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JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH AND ELECTION IN VIEW OF FAITH.

In his review of Dr. Pieper's treatise, "Conversion and Election," Dr. Keyser,¹⁾ of the General Synod, notes as the first "serious error" of the book which he reviews that "the Lutheran regulative doctrine," justification, has been dislocated from its dominating position in the body of Lutheran teaching. He says:—

"A serious doctrinal blemish in the book under review is this: It puts into a minor place the material, chief, and regulative principle of the Reformation, namely, justification by faith. This was the doctrine which Luther made central and pivotal, and by which he judged and decided all other doctrines in the Biblical system. He contended ever that justification by faith alone was 'the sign of a standing or a falling Church.' He would not subordinate this doctrine to any other doctrine, or to all other doctrines combined, but judged all by it, and assembled and coordinated all around it. This is also the view-point of the Augustana. To our mind it is the view-point of the Formula of Concord. If the eleventh chapter is read and studied in the search-light of this cardinal principle, it will be much more easily comprehended and evaluated.

1) Election and Conversion. A frank discussion of Dr. Pieper's book on "Conversion and Election," with suggestions on Lutheran concord and union on another basis. By *Leander S. Keyser*, D. D. Burlington, Iowa. The German Literary Board. 1914. 184 pages. 75 cts.

“But what is the impression made upon one who carefully reads Dr. Pieper’s book? That another doctrine has been introduced, not only as the chief one, but also as the regulative one; as it were, the major premise. That doctrine is the doctrine of the divine decrees, the divine sovereignty, election, predestination. This is the beginning and the end, the principal view-point; it controls everything; it never for a moment slips out of sight; all other doctrines must take a secondary place. Even faith is treated meagerly, is subjected to election, is taken quite out of the sphere of freedom, and is so misconceived as to be made a mechanical thing; instead of the ethical and spiritual act it is always represented to be in the Bible and the Lutheran Confessions. According to this dissertation, man is not elected in view of the fact that he accepts Christ by faith, but he both has faith and is justified because he has been elected unto salvation from eternity by a mysterious decree. If we mistake not, this is reversing the Lutheran order, making divine sovereignty central, and crowding justification by faith off to one side. Luther and his colaborers did not begin with an insoluble mystery pertaining to the Godhead before the world was, but with the plain and simple revelation of Christ and His way of justification by faith; and then, if they wanted to work back to the mysteries, they would judge them all in the light of the simple revelation. It was the Calvinists who began with the *divina decreta*, and made everything else subservient to God’s absolute sovereignty. We beg pardon for having to say it, but just in this one respect the Missouri view-point is more like that of the Calvinists and less like that of the Lutherans. We hasten to say, however, for fear of misunderstanding, that Missouri’s explanation of the doctrine of election itself is far from being Calvinistic; is, in fact, anti-Calvinistic, as has been shown.

“Are we not correct in saying that the central and regulative principle of our Missouri friends is election, not justification by faith? Just note how little faith is discussed in this treatise; how little it is urged; what a small and insignificant

place it occupies in comparison with election; how it must ever step aside to make room for predestination; how belittlingly the *intuitu fidei* is represented, as if faith were a matter of small importance; note, too, that justification is scarcely mentioned in the entire production; and yet with Paul the great question was how a man could be accounted righteous before God. This is the doctrine, too, that saved Luther and made him the Reformer he was; the doctrine to which he always gave the primacy in his theological system. Does any one suppose that he ever would have made Rome tremble, that he ever would have changed the currents of religious and civil history, if he had spent much of his time in debating the order of God's decrees in eternity? Indeed, he always deprecated controversies on this very subject, as any one may see by reading the quotations presented in Jacobs' 'Summary of the Christian Faith' (pp. 576—580).

"Perchance the reply will be made that our Missouri friends do not mean to neglect or depreciate faith and justification, but that just now the doctrine of election is the one in dispute, and for that reason it occupies the foremost place in the controversy. That point we might readily admit, if it were not for the fact that our Concordia friends deal with every passage of Scripture, even the passages that refer to faith and justification, from the view-point of election. Note their theological method: If faith seems to come in the way of election, then faith must step aside, never election. Thus did not Paul; thus did not Luther, who quotes approvingly the salient advice of Staupitz: 'Begin with the wounds of Christ; then all arguing concerning Predestination will come to an end' (Jacobs, *ut supra*, 578). Again in Dr. Pieper's disposition toward *intuitu fidei*, he seems to treat faith as if it were so insignificant a thing that it would be absurd to think that it could in the least have affected God's eternal self-determinations. This surely is not the servile place given to faith in John 3, 16; nor in Paul's preaching to the Philippian jailer; nor in Christ's words when He said: 'Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, and

believe in Me'; nor when He said: 'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever *believeth in Him* may have eternal life.'" (pp. 22—25.)

It has, no doubt, escaped Dr. Keyser that in presenting the general theme of Dr. Pieper's discourse he has inadvertently changed the position of the two leading terms in the title of Dr. Pieper's treatise. Out of a treatise on "Conversion and Election" he has made a treatise on "Election and Conversion." This inversion would pass for a very trifling matter, were it not for the argument advanced by Dr. Keyser as to the relative importance in the practical work of the Lutheran Church of the doctrines of justification and election. Ever since the beginning of the predestinarian controversy, the Missouri Synod has been, partly suspected of, partly charged openly with, starting the salvation of a sinner by teaching him to believe himself elected unto faith, and everything else would follow as a necessary and inevitable consequence from an irresistible decree of election. In certain quarters Missouri Lutherans were for a time believed to be such thoroughgoing predestinarians that in all their meditations on soteriological subjects and in their public ministrations of the saving truth they would instinctively start *ab ovo Calvinismi*: first, settle the fact of your election, then you may proceed to study your vocation, regeneration, justification, etc. How much of this view still remains in the minds of our opponents, God only knows. Dr. Keyser has most emphatically exonerated Missouri from teaching Calvinistic doctrine, and would eventually champion the just cause of Missouri against certain misrepresentations. But he still scents a Calvinizing tendency in Missouri's assumed emphasis on predestinarian teaching. The very sequence of the terms in the inscription of Dr. Pieper's treatise, and a comparison of the space in Dr. Pieper's book devoted to the presentation of controverted points in the doctrine of conversion with that allotted to election, should have demonstrated *ad oculos* to him that it is the doctrine of conversion where Missourians

have ever believed, and believe now, that the cause of the trouble lies.

No one can intelligently discuss the subject of conversion without constantly speaking of faith, *viz.*, the very origin of faith; for that is conversion in the strict sense. Dr. Pieper's book is full of this subject, and just because faith is considered an item of primary importance and the vital element in every presentation of the teaching that saves souls, Dr. Pieper earnestly wrestles with every teaching that would destroy the pure, heavenly origin of faith in man.

