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CORDATUS' CONTROVERSY WITH MELANCHTHON.

The period of unrest at the university of Wittenberg during the year 1536 and the following years affords material for reflection to the psychologist, the historian, and the dogmatician. We behold men whose names have become household words in the Lutheran Church in a curious disagreement with each other. When righteous men differ, they expose not only their points of difference, but also themselves, their character, to public view. And when the matter at issue between them concerns the common faith of Christians, every believer has reason to take notice of the difference and to try to understand its weight. The study of a theological controversy, when rightly pursued, is very useful. It aids the student materially in fixing in his own mind both the τ' and the $\pi\tilde{\omega}\varsigma$ of a doctrine, the matter proposed for man's belief and the correct manner of proposing it. The personal features of a controversy—and what controversy was ever without such features?—may not be pleasant and delectable. But even from these features the student may draw wholesome lessons for his own conduct.

In the controversy before us we find a close friend of Luther arrayed against another very dear friend of the Reformer. Cordatus, the pastor of Niemeck, is usually represented as a narrow-minded, quarrelsome character, an orthodox verbalist, a self-seeking worshiper of Luther. His frequent changes of pastorate—Koestlin even speaks of his being driven out of Bohemia—seem to indicate a morose temperament. His

THE PROOF TEXTS OF THE CATECHISM WITH A PRACTICAL COMMENTARY.

(Continued.)

MAN. — THE IMAGE OF GOD.

Gen. 2, 7: *And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*

Man consists of body and soul. His body was formed of the dust of the ground. Into man's nostrils God *breathed the breath of life, i. e.*, a breath that produced life. This breathing was a creative act of God whereby He made *ex nihilo* the human soul, uniting it with the body. Thus man became a *living soul*. Adam, as he came from the hands of God, was at once an intelligent, moral being; a person physically mature with mental and moral endowments of a very high order both in kind and degree, as a study of the Mosaic record Gen. 1—3 reveals. Of his passing by degrees through a brute existence till he finally reached a superior state, Scripture knows nothing. Hence the theory of Evolution is wrong.

Gen. 1, 27: *God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.*

“Another antisciptural assumption hopelessly exploded and untenable even in the light of scientific induction is that primeval man was androgynous. Man was not created a monstrosity, but the first human being was a male person, and on the same day with the first man a second human being, a mature female person, woman, was made, Matt. 19, 4; Gen. 2, 18. 21—24. The sexes are not a result of gradual differentiation, but *in the beginning*, when God made the first ancestors of our race, He *made them male and female.*” (Dr. Graebner in THEOL. QUART., III, 131.)

The text speaks of man's being created in the image of God. What this means the following passages will show.

Col. 3, 10: *Put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.*

Eph. 4, 24: *Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*

The context contrasts the *old man* with the *new man*. The *old man* is our sinful nature, “*corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,*” Eph. 4, 22. These deceitful lusts are the ruling principle of the old man. He manifests himself in the “*former conversation,*” in the mode of life before conversion. Such life the apostle calls the walk of the Gentiles. In this condition men have “the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their heart.” It is the state of unregenerate man, who has not yet learned Christ. See Eph. 4, 17—20. Natural man is *πάλαιος ἄνθρωπος* pure and simple. The *new man*, on the other hand, is the new life, the new principle, the gifts of grace, given to man in his conversion by the Holy Ghost.

Whence is this new nature? Is it of our own procuring? No. “*The new man . . . is created.*” The *καινός ἄνθρωπος* is wrought by a creative act of God in man's conversion, Eph. 2, 10. In Christ man becomes a *new creature*, a *καινή κτίσις*, 2 Cor. 5, 17; Gal. 6, 15. Before the Fall, man, made in the

likeness of God, was perfectly righteous and holy; his *will* was completely in harmony with the holy will of God; he possessed a deep *knowledge* — ἐπίγνωσις — of God's essence and will. Through the Fall all was lost. Its sad consequences are depicted in such passages as Rom. 3, 24; Eph. 5, 8; 2 Cor. 3, 5. Nothing in natural man is of the image of God. In order to restore it, a new-creation had to take place, a renewal had to be effected, hence the texts say "the new man *is renewed*," "*is created*." This is done in the Christians. The new man is created "*in righteousness and true holiness*," and is "*renewed in knowledge*." *Righteousness* over against the neighbor; *holiness*, true piety, towards God; *knowledge* of God's essence and will are the manifestations of this new life.

This new man is a reflection of the image of God. The text reads: "The new man which *after God* is created," etc., that is, as the passage in Colossians so beautifully explains: κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ χριστοῦ αὐτόν, *after the image of Him that created him*. Manifestly the apostle alludes to the words spoken by God at the Creation: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," Gen. 1, 26. God is a Spirit, hence cannot be represented by any material form. Righteousness, holiness, knowledge—the resemblance to God in these divine perfections—are constituent parts of the image of God. Righteousness, holiness, knowledge, have their seat in the will and the intellect of man. So the image of God had its seat primarily in man's *intellect* and *will*.

