holy before Him *en agape*, having predestinated us *dia Christou* in His grace and made us acceptable *en to egapemeno*, *en o* we have redemption *dia* His blood. This is doubtless one of the strongest proof passages for the Lutheran doctrine, although St. Louis has resorted to desperate means to break its force, but certainly without success. The apostle, then, declares, that God has blessed us with blessings *en Christo*, He has chosen us *en auto*—has made us *en to egapemeno* acceptable and has predestinated us *dia Jesou Christou*. These are all parallels. The question is, how is the preposition *en* to be understood in all these cases? Past. Stoeckhardt insists with great vehemence that they must be taken in the sense of through, *per*. To prove this he refers to Matt. 9, 34, where the Jews charge Christ with casting out devils through (*en*) Beelzebub; to Acts

17, 31, where it is said that God will judge the world *by (en) that man whom He hath appointed*; Col. 1, 16, that *(en) through Him all things are created*; Gal. 3, 8, that *(en) through Abraham all nations shall be blessed*, etc. But these passages are not apposite and to the point, as they treat of altogether different subjects from that under consideration. Besides, the first passage is evidently elliptical for "*by or through the power which resides in Beelzebub.*" And to translate the second by *through* is evidently erroneous. Christ was not simply an instrument in the work of creation, but the act is conceived as having taken place in Him, in the compass of his adorable person. The power of creation resides in His person. An intertrinitarian relation is here referred to, as the Father is in the Son and the Son in the Father. Neither is Past. Stoeckhardt's rendering of the third passage correct, as the very next clause goes to prove, where it is declared that those who are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. The blessing that should accrue to all people is conceived as in Abraham, of whom concerning the flesh Christ should come. Hence it is also generally rendered so, namely *in te, in dir, in Thee*; only our St. Louis exegete strikes out in a new way in the service of his new doctrine. We would advise him to study Winer on the preposition *en*.

Winer is doubtless right when he says that the phrases *en Christo, en Kyrio*, etc., never mean *per Christum*, etc., and are only an abbreviation for *being in Christ*, in the Lord. (See his Gram. on the preposition *en*). Thus 1 Cor. 15, 18, *fallen asleep in Christ* means, in enduring fellowship with Him; the dead *en Christo* (1 Thess. 4, 16), *the dead who die en Kyrio* (Rev. 14, 13), I speak the truth *en Christo* (Rom. 9, 1), *as one living in Christ*, says Winer. I know and am persuaded *in Kyrio Jesu*, "as one living in union with Christ feels certain" (Winer). All such and similar passages have a far deeper meaning than that Rationalistic one, which Past. Stoeckhardt attributes to them, as though the doing was in Christ, but not the doer. When the Christian speaks, suffers, is persuaded, falls asleep, etc., *en Christo, en Kyrio*, it is because he is in Him, and as such does and suffers all these things, as Winer shows conclusively. So living to God *en Christo*, Rom. 6, 11, is living not merely through Christ, *beneficio Christi*, but in Christ, in fellowship with Him. See Rom. 6, 23; 2 Cor.

2, 14; 1 Thess. 2, 14; Rom. 8, 1, 16, 12; 2 Cor. 5, 17; Gal. 1, 22. (See Winer.)

Hofmann speaks to the point when he distinguishes three different uses of the terms *en Christo*, *en Kyrio*, etc., one adverbial, qualifying an idea; another adverbial likewise, but qualifying a whole sentence; and a third which cannot be taken adverbially, but which supplies a whole sentence, where namely the facts predicated of Christ would not exist, if Christ did not exist. And this, he says, is the case with Eph. 1, 4, where namely it is meant to be said that God elected us as being in Christ. With this, as we have seen, Winer agrees, who says that the clauses *en Christo*, *en Kyrio* never mean *per Christum*, and are only an abbreviation for being in Christ. Thus God has blessed us with spiritual blessings that are conceived as being in Christ, as attaching to His person. The act of blessing was not done only in Christ, but the blessings were in Christ that were conferred upon us. In the same sense we have redemption *en Christo*; it is in Him and inseparable from Him. In like manner we read 2 Tim. 1, 9, that grace is given us in Christ Jesus. This grace is regarded as residing in Christ and as given to us with Him. And so we are elected in Him—as being in Him, as we are also made acceptable in the Beloved, as being in the Beloved.

