

David P. Scaer, "God the Son and Hermeneutics:
A Brief Study in the Reformation,"
Concordia Theological Quarterly, 59 (1995) No. 1-2:49-66.

God the Son and Hermeneutics: A Brief Study in the Reformation

David P. Scaer

I. Hermeneutics in General

A. A Christological Skill

In his *Evangelical Interpretation: Perspectives on Hermeneutical Issues*, the Evangelical New Testament scholar Millard J. Erickson makes this observation on theology:

Frequently those who are the most effective practitioners of a given skill cannot explain how they do it. They either possess this ability intuitively, like musicians who play "by ear," or they have so assimilated the methodology that they are no longer conscious of the steps that they go through in executing that action, like experienced drivers driving an automobile

Likewise, many of the most important theologians in the history of the church did not write discourses on theological methodology. They simply proceeded to do theology, correlating their statements with the pressing issues and thought forms of the day.

Erickson offers Augustine and Martin Luther as examples.¹ Instinctively one knows that Erickson is right. Dance lessons by themselves no more produce great dancers than do piano lessons great pianists. Hermeneutics requires a method, but ultimately it is a skill grounded in the faith of the interpreter within the context of the church.² In a Lutheran context the intuition of faith is christological.

B. The Failure of Humanism

All Lutheran theologians from Luther to Pieper have made this fact clear when they claim that suffering (*Anfechtung; tentatio*) is a component of the theological task.³ Theology, especially hermeneutics, originates and finds its goal within the context of the Christian life, denoted not by proscriptions (law), but comprehended in and by christology (gospel). Christology is more than an abstract theological discipline; it is a sharing in Christ's suffering in which the true knowledge of God (theology) is grasped. From his burden the interpreter may instinctively flee, desiring the safe haven of a precisely defined science, but the land of pleasant neutrality is never

found. Erasmus, who gave the Reformation the Greek New Testament, distanced himself from the conflict which Luther's Reformation brought. He died an outcast and was excommunicated after his death; he was branded a heretic and his books were banned.⁴ As a textual critic and linguistic scholar Luther came in second – or third if Calvin be added to the list – but he found Christ in the Scriptures.

C. Method and Its Limitations

Questionable is any claim that theology and with it biblical interpretation are abstract sciences, acquired and then measured by the application of principles and regulations. A variety of often contradictory results come from those applying the same principles. Erasmus, Luther, and Calvin were all exegetical scholars, and Luther was the least methodical. A purely scientific method would be possible if the Bible could be approached from a position of nearly absolute religious, philosophical, or literary neutrality. Humanism failed in this attempt. Locating a Point of literary neutrality even in non-religious writings is elusive. Within their own spheres Shakespearian and American constitutional scholars do not agree. An objective literary hermeneutic remains as elusive as Camelot. The *Jesus Seminar*, for all of its self-heralded scientific objectivity, is hardly more than a curiosity in what must appear to some a carnival with each scholar hawking his own wares. Polling scholars to determine the authentic words of Jesus is no more valuable (scholarly) than asking Lutherans what they believe so as to determine the Lutheran faith. This undertaking is sociology gone awry and allowed to trespass where it does not belong. Scientific exegesis ultimately fails because it assumes that a modicum of objectivity can be located. The content and purpose of the Bible (law and gospel) permit no reader the luxury of neutral, scholarly objectivity. His faith or lack of faith involves him at the deepest level of his existence as he is battered between the seeming contradiction in the God who constantly reverses Himself by rejecting (law) and accepting him (gospel). Claims of discovering the high ground of neutral territory are deluded. Distinctions, made in sermons to seminarists and pastors, between a "professional" and a "devotional" study of the Bible are somewhat puzzling and are hardly Luther-like,

since no one is ever excused from the combat of faith.

