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#### **Errata**

There is an error on page 339 in the research note by Benjamin T.G. Mayes, “Apology of the Augsburg Confession Comparison Chart,” *CTQ* 80:3–4 (2016). A line was accidentally omitted. The missing line reads as follows:

Of Confession and Satisfaction    [Triglott, etc.:] XII (VI) 1–81    [Tappert, etc.:]  
XII 98–178

## **In Search of Celebrating the Reformation Rightly: Luther's *Lectures on Galatians* (1531/1535) as the Banner of the Reformation**

**Naomichi Masaki**

What is a banner? Do we want to march together as a Lutheran army under the slogan “Luther’s Galatians!” and rally our hearts and minds to prepare for a battle? Additionally, why have Luther’s *Lectures on Galatians* become the banner of the Reformation? If we want to celebrate the anniversary year of 2017, would it not be more appropriate to focus on the Ninety-Five Theses of 1517 instead of Luther’s great Galatian Lectures of 1531, published in 1535?<sup>1</sup> Indeed, why bother celebrating this anniversary at all? Do we, who count as heirs of the Reformation, have to re-study what it was all about? It is wonderful if we recognize that our everyday life is under the blessings of the legacy of the Reformation. Every pastor who has pledged himself to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions at his ordination is given to enjoy such an abundant life. But as soon as we glance outside our circles to see the ways in which other Lutherans in the world commemorate the Reformation, we will begin to sense a duty to consider seriously how best we should celebrate the anniversary year *rightly*, as the second International Conference on Confessional Leadership attempted to do last May in Wittenberg.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Luther lectured on Galatians from October 17, 1516–March 13, 1517, and again in 1531 (forty-one lectures between July 3 and December 12). Twenty-one separate editions appeared during Luther’s lifetime, between 1519 and 1546 (Ronald D. Patkus, “Biblical Commentary as Reformation Commodity: The Role of the Paratext in Luther’s *Galatians*,” *Reformation* 13 [2008]: 52–54). Among them, the publications from 1519, 1523, 1525, 1534, 1535, 1538 are noteworthy (Kenneth Hagen, *Luther’s Approach to Scripture as Seen in His “Commentaries” on Galatians 1519–1538* [Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1993], vii). Since Luther’s 1531 lectures were printed in volume 5 of the Wittenberg edition of Luther’s Latin works (1554), in volume 4 of the Jena edition (1558, reprinted in 1570, 1583, 1611), and in German translation in volume 1 of the Wittenberg edition (1539, 1551, 1556, 1567, 1587, 1602), along with other independent editions of 1543, 1546, and 1563, Robert Kolb asserts that many pastors of the Reformation and post-Reformation era had these lectures in their own libraries (Robert Kolb, “The Influence of Luther’s Galatians Commentary of 1535 on Later Sixteenth-Century Lutheran Commentaries on Galatians,” *Archiv für Reformationgeschichte* 84 [1993]: 159).

<sup>2</sup> The papers presented in Wittenberg can be found in *Journal of Lutheran Mission* 2 (September 2015).

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### I. The Ecumenical “Commemoration” of the Reformation

Herman Sasse once warned his readers, “Beware of Reformation anniversaries!”<sup>3</sup> Such a warning is appropriate, for the Reformation celebrations of the past were tragedies. The 1617 festival ushered in the Thirty Years’ War in May of the following year. In 1817, when the image of the Ninety-Five Theses being posted on the Castle Church door in Wittenberg first appeared and soon went viral,<sup>4</sup> as we might say today, the celebration instituted the Prussian Union, whose church lost the very Lutheran Confessions themselves. Ironically, October 31, which was introduced in 1667 as a particular day of celebration by Johann Georg II of Saxony, finally gained acceptance only after 1817 in connection with this Prussian Union.<sup>5</sup> The jubilee year of 1917 took place in the midst of the First World War, and it was at this high point of nationalist interpretations of Luther that Karl Hall called for more careful historical scholarship, paving the way for the Luther Renaissance.

Indeed, while the network of *Refo500* was organizing international conferences of a more scholarly side, the German Evangelical Church (EKD) had already launched in 2008 a program on a more popular side called “Luther 2017: 500 Years of Reformation.” Each year during this “Luther Decade” is devoted to a particular topic, such as “Reformation and Confession” in 2009, “Reformation and Music” in 2012, “Reformation—Art and the Bible” in 2015, and so on. Margot Kässmann, the former council president of the EKD and bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hannover, who now serves as a special envoy for *Luther 2017*, explains that she is an ambassador not only for Luther but for all twelve historical figures who drove the Reformation anniversary: Copernicus, Zwingli, Calvin, Ignatius Loyola, Thomas More, Katharina von Bora, Luther, Müntzer, Bugenhagen, Melancthon, Lucas Cranach, and Erasmus! Kässmann says that this celebration is the first anniversary with a clear ecumenical dimension, the first anniversary since the vast majority of Protestant churches accepted women in the ordained ministry

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<sup>3</sup> Hermann Sasse, “The Social Doctrine of the Augsburg Confession and Its Significance for the Present,” in *The Lonely Way: Selected Essays and Letters (1927–1939)*, vol. 1, ed. Ronald Feuerhahn, trans. Matthew Harrison (St. Louis: Concordia, 2001), 89. Cf. Albert B. Collver, “Theological Observer: A Vision for Lutheranism in Central Europe,” *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 78 (January/April 2014): 155–165.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Albert Howard and Mark A. Noll, “The Reformation at Five Hundred,” *First Things* 247 (November 2014): 45; Thomas Albert Howard, “Remembering the Reformation, 1817 and 1833: Commemorating the Past as Agent and Mirror of Social Change,” in Donald A. Yerxa, *Religion and Innovation: Antagonists or Partners?* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 122.

<sup>5</sup> Karl Dienst, “Reformationsfest,” in *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Handwörterbuch für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft*, 3rd ed. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1961), 5:873–874.

and as bishops, the first one since the Leuenberg Agreement of 1973, and the first one that embraces a historical-critical approach to the Bible.<sup>6</sup>

The former president of Wartburg Theological Seminary, Duane H. Larson, suggests that we should avoid the term *celebration* in the year 2017 because that “would be too much about us and could offend our partners.” He is firmly convinced that the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (JDDJ) has replaced the Augsburg Confession as the ecumenical proposal to the church catholic.<sup>7</sup> Martin Junge, the General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) since 2010, not only echoes such a common voice from that side of Lutheranism but also even advocates for it, saying that “Apostolicity is measured not just in the doctrinal content and truths of faith; it proves itself also in the telling sign of [eucharistic] hospitality.”<sup>8</sup>

The ideal of the JDDJ was furthered by another joint document in 2013 between the LWF and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU) of the Roman Catholic Church, *From Conflict to Communion: Lutheran-Catholic Common Commemoration of the Reformation in 2017*. This piece attempts to “awaken” the Lutherans worldwide to get out of the “dark side” of the Reformation that divided Western Christendom and to move ever closer to the visible unity of the church.<sup>9</sup> Does this mean, then, that the LWF is ready to give up the ordination of women and open Communion, which the Roman Catholics do not allow, in order to achieve such a visible unity?<sup>10</sup> Herman Sasse observed that the modern ecumenical movement strives to ignore and remove confessional differences, and for this

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<sup>6</sup> Margot Kässmann, “*Ecclesia Reformata Semper Reformanda*: Challenges of the Reformation Jubilee 2017,” *Currents in Theology and Mission* 40 (December 2013): 413–423.

<sup>7</sup> Duane H. Larson, “Can Lutherans Recapture Youthfulness at Middle Age? Anticipating the 500th Anniversary of Luther’s Reformation,” *Dialog* 51 (Spring 2012): 3–4.

<sup>8</sup> Martin Junge, “Reformation and Enculturation: Toward the Five Hundredth Anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation,” *Word & World* 34 (Spring 2014): 118.

<sup>9</sup> Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity, *From Conflict to Communion: Lutheran-Catholic Common Commemoration of the Reformation in 2017* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2013).

<sup>10</sup> According to another recent publication, *Declaration on the Way*, which summarizes the consensus that is achieved by Lutherans and Roman Catholics since 1965, issues on women ordination and open Communion are counted among the “remaining differences.” That the Roman Catholics do not recognize the apostolic character of Lutheran ministry is taken for granted in this document because of a lack of apostolic succession among Lutherans. But while many Lutheran churches ordain women, the Roman Catholic Church considers itself “not authorized” to do so (The Declaration on the Way Task Force, *Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry and Eucharist* [Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2015], 89–90, 96–97). For the LWF, ordination of women is a social justice issue. Its booklet *Gender Justice Policy* urges churches that still do not ordain women to “prayerfully consider the effect that inaction and refusal on this matter has on those who are precluded from exercising their God-given calling because they are women” (The Lutheran World Federation, *Gender Justice Policy*, ed. Elaine Neuenfeldt [Geneva: The Lutheran World Federation, 2013], 6). The Office of the Holy Ministry is discussed from the baptismal text

sake, it is a continuation of what unionism of the nineteenth century endeavored to achieve.<sup>11</sup> There is plenty of evidence of such unresolved unionism around the world in Lutheranism today.<sup>12</sup>

## II. Awareness of Lutheran Characteristics

In 2000, David Scaer insightfully wrote, “Strangely, evangelicals are more aware of what is characteristically Lutheran than Lutherans are themselves, and are able to draw boundaries that restrict Lutheran views from permeating their circles. . . . Lutherans often naively acquiesce to these boundaries and unwittingly surrender their Reformation heritage.”<sup>13</sup> What, then, is characteristically Lutheran that Lutherans unwittingly surrender? As a Presbyterian scholar, Carl Trueman might give us an answer in his latest book, *Luther on the Christian Life*. He writes, “For many modern evangelicals, . . . private Bible study is central to their understanding of the Christian life, while sacraments are peripheral. . . . Luther’s piety was rooted in the gathering of the church, in the Word preached more than the Word read, and in the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper.”<sup>14</sup> Trueman continues, after extolling Baptism, the Lord’s Supper, and the Office of the Holy Ministry:

The popular phrase of “doing church” is thus entirely inappropriate within a Lutheran framework: Christians do not “do” church in any ultimate or definitive way. God “does” church. The minster—preaching, baptizing, and officiating at communion—is merely an instrument by which God achieves what he intends.