On the very threshold of the *via salutis* the theologian is confronted with the awful mystery of the *primitiae fidei*, the first movements of the divine life in a heart that was dead in trespasses and sin. If faith is the determining factor in the eternal fate of every man, it is plain that he has served the cause of truth most signally who has surrounded the origin of faith with the teaching of *sola gratia*, and has therewith placed on the entire element of faith in the business of man's salvation that truly solemn emphasis which God and our Lord Jesus Christ have placed on it. Salvation is not by any sort of faith, howsoever produced, but solely and alone by that faith which is "of the operation of God," Col. 2, 12, and which couples faith and grace, to the exclusion of anything that is "of ourselves," in the same manner as this is done in Eph. 2, 8. If faith is thus viewed, we are persuaded that Dr. Pieper's treatise is full, not only of faith, but also of the proper, Scriptural emphasis of faith. Dr. Keyser, whose sincerity has much impressed us, and of whose honorable motives we have no doubt, has been betrayed into an error by studying "The Error of Missouri," which seems to have been his principal, if not sole, source of information on the controversy between Missouri and her opponents. He does not appear to have studied Missouri's side of the question at first hand. This is deplorable, though perhaps easily explained by the fact that the literature of Missouri on topics immediately involved in, or related to, the predestinarian controversy has not been generally accessible.

On the very ground of Dr. Keyser's complaint noted above, Dr. Walther spoke out in an article when the controversy was but a few months old. Partly because we have nothing better to offer, partly because we would like herewith to submit the historical evidence that Missouri, from the very incipiency of the strife, was careful to maintain the relative importance of the doctrine of justification by faith over against the theory of an election in view of faith, we reproduce the article of Dr. Walther: "Does the teaching that election did not take place in view of faith militate against the doctrine of justification by faith alone?" The article was published in the issue of *Lehre und Wehre* for December, 1880.

"Some persons, when hearing or reading that election did *not* take place in view of faith, are fearful that by such teaching the doctrine of justification by faith alone is placed in the background, yea, is even utterly abolished. If this fear were well founded, the teaching aforementioned would indeed be the most horrible error that could be conceived of. For Luther is fully justified in writing concerning the doctrine of justification by faith alone as follows: 'If we have the correct and pure understanding of this article, we have the true, heavenly sun; but if we lose it, we have nothing but utter hellish darkness. Hence, whenever you notice that this article is being weakened or overthrown, be not afraid either of Peter or Paul, or even of an angel from heaven, but resist them; for you can never elevate this article too high or defend it (too strenuously).' (VIII, 1769.) However, just as little as it militates against the doctrine of justification by faith alone to teach, *e. g.*, that the *call of grace* is not issued in view of faith, both doctrines rather being in the most perfect harmony with one another, and the one rather presupposing and confirming the other, just as little the doctrine that *election* did not take place in view of faith militates against the doctrine of justification by faith alone, and just as surely also these two doctrines are rather in the most perfect harmony with one another, and rather presuppose and confirm one another.

“As Christians we must assume this to be a fact even *a priori*, because, in the first place, the Holy Scriptures, which cannot possibly contradict and militate against themselves, being the Word of God, clearly and distinctly teach the doctrine of *justification* by faith alone in innumerable places, but in no place an election *intuitu fidei*, i. e., in view of faith. True, we read: ‘Whom He did *foreknow*, He also did *predestinate*,’ Rom. 8, 29; but where do we find written: Whom He did foreknow *as believers unto the end*, He also did predestinate? And what creature in heaven or on earth has a right to add anything to the words of the Holy Spirit? True, it is written: ‘To the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, *elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father*,’ 1 Pet. 1, 1. 2; but where do we find written: according to the foreknowledge *of their faith*? And who would dare be so bold as to complement from his own reason the words of the Holy Spirit which he assumes to be incomplete? True, it is written: ‘According as He hath chosen us *in Him*,’ ἐν αὐτῷ, Eph. 1, 4; but where do we find written: According as He hath chosen us as persons being in Him, τοὺς ἐν αὐτῷ ὄντας? And who would dare to surreptitiously place these few words from his own fancy into the statement of the Holy Ghost, and take the Holy Ghost to school like an ignorant pupil who did not know how to express what He wanted to express?—However, some one rejoins, Is it not clearly written: ‘We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation *through* sanctification of the Spirit and *belief of the truth* (ἐν ἀγιασμῷ πνεύματος καὶ πίστει ἀληθείας)?’ 2 Thess. 2, 13. Yes, indeed. But where do we find written: God hath chosen you as persons who, according to His foresight, would stand, or be, in the sanctification of the Spirit and in the belief of the truth? Where do we find the terms ὄντας, which would necessarily have to be supplied if the phrase ἐν ἀγιασμῷ καὶ. is not to be connected with the verb εἰλατο, but with δυνῶς, which would be far removed

from this qualifier (ὅντας) and separated from it by the words ὁ θεὸς ἀπ' ἀρχῆς εἰς σωτηρίαν? And who would arrogate to himself the authority to supplement the statement of the Holy Ghost and to supply what in his opinion is lacking in that statement? However, to conclude, some one objects: Does not James state expressly: '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, 5. Without question, he does. But does James in this passage indicate by a single word that God has elected the believing poor *in view of their faith*? Who will undertake to put this patch of comment on the cloak of James's words? For what other conclusion can be drawn from these words except this one, that indeed no person is elect who does not believe unto the end, and that only such as believe unto the end can be elect?—Unquestionably, then, the phrase *intuitu fidei* has not been taken from Scripture, but has been carried into Scripture, contrary to the highest principle in hermeneutics, *viz.*, contrary to the rule: *Sensus non est inferendus, sed efferendus.* (Pfeifferi *Thesaur. hermeneut.*, p. 143.) And thus Luther, too, writes: 'It is not presenting Christian teaching when I carry a meaning into Scripture and wrest Scripture accordingly, but rather when I have first the clear Scripture, and then order my thought accordingly.' (XIX, 1603 f. Comp. V, 641.)