D. Unplanned Discoveries: Unearthing Old Treasures

Even within the same religious community, it would be impudent to suggest that one person (even Luther), one method, or one commentary has exhausted the full meaning of the Scriptures and nothing new can be learned. Biblical commentaries can never be treated rightly as exhaustive, although they are often treated as if they were. Commentators are hermeneutical combatants with the rest of us. Luther and his fellow-reformers approached the Scriptures differently. Luther spoke of interpreting the Scriptures as walking in the woods. One can walk where he wants and may walk where he has already gone to see things which he did not see the first time.⁵ A trip to the botanical garden in which the flora are labeled may be helpful to the uninitiated, but it can never match the sheer joy of discovery. The fathers have made paths through the woods, but we may leave the beaten track. Often, much to our chagrin, paths new to us are already charted by the fathers. Still, as children, we are entitled to the thrill of discovery. We can take the hands of the fathers, but studying the map is no substitute for enjoying the scenery. London may be old to one man, but another can discover it for himself.⁶

If we believe that the Scriptures are a divine book, we shall be drawn into its pages. Here our finite minds pursue in the joy of faith the infinite God revealed in the cross. The right of pursuit does not, of course, give license to crazed wandering exegetes to head for the forests with chain-saws, but it is a passport to go where we and others have already gone and see what was not seen the first time. Biblical interpretation is more than a constant reshuffling of a deck of cards. Rather the interpreter will be consumed by those Scriptures which he consumes. He never fully envelops what fully envelops him.

E. Scripture as Churchly Domain

Those who find themselves only condemned by the Scriptures readjust them or put them aside, but those who find redemption there are drawn by them into the church. The Spirit who inspired the Scriptures is the same Spirit who helped Christ to offer up an eternal

sacrifice and who brings the listener to Christ as the content of the Scriptures. They belong to the church. He comes to us in the Scriptures and joins our existence in the sacraments. The custom of placing the gospel-book on the altar is a profound symbol of the ecclesial and christological nature of Scripture. Inspiration without Christology turns gracious invitations into rules and principles. The Bible arises and functions in and for the church to awaken and confirm faith in the Christ encountered in the sacraments.

F. Setting Boundaries

The task and title here, "God the Son and Hermeneutics," would be unacceptable to Helmut Koester, who disputes the distinctions between secular and sacred documents. The Gospel of Thomas has as much weight as John. Cicero, Socrates, Philo, Jesus, and Paul are equals. Walls separating university and seminary are artificial.⁷ For Lutherans the principle suggested in the title, "God the Son and Hermeneutics," is self-understood. Remove Christ and the law becomes the functional hermeneutical key. Then God's final word becomes what we must do and not what He has already done. Law and gospel are reversed.

II. Johannes Bugenhagen and the Psalms

A. Looking for Guides

While asserting the interpreter's right to wander around in the woods without having others barking at him, these woods are churchly domain. Like children at play, we never want to go so far that we no longer see the lights in the house. Our Lutheran Confessions find our homes in Ceasarea, Constantinople, Milan, Hippo, and Rome.⁸ In addition, of course, Wittenberg beckons.

B. Bugenhagen's Place in the Reformation

The *Lutheran Theological Journal* of May 1992 contains an article by Maurice E. Schild on Johann Bugenhagen's approach to the Psalms.⁹ If he had lived in a different place and time, he may have achieved a greatness denied those who live in the shadow of a giant (in this case Luther). He is immortalized by Lucas Cranach the Younger on the triptych over the altar of St. Mary's Church in

Wittenberg, where he was pastor and shared the pulpit with Luther. There he lies buried. On the right panel of the triptych is Melanchthon baptizing an infant by immersion. In the center stands Luther preaching. Superimposed between him and the congregation, which includes his wife and son, is the crucified Christ. The Lutheran hermeneutical principle is obvious. By itself this painting expresses the theme here of "God the Son and Hermeneutics." Like St. Paul Luther intended to preach nothing except Christ and Him crucified and saw all his theology in christological dimensions. On an upper panel Luther, Bugenhagen, and other reformers gather for Eucharistic celebration with Jesus as the host who is then also symbolized by the slain lamb on the table. The Passover, the institution of the Eucharist, and the participation of the reformers, events covering three thousand years are brought together on one canvas. Mysteries of Old Testament promise, New Testament atonement, and Eucharist comprise one reality. Artists on one canvas can confess mysteries for which theologians need pages. On the right panel stands Bugenhagen alone, holding the keys of his office, one restoring a penitent sinner and another excommunicating an impenitent. On the triptych is the triumvirate of the Reformation: Melanchthon, Luther, and Bugenhagen. Here is the heart and content of Lutheran theology: baptism, preaching, the eucharist, and the pastoral office pictured in the Bugenhagen's keys. Luther fueled the Reformation and Melanchthon provided the confessional structure, but Bugenhagen was the *episcopus*, planting the Reformation and liturgically restructuring the north German and Danish churches.¹⁰

