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Hermann Sasse and the Liturgical Movement

JOHN PLESS



HERMANN SASSE WAS A THEOLOGIAN of the Sacrament and as such he was a theologian of the liturgy. "A church without the Sacrament must die,"¹ Sasse wrote in 1939. Later Sasse argued:

To restore this Sacrament, which under the influence of Reformed Protestantism and the modern world has also declined in Lutheranism, and give it its proper place in the divine service dare not be an interest only of a liturgical reform movement. It is a matter of life and death for the Lutheran Church.²

It was from the perspective of the centrality of the Sacrament of the Altar that Sasse took issue with the Liturgical Movement.

Like Wilhelm Löhe before him, Sasse was not swept away by a liturgical romanticism that defended the liturgy on the basis of venerable tradition or aesthetic preferences. Sasse was fond of quoting from Wilhelm Löhe's *Three Books on the Church*: "The church remains what she is even without the liturgy. She remains a queen even when she is dressed as a beggar."³ But this is not to suggest that the liturgy was a matter of theological indifference, set at the periphery of the church's life. In one of his few works directed specifically at the Liturgical Movement, Sasse opined, "There is no more damning an indictment of a theologian than to say that he knows nothing about the liturgy."⁴

Sasse knew the liturgy. Although he was not a liturgical scholar in the narrow sense of the term, he was thoroughly acquainted with the historical development of the liturgy, as can be seen in his 1957 article "Concerning the Origin of the Improperia."⁵ While Sasse wrote only a few articles that dealt exclusively with liturgical themes, his major book, *This is My Body*, and many of his articles and letters are replete with references to the history of the liturgy, the doctrinal content of liturgical forms, and the significance of liturgical practices.

Sasse's interest in the liturgy was more than academic. His "Letters to Lutheran pastors"⁶ and short articles in the *Lutheran Herald*⁷ give evidence of the imprint that the church's liturgy made on Sasse's piety. Professor John Kleinig, a former student of Sasse, comments on this aspect of Sasse:

When he as a lecturer spoke on the theology of worship, or on its practice, or even on liturgical piety, his whole manner would change. The stern passion for the truth and the polemical edge to his teaching would give way to a sense of joy and sparkling wonder at the mystery of it all. As he spoke with unutterable and exalted joy on these topics, he won me over to his vision of heavenly worship and his conception of liturgical theology, unfashionable though it was.⁸

Sasse's piety, like his theology, was not detached from the liturgical life of the congregation assembled around the preached word and the holy supper. If at times Sasse was rather vehement in his criticisms of the Liturgical Movement, it is because he knew that even as the liturgy is the vehicle that carries the truth of the gospel, the liturgy can be subverted and made into a vehicle for error. Sasse wrote: "It is true that every dogma has its roots in the liturgy, but this is unfortunately true even of the greatest errors of Christendom, as the history of Mariolatry and Mariology shows."⁹

Most of Sasse's references to the Liturgical Movement occur in his writings between 1948 and 1960. Recognizing that the Liturgical Movement was an ecumenical movement in the sense that its influence crosses confessional boundaries, Sasse spotted the source of the German and American Lutheran Liturgical Movement in persons and events within the Roman Church.¹⁰ In many respects, Sasse was quite sympathetic to the Liturgical Movement within the Roman Church. Writing in 1952, Sasse offered the following assessment:

If one today in the middle of the century looks back to the results of the great movement, then one would have to say that only *one* church has dealt with it, has set aside its revolutionary excesses, and has put it in service. That is the Roman Church, which in many countries, especially in Germany and Austria, derived real inner renewal from this movement. This has happened. The fruits will only become completely clear when languages such as German and English have been raised to the level of liturgical languages and when the Catholic "German Mass" (*Deutsche Messe*) will remind Lutheranism that it was once a "German Mass" that led the Lutheran Reformation to victory.¹¹