In these divine perfections, it is true, a *beginning* only is made in the believers in this life, as is evident also from the admonition: "*Put on the new man*." Again and again the Christian puts on the new man; he increases in sanctification. By daily contrition and repentance the old Adam is drowned and dies with all sins and evil lusts, and again, a new man daily comes forth and arises. Thus the new man asserts himself. See Eph. 4, 23—32. But since the righteousness, holiness, and knowledge in the believers constitute the incipient restoration of the image of God, the image lost, in its perfect

state, was an image of God's righteousness and holiness; the intellect of the first man was an image of the knowledge which is in God.

Luther says: "The divine image in which Adam was created was the noblest and most glorious feature, namely, that neither his reason nor his will had become tainted with the leprosy of sin. . . . His intellect was pure, his memory good and fresh, his will upright and true, and, withal, he possessed a very good, pure, and calm conscience, without a single care and without the fear of death. . . . Hence, I understand the image of God to have been in Adam essentially, and that by its means Adam not only knew God and believed in Him, as in a benevolent Being, but also led a wholly divine life, void of the fear of death and of every danger."

Gen. 5, 3: *Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called him Seth.*

The close proximity in which this statement stands to Gen. 5, 1: "In the day that God created man, in the *likeness of God made He him,*" adds a peculiar stress to the inherent emphasis in the phrases of the present passage: *in his own* (Adam's) *likeness, after his image.* Adam had fallen into sin; the image of God was lost. Seth was not begotten in the likeness of God, but in the likeness of fallen Adam. Not the image of God was transmitted to Adam's progeny, but Adam's *own* sinful image. — In the believers a beginning is made of the renewal of God's image, as was shown in preceding passages; fully restored it will be in the life to come, as the psalmist says:

Ps. 17, 15: *I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness.*

In the name of all believing children of God, the psalmist voices his living hope of a blissful life after death and beyond the grave. — *When I awake* from the sleep of death, *I will behold Thy face:* I shall see Thee, God, as Thou art, and by this beatific seeing of Thee *I shall be satisfied.* Thou, God, wilt be

my meat and my drink, my joy, my salvation. I shall behold Thy face *in righteousness*, in perfect innocence and righteousness. Thy image will be perfectly restored to me, for when I awake, it will be *with Thy likeness*.

What a clear testimony of the Old Testament is this as to the resurrection of the body and the renewal of the image of God! Involuntarily it reminds one of the language of St. John: "We shall *be like Him*, for we shall see Him as He is," 1 John 3, 3.

Ps. 139, 14: *I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are Thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.*

The almighty dictum of God: "Let there be!" called into existence marvelous works, Gen. 1. The crown of creation, however, is man. Contemplating his own body, this masterpiece of God's workmanship, the psalmist, touched with awe, exclaims: "I am fearfully and wonderfully made," *i. e.*, I am made in an astonishingly wonderful manner.—On the basis of this text the catechumens should be led to see man's superiority over all other creatures of God's handiwork. This knowledge should induce them to say with the inspired singer: "I will praise Thee."

DIVINE PROVIDENCE: 1. PRESERVATION; 2. GOVERNMENT.

Acts 17, 27. 28: *He is not far from every one of us: for in Him we live, and move, and have our being.*

Athens, the center of culture, art, literature, and science, knew not God. She proclaimed her ignorance loudly to all the world on one of her temples by the humiliating inscription: "To the Unknown God." Paul saw the city wholly given to idolatry, and his spirit was stirred within him. On the summit of the Areopagus Christianity and paganism met. Confronted by adherents of the Stoic and the Epicurean systems of philosophy,—pantheists and atheists,—surrounded by temples filled and ornamented with gods and goddesses, the objects of heathen idolatry, Paul discourses on the Creation, the Preser-

vation, and the Government of the world by this "Unknown God."

A close analysis of this speech, which the scope of this article precludes, would show how Paul fearlessly hurls blow after blow with telling effect at the philosophic systems of the day.

From this masterful oration our text is taken. Having told them "that God made the world and all things therein," v. 24, he goes on to say: "*It is He that giveth unto all life, and breath, and all things.*" God created the world; it still exists. God created us; we exist. The existence of the world, our own existence, is not due to self-preservation, but to God's sustaining power. He gives to all *life* — ζῶν — that is, life in itself; not only that, but He gives to all *breath* — πνοή — the continuation of life by means of breathing; not only that, but He gives to all *all things* — τὰ πάντα — everything necessary to maintain this life.