From 1517 to 1521 Bugenhagen was already lecturing on the Psalms to the monks in Belbeck in Pomerania, the region from which he took his Latin name, Pomeranus.¹¹ In March of 1521 he arrived in Wittenberg. Luther left on April 2 for Worms and exile in the Wartburg until the spring of 1522. In a letter of 1518 Bugenhagen makes reference to Luther. Scholars believe he had his own "tower experience" in reading the *Babylonian Captivity* in 1520.¹² During Luther's absence he lectured on the Psalms for Pomeranian students. Before he had reached Psalm 16, the room was so filled that the self-invited Melanchthon suggested that the lectures be offered at the university (from November 1521 to March 1523).¹³ In 1523 Bugenhagen became pastor of St. Mary's Church

and in 1533 a doctor of theology and professor in the university.¹⁴ In 1537 he was third among forty-three theologians to sign the Smalcald Articles, his signature appearing after Luther and Justus Jonas. During Luther's absence he resisted Karlstadt, and after the reformer's death, he opposed the interims.¹⁵ He died in 1558 at the age of seventy-two, a man of remarkable and unquestionable confessional Lutheran credentials. Influenced by Luther, Bugenhagen was autodidactic, but he shared with him the sense of a tortured soul searching for salvation. Luther was his father, but he was Luther's *Beichtvater* and *episcopus*.

C. Bugenhagen's Commentary and Luther's Preface

Bugenhagen's *Librum Psalmorum Interpretatio* was so important that, upon his return, Luther urged its publication and he and Melanchthon provided prefaces for the first edition in 1524.¹⁶ Luther lectured on the Psalms from 1513 to 1515¹⁷ and wrote another commentary on the Psalms in 1525.¹⁸ To Martin Bucer Luther wrote that Bugenhagen with his exegesis of the Psalms was "on the mark" and urged him to prepare a German translation which appeared in January 1526.¹⁹ By 1679 the Latin version had appeared in sixteen editions. It lies at the center of the exegetical thinking of the Reformation. In his preface Luther said: "Among the number [of the elect] is Johannes Bugenhagen, the bishop of Wittenberg ["Pomeranus episcopus ecclesiae VVittenbergen"] by the will of God and our Father, through whose gift this Psalter ["hoc Psalterium"] is given opening to you, dear reader, by the Spirit of Christ, who is the key of David." Christology or, more precisely, Christ is, according to Luther, the hermeneutical key, and Bugenhagen by God's grace had found it. Bugenhagen is for Luther "the first in the world who deserves to be called an interpreter of the Psalms" ("huc Pomeranu primu in orbe psalterii interpres"). Melanchthon in his preface said of Bugenhagen's commentary: "Mercuriales statuæ vias indicant."²⁰

D. Christ, the Key for Luther and Bugenhagen

Bugenhagen's commentary differs from Luther's, as Luther's two commentaries differ from each other. Not even Luther followed the same path through the woods, but both Luther and Bugenhagen

found Christ.²¹ Luther declares:

Every prophecy and every prophet must be understood as referring to Christ the Lord except where it is clear from plain words someone else is spoken of. For thus He Himself says: "Search the Scriptures, . . . and it is they that bear witness to Me" (John 5:39). Otherwise it is most certain that searchers will not find what they are searching for. For that reason some explain very many psalms not prophetically but historically, following certain Hebrew rabbis who are falsifiers and inventors of Jewish vanities. No wonder, because they are far from Christ (that is, from the truth). "But we have the mind of Christ," says the apostle (1 Corinthians 2:16).²²

Bugenhagen's approach to the Scriptures is caught by the titles which Hans Hermann Holfelder gave to his studies of Bugenhagen's commentaries on Paul's epistles (*Solus Christus*) and the Psalms (*Tentatio et Consolatio*).²⁴ *Solus Christus* expresses Luther's own theology²⁵ and *Tentatio et Consolatio* expresses Luther's dilemma of being condemned and accepted by God at the same time.²⁶ This dilemma of rejection and acceptance describes the Christian experience in confronting God, but also the experience of Christ Himself as the one who is made sin (in death) and the one who is vindicated and declared righteous by God (in the resurrection). The characteristic Lutheran principle of law and gospel is christological; Christ knows intimately, even more profoundly, what every Christian experiences in being rejected (law) and then accepted (gospel) by God. The title *Tentatio et Consolatio* is as much christological as is *Solus Christus*. The cry of the forsaken (Psalm 22:1) is prayed by Christ and believers in Christ.