Past. Stoeckhardt maintains that if this were the meaning here the clause would have to read either *humes tous en auto* or *en auto ontas*, he elected us being in Him, or *us who are in Him*. But this is only another of his conceits, like Mr. Kaehler's rule, that a relative cannot refer to a previous sentence when the conjunction *oti* comes between. When Paul writes to the Romans (16, 7-14): Salute Andronicus and Junia, *who also were in Christ before me*, and in the next verse. Greet Amplias, my beloved in the Lord, and verse 13. Salute Rufus elected *in the Lord*, we see how all this is meant. The greeting is to be done, as appears from verse 7, to those who are in the Lord. And how does Paul express it? *Aspasithe ton dokimon en Kyrio*—*ton eklekton en Kyrio*, and also *tous outas en Kyrio*. Now here we have two forms, the one which Past. Stoeckhardt declares to be alone correct, and the other abbreviated form, like that in the clause in controversy.

which both mean exactly the same thing. We have a transitive verb, the object *eklekton*, and then *en kyrio* without a participle or article, and yet he who is to be greeted is one who is in the Lord. We thus see that Past. Stoeckhardt writes a kind of Greek that is peculiarly his own, and condemns expressions as not Greek which Paul uses. (See also the passages cited *supra*.)

But Past. Stoeckhardt may still claim a loophole to creep out, inasmuch as he maintains that the personal pronoun is construed differently from the noun to which it refers. This is a rule of his own grammar. But even this cannot save him. Phil. 3, 9 Paul says that he counts everything as loss that he may win Christ and be found in Him—*euretha en auto*. If we put this clause in the active form we have an exact parallel to Eph. 1, 4. Here it is said, *Theos exelexato hemas en auto* and here we would have *euresei me en auto*. We have neither the participle nor the article in connection with the personal pronoun, for which Past Stoeckhardt contends with might and main and which he pronounces alone correct Greek. Another passage in point is 1 Cor. 1, 4, where the apostle says that the grace of God had been given *hymin en Christo Jesou*. To the Corinthians, *being in Christ*, the grace of God had been given, as Winer correctly construes. And still another we find Eph. 2, 13, *Nuni de en Christo Jesu hymeis*, which Luther translates, *You who are in Christ Jesus* and were formerly far off, etc.

So also 2 Cor. 2, 14, where Paul says, God he thanked who always gives the victory *hemas en Christo*, which Winer correctly renders, gives us the victory *who are in Christ*. Paul writes to *pistois adelphois en Christo* (Col. 1, 1) and to *hegiasmemois en Christo* (1 Cor. 1, 1). We think that we have thus shown, the clause *has chosen hemas en Christo* must mean, *has chosen us, who are in Christ*. But what makes certainty doubly sure, and puts it beyond any possible doubt, is the circumstance, that the apostle distinguishes between the preposition *en* and *dia*. God has chosen us *en auto* (verse 4) and has foreordained us *dia Jesou Christou*. *Exelexato* and *proorisas* mean substantially the same thing, convey the same idea essentially, as one divine act. How is it possible, that the apostle who writes *proorisas dia Jesou Christou* should write in the preceding verse



exelexato *en auto* (Christo) and with both prepositions mean the same thing, that God the Father namely had elected us through Christ, on account of Christ? No candid man, if he will consider this matter properly, can persuade himself that such is the fact. Hence we consider our proposition as proved in a way that amounts almost to a demonstration, to wit, that our election took place, as of such who were in Christ. God elected only those whom in His omniscience He saw in Christ. He elected no others. And this is the same idea which we found expressed in 2 Thess. 2, 13 and 1 Pet. 1, 2, that we were elected through faith. The evidence is complete. And if God elected only those who were in Christ and elected them *through* faith, faith being regarded as an instrument, it was faith foreseen. Faith preceded election, as election was made of those only who were in Christ.

