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EVIDENCE OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD.

(By request.)

The faith of Christendom is found ultimately to rest upon a single miracle. Christians themselves are taught to stake all on this miracle: "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ: whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised. And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." 1 Cor. 15, 14—18. Thus Paul. This is not hyperbole.

Facts of sacred history show that the supreme importance of the resurrection of the Lord was recognized not only in verbal statement, but in the entire activity of the early Church. In the same chapter from which we have just quoted Paul sketches in a few lines the essentials of apostolic preaching. He states, v. 1: "I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received," etc.; and then proceeds in vv. 3. 4 to say: "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." Peter's Pentecostal oration, the first public effort of an evangelical preacher in the New Testament, states, and proves by means of Old Testament

WARTBURG LETTERS OF LUTHER.

*(Continued.)*TO MELANCHTHON.¹⁾

To Mr. Philip Melanchthon, the faithful servant of Christ and evangelist of the church at Wittenberg.

Jesus.

Grace! I have disliked your letter in a twofold respect: firstly, because I notice that you are bearing your cross with too great impatience, and that you give way too much to your emotions and are too tender-hearted, as usual; secondly, because you exalt me far too much and are egregiously mistaken in attributing to me such great things, for you assume that I am greatly concerned about God's cause. Your high opinion of me confuses and vexes me; for, alas! I am sitting here impassive and hardened in idleness. I am praying little; I am not groaning at all for the Church of God; on the contrary, I am burning with a great fire of my untamed flesh. To be brief, while I ought to be fervent in the spirit, I am fervent in the flesh through evil lust, laziness, idleness, drowsiness, and I do not know but what God has forsaken me, because you are not praying for me.²⁾ You take my place now, more eminently gifted by God and comelier than I.

It is now eight days that I have not written anything, nor prayed, nor studied, partly because of buffetings of the flesh, partly because I have been tormented by other grievances. If this condition is not improved I must needs go to Erfurt in

1) See MS. in Cod. Jen. b, f. 6; in Cod. Solger. Dresd. C. 351, fol. 28 b (much mutilated); MS. 1393, fol. 39, in the royal library at Copenhagen. It was published by Aurifaber I, 334 b, De Wette II, 21, in Erlang. Corresp. III, 189. St. Louis Ed. XV, 2528. Prof. Hoppe notes that the text of the letter has suffered many mutilations.

2) It is over statements like these that Romanists of the Denifle school have gloated, reading into them a confession of gross carnality, while the scope of Luther is plainly this to deprecate praise, of which he was never fond, and in declining which he would sometimes, by a well-known law of the mind, permit his utterances to run to the opposite extreme. Moreover, he has specified the evil lust of which he complains.

broad daylight.³⁾ There you will see me, or I shall see you; for I shall there consult physicians or surgeons. For it is impossible for me to bear this affliction longer.⁴⁾ I could more easily suffer ten large wounds than this slight indication⁵⁾ of a lesion. It may be, too, that the Lord oppresses me thus for the purpose of hurrying me out of the wilderness into the public.

I shall not reply to Emser;⁶⁾ let some else reply whom you consider suited for the task, maybe Amsdorf. However, he may be too good to be mired with this dirt.

I have resolved to translate your Apology⁷⁾ against the asses at Paris together with their insane stuff into German and to add my comment. I should greatly like to see Oecolampad's Treatise on Confession translated among you, in order that the papists may burst (with rage).

I am at work on my German Gospel-Postils, and shall promptly forward them to the press as soon as I shall have finished ten (sermons).

Since all is well with you, you have no need of me at all. And I am angry with you, because you are loading yourself with such great labors and will not listen when told that you must spare yourself. In this you allow your stubbornness to guide you. How often have I been dinning this into your ears! But just as often I have been telling a story to a deaf man.

As regards the authority of the sword, I still hold the same opinion as formerly.⁸⁾ I have the impression that you

3) The plague having broken out at Erfurt, Luther was prevented from carrying out his resolution.

4) See THEOL. QUARTERLY, vol. X, 59.

5) Prof. Hoppe proposes *indicium* for *judicium*.

6) Emser in his "Quadruplica" had attacked Luther. The latter in the end did reply, since no one was found willing to assume this task for him. See "Refutation of his error," etc. St. Louis Ed. XVIII, Introd., p. 41.

7) St. Louis Ed. XVIII, 960. Luther's translation of the *Determinatio* of the Parisians with a preface and epilogue at the same place, col. 932.

