

THEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY.

VOL. XVIII.

JULY, 1914.

No. 3.

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.

MATERIALS FOR THE CATECHIST.

Under this heading we begin to publish, in answer to frequent requests, outlines on the Catechism of the Missouri Synod, with explanatory remarks and annotations, and, in some cases, *excursus* on a doctrinal matter or a disputed point in the Catechism. These articles are designed, partly for the information, partly for the direct guidance, of the catechist in his practical work, and the style of particular sections is, therefore, varied accordingly. The author's aim, moreover, in offering these suggestions on the treatment of the Catechism is to stimulate, not to render superfluous, private and more exhaustive study. Hence, there is frequently offered material that is of no use in the catechisation, but simply serves to increase the catechist's stock of knowledge or render his power of observation more keen, while the references invite to collateral reading.

THE INTRODUCTION.

Qu. 1—6.

The first six questions of that part of our book which we are now studying are called "the introduction" to all that follows, because they make us acquainted with the general character of this entire book. The Introduction tells us two things:

1. What sort of a book Dr. Luther's Small Catechism is, Qu. 1—3, and 6;
2. From which other book Dr. Luther got all that he put into the Small Catechism, Qu. 4. 5.

FIRST OUTLINE.

THE SMALL CATECHISM OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER.

Qu. 1—3, and 6.

I. The word "catechism," Qu. 1.

1. It denotes "a book." Persons teaching such a book are called catechists; persons learning it, catechumens.

2. It denotes "a book of instruction." Instruction means teaching, or imparting knowledge. The Catechism is not for pastime, like a book of riddles. It is a serious book for earnest study. It makes men wise.

3. It denotes "a book of instruction composed in questions and answers." It is not like a reader, which is made up of selections for reciting, nor like a story-book, which contains a running story. Nor is it like a hymn-book, made up of verses and stanzas.

The questions in this book state *what we should desire to know*; the answers, *what we can know*. The question is like a wish; the answer, like the fulfillment of the wish. To understand the answer, one must pay good attention to the question.

Teaching by means of questions and answers is called "catechising." This is an old way of teaching. Our Lord, when twelve years old, catechised, and was catechised, in the temple at Jerusalem, Luke 2, 46.¹)

1) Catechism is derived from *κατά*, "down from," and *ἠχέω*, "to sound." The idea of authority is contained in the word. The young, or immature, catechumens receive instruction from some one superior to them, by being catechised. It is not necessarily the official dignity of the catechist, duly appointed by the Church, that is indicated by *κατηχεῖν*, but rather the highest moral authority which exists in the teaching of spiritual things, God and His Word. The message imparted by catechising comes down from heaven; the human catechist is its mouth-piece.—The popular explanation of the origin of the word "catechism" with which one meets occasionally, takes *κατά* in the sense of "again," and *κατηχεῖν* in the sense of "resound," "sound back," the answer being viewed as the echo of the question. This derivation is grammatically possible, but historically untenable.—In the New Testament *κατηχεῖν* denotes "communicating information," Acts 21, 21. 24, or "giving religious instruction," Luke 1, 4; Acts 18, 25; Rom. 2, 18; 1 Cor. 14, 19; Gal. 6, 6. In every one of these instances it is at least possible that the information or instruction was conveyed by questions and answers.

II. *The Lutheran Catechism*, Qu. 2.

A. We mean by this, first, the Catechism of Dr. Luther.²⁾

1. The Catechism of Luther which we are now studying was written in 1529. In the "Preface," pp. 3—7 in our book, Dr. Luther tells

a) Why he wrote the Small Catechism, §§ 1—3;

b) How the Small Catechism should be learned, *viz.*, first, the text, §§ 4. 5; secondly, the meaning, § 7;³⁾ lastly, the fuller explanation in the Larger Catechism, § 8;

c) Why it is the duty of parents and persons in authority to have children, and men in general, learn the Catechism, § 10;

d) How to deal with persons who refuse to learn the Catechism and to live accordingly, §§ 6. 10—12.⁴⁾

2) Dr. Martin Luther was born November 10, 1483, at Eisleben, in Germany. He died at the same place, February 18, 1546. The greater part of his life was spent at Wittenberg, where he was the foremost teacher at the University. He is called "Doctor," namely, Doctor of Divinity, or Doctor of Theology, because he had been appointed to teach the Holy Scriptures, and had proved himself very able as a teacher of God's Word. He received the title of "Doctor" from the Roman Catholic Church, October 18, 1513. This Church afterwards wanted to forbid Luther to teach the Scriptures.—Dr. Luther is also called "the Reformer," because he tried to correct many things that were wrong in the Roman Catholic Church, for which attempt he was put out of that Church.