It is true, there is nothing here said of final faith, of persevering faith unto the end, and Prof. Pieper constructs a powerful argument, as he imagines, against the Lutheran doctrine that election was made in view of faith. He thinks that in Rom. 8, 30, even if translated, whom He foreknew, first *faith* has to be supplied, then *faith foreseen*, then *final faith*. But we have seen where faith is mentioned as preceding election. And that there is nothing said of final faith creates no difficulty. Faith simply is often spoken of in the Bible when *final faith* is meant. Thus, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved—he that believeth on Him shall be saved, etc. So when it is said that God elected us being in Christ, elected us unto salvation through faith, it is faith unto the end by which alone we can obtain salvation.

The expression of election *unto obedience and the sprinkling of blood*, will come up for discussion under our next paragraph, when it will be seen, that this cannot mean *unto* faith, but only unto obedience, as holiness, and the sprinkling of blood, as the objective righteousness of Christ to which faith, or sanctification of the Spirit, which, as has been shown, and as Past. Stoeckhardt himself holds, is the same with faith, is directed. But we will not anticipate our argument here, but only observe that the Missouri Calvinistic Schibboleth of election *unto* faith, or that faith comes of election, has no Biblical ground to rest upon whatever, and is an invention of idle brains, which they seek to foist upon the Scriptures.

Since the above was written the November number of *L. u. W.* has come to hand. In our article on the meaning of *proegno* and *prognosis*, showing that in the New Testament they simply and always mean to foreknow or foreknowledge, we made no allusion to the fact, that by nearly all our orthodox theologians since the adoption of the Formula of Concord down to the present day, they were understood in this way, knowing that the old dogmaticians had fallen into disfavor at St. Louis and would be pronounced incompetent witnesses. We were also aware that the St. Louis authorities had been compelled, *volens volens*, to surrender nearly all the forces, including such men as Rhegius and Hesshuss, with whom they had opened battle, as it was shown them that these men on some points entertained extreme Calvinistic tenets. But we were of opinion, that if we would produce the great Chemnitz, upon whom they had counted chiefly for success in this struggle, we would at least get a respectable hearing and be challenged to the combat, even if we showed that he understood the terms in question exactly as we do, and that we were only following in his wake. But in this, as it now has turned out, we were utterly mistaken. Past. Stoeckhardt declares in the *Lehre und Wehre* referred to, that with a man like Chemnitz, whom we only followed, and who thus denies *that the sky is blue and that snow is white*, he can have no argument. Thus our *doctor invincibilis* goes overboard. The *alter Martinus* is now utterly discarded as a declared enemy of all lexicons, ancient and modern. The St. Louis generals have thus surrendered every position which they first occupied with even a great flourish of trumpets, and have concentrated their shattered and demoralized forces rearward, in a few disconnected outposts in Luther's *De servo arbitrio*, which Luther in the outset of his career had occupied, but afterwards abandoned and suffered them to become delapidated. General Stoeckhardt intimates that he cannot enter into a regular battle now, because, as we can easily read between the lines, his slender supply of ammunition has given out, having expended it at long range and in a random firing before the battle had actually opened. General Pieper predicts that the tug of war is drawing to a close, if we persist in hurting him, and he has therefore taken an entirely new position on some mountain fastness by reducing the doc-

