

# CONFESSION AND MISSION, WORD AND SACRAMENT

THE ECCLESIAL THEOLOGY  
OF WILHELM LÖHE

DAVID C. RATKE



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# ABBREVIATIONS

- AC Augsburg Confession.
- ACW Ancient Christian Writers. 1946–.
- Apol. Apology of the Augsburg Confession
- BC *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Edited by Theodore Tappert. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1959.
- CD *Christian Dogmatics*. 2 vols. Edited by Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984.
- Deinzer Johannes Deinzer, *Wilhelm Löbes Leben: Aus seinem schriftlichen Nachlaß zusammengestellt*. 3 vols. 4th ed. Neuendettelsau: Freimund-Verlag, 1935.
- FC Formula of Concord
- GW Wilhelm Löhe, *Gesammelte Werke*. Edited by Klaus Ganzert. 7 vols. Neuendettelsau: Freimund-Verlag, 1951–86.
- GWE Wilhelm Löhe, *Gesammelte Werke: Ergänzungsreihe*. Vol. 1, *Abendmahlspredigten (1866)*. Neuendettelsau: Freimund-Verlag, 1991.
- LC Large Catechism. Quotations from the Large Catechism are from *The Book of Concord*. Edited by Theodore Tappert. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1959.
- LW Martin Luther. *Luther's Works*. American Edition. General editors Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehmann. 56 vols. St. Louis: Concordia, and Philadelphia: Fortress, 1955–86.
- TRE *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*. Edited by G. Krause and G. Müller. Berlin, 1977–.
- RGG *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*. Edited by K. Galling. 7 vols. 3d ed. Tübingen, 1957–65.
- SC Small Catechism. Quotations from the Small Catechism are from *The Book of Concord*. Edited by Theodore Tappert. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1959.

## PREFACE

As the third millennium dawns, Christendom is faced with a bewildering future. Among the issues that seem foremost on the church's agenda are those of mission and proclamation, of ecumenism and confessionalism, of tradition and contemporaneity. These are issues that particularly concerned Wilhelm Löhe. Although he lived 150 years ago, Löhe deserves to be heard on these issues. Despite his extensive writings on and consideration of these key topics, Löhe has often been overlooked or neglected on these—and, indeed, on other—issues.

Löhe literature is to be found in both English and German. The most striking thing about the secondary literature in English is the relative lack of it. James Schaaf's excellent dissertation on Löhe's relation to American Lutheranism is the first of six doctoral dissertations to appear in either German or English since the end of World War II.<sup>1</sup> The other three English dissertations are those of Erich Heintzen, Kenneth Korby, and Thomas Schattauer. Of these four dissertations, two are strictly historical in character and the other two are in the field of practical theology. No book-length study of Löhe has attempted to examine his theology or any dimension of it.<sup>2</sup> John Tietjen wrote an enthusiastic S.T.M. thesis on Löhe's ecclesiology, but it is handicapped by the unavailability of a critical edition of Löhe's works at that time.<sup>3</sup> The second historical dissertation, that of Erich Heintzen, explores the relationship between Löhe and the Missouri Synod.<sup>4</sup> The two dissertations by Korby and Schattauer deal respectively with Löhe's pastoral and liturgical theology.<sup>5</sup> These four dissertations and master's theses mark the extent of extended treatments of Löhe in English.

There are a number of smaller article-length treatments of specific aspects of Löhe, his theology, and his historical significance. Of particular notice is the work of Walter Conser Jr., which outlines the main themes of his useful doctoral dissertation. His dissertation is a study of conservative responses to the question of the relationship between church and state. Conser provides a fine historical treatment of Löhe and his involvement in the confessional struggles beginning in the 1840s.<sup>6</sup> Other articles include those by the authors of the dissertations mentioned above. One addition demands notice. Todd Nichol of Luther Seminary in St. Paul,

Minnesota, has written an enlightening analysis of the influence of Löhle on the development of the ordained ministry in the Iowa Synod.<sup>7</sup> In general, relatively few articles about Löhle exist in English. The primary reason for this is likely that Löhle, while being important to the formation of at least three Lutheran bodies in the United States (not to mention Australia and Canada), was never a central player or the main character in the cast. He lost battles with the Ohio Synod over the direction of that body and its seminary and with the Missouri Synod over the nature of the ordained ministry and its relationship to the congregation. By the time of the formation of the Iowa Synod and Wartburg Seminary, he had withdrawn from active involvement in American missions and Lutheranism. So while his voice is always in the background of American Lutheranism, it is never a primary voice.

Löhle's overlooked and unnoticed contribution to American Lutheranism is perhaps best seen in the number of his works which have been translated into English. The single contemporary and critical translation of any of Löhle's voluminous works is that of Schaaß's 1969 translation of *Three Books about the Church* [*Drei Bücher von der Kirche*]. Löhle wrote two other books specifically for the American setting (in German) which were translated at the turn of the century under the direction of Edward Horn. These two books, *Liturgy for Christian Congregations of the Lutheran Faith* and *Questions and Answers to the Six Parts of the Small Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther*, have recently been reprinted by Repristination Press in Fort Wayne.<sup>8</sup> One other devotional book, *Seedgrains of Prayer*, which was translated by Horn, has not been reprinted.

The situation with respect to the literature in German is quite different. For primary literature, Löhle research has been greatly aided by the completion of the complete works of Löhle, edited by Klaus Ganzert.<sup>9</sup> I hesitate to be too negative about this project, but a few comments are necessary here. It has been published in the difficult-to-read Gothic typeface (*Frakturschrift*). Indeed, it has been noted by one commentator that on the basis of its importance and continuing relevance, *Drei Bücher von der Kirche* really ought to be reprinted in a study edition with commentary.<sup>10</sup> It contains numerous typographical errors<sup>11</sup> and no index to the works.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, no table of contents exists for the entire series. If one wants to find a specific essay or article by Löhle, one must search through the table of contents of each of the volumes. Finally, the editing is arbitrary. This is especially apparent in the first two volumes containing the diaries and letters of Löhle. The scholar interested in matters other than Löhle's ecclesiology and relationship to the Bavarian church and to the secular authori-

ties encounters a number of difficulties in the *Gesammelte Werke*. Those interested, for example, in Löhe's missionary activity in North America will often be frustrated. Much of the material relating to Löhe's North American mission activity is omitted.<sup>13</sup> In fact, some of this material is to be found in the *Gesammelte Werke*, but one must search it out in the editorial notes which are to be found at the end of each volume. These drawbacks aside, the *Gesammelte Werke* mark a valuable and important contribution to Löhe studies, as well as to the study of the confessional movement in the nineteenth century, to missiology, ecclesiology, and all fields of practical theology.

An important work which does not strictly fall into the category of primary literature, but clearly is not secondary literature, is Johannes Deinzer's three-volume biography of Löhe.<sup>14</sup> This biography is an ordered collection of Löhe's journal entries and personal and professional correspondence interspersed with helpful commentary to clarify things where ambiguity and confusion threaten. Deinzer's opus is the only exhaustive account of the life of Löhe and as such is invaluable to Löhe research.

