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FAITH.

(Continued.)

The term *καρδία*, heart, and the uses for which Scripture employs this term, might seem sufficiently important to merit a separate discussion. For the present, suffice it to say that *καρδία* is, indeed, "more than the center of the living organism of matter." ¹⁾ Scripture predicates of the heart every known activity of the inner life of man. The heart thinks, projects ideas, formulates judgments, weighs and ponders the pro and con of a question; the heart wishes, desires, cherishes a wish, frames resolves, impels to action. Reason, desire, and will, all act through and by means of the heart. We meet with such phrases as *νοεῖν τῇ καρδίᾳ*, to understand with the heart, John 12, 20; *ἐνθυμήσεις καὶ ἔννοιαι καρδίας*, the thoughts and intents of the heart, Hebr. 4, 12; *διάνοια* κ., the imagination of the heart, Luke 1, 51; *ἐπίνοια* κ., the thought of the heart, Acts 8, 22; *συνιέναι τῇ καρδίᾳ*, to understand with the heart, Matt. 13, 15; *λογίζεσθαι, διαλογίζεσθαι ἐν τ. κ.*, to reason in the heart, Mark 2, 6. 8; *εἰπεῖν ἐν κ.*, to say in one's heart, Rom. 10, 6. Envy and strife, James 3, 14; adulterous desire, Matt. 5, 28; double-mindedness, James 4, 8; sadness and gladness, John 14, 1; Acts 14, 17, have their seat in the heart. The heart conceives a purpose and decides in favor of an action, hence, exercises the will-power, Acts 5, 4; 7, 23; 11, 23. We would summarize the exhaustive research of Cremer in a few

1) Cremer, *Bibl. Woerterb.*, p. 494.

WALTHER ON THE PROPER DISCRIMINATION BETWEEN LAW AND GOSPEL.¹⁾

FIRST LECTURE. (September 12, 1884.)

MY DEAR FRIENDS:—

Although it is indispensably necessary for your future efficiency as teachers in church and school that you learn to know most accurately all doctrines of the Christian Revelation, yet not all that is necessary has thereby been accomplished. But it is necessary, besides, that you understand the right application of these doctrines; that you have not only a clear perception of these doctrines in your mind, but have them deeply imbedded and manifesting their divine, heavenly power in your heart; that all these doctrines have become so dear, so precious, so delightful to you that you cannot but profess, with glowing heart, saying, with Paul: "We believe, and therefore speak," 2 Cor. 4, 13, and with all the apostles: "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard," Acts 4, 20. True, you have not seen these things with bodily eyes, nor heard them with bodily ears, as did the apostles, but you must needs have perceived them with spiritual eyes and ears. Now, while my endeavor in dogmatics is to stablish and make you sure in every doctrine, my aim in our Friday evening lecture

72) May 26.

1) This paper is offered as a sample of a contemplated translation of Dr. Walther's well-known work. Criticism and suggestion is kindly invited.

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is to make you true practical theologians and to verily talk the Christian doctrine into your hearts, so that some day you may come forward as living witnesses, in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, not standing in your pulpits like lifeless statues, but offering help, with confident and cheerful heart, wherever help is required.

Now, the first and most important doctrine is that of justification; a close second, however, is the doctrine of the discrimination between Law and Gospel. We shall now be occupied with the discrimination between Law and Gospel. Let this be the subject of our earnest study.

Luther, indeed, says that he would assign first place to that person, and would call him a Doctor of Holy Writ, who knows this art well, viz., to discriminate between Law and Gospel. Do not believe, however, that I wish to assume first place myself and desire to be esteemed a Doctor of Holy Writ. No, indeed; there you would be greatly mistaken. True, I am occasionally thus traduced. But I, too, shall rather remain an humble pupil and sit at the feet of our Luther, even as he himself has learned this doctrine from the apostles and prophets. As often as you attend these lectures, do come with the silent prayer in your hearts that God would grant His Holy Spirit abundantly — to you, that you may profitably listen; and to me, that I may profitably teach. Let us, then, proceed to our subject, firmly trusting that God will bless our own souls and those whom we are to save.

If we compare the Holy Scriptures with other writings, we observe that no book seems to be so full of contradictions as the Bible, and that, not only as regards secondary matters, but as regards the chief matter, viz., the doctrine how we must come to God and be saved. Now it offers forgiveness to all sinners, now it retains the sins of all sinners. Now it offers to all sinners eternal life freely, now man is directed to make an effort for it himself. Now, this enigma is solved when we consider that in Scripture there are found two totally different doctrines, that of the Law and that of the Gospel.

THESIS I.

The doctrinal contents of all Holy Writ, both of the Old and the New Testament, consist of two doctrines differing fundamentally from one another, namely, the Law and the Gospel.