3) The pedagogical question whether catechumens should be made to memorize material which they do not understand evidently has not troubled Luther. He wants the text of the Catechism learned first, and then the meaning explained. The modern fear of cramming the mind of young catechumens with undigested matter is, at best, exaggerated. Children, as a rule, understand more than their seniors anticipate, or give them credit for. A certain pedagogy seems to regard a child as a sort of human kitten or puppy out of which an intelligent human being must first be evolved by the psychological genius of the teacher. Moreover, the very fact that the catechumen, while memorizing the text, feels that he does not understand all, stimulates his interest in the explanation which he knows will follow. But in very many cases the hue and cry which is raised about "mechanical memorizing," and that sort of thing, flows from contempt of the matter to be memorized. See "*Der Rote Katechismus*" of the Saxon Teachers' Alliance, which has eliminated nearly every Biblical thought and reference from the matter to be memorized.

4) The stern language of Luther, especially in § 6, seems an offense against the principle of religious liberty. Expulsion from home and expatriation are advocated by Luther for all who refuse to learn, and live

by, the Catechism. Now, Luther makes his meaning plain enough in the words that follow the offensive remark, and in § 11. He does not want men to be coerced into believing this or that. He scorns the idea of compulsion in religion, and advocates moral suasion. He will not permit the domain of man's conscience to be invaded by force any other than that of Him who endowed man with a conscience, and to whom the conscience of man is ultimately answerable for all his acts. But there is a practical side to the public exercise of religion, which touches the temporal well-being of the organized society of men. The state, itself non-religious, still has an interest in the religion of its subjects. Evil practices and tendencies which are directed against the practice of religion, even when they themselves might be advocated under the name of religion, may prove harmful to that civil righteousness which must be a matter of serious concern to every nation and its government. It is for this reason only that Luther wants scoffers and blasphemers to be dealt with as enemies to the public weal and order. Moreover, in national churches, as those of Luther's time still were, such a demand was doubly just.—The principle of the separation of Church and State has been expanded since the days of Luther, but its modern application is by no means always wise. Liberty is too often interpreted to mean license, and religious liberty is taken to mean that we must allow a person to do anything which he claims to be a religious duty or principle. This is plainly unjust. Righteousness must not be suffered to languish in order that a certain kind of "liberty" may flourish. A citizen of the United States of America, *e. g.*, need not be a Christian at all to be moved with indignation, as was Luther, when observing the laxity which has invaded our public morals, and the supineness of those in authority over and against these evils. It was therefore sound public policy when some of our American States spread on their statutes *civil* ordinances forbidding blasphemy, lewd pastimes, etc., and making them offenses punishable by the State; or when the State of Texas, on *political* grounds declared Roman Catholics ineligible to public offices; or when the American Mormons were told that the practice of polygamy would be suppressed by legal force; or when the American Anarchists were placed in jail for putting their "honest convictions" into practice in the Haymarket Riot at Chicago. American Catholics are, for the same reason, justly denounced as enemies to the safety of the commonwealth, because they advocate as part of their creed the temporal supremacy of the Roman Pope.—What Luther counsels in § 6 is the suppression of offensive conditions in the home or community, the unrestrained practice of which must cause disastrous effects to the religion of simple, plain people. For the same reason he advocated drastic measures against Jewish usurers, political spies and agitators, against the marauding peasants, and against the profligate and anarchistic Anabaptists. All this was sound common sense of a good citizen. At the same time it was sound theology, and a part of the duty which a public teacher of Christianity had to dis-