"Agreeably to Holy Scripture the pure *Confessions* of our orthodox Church present the doctrine of the *justification* of a poor sinner before God by faith alone as purely and clearly as the confessions of no other Church; however, regarding an *election* in view of faith not a word is said in them, but they teach the exact opposite. Our precious *Confessions*—as has been previously shown in this periodical—not only render the Scriptural term προέγνω, Rom. 8, 29, by the German '*versehen*,' and the Latin '*prædestinavit*,' p. 709, § 27, and thus reject most plainly that interpretation which makes the foreknowledge of faith a cause or basis for the election of grace, but, on the contrary, the *Confessions* teach explicitly that the '*election* of

God . . . is also . . . a *cause* which procures, works, helps, and promotes our salvation, *and what pertains thereto*,' p. 705, § 8, and thus manifestly declare that *election* is the *cause* of faith, instead of *faith* being the cause of *election*.] Whoever denies this must deny at the same time that faith, and faith principally, 'pertains' to a person's obtaining salvation. Add to this, that our Confessions teach that God has '*ordained (decrevit)* that in the way just mentioned He would by His grace, gifts, and efficacy bring the elect thereto (*salutis aeternae participes facere* = make them participants of eternal salvation), and aid, promote, strengthen, and preserve them.' (p. 708, § 23.) However, 'the way just mentioned, as appears from the words immediately preceding, is none other than this, that God desires to bring the elect to faith and keep them in faith,' etc. (Comp. p. 708, §§ 16—22.) Accordingly, *Calvinists*, while discovering in the teaching of the Form of Concord on the election of grace many points which they had to *condemn*, have *praised* the Form of Concord for this very thing, *viz.*, that it maintained the principle: 'God has not *foreseen* in us any cause of election.'²) On the other hand, the synergistic *Philippists* have reprobated this teaching of the Form of Concord as Calvinistic. In a letter dated March 16, 1580, *Matthias Berg*, rector of a school in Brunswick, having repented of subscribing to the Form of Concord chiefly because of the doctrines of predestination and of free will contained in that confession, communicated to the synergistic Philippist Marcus Mening, of Bremen, his intention to cancel his signature. Of course,

2) "These words are from the notorious reply to the Form of Concord which was published in 1581 by the author of the Heidelberg Catechism, Zechariah Ursinus, and inscribed: 'De libro Concordiae, quem vocant, Admonitio christiana.' On p. 332 the author says: 'Retinent illa fundamenta, quod nullam causam electionis Deus in nobis praeviderit.' Hence it is easily explained why just this teaching was not defended against the Calvinists by Kirchner, Selnecker, and Chemnitz in their 'Apology' of the Book of Concord. The reason was simply this, because *this* teaching had not been attacked, but praised by the Calvinists, hence a defense of the same was superfluous."

Mening in his reply, which he dispatched in the same month, highly praised Berg's action, objured him not to waver in his purpose, and, amongst other things, wrote: 'As regards free will and the eternal predestination of God, we agree entirely with the opinion of Dr. *Philip*, of blessed memory, nor will you go astray if you simply follow the same. For these statements of the Form of Concord: In his conversion man is purely passive, resists, and acts hostilely, etc., have, according to my knowledge, never (!) been heard in the Church prior to the days of Flacius; moreover, this view is utterly foreign to Holy Writ, impious, and unsupported by the authority of the holy fathers. Nor can I approve of the monstrous talk of those who do not blush to claim that God has in eternity *elected* only a few persons to everlasting life, and that *by reason of this election* not a single one of the number of the elect can or may be lost, while God has ordained the rest of the human race unto eternal damnation, and by reason of this same predestination the rest of mankind neither can nor shall be saved.'³⁾ Like Mening, all synergistic Philippists were dissatisfied with the doctrine of the gracious election as presented by the Form of Concord. They all held that, if the Form of Concord admitted that final *unbelief* is the cause of *reprobation*, it must

3) "Mening is insincere in his statement that the Form of Concord, by declaring that the eternal election is a cause of salvation, teaches that election is also a cause of damnation. (Comp. *Ph. Jul. Rechtsmeyer*, Church History of the City of Brunswick. Brunswick 1707. Part III, pp. 500—503. Appendix, p. 350 f.) Here we are informed that, after receiving Mening's letter, Berg indeed submitted his revocation of his signature to the Form of Concord, but withdrew the same after earnest deliberations with his immediate ecclesiastical superior, Chemnitz, and publicly did penance at the church for having caused disturbance among the people. He also signed an official document in which he renounced, in very determined language, all fraternal connection with the synergistic Philippist Mening. It is to be regretted that later Berg fell away from the true teaching again and was deposed, whereupon he went to Altorf, where he was soon created professor, and died in 1592. Comp. *Unschuld. Nachrr.* 1728, pp. 216—226. 337—346, where an account of the transactions with Berg is given by Chemnitz."

also admit that *faith* is the cause of *election*; if, however, the Form of Concord denied the latter teaching and posited the cause of election only in the mercy of God and the merit of Christ, admitting no cause in man, it could not escape the absolute decree of reprobation taught by Calvinists. It is well known that the theologians of the duchy of *Anhalt*, with Amling at their head, belonged to the synergistic Philippists. Accordingly, Prince Joachim Ernst of Anhalt, among others—as we learn from Frank—wrote to Landgrave William of Hesse about the ‘Torgish Book’⁴⁾ in a letter dated April 7, 1577, as follows: ‘All who oppose this (synergistic) doctrine of his, and from a few ill-understood chapters in dogmatics have thought out for themselves a predestination that is unknown, must admit that the cause of reprobation is *sin and contempt of the Word of God*.⁵⁾ Hence they must also concede the necessary inference⁶⁾ that, on the other hand, those *who accept grace* are the elect,⁷⁾ and not those who have grace poured into them as into empty jars, without experiencing any emotion and without their assent;⁸⁾ for this sort of enthusiasm is contrary to the analogy of Holy Writ and entails endless absurdities.’⁹⁾ Further on the Prince writes: ‘Now we cannot discover in the Torgau Book that a proper distinction is made, and that with the same degree of thoroughness; for we find in the Book this statement: To any person whom God desires to be saved He gives grace that he may believe; let them tell us why God does not grant this grace to all.’¹⁰⁾’ (See, *Die Theologie der Concordienf.* IV, 135. 267.)

4) “This, as all know, is the last of the treatises from which, after slight changes, the Form of Concord in the form in which we now have it originated.”

5) Quod causa rejectionis sit peccatum et contemptus verbi.

6) Consequentiam necessario.

7) Quod e regione acceptantes gratiam sint electi.

8) Tanquam in vacuos urceolos sine omni motu et assensu eorum infundatur gratia.

9) Infinita absurda.

10) Respondeant isti, cur non omnibus hoc praestet.