This is surely an antidote to the evangelical church’s perennial obsession with the big, the spectacular, the extraordinary, and the impressive. The quest for the next big thing that allows the church to ride the cultural wave, or the technical silver bullet that makes outreach and discipleship so much more

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of Galatians 3:27–28, as has typically been done among those who promote ordination of women (*Gender Justice Policy*, 4). The office is detached from the Lord and his dominical mandate here. Another issue is closed Communion. Concerning Communion practice, *Declaration on the Way* states that while Lutherans exercise eucharistic hospitality with open Communion, in the Roman Catholic Church, “Normally only those in full communion with the Catholic Church are invited to receive the sacrament” (*Declaration on the Way*, 112).

<sup>11</sup> Hermann Sasse, “Worldwide Lutheranism on the Way to Hanover,” trans. Andrew Smith, in *Letters to Lutheran Pastors*, ed. Matthew C. Harrison (St. Louis: Concordia, 2013), 1:418–419.

<sup>12</sup> See examples of the Lutheran churches in Asia in Naomichi Masaki, “The Reformation and Asia: Another Battleground of Confession and Liturgy,” *Journal of Lutheran Mission* 2 (September 2015): 62–66.

<sup>13</sup> David Scaer, “Is Reformation Theology Making a Comeback?” in Michael S. Horton ed., *A Confessing Theology for Postmodern Times* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2000), 156.

<sup>14</sup> Carl R. Trueman, *Luther on the Christian Life: Cross and Freedom* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2015), 22–23.

effective, would be entirely alien to Luther's way of thinking. Preach the Word and administer the sacraments: that is the minister's calling; these are the tools of his trade and the means by which he is to address pastoral problems. That they seem weak and ineffective from a technical perspective is irrelevant: their power and effectiveness come from the agent, God himself.<sup>15</sup>

As Lutherans, we are grateful for the clarity of the gospel in the doctrine of justification by faith. But from time to time, do we not we tend to emphasize the importance of the word of God at the expense of the particular gifts in preaching, Baptism, Holy Absolution, and the Lord's Supper, which usually comes with an inadequate view of the ministry? The words of Jesus are indeed central in the life of the church. Yet, Jesus did not institute Baptism or the Lord's Supper as alternative forms of his words. In each of his means of grace, unique gifts are given. In Baptism, his name; in the Lord's Supper, his body and blood. Characteristically Lutheran in the confession of the Lord's Supper are the doctrines of *unio sacramentalis* and *genus maijesticum* as the Formula of Concord has drawn them from the Scriptures (FC SD VII–VIII). Irene Dingel reminds us that Luther's authority did not originate from his "rediscovery" of the gospel alone, but from his faithful exposition of the *verba Domini*.<sup>16</sup> When there is hesitation to confess this, we are swallowed up by the Augustinian *signum* theory. Conversely, when the *signum* theory is overcome, there is the Reformation. Oswald Bayer has articulated in many of his writings that the reformational discovery in the strictest sense occurred when Luther saw the *signum* (sign) itself as the *res* (the thing).<sup>17</sup> Norman Nagel pushes this further to let us rejoice with every gift that our Lord has his way with us.<sup>18</sup> Since bread and wine are not

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<sup>15</sup> Trueman, *Luther on the Christian Life*, 158.

<sup>16</sup> Irene Dingel, "Luther's Authority in the Late Reformation and Protestant Orthodoxy," in *The Oxford Handbook of Martin Luther's Theology*, eds. Robert Kolb, Irene Dingel, and L'ubomír Batka (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 525–539.

<sup>17</sup> Oswald Bayer, "Luther as an Interpreter of Holy Scripture," in *The Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther*, ed. Donald K. McKim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 75–77; Oswald Bayer, *Theology the Lutheran Way*, eds. and trans. Jeffrey G. Silcock and Mark C. Mattes (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 129; Oswald Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology: A Contemporary Interpretation*, trans. Thomas H. Trapp (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 52; Oswald Bayer, "What is Evangelical? The Continuing Validity of the Reformation," *Lutheran Quarterly* 25 (Spring 2011): 6; Oswald Bayer, "How I Became a Luther Scholar," *Lutheran Quarterly* 27 (Autumn 2013): 251. In his "Luthers Fragen: Die Einsichten des Reformators müssen von evangelischen Christen immer wieder neu gewonnen werden," *Theologie* 19 (April 2015): 3–4, Bayer warns that we should not turn the Lord's Supper as a whole into a Eucharist. An English translation by Jeffrey G. Silcock appears as "Twenty Questions on the Relevance of Luther for Today" in *Lutheran Quarterly* 24 (Winter 2015): 439–443.

<sup>18</sup> Norman Nagel's articulation of how the gospel became clear to Luther is reflected in a collection of essays by his students in his second festschrift, *Dona Gratis Donata: Essays in Honor of Norman Nagel on the Occasion of His Ninetieth Birthday*, eds. Jon D. Vieker, Bart Day, and Albert B. Collver III (Manchester, MO: The Nagel Festschrift Committee, 2015).

mere signs of Jesus' body and blood, the Lord's Supper is not merely another form of the word or an event that happens to take place on Sunday mornings alone; rather, it is the heartbeat of the church. For this reason, Luther risked his life for the delivery of this gift of the Lord. He said that he would gladly walk over a hundred thousand miles to receive it.<sup>19</sup> It is astonishing and joyful that Jesus as God and man loves to serve us in his church by dwelling among us and even by giving his own body and blood for us to eat and to drink for forgiveness and consolation (SD VIII 76–79).

### III. The Reformation Piety in the Altarpiece of St. Mary in Wittenberg

That the Lord's Supper was central in the Lutheran piety in the sixteenth century is evidenced by the well-known altarpiece at St. Mary's, the City Church of Wittenberg.<sup>20</sup> This masterpiece by Lucas Cranach the Elder and the Younger is in many ways truly remarkable. Commissioned by the city of Wittenberg, it was installed in April 1547, after Luther's death and at the time the Smalcald League was defeated, the princely defender imprisoned, the city of Wittenberg captured, and the Interims imposed.<sup>21</sup> In view of these historical circumstances, and acknowledging the tragic event of the destruction of the images by Karlstadt a couple decades earlier

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<sup>19</sup> Martin Luther, *Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe* [Schriften], 65 vols. (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1883–1993), 30/2:616.11–13 (hereafter WA); Martin Luther, *Admonition Concerning the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Our Lord* (1530), vol. 38, p. 125, in *Luther's Works, American Edition*, vols. 1–30, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955–76); vols. 31–55, ed. Helmut Lehmann (Philadelphia/Minneapolis: Muhlenberg/Fortress, 1957–86); vols. 56–82, ed. Christopher Boyd Brown and Benjamin T. G. Mayes (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2009–), hereafter AE.

<sup>20</sup> A helpful resource on Cranach's contributions through his various retables is found in Bonnie Noble, *Lucas Cranach the Elder: Art and Devotion of the German Reformation* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2009). I owe much of my comments on the altarpiece in the City Church of Wittenberg to this work. Also see Thomas H. Schattauer, "From Sacrifice to Supper: Eucharistic Practice in the Lutheran Reformation," in *A Companion to the Eucharist in the Reformation* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 205–230; and Carl C. Christensen, *Art and the Reformation in Germany* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, and Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1979), 136–154.

<sup>21</sup> Cranach, who was a close friend of Luther, must have known the words of Luther in his commentary on Psalm 111 (1530): "Whoever is inclined to set up boards on the altar ought to have the Lord's Supper of Christ painted, with these two verses written around it in golden letters: 'The gracious and merciful Lord has instituted a remembrance of his wonderful works.' Then they would stand before our eyes there for our heart to contemplate them, and even our eyes, in reading, would have to praise and thank God. Since the altar is ordained for the administration of the Sacrament, one could not find a better painting for it. Other pictures of God or Christ can be painted somewhere else" (WA 31/1:415.23–31; cf. *Commentary on Psalm 111* [1530], AE 13:375). Luther was planning to write a hymn on the Lord's Supper, only to rediscover that the Holy Spirit had already composed a better and finer hymn in this Psalm 111. The above comment comes from his exposition of verse 4.



in 1522, the installation of this retable at St. Mary's Church was clearly a testimony to and confession of Christ.



Figure 1. Lucas Cranach the Elder, *Reformation Altarpiece*, 1447. Oil on panel. Stadt-und Pfarrkirche St. Marien zu Wittenberg, Germany. Photo by Naomichi Masaki.