With three exceptions, no monographs have been dedicated entirely to Löhe since Hans Kreßel published the last of his biographical studies in 1960. In 1992, Werner Ost published a popular account of Löhe and his thought.<sup>15</sup> Löhe's understanding of the congregation is the subject of a second monograph: Gerhard Schoenauer's dissertation, which was submitted to the theological faculty in Erlangen.<sup>16</sup> A monograph which is now quite old but nonetheless valuable is Siegfried Hebart's 1939 study of Löhe's ecclesiology.<sup>17</sup> Christian Weber's dissertation, submitted to the theology faculty in Neuendettelsau, *Missionstheologie bei Wilhelm Löhe: Aufbruch zur Kirche der Zukunft*, is an outstanding contribution to Löhe studies. He has read all the published and unpublished works of Löhe, as well as having exhaustively researched the secondary literature. It is a gold mine. These monographs represent the most significant German language treatments of Löhe.

In contrast to the English literature, numerous shorter treatments of Löhe have been written in German. Unfortunately many of these are general, popular summaries of or introductions to Löhe and his thought, but some exceptions exist: Friedrich Kantzenbach, Rudolf Keller, Gerhard Müller, and Martin Wittenberg have each written a number of helpful and illuminating essays on selected aspects of Löhe's thought, as well as his historical and theological significance.

The German literature on Löhe is marked by the excellent availability of edited primary sources. But with respect to monographs, there is a yet

even smaller number of works on Löhe. In comparison to English sources, a larger but still limited number of critical, scholarly articles have been written on selected aspects of Löhe and his theology. The field of Löhe studies in general can be characterized as a field that is largely unplowed, and it appears to be a rich and fertile field, promising a good harvest to the dedicated student. In general, the situation with respect to the research on Löhe in English might be summarized by saying that for the most part the best monographs on Löhe have been written in English with good support from a small number of articles.

Since the field of Löhe studies is relatively open, it is my intent to provide an overview of Löhe's theology from the vantage point of his ecclesiology. Clearly it will not be possible to provide a comprehensive overview of Löhe's theology. Like Luther, Löhe tended to address himself to specific situations as they arose.<sup>18</sup> Many gaps remain in his theology. For the most part, he does not address christological questions. He is generally not interested in questions of method or revelation, though he is on occasion, as will be seen. Nonetheless, it is possible to draw a picture of the main contours of his theology. His theology is a theology of the church, a theology oriented toward mission and ministry.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, Löhe's theology, or at least his ecclesiology, was essentially established by the time he completed his theological studies. That is to say that Löhe did not make any radical changes or adjustments to his theology later in life. The foundations were already in place in his earlier writings.<sup>20</sup> As noted above, the only monographs that are dedicated to Löhe are on Löhe's understanding of the congregation and some other historical treatments of Löhe's mission efforts in America. Siegfried Hebart's outstanding study of Löhe's ecclesiology is, as mentioned, more than fifty years old and is somewhat handicapped by the unavailability of a critical edition of Löhe's works. Historical treatments of Löhe, though in short supply, are available; up-to-date theological treatments of Löhe are nonexistent. My intention is to fill this gap by providing a general overview of Löhe's theology, especially as it relates to ecclesiology and, secondarily, mission and ministry.

Löhe was keenly interested in undergirding theological praxis and dedicated himself to working out the theological dimensions and implications of those problems that arose in the day-to-day activity of mission and ministry. It is my contention that Löhe is still of interest in the early years of the third millennium. Today, as yesterday, the church is concerned with ministry and mission. The church is particularly interested in ministry and mission in a pluralistic context, a context marked by a pluralism of language, culture, ethnicity, and denominational (or confessional, as Löhe

might phrase it) adherence. Of course, Löhe's "world" was much smaller than ours; he addressed himself to a Western context. We can no longer ignore the thought and culture of the East, which seems so foreign and strange to us. This strangeness is what binds us to Löhe and Löhe to the contemporary context. How does the church proclaim its message in a world that is clearly not homogeneous, a world that is pluralistic? These are questions with which Löhe struggled and questions which will help determine Löhe's contribution to the church.

The preface to any work would be incomplete without acknowledging those who have contributed to its successful completion. First and foremost, I must express my grateful thanks to my wife. Noelle helped proofread the entire manuscript in its dissertation form. She is not a theologian and, as far as I know, does not aspire to be one. Her comments and questions were sometimes frustratingly difficult to answer but always necessary. Even more than her questions and proofreading, I am grateful for and humbled by the gift of her companionship. This book was originally submitted as a dissertation to the University of Regensburg. To my *Doktorvater*, Hans Schwarz, I must also express my gratitude. He first suggested Löhe as part of a different project. I rejected the project, but the project did suggest to me the possibility of doing something on Löhe. Professor Schwarz never gave up on me, even when my progress must have seemed aggravatingly slow. No work is completed in isolation. Martin Rothgangel encouraged me often and guided me through German academia. Thanks also to other doctoral students who worked under Hans Schwarz at that time. I hesitate to name them individually for fear that I might omit someone. My conversations with these classmates sharpened me and whetted my appetite for further theological reflection. Thanks finally to Ken Wagener, my editor at Concordia Publishing House. Ken believed in me and this project and without him this manuscript would not have seen the light of day.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> James L. Schaaf, "Wilhelm Löhe's Relation to the American Church: A Study in the History of Lutheran Mission" (D. Theol. diss., Heidelberg, 1961).
- <sup>2</sup> One exception is the Finnish study of Löhe's ecclesiology printed with a German summary at the end: Matti Sihvonen, *Jumalan Kaunein Kukka: Wilhelm Löhen kirkkokäsitys*. Zusammenfassung: "Die schönste Blume Gottes: Wilhelm Löhes Auffassung von der Kirche" (Helsinki: n.p., 1980).
- <sup>3</sup> John H. Tietjen, "The Ecclesiology of Wilhelm Loehe" (S.T.M. thesis, Union Theological Seminary, New York, 1954).
- <sup>4</sup> Erich Hugo Heintzen, "Wilhelm Löhe and the Missouri Synod" (Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1964).