“As regards *the authors and defenders of the Form of Concord*, and *Luther*, whom the *Form of Concord* (p. 655, § 41) introduces as ‘the most distinguished teacher of the churches which confess the Augsburg Confession,’ we have in a former issue of this periodical shown that, although these men strenuously urge the article with which the Church either stands or falls, *viz.*, the article of justification by faith, the doctrine of election in view of faith is foreign to all of them. We ask permission, first, as regards *Chemnitz*, to insert here a remark of Prof. Frank. After calling attention to the difficulty which arises when the *Form of Concord* teaches the assurance of salvation and at the same time admits that there are time-believers, Frank proceeds to say: ‘It seems that *the theological device*, so popular at a later time, of a *foreseen faith* in connection with the teaching of an antecedent and consequent will of God will not avail, because, on the one hand, faith itself is to be regarded as an effect of grace (p. 718, § 69),—and that, in this wise, that before they existed and had done anything good, before the foundation of the world, the elect were chosen unto salvation according to the purpose of God by grace in Christ,—and because, on the other hand, our confession nowhere makes use of this device. For, in his “*Enchiridion*,” the question whether the election of God does take place in time, when men repent and believe, or whether it has taken place in consideration of their foreseen godliness, is thus answered by *Chemnitz*: *Election does not follow after our faith and righteousness, but goes before, being a cause of all these things; the election of grace is a cause of all that pertains to salvation.* This statement *Chemnitz* makes notwithstanding in his sermon on predestination, in conformity with the distinction he has made between predestination and prescience, he makes the decree of the *reprobation* of unbelievers to depend on God’s foreseeing their unbelief.’ (*Theol. der Concordf.* IV, 226 f.) True, an argument has been attempted on the ground that *Chemnitz* has formulated the question in the ‘*Enchiridion*’ thus: Does the election of God not take place except in time (*aller-*

erst in der Zeit), after men repent and believe? Or has it taken place in consideration of their foreseen godliness? It has been claimed accordingly that in his *answer* Chemnitz *only* states that faith follows election *in point of time*, and hence, election precedes faith *only in point of time*. However, the *answer* shows incontrovertibly that Chemnitz is speaking, not only of a sequence and precedence in point of time, but of a logical sequence and precedence which expresses the relation of cause and effect. For, while the *answer* begins with these words: 'St. Paul says, Eph. 1: "We are chosen in Christ *before the foundation of the world*"; and 2 Tim. 1: "He hath saved us and called us, not according to our works, but according to His purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus *before the world began*,"' Chemnitz proceeds thus: '*Hence ALSO the election of God does not follow after our faith and righteousness, but goes before, AS A CAUSE of all these things; for whom He has predestinated and chosen, them He has also called and justified, Rom. 8. And Eph. 1 Paul does not say that we were chosen because we were holy, or would be holy, but he says: We have been chosen that we might be holy; for the election of grace is a cause of all that pertains to salvation, as Paul says: "We have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, that we should be to the praise of His glory; and according to that operation we believe," etc. This election has not taken place in consideration of (respectu) our present or future works, but according to God's purpose and grace, Rom. 9; 2 Tim. 1.'* There is, accordingly, no doubt, and only blindness or bias can deny, that in Chemnitz' view election is a cause of faith, and also in this sense something that precedes faith, and faith is not a cause of election, nor election something which logically follows after faith. Besides, Chemnitz speaks of this matter as of a truth that was generally accepted in his time; accordingly, he cites this truth as proof that the election cannot take place 'in time.' For if election

precedes faith as its cause, it is impossible that it should take place 'in time,' and follow 'in time,' after faith has been wrought. Hence, of that theory which was introduced later, and first adopted by *Aegidius Hunnius*; that election has taken place in view of faith, Chemnitz knew nothing, and did not care to know anything.

"As regards *Luther*, the most powerful champion of justification by faith alone since the days of the apostles and prophets, no one, we think, will claim that he taught that election flows from foreseen faith. To increase the evidence already at hand, we should like to add here a testimony of Luther from the year 1538. On the words of the Lord: 'Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit,' John 15, 16, Luther comments as follows: 'Here He explains Himself how He wishes to be understood when He said: "Henceforth I call you not servants, but my friends," etc. This friendship, He says, that I call you my friends, you have not attained by yourselves, but it has come to you because I have first chosen you by my suffering and death to be my friends, and acknowledge you as my friends. Therefore, you may not boast that you had deserved this of me and were worthy of it. To sum up, by my choosing and accepting you, you are called friends, while in your own condition you would be nothing but enemies who know nothing either of me or of God. Now, however, you are friends solely for this reason because I have conceived such love for you and cherished such faithful intentions concerning you as to redeem you and place you in the life everlasting. And for this same reason you are also to remain my friends and enjoy my friendship in eternity, provided only that you show that I have not thus cherished you in vain. Thus He repeats and explains what this friendship is. In the world this thing is done differently: one person calls another his friend when he believes him well-disposed and expects to be benefited by him. He does not consider that person a friend who has not endeared himself

to him, and who cannot give, aid, or benefit him aught. However, in this instance people are called friends who have never shown Christ a favor, yea, who have never known Him, but are poor, miserable sinners, yea, enemies of God, whose sins and death He Himself has assumed, etc.

“Thus there is here cut off and reprobated every audacious attempt which the false saints make against God when they presume to accomplish and merit this much, that they will reconcile God and make Him their friend. For what else are such people doing than starting their own election and wanting to be beforehand in it? Their merit is to go before, and God’s grace is to come trotting after. God is not to be the one who chooses us, but we want to seek Him and make Him our friend, in order that we may boast that we have conferred a favor on Him. That is the way the whole world acts, Jewish, Turkish, and Papistic saints: they all presume God’s grace by their previous works. But it is written: “Ye have not chosen me,” etc., that is, you are my friends, not for your sakes, but for mine. For if you were my friends for your sakes, I should have to regard your merit. But now you are my friends solely by and through me, because I draw you to me and give you all that I have, despite your work and merit and that of the whole world. For I have not suffered myself to be found by you, but I have had to go in search of you and bring myself to you when you were far from me, and strangers to the knowledge of God, and were buried in error and damnation like the rest. However, now that I am come and have called you out of darkness before you asked me or had done aught to deserve my calling you, you are my friends, with this understanding that you receive blessings from me, and know that you have received everything gratis, from sheer mercy.’ (VIII, 560 f.)¹¹⁾

11) “Gerhard offers this comment on John 15, 16: ‘Some think that Christ in this place speaks of an election *in time* by which the apostles were called not only into the fellowship of the Church, but to the highest grade of the church-office. . . . Others, again, hold that Christ is here

"It is established, then, that the doctrine that election has not taken place in view of faith cannot in any possible way militate against the doctrine of justification by faith alone. We are forced to assume this fact even *a priori*, because Scripture and, agreeably thereto, the confession of the orthodox Church, as well as the authors, and those whom the Church summoned to defend this confession, have with such force urged the doctrine of justification by faith alone, but have utterly declined an election in view of faith, and rather teach the contrary.

