

WARM WINDS FROM THE SOUTH: THE SPREAD OF PIETISM TO SCANDINAVIAN LUTHERANS

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It is indeed a pleasure and a privilege to participate in the annual Pieper Lectures. I have always had the deepest admiration for Dr. Francis Pieper, having studied his *Christian Dogmatics* at Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary while a student there and then teaching *Christian Dogmatics* for seventeen years while president of Bethany Seminary.

Since the theme of the lectures this year is pietism it should be noted that Dr. Pieper has much to say about this subject in his three volumes of *Christian Dogmatics*. I checked the many references to pietism in the Index Volume IV and would like to submit one quote from Pieper where he summarizes the essence of pietism. He writes: "The essence of Pietism was that it led men to base their state of grace before God on inner experiences of the human heart, contrition, 'faith,' internal renewal, etc, instead of basing it on the grace earned by Christ and offered by Him in the objective means of grace." (Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. III, p. 174) He goes on to say that "some of the Pietists plainly had good intentions. With a 'heartfelt,' 'living' Christianity they wanted to oppose the externalism which unfortunately had become rampant in the Lutheran Church and made an opus operatum of the use of the divinely appointed means of grace. But unhappily they belonged to the class of reformers who do not know how to bring about a true reformation of the Church . . . Thus Pietism turned into the channel common to the Reformed and the Papists." (Ibid., pp. 174-175)

Dr. Pieper's predecessor, Dr. C.F.W. Walther, who suffered much spiritual distress under Pietism, devoted a lengthy section in his *Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel* under Theses IX which reads: "The word of God is not rightly divided when sinners who have been stricken down and terrified by the Law are directed, not to the Word and Sacraments, but to their own prayers and wrestling with God in order that they may win their way into a state of grace; in other words, when they are told to keep on praying and struggling until they feel that God has received them into grace." (Walther, *Law and Gospel*, p. 127) In developing this theses, which consists of 83 pages, Walther describes the spiritual agony that he experienced while a student at the University of Leipzig. He tells about a candidate of theology, a genuine Pietist, who came to his group and said, "You imagine that you are converted Christians, don't you? But you are not. You have not yet passed through any real penitential agony." (Ibid., p. 142)

In this connection I might suggest that for an in-depth study of pietism I would direct your attention to the book *The Complete Timotheus Verinus* by Valentin Ernst Loescher, published in English by Northwestern Publishing House. This book is the most comprehensive analysis of the pietistic movement in the German Lutheran Church. According to the Historical Introduction Part One is a systematic analysis of pietism and Part Two is a more personal plea to the religious world to look at the facts and decide who was presenting them honestly and in a Christ-like way. Chapter one deals with the General Characteristics of the Pietistic Evil and chapters two through sixteen deals with Special Characteristics of the Pietistic Evil. I submit a few excerpts from Chapter three which deal with one of the special characteristics of the pietistic evil: "Finally, so that this second special characteristic of pietism, the contempt and invalidation of the means of grace, can be surveyed once again, the following-proved teachings are yet briefly presented. 1) It has been taught that without means, especially without the

preached word, which they call dark, one can and ought to enjoy God and be saved. Complete Christians need no external means of help, they need no Lord's Supper; the first Christians regarded the other external signs in the same way and did not dwell on them. 2) They have taught that living reverence for God, or true piety, is the only means of salvation. 3) They have taught that the external word is not essentially the correct means of salvation." (Loescher, *The Complete Timotheus Verinus*, p. 86)

Matthew Harrison, in a recent issue of *Logia*, adds this evaluation of Loescher's study of pietism:

What V.E. Loescher once described as the *malum pietisticum* at the height of eighteenth-century Pietism is with us yet today. Pietism is as old as man. It turns the heart away from the concrete and *extra nos* word and means God has established for our salvation, to inner lights, experiences, feelings, and convictions. More amenable to such things, prayer meetings and home Bible study displace the divine delivery of gifts on the Lord's day with its ancient and gospel-oriented liturgical progression. Instead, they create their own solar system, relegating the divine service to an orbital position, and with it also the means of grace and the office divinely mandated to deliver them. Loescher noted these marks of Pietism: "pious-appearing [doctrinal] indifference," "devaluation of the means of grace," and of necessity, "the debilitation of the office of the ministry." (*Logia*, Lutheran Missions, 1998 issue, Vol. VII, Number 3, p.3)

What a far cry from Confessional Lutheranism which is rooted and grounded in the doctrine of the means of grace! Or as Luther has put it: "We should and must constantly maintain that God will not deal with us except through his external Word and sacrament. Whatever is attributed to the Spirit apart from such Word and sacrament is of the devil!" (*Tappert*, p. 313)

German Pietism was not confined to Germany. It also spread to the Scandinavian countries and that is the thrust of this lecture, namely *Warm Winds From The South: The Spread Of Pietism To Scandinavian Lutherans*.