charge toward his clients. As a champion, however, of the true religious liberty Luther was really far ahead of his times. In his commentary on Deut. 18, 19, he says: "By this statement: 'Whosoever will not hearken unto My words, etc., I will require it of him,' He abolishes the entire civil government which has hitherto been taught in the law of Moses; for He had appointed judges, and given them the sword, that they should teach and maintain the law of Moses. But in this passage, where He ordains a new word, He appoints no judge, no sword, but threatens that He will Himself be the person to execute vengeance, as He says also in the Prophet Micah, chap. 5, 15: 'I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard.' (Luther has translated the last clause: 'die nicht gehorchen wollen.') For since this is the preaching unto life and salvation, nobody is to be coerced by human force to embrace the same, because God demands a willing heart, which believes. But since this cannot be rendered, nor exacted, by human power, we must leave those who will not believe to be judged by God alone, since He has Himself already passed sentence on them when He says (John 3, 18): 'He that believeth not is condemned already,' and in the passage before us: 'I will require it of him.'" (III, 1530.) To the Burgomaster, City Council, and Citizens of Prague Luther wrote, March 21, 1521: "We must not coerce any person into believing, but must leave room to the Holy Ghost to operate wherever He pleases, and give Him the honor." (X, 1598.) In his reply to certain questions which had been submitted to him by Queen Anne of Bohemia and Queen Mary of Hungary, Luther says: "Some one might say: No one ought to be coerced into believing; yet our princes have compelled the monks to leave the cloisters. I answer: No one must be coerced to believe or embrace our teaching; nor has any one been thus coerced heretofore; we have only checked and prevented blasphemy that was directed against our teaching, as I have shown in the foregoing. For it is one thing to force men to embrace a certain teaching, and quite another, not to suffer the teaching to be traduced." (XIX, 1726.) In his exposition of Ps. 14, 7, Luther lays stress on the fact that the help of God's people comes "out of Zion," that is, from the Lord Christ Himself, and says: "Therefore the fury of some Christians deserves to be condemned—if we may call them Christians at all—who think that they are doing God a service by persecuting the Jews in the most hateful manner, by thinking all manner of evil of them, and with proud contempt railing at them in their deplorable misfortune. The example of this text and of Paul in Rom. 9, 1, rather teaches us to be sorry for them and pity them with our whole heart, and to never cease praying for them." (IV, 928.) In his "Exhortation to Peace, in answer to the Twelve Articles of the Peasants" in Suabia, which Luther in 1525 addressed to the princes and magistrates of Germany, Luther urges that the peasants' demand be granted, *viz.*, that they be permitted to elect their own pastors, though it might be reasonably feared that they would elect men who would not preach them the Gospel. He says: "The government cannot and must not do anything to oppose

2. Luther wrote two catechisms; ours is called the Small Catechism, the other the Large Catechism. The Large explains the Small. After one has learned the Small Catechism, he should learn the Large also.⁵⁾

3. Luther has indicated in the Catechism itself how and by whom he desires to see this book used.

a) He wrote it, first, "for pastors and preachers." (See title on p. 2.) These, and their assistants, *e. g.*, teachers in Christian

this demand. Yea, the government must not interpose here, dictating to any one what he is to teach or believe, whether it be the Gospel or lies. It is sufficient if the government checks the teaching of revolution and unrest." (XVI, 50.) In a letter to the Elector, August 26, 1530, Luther replies to the shrewd argument of certain papists, who wanted the Elector's consent for introducing the private mass of the Roman Church in the Elector's country. He says: "As regards their argument that the Prince's authority does not go so far as to empower him to forbid this, we answer: We know quite well that the office of a prince and the office of a preacher are not the same thing, and that it does not behoove a prince to do this. But the question before us now is, whether a prince, as Christian, may give his consent in this matter, and the question is not at all whether he is acting as a prince. It is one thing for a prince to preach, and another, for him to consent to a (certain kind of) preaching. Not the prince, but Scripture is to prohibit private masses. It rests with the prince to side with the Scriptures or not; nobody on earth forces him to do so." (XVI, 1416.) See also Luther's treatise of 1523: "On Civil Magistrates; to What Extent Do We Owe Them Obedience?" X, 374 ff.; Luther Waring, "The Political Theories of Martin Luther," chap. IX: "Limits of the State," p. 232 f.; and "Luther and Liberty," a symposium of expressions on this subject taken from non-Lutheran authors, by Rev. C. Drewes. THEOL. QUARTERLY XIII, 89 ff.

5) A good translation by Prof. J. N. Lenker, D. D., has been published by the Luther Press, Minneapolis, Minn., 1908; 188 pages; price, 40 cts. — Historical investigation has now settled the question which of Luther's two Catechisms was the earlier product. The Small Catechism was published in chart form as follows: Parts I—III in January, 1529, Parts IV—V in March. The Larger Catechism was published in April, and the Small Catechism appeared in book form in May, 1529. The *editio princeps* of the Small Catechism has not been discovered. The earliest edition known is the third, also of the year 1529. The last edition, which Luther himself prepared, is of 1542. Our text-book follows this edition. The three questions on the Office of the Keys were embodied in an edition printed at Nuremberg. Their authors are two provosts of that city. The "Christian Questions" were prepared by Luther's lifelong friend, Johann Lange of Erfurt. They grew out of Luther's "Adhortatio ad Sacramentum," on Maundy Thursday, 1529.

schools and Sunday-schools, are to be guided by this book in the instruction which they must impart to their catechumens. The Catechism of Luther is a book that is *to be used in the church and at school*.