While it is not my intention in these lectures to systematically treat the doctrines of Law and Gospel, but rather to show you how easily Law and Gospel, which differ so greatly from each other, can be confounded, and the final aim of either doctrine frustrated, still you will not consider this matter with interest until you realize wherein the difference between Law and Gospel consists.

Law and Gospel do not differ in this, that the Gospel is a divine, the Law a human doctrine, resting on human reason. No, what there is found in Scripture of both doctrines is all the Word of the living God Himself. Nor is this the difference, that only the Gospel is necessary, but not the Law, the latter being a mere appendix which, if need be, might be dispensed with. No, both are equally necessary for us. Without the Law we do not understand the Gospel, and without the Gospel the Law benefits us nothing. Nor is this the difference, as simple people often imagine, viz., that the Law is the doctrine of the Old, the Gospel that of the New Testament. No, there is Gospel found in the Old, and there is Law found in the New Testament. In the New Testament the Lord has even unsealed to us the Law; He has purged it from Jewish traditions. Nor is this the difference, that each doctrine has a different aim, the Gospel having been given for salvation, the Law for damnation. No, the ultimate aim of both is the salvation of men; only the Law, after the fall, cannot effect our salvation, but can only prepare us for the Gospel. And moreover, by the Gospel we are given power in a manner to fulfill the Law. Nor is this the difference, that these doctrines contradict one another. No, there is no contradiction in Scripture. They are merely different, yet in most beautiful harmony with one another. Nor is this the difference, that only one of these doc-

trines is intended for Christians, not the other. The Law retains its importance even to a Christian. Yea, when a person quits the use of either doctrine he is no longer a true Christian.

The difference between Law and Gospel rather consists in the following: 1. These doctrines differ as regards the mode and manner in which they were revealed to man; 2. they differ as regards their *contents*; 3. as regards the *promises* conveyed by either; 4. as regards their threats; 5. as regards their function and the effects of either; 6. as regards the persons to whom either doctrine is to be preached. All other differences can be brought under these six heads. Let us now prove from God's Word what has been said.

Law and Gospel, then, differ, in the first place, as regards the manner in which these doctrines have been revealed to man. The Law is concreate with man and written in his heart. True, this writing in man's heart has, through the fall, become much obliterated, but not entirely effaced. Accordingly, when the Law is preached even to the most godless person, his conscience tells him: "That is true!" But his conscience does not tell him the same when the Gospel is preached to him; aye, he may become enraged. Even the most profligate person acknowledges that he ought to do what is written in the Law. Whence is this? Because these things have been written in his heart. Conditions are different as regards the Gospel. The Gospel contains the proclamation and revelation of nothing but free acts of God's grace, which cannot be arrived at by reasonable deduction. God was not obliged to do what according to the Gospel He has done, on the ground that no other course was open to Him if He wished to remain just and kind. No, God would have remained eternal Love, even if He had suffered all men to go to the devil.

Rom. 2, 14. 15: "For when the Gentiles, which have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law, these, having not the Law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing

or else excusing one another." Here the apostle testifies that even the blind heathen have the moral Law in their hearts and consciences. They required no supernatural revelation for these matters. The Ten Commandments were given merely to the end that the faded writing in men's hearts might be retouched.

Rom. 16, 25. 26: "Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my Gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith." We have here a testimony uttered in clear words to the effect that since the beginning of the world the Gospel could not be evolved from reason. It was made known only in this way, that the Holy Ghost gave it to holy men of God by inspiration.

Observe what an important difference this is. All religions retain parts of the Law. Some of the heathen have even progressed as far as to understand that an inward cleansing of the soul, a purification of thoughts and desires, is necessary. But there is not a particle of the Gospel found anywhere outside of the Christian religion.—Had the Law not been written into men's hearts, no one would listen to the preaching of the Law, but everybody would turn aside. People would say: "This is cruel; surely, nobody can keep it!" But do not forbear preaching the Law! Men may revile; however, they do so with their mouths only; for what you preach to them, their own conscience preaches to them every day. Nor should we convert any person by our Gospel if the Law did not prepare the way. We should convert no one if the Law had not been written in men's hearts. Of course, I am speaking of God as He has revealed Himself and has laid down a definite order of salvation. He might indeed have saved all men by His mere will.

In the second place, Law and Gospel differ as regards their contents. The Law tells us what we must do. Of this the Gospel says nothing, but reveals to us only what God does. The

Law speaks of our works, the Gospel of the mighty works of God. In the Ten Commandments you find the tenfold appeal: "Thou shalt!" Beyond this the Law has nothing to say to us. The Gospel, on the other hand, makes no demand. Do not say: "Why, it does demand faith!" Just imagine a hungry person invited to sit down at the table and to eat. Would he say: "Pshaw, I will take no orders from you!"? No, he will take your words as a kind invitation. It is the same when you preach the Gospel. The Gospel is a kind invitation to partake of heavenly treasures.