First of all, it is important to know something about the historical background of the Reformation in the Scandinavian countries. According to George Fisher, author of *The History of the Christian Church*, "the Reformation in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden was dependent to a large extent upon the political fortunes of these kingdoms, which had been united under one monarch by the Union of Calmar in 1397. Protestantism was favored by Christian II who was on the throne when the Lutheran movement began." (Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, p. 311)

DENMARK

We begin with Denmark. The church there was badly in need of reform. Christian III, who was a convinced Lutheran, invited Johannes Bugenhagen, to help him complete the work of reform in Denmark. He arrived in 1537. Bugenhagen's zeal, learning, and administrative ability made him one of the outstanding figures of the German Reformation, inferior only to Luther and Melancthon. His first task was to crown the King and Queen. This took place in the Church of our Lady, Copenhagen. He also restored the University of Copenhagen where he taught theology along with Peder Palladius, who was one of the most outstanding Danish bishops, and Hans Tausen who was a Greek scholar.

The Lutheranizing of Denmark consisted in the drawing up of a constitution for the Danish Church and its publication in the contemporary form as a church ordinance. Meanwhile Tausen, a Danish theologian, and his brethren had been sitting together in conference composing a statement of their faith which they intended to present to the Herredag (a church council), "When completed, this consisted of the Forty-three Articles which later came to be known as the Copenhagen Confession. It coincided in time with the Augsburg Confession, from the pen of Melanchthon, which the German princes presented to the Emperor at the Diet of Augsburg on June 25, 1530." (Cf. E.H. Dunkley, *The Reformation in Denmark*, p. 62)

Later the commission appointed by the King appears to have used both Danish and German sources in their composition of the new Church Ordinance. "Among the Danish works evidently employed were the Forty-three Articles of 1530, and among the German works there are clear traces of the influence of the following: Luther's Formula Missae, the Saxon Visitation Articles and the Church Ordinances of Brunswick, Hamburg, and Lübeck." (Ibid, p. 81) Dunkley goes on to say that "The reorganization of the Danish Church work took place in three stages: 1) The decision of the Herredag at Odense in 1526 to cease applying to Rome for papal conformation of newly appointed bishops. 2) Abolition of the old episcopacy and the institution of the Superintendents nominated by the King and ordained by Bugenhagen and 3) The predominance of the Crown in ecclesiastical affairs." (Dunkley, *The Reformation in Denmark*, p. 173)

Unfortunately, Melanchthonian influence was felt. Niels Hemmingsen, known as "Denmark's Great Teacher," was a Phillipist. His biblicistic humanism made headway and sought a compromise with Calvin. After 1600 this humanistic theology was sharply attacked by Lutheran Orthodoxy, which dominated the church in the 17th century. Lutheran Orthodoxy required pastors to pledge adherence to the Augsburg Confession. Pastors were better trained, but there was a tendency to separate faith and life. Thomas Kingo, a Danish hymnwriter, gave expression to this in one of his hymns entitled "How Fair the Church of Christ Shall Stand," where he writes in verse two,

"Tis all in vain that you profess
The doctrines of the Church, unless
You live according to your creed,
And show your faith by word and deed.
Observe the rule: To others do
As you would have them do to you." (ELH 418 v. 2)

Pietism came to Denmark from Germany in 1703. In 1705 the first Lutheran foreign mission was launched in India by the Danish king in cooperation with the Halle pietists. Pietism gained strength through small groups, which met for prayer and Bible reading. Orthodox pastors were often worldly men and all through the 18th century there was a struggle between dead orthodoxy and pietism. Danish common schools were started with the erection of 240 schools in the land where children were given a thorough instruction in Christianity.

The pietistic period was rather short in Denmark. Its subjective elements quickly melted into the optimistic views of the Enlightenment. Faith in God was replaced by faith in man and the voice

of conscience by reason. Educated classes drifted away from Christianity, church attendance declined, and religious indifference was general.