trine of election to conversion, and holding with Mr. Kaehler that God elected men by giving them faith, and has entrenched himself, *a la* Pillow of Memphis fame, where the enemy cannot *get in*, but he also cannot *get out*. The indomitable Kaehler, our brave knight of the quill, has skedaddled and left, as it would seem, in disgust for parts unknown, or has withdrawn to some dismal swamp where no one can follow him. And Dr. Walther, the *generalissimo*, has caused a retreat to be sounded all along the line by the signal, that it had been necessary to bring such formerly unionistic bodies like the Ohio Synod to the writings of the fathers, but that now they will only look into their compendiums, when he, as we think, would lead them on a wild goose chase into the Calvinistic elyseum. (For all which see last number of *Lehre und Wehre*.) And last, but not least, the most Eastern forlorn outpost, the New York *Zeuge*, who always piques himself on doing work thoroughly, drew up his forces at the gates of paradise and made his objective point paradise again, and who, in treating the subject, commenced with original sin, going to the roots of matters, so that the whole, when completed, promised to equal the Chinese encyclopedia of 5000 volumes. But to his chagrin he found that he had taken too long a start and that when he reached the jumping point his strength was exhausted, and he simply leaped into the ditch, where he still lies sprawling. Thus the whole campaign has proved a fizzle which, in common parlance, would be called *a coming out at the little end of the horn*. And all the multitudes who *in sancta simplicitate* had been carrying bundles of wood to Worms to burn us all at the stake a heretics, are disappointed and cannot be gratified. *Sic transit gloria mundi*, which, when rendered into good English, means that a king who makes war against another king should first sit down and consult, whether he will be able, with a thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand.

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NOTE 1.—The Missourians have observed a strange method in the defence of their new theological foundling. From the beginning and all along they have dealt in mysteries at wholesale. When it was objected, that their doctrine of election militated against the order of salvation, they exclaimed,

*Mystery!* When it was shown that it made God a respecter of persons, by rejecting some on the ground of unbelief, whilst He elected others, who were, when election took place, in the same condition, they cried, *Mystery!* When it was answered that they made God act partially in removing wilful resistance to converting grace in some, and not in others, thus allowing them to perish, they said, *Mystery!* When it was replied that to set up a secret will of God to run counter to His revealed will in His Word, was to upset the whole Gospel, they vociferated, *Mystery!* You nasty Rationalists, don't you see the Mysteries! And thus they led a charmed life and were invulnerable, whilst they handled the Bible proofs of their opponents with the most palpable rationalism.

Of late, however, as the constant cry of mystery had become insipid, they have resorted to a really desperate way of defending their indefensible cause. It is that of impeaching the moral character of their opponents, of throwing stones whilst they themselves live in glass houses, in which Mr. Kaehler, we suppose on account of his peculiar moral fitness, took the lead and wore the bell. In the absence of argument, in which they have always been very sparing throughout the present controversy, and in which, like a good housewife, they have made a very little go a great ways, and have virtually acknowledged themselves bankrupt in this respect, they have taken to throwing mud, setting themselves up as moral censors and pronouncing their opponents "a collection of unclean spirits" of vain and puffed up men, who have an ax to grind or a grudge to serve against these saintly innocents. This we consider the *testimonium paupertatis* concerning themselves and their "thoroughly educated faculties." But if it is the best they can do, we will have to be satisfied. An evil cause is difficult of defence even in skillful hands, but when undertaken by poor cobblers, such as have lately come to the front and to the rescue, we can look for nothing else. Do the best that you can, gentlemen, and no reasonable man can justly ask any more.

NOTE 2.—*Lehre und Wehre*, October, 1881, has a translation of a very sensible and candid article from the pen of Prof. Stub, in which he observes that he translates *proegno* and *prognosis* by *foreknew*, *foreknowledge*. Nevertheless he thinks that it is a foreknowledge which designates *an act of the divine will*. But in this, we think, he is mistaken. Indeed, if the word means *foreknowledge*, the other idea is excluded. It is simply impossible that the word can mean both. A state or a condition cannot be an act, and *vice versa*. The subject that foreknows of course has the faculty of volition, but in foreknowledge itself there is no volition. Knowledge, no matter how we twist it, can only take cognizance of objects and *facts*, but it cannot make or change them. And this