- <sup>5</sup> Kenneth Korby, "The Theology of Pastoral Care in Wilhelm Loehe with Special Attention to the Function of the Liturgy and the Laity" (Th.D. diss., Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, 1976); and Thomas Schattauer, "Announcement, Confession, and Lord's Supper in the Pastoral-Liturgical Work of Wilhelm Loehe: A Study of Worship and Life in the Lutheran Parish at Neuendettelsau, Bavaria, 1838–1872" (Ph.D. diss., University of Notre Dame, 1990).
- <sup>6</sup> Walter Conser Jr., *Church and Confession: Conservative Theologians in Germany, England, and America 1815–1866* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1984); and Walter Conser Jr., "A Conservative Critique of Church and State: The Case of the Tractarians and Neo-Lutherans," *Journal of Church and State* 25 (1983): 193–210.
- <sup>7</sup> Todd Nichol, "Wilhelm Löhe, the Iowa Synod and the Ordained Ministry," *Lutheran Quarterly* n.s. 4 (1990): 11–29.
- <sup>8</sup> Wilhelm Loehe, *Liturgy for Christian Congregations of the Lutheran Faith* (ed. J. Deinzer; trans. F. C. Longaker with an introduction by Edward T. Horn; Newport, KY: n.p., 1902; repr., Fort Wayne, IN: Repristination Press, 1995); and Wilhelm Loehe, *Questions and Answers to the Six Parts of the Small Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther* (2d ed.; trans. Edward T. Horn; Columbia, SC: W. J. Duffie, 1893; repr., Fort Wayne, IN: Repristination Press, 1993).
- <sup>9</sup> Wilhelm Löhe, *Gesammelte Werke* (ed. Klaus Ganzert; 7 vols.; Neuendettelsau: Freimund-Verlag, 1951–86).
- <sup>10</sup> Rudolf Keller, "Wilhelm Löhe im Spiegel seiner Briefe: Zum Abschluß von Löhés GW," *Zeitschrift für bayerische Kirchengeschichte* 56 (1987): 282. I would add that it should be printed in standard typeface.
- <sup>11</sup> C. F. W. Walther is repeatedly printed as K. F. W. Walther; see, for example, *GW* II: 42, 182.
- <sup>12</sup> Christian Weber helpfully provided both a chronological and an alphabetical table of contents in his study of Löhe's theology of mission: *Missionstheologie bei Wilhelm Löhe: Aufbruch zur Kirche der Zukunft* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1996), 444–63.
- <sup>13</sup> The content of omitted text is indicated by normal typeface and the text of the letters themselves are indicated by italic typeface, thus omitted text is quickly determined. For example, the "Brief an Friedrich Wucherer" (6 December 1842), *GW* I: 620, notes the omitted contents thus: "was in der NA-Sache getan hat, von kleinen Kreisen, die monatlich Beiträge für die Mission geben." Other examples of omitted text regarding mission activity in North America include: "Brief an Georg Güttler" (24 December 1842), *GW* I: 622; "Brief an Karl von Raumer" (29 January 1843), *GW* I: 625; "Brief an Karl von Raumer" (21 February 1843), *GW* I: 626; and "Brief an Friedrich Wucherer" (13 March 1843), *GW* I: 629–30.
- <sup>14</sup> Johannes Deinzer, *Wilhelm Löhés Leben: Aus seinem schriftlichen Nachlaß zusammengestellt* (3 vols.; 4th ed.; Neuendettelsau: Freimund-Verlag, 1935).
- <sup>15</sup> Werner Ost, *Wilhelm Löhe: Sein Leben und sein Ringen um eine apostolische Kirche* (Neuendettelsau: Freimund-Verlag, 1992).
- <sup>16</sup> Gerhard Schoenauer, *Kirche lebt vor Ort: Wilhelm Löhés Gemeindeprinzip als Widerspruch gegen kirchliche Großorganisation* (Stuttgart: Calver, 1990).
- <sup>17</sup> Siegfried Hebart, *Wilhelm Löhés Lehre von der Kirche, ihrem Amt und Regiment* (Neuendettelsau: Freimund-Verlag, 1939).

- <sup>18</sup> Löhe admitted that he was not a systematician and that his writings are oriented to situations as they arose: “Ich bin kein Mann der Wissenschaft, ich schreibe nicht systematisch; Briefe sind es, die Du bekommen sollst und die Folge derselben wird weit mehr von gelegentlichen Ursachen abhängen, als von der Disposition, die etwa eine Abhandlung hätte” (“Kirchliche Briefe,” *GW* V/2: 844). Gerhard Rau, *Pastoraltheologie: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Struktur einer Gattung praktischer Theologie* (Munich: Christian Kaiser Verlag, 1970), 204, argues that “Löhe is a theologian in so far as theology includes intentional, conscious ecclesial actions, in so far as theology also encompasses the knowledge of the past and the present as well as the wisdom, knowledge, and breadth of life.”
- <sup>19</sup> Hebart writes that the church is at the center of Löhe’s thinking and ministry and that his ecclesiology cannot be easily separated from his activity (*Wilhelm Löbes Lebre*, 6–7).
- <sup>20</sup> See Hebart, *Wilhelm Löbes Lebre*, 39, who agrees, though the divisions in his book (organized chronologically) would suggest otherwise. See also Martin George, “In der Kirche leben: Eine Gegenüberstellung der Ekklesiologie Wilhelm Löhes und Aleksej Chomjakovs,” *Kerygma und Dogma* 31 (1985): 216.

# BIOGRAPHY AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

## BIRTH AND FAMILY

On February 21, 1808, in the midst of the Napoleonic era, Johann Konrad Wilhelm Löhe was born in the city of Fürth near Nuremberg. He died nearly sixty-four years later in the farming village of Neuendettelsau on January 2, 1872. He lived the greatest part of his life—more than thirty-four years—in Franconia, in a small village of fewer than a thousand inhabitants.<sup>1</sup> Yet in this village, where he was removed from the large churches of Nuremberg and the sanctuaries of ecclesial power, Löhe had an impact upon liturgy, the Confessional movement, missions, and the relationship between church and state, not only in Bavaria, but in lands far-removed from Neuendettelsau.

Löhe grew up in the city of his birth, Fürth, an industrial and manufacturing center, in a middle-class home typical of the citizens of that city.<sup>2</sup> The faith and the piety of the Löhe family was not typical of their neighbors. The faith predominant in the first third of the nineteenth century in Bavaria was influenced to a large degree by the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century and its rationalistic and deistic elements. The Löhe family clung to a brand of faith more in keeping with an anachronistic and distant past than with the contemporary milieu. It was a faith influenced by sixteenth century Lutheran Orthodoxy, as well as seventeenth century Pietism.<sup>3</sup> The faith and piety of the Löhe family was noticeably out of step with that of their more enlightened neighbors. Pietism was also an important influence on Löhe, though its effects were more like that of an underground river which only later sprung forth from the depths of his faith and theology.<sup>4</sup> The faith of Löhe's childhood cannot be easily separated from the adult theology of the pastor and churchman in Neuendettelsau.