In Sasse's mind, the Liturgical Movement within the Roman Church was seen as something positive; in the Protestant churches

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it was problematic. While Sasse acknowledged that the Liturgical Movement in Roman Catholicism was given birth by reforms in church music initiated by Pius x and the liturgical research of the Benedictines of Maria Laach,¹² he saw that at a deeper level the Liturgical Movement is “seeking and questing for the church.” Sasse commended the Roman Liturgical Movement for providing an answer to the question “What is the church?” in “exceedingly impressive and practical terms,” such as “The church is where the congregation of Christian believers gather as *ecclesia orans* (the praying church) about the altar; where the Body of the Word is received with the mouth in the Holy Communion, there is the church as the Body of Christ.”¹³

With the coming of Vatican II, Sasse’s optimism for a genuine evangelical renewal of the Roman Church through the Liturgical Movement ceased.

Sasse then went on to note the renewal that was generated in the Roman Church from this understanding of ecclesiology:

She possesses her present vitality in spite of all these things and in spite of everything un-Christian and anti-Christian that happens in her midst. The real source of her vitality in this remnant of her primitive heritage in spite of all these things and which she still retains and which she knows how to renew again and again: The profound truth of *the Real Presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar*. It is one of the most noteworthy signs of the times that the Roman Catholic Church seeks to make the center of her spiritual life precisely that primitive and scriptural tenet which Blessed Martin Luther so doughtily defended against Zwingli and the sixteenth-century Enthusiasts.¹⁴

Thus Sasse could be grateful for signs of genuine renewal in Rome. He praised Pius XII for insisting that the *lex orandi lex credendi* (the law of what is to be prayed is the law of what is to be believed) must be turned around so as to make dogma the norm of the liturgy.¹⁵ Sasse noted approvingly the inclusion of Luther’s hymns in modern Roman hymnals and the judgment of the Oratorian priest Felix Messerschmid that Nicolai’s great hymns are “unsurpassed examples of what church hymns should be.”¹⁶ Sasse observed that the Liturgical Movement was causing Rome to confront the questions raised by Luther:

Wherever the pure gospel comes, there the great liturgy of the true church revives. And wherever men seek genuine liturgy they cannot avoid facing the question, “What is the gospel?” Here is the fundamental reason why the liturgical movement in the Roman Church has confronted that denomination with the whole issue of the Reformation.¹⁷

With the coming of Vatican II, Sasse’s optimism for a genuine evangelical renewal of the Roman Church through the Liturgical Movement ceased.

In 1952, Sasse was still optimistic regarding the Liturgical Movement in the Roman Church. He was not impressed, however, with the place of the Liturgical Movement within the Protestant communions. He lamented the failure to renew the liturgical life of the evangelical churches. The Liturgical Movement did not exert the same influence in the Protestant churches as it had in the Roman Catholic Church. Sasse noted two differences between the Liturgical Movement in the Roman Church and the Protestant churches:

Where does the difference lie? What is evident immediately is that the liturgical movement in the Roman Church affected all the people from the Catholic scholars to the unsophisticated country congregations. All efforts on the Protestant side remain limited to pastors, some church-minded lay people, and very small, sometimes sect-like associations. The second immediately obvious difference is that the liturgical movement in the Roman Church has remained on the foundations of Roman dogma in spite of some difficult conflicts with dogma and church order.¹⁸

It is the second difference that occupied Sasse’s attention. Sasse observed that the Liturgical Movement in the Roman Church was consistent with Roman doctrine. This is especially evident at three crucial points: the sacrifice of the Mass, the compatibility of Augustine’s sacramental theology with the sacramentalism of the *Religionsgeschichtliche* school, and the relationship of Christianity to paganism.