Rationalism held sway at the beginning of the 19th century. Nicolai Grundtvig (1783-1872) was influenced by rationalism but he took a more orthodox view of the Bible and Faith. He sought in the sacraments the clear and unchanging expression of true Christianity as it had come down from Christ himself through the centuries. By his preaching rationalism began to shake. The Danish church was greatly influenced by Grundtvig both directly and indirectly, not so much by his theology as by his view of life, by his hymns, and the appeal his message had on the popular mind in the rural areas. His great love for Denmark and its history gave his movement a national spirit. Gradually he reacted against the small Bible reading groups.

Grundtvig did have some theological hang-ups, though. For one thing, he held that the Apostle's Creed was of divine origin in the same way that the Holy Scriptures are, and later this proved to be a problem for the Norwegian Synod, to which I will refer later. His followers were also charged with teaching such things as the possibility of the conversion of the soul after death and with rejecting the infallibility of the Bible, views which Grundtvigian clergy did not deny having. There was also a period in his life when he was a staunch supporter of Lutheran Orthodoxy, but his strong historical sense caused him to doubt the orthodox doctrine of inspiration. He made what he himself called the "marvelous discovery" that the foundation of the Christian faith is not to be found in the Scriptures (viewed as written words) but in the living Word in the church, in the sacraments, and in the confession used in connection with Baptism.

It has been noted that "his theology was not always as good as his hymns." He wrote such hymns as "Built on the Rock the Church Doth Stand," an excellent hymn which has been sung throughout the Lutheran Church. One of the stanzas shows that he had the right concept of the means of grace, which reads:

"Here stands the font before our eyes,
Telling how God did receive us;
Th' altar recalls Christ's sacrifice
And what His table doth give us;
Here sounds the Word that doth proclaim
Christ yesterday, today, the same,
Yea, and for aye our Redeemer." (ELH 211 v. 6)

He also wrote other hymns that are familiar to us, such as "God's Word is Our Great Heritage," "Peace to Soothe Our Bitter Woes," and "The Happy Christmas Comes Once More," to mention a few.

SWEDEN

From Denmark we go to Sweden. Two Swedish brothers, Olavus and Laurentius Petri, were the instigators of the Reformation in Sweden. Olavus (1493-1522) did more than any other teacher to establish the Swedish Church. He gave to the clergy in his doctrinal, liturgical, polemical, and homiletical writings a statement of faith which established the Swedish Lutheran Church as Lutheran for centuries. His brother, Laurentius (1499-1573) preserved an episcopal church structure and an order of worship which saved the best elements of the past for the new order. The result of the labors of the Petri brothers is evident in the ability of the evangelical Church to

defend itself against a Romanizing liturgy of John III against the Counter Reformation in the reign of Sigismund, so that at Upsala in 1593 the Church declared itself Lutheran.

A strict orthodoxy characterized the Church of the 17th century, and the faith tended to be stated in intellectual terms. This set the stage for the interest in pietism which came with returning soldiers of the wars of Charles XII. Then the Waldenstrom controversy broke out. Waldenstrom put forward a theory of the Atonement which was inconsistent with Lutheran Orthodoxy. He rejected the objective view of Christ's atonement in favor of a subjective view which restricted the significance of Christ's atonement to the impact that it makes on man. Carl Olaf Rosenius, a lay preacher and devotional writer and a friend of Waldenstrom, took issue with his theological mentor and became leader of the Swedish revival. He emphasized conventicles for edification and a stress on religious experience (conversion) combined with a doctrinally orthodox theological position and a friendly attitude toward non-Lutheran evangelicals, and as long as Rosenius lived the revivalist groups remained within the church.