"However, we can easily prove our claim also *a posteriori*.

"When a person reads the Holy Scriptures and discovers that the doctrine of *justification* by faith in Christ alone, like a golden thread, runs through the entire Scriptures, and represents their marrow and essence, and is then informed that *election* unto eternal salvation has *not* taken place in view of faith, he can indeed, upon a superficial consideration of both these operations of God and upon omitting carefully to compare both, easily conceive the idea that by this teaching regarding election the doctrine of justification is pushed into the background, if not entirely abolished. However, this thought can only arise during a *superficial* study and *inaccurate* com-

speaking of the *eternal* election, that is, of that election by which the apostles were chosen unto eternal salvation.' After *Gerhard* has enumerated the reasons which are adduced for the one and for the other view, he proceeds thus: 'However, these two interpretations are not contrary, but subordinate to one another. For in either of these two ways Christ has manifested His love of the apostles, not only by calling them in time into the communion of the Church and into the apostolate, but also by choosing them in eternity unto everlasting salvation. Each of these elections is by grace (*gratuita*), each of them was made through Christ, Eph. 1, 4; 4, 11; each of them is for the purpose that the elect may bring fruit, and that their fruit may abide. Hence, both interpretations can very well be harmonized. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you unto fellowship with the Church, unto apostleship, and unto salvation," "and I have ordained you that you may go and bring fruit," both by your private practice of godliness and by your public preaching of the Gospel, "and that your fruit may abide."' (*Harmonia Evangelistarum* ad John 15, 16, chap. 177. Ed. Roterodam., fol. 1022.)"

parison of both doctrines, namely, when the doctrine that the elect have *not* been chosen unto salvation *in view of faith* is, by an act of thoughtlessness, regarded as tantamount to teaching that the elect have been chosen to be saved *without faith*. By this latter teaching the doctrine of justification would indeed be, not only pushed into the background, but altogether abolished, yea, by such teaching the entire Gospel, the entire Christian religion would be destroyed. However, the doctrine that election did *not* take place *in view of faith*, far from trenching on the doctrine of justification by faith alone, rather confirms that doctrine most gloriously. For the very men who, with our Confessions, with Luther, Rhegius, Chemnitz, Kirchner, and others, deny that election has taken place in view of faith, teach with all the more firmness that the elect have by grace alone and for the sake of the most holy merit of Christ been chosen and ordained from eternity *unto justification and salvation by faith alone*. Accordingly, the doctrine of justification by faith alone, far from being excluded, or encroached upon, or pushed into the background by the aforementioned doctrine of election, is rather drawn fully into the light by that doctrine. The very heart of the doctrine of a poor sinner's justification in the sight of God is this fact, that we are made righteous by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith alone, and that, not of ourselves, for it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. Rom. 3, 24. 25; Eph. 2, 8. 9. Hence, this fact that justification is by faith alone is not the only point where a person's orthodoxy in his teaching concerning justification must be tested; for this is taught also by the Socinians who hide their miserable doctrine of human merit beneath these beautiful terms; for they understand by faith nothing but the obedience which men have to render to the commandments of Christ. Only that doctrine of justification by faith alone is correct which teaches at the same time that man is made righteous *by grace*, and that *faith*, too, *is not of man*, not his work, not the product of his decision, or of his non-resistance, but a gift of God, without

the cooperation of man, so that in regard to his faith man has nothing whereof to boast, all boasting on the part of man is excluded, Rom. 3, 27, and all glory in this matter is for God alone. The reason why a person is justified *by faith alone* is not, because the merit of Christ is not fully sufficient for this purpose and man must do something at least towards it, but man can be justified before God *only by grace*. Thus the apostle writes distinctly: '*Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace,*' Rom. 4, 16. The perniciousness of the trick which the sects and many so-called Lutherans are working upon men by their teaching of justification by faith, is beyond utterance. Again and again they talk about faith; there is no lack of this among them. But if one pays close attention to their whole manner of teaching, one soon perceives that by faith they understand all sorts of men's work and men's quality, and *by their teaching regarding faith they destroy faith*, they rob Christ of the honor that it is He alone who makes men righteous and saves them, and give this honor to men. This caused *Luther* to write: 'No false Christian nor sectarian can understand this doctrine. Much less will he preach it aright and profess it; *though he may employ (correct) words and repeat them* (after the Scriptures), he does not adhere to them and suffer them to retain their pure meaning. *He always preaches in such a manner that you are impressed he has not the right understanding. Still he glosses it over with his balderdash, thus robbing Christ of His honor and attributing it to himself.* Hence, *THIS alone is most certainly the work of a true Christian: praising and preaching Christ in such a manner that the people learn THAT THEY ARE NOTHING, AND CHRIST IS ALL.*' (*Ad Matt.* 5, 16. VII, 623.) This, and nothing else, is what those who teach that God has not chosen His elect in view of faith will not suffer to be taken from them or to be perverted in any manner; this teaching they mean to hold fast and preserve faithfully. They do not want to rest satisfied with the appearance that they are teaching justification by faith alone, and hence, by grace alone, but

they mean to apply this very teaching with the utmost seriousness, by teaching at the same time that the elect have not been chosen by God on account of their foreseen faith, but that the elect have to thank, not themselves, but a gracious decree of God in Christ, for their perseverance in faith unto death. These very men teach with great seriousness that man is saved by faith alone. They testify to all who are not believers, but reject the Gospel through unbelief, that they are sacrilegious dupes of the devil, if in their terrible state they would take comfort from their election, and say: If I am elected, I shall be saved, no matter how wickedly I live; if I am not elected, I shall be lost, though I work out ever so earnestly my own salvation. These men testify with a loud voice that without faith it is impossible to please God, that the election of grace affords comfort only to believers, and that no one has been chosen unto salvation without being chosen and ordained at the same time to all 'that pertains thereto,' hence, to repentance, justification by faith, conversion, sanctification, fighting the good fight, perseverance under the cross, and steadfastness unto the end. (F. C., p. 705, § 8; p. 708, § 23.) No doctrine, therefore, can more excite men to fidelity in faith and godliness than this doctrine of the election of grace; no doctrine can affix a stronger seal to the doctrine of justification. For this reason our Confession expressly testifies regarding this doctrine: *'It establishes very effectually the article that we are justified and saved without all works and merits of ours, purely out of grace, alone for Christ's sake. For before the ages of the world, before we were born, yea, before the foundation of the world was laid, when we indeed could do nothing good, we were, according to God's purpose, chosen out of grace to salvation, Rom. 9, 11; 12) 2 Tim. 1, 9. 13)* All opinions and erroneous

12) "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger."