The altarpiece consists of four panels. In the left wing, Melanchthon presides at an infant Baptism. As far as I know, he had never preached or baptized. This panel may be simply an honorific inclusion of Luther's closest colleague and a leader of the Reformation. Cranach may have wanted to draw people's attention to *infant* Baptism more than to Melanchthon. In the right wing, Bugenhagen conducts the Office of the Keys as pastor *in loco* at St. Mary's. To Bugenhagen's right is a penitent, humbly receiving Holy Absolution while kneeling. As a return and approach to Baptism, Holy Absolution puts him in close proximity to the Lord's Table. To Bugenhagen's left, on the other hand, is a man who tries to move away in bitterness. Bugenhagen's left hand looks to be pulling the key back, as though it

had been offered and rejected. The only other figure who is fleeing from the Christian community in this altarpiece is Judas.

The central panel depicts the Lord's Supper. The larger size indicates its vitality and weight in the life of the church. Jesus sits at a round table. John is sleeping comfortably in his lap. Judas looks distinguished from the rest by red hair and a bright yellow robe. Other Apostles are talking, making gestures, and eating. Interestingly, Cranach painted the faces of the Apostles to resemble people of St. Mary's congregation. Everyone could identify who they were. Among them is an Apostle in the figure of Luther, turning back and receiving the Lord's blood from a servant. Luther doesn't wear clerical or monastic garments. He is Junker Jörg, or Knight George of the lower nobility—a layman. Jesus and his Apostles sit before a window that opens up to a contemporary German landscape. This panel portrays the Lord's Supper as both heavenly and earthly at the same time. Jesus, the Savior who dwells in heaven as the ascended Lord, is physically there in his church. For our sake, he has arranged a particular place on earth so that we may find him with certainty. If we want our sins forgiven, we run to the Lord's Supper. If we wish to know where the true church is, we find it where the Lord's Supper is going on. A pastor does not receive any attention. In fact, he is not even there in this central panel. That is a Lutheran confession of the pastoral office. When a pastor serves the means of grace as the one in the office, people see Jesus alone. Has Cranach confused Jesus' Last Supper with his Holy Communion in the church? Of course not. At the Lord's Table, we sit with the Twelve, and the Apostles sit with us, even Luther. The Lord has but one church.

Finally, the fourth panel below this triptych is a familiar portrait of Luther as a preacher. The Bible rests open in the pulpit. Luther points to the looming Christ whose eyes seem to be still open and whose mouth is still moving. God made Jesus to be sin who knew no sin. Jesus bore our sin vicariously. Luther points to this Christ the crucified who alone achieved our salvation and preaches as if he were proclaiming, "Behold the Lamb!" or "Hear Him!" or "Be reconciled to God." The congregation listens to the sermon attentively. We see among the assembled Katharina von Bora with an infant in her lap, Luther's deceased daughter Magdalena standing behind Katie, and a bearded man near the back wall, Cranach himself. Christ's hands are open wide to suggest that his atoning sacrifice and the preaching of his crucifixion are the only foundation and source of Holy Baptism, Holy Absolution, and the Holy Supper above.

This profound and skillfully depicted Lutheran *externum verbum* piety in Cranach's altarpiece in Wittenberg may be contrasted with the medieval Catholic piety exemplified in Rogier van der Weyden's *Seven Sacraments Altarpiece* a century earlier. His left panel has Baptism, confirmation, and the sacrament of penance.

Ordination, marriage, and extreme unction are in the right-hand panel. At the center is an enormous crucifix with a depiction of the women in the passion narrative in the Gospels. Where do we find the Mass, the seventh sacrament? It is found in a far-back location where a priest stands before the carved retablo of the Virgin Mary celebrating the Mass with his back to the congregation. Painted is the crucial moment of the elevation of the host: the moment of transubstantiation. In this altarpiece, preaching does not occupy a space. There is no feast of a community like the round table in Cranach's altarpiece. The Mass is only one among a



Figure 2. Rogier van der Weyden, *Seven Sacraments Altarpiece*, c. 1445–1450. Oil on oak panel, 200 x 97 cm. Roayl Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen, Belgium. Public domain.

sevenfold sacramental system. Darkness, remoteness of the living Christ, and Christians not engaging with the world illustrate an utter absence of the vitality of the gospel. Ascending and upward Christian piety dominates in this altarpiece in stark contrast to the *externum verbum* piety of the Cranach altarpiece.

During the anniversary years of the Reformation, we get to examine and diagnose how we have been receiving the Lord's gifts. The point of consideration is our receiving rather than our doing. The anniversary is not for us to seek romantically to repeat the unrepeatable. The question is concerning the relevancy of the

Reformation today.<sup>22</sup> Where the faithful confession of Jesus is, there lives on the vitality of the Lord's liturgy. Luther's *Lectures on Galatians* is like the preaching panel in Cranach's altarpiece. It will help us examine whether the doctrine with which the church stands or falls remains whole among us.

### III. Luther's *Galatians*: Its Popularity and Criticism

At the heart of Luther's *Lectures on Galatians* is the doctrine of the proper distinction between law and gospel.<sup>23</sup> While Luther's contemporary opponents failed to see this—whether they were the papists, enthusiasts, Anabaptists, Sacramentarians, or antinomians—law/gospel articulation defined Luther's legacy in the thinking of his colleagues, students, and generations after him.<sup>24</sup> The same

<sup>22</sup> In his "Twenty Questions on the Relevance of Luther for Today," Oswald Bayer poses personal questions on the relevance of the Reformation today that are specific to the pastoral office.

<sup>23</sup> Luther emphasized with strong language that the doctrine of the proper distinction between law and gospel is "our theology." It contains, he maintained, "the summary of whole Christian doctrine" and "keeps all genuine theology in its true use." Therefore, "Whoever knows well how to distinguish the Law and the Gospel is a theologian" (Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* [1535], WA 40/1:45.24–27 [AE 26:7]; WA 40/1:209.11–12 [AE 26:117]; WA 40 1:511.31–32 [AE 26:331]; WA 40/1:207.17–18 [AE 26:115]. Cf. WA 40/1:204.11–15 [AE 26:113]; WA 40/1:207.19–28 [AE 26:115]; WA 40/1:208.16–25 [AE 26:116]; WA 40/1:209.16–23 [AE 26:117]; WA 40/1:336.32–337.22 [AE 26:208–209]; WA 40/1:486.17–487.14 [AE 26:313], WA 40/1:519.34–520.24 [AE 26:337]; WA 40/1:617.24–30 [AE 26:406–407]). Later in his life, Luther recalled his theological development: "But when I discovered the distinction—namely, that the Law is one thing and the Gospel is another—then I had the break-through" ("*aber do ich das discrimen fande, quod aliud esset lex, aliud euangelium, da riß ich her durch*") (Luther, "Table Talk recorded by Caspar Heydenreich" [1542–1543], WA TR 5:210.12–16, no. 5518 [AE 54:442]). In his *Lectures on Galatians*, Luther said that the law and the gospel are "two entirely contrary doctrine" (*Ideo lex et Evangelium duae prorsus contrariae doctrinae sunt*) (WA 40/1:336.35–337.14 [AE 26:208]; cf. WA 40/1:520.25–27 [AE 26:337]).

<sup>24</sup> FC SD III 67 recommends the readers to review "the wonderful, magnificent exposition by Dr. Luther of St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians." (All quotations from the Lutheran Confessions in this article are from Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, trans. Charles Arand, et al. [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000].) The source of this statement comes from the Torgau Book of 1576 (Irene Dingel, ed., *Die Bekenntnisschriften der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche: Quellen und Materialien* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014], 2:407.29–33). The mention of Luther's *Lectures on Galatians* in SD III reflects Nicholas Selnecker's recommendation at the Lichtenberg Conference a couple of months earlier to adopt it in addition to the three ecumenical creeds, the unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology, the Smalcald Articles, and the Small and the Large Catechisms as the new *corpus doctrinae* to replace the Wittenberg Catechism, the *Consensus Dresdenis*, and *Corpus Philippicum* (F. Bente, *Historical Introductions to the Lutheran Confessions*, 2nd ed. [St. Louis: Concordia, 2005], 575). On the place of Luther's *Lectures on Galatians* in his funeral sermons and oration by Jonas, Coelius, Bugenhagen, and Melanchthon, see my work, "Luther Memoria on the Occasion of his Death" in Irene Dingel, ed., *Memoria-Theologische Synthese-Autoritätenkonflikt: Die Rezeption Luthers und Melanchthons in der Schülergeneration* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 69–87. The influence and reception of Luther's *Galatians* among the later sixteenth-century Lutheran fathers is articulated by Robert Kolb in his works, "The Influence of Luther's *Galatians*

pattern is found today also. During the past several decades, those who are sympathetic to the JDDJ, the New Perspective on Paul (NPP), and the New Finnish Interpretation of Luther (NFIL) have expressed their disagreement with Luther's confession of law and gospel in one way or another. Intended or not, some of the common features among the deniers of the proper distinction may be traceable to the theologies of Karl Barth, Albrecht Ritschl, Johannes von Hofmann, and Friedrich Schleiermacher.<sup>25</sup> Faithful Lutherans of our time have been responding to their various charges.

