

THE

*J. Krauth*

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“Es sei denn, dass ich mit Zeugnissen der heiligen Schrift, oder mit öffentlichen, klaren, und hellen Gründen und Ursachen überwunden und überweiset werde, so kann und will ich nichts widerrufen.”—LUTHER.

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## ARTICLE VIII.

## GENERAL VIEW OF DIVINE WORSHIP AS HELD BY THE LUTHERAN CHURCH.\*

Translated from the German of Kliefoth, by Rev. B. M. Schmucker.

As early as 1523, before the appearance of the *Formula missae*, Luther published a small work "On the Order of Divine Worship," which commences with these words: "The form of divine worship which now generally prevails (the Catholic of the middle ages), has a noble christian origin, as has also the office of the ministry. But just as the office of the ministry has been perverted by priestly tyrants, so divine worship has been corrupted by hypocrites. And as we do not abolish the office of the ministry, but desire to place it again in its true position, so it is not our purpose to set aside divine worship, but to restore it to its ancient purity. Three great abuses have crept into public worship: the first, that God's word has been silenced in the church, and reading and singing alone are heard. This is the most pernicious abuse. The second, God's word having been silenced, so many wicked fables and lies have crept in, in the form of legends, hymns and sermons that it is lamentable to behold. The third, this worship has been performed as a service by which divine grace and salvation were merited, and hereby is faith trampled upon." These words, the first which were uttered within the Lutheran church concerning her public worship, fully express her principles, and that which follows here is merely a historical commentary on them.

The three abuses mentioned by Luther may be reduced to one, for the first two mentioned have their source in the third. The fundamental error and abuse of the Catholic church is this, that usurping the place of the only mediator between God and individual men, she disregarded the office of Christ, and substituted her own works and deeds for the work of Christ. The natural result of the influence of this fundamental error on divine worship was, that it became entirely transformed into a work of the congregation, and that no portion was allowed to remain, of which it could be said that in it God and his Son

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\* Th. Kliefoth. Die ursprüngliche Gottesdienstordnung in den deutschen Kirchen lutherischen Bekenntnisses, ihre Destruction und Reformation.

took part in the worship, in order to communicate himself and his gifts to the congregation. The Lord communicates himself to the world and to his people in his word and his sacraments; the influence of this fundamental error must be to lessen the prominence of both in public worship. It is an incorrect opinion, though frequently met with among protestants, that the entire public worship of the Catholic church is absorbed by the services of the mass; they have a great multitude of matins, vespers, horae, &c., in all of which no mass is held, but which claim to be really a ministering of the word. But it was an unavoidable result of their error, that the use of the divine word, the holy scriptures, was gradually abolished in their services, and that in them the church, more and more, from time to time, drew near to God with her hymns and prayers in her own words alone. The sacrament of the altar could not be set aside so easily as the scriptures, but is retained as the central fact in the mass. But while its outward form was retained, their fundamental error led them to give it a meaning directly the opposite of the truth. The Lord's Supper was no longer the place at which the Lord offered the fruits of his sacrificial death to his people, and they partook of them; but according to the Catholic view, the church by the hand of her priest produces the body and blood of the Lord, and lays them before God as a daily offering made by her for the redemption of the world. So that the Catholic church never draws nigh to God in her worship as receiving, as needing to learn and to be fed, but always prepared; and full of all good gifts of the Lord, she has nothing more to do in her public services, than simply to draw from the full treasury of her riches, her words and works, her praise and glory, thanksgiving and honor, and lay them before God. And even for each individual member, a personal appropriation is scarcely any longer necessary; for the public offering, although made only by the priest, is to be considered as the work of the entire church, in whose presentation every member of the church has part. It is only necessary that by baptism I be united to the church, that by keeping the ordinances established by the Catholic church for its members, I become incorporated in the church; thus united to the church, I have part in her works; but if I can perform works acceptable to God, then I have the favor of God; and I no longer need the continuance of the reconciling grace and gifts of God, e. g., the preaching of his word, which was, for this reason, generally omitted; nor have I need of subjective faith and personal sanctification, for their place is supplied by my objective relation to the church. It is this which gives rise to