13) "Who hath saved us, and called us with an 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."

doctrines concerning the powers of our natural will are thereby overthrown, because God in His counsel, before the ages of the world, *decided and ordained* (*decreverit atque ordinavit*) that *He Himself*, by the power of His Holy Ghost, would produce and work in us, through the Word, everything that pertains to our conversion.' (F. C. p. 713, §§ 43. 44.)

"But, some one objects, If you are really in such great earnest to hold fast the doctrine of justification by faith alone, why do you refuse to grant that *election* has taken place solely *in view of faith*? We reply: *We refuse to do this for this very reason, because we wish to preserve the doctrine of justification by faith alone.* We ask, *Why* is it that faith justifies? Is it because a person cannot be justified by grace alone? or because man must do something toward his justification, be it ever so little? or because faith is the condition which must necessarily be fulfilled on the part of man, hence, is such a glorious feat or virtue of man that without it God cannot regard a person as righteous, nor declare him righteous, and that, although by itself faith would not be sufficient, still God, from goodness and grace, will regard it as a sufficient accomplishment on the part of man, and credit man with it? Never. The reason is this: because, in the first place, righteousness and salvation has already been acquired for all men; because, in the second place, God has deposited these highest treasures for all men in His Word, namely, in the audible and the visible Word, and wishes to offer, give, and seal these highest treasures to all men only by means of the audible and visible Word; and hence, because, in the third place, faith is the only means for obtaining the blessings promised in the Word. Hence the Apology of the Augsburg Confession declares: 'Remission of sins is something promised for Christ's sake. Therefore, it cannot be received except by faith alone. For the promise cannot be received except by faith alone. Rom. 4, 16: "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end that the promise might be sure."' (p. 102, § 84.)

"Now, according to this statement faith cannot hold the

same relation to election that it does to justification. For election is not, like the righteousness of Christ, something that has been acquired and lies ready for all men, and which all men must apprehend, appropriate, and become partakers of by faith. On the contrary, according to Scripture, election is a decree which relates only to *few*, if these are compared with the reprobate; for 'many are called,' says the Lord, 'but few are chosen.' Accordingly, *Sebastian Schmidt* says quite correctly: '*Nor does faith apprehend the blessing of predestination in the same manner as it apprehends the blessing of justification, etc., viz., in order that the believer may appropriate predestination just as by faith he apprehends his justification; but from his predestination he draws comfort and strength for his faith, and is enabled to say with the apostle: "If God be for us, who can be against us?"*' (*Aphoris. theol.*, p. 295.)¹⁴ What, then, can be the sense of the statement that election has taken place solely *in view of faith*? Since faith does not apprehend election as it does justification; since faith, in the business of election, is not, like in the business of justification, the receiving organ or the hand which appropriates an election that has been acquired for all men and lies ready for all men; since faith cannot make out of an objective and universal election a subjective and personal election, just as it makes out of the objective and universal justification a subjective and personal one,¹⁵ cannot, I say, make an election

14) "Musaeus reports that Aegidius Hunnius had claimed faith to be the *cause* of predestination. When several Lutheran theologians objected to this teaching, claiming that in that case faith would have to be something *meritorious*, Aegidius Hunnius declared that he had meant to say that faith is the *instrumental* cause of election, just as of justification. However, Musaeus adds that even this statement is difficult to grasp ('etwas hart laute'), and that Huber and Tossanus had interpreted this statement to mean that, according to Hunnius, our faith 'apprehends our predestination.' For this reason other Lutheran theologians '*hesitated to adopt*' this terminology. (See Calov's *Hist. syncretismi*, pp. 1041 to 1046.)"

15) "To teach a twofold election, an objective and a subjective one, is Huberianism."

that is available for all to become the actual election of an individual, just as it causes the justification which has been acquired for all, and is available for all:—what, then, must be the office and nature of faith in the decree of election, if election is to have taken place only *in view of faith*? No other view remains but this, that faith is a *condition*, to be fulfilled by man, upon which, hence, a *work* on account of which he alone was elected.¹⁶⁾ In other words, faith which *precedes subjective justification* is necessary only in so far as it apprehends and appropriates the *bonum justificum*, the merit of Christ and the objective justification, which has been acquired for all men. Now, faith does not apprehend and appropriate the *election of grace* as a universal blessing. Hence, while faith is ever so necessary for subjective justification and salvation, it is not necessary *as something that must precede election*. Again, in so far as faith does *not* apprehend the objective justification which has been acquired for all men, with a view of appropriating it, but represents a quality in man, it is a good *work* which does not justify. Now, faith does *not* apprehend an objective election that has been acquired for all men, in order to make it its own. Hence, if faith must necessarily *precede election*, it must do so as a necessary quality in man, as a good *work*. And thus, by the teaching that *election* unto salvation has taken place *in view of faith*, if it is consistently applied, the entire doctrine of justification by faith alone as the receiving organ is overthrown. It is, therefore, in vain for those who wish to hold fast the teaching of ‘in view of faith’ at any price to try to repel the charge that in synergistic-pelagian fashion they are destroying the teaching of ‘by grace alone’ and are forced to ascribe to man a cooperation in his own salvation, by appealing to the fact that according to Scrip-

16) “Hence, *Selnecker*, one of the authors of the Form of Concord, returns to the question: ‘Is foreseen *faith* the cause of election?’ this answer: ‘If foreseen faith were our *achievement*, our *quality* and *virtue*, the question would be admissible.’ (See the complete answer in *Lehre und Wehre*, 1880, p. 69.)”

ture faith is necessary also for justification, and that, as something that precedes justification, and yet by such teaching justification by grace alone is not destroyed, nor is there a cooperation of man toward his justification and salvation declared by such teaching. For this whole argument rests on a misconception: on the identification of the relation of faith to election with the relation of faith to justification, while in truth the relation of faith to the one act of God is entirely different from its relation to the other. As regards justification, faith is merely the receiving organ, while in its relation to election faith cannot be the receiving organ, hence must be necessary on the part of man as a quality, act, work, or achievement, and, on the part of God, as the cause moving Him to elect. It is useless in this matter to appeal to great men, for 'men of high degree are a lie,' Ps. 62, 10, and cannot change the laws of logic, though we do not deny that a certain error may necessarily result from a certain assertion, and yet the person making the assertion may be far from actually cherishing the error.