## EDUCATION

Although the Löhe household was one where Pietism held sway, it was the Enlightenment with its rationalism that was dominant at school and at church. Rationalism was the first important influence on Löhe's formal religious instruction. At church and school the young pupil was introduced to deism with its emphasis on morality. As an adult Löhe decisively rejected the rationalist faith, but while he was still young, it exercised considerable influence upon him, especially in his prayer and devotional life.<sup>5</sup> But the Enlightenment was not able to retain its grip for long. Löhe attended the Melancthon-*Gymnasium* in Nuremberg. The rector of the *gymnasium*, Karl Ludwig Roth, had an enduring influence on the pupil from Fürth.<sup>6</sup> Already as a young man, Löhe exhibited a conspicuous tendency to solitude which nonetheless did not prevent him from being sociable. His isolation often caused him to suffer at school and moved him to protest against societal conventions. Earnestness and seriousness were to be features of his personality throughout his life.<sup>7</sup>

Immediately after completing his studies at the gymnasium in Nuremberg, Löhe went to Erlangen, where he began theological studies in winter semester 1826–27. Löhe had wanted to be a pastor from the time he was a child. In Erlangen he came into contact with Christian Krafft and the writings of David Hollaz. Krafft, a Reformed professor, introduced Löhe to *Erweckungstheologie* (Theology of Awakening or Revival Theology). Löhe was not so much influenced by Krafft's thinking as by his intellect or spirit, as were Adolf von Hoffmann, J. C. K. Harless, and others.<sup>8</sup> Krafft inspired Löhe to read in dogmatic theology more deeply. His studies in dogmatic theology led him to the writings of David Hollaz, the last great dogmatician of Lutheran Orthodoxy. Hollaz, a professor of dogmatic theology in the eighteenth century, impressed upon the young theology student a deep appreciation for the Lutheran faith.<sup>9</sup> This faith was not necessarily that of Luther or even of the Confessions, but rather of Lutheran Orthodoxy.

In the summer semester of 1828, Löhe went to Berlin to hear lectures from the most prestigious theology faculty in Germany at that time. He heard lectures from Hegel as well as Schleiermacher. Hegel failed to impress him. In an entry in his journal (August 8), Löhe wrote that he attended a lecture of Hegel's in which he understood nothing and in which there was nothing to understand.<sup>10</sup> Schleiermacher, on the other hand, impressed him. Löhe was especially influenced by Schleiermacher's style of preaching.<sup>11</sup> As it was, Schleiermacher's preaching was not enough

to overcome the strange and unfamiliar city with its incomprehensible philosophers and worldly students. Löhe returned to the familiarity of Franconia and its theology faculty at Erlangen.

Already during this period of studies at Erlangen, Löhe's shift away from rationalism can be readily detected. In a paper submitted to the faculty in 1829, he stated that pastors are God's stewards and co-workers whose task it is to proclaim God's honor and announce the resurrection of humanity.<sup>12</sup> Implicit in this understanding of the pastoral office is the rejection of the notion that God's honor is self-evident within creation; the glory of God must be actively and intentionally proclaimed. This task was neither light nor easy. It was not a task that once it was set in motion it would then run by force of its own inertia (*à la* the deistic prime mover theory) and be carried through to completion. The task of proclaiming the glory of God may not be light, but an important promise is attached to it—the promise of the Holy Spirit. Löhe had clearly and decisively left the Enlightenment behind.

Löhe completed his theological studies and passed his theological examinations in 1830. He was ordained on July 25, 1831, in Ansbach. In preparation for his ordination, he read the confessional writings, in particular the Augsburg Confession, several times. He decided that the Scriptures were properly understood in the Confessions.<sup>13</sup> He could, in good conscience, be ordained a pastor and teacher of the Lutheran church. Löhe's ordination was significant for another reason. Löhe always had a strong evangelical sense of mission. As a student at the university, he organized a mission society and distributed religious tracts.<sup>14</sup> On the day of his ordination, he prayed that he would receive a sign, a word, from the mouth of God. He opened his Bible and three times he was confronted with the commissioning text in Isa 6:8–10; the passage speaks of going out to the people with a message that they will not hear. Löhe responded, "Here I am, Lord, send me."<sup>15</sup> This sense of service in the work of mission and proclamation was a predominant motif in Löhe's own piety and in what he asked of others.

## MINISTRY

In October 1831, Löhe began his internship in Kirchenlamitz (not far from the present border of the Czech Republic). Already he was an accomplished preacher who drew unusually large audiences, but his biblical and confessional radicalism also found enemies. From the beginning of his ministry, he urged for a stricter church discipline.<sup>16</sup> In 1834 he was recalled

on account of his conflicts with more “sober” parishioners, colleagues, and overseers.<sup>17</sup> In its official letter of recall, the Consistory charged that Löhe “ruthlessly strived to win others over to his views by his one-sided theological direction.”<sup>18</sup> Löhe was nearly universally beloved by his parishioners, but he managed to alienate a few with his attacks on the “social and religious evils he considered rampant in the community.”<sup>19</sup> In particular he succeeded in alienating a prominent district judge in the village, who felt personally attacked and responded in kind. First, Löhe was merely reprimanded, but this did not satisfy the judge who wanted Löhe removed from office. Löhe was asked to appear before the *Dekanat* (deanery); he was here confronted with a variety of charges. Some were out-and-out fabrications; others were malicious distortion. Only one had substance: that he was a mystic. It was nearly inevitable that these more “sober” people, who were children of the Enlightenment, would be offended by Löhe who had rejected the Enlightenment in favor of a pietistic, revivalistic, and increasingly confessional agenda.

Regardless of whether Löhe had abused his authority and whether he had been unfairly accused by these sober people in the congregation with more of a rationalist or deist bent, he was unlikely to persuade the ecclesiastical authorities of his innocence. The church hierarchy and bureaucracy at that time was dominated by rationalists and unionists and would remain so for another decade until the Confessionalists (Löhe among them) gained the ascendancy in the Bavarian church. Löhe must have recognized that the force of his personality and the severity of his theology would always be a source of conflict. He wrote, “So it goes and so it will go with me. I am a knife and who gladly permits him or herself to be cut?”<sup>20</sup> These words of Löhe were prophetic. Because there were more pastors available at that time than congregations able to call them, Löhe had difficulty finding a parish and went from one temporary position to another before receiving and taking a call to Neuendettelsau.

The experience at Kirchlamitz was not all bad. One consequence was that Löhe was asked to write a report for the Upper Consistory in Munich. Then he was asked to personally appear there. The consequence of his report and appearance was that Löhe made such a favorable impression—especially upon Friedrich Roth, the president of the Consistory—that he was offered a temporary position at St. Egidien Church in Nuremberg.<sup>21</sup> This assignment was essentially a vindication of his actions in Kirchenlamitz. Löhe’s residency in Nuremberg was successful on many counts. His skills as a preacher developed to their fullest extent, as did his effectiveness in the chancel as a liturgist. The sanctuary was often filled to

overflowing when he preached. His preaching was powerful indeed. One time a group of *gymnasium* students came to hear one of his sermons in order to critique it, but they were so dumbstruck by it that they left the worship service without saying a word to one another.<sup>22</sup> Already at this early date, a few of Löhe's sermons were published. The most significant men in the city—Rector Roth, the mayor, and many others—participated in the young vicar's Bible study. Many people in the city were enamored of his charismatic personality and powerful presence, but Löhe made enemies too. He preached uncompromisingly against the evils and ills of urban life. He thus aroused the ire of the *Stadtmagistrat* (city magistrate), who took steps to have Löhe's call to the parish revoked. Many of the well-placed supporters of Löhe tried to plead his case, but it was to no avail. This scenario was to be repeated many times over: affection from the majority; opposition from a sometimes influential and almost always vocal minority.