the whole theory of the *opus operatum* benefit of the services of the sanctuary, prayers, masses, &c., even to absent and deceased members, with all its consequences, as private masses and masses for the dead. But this proud self-exaltation of the Catholic church tended directly to impoverish her in three respects: *First*, the necessary result was, that only the priest who read, sang, or consecrated, took any part in the worship, while the congregation, though represented by his labors, looked idly on. And inasmuch as the entire benefits of these works was secured by the mere performance of them, and they were not looked upon as instrumentalities by which divine grace was conveyed to the congregation, their number was so much increased that a dozen masses were read in one church at the same time; while one priest was hurrying to the close of his mass, another was just beginning, and a third was in the middle, and during this confusion of services, the congregation stood and—looked on. The priest reads, sings and prays, not for the people, but in their stead, in a foreign tongue, and drinks the Lord's blood for them all. *Second*, every vigorous productive energy must gradually die out in a church which had forsaken the living fountains of God's word, which did not even drink the Lord's blood for its spiritual nourishment, but as an offering for the world. No special effort to maintain the claims, in this respect, of a church in which one worshipped for all, was necessary, in order that every exhibition of free productiveness should be prohibited in the cultus, and every thing reduced to so mechanical a performance of forms, as, even granting the *opus operatum* theory, could scarcely be expected to have a sufficiently edifying influence on the church, as even to fit it for merely sacrificial worship. *Third*, the more the Catholic church withdrew from the gifts of the Lord in her worship, and sought to bring her own gifts, the more did she come, in the course of time, to abtrude her imperfect and sinful works in the places where the honor of the Lord dwelleth; she introduced her saints-days into the year of our Lord; she read legends instead of the appointed word of God; she invoked her saints, i. e., herself, instead of the triune God; her worship became an overgrown waste of her own works.

When the reformation arose in opposition to this confused mass of doctrinal and historic fictions, there were two modes of opposition possible. Objection could be entered to the Catholic form of worship, on the ground that it is a departure from the ancient form, it is traditional and impure, it is not apostolic, nor in accordance with the scriptures. This appeal to the tribunal of the scriptures alone, was the course adopted

by the Reformed church. She did not examine the Catholic form of worship, in order to learn what parts of it were not in doctrinal accordance with the teachings of scripture, but rejected everything which external historic proof did not show belonged to the times of the Apostles, or the earliest age of the church. And so thoroughly consistent was she; that in addition to other things, which will appear hereafter, she made but little use of the hymns of the church, restricting herself mainly to versifications of the Psalms.

The Lutheran church agrees with the Reformed in maintaining the principle of accordance with the scriptures, inasmuch as she considers only such things as pure and admissible by the church, which are not opposed to the scriptures, but approved by them. But in her rejection of that which she found provided, and in the establishment of her form of worship, she was not satisfied with an abstract immediate accordance with scripture established by external historical proof, but decided truth and error by a doctrinal standard. The principal passage in which this view is set forth with symbolic authority, is the well known one found in the Apology for the Augsburg Confession, article "of the mass," "what is a sacrifice."<sup>1</sup>

In this passage Melancthon combats the fundamental error of the Catholic cultus, according to which it is, in all its parts, a work of the church, a sacrifice which she brings before the Lord, and he presents the following in opposition to it. Divine worship consists of two distinct elements: *the sacramental* and *the sacrificial*. We characterize as *sacramental*, every ceremony or act in worship, in which God bestows upon us the blessing which his promise has connected with that ceremony, as for instance baptism, which is not an offering which we lay before God, but an ordinance in which God baptizes us, and bestows on us forgiveness of sin, according to his promise. We characterize as *sacrificial*, every ceremony or service which we offer unto God as a tribute to his glory. The sacrificial, however, may be distinguished as of two kinds: *the propitiatory sacrifice*, which atones for guilt and punishment, and secures reconciliation with God, and forgiveness of sins for mankind; and the *sacrifice of thanksgiving*, which does not merit the forgiveness of sin, but which is offered unto God by those whom he has redeemed, in gratitude for that and all his other blessings. A propitiatory sacrifice, in the christian sense, cannot be made by man, but the only propitiatory sacrifice, made

<sup>1</sup> Müller, Symbol. Bücher. p. 251.

once for all, is the death of Christ (Heb. 10: 4-10). There remain, therefore, for us, only sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving; and the entire divine worship divides itself into the sacramental part, to which belong the word of God, baptism, and the Lord's Supper, and the sacrificial, which includes the sermon, faith, prayer, praise, confession, and even in a wider sense, the sufferings and the entire christian life of believers. This distinction, which should never be overlooked, is set at nought by the Catholics, for they suppress God's word, they do not even allow the Lord's Supper to retain its sacramental character, according to which God allows us to partake of the fruits of the propitiatory sacrifice made by his Son, but they make of it a propitiatory sacrifice which they themselves offer, and so transform their entire divine worship, that even those parts which in their nature are sacramental, are made to become sacrificial.