E. Christus Qui Clavis David

Schild notes, as others have, that Bugenhagen's commentary is not a modern one.²⁷ He does, however, attend to exegetical details and textual criticism.²⁸ Schild calls the commentary "a work of spiritual edification in which he [Bugenhagen] teaches that the Psalter is opened through the Spirit of Christ, who is 'the key of David' – as Luther rejoiced in his preface."²⁹ Luther echoed his preface to the

lectures on the Psalms which he delivered between 1513 and 1515 providing nine biblical references, including Revelation 3:7, identifying Jesus as the key of David, and Psalm 40:7, "In the roll of the book it is written of Me."³⁰ In biblical interpretation Bugenhagen and Luther came from Christ and return to Him.³¹ Christ is the hermeneutical key.³² In Reformed and Evangelical hermeneutics this role is played by the Spirit.³³ A christological hermeneutic and not inspiration accounts for Lutheran differences with others on justification, sanctification, the ministry (including our opposition to the ordination of women), the sacraments, and the person and work of Christ.³⁴

F. *Confessio Autoris*

Biblical hermeneutics presupposes faith, because Christ through the biblical text embraces the interpreter. Bugenhagen's interpretation of the Psalms was his spiritual autobiography, *confessio autoris*. Yet he was an accomplished linguist and had come under the influence of the humanists Faber Stapulensis and Erasmus and was known by them.³⁵ He prepared three translations of the Psalms from Hebrew into Latin.³⁶ As a scholar he compared the Hebrew text with the Septuagint and Vulgate and eventually Luther's German translation; he lectured and wrote in the Latin language. His christological hermeneutic was not compensation for a linguistic deficit. His christological conclusions can hardly be explained alone as the results of the proper application of linguistic or scientific methods. Erasmus, with his view of the Scriptures as the source of Christian life, was Bugenhagen's nemesis, whose views he rejected as his own *priores errores*.³⁷ He, like Luther, admits undergoing a conversion from the human righteousness which he knew under the papacy and Erasmus to a righteousness given in Christ. Luther was by far the more famed opponent of Erasmus (notably in his *Bondage of the Will*), but he had never been under humanism's spell as Bugenhagen confessed that he had been.

As Bugenhagen was drawn into the text, it spoke of David, of Christ, and of himself. Bugenhagen used Nicholas of Lyra against the allegorizing of Augustine, but did not adopt Lyra's application of the *census literalis*, steering a course in between the two.³⁸ Seeing the psalms in terms of the psalmist, of Christ, and of himself

did not introduce various layers of meaning, since christology was the key to all three arenas involved. Christ participates in the lives and deaths of believers, as they participate in His life and death, a reciprocal imputation and participation. Pietism separated sanctification from justification and lost the christological perspective. With sanctification seen as self-conscious moral achievement, the way was open to separating ethics from God and religion in the Enlightenment. Bugenhagen was religiously self-conscious of being a sinner and not of his own moral accomplishment. Christology distinguishes Lutheran hermeneutics as it does the Lutheran view of sanctification. "Christ is made our sanctification."³⁹

G. Peccatum Reliquum

As for Luther, so for Bugenhagen, the past was never entirely wiped away, but came back to plague him.⁴⁰ The good tree of Psalm 1 at times produces rotten apples. "For there is in the saints a *peccatum reliquum*, which, however, is not imputed because of faith."⁴¹ Bugenhagen finds himself among both the righteous and the wicked in Psalm 1. While he was leading others into his error of (popish) works-righteousness, God had compassion on him and restored him. "God took pity on human error [and] brought back apostolic times and the preaching of His gospel according to the Spirit of Christ."⁴² We, not others, are the sinners. God's enemies are ourselves. Bugenhagen made this confession:

Once I was an offense to God, but now I am the one who has been made an offense to men, especially to those for whom the gospel of Christ is more of an offense than I am. For the change in my lot I will forever thank God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, beseeching Him, to give me His Spirit, through which I will have the strength to meditate on His law [*lege*, the Scriptures] day and night, that by the comfort of the Spirit I may avoid the offense of the teachings of the Antichrist and through love bear the sins and follies of my weaker brothers, to many of which I myself am abundantly [*nimisque*, immoderately] given.⁴³

Even in his state of being saved Bugenhagen sees himself as sinner, and thus he represents the classical Lutheran understanding

of *simul iustus et peccator*. A Christian is released from sin purely by God's grace so that he may help others who show the same imperfections which exist excessively in him. In looking at Psalm 1 Bugenhagen does not find himself as a spectator cheering the righteous and heckling the wicked, as Calvin does in his commentary,⁴⁴ but rather finds himself on both sides, not watching but participating. In helping relieve the sins of others, he finds that they are only a reflection of a worse condition in himself.⁴⁵ Bugenhagen, finds himself in the battered condition of David who finds himself rejected by God and condemned by others, often for things of which he is unaware, and finally accepted by God. The great reformer could see in Bugenhagen's self-portrait his own image. He "had hit the mark."⁴⁶ In the back of Bugenhagen's mind is Erasmus for whom the law is *praecepta lex*,⁴⁷ anticipating Calvin for whom the law reenters the Christian life with prescriptions and regulations. The "study of the law" means that "that God is rightly served when His law is obeyed."⁴⁸ For Bugenhagen the *torah* (Scripture) is the *verbum Dei* or the *evangelium Christi*.⁴⁹

H. Christ and Then the Man Who Is in Christ

The continuing quest for the historical Jesus regardless of the quantity of details unearthed hardly qualifies as christology, since it concerns itself in locating Jesus as an historical figure without relating him to either God or mankind or the reader of the biblical texts.⁵⁰ Carl Braaten calls it "Jesuology." Luther says as much in condemning rabbinic exegesis.⁵¹ Christology means instead that Jesus is the manifestation of God to us and the presentation of us to God. In Him we see God and in Him God sees us. Jesus is on all sides of the theological equation. Christ is inclusive of the divine and human; nothing less could be expected of a Chalcedonian christology. Also for Bugenhagen's hermeneutic Christ is foundational. Biblical interpretation begins and returns to Him.

In dealing with psalm 1, Bugenhagen relates "blessed" to the Beatitudes: "Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are the merciful. Blessed are those who suffer persecution on account of righteousness ["propter iustitiam"]. Blessed are you when they speak evil of [curse] you." He then refers to Jeremiah 17: "Cursed is the man who trusts in himself"; "Blessed is the man who trusts in the

Lord." The Hebrew text is compared with the Septuagint and the Vulgate. Where the Septuagint uses the singular, the Hebrew uses the plural and the Latin has *beatitudines viro sunt*. The Hebrew text, he notes, moves between the singular and plural. Bugenhagen identifies the blessed man first as Christ and then the man who is in Christ. "Beatus vir, qui hic describit, primu est Christus Dominus propter nos homo factus, deinde quilibet homo qui est in Christo."⁵² Luther in his lectures of 1512 saw the *beatus vir* in christological terms: "The first psalm speaks literally concerning Christ thus."⁵³ Bugenhagen went a step further by referring to the believers of the Old and New Testaments. A christological hermeneutic is ecclesial:

When we speak in this way [the man who is in Christ], do not think that we are excluding believers who died before the incarnation of Christ; for all those are in Christ who looked for the coming of the Woman's Seed, who would crush the head of the serpent (Genesis 3) and [who looked for the coming] of the Seed of Abraham by whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed (Genesis 22). Christ . . . [is] set forth as the goal, as it is said in Luke 2.⁵⁴

After Bugenhagen speaks of the "blessed man" first as Christ and then as the church, because it is "in Christ," he speaks of himself, the interpreter of the psalm. "For whoever does not believe that he is one with Christ, that one will never understand the Psalms."⁵⁵

I. Christus Summum Sacramentum

Also characteristic of Bugenhagen's hermeneutic is his sacramental approach to the Psalms. In connection with the "cup" of Psalm 23 he makes eucharistic references, as also in connection with the "remembrance" and "food" of Psalm 111:4-5. He also refers to John 6. While the Lord's Supper is for Bugenhagen *sacramentum* itself, it still points to Christ who is *summum sacramentum*.⁵⁶ As Bugenhagen spoke christologically of his dilemma, he could likewise speak of Christ sacramentally, anticipating Articles VII and VIII of the Formula of Concord.