8) Luther here replies to the question which had been propounded to him, viz., whether the authority of the sword, or the civil magistrates, could be substantiated from the Gospel. Melancthon had denied this. Luther, as will be seen, holds that the Gospel approves and sanctions secular authority, but does not ordain it.

desire to be shown from the Gospel either a command or a suggestion in regard to this matter. I fully agree with you that an authority of this kind is neither commanded nor suggested in the Gospel, nor would it be at all proper (that either should have been done), inasmuch as the Gospel is a law to the willing and the free, who have nothing to do with the sword, or the authority of the sword.

But, on the other hand, this authority is not forbidden either, but rather confirmed and lauded, something that we do not read with regard to matters which are merely tolerated. For fasts and outward ceremonies are not commanded nor suggested in the Gospel, nor any concern about temporal affairs. Nor would it have been proper for the Gospel to make disposition regarding these matters, since it guides only the spirit in (the exercise of) his liberty. However, does this authority exist to the end that we should not make use of it? Yea, do not the exigencies of life require an authority of this sort and also its use?

Your argument would, indeed, apply beautifully, if all obeyed the Gospel. For inasmuch as the wicked are necessarily in the majority, how long would the Church subsist in this world, if the sword were withdrawn, since on account of the unbridled license of the wicked no one can be secure in the enjoyment of his life and possessions? However, you desire to be convinced not with arguments and statements based on certain improprieties which might possibly arise, but with Scripture.

I have stated before that, like many other things, the sword is neither commanded nor suggested, and yet it is extolled and confirmed, just as the right of marriage, which does not concern the Gospel either. For here you have John Baptist instructing the soldiers and saying: "Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages," Luke 3, 14. Assuredly, if these people had no right to the power of the sword, he would have had to forbid its use to them; for they really put the same question which you pro-

pound, when they asked: "What shall we do?" Here you have, not the institution indeed, but the sanction of the military order. Don't you think that it will be much more difficult for you to reply to those who cite this passage against you than for them to make answer to you? Paul commands us 1 Tim. 2, 1 ff. to pray for those who are in authority, in accordance with the example of Jeremiah who commands the Jews (ch. 29, 7) to pray for the king of the Babylonians, and does not order them to pray against authorities as against something that either is forbidden or has no right of existence.

But you object: Those people were pagans. However, the prayer offered for them⁹⁾ was not to the effect that they might become believers, but that the Jews might be and remain at peace with them. You will not persuade me to believe that the apostles and prophets could have enjoined prayer for things which we may only suffer and tolerate. Else we should pray for robbers and, as you put it, for unrighteous tyrants, asking that they stay unrighteous.

Now, I shall not suffer you to reject Rom. 13, 1 ff. and 1 Pet. 2, 13,¹⁰⁾ claiming that they do not apply here and are meant merely as an instruction to subjects. This you shall not accomplish, Philip. These are God's words, and they express a great truth when they state: The powers that be are of God, and he resists the ordinance of God who resists the powers that be, and they are the ministers of God. You will not find proof to show that these words were spoken in reference to matters that are merely tolerated.

He is not a minister of God, but an enemy, who does injustice or imposes whatever he can on the patience of men, nor is anything that is merely suffered to exist a minister of God. It is one thing that we find recorded that He has excited one nation to war¹¹⁾ against the other, 2 Chron. 15, 6; Matt. 24, 7, *e. g.*, the king of Babylon against Tyre, and that He

9) *Orabatur* for *orabat* in MS. — Prof. H.

10) Instead of 1 Pet. 3, 13 in all editions. — Prof. H.

11) Prof. H. adopts De Wette's suggestion of *ad bellum* for *bellum*.

calls him His servant, Ezek. 26; Jer. 27, 6, and says that He "hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes," Jer. 51, 11. And it is quite another thing when we are told, Rom. 13 and 1 Tim. 2, that the powers that be are ordained for the sake of peace. For here we are told¹²⁾ that they have been ordained to imbue men with fear when they do evil, and for the praise of them that do well; while in the former passages we are told that they are appointed for vengeance and to balance accounts for an evil work that has already been perpetrated.