#### IV. Luther Preaches as He Lectures

In hearing Luther's exposition of the epistle, we immediately recognize Luther's homiletical lecture style rather than a more formal academic style of narrative explanations of the sacred text.<sup>26</sup> This does not mean that his lectures were not scholarly enough or objective enough. Rather, it indicates that Luther was teaching at the university as a pastor in the office. Ronald Rittgers observes that the driving force in Luther's entire career, whether as a professor, theologian, or preacher, was *cura animarum* (care of souls), concrete ways in which Jesus deals with sinners, baptized or not.<sup>27</sup> Such an assertion corresponds to a reflection of Theodor Kliefoth when he wrote that the Reformation was basically a restoration of Confession and Absolution.<sup>28</sup>

For Luther, theology was not about abstract notions, concepts, or ideals, because that would be a show of man's pretention and the devil's illusion. He was not interested in constructing a systematic theology using the law as its basic structure or the love of God as the organizing principle.<sup>29</sup> For Luther, the fact

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Commentary of 1535" and *Martin Luther as Prophet, Teacher, and Hero: Images of the Reformer, 1520–1620* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999).

<sup>25</sup> Concerning the contemporary law and gospel debate with Luther's Galatians, see my work "Luther on Law and Gospel in His *Lectures on Galatians* 1531/1535," in *The Necessary Distinction: A Continuing Conversation on Law & Gospel*, ed. Steven D. Paulson et al. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2017), 135–167.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Kolb, "The Influence of Luther's Galatians Commentary of 1535," 161.

<sup>27</sup> Ronald K. Rittgers, "How Luther's Engagement in Pastoral Care Shaped His Theology," in *The Oxford Handbook of Martin Luther's Theology*, 462–470. The Formula of Concord gives a brilliant summary of how Jesus as both God and man wants to deal with the saints in a manner of bestowing on them his own flesh and blood. "He instituted his Holy Supper as a certain assurance and confirmation of this, that also in the nature according to which he has flesh and blood he wants to be with us, to dwell in us, to work in us, and to exert his power for us" (FC SD VIII 79).

<sup>28</sup> Theodor Kliefoth, *Die Beichte und Absolution*, vol. 2 of *Liturgische Abhandlungen* (Schwerin: Stiller, 1856), 125.

<sup>29</sup> In his *Lectures on Galatians*, Luther warns against imposing our ideas on the word of God in reading and hearing the Scriptures (WA 40/2:36.24–37.25 [AE 27:28–30]). Luther's theological point of departure was man's condition before God as a sinner. For example, in the Smalcald

remained that life was under *tentatio*<sup>30</sup>—the daily battle against the devil, the world, and sinful flesh. Man is a sinner *bottomlessly*.<sup>31</sup> If one wishes to treat the word of God by positioning himself above it, then his theology will resemble a scientist who investigates the poison of a snake by googling. Instead, he should realize that the snake is already around his neck. Luther may not have been joking when he said at a dinner table one evening, “Tomorrow I have to lecture on the drunkenness of Noah (Gen 9:20–27), so I should drink enough this evening to be able to talk about that wickedness as one who knows by experience.”<sup>32</sup> Luther consistently stayed under the word. He listened to the voice of Jesus without pretention, and he delivered his lectures with passion.

### V. Luther’s Theological Opponents

Over the course of his *Lectures on Galatians*, Luther repeated a simple statement that the law was given not to justify, but to terrify, accuse, and kill.<sup>33</sup> This was not a mere critique of works righteousness for Luther. It was his observation of an overarching problem in all of his theological opponents, the papacy, the enthusiasts, the Sacramentarians, and the antinomians alike.<sup>34</sup> Luther was also fighting against the

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Articles, before confessing the law and the gospel, Luther deals with sin (SA III I–IV). Less than a year after the completion of his Galatians lectures, Luther said that the subject of theology was never God in himself or our projection of who God should be, but the fact of man as sinning and of Jesus as justifying the sinner (*Nam Theologiae proprium subiectum est homo peccati reus ac perditus et Deus iustificans ac salvator hominis peccatoris*) (Luther, *Psalm 51* [1532], WA 40/2:328.17–18 [AE 12:311]). These lectures took place from June to August of 1532). Cf. Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:406.24–25 (AE 26:259): “*Cum tamen iustificare peccatorem sit solius Christi proprium officium.*”

<sup>30</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:318.12 (AE 26:193); WA 40/1:321.27–33 (AE 26:196).

<sup>31</sup> Here, the expression “bottomless” (*grundlos*) was employed from Luther’s Smalcald Articles III II 4. In the *Lectures on Galatians*, Luther observes that man is indifferent to sin, regarding sin as something trivial—a mere nothing. Man does not know the weight and force of sin, thus he supposes some little work or merit of his own will remove it. It is a foreign concept to him that the word *sin* includes the eternal wrath of God and the entire kingdom of Satan (WA 40/1:84.12–24 [AE 26:33]).

<sup>32</sup> Luther, *Table Talk*, as recorded by Anthony Lauterbach and Jerome Weller (1536–1537), WA TR 3:344.19–20 (AE 54:206).

<sup>33</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:44.12–16 (AE 26:6); WA 40/1:48.16–17 (AE 26:9); WA 40/1:73.21–22 (AE 26:26); WA 40/1:403.21–23 (AE 26:256); WA 40/1:479.12–13 (AE 26:308); WA 40/1:480.32–481.25 (AE 26:309–310); WA 40/1:482.12–483.15 (AE 26:310); WA 40/1:486.13–16 (AE 26:313); WA 40/1:511.24–30 (AE 26:331); WA 40/1:529.11–14 (AE 26:345); WA 40/1:554.27–555.19 (AE 26:363); WA 40/2:8.18–20 (AE 27:7–8); WA 40/2:16.20–23 (AE 27:14); etc.

<sup>34</sup> Luther did a similar thing when he dismissed all the heretical doctrine of the Lord’s Supper by saying that for them, the sacrament was “something that we do” (*ein ding, das wir thun*) (LC V 7). Whether playing some effective role before God through works/ethics (Rome),

most powerful and attractive opinion that is inherent in man at the same time: the law as the original way of salvation. This is what human hearts say.<sup>35</sup>

Luther's harsh criticism of the merit of congruity and the merit of condignity as speculations and the tricks of Satan should be construed within such a theological diagnosis.<sup>36</sup> The scholastic theology culminated in the tradition of Gabriel Biel carried with it the ongoing attempts to structure theology under the shadow of ancient philosophies.<sup>37</sup> When philosophies of Plato and Aristotle were used to organize Christian theology, the church naturally rejected their notion that there is no Creator. Nevertheless, the basic structure of a movement from lower to higher (Plato) or from a cause to an effect (Aristotle) was retained. God was thought to preserve the perfect eternal order in the world. When scholasticism moved up to its late period, nominalism destroyed the firm relation between faith and reason of the earlier periods by freeing God from acting by necessity. But the basic structure remained the same.<sup>38</sup> The law existed to preserve everything in its place and protect

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mysticism/emotions (Karlstadt), or reason/speculation (the Swiss), Luther discerned that his opponents had one common point of departure: *something in us*.

<sup>35</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:474.21–24 (AE 26:305).

<sup>36</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:220.4–237.24 (AE 26:124–35); WA 40/1:290.33–296.22 (AE 26:172–76); WA 40/1:302.32–305.13 (AE 26:181–83); WA 40/1:453.22–456.16 (AE 26:291–93); WA 40/1:468.17–22 (AE 26:301); WA 40/1:511.12–24 (AE 26:330–31); WA 40/1:571.15–573.20 (AE 26:374–75); WA 40/2: 34.10–20 (AE 27:28). Cf. Ap IV 19, 146, 167, 356.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Heiko A. Oberman, *The Harvest of Medieval Theology: Gabriel Biel and Late Medieval Nominalism*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1983); Heiko A. Oberman, "Luther and the Via Moderna: The Philosophical Backdrop of the Reformation Breakthrough," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 54 (October 2003): 641–670; Bengt Häggglund, *The Background of Luther's Doctrine of Justification in Late Medieval Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971); Denis R. Janz, "Late Medieval Theology," in *The Cambridge Companion to Reformation Theology*, eds. David Bagchi and David Steinmetz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 5–14; Alister E. McGrath, *Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1–187; Theodor Dieter, "Luther as Late Medieval Theologian: His Positive and Negative Use of Nominalism and Realism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Martin Luther's Theology*, 31–48.

<sup>38</sup> In Plato, the always-changing (becoming) physical and empirical world was contrasted with the ever unchanging (being) world of the eternal ideas. The former is the shadow or copy of the latter. In turn, the latter exists as a goal and purpose of the former. Since the world of eternal ideas is sufficient in itself, if these two worlds should relate with each other, it was the sensible world that has to move toward the nonsensible by way of imitation. This upward movement of drawing near to the world of ideas takes place because the sensible world yearns for the return to the nonsensible world where it used to belong (*anamnesis*). Plato thought that man lives in both worlds. Man's happiness is achieved when his soul is freed from the physical world of imprisonment as his reason disciplines his fleshly desires. Yet man's happiness is not fully accomplished individually. The nation to which he belongs should also follow the same pattern of movement and maintaining a common good order.