J. The "Zwinglian" Distortion and Bucer

Bugenhagen followed medieval precedence in making eucharistic

references in connection with Psalm 111:4-5: "He caused His wonderful works to be remembered."⁵⁷ His commentary appeared on the eve of the Zwinglian denial of Christ's bodily presence in the Lord's Supper and did not necessarily use the terms which later became familiar to Lutherans. Bucer, asked by Luther to translate the book, took the opportunity, as Schild notes, to "read the Bugenhagen texts as if they were open to a Zwinglian denial of the real presences [sic!] and, in his free translation, took the risk of rewriting them accordingly."⁵⁸ *Translator traditor est!*⁵⁹ Bucer did the same with Luther. Bucer was unaware of certain tracts which Bugenhagen had written in 1525 in the course of his controversy with Karlstadt, one addressed to Thomas More on iconoclasm and another addressed to a clergyman of Breslau "against the new error concerning the sacrament of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ."⁶⁰ Both Luther and Bugenhagen were outraged at Bucer's alterations and published treatises against him. In a response Bucer (1527) pleaded ignorance, and Bugenhagen declared matters at an end in 1528. Bugenhagen's exchange with Bucer was the first step in the debate between Luther and Zwingli on the Lord's Supper, an issue which has permanently divided Protestants from one another. Bugenhagen, with his christological and sacramental hermeneutic, was first in the arena against the denial of the real presence. Luther, in the face of Bucer's attempt to paint Bugenhagen as Zwinglian, defended him and permitted his preface to stand.

K. Christological Hermeneutic as Inclusive Exegesis

Bugenhagen was no peripheral figure in the Reformation. Luther was his father, but he was for Luther a bishop (*episcopus*) and confessor (*Beichtvater*), a friend closer than either Melanchthon or Justus Jonas. On the way to meet the papal legate, Luther said to Bugenhagen; "Da fahren der deutsche Papst und Kardinal Pomeranus."⁶¹ Luther was pope and Bugenhagen his legate. The *Commentarius Pomeranii* is a window into a leading soul of the Reformation shared with Luther. When Bugenhagen came to occurrences of "David" in the Psalms (as in 132), not merely the phrase "Son of David," he saw Jesus as the real "David,"⁶² Schild says of Bugenhagen's interpretation: "The closer Christ is to David, the closer is the Lord to our temptations, sufferings and sin."⁶³ A christological

hermeneutic does not confront us with making a separation between Christ and believers. Christology, history, and autobiography (sanctification) are perspectives on one reality. The times of Israel, of Christ, and of the church are not divorced from one another. In Cranach's altar-painting, again, the reformers sit for the sacrament with the risen Christ at the table and the Passover lamb, signifying Christ, on the table. Christ is in all parts of the equation. In another painting in St. Mary's Church Bugenhagen is placed in the scene of John's baptism of Jesus, recalling Luther's baptismal hymn: "To Jordan Came Christ the Lord." Now Bugenhagen is in the equation. Christ's baptism is his. Bugenhagen's hermeneutic is classically Lutheran, simply because it is christological.

After Luther's death Bugenhagen faced personal tragedy and a church weakened by compromising friends. When Wittenberg was occupied by the imperial forces of Charles V, he remained. In 1556 he addressed his last episcopal letter to the Saxon pastors, and in 1557 he preached his last sermon. Until he died on the night of April 19-20, 1558, the now blind reformer daily attended services in the church. Perhaps his faith can be described in this statement gleaned from his commentary by Schild: "Christ would not be king were he defeated in His saints."⁶⁵

Endnotes

1. Millard J. Erickson, *Evangelical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1993), 80-81.
2. *Lex orandi lex credendi*.
3. Readers are referred to Paul Buehler, *Die Anfechtungen bei Martin Luther* (Zurich: Zwingli Verlag, 1942); Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1950), 188-189; David P. Scaer, "The Concept of *Anfechtungen* in Luther's Thought," *Concordia Theological Quarterly*, 47:1 (January 1983), 15-30.
4. William Manchester, *A World Lit Only By Fire* (Boston: Little-Brown, 1992), 186.
5. Heiko A. Oberman, *Luther: Man between God and the Devil*, trans. Eileen Walliser-Schwarzbart (New Haven: Yale Universi-

ty, 1989), 166.