"How now? some one may object, is faith, then, to be entirely excluded from the decree of election? Does it not follow by necessity from your teaching that God may also have elected a person who remains an unbeliever?—We reply: Far from it. We, too, believe, teach, and confess that God has elected no one who does not become a believer and does not abide in faith unto the end. True, we do not teach, and in obedience to the Scriptures and Confessions we cannot teach, that God has elected any person *in view of* faith. But we *teach*, and are forced by the Scriptures and Confessions to teach, that God has chosen His elect, not only to save-them, but also to save *by faith alone*, and for this very reason He has chosen them with a view to create and preserve faith in them by the means of grace. We are well aware, and we believe and quite readily admit, that the merit of Christ does not justify nor save a person, unless the person apprehends the merit of Christ by

faith.¹⁷⁾ But any person who denies that the merit of Christ can be a cause why God gives saving faith to one is forced to deny likewise, either that God gives saving faith to any one, or to claim that God gives this faith only to such as have merited this gift of Him, or that man creates his own faith. Finally, we admit with all our heart that God is willing to give faith to all men, and that faith is not obtained only by those who maliciously and obstinately resist the operations of grace. Nevertheless, we maintain on the ground of God's Word and the Confessions that faith is a gift of God, without the co-operation of man, as the Form of Concord distinctly states when it says: *'Trahit Deus hominem, quem convertere decrevit.'* (p. 603, § 60.)

"However, some one objects, is it not an incontrovertible principle that whatever God does in time, and in whatever manner He does it, that He has decreed to do, and in that exact manner He has decreed to do it, in eternity? No doubt, this is correct. But if our objector proceeds to argue: Now, God justifies and saves in time only such a person as believes with his heart and abides in faith unto the end, must not God, then, have chosen the elect *in view of faith*? We reply: By no means. Why? Simply because God does not graciously justify and save a person in time *in view of* his faith, but *by* his faith as the only receiving organ. In like manner a charitably disposed rich man from his goodness makes a poor man rich and happy, not in view of, but by the latter's acceptance of, the rich man's gift. Hence, the assertion that God must in eternity have elected persons to justification and salvation only in view of their faith, because He justifies and saves them in time only in view of their faith, is plainly a begging of the question; for it is an attempt to use that as a proof which remains to be proved. The correct conclusion on the basis of the aforementioned postulate would rather be this: Since God

17) "It is self-evident that we reprobate the statement that the merit of Christ is of no use to a person without faith."

in time justifies and saves men solely by grace, for the sake of the merit of Christ through faith, God must in eternity have decreed to justify and save men solely by grace, for the sake of the merit of Christ, through faith. And this is indeed unquestionably true.

“Again, some one objects, if we teach that predestination did not take place in view of faith, hence that men were elected by the mercy of God alone and for the sake of Christ’s merit, and not on account of anything that God foresaw in man,—do we not land in *absolute predestination*? Since we have already replied to this objection in the October issue of this periodical, we beg leave to refer to that article now. We would only urge two additional points. The first is this: The cry: That is absolute predestination! always makes a strong impression on the minds of well-disposed people who are not sharp thinkers. However, let those who, by raising this cry, seek to put the pure teaching of the Bible under suspicion beware lest they practice the cunning of the Calvinists who had first, in an arbitrary manner, given a definition of the term ‘sacrament,’ and then proceeded, on the basis of this arbitrary definition, to fight the doctrine of Scripture and of universal Christendom regarding Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. — The second point that we wish to urge is this: When infants, despite the fact that God gives them their faith while they are, as it were, sleeping, are not saved by virtue of an absolute decree, it is foolish that God does this in the case of adults because to them, too, God gives faith without their cooperation. If one were to contend that infants dying soon after being baptized are saved indeed by reason of their absolute predestination, but not adults, it would be still more foolish to see a danger to the universal gracious will of God in a universal, but not in a particular predestination that is presumably absolute, and hence to reject the latter.

“In conclusion, some one may object: Do not nearly all the dogmaticians of our Church since the days of Aegidius Hunnius teach an election *intuitu fidei*? — Lack of space for-

bids us at present to exhaustively state our opinion on this matter, and we reserve to do this in a later article.¹⁸⁾ However, even now we should like to recall two facts that have a bearing on this matter: one is the old, tried, and true saying: '*Duo cum dicunt idem, non est idem*'; the other is the word of the Lord: 'One is your master, even Christ.' And the latter statement surely applies not only to the living, but also to those already departed."¹⁹⁾

In the same year in which the above article was written, Dr. Walther read the doctrinal paper, and led the doctrinal discussion, at the convention of the Western District (Walther's District) of the Missouri Synod. The paper had grown out of just such charges as Dr. Keyser has raised against Dr. Pieper's book. It is apologetic from beginning to end. Walther's Fourth Thesis reads: "That doctrine of election (that election is a cause of salvation, hence of faith, and that it is not universal but particular) does not obscure nor weaken, but rather illumines and confirms, the doctrine of *justification and salvation by faith alone*."

Walther starts his elaboration of this thesis with an appeal to these words of the Form of Concord: "The mystery of predestination revealed to us in God's Word . . . is a very useful, salutary, consolatory doctrine; *for it establishes very effectually the article that we are justified and saved without all works and merits of ours, purely out of grace, alone for Christ's sake.*" (p. 713, § 43.) Next, he cites Luther's comment on Matt. 5, 16: "To rightly teach and confess Christ is not possible without faith. As St. Paul says, 1 Cor. 12, 3: 'No man can

18) Walther had, however, when he wrote this, issued a series of dogmatico-historical articles on the relation of faith to election. (*L. u. W.* 1880, pp. 42. 65. 97. 129. 161.) He has offered further information on this subject in the series of articles entitled: "The Synergistic-Pelagian Doctrine of Election." (*L. u. W.* 1881, pp. 161. 225. 289. 353, 401.)

19) Along the same lines, and very much in the same terms, Walther argues a year later that there is no conflict between teaching justification by, and election unto, faith, nor that the latter doctrine overshadows in importance the former. (See *L. u. W.* 1881, pp. 354 ff.)

say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost.' For no false Christian nor sectarian can understand this doctrine," etc.²⁰⁾ And now Walther proceeds to say: "This is of the highest importance. Yea, all depends on our preaching in such a manner that our hearers may learn that they are naught and can accomplish nothing, while Christ is all and does everything. This is the grand summation, the pure and true teaching of justification and salvation alone by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ. Whoever propounds justification in such a manner as to lead men to trust in their own work, miserably perverts this doctrine, and has, spite of all his talk about faith and divine grace, taken the kernel out of the saving doctrine.