Bo Giertz, Bishop Emeritus of the diocese of Gothenburg, Sweden, wrote a book entitled *Hammer of God*. This book gives an insight into Swedish pietism. He writes about a young pastor named Frifeldt, who had false ideas as to what it means to be born again. In discussion with an older pastor Frifeldt said that he was a believer. The pastor asked: "Believer in what?" "Jesus," he answered, "I have given him my heart." The older pastor responded: "If you think you are saved because you have given Him your heart you will not be saved. It's a different thing to believe on Him as the Redeemer of sinners of whom I am chief. The heart is a rusty old can on a junk heap. But a wonderful Lord passes by and has mercy on the old tin can, strikes his walking cane through it and rescues it and carries it from the junk pile and takes it home with him." Frifeldt admitted that he had looked for penitence and for amendment of life. He had taken stock of his deeds, but had lost sight of Jesus. He learned that the law constrains a man to look chiefly at himself and drives him to compare his corrupted nature with the holiness of God and his guilt with the righteousness of God. But afterwards the Holy Spirit lifts the eyes of our understanding to Jesus only. It is a blessed thing when a believing soul looks in the Word for Jesus only. The question was then discussed whether little children can believe. The wrong opinion was held that one had to be a believer before one should be baptized. And the passage was quoted: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." And so it was contended that faith was necessary for baptism. Answer: "No, not for baptism, but for salvation. Jesus does not in that passage say what is necessary in order to be baptized, but what is necessary to be saved. Faith and baptism are two things that belong together. And if little children could not believe they could not be saved either. The point was made: Can you mention a single passage of Scripture that states that a little child can actually be born again?" Answer: "Not just one, but two." One is: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" and the other is: "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." The first passage says that God's kingdom is received through regeneration in Baptism. The other states that children can receive the kingdom of God and that it is just they that receive it in the right way, and if that way is to be born again it also becomes clear that children really can be born again. And it becomes equally clear that we all received the kingdom of God when we were baptized as children. (Cf. Giertz, *The Hammer of God*, pp. 146-147 and 215-218)

The above shows to what extent pietism had infiltrated Sweden. But the revivalist groups also became stronger and more powerful. As long as Rosenius lived, the revivalist group remained within the church, but under Waldenstrom of the Swedish Mission Covenant in 1878, began a separate existence.

NORWAY

From Sweden we go to Norway. The main stream of the Reformation flowed into Norway through Denmark. It was a gradual process. King Frederik I was sympathetic to the Reformation and announced that men were free to preach either Roman or Lutheran doctrine. Bergen, center of commerce and shipping, helped spread the new teaching. The Danish nobility saw in the Reformation a two-fold opportunity: 1) To throw off the political and economic power of the Roman bishops and 2) To get their hands on the wealth of the churches and monasteries. Many of them became "promoters" of the Reformation for selfish reasons.

King Christian III was won for the Reformation while attending the Diet of Worms. He established the Reformation officially at the Diet of Copenhagen in 1536, the full effects reaching Norway the following year. Catholic bishops were deposed and Lutheran bishops gradually took their place. Priests, too, were removed; however, it took time to get replacements. The laity didn't quite realize what was going on. The pastors were poorly trained; both they and the laity suffered under the handicap of having only the Danish Bible, hymnbook, and liturgy. Norwegian translations were slow in coming.

The first great upswing in progress of the Reformation came with Jorgen Erickson, Bishop of Stavanger. Known as "Norway's Luther" he had great influence on the spiritual life of clergy and laity. He published excellent sermons. By the end of the century the Reformation was established and organized.

Lutheranism in Norway, as in Denmark, was closely bound to the Mother Church in Germany. Some of the earliest leaders had studied at Wittenberg. Torbjorn Bratt, first bishop of Trondheim, was there for two years, even staying in Luther's home. Norwegian pastors went to Germany in increasing numbers for study. The "Ordinance" or "Directory of Worship" of 1607 required theological candidates to spend some time at a foreign university, and an "Ordinance" of 1629 demanded theological examination of every Norwegian candidate at the University of Copenhagen.

The connection with Germany brought the following theological movements to Norway. First of all, Orthodoxy, the movement which characterized the church's development in the 17th century. This movement had the same two-fold effect in Norway as in Germany: 1) It established the theology of Norway on a solid foundation; it was rooted in the Word of God, and 2) It built up a reverence for the Word among clergy and laity. With it went an emphasis on catechetical instruction.

Orthodoxy, however, followed the pattern of German development. Eventually the preaching became "stiffly correct in doctrinal content, but devoid of Gospel warmth" as it has been described. The Law was overemphasized in many quarters, Christianity was intellectualized, spiritual fervor in the life of Christian love was too often left out. Christian life became cold and sterile in large sections of the church.