Löhe's contract at St. Egidien's expired in March 1835. He wrote his second series of theological examinations later that year. Once again he attained the highest grade possible ("*sehr gut; dem Vorzüglichen nahe*"). A gifted student and gifted preacher such as Löhe should have had little difficulty finding a position, even in a time when positions were scarce, but he had little success. Friedrich Höfling, a professor in Erlangen, wanted a Lutheran preacher like Löhe at the university and even went so far as to request him, but it came to nothing. Finally, Löhe received and took a call to Neuendettelsau after a series of temporary assignments, beginning his ministry there on August 1, 1837. Little did he know that he would spend the rest of his life in this small farming village. Indeed, he tried repeatedly to obtain positions in larger cities but was rebuffed on each occasion. After 1848 he resigned himself to being a pastor in the country and did not seek positions elsewhere.

While he was in Nuremberg, Löhe met Helene Andreae, a confirmation student. Three years later, on the sixth anniversary of his ordination, one week before taking up his position in Neuendettelsau, he married his former student. They had four children. Six years after they were married, Löhe's wife died suddenly, leaving him to raise his children alone except for the assistance of his sister who came to live in the parsonage.<sup>23</sup>

## NEUENDETTELSAU YEARS

In Neuendettelsau, Löhe did not retire to the life of a quiet, sedate, unassuming country pastor. That would have been easy, but it was not his way. Löhe was a gifted and dedicated pastor. He placed high value on preaching, instruction, and pastoral care. He put much energy into his sermons, writing them all out. Only later in his life did he resort to relying on outlines or preaching extemporaneously. Dedicating himself to an intensive study of liturgy, he slowly but certainly transformed worship life at Neuendettelsau.<sup>24</sup> He held pastoral care and visitation in high regard, and he prayed with and for his parishioners.<sup>25</sup>

In 1840 Löhe read an appeal by Friedrich Wyneken for help in North America. Wyneken was a German Lutheran pastor who had volunteered for missionary service in America and had returned to Germany to raise financial support and recruit volunteers for mission in the New World. The Lutheran church there was in desperate need of pastors and others willing to serve its German community. Almost immediately Löhe wrote an article titled “Die lutherischen Auswanderer in Nordamerika: Eine Ansprache an die Leser des Sonntagsblattes” [The Lutheran Emigrants in North America: An Address to the Readers of the *Sonntagsblatt*] for the *Sonntagsblatt*, edited by his friend and collaborator, Pastor Johann Friedrich Wucherer. Löhe quoted directly and often from the pamphlet written by Wyneken and concluded with an appeal of his own for help for the German brothers and sisters who were wilting without the benefit of spiritual leaders to nourish them with Word and Sacrament in their native tongue.<sup>26</sup> Löhe’s article generated a missionary enthusiasm which he had not foreseen. Wucherer and Löhe were flooded with donations. This was the beginning of Löhe’s missionary activity.

## ACTIVITY IN NORTH AMERICA

At first Löhe and Wucherer did not know what to do with the money that was sent to the *Sonntagsblatt* for the “German mission in North America.” The problem was soon solved, though, by the appearance of a volunteer. Adam Ernst was a journeyman shoemaker who had not had the benefit of a *gymnasium* education, which would have prepared him for theological studies at the university. Ernst had been moved by Löhe’s appeal and sought ways to serve. After being rebuffed by a mission organization in Dresden, he finally came to Wucherer. Since Ernst was not theologically trained, Wucherer was unsure what to do with this unsolicited volunteer.

Soon he sent Ernst on to Löhe, who decided to instruct Ernst. His idea was to sufficiently instruct Ernst so he could become a schoolteacher in North America, as he did not think that Ernst was sufficiently qualified to be a minister. Soon after, Ernst was joined in his instruction by another volunteer, Georg Burger. These two men were instructed and in 1842 were commissioned for missionary service in North America.

When Ernst and Burger arrived in New York, they were introduced to Friedrich Winkler, who had just accepted a call to become professor at the Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary in Columbus, Ohio. The two missionaries were encouraged to go to Columbus and study further to prepare for the ordained ministry since the likelihood of them finding positions as schoolteachers was remote and ordained clergy were urgently needed on the frontier.

This began Löhe's association with the Ohio Synod and its seminary in Columbus. The timing was propitious. The seminary was undergoing difficult times, having trouble finding teachers, and experiencing financial difficulties caused by an ambitious building campaign. Löhe was pleased that Ernst and Burger had found their way to Columbus and were enrolled. He wrote Winkler at the seminary and asked if they would be willing to accept more students like Ernst and Burger (Löhe would cover their costs), as well as books and other necessary materials (Löhe would cover purchases and shipping expenses).<sup>27</sup> In his letter, Löhe also enclosed a request for a statement of faith; he wanted to know if the seminary was confessional. The seminary's response satisfied Löhe that the Ohio Synod and its seminary was sufficiently confessional to justify cooperative efforts; it also gratefully—even eagerly—accepted Löhe's offer of students and books.<sup>28</sup> When the Columbus seminary accepted this offer of students and books, a fruitful, though ultimately painful, relationship between Löhe and the Ohio Synod was established. This became the pattern of Löhe's missionary activity. He trained men, sent them to the United States with instructions to present themselves to an appropriate church, and then supported these men in their studies. He also advocated establishing and funding seminaries. Unfortunately, the relationship between Löhe and the Ohio Synod came to an end in 1845 over questions of confessional integrity. Löhe looked farther west to form another relationship.

Löhe had foreseen the end of the relationship with the Ohio Synod and had made appropriate alternate plans. He instructed his men—*Sendlinge* or *Notbelfer* (“sendlings” or “emergency workers”)—to approach the Missouri group of whom he had become aware in the time since Ernst and Burger had first arrived in the United States.<sup>29</sup> Löhe's men met in Cleveland and

formed a committee to lay plans for the formation of a genuinely Lutheran synod. This committee was charged with the task of going to St. Louis and meeting with C. F. W. Walther to explore the possibility of uniting with the Saxon Lutherans there. At the time of the organizing convention of the “German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States” in 1847, Löhe’s *Sendlinge* comprised more than half of the charter pastors.<sup>30</sup> Löhe became as enthusiastic a supporter of the Missourians as he had been of the Ohioans. He sent men; founded and financially supported the seminary in Fort Wayne; and organized colonies of German Lutheran immigrants in Michigan. His contribution to the growth and development of the Missouri Synod cannot be lightly overlooked: “Löhe’s contributions of manpower, money, institutions, and missionary spirit must be reckoned among the infant Synod’s most valuable material and spiritual assets.”<sup>31</sup> The relationship with the Missouri Synod (like that with the Ohio Synod) was destined to be short-lived. The seeds for its unfortunate end were already present in the beginning at the constituting convention. Löhe was concerned about the congregational polity of the Missouri Synod.<sup>32</sup> This difference in polity would be the cause for the dissolution of the relationship after only seven years.