Now what will you do when you read that Abraham, David, and the ancient saints have made the best use of the power of the sword, men of whom we are certain that they were of evangelical mind? Although they used it only for a time,¹³⁾ it is certainly not a pious act for people of an evangelical mind to place their interdict on the use of a matter which those men employed in a laudable manner, namely, the right to use the sword, all the more because it is neither revoked nor forbidden in the Gospel, but, as I stated, has been sanctioned, at least in behalf of such as were believers, namely, the soldiers who made inquiry of John.

Now, since Christ in the Gospel had to ordain divine and heavenly matters, it is small wonder that He did not ordain the power of the sword, which can easily be ordained by human creatures, and that meanwhile He treats it so as to show that, if it did not militate against the Gospel for Him to ordain it, He would have ordained it, since He praises and sanctions it now that it has been ordained, yea, He plainly teaches that it has been ordained by God.

Moreover, Peter (2. Ep. 2, 10) and Jude (v. 8) are indignant, because governments and dignities are being despised by Antichrist. Now, may we not despise unbridled license and unjust practices that are merely tolerated? But God requires

12) *dicitur* for *dicit*. — Prof. H.

13) In the editions cited the preceding clause is brought to a close at this place.

that to the institution named we should show honor and reverence; does He require the same for godless matters which are merely tolerated?

I am caught in these passages of Scripture, Philip, and should not know what to answer. Your view of this matter gives me much less satisfaction than mine ought to give you. You can cite no passage which rejects or interdicts or instructs us to flee secular government in any way whatsoever. I find it confirmed and praised in many ways, and represented as an institution that we should honor and commend to God in prayer, only its use is not directly commanded or suggested in the Gospel, just like marriage, family affairs, home discipline, town-rule, or any other government or management of temporal affairs.

Communicate to me if you receive light on this matter in any other way, but do it in such a manner as to prove that secular government is forbidden, that we must eschew it, or that it is merely tolerated. For Christ has said that power was given to Pilate from above, John 19, 11, I hold, however, that the statement in this place must be interpreted to mean that God does not bestow His gifts for an evil purpose. But let this suffice.

I congratulate Amsdorf on the increase of his revenue,¹⁴⁾ but still more because he is now fortunately to furnish an apostle. Now ye are full, ye reign as kings without us, 1 Cor. 4, 8, and I do not see why you should miss me so much, and in what respect you should be in need of my labors. It seems to me you are borrowing trouble,¹⁵⁾ for your affairs are in a better condition now that I am absent than when I was with you: you are lecturing, Amsdorf is lecturing, and Jonas is about to lecture.¹⁶⁾ Pray, would you have the kingdom of God to be proclaimed to you people alone? Must not the Gospel

14) Amsdorf had been elected pastor at Schmoelln, near Altenburg.

15) du scheinst dir selbst Gedanken zu machen.

16) Jonas had not yet arrived at Wittenberg to assume his professorship. See THEOL. QUARTERLY, vol. X, 188, note 6.

be brought to others also? Is your Antioch unwilling to furnish neither a Silas, nor a Paul, nor a Barnabas for some work of the Spirit? Acts 15, 34 f.

I tell you, although I should very much like to be with you, still in view of your present abundance I should not regard it as a hardship if the Lord graciously were to grant me a door for His Word either at Erfurt or at Cologne or elsewhere. Consider, pray, what a great harvest there is everywhere and that there are no laborers, Matt. 9, 37; you, however, are all laborers. We must surely consider, not ourselves, but our brethren who are scattered everywhere, lest we live unto ourselves, that is, unto the devil, and not unto Christ.

Accordingly, let us be careful not to be too carnally minded toward one another and to seek the presence of the body more than that of the Spirit. I am ready to go whithersoever the Lord wills, either to you or to some other place. As regards my return, I know nothing at all. You know with whom that rests.

Spalatin writes me that by order of the prince that part of the theses which treats confession was not debated, whereat I am quite extraordinarily displeased. I beseech you in the future always to anticipate the schemes which are being forged at the court, and do not follow them, as I have done heretofore. If I had followed their advice, not half of what has been done would have been accomplished. Those people are men just like we are.

I shall argue this matter with Spalatin. These things inflate our opponents and make them stubborn; moreover, they show that we are timid. Farewell! Somebody promised to carry this letter which I had just finished writing, but the party did not keep his promise. Pray for me, all of you, I beseech you; for I am being merged in sins in this solitude. From my wilderness, 1521, on St. Margaret's Day.¹⁷⁾

MARTIN LUTHER, *Eremite.*

(To be continued.)

17) July 13.