This set the stage for pietism. To many, this was the answer to dead orthodoxy. Pietism stressed the importance of personal piety at the expense of orthodox teaching. In all of this emphasis on a "living Christianity" as opposed to the insincerity, the corruption, and dead formalism of clergy and laity in the established State Church, the preaching by lay members came to be regarded more and more as a sign of true spirituality, while the means of grace and the divine office of the ministry were neglected and even despised.

German Pietism came into Norway via Halle where Francke was preaching the same message of spiritual awakening as Spener. It started in Norway as a fanatical and separatistic sectarianism which was hostile to the church and ministry, spiteful to the Sacraments, and legalistic to the extreme. However, there was in the movement a stream of healthy piety which flowed into the church. Confirmation was instituted in 1746. Eric Pontoppidan wrote an Explanation to Luther's Catechism, which was very well received. But by the end of the first half century pietism had run its course. It had dribbled off into subjectivism and fanaticism, characterized by the same errors which its early Norwegian promoters had revealed.

The strongest voice against rationalism was that of Nordal Brun (1745-1816). Brun was Bishop of Bergen at the beginning of the 19th century and was the greatest preacher of his day. But now came the man who really brought renewal to the church: Hans Nielsen Hauge (1771-1824). He was "the Spener of Norway," a layman who combined orthodoxy's reverence for the Word with a deep personal piety. Conditions in the State Church were horrible, with a clergy which had departed not only from the plain teachings of Scripture but from its moral precepts as well. Hauge's denunciation of sin and his call to repentance struck a responsive chord in the hearts of many. His ringing preaching of repentance "set the whole church on fire." In the book *Grace for Grace*, written in commemoration of the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Norwegian Synod in 1853 and the twenty-fifth anniversary of its reorganization in 1918 as the Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church (now ELS) Dr. Sigurd Ylvisaker, chief editor of this book, describes the situation in these words: "no one will deny that the deplorable conditions in the State Church of Norway at this time called with a loud voice for a revival of sound preaching and pious living. And we can truly admire the layman Hauge, who in burning zeal undertook to do what he could in this emergency cause of Christ. He traveled to the far corners of Norway, trudging tirelessly over these vast and difficult miles on foot, to awaken his people to sincere repentance." Ylvisaker goes on to say, though, that "a closer study of Hauge's preaching will show a peculiar unclarity whereby he mixed law and gospel, confused the teaching of justification with that of sanctification, and over-emphasized personal piety at the expense of faith in the all-sufficient merit of Christ." (Ylvisaker, *Grace for Grace*, p. 7)

It was out of this theological morass in Norway that by the grace of God there came a new confessional awakening led by two professors at the University of Christiania (now Oslo) namely Gisle Johnson and Paul Caspari. Their theology reflected the old healthy orthodoxy with the spiritual warmth of Hauge. Students of theology Herman Amberg Preus, Jacob Aal Otteson, and Ulrik Vilhelm Koren, later to become theological leaders in the New World, received their training at the feet of these confessional theologians, and thus by God's grace preserved and perpetuated orthodox theology on American soil.

A student of mine at Bethany Seminary wrote a paper entitled: *Gisle Johnson and the Johnsonian Awakening*. He notes, and correctly so, that "The Johnsonian type of Lutheran orthodoxy was Biblical and confessional, and yet was marked by a profound, true Christian piety. Johnson was aware of, and himself warned against, the legalistic danger of pietistic and sectarian expressions of the Christian faith. His piety never lost sight of Christian liberty, and he never tended toward moralism or perfectionism in any form. He loved his pipe, and was unwilling to condemn dancing, always avoiding the legalism that some of his followers fell into, followers whom, by the way, were also frequently affected by Haugeanism. In those who were balanced, like Johnson himself, we discover a marvelous combination of Lutheran doctrinal orthodoxy along with its concomitant devotional expression that can only be considered as being likewise orthodox." (*Lutheran Synod Quarterly*, Vol. 36, p. 19, 1996)

A wholesome effect of the Johnsonian Awakening was the return of historic Lutheranism in many quarters of the Norwegian Lutheran Church. The State Church of Norway had become compromised by modern critical theology emanating from Germany, taking form primarily as degrees of rationalism.

Norwegian Lutheranism was translated to the New World in the middle of the 19th century when the heavy immigration began. The two streams of religious thought which dominated Norway characterized Norwegian Lutheranism in America. There was the Haugean spirit of personal piety and lay activity on the one hand, and sound Biblical theology on the other hand, which the students of Caspari and Johnson brought to the New World.