principle applies to his instances and passages quoted. "John 10, 14, 15, Christ says," he observes, "*I know my sheep and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me even so I know the Father.* Does this mean only that Christ has knowledge of those that are His?" We reply, that is all that the word means. Only we must take the passage as it is and reads, that the Savior namely says, *I know mine*, which implies that He knows them to be *His*—He knows the fact of this relation and fellowship and His own know Him also. That He loves them and provides for them is certain, and is said in other passages—is said in this very connection, when Christ declares that He lays down His life for them. So the Father loveth the Son and the Son the Father, but it is not said here, and *ginoskein* does not, and cannot express it. For the same word is used in expressing Christ's knowledge of evil things (John 2, 24, 25; John 5, 42), of men's hearts (Acts 1, 24, 15, 8), etc. Or does Prof. Stub suppose that *ginoskein* has a different meaning always, according to the different objects to which it refers? If we were to say, Prof. Stub knows *his* Savior, and also say, that he knows the sinfulness of his flesh, would it follow that the word *to know* in the first clause must be of different import from that in the second? Certainly, if he knows his Savior, he will also love Him, and if he knows his sinful flesh he will not love it, but that is not expressed in the word *to know*, but results from other considerations. So it is with the word *ginoskein*—it always has the same meaning, whether pertaining to good or evil objects, and the very fact of its being used with regard to both incontestably proves this, and goes to show that it means simply *to know*, and not to love; for otherwise it would convict Christ of loving evil, because He also knew it. So when Christ said to those workers of iniquity, *I have never known you*. The knowing which is meant appears from verse 21, namely as *such who do His Father's will*. As such He had never known them. Or would it answer to translate here, as Prof. Stub does the passage, John 10, 15—*I have never known you so as to love you?* Would not the Savior have made Himself responsible then for their perdition? And that their working of iniquity is only another way of saying *ye would not*, is a strange conceit of Prof. Stub. For the reason which Christ gives, if Prof. Stub is right, is not that they have not accepted Him—this he puts in here—but that *He never knew them to love them, to make them His own*. No—He never knew them, as those who do His Father's will, as those who hear these sayings of His and do them (verse 24) and hence He tells them to depart. And does not the Savior, aside from loving and caring and providing for His sheep or His own, also simply know them. know who they are and what they are and what they need.

that namely He should lay down His life for them? And why should not this also be said in the Bible?

The only passage which *seems* to favor Prof. Stub's view of *ginoskein* is John 17, 3, where it is said, *And this is eternal life that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.* But it only *seems* so. Eternal life is said to consist of knowing God and Christ, whom He sent. Consequently this is a knowledge that shall prevail in the life to come and of that knowledge we know very little here, and consequently this passage can decide nothing. When Paul 1 Cor. 13, 9-12 says, Now we know in part and prophesy in part (verse 9), and then adds (verse 12), these *I shall know even also as I am known*, we have an inkling as regards the difference of the degree of knowledge between here and there. We see that *ginoskein* and *epignoskein* are both used of the knowledge prevailing in the life to come. That perfect knowledge of God, there, even as we are known of God, is life eternal. That those who have this knowledge will also love God and live in blessed fellowship with Him, will see God face to face, is certain. But why *ginoskein* must say and express all this we cannot see. When Christ shall tell those who have done good works to enter His kingdom (Matt. 25, 35-38) does it follow, that the good works there mentioned also mean faith because we are saved by faith? True, they presuppose faith, but do the terms or words signify it? Assuredly not! And so here.