At the heart of Rome’s theology of the Sacrament is the assertion that the Mass is a sacrifice offered to God. In his 1948 essay “Liturgy and Lutheranism” Sasse observed that under the influence of the Liturgical Movement

The idea of sacrifice in connection with the mass has not been abandoned, but it has been so drastically reinterpreted that it comes very close to the evangelical *solus Christus, sola gratia*.¹⁹

Rome was beginning to speak of the sacrifice of the mass as a representation (*repraesentatio*) rather than as a repetition.

Sasse appears to have backed away from his 1948 remarks, noting in his 1952 article “The Lutheran Understanding of the Consecration” the synergism of the modern Roman notion of Christ and church as head and body doing the sacrificing together. This comes dangerously close to a deification of man.²⁰ Whether it be priest or church doing the sacrifice, the liturgical action is anthropocentrically driven. Likewise in his 1957 essay “Consecration and Real Presence” Sasse comments that many contemporary Protestants

do not see that the ambiguous *repraesentatio* does not exclude that in each mass the priest offers a propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead, even if the identity of this sacrifice with that of Calvary is pretended.²¹

In the same essay, Sasse had observed that the deepest difference between the Roman and Lutheran understanding of the consecration did not lie in the question of transubstantiation, but in the fact that “the Roman understanding of consecration is at the same time the ‘*immolatio*,’ the offering of the sacrifice.”²² The Liturgical Movement did not represent a substantial shift away from the traditional Roman teaching concerning the sacrifice of the mass. In that sense, it remained consistent with Roman doctrine.

A second area of consistency between the Liturgical Movement and Roman doctrine is the reliance on Augustinian sacramental doctrine. Sasse located one of the weaknesses of Augustine’s sacramental theology in his attempt to establish *sacramentum* as a universal idea or category that applies to all religions. Sasse noted that Augustine was unable to sufficiently break through from his pagan past to recognize that the Lord’s Supper is something unique “because it was instituted by Jesus Christ and so is inextricably bound up with the incarnation of the eternal Son of God.”²³ In this sense Odo Casel is thoroughly Augustinian as he finds Hellenistic cultic mysteries to be shadows of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper.²⁴

The *Religionsgeschichtliche* approach to the sacraments fails as it attempts to move from universal categories to specific manifestations, unable to distinguish between myth and history. While Casel’s theory cannot be reconciled with Lutheranism’s incarnational understanding of the sacraments,²⁵ Sasse pointed out that Casel’s *mysterium theologie* “can be accommodated in the Roman Church because, for one thing, it has a different relationship with heathen religion than we do.”²⁶

The Liturgical Movement, as it had developed in Roman Catholicism, represented a challenge to Lutheranism. Sasse was most critical of Lutheran theologians and churches who were enchanted by the attractions of this powerful movement, unable to discern its alien theology. For Sasse, liturgy could not be thought of apart from dogma. It is from the perspective of dogma that Sasse addressed the Liturgical Movement within the Lutheran churches of Germany and North America.

On the German scene, Sasse focused primarily on Friederich Heiler and Wilhelm Staehlin. Lamenting the inability of the Liturgical Movement to grasp the Lutheran doctrine of justification, Sasse saw Heiler as “the real tragedy of the High Church movement in Germany.”²⁷ Of Heiler, Sasse wrote:

Heiler was a Reform-Catholic from the school of Schnitzer in Munich. His theology remained what it was from the beginning: liberal Catholicism. His “conversion” to the Lutheran Church in Sweden by reception of communion from Soederblom was a misunderstanding. The calling of this very promising young scholar to the theological faculty at Marburg was a terrible mistake. That he then created an ill-approved secret organization, along the lines of such an organization in the Church of England, to secretly “consecrate bishops”—which assured “validity” in the technical sense—and that he then secretly re-ordained Lutheran pastors in “apostolic succession” so that they could make the “change” in the supper, was a terrible sin. We will not investigate just how terrible and

fateful that sin was here. It is this High Churchism which has so discredited all the efforts to re-institute the old catholic heritage of our church in the best sense.²⁸