Upon this foundation then, the Lutheran church has built up her divine worship. Firmly believing the promise of the Lord in Matthew 18: 20, she believes and teaches that the Lord is truly and actively present in the worship of his people, and in it bestows himself and the gifts of his grace upon them, through his word and the sacraments, through those vehicles which the Lord has appointed to be conveyancers of his spirit, and means of grace, in order that by the preaching of the one, and the administration of the other, he might evermore gather a church out of the midst of the world. Thus we read, in the Brandenburg Kirchenordnung of 1533: "For the divine Majesty on high, God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are present in the congregation of his people, receiving the hymns and prayers of the church, and communing with it through the divine word and sacraments, as Christ says: 'for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.'" These two things, the word and the sacraments, in which the Lord is present and communes with the congregation, are therefore the first and most essential part of worship, and everything else, as the sermon, hymns, &c., obtain sacramental character only by their connection with them; they are absolutely necessary, dare not be omitted, added to, or diminished, because only through their use is the active presence of the Lord made manifest; and there can be no divine worship held in which at least one of these two is not found. Thus Luther says:<sup>1</sup> "If God's word is not preached, it is better that we neither sing, read, nor even assemble

<sup>1</sup> Ed. Walch. X. 261.

ourselves." And the Courland Kirchenordnung of 1570 still more in detail: "It is necessary that all christians should constantly be diligently taught how great a difference there is between the ceremonies in worship which men have prescribed, and the word of God, which alone bringeth salvation, and the holy sacraments. For both these, namely the word of God and the two sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper, alone, are the parts necessary to our salvation, which never can, nor dare be perverted, altered, added to, or diminished, by men or angels, except at the peril of heinous sin against conscience, and inevitable injury to the church of God. For Paul says distinctly, Gal. 1: 8; But though we, or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel, let him be accursed. And 1 Cor. 11: 23; For I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you; and proceeds to give an account of the institution of the Lord's Supper. But afterward he speaks very differently of mere ceremonies: The rest will I set in order when I come; of which he speaks further in the fourteenth chapter. Ceremonies, however, are external rites, &c." It is evident, in accordance with these principles, that the leading controlling idea in Lutheran divine worship, is that it is to teach and communicate in general, and that a Lutheran congregation, in its worship, assumes above every other, the position of needy expectant desire, not indeed toward the clergyman, but toward the Lord and his word and sacraments. Therefore the Lutheran Kirchenordnungen in general, in their introductions to the part containing the order of divine worship, exalt the sacramental portion as above explained, above that which they designate as strictly ceremonies.

But this is only one side. The Lutheran church has an immoveable faith in the efficacy of the divine word and sacraments. Where the former is preached, and the latter administered, there, she is confident, a church of God must grow up, be it great or small. The Mecklenburg Kirchenordnung says: "Where the pure christian doctrine is preached, there is certainly the church of God, for there God works mightily through his Gospel, and there are ever in that assembly elect saints who shall be saved." But when the word and sacraments have gathered together a congregation, and it has partaken of the life of the Lord through them, that life must necessarily show itself forth in its influence upon their life in all the fruits of good works, and in its influence upon their worship, in supplications and thanksgiving, in psalms and music, in prayers and hymns, in vows and confession. This is the sacrificial portion of divine

worship, in which the congregation, planted by the word and sacraments, draws nigh to its Lord with prayer, and goes from his presence with thanksgiving, as distinguished from the sacramental portion, in which the Lord bestows his gifts upon the congregation. The more the Lutheran church has kept this sacramental sphere of the communicating grace of the Lord pure, undisturbed and in high honor, the more fully has she been able to cultivate her sacrificial sphere; for by the faithful use of the former has she obtained that fulness of inner life which has pervaded the latter. As an example of the great richness of the sacrificial element in her worship, we might here merely refer to the body of hymns, and the musical wealth of the Lutheran church. Nevertheless there are two things here which require notice. First: However much stress our church laid upon this sacrificial part of her worship, its origin, and the whole process of its development, forbade that she should ever attribute any power to remove sin or meritorious worth to these her offerings of thanksgiving and prayer, or to the forms and ceremonies by which they were made. The Catholic church, on the other hand, looking at it in an entirely different light, attributed both to hers. The Lutheran church only brings again to the Lord, that which he has given her, and offers not arrogantly, but humbly, those fruits which he has planted in her. All the Lutheran Kirchenordnungen, without exception, guard against this error. Secondly: It requires only a glance at the mode in which the Lutheran church rightly believes the genesis of the sacrificial element to have occurred, in order to understand the other principle to which she clings firmly; that the sacrificial element dare be found in worship independently and by itself, but only in connection with the sacramental, out of which it grows.

When we thus view the sacramental<sup>2</sup> and the sacrificial elements in worship, in their relation to each other, how the latter can only proceed from the former, and the former must necessarily produce the latter, we find that a mediate instrumentality is necessary to the production of the one by the other. The word of God must be explained in the sermon, and the sacraments must be administered and received, in order that the blessings of which they are the bearers, may be appropriated by the congregation. This mediating agency of the sermon, and of the administering of the sacraments, requires the office of the ministry. But just as the minister, according to the Lutheran view, stands within the congregation, and yet in another sense certainly does not, so the sermon and the administering of the sacraments hold middle ground between the sa-