The true God, says Paul furthermore, is in no way similar to your dead idols enthroned in the temple of Mars nearby or in the Parthenon below me. In temples made with hands the Deity does not dwell. "He," God, "*is not far from every one of us.*" The true God is nigh us, protects us, sustains us. "*In Him we live*" — without Him we should have no life. "*In Him we move*" — without Him we could not move from place to place, we could not lift our arms or open our mouths. "*In Him we have our being*" — without Him we should have no existence at all.

This was strange doctrine to the heathen philosophers of that day; it is a matter of jest to the philosophers of our day. Worldly-wise philosophers, "men of science," as they love to style themselves, whether of the first century or of the twentieth, are but ignorant idolaters.

Hebr. 1, 3: *He upholds all things by the word of His power.*

God *upholds, i. e., maintains, all things*, the whole world. If God would withdraw His hand from this world but for a

single moment, it must collapse, chaos must ensue. "God has not forsaken His work, as the architect leaves the house when it is finished, but He preserves all things and governs them by His paternal providence." (Dietrich.) Of God's government the next passage speaks.

Ps. 33, 13—15: *The Lord looketh from heaven; He beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of His habitation He looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth. He fashioneth their hearts alike; He considereth all their works.*

This beautiful anthropomorphism, representing God as seated upon His throne of majesty, looking down upon the doings of men, forcibly teaches the great truth that God is not unconcerned about the affairs on earth. "*He looketh from heaven,*" and of all the millions of people not one escapes His all-seeing eye, for "*He beholdeth all the sons of men, He looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.*" Nor is He an idle spectator, allowing men to do as they please, but "*He fashioneth their hearts alike,*" *i. e.*, He fashioneth the hearts of them all, "*He considereth all their works.*" All things and all the affairs of men are in His hands, subject to His control and direction.

Ps. 145, 15. 16: *The eyes of all wait upon Thee; and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest Thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.*

Though God can preserve our lives without any earthly means (Moses on Mount Sinai for forty days, Ex. 34, 28), and though He can provide the necessaries of life, directly (Deut. 8, 3. 4, Israel in the desert; 1 Kings 17, Elijah; the widow), still it is His good pleasure to provide for our sustenance mediately. In the sweat of our brow we are to earn our livelihood. Who will not work shall not eat, says the apostle. But it is God who preserves our strength, our skill, etc., which enable us to obtain our daily bread. It is He that promised: "*While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not*

cease," Gen. 8, 22. It is He that "maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust," Matt. 5, 45. It is He that "giveth rain in his season; He reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest," Jer. 5, 24. The words of our text, teaching the universality of God's providence, are literally true. Our *meat*, *i. e.*, our food, our nourishment, is a *gift* of God. "*Thou givest them their meat in due season.*" And for Him it is a trifling matter to provide for the millions of His creatures. He has but to *open His hand* and they are satisfied. May God through His Word lead us to know this more and more so as to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving! Then while performing the work of our calling industriously, we will commit the success of our labor to God, and thus escape the carking cares for the morrow.

1 Pet. 5, 7: *Cast all your care upon Him; for He careth for you.*

The section from which this passage is taken treats of the cross of the Christians. They are exhorted: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time," v. 6. Closely connected with this Christian humility is confidence, trust, in God. "*Casting all your care upon Him.*" Trials of faith produce cares, spiritual cares. These they are to cast upon God in fervent prayer. But Christians are also oppressed by temporal cares, cares for food, raiment, and the like. These, too, they are to cast upon God. Christians are not to bear their lot stoically, in dull resignation. Thus the children of the world suffer the sorrows that befall them. In its last analysis this sentiment is despair. In the trials of this life, both spiritual and temporal, the thought oftentimes assails the Christian: God has forsaken thee! No, says the apostle, not so. These cares, of whatever nature they may be, are not to make us doubt God's grace and mercy. Whatever may betide: "*cast all your care upon Him.*" Why can the Christian cheerfully do that? "*He careth for you.*"

It is not a blind fate that rules over your lives, but God, your Father, guides you, protects you, provides for you. *He careth for you*, He is mindful of you, His fatherly eye rests upon you. He will not allow you to be tempted above that you are able to bear. Hence trust this Father in childlike confidence, and cast *all* your cares — also the temporal cares — upon Him, and rest assured: The Lord will provide.

Matt. 10, 29. 30: *Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.*

God's government extends even to the smallest and most trifling matters. This comforting truth is most beautifully set forth here by an *argumentum a minore ad majus*.