At the center of Sasse’s critique of Heiler was the latter’s dismissal of the Reformation’s *sola gratia* as a distortion of the message of the New Testament.²⁹ “For Heiler,” said Sasse, “the authentic doctrine of justification has always been that of Trent.”³⁰

Like Heiler, Wilhelm Staehlin³¹ stumbled over the doctrine of justification. Sasse saw Staehlin as a “latter-day disciple of Osiander” as he made of justification a process of internal renewal rather than a forensic verdict. Thus for Staehlin, the liturgy was understood in the categories of mysticism rather than from the evangelical center of the *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae*.³² From his encounters with Heiler and Staehlin and the *Berneuchener* movement with which they were associated, Sasse concluded that the Liturgical Movement was hopelessly captive to a romantic syncretism that could not be reconciled with confessional Lutheranism.

Sasse concluded that the Liturgical Movement was hopelessly captive to a romantic syncretism that could not be reconciled with confessional Lutheranism.

This led Sasse to cast a critical eye at developments in the United States. Arthur Carl Piepkorn represented the party in American Lutheranism which in many aspects parallels the *Berneuchener* movement in Germany. In 1959 Sasse identified a seminary chapel homily of Piepkorn “as a particularly troubling sign of how Lutherans can succumb to the dangers of High Churchism.”³³ Sasse detected in Piepkorn a theological methodology that threatens the Reformation’s *sola scriptura* as Piepkorn attempted to give room to “pious opinion” where the Scriptures are silent. Thus Sasse concluded:

The tragedy of Piepkorn is rooted deep within that of modern High Churchism, which to its detriment, separates it from Rome. It finally has no theology. And thus Piepkorn represents a movement, but not a church. He belongs to a class of American Lutherans who learned the old dogmatic heritage, but it has never taken hold in the depths of their being.³⁴

Sasse’s most direct analysis of the influence of the Liturgical Movement on American Lutheranism is in an extended letter to Pastor Glenn Stone, then editor of *Una Sancta*, “The Liturgical Movement: Reformation or Revolution?” In this article, Sasse attempts to gain a sympathetic hearing from American Lutherans associated with Berthold von Schenk and Arthur Carl Piep-

korn. After agreeing with the proponents of the Liturgical Movement that the Lutheran Church is in need of a rediscovery and restoration of its sacramental life, Sasse goes on to state that "The great tragedy of the Liturgical Movement in the Lutheran Churches is its inability to face the doctrinal issues."³⁵

Far from being anti-liturgical, Sasse argued for a full-bodied liturgical life that rests on the solid foundation of Lutheran doctrine.

After rehearsing the errors of Heiler, Staehlin, and the *Berneuchener* movement,³⁶ Sasse raises the possibility that these false teachings are finding their way into American Lutheranism. Fearful that the Liturgical Movement was loosing its doctrinal moorings, Sasse worried that the movement was in danger of becoming a revolution. As evidence of this, Sasse cited the failure of von Schenk to distinguish between the right administration of the means of grace and the ceremonies connected with them,³⁷ the interaction of the Eucharistic Prayer in the *Service Book and Hymnal* published two years earlier,³⁸ and Piepkorn's Mariological article.³⁹

Far from being anti-liturgical, Sasse argued for a full-bodied liturgical life that rests on the solid foundation of Lutheran doctrine: "Only if we do not forget the great concern for the pure doctrine of the gospel can our liturgical endeavors remain sound. If the dogmatic compass no longer functions, the ship of the church is going to be wrecked."⁴⁰ Here Sasse repeated a theme that runs consistently through his writings on liturgical issues: "Nothing can be liturgically correct which is not dogmatically correct."⁴¹