Aristotle rejected his master's idea of the world of ideas. He reduced the two independent worlds into one, seeing the ideas only within the *ousia* in the empirical world. For Aristotle, each substance consists in matter and form. And every substance is changing (becoming) in a movement of a matter (*dynamis*) to a form (*energeia*). Because every substance has a movement, there has to

the entire structure in the world from chaos. But disorder was inevitable. So Christ came to the world to fix the muddle by providing a new law. In these late scholastic views, the law was considered inherently good, as it was given to conserve God's eternal order and to protect man from descending to a lower order in his sin. The law was also the ultimate. The goodness of man's life was considered in a realm of moral achievement.

## VI. Luther and Conscience

Luther frequently used the word *conscientia* ("conscience") in his *Lectures on Galatians*. In our time, conscience is normally understood as a faculty or judgment that assists in distinguishing right from wrong. While this view resembles a scholastic view of Thomas Aquinas, Luther employed the term quite differently. Conscience meant more than moral principles for Luther. It was a sense of man's standing in relation to God.<sup>39</sup>

According to Michael Baylor, who attempted to understand Luther's view of conscience from the Scriptures, the early church fathers, the *via antiqua* of Thomas, and the *via moderna* of Ockham and Biel, the crucial difference that emerged in Luther as the gospel became clearer to him was found foremost in the

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be the beginning point and the ending point. Aristotle called the most elemental and imaginative matter that subsists without a form the prime matter, and the highest substance that exists without a matter he called the unmoved mover. When Aristotle devised the unmoved mover as god, his notion moved closer to Plato. In both, god is immaterial substance. In both, god never moves toward the empirical world. The movement of things in the world is only upward, toward the goal of this unmoved mover or the world of ideas. God is self-sufficient. His activity consists in eternal self-contemplation. In terms of the living thing, Aristotle thought it to be a union of body (matter) and soul (form). Again, there is a hierarchy within the living thing. The plant (the lower soul) is lower than the animal (the higher soul) because the lower soul engages in actions related to nutrition and reproduction alone, while the higher soul also possesses emotions and desires. Man is placed as the highest in the hierarchy, because only man possesses reason, which is related to the self-contemplation of the unmoved mover. For Aristotle, the highest goodness is found in a life that is guided by this reason. Reason controls emotions and desires, and in this way, man spends a morally upright life for the common good of a nation. Cf. Takeo Iwasaki, *Seiyo Tetsugaku Shi*, rev. ed. (Tokyo: Yuhikaku, 1975), 10–120; Diogenes Allen, *Philosophy for Understanding Theology* (Atlanta: John Know, 1985), 15–169; James A. Nestingen, "Changing Definitions: The Law in Formula VI," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 69 (2005): 259–70; Robert Kolb, *Martin Luther: Confessor of the Faith* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 11–71.

<sup>39</sup> For example, Luther speaks of the location of Christian freedom in the conscience. "This is the freedom out of which Christ has set us free, not from some human slavery or tyrants but from the eternal wrath of God. Where? In the conscience. This is where our freedom comes to a halt; it goes no further. For Christ has set us free, not politically or physically but theologically and spiritually, that is, to make our conscience free and joyful, unafraid of the wrath to come. This is the most genuine freedom; it is priceless" (Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* [1535], WA 40/2:3.20–25 [AE 27:4]; cf. WA 40/1:47.26–48.20 [AE 26:8–9]; etc).



object of conscience.<sup>40</sup> To be sure, there were differences within the scholasticism. For example, in the *via antiqua* of Thomas, conscience renders judgment according to general moral knowledge innately present in all men, while in the *via moderna* of Biel, the standard of judgment becomes the revealed law of the Scriptures. But in both traditions, the conscience judges about *individual moral actions* in light of their conformity or lack of conformity to universal moral principles.<sup>41</sup> Luther, however, spoke of the conscience as judging *the person as a whole*, the agent of the actions, not simply the actions themselves.<sup>42</sup> For Luther, a bad conscience is more than one that experiences regret about *past actions*. It goes deeper. The guilty conscience suffers under the impact of a divine judgment that condemns and rejects *that person himself*. Good or bad consciences are not so much emotional conditions that relate to individual actions—like how you feel bad when you violate the law and you feel good when you fulfill it. Rather, they are the conditions that result when a man experiences either the wrath of God over his person that is revealed in the law or the merciful judgment that is conveyed in the gospel.<sup>43</sup>

The late scholastic tradition held that man is, in principle, capable of knowing and keeping the moral principles. Luther did not hold to this. The conscience is not autonomous. It has to be taught by Scripture. In the late scholastics, man's sin was in the area of actual sins. In Luther, it was original sin—you do not merely *have* problems, you *are* the problem! The scholastics viewed the law as precepts that must be fulfilled in order to attain salvation. For Luther, the law uncovers sin and reveals a judgment of God about the person.

“As soon as reason and the law are joined, faith immediately loses its virginity.”<sup>44</sup> Insightful words such as these from Luther reveal his profound awareness of the context in which man is given to exist. He agonized over the fact that not one of his opponents comprehended either the law or the gospel.<sup>45</sup> For Luther, the place of daily struggle for the Christian was not found in a cosmic

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<sup>40</sup> Michael G. Baylor, *Action and Person: Conscience in Late Scholasticism and the Young Luther* (Leiden: Brill, 1977).

<sup>41</sup> Baylor, *Action and Person*, 20–118.

<sup>42</sup> Baylor, *Action and Person*, 157–272.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. SA III II 1–5; III III 1–3.

<sup>44</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:204.17–18 (AE 26:113): “*Quam primum autem Lex et ratio coniunguntur, statim virginitas fidei violata est.*”

<sup>45</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:480.32–483.13 (AE 26:309–10); WA 40/1:485.9–22 (AE 26:312).

arena but in the conscience, the most difficult location.<sup>46</sup> And it is there where the proper distinction between law and gospel is to be made.<sup>47</sup>

## VII. Sin and the Proper Office of the Law

Against the rest of the theological world and human traditions, Luther rejected the notion that the law describes what man is supposed to do within the structure of the eternal order. Instead, he viewed the law as what it actually does: it kills.<sup>48</sup> Man in his weakness and sinfulness is capable of reducing the law to a mere command, a rule, a system, a structure—a neat little package that is not threatening. Luther lamented that not only the sophists and monks but also the majority of those who hear the word do not struggle with sin, death, and the devil.<sup>49</sup> The law, indeed, does give requirements. But beyond the commandment, the law exercises power and force.<sup>50</sup> Man can no longer make use of the law to organize his life and to take control of his way of living. The law kills and condemns, and it does so in a number of ways.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:95.19–96.11 (AE 26:40–41); WA 40/1:539.34–541.35 (AE 26:352–53); WA 40/2:178.16–179.24 (AE 27:139–141).

<sup>47</sup> Luther says, “*Ideo quisque diligenter discat discernere legem ab Evangelio, non tantum verbis, sed etiam ipso affectu et experientia, hoc est in corde et conscientia ista duo bene distinguat. Alioqui quantum ad verba attinet, facilis est illorum distinctio. Sed quando ad experientiam venit, tum invenis Evangelium rarum et e contra legem assiduum esse hospitem in conscientia.*” “Let everyone learn diligently to distinguish the Law from the Gospel, not only in words but in feeling and in experience. That is, in his heart and in his conscience let him distinguish well between these two. As far as the words are concerned the distinction is easy. But when it comes to experience, you will find the Gospel a rare guest but the Law a constant guest in your conscience” (*Lectures on Galatians* [1535], WA 40/1:209.17–22 [AE 26:117]). Luther also says, “*Sic pulchre distinguit Paulus tempus legis et gratiae. Discamus et nos recte distinguere utriusque tempus, non verbis sed affectu, id quod est omnium difficillimum.*” “Thus so beautifully does Paul distinguish between the time of Law and (the time) of grace. Let us learn to distinguish the times of both, not in words but in feeling, which is the most difficult” (WA 40/1:527.21–23 [AE 26:343]; cf. WA 40/1:47.26–29 [AE 26:8–9]).

<sup>48</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:336.32–337.22 (AE 26:208–209); WA 40/1:257.28–32 (AE 26:148–149).

<sup>49</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:84.12–24 (AE 26:33); WA 40/1:618.11–17 (AE 26:407); WA 40/2:90.12–21 (AE 27:71); cf. WA 40/1:236.17–22 (AE 26:134); WA 40/1:484.32–485.22 (AE 26:312).

<sup>50</sup> Luther summarizes his thinking of the law in *Theses concerning Faith and Law* (1535), WA 39/1:50.20–35 (AE 34:116), when he expounds on Romans 3:28: “34. It is firmly established, therefore, that Paul is speaking *not only of moral law, but also of its total power (potenta) and force (vi)*. 35. Man, the rational animal, does not even understand its *force*, much less is he able to judge and teach it. 36. Its *force*, however, and *power* is to *slay* (occidere), or to *show that sin must be punished with eternal death*. 37. When a man really begins to feel this force, with the Spirit reproving him, he soon despairs of God’s mercy. 38. But despair of God’s mercy is the greatest sin and is unforgivable unless grace cancels it in suitable time. 39. Such then truly are these greatest works which man does according to God’s moral law. 40. This is what Paul says, that through the law sin is made sinful beyond measure; through the law sin slays me; and the law brings wrath [Rom. 5:20–21; 4:15]. 41. A man never sins more terribly than in that moment when he begins to feel or understand the law” (emphases added). Cf. FC SD V 10–27.