"It is just the most zealous preachers who err in this respect. Fearful lest their parishioners be lost, they are determined by all means to prevent their hearers from becoming secure, from getting into the false notions begotten of mere intellectual belief. Accordingly, they surround divine grace with so many provisos and conceal the Lord Jesus from poor sinners to such a degree that the latter never attain to grace and cannot behold the Lord Jesus in all His glory. The preacher has succeeded in filling his people with fear and anxiety as to whether they can be saved, and put them into a state of perpetual doubt, but they are not joyful and zealous unto good works because they are never assured of their state of grace and salvation. For if a person does not know that God already has opened heaven and given everlasting life to him, he will never be zealous unto all good works, but will all his life remain a wretched slave to the Law. Only occasionally a so-called good work can be wrung from him, while we demand anything from a person who knows: Heaven is mine, the Lord Jesus is mine, I may die any moment and be saved! and he will do it, if he is aware that love demands that he do it.

"Why is it that just in our Synod there is such willing-

20) See this citation on p. 146.

ness to help persons in distress? There is no end of begging letters. Often we are greatly perplexed whether to lay them before our congregations. We imagine our people will grow angry at us because of this incessant begging. Lo, and behold! we have hardly related the case and there is a shower of charity-gifts descending. The reason is, because God has given us the grace to zealously urge and eloquently proclaim, though in much weakness, the pure doctrine of justification by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. True, we have made but a feeble beginning in this. If Luther had one reason for declaring that he had only had a slight foretaste of this doctrine, there are a thousand reasons why we should say the same. However, this *dictum* of Luther: So preach that people learn that they are naught and Christ is all, is a veritable beacon light to us.

"In order, then, to teach the doctrine of election correctly, I must teach it so as to harmonize it with the aforementioned saying of Luther. The doctrine of election becomes false as soon as something is ascribed to man that has caused God to elect him. Care is indeed taken nowadays not to ascribe to man some work of merit; for the doctrine of salvation by works has become too malodorous. But it is false, too, to represent man's faith as a cause moving God to elect a person.

"No, till our dying day we shall gladly confess: There is nothing in man that has caused God to save him, but the only thing that has moved Him to do this is His own grace and the merit of Christ. On the other hand, we are just as decided in professing that whoever is lost must not blame God, but himself."

The next remark of Walther differentiates most clearly and emphatically between the fundamental character and the central position in the body of Christian teaching, of the dogma of election and that of justification.

"It is a horrible misrepresentation of our teaching to say: The Missourians have begun to push the doctrine of justification in the background, behind election. The truth is that it is a

rare occurrence among us to hear a sermon on election. Justly so; for election is not a doctrine that should be urged with such emphasis as other doctrines. It is not for the purpose of laying a foundation, but a doctrine that conveys a special comfort to us after we have been started on our way to heaven. Just those points, moreover, in which the doctrine of election coincides with the doctrine of justification are to us the most precious, comforting, and endearing points. It is these points that we urge every time we speak of election. We say to our hearers: Dear people, you wish to be saved. Do not despair; God asks nothing of you. He deals with you only by His grace. Come, ye that thirst, and drink; come, ye that hunger, and eat. Do not offer money; you are to be saved without money and without price. Salvation in Christ Jesus is for the whole world. Do not, like the men of this world, pass by this salvation; do not follow after the lusts of the world, but do as the children of God have ever done: believe! You will not have your finger rapped if you reach for the grace offered you. That is what false prophets are doing; it is a characteristic of theirs to hear them say to those hungering for grace: This, that, and the other thing must first take place in your heart before you will be in a condition to lay hold of grace. Fact is, that any person who knows that he will be lost because of his sins is in a proper condition to lay hold of the grace offered him by the Gospel. We say to such a person: You cannot be too forward in laying hold of grace."

After citing the statement in the Form of Concord to which reference has been made several times in this article (p. 713, §43), Walther closes his remarks on his thesis as follows: "There is no doctrine of Holy Writ which more confirms, illumines, and explains to us the doctrine of justification than the doctrine of election. For if it is true that those who are saved have in eternity been appointed to salvation, and that God has at the same time ordained that He will convert them, bring them to faith, and keep them in faith unto the end, despite the fact that He has beheld naught that

is good in them,—is there anything that can serve more strongly to confirm the doctrine of justification than the above teaching? For if God has decreed in eternity that we shall be saved, He must have acted from His own free grace, and we have no reason for boasting and saying: Ah! but I have been at considerable expense in getting to heaven. No! [the opposite is true:] we have caused the *Lord* labor, and He has had to bear the expense of our salvation, by causing the blood of the Son of God to be shed for us. To Him we must ascribe all honor, all glory.”²¹⁾

In his annotated edition of Baier's *Compend of Positive Theology*, which was published in 1879, and for several generations was the text-book in dogmatics at Concordia Seminary, Walther has explained the relative importance of the doctrines of justification and election, and their relation to one another, in the same manner as in the articles which we have reproduced.²²⁾

In Dr. Keyser's treatise we have been struck at several places with expressions of evident candor. Moreover, the first exception which Dr. Keyser registers against Dr. Pieper's book is of such nature that it must, *prima facie*, appeal to every Lutheran. It reveals a sound Lutheran sensorium as regards the cardinal doctrine of the Christian religion.

We believe that Dr. Keyser's exception is utterly misconceived, and from a careful reexamination of Dr. Pieper's book, with a view to discover the possible cause for Dr. Keyser's exception, we are prepared to say that Dr. Keyser has been led to a hasty and sweeping statement by a rather superficial examination of what Dr. Pieper says regarding faith, its origin, and its overshadowing importance at every point of the saving

21) Report of the 23d Convention of the Western District at Concordia, Mo., Oct. 13—19, 1880; pp. 63—65.

22) See Prolegomena, §§ 30—33, on “articuli fundamentales primarii et secundarii,” pp. 52—64; “de justificatione,” III a, § 1, pp. 240—246; “de praedestinatione,” III b, § 1, pp. 531—535.

doctrine. A second and third perusal of what is offered in Dr. Pieper's treatise, and a study of what Missourians have said elsewhere regarding justification ever since the predestinarian controversy began, we are fain to believe, would lead to a revision of Dr. Keyser's opinion. We should rejoice exceedingly if this charge, so often refuted by our side in the past, would be withdrawn with the same frankness that marks other utterances in Dr. Keyser's book.

We are persuaded, however, that, while this exception stands first in Dr. Keyser's critique, and is, by itself, of the greatest import, it does not express the chief trouble that Dr. Keyser has found with the book which he has reviewed. We wish to take up his other exceptions in our next issue, and, if possible, disabuse Dr. Keyser's mind of certain views regarding free will. D.