Once again, Löhe was forced to start anew in North America. Those loyal to Löhe went to Iowa to start again. Most of these were in Michigan and were attached to either the Saginaw Seminary that Löhe had founded or the colonies in that area. The plan was the same. They went to Dubuque, Iowa, to establish a seminary that would be a base for missionary activity among the American Indians in the region, as well as for training pastors for the German immigrants.<sup>33</sup> The one difference in strategy in Iowa was that because it was as yet unclaimed territory among German Lutherans, the Neuendettelsau missionaries formed their own synod. This synod proved to be the independent, moderating voice between the Buffalo and Missouri Synods that Löhe hoped it would be in the dispute over the ordained ministry.<sup>34</sup> The Iowa Synod also proved to be independent of Löhe as well. Löhe never exercised the same influence on that synod, and especially its pastors and seminaries, as he did in the Ohio and Missouri Synods. In part the Iowa Synod chose to act independently of Löhe, and in part he turned to other interests.

## CHURCH-STATE STRUGGLES

Löhe was not, however, simply an organizer, supporter, and booster of foreign missionary activity. He was a gifted preacher and published many

sermons. He wrote extensively: devotion books, prayer books, instructional books, as well as books on the practice of ministry. The topics of these books on pastoral theology ranged from liturgics to pastoral care to church discipline and order. Löhe was deeply concerned about and involved in the question of the identity of the church in Germany.<sup>35</sup> What was its confessional identity? What should its relationship be to the state? to other confessions? Löhe was a man of deep faith and convictions; it was his faith that had led him to respond to Wyneken's appeal for help in the American mission field. His convictions also led him into a bitter struggle with church authorities.

Although Löhe was deeply influenced by the Pietism of the preceding century, he was not one to conceal his deeply felt Lutheran confessionalism. His abiding principle was to make "the invisible church as visible as possible."<sup>36</sup> He had hoped that with the Revolution of 1848 there might be change in the church, that it might return to its apostolic roots. But these hopes were dashed; everything remained as it was. Löhe even permitted himself to stand as a candidate for the Frankfurt Parliament in 1848; to his relief he was not elected.<sup>37</sup> More important, he wrote almost unceasingly on this issue. In 1845 Löhe published *Drei Bücher von der Kirche* [*Three Books about the Church*] to a warm reception. In it he argued that the Reformation is "complete in doctrine but it is incomplete in the consequences of doctrine."<sup>38</sup> The kneeling controversy (1838–45) was at its height at the time of the writing of *Three Books about the Church*. Ludwig I, king of Bavaria, had been impressed by the French practice whereby soldiers had knelt at Mass and at Corpus Christi processions when the host passed.<sup>39</sup> Ludwig ordered his soldiers to do likewise. Lutherans in Bavaria were outraged, and the nascent confessional movement in Bavaria was spurred to quick response. Protestant soldiers were punished for refusing to kneel, and one pastor was removed from his parish and sentenced to a year in prison for advocating open defiance of the king's order. The controversy threatened to topple the monarch; it was not until 1845 that the king finally heeded the advice of more pragmatic advisors and the crisis passed. Löhe nowhere mentions or alludes to this controversy, but it must have been at the back of his mind as he formulated his arguments for the superiority of the Lutheran church over other confessions.

In *Entwurf eines Katechismus des apostolischen Lebens*, published in 1848, Löhe began to move away from the center of the mainstream of the church (not that he ever was particularly close to the center). He wrote that "confession without discipline has not accomplished what it ought."<sup>40</sup> This year was a fruitful year in terms of Löhe presenting his ecclesiology; he

also published “Aphorismen über die neutestamentlichen Ämter und ihr Verhältnis zur Gemeinde.” These publications signaled the beginning of his difficulties with the state church.

Löhe was uneasy about the close relationship between the church and the state, calling the relationship between throne and altar an “unhappy mismatch” which ought to be annulled and that “what God has not joined, goes in opposite directions.”<sup>41</sup> He petitioned the Bavarian state church several times in the years following the Revolution of 1848, protesting the union of the Lutheran church with the Reformed church. He even toyed with the idea of leaving the church and joining forces with the burgeoning Lutheran free churches.<sup>42</sup> After visiting a free church, though, he decided that these churches were no more apostolic than what could be attained within the state church.<sup>43</sup> Indeed, if Adolf von Harless had not been named as head of the Bavarian Lutheran Church, Löhe might well have left the *Landeskirche*.<sup>44</sup>

In 1849 Löhe spearheaded a press and letter-writing campaign which succeeded in presenting a petition with more than 330 signatures to the General Synod that year. This petition contained a series of demands, which gave it more the character of an ultimatum than an attempt at reform. The confessionalists were not successful on this front, but they did not lose hope and abandon the campaign. They turned their attention to the Upper Consistory, but again to little or no effect. Now they focused on a complete separation between the Lutheran and Reformed congregations on matters of church and communion fellowship. At this point the Upper Consistory threatened to suspend Löhe and eight other leaders. Popular pressure mounted, and the Upper Consistory was forced to backpedal. After a vote of the Upper Consistory, the official in charge of the case had to reluctantly drop the charges. The threat of a suspension for Löhe and the other confessionalists only served to galvanize the Confessional forces. A suspension would have moved the *Landeskirche* to the brink of a complete rupture. The overreaction of the Upper Consistory was an embarrassing situation for the pastors who were not necessarily close to or sympathetic to Löhe and his ideals. A rupture was avoided and a resolution was effected when King Ludwig I, sensing the threat of a separation, acted quickly and named Adolf von Harless president of the Upper Consistory.

Harless was an excellent choice. He was respected and trusted by both parties—most notably the Löhe party. Immediately the tensions began to subside. A relaxation of the association between the Lutheran and Reformed confessions effectively dissolved the laws enforcing congregational life and the duties of pastors (*Parochialordnung*). An independent

Lutheran church body and an independent Reformed church body were created. Other ecclesial reforms were set into motion and gradually carried out. This immediate action, combined with the universal trust in and respect for Harless, served to calm the storm. In 1853 the Bavarian church was renamed the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Bavaria [*Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche in Bayern*]. With this settlement, Löhe turned his attention to other matters.