To demonstrate how many forms the law can take, Luther presented the discussion on two kinds of righteousness at the beginning of his lectures. Christian righteousness is only one. It is the doctrine of faith, grace, and forgiveness. It is *passive*.<sup>51</sup> But outside this Christian righteousness, there are many other forms of righteousness, such as political righteousness, ceremonial righteousness, human traditions established by parents and teachers, moral discipline, and the Decalogue. These kinds of righteousness are all *active*.<sup>52</sup>

The proper office of the law is to make guilty those who are smug and at peace,<sup>53</sup> as the law reveals to man his sin, blindness, misery, wickedness, ignorance, hate and contempt of God, death, hell, judgment, and well-deserved wrath of God.<sup>54</sup> The law accuses and terrifies the conscience. The office of the law is only to kill.<sup>55</sup> Luther saw the organic relation between the proper distinction and the Lord's Supper here. The papacy, the Sacramentarians, and the Anabaptists blasphemed the body and blood of Christ because they failed to understand the proper office and use of the law.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Luther says that man works nothing and renders nothing to God. Man only receives and suffers someone else to work in him. This passive righteousness comes to man as rain, a free gift of God in Christ.

<sup>52</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:41.15–51.34 (AE 26:4–12). Luther expressed the same thought when he stated later in his lectures, “*Whatever* is not grace is Law, whether it be judicial, ceremonial, or the Decalogue” (WA 40/1:218.7–8 [AE 26:122], emphasis added). In the second set of theses in his second disputation against the antinomians (1538), Luther stated in thesis 18, “*Whatever* shows sin, wrath, and death exercises the office of the Law, be it in the Old or in the New Testament” (WA 39/1:348.25–26, Sonntag ed., *Only the Decalogue Is Eternal*, 80. Emphasis added). FC SD V 12 also states, “*Everything* that proclaims something about our sin and God's wrath is the proclamation of the law, *however and whenever it may take place*” (emphasis added).

<sup>53</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:257.19–22 (AE 26:148). By using the term *proper*, he contrasted another use of the law in the political and civic realm. Luther presents two uses of the law: (1) political/civic, and (2) theological/spiritual. Both confine men in a prison. But the latter is the “true and proper use of the Law” (WA 40/1:519.34–520.24 [AE 26:337]).

<sup>54</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:480.32–481.25 (AE 26:309–310).

<sup>55</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:517.26 (AE 26:335). In the lectures, we encounter Luther's employment of many illustrations on this chief office of the law. His favorite one is that of the hammer of God drawn from Jeremiah 23:29. Man has a huge rock and a solid wall to protect (imprison) himself in the presumption of his own righteousness, immense pride, self-trust, smugness, hate of God, contempt of grace and mercy, and ignorance of the promises of Christ. This huge and horrible monster must be crushed and completely broken. If not, man suffers from two crucial consequences. First, he will never come to know himself as a sinner, not merely civically and morally but also theologically, not only outwardly but also in his conscience, and not only before men but also before God. Second, he will never experience that the proclamation of the forgiveness of sins enters his heart and understanding (WA 40/1:482.12–483.13 [AE 26:310]). Luther repeated the illustration of the law as the hammer in SA III III 2.

<sup>56</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:485.9–22 (AE 26:312).

Luther also predicted that after his time, this proper office of the law would be obscured again and would be completely wiped out.<sup>57</sup> Luther was a true prophet!

### VIII. The Proper Office of Christ

When the proper office of the law approaches man, it strips the self-righteous, self-excusing sinner of every credential and covering. It strikes him dumb. It makes him guilty. It humbles him. It leads him to hell.<sup>58</sup> However, this is not the end of the story. The Lord does this to a sinner so that he may be able to make him alive.<sup>59</sup> He strikes in order to heal. He kills in order to make alive. When the user of the law is the Lord God himself, the proper office of the law is not separated from the proper office of the gospel.

According to the Smalcald Articles, such a proper office of the gospel is the preaching of the forgiveness of sins.<sup>60</sup> In the *Lectures on Galatians*, however, instead of the office of the *gospel*, Luther speaks of the office of *Christ*. This office is twofold. First, Luther confesses that the proper office of Christ is “to wrestle with the Law, sin, and death of the whole world, and to wrestle in such a way that He endures them, but, by enduring them, conquers them and abolishes them in Himself, and in this way frees us from the Law and from every evil.”<sup>61</sup> Here we observe Luther’s understanding of the relationship of Christ with the law. Although Jesus is the Lord of the law, he is confessed as the receiver of the law and not the giver. Christ relates to the law *passively*. He was born under the law. He voluntarily (*sponte*) subjected Himself to it in his ministry. He did this so that the law may rage against him as much as it does against an accursed and condemned sinner, and even more fiercely. The law accused Jesus of blasphemy and sedition. It found him guilty before God of all the sins of the whole world. It frightened him to the point of the bloody sweat in Gethsemane. Finally, it sentenced him to death, even to death on the cross.<sup>62</sup> Luther confesses that in such a passive way, Jesus achieved the forgiveness of sins

<sup>57</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:484.32–485.9 (AE 26:312).

<sup>58</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:519.11–12 (AE 26:345).

<sup>59</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:517.26–30 (AE 26:335); WA 40/1:529.11–14 (AE 26:345); WA 40/1:534.17 (AE 26:348).

<sup>60</sup> SA III IV: “Erstlich durchs mündlich wort, darinn gepredigt wird vergebung der sunden inn alle wet, welchs ist das eigentliche Ampt des Evangelii.” “. . . primum per verbum vocale, quo iubet praedicari remissionem peccatorum in universe mundo. Et hoc est proprium officium Evangelii.”

<sup>61</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:569.18–21 (AE 26:373): “Quare Christi verum et proprium officium est, luctari cum lege, peccato et morte totius mundi, et sic luctari, ut ista sustineat et sustinendo in Semetipso vincat et aboleat et hoc modo nos a lege et omnibus malis liberet.” By asserting this, Luther explains that teaching the law and performing miracles are his accidental offices. They are not the chief reasons for his coming (WA 40/1:568.25–569.14, 569.21–24 [AE 26:372–373]).

<sup>62</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:564.26–565.17 (AE 26:369–370).

for all people. It was not through force and might, but through weakness and powerlessness. Against his sin, Luther found another sin, that which is in the flesh of Christ.<sup>63</sup> Christ is “my law, my sin, and my death,” Luther exclaimed.<sup>64</sup> In his own body, Jesus destroyed the wrath of the law.<sup>65</sup>

Second, while Luther spoke of the true office of Christ as bearing our sin, he also continued, saying: “It is the proper office of Christ alone to justify the sinner.”<sup>66</sup> Luther frequently spoke of Jesus as “going to the Father.” This was not merely to express Jesus’ victory, but also to confess his ongoing ministry of delivering the forgiveness of sins in the world.<sup>67</sup> How does Jesus justify the sinner now?<sup>68</sup> Jesus justifies the sinner through preaching.<sup>69</sup> He also preserves the saints by preaching justification.<sup>70</sup> The gospel comes to sinners in more than one way. It is cheering

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<sup>63</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:273.17–32 (AE 26:159–160).

<sup>64</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:278.20–29 (AE 26:163).

<sup>65</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:503.19–504.21 (AE 26:325). The true office of Christ is to *bear* our sin, not just some of our sins but all of our sins and sinfulness, not just small sins but sins of any size and magnitude. For Luther, Jesus is not the Savior because he overlooks our sins or ignores them as if they did not exist. Neither did Jesus merely perform what we were unable to do. Man’s sins and his sinfulness are as real as Jesus who suffered and shed his blood on the cross. Jesus wrestled with the law, sin, and death, and by doing so, he answered for them all vicariously and as our substitute. “And all the prophets saw this, that Christ was to become the greatest thief, murderer, adulterer, robber, desecrator, blasphemer, etc., there has ever been anywhere in the world. . . . He is a sinner, who has and bears the sin of Paul, the former blasphemer, persecutor, and assaulter; of Peter, who denied Christ; of David, who was an adulterer and a murderer, and who caused the Gentiles to blaspheme the name of the Lord (Romans 2:24). In short, He has and bears all the sins of all men in His body—not in the sense that He has committed them but in the sense that He took these sins, committed by us, upon His own body, in order to make satisfaction for them with His own blood” (WA 40/1:433.26–434.12 [AE 26:277–278]). When Luther expounds the office of Jesus in the lectures, he gets so excited that he forgets he is teaching in the university classroom, and he begins to preach. The proper office of Christ is not a description of a thing. It is preaching of Christ crucified. It does not belong to a classroom, but to a liturgical assembly where the Lord’s liturgy goes on!

<sup>66</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:406.24–25 (AE 26:259): “*iustificare peccatorem sit solius Christi proprium officium*.”

<sup>67</sup> E.g., Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:361.12–362.14 (AE 26:227–228). Here is summarized all that Luther wished to say about Christian righteousness. Jesus achieved the forgiveness on the cross by passively receiving all the accusations and attacks of the law and its associates, sin, the devil, death, and the world. But he was not done for when he died on the cross. He was raised from the dead and now is seated at the right hand of God. Jesus alone is the one who justifies the sinners now. From our human point of view, Christian righteousness is to receive his justification. Christian righteousness is, once again, completely passive.