And so when John (1 John 4, 8) says, *He that loveth not, knoweth not God.* In the preceding verse he says that every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. Christian love then springs from the new birth and from the knowledge of God—from these two. But he also declares that he who is destitute of the latter, will not love. Now, can any one have Christian love who has no knowledge of God? Certainly not! To love Him presupposes knowledge of Him, who is love. But the opposite does not follow, as Prof. Stub supposes, that he who has *some knowledge of God*, must *necessarily* love Him. We would ask him, whether any man can love without knowing God? And if *ginoskein* means also to love, as Prof. Stub says of John 14. 15, how would he render the passage under consideration?—He that does not love God, does not know and love Him? And when in this same chapter, verse 6, John uses the same word and says, *Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error*, does he render the latter clause *know and love and live in fellowship with the spirit of error*? Can the verb *ginoskein* possibly mean anything else and more, than simply to *know*? Or does it mean something else in every passage in which it occurs? And besides can it be said that any unconverted person has the true *knowledge*,

simply as knowledge, of God as love? We do not believe it. This true knowledge, only as *knowledge*, comes through the enlightening influence of the Holy Ghost. And this knowledge is followed by love, just as love follows faith, but they are not identical, neither are they contained the one in the other. When Christ said to that woman, *many sins are forgiven thee* because she loved much, must we conclude, that love here means faith, because we obtain forgiveness of sins by faith, or must we not rather take love as a fruit of faith, and which presupposes faith? And when it is said Matt. 6, 14, *If ye forgive unto men their trespasses, my Father who is in heaven will also forgive yours*, must we understand the first clause to mean faith in Christ, upon which forgiveness depends, or not rather the two causes which are assigned in the Apology for the Scripture using such language? And when we read, that if we judge ourselves we will not be condemned, must we depart from the natural meaning of the first clause and substitute faith, because through faith only we escape condemnation? Faith is here everywhere presupposed, but that gives us no right to depart from the natural meaning of the words. And exactly so is it with *ginoskein*, where it is said that it is eternal life, and that those who love not, know not God. It is a synecdoche—a part taken for the whole—but that lies never in the word itself, but in the form of speech. The word retains its original meaning and never has any other.

NOTE 3.—Prof. Stub is mistaken, or rather fails to see the point, when he says that the theologians of the 17th century teach that in conversion God also removes the resistance of man to His grace. This they do teach and the Bible teaches and our church has always taught. But this is not the point. The question is whether converting grace, in addition to removing natural resistance and enmity, also overcomes and removes *wilful* resistance and pertinacity in some, but not in others, or in any at all? And this the Bible and our theologians as well as our Confessions deny, and hold that in the ordinary way of grace God does not remove wilful and pertinacious resistance. *Natural* resistance they hold is, strictly speaking, no hindrance to conversion, but *wilful* resistance is. Men are converted in and during natural resistance, grace overcoming it; but no man in the ordinary way is converted in and during wilful resistance. And this is the manner of resistance, from which they say man can with his natural powers desist, whereas he cannot by his own free will abstain from natural resistance. And this is the reason why some men are converted and others not.

This solves the difficulty of which Prof. Stub speaks, but of course it leaves one difficulty unsolved, but one which does not come in conflict with God's universal mercy and the

free grace of the Gospel. The unsolved problem is this, how and why men with equally corrupt hearts, equally dead in trespasses and sin, act so differently, some resisting wilfully and others not, as all voluntary action requires a motive. And where the motives are alike, it would seem the actions would be alike. But this in a wider sense is the problem of the relation of the divine providence and human free agency, a problem that confronts us every day in the different actions of men in mere outward morality, where the source and motives are equally bad. The St. Louis predestination solves also this difficulty, but how? By contradicting the Scriptures and overturning the whole Gospel.

NOTE 4.—Past. Stoeckhardt has strange crotchets in his mind with regard to this passage. He thinks: If we translate *chosen through Christ apprehended by faith*, we only obtain an election through faith, and the idea of *faith foreseen* must be supplied and put into the act of divine election. The proposition, *God has chosen us through faith*—as election is an act of God—only affords the conception, that God through faith, *which by election He created*, has chosen us!! (L. u. W. 1881, p. 126). What a schoolboy argument! Election being a divine act and having taken place *through faith*, it must have created faith! Then, if we were elected through Christ, election must have created Christ! And if God caused His Gospel to be preached to us *through the Holy Ghost* (1 Pet. 1, 13) He must thereby have created the Holy Ghost! And if the declaratory act of personal justification is a divine act, it must create that faith, through which the sinner is justified! Does Past. Stoeckhardt really not know, that when God does anything through instruments, that act does not imply the creating of those instruments, but only their use, as already on hand? The conversion of the individual sinner through the Word is a divine act, but does it imply, that in every individual conversion, God *creates* the Word anew, as His instrument, or does He not rather only use the Word as a means, which is already at hand? A licentiate of theology ought not to blunder so grossly in his arguments.