cramental and the sacrificial, and partake of the nature of both. The word of God and the sacrament in themselves, are purely sacramental in their nature; but when the church takes the former upon her lips, and joyfully proclaims the word of salvation which divine grace has given her, to her own members and the world, she is "ministering the gospel of God," Rom. 15: 16; and when the church takes the gifts of the altar which have been granted her, and gratefully derives strength from them, that act is a eucharist, a giving of thanks, and therefore a sacrificial act. So the sermon is sacramental in so far as it is an objective announcement of God's word, but every form of personal application which necessarily forms part of it, as entreaty, confession, consoling, exhorting, &c., are sacrificial in their nature. And in the sacrament the outward sign and the word of promise are purely sacramental, but the church's reception of the word and signs, with all the prayers and thanksgiving which attend it, are sacrificial acts. And other portions of worship have also this mediating character in part, as for example the singing, inasmuch as it is, in a certain sense, a sermon which the congregation directs to itself. With regard to these mediating agencies in divine worship in general, Melancthon already, in the passage of the Apology above cited, refers distinctly to them, and exhibits their nature. And it was the protestant church, indeed, which restored them to their proper province, in opposition to the Catholic, by which they were omitted. The Lutheran church positively insists that God's word dare not be wanting in any divine worship, and as positively that the reading of the scriptures must always be attended by the explanation of them. After the reading of the lesson at the early worship, "shall the minister, or whoever is appointed thereto, arise and explain a portion of the same, in order that all who are present may understand, learn and be admonished. And where this is not done, the congregation is none the better for the lesson; as has hitherto been the case in cloisters and monasteries where they have only bellowed to the walls."<sup>1</sup> It is true that they always conceded the truth of the principle—the scriptures their own interpreter—so that where they were without the interpretation of the ministry, such passages of scripture as explained themselves could be read. Nevertheless, such of the liturgies as are more specific, ordain that even in these cases, short summaries at least shall be read after the lessons, or they appoint particular lectionaries to be used, which contain paraphrases of the portions of scripture to be

<sup>1</sup> Luther's Werke. Ed. Wach X. 261.

read, thus furnishing also the explanation. With regard to the Lord's Supper, however, the protestant church positively demands that it shall never be held unless there are persons to communicate, thus rejecting the Catholic private masses. The Wolfenbüttel Kirchenordnung says: "When there are no communicants present, pastors shall not administer the sacrament, that the church fall not again into the popish idolatry of the sacrifice of the mass." All the Kirchenordnungen contain similar directions.

So clear a doctrinal appreciation of the nature and elements of christian worship, accordant with the purest spirit of the gospel, gave the Lutheran church a consciousness of freedom in its relation to the forms of worship which the church of the past had handed down. That we reject and cast away anything, is oftener the result of weakness than the proof of strength. The Lutheran church possessed, in this clear doctrinal appreciation, a standard by which she was enabled to decide upon what was permanent in the form of worship, which had come down from former ages, and what was not. It was not necessary to her preservation from error that, like the Reformed church, she should adopt the contracted principle of rejecting everything not found in the scriptures and earliest ages of the church; she could judge clearly and positively with reference to the liturgical forms which had been handed down, prove all things, hold fast that which was good, perfect that which was incomplete, pass by that which was unsuitable, and reject that which was false. The form of divine worship of the middle ages contained many single elements derived from the purest period of the early church, but they were overshadowed, altered and robbed of their true meaning. If the Lutheran church, restoring these elements to their original purity, treasured them up, she thereby secured for herself a bond of union with the ancient church and the church of all ages, which the Reformed church violently severed. The Lutheran church, indeed, was, to some extent, necessitated to pursue a conservative course. The Reformed church took its rise in smaller communities and cities; or at least such smaller and more cultivated communities, whose form rendered them more controllable, certainly exercised the controlling power in her organization; and this circumstance had great influence in shaping all her arrangements. The Lutheran church, from the beginning, had to control large districts of country and masses of people. Within such a sphere, she could only hope to achieve a reformation, by avoiding every unnecessary rejection of those things to which all were accus-

toned, by adopting, in so far as the truth would allow it, a process of transition. Therefore she revised, purified and preserved that which had been handed down.

It would, however, be a great mistake, to believe that the entire action of the Lutheran church in reference to its liturgy, consisted in the mere purifying revision of the Catholic form of worship, as if she had merely pieced together an incongruous service out of these borrowed fragments, or only mended the old Catholic garment with a few new patches. A single retrospective glance will show the necessity of the opposite. The Catholic church had degraded the sacramental portions of worship to merely sacrificial significance, and, on the other hand, endeavored to attribute sacramental honor to her sacrificial offerings; thus corrupting both elements in divine worship and either discarding the mediating agencies, or reducing them to narrow limits. The Lutheran church, therefore, if she correctly apprehended these three elements in their distinctive character, was compelled at least to make a new disposition of the worship which would place them in their proper position to each other, and to introduce entirely new liturgical formulas not found in the Catholic worship, and even to give those portions which had been taken from it, a new position in relation to the whole, and thereby a new sense. The Lutheran form of worship is, therefore, a new one, notwithstanding its partially conservative relation to that of the middle ages.