Gal. 3, 12: "And the Law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them." A passage of the utmost importance! The Law knows nothing of forgiveness, nothing of grace. The Law does not say: "If you repent and amend your life, all else will be condoned." Not a word of this is found in the Law. The Law only commands and demands. The Gospel only offers; its nature is not to take, but to give. Accordingly, we read:

John 1, 17: "The Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." The Gospel bears nothing but grace and truth. Oh, how important is this! When we read and search the Law, and measure ourselves by its rule, we shall be terrified at the numerous demands made upon us. And if we had nothing besides the Law, we should have to resign ourselves to despair, we would be lost. God be praised! we have still another doctrine, the Gospel, and to this we cling.

Law and Gospel differ, in the third place, as regards their promises. The Law promises a boon just as great as the Gospel, viz., everlasting life and salvation, however, with this great difference: all promises of the Law are made on certain conditions, namely, on condition that we perfectly fulfill the Law. Hence, its promises are as sorry as they are great. It holds out food to us, however, without placing it within our reach. Its offer of salvation is made as to Tantalus. It does indeed say to us: "I will quench the thirst and satisfy the hunger of thy soul," but is unable to effect this; for it ever adds: "You

shall have what I promise, provided you do what I command." — How different is the gracious, sweet, and comforting Gospel! It promises God's grace and salvation to us unconditionally. It is a promise of free grace. It makes no demands beyond this: "Accept my offer, and you have it." That is not a condition, but merely a kind invitation.

Lev. 18, 5: "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them." Accordingly, no one else shall be saved by the Law.

In Luke 10, 26 ff. Christ replies to the self-righteous lawyer, saying: "What is written in the Law? how readest thou?" And when the lawyer had answered correctly: "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself," Christ tells him: "This do, and thou shalt live." Here the Lord testifies that by the rule of the Law only he who fulfills the Law can obtain salvation. Now, this condition plunges us into despair.

Instructing His disciples what they should preach, the Lord said: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." No condition, then, is attached to the Gospel, but it is a promise of grace.

Again, we read Rom. 3, 23, 24: "There is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

Eph. 2, 8, 9: "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." — Unconditional promises of grace and salvation are found in the Gospel. Oh, what a precious difference! When the Law has cast us down, we may joyfully lift up our heads again; for we have a doctrine besides the Law, which makes no demands whatever. Were we to inquire of Christ: "What is it that must be performed on my part toward my salvation?" He would answer: "Not any works; I have

accomplished all; you need not drink a drop of my cup." If you duly ponder this, my friends, you will exult and rejoice greatly, because these glad tidings have been brought to you also. If any one still hangs his head, saying within himself: "I am a wretched man; there is no forgiveness for me," he rejects the Gospel, yea, Christ. If I had committed the greatest sins, and were constrained to say with Paul: "I am chief of sinners," and were burdened with the sin of Judas, I ought still to accept the Gospel, for it demands nothing of me.

Law and Gospel differ, in the fourth place, as regards their threats. The Gospel contains no threat whatever, but only consolation. Wherever in Scripture you meet with a threat, you may rest assured that it belongs to the Law. He would be a blessed man indeed who would lay this comfort to heart! But it is for the Holy Spirit to effect this in every man. No man is able to effect it unless by the operation of the Holy Spirit. Unless the Holy Spirit effects this in a person, the person remains faithless. However, you are not to imagine that the Gospel makes men secure because it utters no threat. No, the Gospel removes in a believer the desire to sin. — The Law, on the other hand, cannot issue anything but threats. As Abraham drove Hagar into the wilderness with a piece of bread and a bottle of water, so the Law hands us a piece of bread and hurries us off into the wilderness.

Deut. 27, 26: "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this Law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen." Aye, man is called upon by the Law to invoke a curse upon himself. No one but a person shrouded in hellish darkness can imagine that he will be able to manage the Law. The Gospel proceeds in an entirely different way. Paul says, 1 Tim. 1, 15: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." So, even the chief of sinners receives no threat, but only the sweetest promise.

Luke 4, 16—21: "And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, He went into

the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it is written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And He closed the book, and He gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him. And He began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your eyes." Here the Lord tells what are the contents of His doctrine, or of the Gospel. He meant to say: "I am not come to bring a new Law, but to proclaim the Gospel." In His preaching there is nothing but comfort and salvation for sinners. Oh, what a happy man is he who truly knows this! May God aid us all to such knowledge!