6. Oberman, 166. Luther, who was a doctor of theology of thirty-four years and well-practiced in exegesis and translation, admitted "that he was overwhelmed by the depth and wealth of the Scriptures, which no man would ever fathom in a single life time."
7. Carl Braaten makes reference to the gathering of Lutheran professors at the meeting of the American Academy of Religion and the Society of Biblical Literature in November of 1990 in New Orleans at which Koester made these remarks. "A Chalcedonian Hermeneutic," *Pro Ecclesia*, 3:1 (Winter 1994), 18-19. "The canon [for Koester] was the result of a deliberate attempt to exclude certain voices from the early period of Christianity: heretics, Marcionites, Gnosticism, Jewish Christians, perhaps also women Koester advocated a return to the 'history of religions' approach in which 'early Christianity is just one of several Hellenistic propaganda religions.'"
8. Augsburg Confession, XXI: ". . . this teaching is grounded clearly on the Holy Scriptures and is not contrary or opposed to that of the universal Christian church or even of the Roman church"
9. Maurice Schild, "Approaches to Bugenhagen's Psalms Commentary (1524)," *Lutheran Theological Journal*, 26:1 (May 1992), 63-71.
10. Johannes H. Bergsma, *Die Reform der Messliturgie durch Johannes Bugenhagen* (Kevelaer: Butzon and Bercker, 1956).
11. Biographical data on Bugenhagen is taken from Bergsma, 1-35.
12. Bergsma, 7.
13. Georg Geisenhof, *Bibliotheca Bugenhageniana* (Nieukoop: B. de Graaf, 1963), 3-4.
14. Already in 1522 Bugenhagen was called "doctor."
15. Bergsma, 30-31.
16. Johannes Bugenhagen, *Librum Psalmorum Interpretatio [Commentarius Pomerani]* (Nuremberg: Jo. Petrejus, [August] 1524). Direct references to Bugenhagen's work are based on a micro-

film in the library of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, which is a copy of the fourth edition to follow the first (which was published in Basel in March of 1524).

17. Martin Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms, I, Psalms 1-75, Luther's Works*, American Edition, 10 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1974), x. This first volume on the Psalms was not written as a commentary, but was constructed from Luther's glosses written in the margins of his Psalter.
18. Luther lectured on the Psalms in Latin in 1525. In his own preface to a German translation by Stephan Rodt, Luther discusses how he was delayed in writing this commentary by his going to Worms and how in his absence "Johann Pommer" had done this work in his stead.
19. Schild, 64.
20. Road-markers were placed on ancient Roman roads to assist merchants in determining distances.
21. For a detailed yet popularly written study of Luther's christological exegesis, readers are referred to Oberman, 151-175, "The Reformation Breakthrough." "The Bible contains only one truth, but it is the decisive one: that Jesus Christ, our God and Lord, died for the sake of our sins and was resurrected for our righteousness" (171).
22. *Luther's Works, 10:7*. For a recent study of the role of christology for Martin Luther, readers are referred to Gerhard Ebeling, "The Beginnings of Luther's Hermeneutics," *Lutheran Quarterly*, 7:2 (Summer 1993): 129-158; 7:3 (Autumn 1993): 315-337; 7:4 (Winter 1993): 451-468.
23. Hans Hermann Holfelder, *Solus Christus* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1981).
24. Hans Hermann Holfelder, *Tentatio et Consolatio* (Berlin: DeGruyter, 1974).
25. Readers are referred to *Lutheran Synod Quarterly* (December 1992), 90-91. "For when Luther emphasized *solus Christus*, this meant, as you point out so well, that justification and the work of Christ as Propitiator and Redeemer belong inextricably together; the entire Scriptures are Christocentric in their content;

therefore all Christian doctrine must center in Christ (the purpose, of Scripture and of all doctrine in the church is soteriological)."