The Haugean spirit of personal piety and lay activity was perpetuated by a lay preacher, Elling Eielsen, who came to America in 1839, five years before an ordained pastor arrived from Norway. Eielsen began his work among the immigrants. He pretty much had the field to himself and he made the most of it. Bjug Harstad in his booklet *Pioneer Days* quotes a friend of Elling as saying that "Eielsen knew of no parish boundaries." (p. 13) His theology is also reflected in the second paragraph of his constitution which reads, "According to the order and manner which the Holy Scripture teaches, that nothing common or unclean can enter into the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21:27, etc.) so no one can be received as a member in our denomination (Samfund) without having gone through a sincere conversion, or is on the way to conversion." [emphasis mine] (Harstad, *Pioneer Days*, p. 10)

Eielsen's activities led to a controversy on lay preaching in the Norwegian Synod. This issue was thoroughly discussed at pastoral conferences in which some "Missourians," including Dr. Walther, took part. It was also discussed at two synodical conventions, which resulted in the adoption of seven theses and this marked the end of the controversy on lay preaching within the Norwegian Synod.

The Norwegian Synod was involved in several other controversies, in fact it had to deal with one doctrinal problem before it was formally organized in 1853, namely the "Grundtvigian error" which I alluded to earlier. Somehow it found its way into the first draft of the constitution that had been prepared in 1852, one year before its organization. The doctrinal paragraph, and therefore one of the unalterable articles of that first synod's constitution was Grundtvigian. It placed the word "in our baptismal covenant" on equal footing with the inspired Scriptures. (Larson & Madson, *Built on the Rock*, pp. 7-8) It was Herman Amberg Preus

who made the motion to strike the words “in our baptismal covenant” from the constitution and since it was one of the unalterable articles the first dissolved itself and a new constitution was written which did not include the Grundtvigian error. This constitution was adopted at the constituting convention in 1853. The fact that this error was detected and subsequently purged from the constitution shows how earnestly the leaders of the Norwegian Synod were in upholding the Lutheran, Scriptural principle in making the Scriptures the only source, rule, and guide for faith and life. President Preus, reflecting on this, stated that this strict adherence of the Synod to the Scriptural principle soon brought it into conflict with pseudo Lutheran bodies which, indeed, formally confessed the same principle but did not in practice take the matter of carrying it out seriously. As a result other controversies arose, such as the Gospel, Absolution, and Justification.

These controversies get to the very heart of the Christian faith and they can be traced to pietism, for pietism with its emphasis on subjectivism explains why controversies arose on these fundamental doctrines. The Synod taught an unconditional absolution, that is, it is not conditioned on man’s faith; whereas the opponents taught just the opposite. While both agreed as to the effects of absolution, namely that only believers receive the forgiveness of sins by it, they disagreed over the essence or nature of absolution. The controversy led to differences over the question: What is the Gospel? The opponents made the Gospel conditioned on man’s faith in such a way “that without faith there was in reality no Gospel either, – as if without the seeing eyes there could be no sun,” as our fathers expressed it. (*Grace for Grace*, p. 161)

The Synod drew up twelve theses in which it sought to clarify its position on these controverted doctrines. We would share two of these theses, namely 7 and 11.

Theses 7 reads:

The Gospel is not a mere historical account of the completed work of redemption, but much more a powerful declaration of peace and promise of grace by God to the world redeemed by Christ. Thus it is always a powerful means of grace, in which God on His part brings, offers, distributes, gives and presents the forgiveness of sins and the righteousness earned by Christ, although not all to whom God lets His earnest call of grace go out accept this invitation of the reconciled God and thus do not either become partakers of the benefits following it. (*Grace for Grace*, p. 161)

Theses 11 reads:

The faith of the individual does not by its own power effect this that the Gospel promise of grace, which God expresses in the word of the Gospel or in Absolution, actually becomes valid, powerful and true; but it clings simply to the promise of grace and forgiveness as a divinely true and effective promise, and in that it thus accepts God’s promise, it grasps therein also the gift of righteousness and salvation and possesses that which the words say and express.” (Ibid, p. 163)

In brief, the Gospel is always the same whether a person believes it or not. Luther used this illustration: “A king gives you a castle; if you do not accept it, then it is not the king’s fault, nor is he guilty of a lie. But you have deceived yourself and the fault is yours. The king certainly gave it to you.” (*LW* 40, p. 367)

Similarly God has declared us forgiven, whether we believe it or not. However, this forgiveness does not benefit one unless he believes. It is not strange, then, that those who emphasize man's faith at the expense of objective reality of Christ's Gospel and his words of justification will go astray in other doctrines, such as Election and Conversion, so as to give man's faith there also an entirely unscriptural importance.