Without entering minutely into particulars, as for instance, the universal introduction of the sermon, which was only occasionally found among the Catholics, the newness of the Lutheran form of worship appears distinctly in one point which was left entirely out of sight in the Catholic; in the participation of the congregation in the worship. The word and sacraments, which are God's gifts to his people in divine worship, are to be communicated to the congregation through the sermon and the distribution. This participation of the congregation by hearing and receiving, renders it necessary that they should take part in the worship, for people are only open to impression while they are active; and the congregation must preach to itself in the singing, in order that it may be preached to with profit. But finally, the whole sacrificial portion of divine worship is, in its very nature, an act of the congregation; and wherever this portion of the worship is not conducted by the congregation, either entirely or responsively, there is a backsliding to a considerable degree to the Catholic doctrine of "one instead of all." It would be accordant with their true nature, if the congregation themselves brought these their of-

ferings to the Lord. We cannot here show how the Lutheran liturgy provided for this participation of the congregation in the singing and responding; we can only mention two consequences which necessarily resulted from it. First, the use of the German language in divine worship. From her very commencement, the Lutheran church used the German language in reading the scriptures, preaching, and administering the sacraments. After considerable efforts, the German language was gradually introduced into all the other parts of the worship. The second consequence was that divine worship, which was only held in behalf of the congregation, formed each time a complete whole, in all of which the whole congregation was interested. And thus the accumulation of services which was prevalent in Catholicism, where a number of masses were read in the same church at the same time, without any connection between them, was done away with. "It is our desire that, God willing, everything should be done peaceably and in order, and we will not endure in our churches such discordant and profane babbling for money, as has so long been the case, where one was singing a festival mass, another a mass to Mary, and a third a requiem, and all howling together like a pack of wolves, and only to get money."<sup>1</sup>

All these views of the nature and arrangement of divine worship, united to render a fixed liturgy necessary. The more clearly the Lutheran church distinguished between the elements of divine worship, and the more she felt the danger of radical error in confounding them, and overlooking this distinction, the less was she disposed to leave the arrangement of these elements in the complete order of public worship, to the accidental preferences of single congregations and ministers; because it was in this arrangement that a confounding of the several elements could most easily occur. The participation of the congregation in the worship for instance, inasmuch as it had not been customary, was a point for which careful provision was as necessary as it was difficult. A small reformed commune, after fixing a few general rules, could leave the remainder to custom and common consent, but a more extended and fixed liturgical service was required by the large and populous Lutheran countries. And the peculiar importance which is attributed to the instruction and nurture of the congregation in the worship of the Lutheran church, required on pedagogical principles, a permanent arrangement and fixed forms in public worship, in order that familiarity might produce a natu-

<sup>1</sup> Brunswick Kirchenordnung of 1528.

ral and home feeling. "It is to be done for the guidance and instruction of the people; for this purpose it is necessary that liberty should be restrained, and worship conducted in accordance with one plan, particularly in the same church; I therefore entreat that the same paraphrase (of the Lord's prayer, of the liturgical use of which he is speaking) and the same exhortation to communicants may be used, according to the prescribed form, for the people's sake, so that one may not employ one form to-day, and another a different one to-morrow, and thus each display his own skill confounding the people, so that they cannot learn or retain anything."<sup>1</sup> Hence the great care which all Lutheran Kirchenordnung bestow on the accurate and proper arrangement of the formula for divine worship; and hence too the fact that the importance as reformers of a number of persons, as for instance, apart from Luther himself, Bugenhagen, Brenz, Corvinus, Veit Dietrich, lies in their labors in behalf of the liturgical arrangement of public worship. It is certainly true that, the Kirchenordnungen proceed with great caution in appointing these liturgical forms; they never neglect to forewarn the church that they had no idea that the forms provided were suitable under all circumstances, unchangeable or necessary to salvation. But they unanimously assent that these ceremonies, with the exception, of course, of the word and sacraments, are in their nature free, and of human and conventional authority and origin, in opposition to the high authority and claims of the missal among Catholics.

"Ceremonies, however," continues the Courland Kirchenordnung after the passage before cited, "are external rites, outward acts in the general assembly of the christian church, which devout men, in the exercise of christian liberty, according to the requirement of place and circumstance, have proposed, generally approved, peaceably agreed to, and unanimately adopted, to the end that everything may be done decently and in order, and to the edification of the church. They are therefore non-essentials, not necessary to salvation, and at times, in cases of special necessity, when particularly desired, may be omitted, or where they do not serve unto edification to the church of God, and as is unfortunately frequently the case, if unaltered would lead to idolatrous practices, they may be entirely set aside." All the Kirchenordnungen contain similar passages, though but few are so strong. It would, however, be a great error so to understand the expression, that ceremo-

<sup>1</sup> Luther, deutsche Messe X. 233.