If severed from the dogmatic foundation of the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper, Sasse con-

tended that all liturgical renewal would not rise above an empty ritualism. The Sacrament would be replaced by "High Church Ceremony."⁴² Thus Sasse was critical of all "naturalistic" attempts to explain the sacraments⁴³ as well as liturgical theologies based on the work of Old Testament theologians who maintained the "realization" of salvation in the cultus.⁴⁴ Of these, Sasse remarks, "Their doctrine of the Real Presence is Calvinistic, and that of the sacrifice is Roman Catholic."⁴⁵

In the years since Sasse first called the Lutheran churches to a genuine liturgical renewal anchored in Reformation doctrine, Lutheranism has endured much liturgical experimentation. Now large parts of English-speaking Lutheranism are inflicted with an alien understanding of worship imported from American Evangelism via the Church Growth Movement.⁴⁶ Sasse's critique of the Liturgical Movement provides contemporary Lutherans with a theological understanding of the liturgy that is well suited to address the present challenges, since it invites doctrinal discernment. The concluding paragraph of Sasse's "Liturgy and Confession: A Brotherly Warning Against the 'High Church' Danger" is equally applicable to those who would remove the liturgy from the church, dressing the queen in beggar's garb:

It belongs to the greatness of Luther, that he had the gift of discernment. He was brought up in the liturgy and lived in it. He desired to maintain of it, what ever could be retained. And he never gave up any of it frivolously, and often long hesitated before he finally made a decision. Luther had the gift of discernment. He had this great gift of the Holy Spirit, without which the church cannot exist, because he had the Word and Sacrament, to which the Spirit of God has bound himself in the church. He could judge liturgy because he possessed the measure on which it alone can be judged: The holy gospel, the saving message of the justification of the sinner by faith alone, the article from which nothing can be granted even if heaven and earth should fall, and nothing remain. On this article depends not only our salvation, but also the church and the liturgy of the true church.⁴⁷ **LOGIA**

NOTES

1. Hermann Sasse, "The Lord's Supper in the Life of the Church," in *Scripture and Church: Selected Essays of Hermann Sasse*, ed. Jeffrey J. Kloha and Ronald Feuerhahn (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary Monograph Series, 1995), 14.

2. Hermann Sasse, "The Lutheran Understanding of the Consecration," in *We Confess the Sacraments*, trans. Norman Nagel (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1985), 120; also see "The Lord's Supper in the Lutheran Church," in *We Confess the Sacraments*, 98–112.

3. Sasse, "The Lutheran Understanding of the Sacrament," 117.

4. Hermann Sasse, "Liturgy and Lutheranism," in Kloha and Feuerhahn, 41.

5. Hermann Sasse, "Concerning the Origins of the *Impropria*," *Reformed Theological Review* 16 (October 1957): 65–75.

6. See Friedrich Wilhelm Hopf, ed., *In Statu Confessionis: Gesammelte Aufsätze von Hermann Sasse* (Berlin and Hamburg: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1966).

7. Hermann Sasse, "Fifty Days of Joy from Easter to Pentecost," *Lutheran Herald* (8 April 1961): 100–101; Hermann Sasse, "Lent and the Christian Life," *Lutheran Herald* (11 March 1961): 68–69.

8. Lecture by Professor John Kleinig on "Sasse in the Practical Department: Worship as Church Life," presented at "An International Theological Symposium Marking the Centennial of the Birth of Dr. Hermann Sasse" at St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada, 30 October 1995.

9. Hermann Sasse, "Consecration and Real Presence," in Kloha and Feuerhahn, 279.

10. For additional material on the Liturgical Movement in the Roman Church, see Ernest B. Koenker, *The Liturgical Renaissance in the Roman Catholic Church* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1966); Bryan Spinks and John Fenwick, *Worship in Transition: The Liturgical Movement in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Continuum Publishing Company, 1995); and James White, *Roman Catholic Worship: Trent to Today* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1995).

11. "The Lutheran Understanding of the Consecration," 114.

12. "Liturgy and Lutheranism," 34. Also see J. D. Critchton, *Lights in the Darkness: Fore-runners of the Liturgical Movement* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996), 151–160.