<sup>68</sup> Or as Luther poses the question, “Why should we listen to the Gospel? What need is there of the sacrament and of absolution?” “*Quid igitur audiamus Evangelium, quid opus est Sacramento et absolutione?*” (WA 40/1:538.13–14 [AE 26:350]).

<sup>69</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:336.32–337.22, 343.33–345.30 (AE 26:208–209, 214–215).

<sup>70</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:534.30–538.35 (AE 26:349–351).

to read how Luther teaches on Baptism,<sup>71</sup> the Lord's Supper, and Holy Absolution in this context.<sup>72</sup>

### IX. Justification and the Office of the Holy Ministry

The way of the gospel is not by coercion. The gospel does not demand; it bestows Christ's gifts freely. The gospel *bids* us (*iubet nos*) to hold out our hands and receive what is offered.<sup>73</sup> Jesus gives. We only receive. We don't even *permit* him to work in us and toward us. Faith passively *suffers* (*patimur*) his gracious work in us and for us.<sup>74</sup> In this way, the baptized get to live in the fellowship of the church<sup>75</sup> where Jesus' ongoing ministry of delivering his gifts takes place.<sup>76</sup>

The Office of the Holy Ministry is a confession of such an ongoing ministry of Jesus. Luther acknowledges that when he was a young theologian and doctor, he did not understand that the *rite vocatus* was such a weighty matter.<sup>77</sup> But as his understanding of the doctrine of the proper distinction between law and gospel became clearer, his confession of the Office of the Holy Ministry also matured.<sup>78</sup> Luther follows Paul in the first two chapters of Galatians and testifies that the certainty of the call and ordination gives comfort both to hearers and to pastors. People are comforted because when they hear the voice and see the hands of their pastor, they know for sure that it is Jesus who ministers to them. The pastor is also comforted when he realizes that the reason he preaches and administers the sacraments is because his Lord Jesus called him, put him there, and assured him that the Lord himself is there in the office to carry out the ministry. As in the Book

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<sup>71</sup> For example, when Luther presents Baptism as a new birth and a new creation, he dismisses a *signum* theory (*non signum*) and calls Baptism the garment of Christ (*Lectures on Galatians* [1535], WA 40/1:539.34–541.35 [AE 26:352–353]) and Christ himself (*ipsum Christum*) (WA 40/1:541.32–33 [AE 26:353]). In baptizing the sinner, Jesus is the Justifier (*Iustificator*), Lifegiver (*Vivificator*), and Redeemer (*Redemptor*). To put on Christ in Baptism does not mean to imitate him by the works of the law but to receive “an inestimable gift of the forgiveness, righteousness, peace, comfort, joy in the Holy Spirit, salvation, life, and Christ Himself” (WA 40/1:540.33–541.20 [AE 26:352–353]).

<sup>72</sup> E.g., Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:51.14–17 (AE 26:11).

<sup>73</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:337 (AE 26:208): “*Contra Evangelium non exigit, sed donat gratis et iubet nos porrectis minibus oblate accipere.*” In the gospel delivery context such as this, we prefer “bidding” rather than “command” as a translation of *inbeo* in order to avoid an impression of demand and coercion. The Lord bids us to hear his comforting voice of the gospel. He bids us to come to the Lord's Table to receive his body to eat and his blood to drink.

<sup>74</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:41.17–21 (AE 26:4–5).

<sup>75</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:576.21–25 (AE 26:378).

<sup>76</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:387.21–388.17 (AE 26:245–246).

<sup>77</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:63.19–22 (AE 26:20).

<sup>78</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:54.15–64.12, 66.14–71.28 (AE 26:15–21, 22–26); WA 40/1:183.25–187.15 (AE 26:101–103); WA 40/1:357.14–30 (AE 26:224–225); WA 40/2:148.31–153.29 (AE 27:116–20); WA 40/2:161.30–36 (AE 27:126).

of Concord on the *Predigtamt*, Luther confesses the doctrine of the Office of the Holy Ministry in his *Galatian Lectures* by bringing in such New Testament passages as Matthew 28:19–20, Ephesians 4:11–12, and Titus 1:5.

#### X. Faith and Imputation: *Blessed Exchange*

In Luther's *Galatians*, justifying faith is not autonomous. It is Christ who justifies, not faith. Faith in Christ indeed plays a vital role in Christian life.<sup>79</sup> Yet, there exists in Luther's exposition something more important than faith in the heart, and that is imputation.<sup>80</sup> Luther does not draw the attention of his hearers to faith in the heart but to Christ who gives such trust that takes hold of him and who uses their imperfect and weak faith, which Luther calls a mere "little spark,"<sup>81</sup> to reckon them as righteous.

As a result, God does not see the sin that remains in man. He covers the remnant of sin, and he forgives it. This emphasis on imputation lies at the base of Luther's favorite phrase on Christian righteousness: the *blessed exchange*.<sup>82</sup> Jesus took upon himself our sin and sinfulness. In turn, he grants us his innocence and victory. Luther does not let the Christians lose Jesus the crucified.<sup>83</sup>

#### XI. The Christian Life as *simul iustus et peccator*

Just as Paul says that Christ is the end of the law in the Epistle to the Romans (Romans 10:4), so also Luther, in his *Lectures on Galatians*, confesses with Paul that the time of the law ends with Christ's intervention.<sup>84</sup> Christ is the *telos*. He is not only the fulfillment of the law but also its end. The law is not the way of salvation anymore. The law is now replaced by Christ.

According to Luther, a Christian lives in two time periods: the time of the law, when he is under the accusation of the proper office of the law; and the time of grace, when the law's accusing voice is stopped by the forgiveness of sins.<sup>85</sup> The Christian

<sup>79</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:228.27–229.32 (AE 26:129–130).

<sup>80</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:363.28–368.25 (AE 26:229–232).

<sup>81</sup> Cf. AC XX 23–26.

<sup>82</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:442.31–443.34 (AE 26:283–284): "*Sic feliciter commutans nobiscum suscepit nostrum peccatricem et donavit nobis suam innocentem et victricem personam*" (emphasis added).

<sup>83</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:564.11–14 (AE 26:36): "*immergo conscientiam meam in vulnera, sanguinem, mortem, resurrectionem et victoriam Christi, praeter hunc nihil plane videre et audire volo.*"

<sup>84</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:556.23–27 (AE 26:364): "*non tamen desperes, sed credas in Christum qui est finis legis ad iustitiam omni credenti*" (emphasis added).

<sup>85</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:523.31–529.14 (AE 26:340–45); cf. WA 40/1:454.30–33 (AE 26:292); WA 40/2:19.25–26 (AE 27:17).

is to learn to distinguish the two, not in words alone but also in the feelings,<sup>86</sup> because the accusation of the law and the freedom of the gospel are both experienced in the conscience.<sup>87</sup> When the Christian fails to distinguish these two time periods, he has abused the law.<sup>88</sup>

Luther does not regard the time of the law and the time of grace as occurring in a chronological order, as if there were two dispensations, one of the law, and another of the gospel. Luther borrows the Aristotelian language of *forma* and *formalis* to point out that Christian righteousness is not in the saint in a formal sense, but it is outside of him in Christ's imputation.<sup>89</sup> Such a description resembles Luther's statement in his antinomian disputation's fifth set of theses, numbers 46 through 48 (1538). There Luther asserts that the antinomians are convinced that sin is formally (*formaliter*) and philosophically eliminated in Christ because they are completely ignorant of the fact that it is only eliminated in the reckoning and forgiveness of the merciful God. Thesis 48 says, "For *relatively*, not *formally* or *substantially* is sin eliminated, law abolished, death destroyed."<sup>90</sup> Luther does not deny that salvation is fully accomplished by Christ on Calvary. Yet, when it comes to his justifying office, Christ is the end of the law in a relative sense, that is, dependent on his daily coming to the conscience through the means of grace. The structure of the law remains. But the accusing voice of the law ends in the conscience relationally when the living voice of the gospel arrives to the sinner and frees his conscience with Christ's forgiveness.

All this is another way of recognizing that "the Christian man is righteous and a sinner *at the same time*, holy, profane, an enemy of God and a son of God."<sup>91</sup> As long as a Christian lives, both remain as a fact. He is completely righteous. He is thoroughly a sinner. Luther says, "Thus if I look at Christ, I am completely holy and

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<sup>86</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:527.21–23 (AE 26:343).

<sup>87</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/2:3.20–4.12 (AE 27:4).

<sup>88</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:528.23–34 (AE 26:344–345). Here Luther describes three ways in which the law is abused. The first is when the self-righteous imagines that he is justified by the law. The second is the sectarians (antinomians) who want to excuse Christians from the law altogether. The third is when the Christian feels the terror of the law and does not understand that these are to last only until Christ.

<sup>89</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:370.28–32 (AE 26:234): "*iustitiam non esse formaliter in nobis, ut Aristoteles disputant, sed extra nos in sola gratia et reputatione divina, Et nihil formae seu iustitiae in nobis esse praeter illam imbecillem fidem seu primitas fidei, quod coepimus apprehendere Christum, interim tamen vere peccatum in nobis manere*" (emphasis added).

<sup>90</sup> WA 39/1:356.27–32, Sonntag ed., *Only the Decalogue Is Eternal*, 135. Thesis 48 reads, "Relative enim, non formaliter aut substantialiter est peccatum sublatum, lex abolita, mors destructa" (emphasis added).