nies are non essentials, as if it were a matter of indifference to the Lutheran church whether they are observed or not. That such is not the case, appears from the importance which she attached to her ritual, as distinguished not only from that of the Catholic, but also of the Reformed church, and also from the vehement commotion produced by the attempt to introduce a *Kirchenordnung* not formed according to pure Lutheran principles, as the Prussian of 1558.<sup>1</sup> The sense in which the term non-essential is employed, is that of the tenth article of the Form of Concord, as contra-distinguished from the Catholic view, which attributed to their ceremonies power to cancel sin and justify before God. It would also be an error to believe, that the Lutheran church laid great stress upon the preference, or dislike, or the love of change, of individual ministers or congregations. For history teaches most clearly, with what steadfastness she met the insubordination of individuals, from Carlstadt down; and how in theory, basing her claim on 1 Cor. 14: 33, she ever considered and treated the right of forming and altering the liturgy, as a right of the church, held congregations and individual ministers bound by the decisions of the church general, insisted on uniformity of ceremonies, forbade all arbitrary alterations, and fully acknowledged the great practical evil of inconsiderateness and disposition to change in reference to the liturgy. "In order that the scriptures may be suitably learned, the sacraments reverently received, and the christian church most fully and appropriately edified and extended, it is necessary above all things that there be harmony and general uniformity of ceremonies. Therefore we must guard with the utmost possible care against that most grievous and pernicious evil, the love of innovation. Nor should we, except in case of urgent necessity, without the best reason, seek to alter, renew, abbreviate, extend, increase or diminish anything in the ceremonies of the church, or inconsiderately to forsake an ancient, admirable, useful, received practice, and confessedly innocent custom, in order to adopt ceremonies and church services lately formed and introduced. It is greatly to be desired that uniformity of ceremonies should obtain throughout the whole land, and it would make a favorable impression on the simple uncultivated populace, and secure no small advantage to the growing church. For if the simple peasantry, who are not only weak-minded, but generally ignorant also, see a different order of services and ceremonies in one place, from those practised in another, they cannot

<sup>1</sup> Hartknoch *Preusz. K. Hist.* II. 3, p. 395.

tell how it stands with the whole matter of religion, and this want of conformity becomes a stumbling block to them. Therefore, it shall ever be our earnest endeavor to secure decent and christian order in the churches of this principality, and we will in no degree give way to the fanaticism of the Calvinists, who in their perverse blindness, will not understand that God is not a God of confusion and disorder, but of peace.—1 Cor. 14: 33.”<sup>1</sup> Thus it happened that the Lutheran order of divine worship developed itself with considerable uniformity, not only in the national church of each Lutheran country, but—with a few exceptions—throughout all Lutheran Germany. The divergence of the liturgies of the different state churches from each other, is not greater than the liberty which each state church allowed within its own bounds. The Reformed church agreed with the Lutheran in her opposition to the Catholic church, with her views of the mass and the meritoriousness of ceremonies, &c., as also in many details of practice, for instance the adoption of the German language. But apart from the different mode of appeal to the scriptures, which the two churches adopted, there was one radical influential difference between the Reformed and the Lutherans, they rejected the Lutheran view of the sacramental element in worship. Zwingli says:<sup>2</sup> “I believe, yea, I know, that the sacraments not only do not bestow grace, but do not even convey it. For, inasmuch as grace is wrought or bestowed by the Holy Spirit, (by the word grace I understand reconciliation, forgiveness, and unmerited favor,) the gift is received by the spirit (of man) alone. The spirit does not need a bearer or conveyance, for it is itself the conveying power by which all things are conveyed, and not one which needs itself to be conveyed. Nor do we read anywhere in the holy scriptures that outward signs, such as the sacraments are, do certainly convey the Spirit; but if at any time outward signs, in connection with the Spirit, are conveyancers, it is the Spirit, and not the outward sign, which conveys. Just as in Acts 2, a mighty wind was borne along, and cloven tongues were borne by the power of the wind, and not the wind borne by the power of the tongues. As the wind brought the quails, and took away the locusts, but no quails or locusts were ever able to bring the wind. When the great and strong wind passed over Elijah, rending the mountain, the Lord was not in the wind. In short, the

<sup>1</sup> Churländ Kirchenordnung.

<sup>2</sup> Opera ed. Schuber et Schulthess. Vol. IV. p. 9.

wind bloweth where it listeth, &c. ; so is every one that is born of the Spirit ; that is, he is enlightened and drawn by means invisible and inappreciable to the senses. Here we have the truth declared ; therefore the grace of the Spirit is not conveyed by the immersion, nor by the participation, nor by the anointing. But the Spirit, according to his gracious good pleasure, is already present before the sacrament ; and in consequence, grace is wrought and bestowed before the sacrament is added thereto. Therefore it results therefrom, that the sacraments are instituted as outward signs of that grace, which is of itself already present in each one." According to this view, the word of God and the sacraments, are not *means* of grace, not bearers of the Lord and his Spirit and his gifts : the Spirit has nowhere any need of such mediate instrumentalities ; and of course, divine worship is not the place where the gracious treasures of forgiveness, &c., are offered by the Lord to his people, but on the contrary, they are received by an immediate inward communication between the Holy Spirit and my spirit. And if the Lord is present at the worship of his congregation, he is not really so, but only in so far as his believing followers bring him and his Spirit thither in their hearts. And when the Lord's taking part in the worship is spoken of, an active participation is not so much meant as simply the reception of the offerings of the congregation.