A brief but unfortunately sharp and bitter conflict occurred between Löhe and the church authorities over the practice of church discipline, which caused Löhe a two-month suspension in 1860. He had refused to marry a member of his congregation who he felt had unjustly abandoned his wife and divorced her.<sup>45</sup> The member had received the legal right to remarry, but Löhe felt that as an advocate for the poor and defenseless he was obligated, by virtue of his office as pastor, to take a stand. Unfortunately, two demands of this office came into conflict. At that time pastors were the only officials authorized to conduct marriages. This put pastors in the uncomfortable and unenviable position of being legally obligated as officials of the state to conduct marriages. On the other hand, pastors had a divine, or at minimum an ecclesial, obligation to conduct marriages in accordance with Christian teaching. Pastors like Löhe who took their call to the pastoral office more seriously than their duties as officials of the state were bound to run into conflict. And so it happened. Löhe refused to conduct the wedding. The state demanded that he conduct the marriage or be suspended. Löhe refused again and was suspended. The suspension deeply hurt Löhe and signaled the end of his battles with the church authorities and the state.

### THE FINAL YEARS— DIACONAL SERVICE AND INNER MISSION

Löhe focused his attention on a quiet reformation and renewal of the church and dedicated the last decade of his life to realizing his goals within the framework of establishing diaconal orders or associations. In 1849 he was instrumental in the founding of a missionary society, the *Gesellschaft für innere Mission im Sinne der Lutherischen Kirche*. Four years later he founded a female diaconate, the *Lutherischer Verein für weibliche Diakonie*, which consecrated its motherhouse a year later in Neuendettelsau. These two societies had the aim of quietly (and sometimes not so quietly) reforming and renewing the Lutheran church in Bavaria.<sup>46</sup> Löhe and the others who formed the *Gesellschaft für innere Mission im Sinne der Lutherischen*

*Kirche* were clear about their unhappiness with the state of the Bavarian church. In 1855 an unsigned article appeared in the *Correspondenzblatt der Gesellschaft für innere Mission nach dem Sinne der lutherischen Kirche*. The author spoke of the “wretched condition of the Bavarian church” and stated that the goals of recalling the Bavarian church to its Lutheran roots had not been realized.<sup>47</sup>

This women’s diaconate had a twofold aim. Its more specific aim was for the awakening and formation of a sense of service to those who were suffering among the Lutheran population in Bavaria, particularly among women.<sup>48</sup> Its second and broader aim—and one might say its more subversive aim—was the continuing formation of the “apostolic-episcopal church.”<sup>49</sup> Its life was organized around service and worship, specifically Lutheran worship. This emphasis on Lutheran worship pointed to one of the reasons, if not the primary reason, that Löhe formed yet another diaconal association. He felt that the associations active at that time (such as that established by Wichern in Hamburg) were not sufficiently confessional and, therefore, were given to unionistic tendencies. The basic idea of the diaconate was to provide education to young women in difficult social circumstances and then to place them into settings where they might help others in need. The order was not restricted to those who desired to enter the diaconate; no young woman who was in need was turned away. Nonetheless, this order was not the fulfillment of Löhe’s vision; it was merely a model of what the local church should look like. Despite his earnest efforts to develop such communities, most notably the communities in Michigan, Löhe did not succeed. He died in 1872 a disappointed man who felt his goals for the Bavarian church had not been adequately realized.

## INFLUENCES

Löhe and his theology have often been characterized as a mere reception of Lutheran orthodoxy. This assessment might be true if one examines only his theology in terms of his expression of the classical loci of theology (e.g., Christology and soteriology). However, this assessment is short of the mark when one begins to examine his ecclesiology, especially as it is presented in his occasional writings. His suggestion in *Vorschlag zu einem Lutherischen Verein für apostolisches Leben* for the formation of core groups which would model authentic Christian (apostolic) life recalls the *ecclesiola* (“little churches”) of the Pietists.<sup>50</sup> To be sure, Lutheran orthodoxy was probably primary in the formation of Löhe’s theology, but it is most certainly not the only influence. Pietism played an important role as well.

Hebart rightly concludes that Löhe is “one of the most original thinkers in Lutheranism.”<sup>51</sup> Löhe’s theology was not simply a mere reception and reprimatation of Lutheran Orthodoxy or of Pietism or, indeed, of any other theological school. He combined and borrowed what was necessary and useful for the building up of the church. This mixing was always creative and always fresh.

Löhe was influenced by the Pietism which was transmitted through his mother more than through his reading of Pietist theologians such as Spener, Nicolai, Francke, and Zinzendorf. His family was closely related to Pietists active in the greater Nuremberg area. It would be a mistake to discount the influence of Pietism on Löhe.<sup>52</sup> The devotional writings of the Pietists were read daily in the Löhe household during his youth. As Hebart writes, “his thinking is always Lutheran, the Orthodox element is the dominant, but the Pietistic always makes itself apparent and the one is not to be thought without the other.”<sup>53</sup> Löhe’s instincts tended to Lutheran Orthodoxy, but his pastoral sense recognized the value of Pietism. His vision of mission was not unlike that of Zinzendorf. Indeed, Löhe was familiar enough and fond enough of him that he told members of his congregation about Zinzendorf’s life.<sup>54</sup> Perhaps the central difference between the confessional theology of Löhe and the theology of the Pietists was that Löhe “insisted that the church was the vehicle through which the gospel message of salvation was transmitted.”<sup>55</sup> Salvation, in the Pietist view, tended to be a personal matter. In any case, it is fair to say that in Löhe’s view the faith of the Pietists was a vibrant alternative to the dead, moralistic faith of the Rationalists.

Romanticism ought to be named as an influence upon Löhe as well. Nothing indicates that he was influenced by the theologians one normally associates with Romanticism (Schleiermacher, for example, or in philosophy Hegel), yet the influence is there. Löhe read Johann Gottfried von Herder, who influenced his understanding of Scripture and history.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, as a student in Erlangen, Löhe named Jean Paul as his favorite author.<sup>57</sup> As Wolfgang Trillhaas points out, Löhe “was a romantic Lutheran, that is, not a Lutheran of contradictions, but rather a man of synthesis insofar as it concerned the church.”<sup>58</sup> His ecclesiology is an attempt to synthesize the ecclesiologies of the Lutheran confessions and the New Testament. His interest in history and his desire to respect the heritage of Lutheran theology and the apostolic tradition as represented in the New Testament and the writings of the early church also hint at his Romantic inclinations.<sup>59</sup> These two characteristics, synthetic thinking and historical perspective, suggest Romantic influences.

Löhe's language at times reflects the animate, organic imagery favored by Romantics. His comparison of the church in *Three Books about the Church* with a stream and a flower (and even the moon!) reflects his affinity to Romanticism.<sup>60</sup> At the same time, Löhe was not a man given over to excessive enthusiasm in the same way that many other Romantic thinkers were.<sup>61</sup> This difference aside, sufficient evidence exists to say that Löhe was influenced and shaped by Romanticism even while he was not limited to its influence.