<sup>91</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:368.26–27 (AE 26:232): "*Sic homo Christianus simul iustus et peccator, Sanctus, prophanus, inimicus et filius Dei est*" (emphasis added).



pure, and I know nothing at all about the Law . . . But if I look at my flesh, I feel greed, sexual desire, anger, pride, the terror of death, sadness, fear, hate, grumbling, and impatience against God.”<sup>92</sup> A Christian needs to hear the gospel and receive the Lord’s Supper precisely because there is sinfulness remaining in him, and so there is a time of the law when it accuses and terrifies the conscience. Luther talks about the church in the same way. The church is *simul iustus et peccator*.<sup>93</sup>

## XII. Faith and Love

It is inconceivable for Luther that the Christian would ever come to the point when he does not need Christ. There is no progressive sanctification in a sense that a Christian is supposed to make a gradual improvement of his life toward moral purity in a synergistic manner.<sup>94</sup> Rather, as he matures as a Christian, he will increasingly discover the fact that he is indeed more deeply sinful than he has ever realized before. The battle between flesh and spirit, between old and new Adams, continues. Luther says, “In fact, the godlier one is, the more he feels this battle.”<sup>95</sup> The true saints are not people who are free from experiencing the desires of the flesh.<sup>96</sup> They are not those who perform works that give the appearance of brilliance or grandeur. But they are the ones who are called by the gospel, baptized, and forgiven.<sup>97</sup> “A Christian is not someone who has no sin or feels no sin; he is someone against whom, because of his faith in Christ, sin is not reckoned by God.”<sup>98</sup> Moreover, a Christian remains the object of Jesus’ pastoral care. Just as the head is more sensitive and responsive in its feeling than the other parts of the body, Luther says, “Christ, our Head, makes

<sup>92</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:537.24–28 (AE 26:350).

<sup>93</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:445.16–18 (AE 26:285); WA 40/2:106.34–107.21 (AE 27:85).

<sup>94</sup> Today, as at the time of the Reformation, many people view Jesus as the taskmaster, so that they are to keep the law, to obey him, and to be good as he is good; yet unlike Luther’s days, such popular teaching does not seem to lead them to a terrified conscience. Instead of terrifying, the law seems to have been turned into a comfort. But this is nothing new. Luther was critical in his lectures of those who attribute to the law what properly belongs to Christ. In short, for them, the law becomes Christ (*Lex fit Christus*). And, in turn, Christ is the law (*Christus est Lex*) to them (Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* [1535], WA 40/1:248.22–30 [AE 26:142]).

<sup>95</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/2:94.14–15 (AE 27:74): “*Imo quo quisque magis pius est, hoc plus sentit illam pugnam.*”

<sup>96</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/2:96.17–97.16 (AE 27:76).

<sup>97</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/2:18–28 (AE 27:82).

<sup>98</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:235.15–17 (AE 26:133): “*Definimus ergo hunc esse Christianum, non qui non habet aut non sentit peccatum, sed cui illud a Deo propter fidem in Christum non imputatur.*”

our afflictions His own, so that when we, who are His body, suffer, He is affected as though the evils were His own.”<sup>99</sup>

Christ may be seen as an example to imitate. But that happens only at the time of rejoicing when the Christian is out of the reach of *tentatio*.<sup>100</sup> When he is under the law, which is the majority of his life,<sup>101</sup> Christ remains as a gift.<sup>102</sup> Luther sees Christians’ good works through the doctrine of *simul iustus et peccator*. He considers good works theologically rather than moralistically.<sup>103</sup> “To do” includes faith at the same time (another *simul!*).<sup>104</sup> Faith takes the doer himself and makes him into a tree, and his deeds become fruit. When the accusing office of the law is ended by Christ,<sup>105</sup> the law is deprived of this right and begins to work as a companion. Here, the law does not work by coercion, but it entices and charms the saints to do the works of vocations.<sup>106</sup> Just like Luther described Christian righteousness as rain from heaven so that while Christ is active we remain completely passive in receiving his gifts, so the Reformer uses the same illustration of rain to speak of a Christian’s service to his neighbor in love.<sup>107</sup> There, a Christian is completely active. His attention goes to the neighbor’s need and never to his own interest, so long as he does those works as a Christian. Obviously, there is a big difference between Christ as rain and Christians as rain. Christians are under the *simul*, but Christ is not. In doing good works, a Christian relentlessly struggles in his conscience.

When the whole Christian life is depicted as faith toward God and love toward the neighbor, that love is never detached from faith.<sup>108</sup> It is important to note that Luther does not describe the Christian life by employing the third use of the law talk as Calvin and his followers presented it (i.e., the third use as the chief use). Luther

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<sup>99</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/2:171.32–172.14 (AE 27:134).

<sup>100</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/2:42.24–26 (AE 27:34).

<sup>101</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:209.20–22 (AE 26:117). “*Sed quando ad experientiam venit, tum invenis Evangelium rarum et e contra legem assiduum esse hospitem in conscientia*” (emphasis added).

<sup>102</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/2:42.29–32 (AE 27:34).

<sup>103</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:417.13–15 (AE 26:266).

<sup>104</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:402.13–14 (AE 26:255). “*Ut facere includat simul fidem.*”

<sup>105</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/2:97.29–34 (AE 27:77). “*Itaque pii non sunt sub lege, scilicet Spiritu, lex enim non potest accusare et ferre sententiam mortis contra eos, etiamsi ipsi peccatum sentiant et fateantur se peccatores esse, quia ius ademptum est legi per Christum, qui factus est sub legem, ut eos, qui sub lege errant, redimeret.*” *Ideo hoc, quod vere peccatum est contra legem, lex pro peccato non audet accusare in piis*” (emphasis added).

<sup>106</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:51.21–31 (AE 6:11–12); WA 40/2:76.13–78.23 (AE 27:60–62).

<sup>107</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:43.18–28, 51.21–31 (AE 26:6, 11–12).

<sup>108</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/2:37.26–30 (AE 27:30).

speaks of the *simul*. A Christian spends his life in the world within the forgiveness that he keeps receiving from the Lord.

### XIII. Conclusion

At the conclusion of his funeral oration of Luther, Melancthon urged the pastors to follow Luther's footsteps as bearers of the same office into which Luther had also been put: to be diligent and faithful in the study, confession, preaching, and teaching of law and gospel.<sup>109</sup> We would do well to remember his words in this anniversary year of 2017.<sup>110</sup>

We do not have to boast about celebrating the coming anniversary as the first one after the introduction of women pastors, higher-critical method, NPP, NFIL, the unionism, and false ecumenism, as if the church were progressively getting better and better by discarding doctrine and liturgy. Luther's historical view is exactly the opposite. In his preface to the *Lectures on Galatians*, when its first revised edition was printed in 1538, he maintained that the doctrine of the proper distinction between law and gospel finds its root at the beginning of creation; it was not something new that he had invented. However, as Satan attacked this solid rock in paradise, and a series of persecutions of doctrine followed through Cain and his sons in the world after Noah, in the people of Israel, in the church of the Gentiles (Rome),<sup>111</sup> and in new sects including the antinomians,<sup>112</sup> the devil succeeded in proposing new doctrines and new christs in each generation and even each day.<sup>113</sup>

What we are called to do is to examine our faithfulness in receiving the Lord's gift. We are also given to pray for the *concordia* of doctrine in the church catholic.<sup>114</sup> Luther himself mentioned that he confessed this doctrine with greater certainty (*maiore certitudine*) at the time of the lectures than ever before. His conviction was

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<sup>109</sup> CR 11:734; Johannes Fünck, *Eyn Sermon uber der Leich / des Erwardigen Herrn Doctor Martin Luthers zu Wittenberg 1546 von Phillippo Melancthon* (March 13, 1546), fol. b3; Lewis W. Spitz, ed., *The Protestant Reformation* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966), 76; J. Unwin, trans., *The Life and Acts of Martin Luther by Philip Melancthon* (Malone, TX: Repristination Press, 1990), 45–46.

<sup>110</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:209.17–19 (AE 26:117); WA 40/1:511.31–32 (AE 26:331).

<sup>111</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:486.21–25 (AE 26:313). J. A. O. Preus observed that Chemnitz, who was “probably the greatest student of patristics Lutheranism has ever produced,” made no use of the church fathers to support the doctrine of law and gospel (“Chemnitz on Law and Gospel,” *Concordia Journal* 15 [October 1984]: 409).

<sup>112</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:33.12–36.27 (AE 27:145–149); WA 40/1:36.28–27.20.

<sup>113</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:321.31–33 (AE 26:196); WA 40/1:563.22–26 (AE 26:369).

<sup>114</sup> Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1535), WA 40/1:627.13–18 (AE 26:413); WA 40/2:46.16–49.19 (AE 27:37–39, 41–42); WA 40/2:136.20–137.10 (AE 27:107–108).

deepened through “study, practice, and experience, as well as through great and frequent temptations.” It was his prayer that Christ would keep him and strengthen him in that faith and confession to the end.<sup>115</sup>

Are the *Lectures on Galatians* the banner of the Reformation? I would trust you to make an informed judgment. *Concordia* of doctrine lives together with evangelical liturgy and eager missionary work. May the Lord Jesus ever keep the church in such *concordia* so that sinners like us may never be deprived of him and the comfort he alone bestows.

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<sup>115</sup> WA 40/2:135.24–136.8 (AE 27:106–107).