And although the reformed church was afterward led by the influence of Calvin and the Lutherans, measurably to forsake the strictness of Zwingli, yet even according to the Calvinistic view, the Lord is only in so far efficaciously present in the gifts of the altar, as those who draw nigh, bear him in faith in their hearts. We are thus always brought back to the position that the Reformed church does not acknowledge a distinct sacramental element in the Lutheran sense, that with her, the sacrificial element takes decided precedence ; and that while the Lutheran church in her worship, esteems as of chief importance the instruction and nurture of the congregation, she has shaped her worship more for the purpose of arousing and expressing feeling, and considers it as the sphere in which believers are to exhibit and employ that life which has been begotten within them by the hidden working of the Holy Ghost. But if the view held by the Lutheran church be correct, that the sacrificial grows only out of the sacramental, it must be difficult for the Reformed church to attain the full development of the former, on account of her want of appreciation of the latter. By her half appreciation of the word and sacraments as means of grace, she cut herself off from the source

from which God's people must ever derive power to sing, praise, pray and give thanks; and thus is explained the fact, which a passing glance, for instance at her poverty in hymns, shows that, notwithstanding her giving precedence to the sacrificial, she exhibits but a very imperfect development of it. Thus, but half appreciating the sacramental and sacrificial elements, she has necessarily been restricted to the mediating agencies of the sermon and the mere administration of the sacraments, with which almost the whole of her divine worship is occupied, and even these she receives and employs mainly in their sacrificial aspects. She esteems the sermon principally in the sense that in it, she "ministers the gospel of God;" and lays the greatest stress in the Lord's Supper on that which the congregation does in it, the doing it in remembrance of him, the showing forth the death of Jesus; ascribes to it the character of a thanksgiving, and prefers above every other, the name of the eucharist. The consequences of this view are perfectly apparent, no proper participation of the congregation in the worship could take place where the sacrificial element is so imperfectly developed. The participation of the congregation, indeed, in the Reformed church, was carried out more in the sphere of government, as it is indeed natural that such excitable communities should prefer to rule, rather than to learn. And a fixed and extended liturgy was the less necessary when the congregation took so little part, and especially in ecclesiastical districts so limited in extent. We find, therefore, that the position occupied by the liturgical service in the Lutheran church is mainly supplied in the Reformed by the extemporaneous prayers of the clergyman, and especially in their more cultivated congregations, they might reckon upon their being understood and enjoyed. The Reformed church, therefore, could never properly understand what the Lutherans wanted with their liturgy, as is shown by the following passage from the second Helvetic Confession, chap. 27, which is otherwise very moderate. "In olden times, ceremonies were appointed for the edification of those who were kept under the law, as under a schoolmaster or guardian; but since Christ has come, and abolished the law, we who believe are no more under the law, Rom. 6: 14; and the ceremonies which the apostles did not retain or renew in the church of Christ, are abrogated, as they themselves clearly declare, that they will lay no burden on the church, Acts 15: 28. We would, therefore, be reintroducing or restoring Judaism, if we should multiply customs and ceremonies in the church of Christ, after the manner of the old church. We do not, therefore, in any degree approve

of the view of those who think that the church must be restrained within bounds by many and divers ceremonies, as by a kind of discipline. For if the apostles did not even impose upon christians the ceremonies and practices which had been ordained of old by God, who that is reasonable would burden them with those which are fabricated by men. For the more ceremonies are heaped up in the church, the more is christian liberty removed, yes, even Christ and faith in him, for the congregation seek in these ceremonies, that which they should seek alone by faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Therefore, devout men need only a few moderate simple ceremonies, which do not depart from the teachings of scripture." All of this has force only in reference to Catholicism.