13. "Liturgy and Lutheranism," 34–35.

14. "Ibid., 35.

15. "The Lutheran Understanding of the Consecration," 117. Sasse's view runs counter to many contemporary advocates of liturgical theology. See, for example, David Fagerberg, *What Is Liturgical Theology: A Study in Methodology* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992); Aidan Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1984); and Don Sailers, *Worship as Theology: Foretaste of Glory Divine* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994). For an insightful treatment of the Liturgical Movement's misuse of the *lex orandi—lex credendi*, see Thomas Winger, "Lex Orandi Revisited," *LOGIA* 4 (Epiphany 1995): 65–66.

16. "Liturgy and Lutheranism," 36.

17. *Ibid.*, 37; also Sasse, "Ecclesia Orans," *LOGIA* 2 (Eastertide 1993): 28–33.

18. "The Lutheran Understanding of the Consecration," 114.

19. "Liturgy and Lutheranism," 36.

20. "The Lutheran Understanding of the Consecration," 127.

21. "Consecration and Real Presence," 299.

22. *Ibid.*, 306.

23. Hermann Sasse, "Word and Sacrament: Preaching and the Lord's Supper," in *We Confess the Sacraments*, 13.

24. *Ibid.*, 26. Also see Offried Koch, *Gegenwart oder Vergegenwuer-tigung* (Munich: Claudius Verlag, 1965); Gerald Krispin, "Odo Casel and the Kultmysterium," *The Confessional Research Society Newsletter* (Easter 1991): 1–4; and Oliver Olson, "Contemporary Trends in Liturgy Viewed from the Perspective of Classical Lutheran Theology," *Lutheran Quarterly* 26 (May 1974): 110–157.

25. Peter Brunner attempts this synthesis unsuccessfully. See Peter Brunner, *Worship in the Name of Jesus*, trans. Martin Bertram (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1968). Also see Koch and Olson.

26. "Word and Sacrament: Preaching and the Lord's Supper," 28. See J. A. DiNoia, "Christian Universalism," in *Either/Or: The Gospel or Neopaganism*, ed. Carl Braaten and Robert Jensen (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 37–48, for a classical Roman Catholic view of the relationship between Christianity and non-Christian religions.

27. "Liturgy and Confession: A Brotherly Warning Against the 'High Church' Danger" (unpublished translation by Matthew Harrison), 4. Friedrich Heiler (1892–1967) was a Roman Catholic convert to Lutheranism and was representative of the *Religionsgeschichtliche* approach to the development of doctrine.

28. "Liturgy and Confession: A Brotherly Warning Against the 'High Church' Danger," 4.

29. *Ibid.*

30. "The Lutheran Understanding of the Consecration," 115.

31. Wilhelm Staehlin was the Lutheran bishop of Oldenburg and leader of the *Berneuchener* movement. See his *The Mystery of the Word*, trans. Henry Horn (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964).

32. "The Lutheran Understanding of the Consecration," 115.

33. "Liturgy and Confession," 6. Piepkorn's homily, "Blessed Art Thou Among Women," is included in the recent volume *The Church: Selected Writings of Arthur Carl Piepkorn* (Delhi, NY: American Lutheran Publicity Bureau Books, 1993), 287–291.

34. "Liturgy and Confession," 14. In the same essay, Sasse notes that "In many cases the Liturgical Movement has become a replacement for what had been doctrine in old Missouri" (15). Also see Sasse's evaluation of the state of confessional theology in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in the middle part of this century in "Confession (Confessionalism) and Theology in the Missouri Synod," in Kloha and Feuerhahn, 189–220.