Dr. J.A.O. Preus in an interesting article in the October, 1989, issue of the *Concordia Journal* wrote an article entitled "Chemnitz on Law and Gospel" in which he shows that Lutherans were at odds with the enthusiasts over the proper distinction between Law and Gospel, which Preus correctly says is "one of the cornerstones of Lutheran theology." In that same article he says: "It should also be noted that the Reformation not only discovered the Gospel, but also the Law of God. Some of the results of this are Articles IV, V, and VI of the Formula on Good Works, Law and Gospel, and the Third Use of the Law. These came about as a result of controversies created by antinomianism on the one hand, and pietism and synergism on the other hand. This is the basic reason why orthodox Lutheranism must always oppose legalism, pietism, the charismatic movement and subjectivism of every kind which obscure the Gospel and prevent it from truly being the Gospel or in any way contribute to the confusion of Law and Gospel in preaching, teaching, and parish practice. And it is also the reason why we must oppose secular humanism which is merely the old raven of antinomianism floating in the new gravy of libertinism." (*Concordia Journal*, October, 1989, p. 409)

It should be mentioned that there are different shades of pietism. There is the extreme pietism espoused by Spener, Francke, Hauge, and others. Then there is a pietism which is quite orthodox in doctrine, but makes a sin out of things which in themselves are not sin, such as dancing, card playing, and moderate use of alcohol. We also make a distinction between pietism and piety. We recall Dr. Walther's words: "May God preserve unto us a pious ministry" and certainly we as Christians want to lead pious lives. Luther in his explanation of the Fourth Petition includes a "pious spouse, pious children, pious and faithful rulers," etc.

The same Luther in the explanation of the First Petition teaches us that we hallow God's name by pure teaching and godly living, and that we dishonor God by false doctrine and ungodly living. This is an excellent response to those who contend that it doesn't make any difference how you live so long as you have pure doctrine and, on the other hand, it doesn't make so much difference what you believe as long as you live right.

We conclude with these words in the introduction to an essay entitled "Present-Day Pietism," found in the (*Theological Quarterly*, Vol. 49, January, 1952) by Professor E.W. Wendland and reprinted in (*Our Great Heritage* Vol. III, p. 168) published by Northwestern Publishing House:

Christians always face the danger of running aground on the shoals of either "dead orthodoxy" or "subjectivism." Our Lord tells us to be concerned about purity of doctrine. Therefore, we cannot become indifferent to false teaching. We must always work to the end that our confession and practice agree with Scripture. Yet, we must also be on our guard lest our confession becomes mere lip service to God belied by the lives we lead. If we profess correct doctrinal formulations but walk by on the other side of our neighbor in need, we have

fallen into dead orthodoxy. On the other hand, we must also guard against a religion which stresses deeds over creeds, which places emphasis on the Christian life to the exclusion of what Scripture says on correct teaching, which finds assurance for salvation in the subjective feelings of deeds of the individual rather than in the universal and objective atonement of Jesus Christ. Such a religion is also dangerous, for it leads to shipwreck on either the Scylla of self-righteousness or the Charybdis of despair.

Luther had it straight in his explanation of the First Petition of the Lord's Prayer. In answer to the question, *How is God's name hallowed?* he answers: "God's name is hallowed when His Word is taught in its truth and purity, and we as children of God live holy lives according to it. This grant us, dear Father in heaven! But he who teaches and lives otherwise than the Word of God teaches dishonors God's name among us. From this preserve us, heavenly Father."

In closing, may our study of pietism lead us to a renewed appreciation of the inseparable connection between faith and life, and also of the comforting doctrine of the means of grace, so beautifully articulated by Thomas Kingo, the Danish hymn writer, who wrote:

"For the joy Thy birth doth give me,
For Thy holy, precious Word;
For Thy baptism which doth save me,
For Thy blest Communion board;
For Thy death, the bitter scorn,
For Thy resurrection morn,
Lord, I thank Thee and extol Thee,
And in heav'n I shall behold Thee." (ELH 354 v. 10)

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