The word *farthing*, δροσάριον, was used among the Greeks to designate any small, insignificant amount. Its value, in our money, is about five-eighths of a cent. Two sparrows sold for five-eighths of a cent! "*And yet*" (καί) God cares for them; *one of them shall not fall on the ground* — dead — without God's permission. To the sparrows God stands but in the relation of the Creator to the creature. To you, however, He stands in the relation of a *father* to a child. Emphatically God is called "*your Father*." The Creator who cares for the meanest of His creatures, *e. g.*, the sparrows, will not He care for you, His child, whom He has bought with a price? Why, you are so precious in His sight that His care extends to *the very hairs of your head* — trifling matter as that may seem. Every one of them is numbered.

"Our Lord's line of argument here is in precisely the contrary direction to that which men often follow on this subject. They will say that no doubt God controls great matters, but that it is questionable whether His care extends to such little things as the concerns of an individual man. Jesus says, God takes care of the smallest and most trifling things, and therefore we may be sure He cares for man, who is so much more important." (Broadus.)

Ps. 91, 10: *There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.*

This is said of them that have made the Most High their habitation, v. 9, that is to say, the true children of God. They have the assurance that no *evil* shall befall them, and no *plague* shall come nigh unto them. Troubles and afflictions may assail them, the cross will enter their threshold, yet there shall not be a real *evil* in all this, for it comes from the love of God and is sent not for their hurt, but for their good, as St. Paul expressly declares: "We know that *all things* work together for good to them that love God," Rom. 8, 28. "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby," Hebr. 12, 11. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him," Ps. 126, 4. 5.

Gen. 50, 20: *Ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.*

These words Joseph spoke to his brothers when they craved his forgiveness for the evil they had done unto him. He contrasts the evil intents of men to the good intents of God, showing how God overrules the evil for good. God's government extends also to the evil. It is not His will that evil should be done, but when it is committed, He directs its consequences. Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers. They "*thought evil against him.*" Reason asks, Why did God not prevent this abominable deed? God, looking into the future, "*meant it unto good.*" Not only did Joseph become a great man — thus evil turned into good for him — but God, controlling the evil for good, "*brought it to pass to save much people alive.*" Among these people saved alive were the very brothers of Joseph. It was for their welfare also that God overruled their evil act. They did not deserve it, but God is kind.

Ps. 37, 5: *Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass.*

The entire course of our life is pictured as a way over which we Christians travel to reach our heavenly destination. On this way there are obstructions to impede our progress—trials, cares, afflictions manifold are encountered. What are we to do in the face of such dangers? “*Commit thy way unto the Lord,*” or as St. Peter says, “*Cast all your care upon Him,*” and then, whatever may betide, *trust in Him* as in a most faithful counselor and guide and an ever-present help in every need, *and He shall bring it to pass,* He will bring it to a good end. Appropriating the words of the psalmist, we may confidently exclaim: “*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me,*” Ps. 23, 4.

Ps. 103, 13: *Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.*

All the divine blessings spoken of in the preceding passages the Lord showers upon “*them that fear Him,*” upon the Christians. What impels Him to do it? Any merit or worthiness in us? No. God owes us nothing. “*When ye shall have done all those things commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do,*” Luke 17, 10. So, even though we had fulfilled all the commandments of God, the idea of merit would be excluded. Moreover, though we belong to the number of *them that fear Him,* yet we are *sinners,* and do not deserve to be helped. David’s plea must ever remain ours: “*Enter not into judgment with Thy servant.*” What, then, prompts God to bless us so abundantly? The answer is found in the text: “*The Lord pitieth them that fear Him,*” or as the psalmist says in another place: “*For He is good: because His mercy endureth forever,*” Ps. 118, 1. His *pity, i. e., His mercy* wherewith He attends the miserable; His *goodness, i. e., His love* whereby He bestows blessings—these are His only motives. And God *pitieth* us “*as a father*

pitieth his children." A fatherly pity, a fatherly mercy is one such as a dear father entertains and manifests towards his dear children. And since it is the *Lord* that has pity on us, this mercy is a *divine* mercy, such as only God can entertain and show, one that is altogether perfect, and one "*that endureth forever,*" Ps. 118, 1.

Now, since God does all this purely out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, we are constrained to confess with Jacob:

Gen. 32, 10: *I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which Thou hast showed unto Thy servant.*

On returning home, after an absence of twenty years, Jacob reviews his past life. His heart expands with the goodness of his God, for what he beholds is all *mercy*, all *truth*. God had faithfully kept His promises, and overwhelmed him with blessings manifold as from an inexhaustible store. Though Jacob is a *servant* of the Lord, yet he knows that he has deserved none of the things bestowed upon him; they are due only to God's mercy and truth. He is *not worthy of the least* of all mercies received.

This is the sentiment of every true Christian. Hence he asks with the psalmist: "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?" Ps. 116, 12. And the answer is found in Ps. 118, 1: "O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good: because His mercy endureth forever."

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(To be continued.)