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## WHAT, ACCORDING TO THE MISSOURIANS, IS THE CAUSE OF ELECTION?

BY PROF. F. W. STELLHORN.

As is well known by all who are in any way conversant with the principal features of the present controversy about predestination, the Missourians strenuously deny that it is in accordance with the Scriptures and the Confession of our



Church when we together with our fathers say, that predestination may be taken in so wide a sense that the eternal determination and ordination of the way to heaven for all men is included as the first and principal part. According to their notion neither the Scriptures nor the Confession warrant such a use of the term of predestination or election. When the Missourians speak of election they only speak of the election of persons to salvation, or of the selection of those individuals that are infallibly saved, combined, of course, with the ordination that these individuals shall be led to heaven on no other way than that eternally fixed for all men. According to their view, the kernel, so to say, the pith and heart of election, is the *selection* of certain persons that are infallibly to be brought to repentance, faith and salvation. Election always implies selection, nay, is itself selection for a certain purpose. An election or selection of certain persons, is always and necessarily a discrimination between persons, a "discretio personarum." If I speak of what God has resolved to do regarding me, without taking any reference to other persons, concerning whom He has not resolved this, I do not and can not speak of an election equivalent to a selection. For this always necessarily implies a singling or picking out among a number. Nobody can deny this, and the Missourians themselves have oftentimes urged it.

Well, if this be the case, as it really is, what, then, do the Missourians teach to be the cause of election? Very often they say, for example in the Chicago Minutes pp. 67, 94, that the mercy of God and the merit of Christ are the only causes of election also in the sense in which they take it; but, they add, the merit of Christ not in so far as it is apprehended by faith, but only in so far as it exists for all men without any exception. But if you then say, How is it possible that the mercy of God and the merit of Christ, in so far as they exist for *all* men, can be the cause why God does not infallibly ordain all men to heaven and salvation, but does elect or select only a few—the Missourians answer: Well, why God makes a selection between men who are in *every* respect the same before His all-seeing eyes, why He does elect one and not the other—the *cause of this we do not know; the cause of this is a mystery*, and has not been revealed to us.

But if this cause be a mystery which has not been revealed to us, except in so far as we know that it is not faith or Christ's merit apprehended by faith, how can the Missourians say, that the cause of election, in the sense in which they take it, is the mercy of God and the merit of Christ, the latter in so far as it exists for all men alike? How can they at one time say that the cause of election, which in their sense is nothing but the *selection* of certain persons for the purpose of bringing them to faith and salvation, is a mystery that will not be revealed to us before we get to heaven, and at another time, that this cause is the mercy of God and the merit of Christ not apprehended by faith? Is not that again one of the "mysteries" contained in such great numbers in the Missouri theory of election? Or is it another one of the frequent equivocations now in use among the Missourians? Do they, perhaps, at one time give themselves the appearance as if they really held that the mercy of God and the merit of Christ are the causes of election, also in the sense in which they take it, because the Formula of Concord says this explicitly, and then again, when it suits their purpose, say that this cause is a mystery? Or do they, perhaps, at one time say that election according to their acceptation is essentially a selection and a singling out of certain persons for the purpose of giving them faith and life eternal, and then again, when it suits their purpose, act and talk as if this were not the case, as if, on the contrary, election consisted mainly and principally in ordaining some to faith and salvation, without any reference to other men who are not thus ordained? In other words, is election, whenever it suits their purpose, essentially a selection out of a number or mass, and then again, whenever it serves another purpose, the very opposite of this? We pause for a reply.