The Reformed church, however, at least in those countries where the German language prevails, adopted this extreme position only in Switzerland and some adjacent town districts. On the other hand, it is well known that the south-western portions of Germany sought, from the beginning, to assume a middle position between the Lutherans and the Swiss. With regard to doctrine, they were unable to produce a separate confession, but after oscillating to and fro for a long time, finally gave in their adhesion either to the Lutheran or Swiss confession. They succeeded, however, in carrying out a sort of union in the practical sphere of the liturgy. It is true that, as is generally the case in unions and compromises, it accomplished nothing more than an adjustment of quantity; the Lutheran churches among them adopting somewhat fewer forms than the genuine Lutheran liturgies contained, and the Reformed churches somewhat more than the rigid Swiss admitted. There arose, however, in this manner, a distinct liturgical type, which may with considerable accuracy be characterized as an abbreviation of the complete Lutheran form of worship, and which was adopted in Baden, the Palatinate, partly in Wurtemberg, Strasburg, and other cities and small districts. The peculiar characteristics of this type may be learned from the *Kirchenordnung* of Count Palatine Ottheinrich, of 1556. In the article concerning the Lord's Supper, after promising to be and remain purely Lutheran in doctrine, it proceeds: "With regard to the service for the administration of the same, whereas in times past a great many hymns, lessons, chants and prayers have been appointed in addition to the original form of institution by Christ, and some christian churches in which the gospel is preached in its purity still continue to use many of them, so we also, inasmuch as the ecclesiastical authorities propose, by the grace of God, to

adopt a useful and christian form of government and worship, will, in like manner, gladly retain them. Nevertheless, inasmuch as at the administration of the holy supper, two sermons should always be delivered, namely, the general sermon, and the annunciation of Christ's death, and the mass of the above mentioned articles might interfere with the time required by the sermons and the distribution of the supper, which cannot be dispensed with, therefore we will introduce some of these portions at other suitable times, and thus arrange an appropriate service, in order that the congregation may not be detained inconveniently long."

Before we proceed to exhibit in full the distinctive difference between the Lutheran order of divine worship, and the Catholic, Reformed, United, or any other type, it may be well to call to memory once more, the general principles of the Lutheran view, by the appropriate words of the Pomeranian liturgy. "Almighty God upholds his christian church on earth by the office of the public ministry in the congregation of his people, by instruction and the preaching of the gospel, by the administration of the holy sacraments, by the exercise of godly pure discipline, by christian hymns, prayers and ceremonies, and the like. The Lord God will also, that we men should honor, invoke, and praise him in the assembly of his people, (Ps. 149: 1; Ps. 22: 23; Ps. 84: 2). Wherever the divine word is preached, prayed, read or sung, there the Lord our God is mightily present with all his holy angels, to the end that we, with all the angels and God's elect, might give praises unto the name of the Lord. To this end also, the Son of God is present, moving the hearts of believers through his word and pious hymns, Matth. 18: 19, 20. Such assemblies of believers in Christ, in the house of the Lord, are lovely, beautiful and august, and to be held in highest honor and esteem. For in them, christians have a foreshadowing of that glorious everlasting assemblage of all the redeemed, which at the last great day shall appear before the Son of man, our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore did God in the Old Testament also, in the laws of Moses, appoint unto his people certain times and ceremonies, which should be observed by the congregation, and commanded all men in general, to hallow the Sabbath day, and to appear with gladness in the assemblage of God's saints. For this reason all christians come together gladly to unite in the singing and ceremonies in the church. For although the christian church is not built on a like round of ceremonies, but upon the foundation of prophets and apostles, which is our Savior Jesus Christ, and upon his blessed word; yet inasmuch as God is

not a God of confusion, but of peace, and will that in the congregation all things should be done decently and in order, (1 Cor. 14: 40), there can be no doubt that it is a service peculiarly acceptable to the everlasting divine Majesty, when a uniform, spiritual, and useful form of worship is adopted and maintained, as far as possible. In addition to the manifold other blessings which it brings with it, it tends to secure unity in the doctrines of God's word, and to remove many causes of stumbling to the common people, who form their judgment of doctrines, sacraments, and the whole work of the ministry, from outward ceremonies. On this account the appointed order of hymns, lessons and ceremonies, is to be observed in our churches. And also where it has not hitherto been the case, pastors shall comply with this order, and shall not depart from it without especial and important reasons, but cheerfully conform thereto, out of willing christian love, in order that divisions and dissensions among the people may be avoided. For it shall not be allowed any one arbitrarily to reject this order, or to make any alteration therein, according to his good pleasure."

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## ARTICLE IX.

### NOTICES OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

*Manual of Sacred History: a Guide to the Understanding of the Divine plan of Salvation according to its historical development.* By John Henry Kurtz, D. D., Professor of Church History in the University of Dorpat, etc. Translated from the sixth German Edition, by Charles F. Schaeffer, D. D. Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakiston.—1855.

THIS work has already been noticed more than once in our quarterly, and the English translation by Dr. Schaeffer has been, for some time, eagerly looked for, as the unusually favorable reception which it has met with in Germany, was justly regarded as conclusive evidence of its extraordinary merits. As a manual of the Bible history, it is far superior to any other work with which we are acquainted. Its design is to conduct "the friends of the Holy Scriptures through the region of sacred history:" to direct the attention of the intelligent and devout reader to the wonderful works and ways of God among men, and "to exhibit, in a statement that shall attempt to combine comprehensiveness with succinctness, the Divine Plan of Salvation—its first manifestation in history, its progressive movements, its glori-