b) He wrote it, secondly, to show "the head of a family what he should teach in all simplicity to his household." (See the headings of each of the six chief parts of the Catechism, pp. 2. 13. 15. 19. 22. 26, and of the little prayer-book, p. 28.) For this reason Luther also added a part which he called "Table of Duties," by which he wishes to remind persons of every rank, station, and occupation in life of the duties which they owe God and their fellow-men in their respective calling. The Catechism of Luther is, therefore, a family-book, *to be used at home*, by father, mother, children, and servants.

c) Luther has written at the very head of his Small Catechism a Greek word, "Enchiridion" (p. 2), which means "handbook." He desires this book, not only *to be in everybody's hand*, but also that everybody should *have it ready at hand*, and use it regularly. Every one should often review the Catechism for himself; the prayer-book, pp. 28—30, should be used daily, and the "Christian Questions," pp. 36—40, whenever we are about to go to communion. Let us remember, however, that while Luther could put this Catechism into our *hands*, and while our parents and teachers may possibly succeed in putting it into our *heads*, God alone can put it into our *hearts*, where it chiefly belongs. We should, therefore, pray God every time we take up our Catechism to bless our study of it.

B. When we speak of *our* Lutheran Catechism, we mean this entire book which we are studying. Luther's Small Catechism is only a part of this book, pp. 1—40. The remainder, pp. 41—152, is

1. Called "A Short Exposition of Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism." Exposition means explanation. This second part of our book wants to make us understand what Dr. Luther says in the Small Catechism. All that is in the Exposition is also in the Small Catechism, part for part, section for section, sentence for sentence, word for word, and besides that, there is an explanation of all. The explanation will show us how true and precious everything is that is in the Small Catechism, and what a great little book the Small Catechism really is.

2. The "Exposition" is not by Dr. Luther, but was prepared by order of our Lutheran Synod of Missouri. Dr. Schwan, who was at that time the President of our Synod, prepared the draft for the

German text, and other members of our Synod revised it until it received the form from which our English translation was made. It was published by Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo., in 1899.

III. *The Contents of the Lutheran Catechism*, Qu. 3. 6.

1. It contains "*doctrine*," *i. e.*, teachings. If men were not taught these, they would never know them. If men do not learn these teachings, they may learn many other things and become wise in a worldly way, but they are untaught and uneducated in the most important things that men can be taught, and suffer a great damage here in time and hereafter in eternity, as we shall see during the progress of our study of this book.

2. It contains "*Christian doctrine*," *i. e.*, such teachings as are taught by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and concerning Him, in the Church that is founded on His teaching and work, and is named after Him.

3. It contains "*the chief parts of the Christian doctrine*." Christian doctrine embraces more details than those given in the Catechism, but not any more essential teachings. The Catechism presents all the leading points of Christian doctrine in a nutshell, and helps one to see them all at a glance and to remember them readily. For this reason the Catechism is specially useful and necessary for young Christians. It may be said that the Catechism is to young Christians what milk is to babes. But just as persons of every age use milk and need milk, Christians of every age need the Catechism. Dr. Luther was an old man when he wrote about certain people who imagined they had outgrown the need of the Catechism: "I am a doctor and a preacher, yea, every way as learned and experienced as all who have such presumption and security. Yet I do as a child who is being taught the Catechism. Every morning, and whenever I have time, I read and say, word for word, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Psalms, etc. And I must still read and study daily, and yet I cannot master it as I wish, but must remain, and that too gladly, a child and pupil of the Catechism." (Preface to the Large Catechism, § 7, p. 384 [Jacob's Ed.].)⁶

6) For other expressions of Luther on the same matter see his Works, St. L. Ed. III, 1734 (Luther declares that he will ever remain an abecedarian in the study of the Commandments); III, 1840; VIII, 34. 242. 724; V, 1137; III, 1813; XIII, 1854; XII, 1640; XXII, 18 f. (Luther recites the Catechism just like his little Johnny) 59.

This comparison of teaching Christian doctrine with milk we find also in Scripture, 1 Pet. 2, 2. Since our Catechism is entirely taken from "the sincere Word of God," we may call it "milk for new-born babes," or young Christians.⁷⁾ If we "desire" this milk, *i. e.*, are eager to learn the Word of God and the Catechism that was taken from it, we shall "grow thereby"; we shall become stronger and better informed Christians than we were at first.

4. The "chief parts of the Christian doctrine" are: 1. the Ten Commandments; 2. the Creed; 3. the Lord's Prayer; 4. the Sacrament of Holy Baptism; 5. the Office of the Keys and Confession; 6. the Sacrament of the Altar.