35. Hermann Sasse, "The Liturgical Movement: Reformation or Revolution?" *Una Sancta* 27 (St. Luke the Evangelist 1960): 18. See Charles Evanson, "New Directions," *LOGIA* 4 (Epiphany 1995): 3–9; John T. Pless, "Implications of Recent Exegetical Studies for the Doc-

trine of the Lord's Supper," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 48 (April–July 1984): 203–220; and Timothy Quill, *The Impact of the Liturgical Movement on American Lutheranism* (Lanham, MD, and London: Scarecrow Press, 1997).

36. Piepkorn offers the following assessment of the leaders of the Liturgical Movement in German Lutheranism, quite different from Sasse: "Under the leadership of Friedrich Heiler, ably seconded by Adolf Glinz, Oscar Mehl, Karl Ränge, Paul Schorlemmer and others, an articulate and scholarly liturgical movement challenged the prevailing apathy with its fourfold emphasis on evangelical justification by faith, the gospel of *sola gratia*, Pauline freedom from the Law, and the alleged primitive primacy of the prophetic-pneumatic charisma over the official-hierarchical element in the Church." Arthur Carl Piepkorn, "The Protestant Worship Revival," in *The Liturgical Renewal of the Church*, ed. Massey H. Shepherd Jr. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), 84.

37. "The Liturgical Movement: Reformation or Revolution?" 22.

38. "The Liturgical Movement: Reformation or Revolution?" 22–23; also see "Liturgy and Confession," 16. In the same article Sasse warned, "Wherever Anglicanism with its High church ideas has affected Lutheranism, there the heritage of the Reformation has sooner or later vanished" (4). Sasse, like Luther, knew that the words of institution are "the sum total of the gospel" and that it was "a deformation of the Sacrament" to make the *verba* part of a eucharistic prayer (see "Consecration and Real Presence," 296–301).

39. "The Liturgical Movement: Reformation or Revolution?" 22.

40. *Ibid.*

41. *Ibid.*, 21; also see "Liturgy and Lutheranism," 40–42.

42. Hermann Sasse, *This is My Body: Luther's Contention for the Real Presence in the Sacrament of the Altar* (Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, 1977), 332–333.

43. "Word and Sacrament: Preaching and the Lord's Supper," 19. A contemporary example of such a "naturalistic" approach to the sacraments is Gordon Lathrop, *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993). Note the perceptive review by Louis Smith, "Lathrop's Holy Things," *Lutheran Quarterly* (Summer 1997): 224–299. Smith says the danger in Lathrop's book "is nothing less than that 'old-time religion' known as paganism" (229).

44. "Word and Sacrament: Preaching and the Lord's Supper," 29. Against such a "cultification" of the Sacrament, Sasse asserts that "the essence of the Lord's Supper, as the church of the new Testament understood it, lies not in *remembrance* and not in *hope*. The Lord of the Lord's Supper . . . is the one who is present now." See "The Lord's Supper in the Life of the Church," 8.

45. "Word and Sacrament: Preaching and the Lord's Supper," 30. In his article "A Lutheran Contribution to the Present Discussion of the Lord's Supper," *Concordia Theological Monthly* (January 1959): 18, Sasse maintains that the Liturgical Movement and the Ecumenical Movement are "two great branches of one movement." How closely these branches cleave to one another can be seen in the World Council of Churches' *Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry* volume (Geneva, 1982), sometimes called "the Lima Document." See John T. Pless, "The Lord's Supper Today: The Lima Document and the Lord's Supper of the Lutheran Confessions," *Confessional Lutheran Research Society Newsletter* (Lent 1987): 3–10; and Ernst Volk, "Evangelical Accents in the Understanding of the Lord's Supper," *Lutheran Quarterly* 1 (Summer 1987): 185–204.

46. See Alan Klaas, *In Search of the Unchurched* (New York: Alban Institute, 1996), and David Luecke, *The Other Story of Lutherans at Worship: Reclaiming Our Heritage of Diversity* (Tempe, AZ: Fellowship Ministries, 1995) for examples of how deep the infection is in American Lutheranism.

47. "Liturgy and Confession," 17.