26. Holfelder, *Tentatio*, 167.
27. Schild, 65.
28. Holfelder, *Tentatio*, 96-97.
29. Schild, 65.
30. *Luther's Works*, 10:6. This is no casual remark, but essential to Luther's theology. In his *Lectures on Romans* (*Luther's Works*, 25:40) Luther writes "that the entire Scripture deals only with Christ everywhere, if it is looked at inwardly, even though on the face of it it may sound differently by the shadows . . . Hence he [St. Paul] also says that Christ is the end of the Law (v. 4), as if to say that all Scripture finds its meaning in Christ."
31. Luther clearly used the christological principle of biblical interpretation before Bugenhagen did. For a scholarly study of Luther's christological hermeneutics, readers are referred to Gerhard Ebeling as cited above in note 22.
32. Kenneth Paul Wesche discusses the christological interpretation of the Scriptures of Ignatius of Antioch in "St. Ignatius of Antioch: The Criterion of Orthodoxy and the Marks of Catholicity," *Pro Ecclesia*, 3:1 (Winter 1994). At the end of the first century the Judaizers used the approach now associated with Fundamentalists in saying that each doctrine needed a specific biblical passage. Their cry was that what "I do not find in the Scriptures [Old Testament], I will not believe in the gospel [what is now recognized as our New Testament]." When the Judaizers found the scriptural references which he offered unacceptable, Ignatius replied: "For me, the Scriptures [*archeia*, i.e., the Old Testament] are Jesus Christ; the holy Scriptures are his cross and death, his resurrection, and the faith which comes through him.
33. For a discussion of this issue in contemporary Evangelical thought, readers are referred to Erickson, 33-54 (Chapter 2, "The Role of the Holy Spirit in Biblical Interpretation"). Erickson takes issue with those Evangelicals who see the Spirit's illumination providing new or cognitive information. He does see the Spirit providing an insight which may escape a particular methodology (52), but does not identify that insight as christolog-

ical as is characteristic of Lutheran theology.

34. Formula of Concord, VII and VIII.
35. Holfelder, *Tentatio*, 3-4, 112-119.
36. Geisenhof, 4.
37. Holfelder, *Tentatio*, 111-112.
38. Holfelder, *Tentatio*, 92.
39. "[God] is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness, and sanctification and redemption; therefore, as it is written, 'Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord'" (1 Corinthians 1:30-31).
40. Schild, 66.
41. Schild, 66.
42. Holfelder, *Tentatio*, 202-203. "Dum interim fidei rationem, per quam illa omnia praestanda sunt, ignorabam, donec ex alto miseratus hominum errores deus apostolica tempora et praedicationem sui evangelii secundum spiritum Christi nobis revocavit."
43. Holfelder, *Tentatio*, 203 (the author's translation).
44. John Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of the Psalms*, trans. James Anderson (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1949), 1:7.
45. Holfelder, *Tentatio*, 203: "ipse multa nimiaque circumdatus sum infirmitate."
46. Schild, 64.
47. Holfelder, *Tentatio*, 13.
48. Calvin, *Commentary on the Psalms*, 4.
49. Bugenhagen, *Commentarius*, 3.
50. See Jeffery L. Sheler, "Who Was Jesus?" *U.S. News and World Report* (December 20, 1993), 115(24):58-66.
51. *Luther's Works*, 10:7.
51. Bugenhagen, *Commentarius*, 2.

53. *Luther's Works*, 10:11.
54. Bugenhagen, *Commentarius*, 2 (the author's translation). Luther in his first lectures on the Psalms spoke of the text literally, allegorically, and tropologically. (*Luther's Works* 10:7.) Where we should expect the literal meaning to refer to David, Luther sees Christ. Thus the first verse is an explanation of the humanity of Christ (10:10). It spoke allegorically of the church and tropologically (in the moral sense) of the conflict between the inner and outward man, the spiritual and carnal. In his second series of lectures on the Psalms Luther abandons this method and concentrates on how the Christian is involved. Bugenhagen is not indebted to a restructured medieval method, but has made christology the over-arching category to which first Jesus relates, then David, and finally himself.
55. Bugenhagen, *Commentarius*, 2.
56. Schild, 67.
57. Schild, 67.
58. Schild, 68.
59. This Latin phrase means that the translator puts his own ideas into the translation, and thus the translation is really something different from the original. In the case of Bucer the alteration seems intentional.
60. Bergsma, 15 (the author's translation).
61. Bergsma, 16-17.
62. Schild, 69.
63. Schild, 69.
64. Holfelder, *Tentatio*, 202-203, as quoted above in note 42.
65. Schild, 70-71.