To all other men beside the Missourians it is perfectly clear that the mercy of God and the merit of Christ can only be the cause of an election, or a selection of certain persons out of a great mass and number, if either this mercy of God and this merit of Christ are from the beginning not intended for all men, or are not the cause of such a selection in so far as they exist for all men without any distinction. And as the former assumption according to the clear and undeniable

statements of Holy Writ is not true, much as the Calvinists in consistency with their system claim it to be true, the latter assumption must necessarily be true, that is, that they are not the cause of selection in so far as they exist for all men alike, without any reference to their acceptance or rejection, but only in so far as they are in God-given faith accepted by some and in wilful and obstinate unbelief rejected by others.

If, indeed, we conceive of election in the wider sense in which Luther, Chemnitz, and the Formula of Concord speak of it, so that it includes and comprises as an integrant part the eternal determination and ordination of the means of grace for all men, we must say that in regard to this principal part of election in its wider sense the mercy of God and the merits of Christ, as they exist for all men alike, are the cause. For this part pertains to all men alike, though it does not predestine all men to salvation, inasmuch as this part does not predestine anybody. For by it God has predestined or foreordained, that is, fixed and determined before all time, the way and the means to heaven. And, humanly speaking—and otherwise we can not think or speak of God at all—only after God had seen that, in spite of all His grace and mercy, not all men would get to heaven on this way or by these means, all-sufficient as they are for all men without any exception—only then He instituted an election of persons—only then He predestinated only *a part of men* to life eternal. Had He not foreseen this, certainly no election or selection would have taken place, though a predestination, viz. of all men. For the word predestination does not in itself imply a selection or a singling out, as the word election, in as far as it is equivalent to selection, always does. Thus we could speak of a possible predestination of all men, but not of an election or a selection of all men.

The cause that God at all could predestine any man to salvation is, of course, nothing but the mercy of God and the merit of Christ. Without these God could, so to say, not even have thought of predestining any man whatever. But in order to be able to predestinate any definite person to salvation, God had to see and know that this person did or would accept Christ, and not obstinately reject Him. This was a

prerequisite to election. The mercy of God and the merit of Christ are the only causes of election, but they can not be such causes, if they are not accepted by faith. If they are the cause why He elects some persons whilst He does not elect others, although they are intended and exist also for these, it can be thus only because He sees that they are accepted by some, whilst they are spurned and rejected by others. If He did not see this, there would not be any election at all, but a predestination of all men.

But does not the Formula of Concord, and do not all our dogmaticians say that the mercy of God and the merits of Christ are the causes of election? Most assuredly they do. But both do not exclude faith as a factor in election, or, in other words, they do not speak of the mercy of God and the merit of Christ as being the cause of election or selection aside from their acceptance by faith. The dogmaticians, as is well known, teach explicitly that election has taken place in view of the merit of Christ as being apprehended by faith, and the Formula of Concord does so implicitly more than one place, e. g. in the words of the Epitome (Mueller p. 556): "In Christ we shall look for the eternal *election* of the Father who has decreed in His eternal divine counsel *that He will not save anybody except those who recognize His Son Christ and truly believe in Him.*" This, therefore, according to the Formula of Concord, *is election*, as far as it concerns us at all, that God has decreed in all eternity, that *all those who believe in Christ*, and only those, will be received and saved by Him. And thus the Formula of Concord, and our dogmaticians, and we who believe and teach as these do, are perfectly justified in saying that the mercy of God and the merit of Christ are the cause of election or selection of some men, because we do not exclude, but rather include faith as a factor, though not as a cause in the strict sense of this word. But the Missourians can not consistently do the same, though they sometimes do it, for what reasons, God and they themselves must know. If they want to be consistent, they must say, as they sometimes have said, that the cause of election, as they take it, can not be the grace of God and the merit of Christ, but that it is unknown and a mystery to us.