7) The ἀργυρένητα βρέφη in 1 Pet. 2, 2, are the same persons whom the apostle, in chap. 1, 1, 2, addressed as elect, believing, sanctified Christians. All that they had become through the new birth, chap. 1, 23, and that not such a very long time ago. — Birth begins life, and life is sustained by food. Food is adapted to a person's age or condition. — λογικόν may be either reasonable (*L.*, "vernunftig") or verbal (*A. V.*, "of the Word"). In the former acceptation the milk is viewed as entering into the reason, mind, spirit of those who receive it; in the latter acceptation, as taking its origin from God's Word. Both renderings are made to agree thus: The food which Christians as such, especially neophytes of the Christian faith, must have is of a spiritual, not physical, kind, and it is furnished by, or drawn from, the Word. In Rom. 12, 1, *A. V.* translates λογικόν as Luther has translated this term in this text. — Paul uses the same metaphor in 1 Cor. 3, 1, 2, and the same metaphor together with plain expressions, Hebr. 5, 12; 6, 2. — "Sincere" is here used in its Old English, and original, meaning = unadulterated, uncorrupted (*sine cera*, without wax, as pure honey should be). It is the exact equivalent of Luther's "lauter." Food adulteration, especially of milk, is common, and now punished as a penitentiary crime by our Government. There is also teaching offered to Christians that has the appearance of milk, it is labeled "from the Bible"; but it is not food for Christians, because it is not the very Word of God, which alone is ἄδολον γάλα. Christian teachers do not supply adulterated milk, 2 Cor. 2, 17, and Christian pupils refuse to take it. But the pure milk of the Word — and only such is offered in Luther's Catechism — they desire. Ἐπιποθεῖν signifies craving, like hunger or thirst, that must be stilled. When this healthy desire for spiritual food is fulfilled, there is commensurate growth ἐν αὐτῷ, *viz.*, in the sincere milk of the Word, this having become the native element in which every new-born child of God attains to his spiritual maturity. No person can become "a perfect man in Christ," Eph. 4, 13, outside of the Word. This ἐν αὐτῷ becomes virtually δι' αὐτοῦ, because the power to grow is communicated by the Word with which a person becomes conversant, and while he is engaged upon its study; hence *L.*: "dadurch"; *A. V.*: "thereby."

The Lutheran Church thinks very highly of the Catechisms of Luther. It has called them "the Bible of the laity" (Preface to Form of Concord, § 5, p. 492). The Catechisms of Luther have been embodied in the confessional writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, which were gathered into one book, the Book of Concord, in 1580. These writings show what Lutherans really believe, and why. The Small Catechism, in particular, every Lutheran communicant is required to know. Many men have expressed their admiration and gratitude for Luther's Small Catechism.⁸⁾ D.

8) *Johann Mathesius*: "If Dr. Luther in the course of his life had achieved no other good than this, that he brought the two Catechisms again into our homes, schools, and churches, and taught men to say their prayer when sitting down to meat and rising from the table, and when retiring at night and rising in the morning, the whole world could never sufficiently thank or pay him for it." (Sixth Sermon on the *History of Dr. Martin Luther*, p. 59.) — *Johann Wigand*: "The well-known Catechism of Luther possesses all those qualities which would commend and adorn a book that is to be a guide to men: an experienced and excellent author, great, namely divine, subjects, pure truth, clear terms, skill in its order, brevity and vigor, an immense usefulness, and the approval of right thinking men." (*Oratio de causis, cur Catechismus Lutheri in scholis et ecclesiis retinendus.*) — *Conrad Porta*: "Though it may seem small and insignificant in appearance, still this Catechism comprises with admirable brevity the subject of our salvation in a more impressive manner than many large tomes that have been completely filled with intricate questions and silly and impious glosses; and that, to such an extent that all the gates of hell and all enemies and heretics combined shall not in the least prevail against it." (*Oratio continens adhortationem ad assiduam lectionem scriptorum Martini Lutheri, ultimi Eliae et prophetae Germaniae.*) — *Seckendorf*: "There is found in this little book both orthodox teaching and a spirit that is without equal in its class of writings. We leave it to the readers who are not stubbornly resisting the truth to investigate and judge for themselves. The explanation of the Apostles' Creed excels all that we have heretofore heard. Next, the brief and very impressive interpretation of the Lord's Prayer, suffices for refuting the slanders that Luther had foisted on the Church mere faith, *i. e.*, the mere profession of it, without sanctification of life, or an idea of the merit of Christ that is imputed to us." (*Hist. Lutheranismi*, lib. II, § 51, p. 145.) — *Ambrosius Wirth*: "Dr. Justus Jonas said: Dr. Luther's Catechism is a little booklet that can be purchased for six pence" (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, has issued a cent edi-