Yet another influence on Löhe was that of the "Awakening," especially as it was mediated by Christian Krafft. Löhe incorporated the biblicism of Krafft and the Awakening.<sup>62</sup> Throughout his life and his theology, Löhe turned to the Bible over and over again as the fount which fed and nourished his thought. He looked to the practices of the early church as recorded in the New Testament for guidance in his own ecclesiological thinking. These are traits of his thinking which are held in common with "Awakening Theology."

The confessionalism of neo-Lutheranism exerted its influence upon Löhe also. Perhaps because Löhe is often mentioned in the same breath as other representatives of neo-Lutheranism (e.g., Hoffmann, Harless, and Thomasius), one tends to overlook the influence of his contemporaries on him. Yet the similarities are clearly there. Like Hoffmann, Harless, and Thomasius, Löhe returned to the Lutheran tradition for theological insight.<sup>63</sup> In this return to the Lutheran theological tradition, Löhe built upon its foundations and contributed to its growth. In fact, one could say that Löhe's program was one of providing a confessional basis to the Pietist and Awakening impulses that influenced him.

Although one can point to traces of Romanticism, Pietism, or Lutheran Orthodoxy in Löhe's thinking, it is difficult to say that any of these are primary. Georg Merz rightly remarks that Löhe "followed his own path beyond Idealism, Pietism, Rationalism."<sup>64</sup> His path, though not one that followed any particular school, drew upon the strengths of many streams flowing in nineteenth-century theological thinking.<sup>65</sup> Löhe was clearly an independent thinker who, while appreciating the strengths of many different theological streams, schools, and traditions, did not consider himself a representative of any one of these influences. Even the most common of the labels applied to him—neo-Lutheranism or sometimes Lutheran Orthodoxy—shows his difference from the Erlangen faculty as the events of 1849 and following highlight. Löhe's theology was shaped not by reasoned reflection, but by his reflection on what it means to be a pastor and what it means to proclaim the Gospel.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Wolfhart Schlichting, "Löhe, Johann Konrad Wilhelm (1808–1872)" in *TRE* 21: 421. In addition to Schlichting, introductions to the life and work of Löhe include Friedrich Wilhelm Kantzenbach, "Wilhelm Löhe, Frankens Grosser Lutheraner," in *Evangelischer Geist und Glaube im neuzeitlichen Bayern* (Munich: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1980), 158–98; and Gerhard Ottersberg, "Wilhelm Loehle," *Lutheran Quarterly* 4 (1952): 170–90; as well as the other sources cited.
- <sup>2</sup> For a detailed account of Löhe's life until he went to Neuendettelsau, see Adolf Schwammberger, "Der junge Löhe," in *Wilhelm Löhe—Anstöße für die Zeit* (ed. Friedrich Wilhelm Kantzenbach; Neuendettelsau: Freimund-Verlag, 1972), 13–36.
- <sup>3</sup> Hans Kreßel, *Wilhelm Löhe, der lutherische Christenmensch: ein Charakterbild* (Berlin: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1960), 15, reports that Löhe's maternal grandfather, Gürtler Walthelm, was active in a Moravian [*Herrnbuter Brüdergemeinde*] congregation in Fürth. Friedrich Wilhelm Kantzenbach, "Wilhelm Löhe (1808–1872)," in *Klassiker der Theologie* (ed. Heinrich Fries and Georg Kretschmar; vol. 2; Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck, 1983), 176, notes that Löhe's parents were pious people who read Lutheran devotional literature and for whom Sunday worship attendance was a given. Löhe himself reports in *Deinzer*, I: 7–8, that he and his siblings went to church and received the Sacrament regularly; daily prayer and readings from the Bible, Luther's writings, and other devotional sources were also an integral part of their spiritual life.
- <sup>4</sup> Wilhelm Maurer, "Wilhelm Löhe und der römische Katholizismus" in *Wilhelm Löhe—Anstöße für die Zeit*, 80.
- <sup>5</sup> Martin Schmidt, *Wort Gottes und Fremdlingschaft: Die Kirche vor dem Auswanderungsproblem des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* (Erlangen: Martin Luther Verlag, 1953), 48; see also Gerhard Müller, "Wilhelm Löhe" in *Die neueste Zeit II* (vol. 9 of *Gestalten der Kirchengeschichte*; ed. Martin Greschat; Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1985), 72. Müller, in something of a minority viewpoint, asserts that it was not so much the pietistic tradition that shaped the young Löhe as the Enlightenment tradition. Furthermore, the Enlightenment, even into Löhe's adult life, was not without effect, though the adult Löhe clearly distanced himself from rationalism and deism. Siegfried Hebart, *Wilhelm Löhes Lehre von der Kirche*, 13, claims that Orthodoxy and Pietism exerted the biggest influences on the young Löhe, though the Enlightenment is not without its effects (16).
- <sup>6</sup> Rector Roth may well have been the first to expose Löhe to Revival Theology. For more, see Müller, "Wilhelm Löhe," 72–73.
- <sup>7</sup> Concerning Löhe's penchant for solitude and how it moved him to respond to his cultural, social, and spiritual environment, see Hans Kreßel, *Wilhelm Löhe*, 20.
- <sup>8</sup> K. G. Steck, "Krafft, Christian" in *RGG* 4: 30; see also *Deinzer*, I: 266; and "Brief an Dorothea Schröder" (14 November 1827), *GW* I: 261; as well as *Deinzer*, I: 58; and "Brief an E. Huschke" (6 December 1836), *GW* I: 480. Krafft's influence extended not only to Löhe. Georg Merz, *Das bayerische Luthertum* (Munich: Verlag des Evangelischen Presseverbandes für Bayern, 1955), 20 and 22, names Krafft as "the leader of the young generation" in Erlangen.
- <sup>9</sup> Hans Kressel, *Wilhelm Löhe als Prediger* (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1929), 25; and Hans Kressel, *Wilhelm Löhe: Ein Lebensbild* (Erlangen: Martin Luther-Verlag, 1954), 13.

- <sup>10</sup> Deinzer, I: 71.
- <sup>11</sup> See Deinzer, I: 74–76, 80. Löhe stated that Schleiermacher controlled himself when he preached; he was a great man and, therefore, a great preacher. That Schleiermacher was a powerful preacher is not an opinion unique to Löhe. Schleiermacher was not afraid to comment on social and political issues (a quality shared by Löhe, as seen in his struggles against the state in the 1840s and 1850s). Robert M. Bigler, *The Politics of German Protestantism: The Rise of the Protestant Church Elite in Prussia, 1815–1848* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 31, notes that “toward the end of the [Napoleonic] war Schleiermacher became so bold that some of his sermons were indictments of the social system of inequality and of aristocratic arrogance.” Apparently Schleiermacher was not afraid to speak against the prevailing government policies. See Bigler, *Politics of German Protestantism*, 29–32.
- <sup>12</sup> Gerhard Müller, “Der Student Wilhelm Löhe und das Amt: Eine Äußerung aus dem Jahr 1829,” *Jahrbuch für fränkische Landesforschung* 34–35 (1975): 595. Löhe’s paper is included in its entirety as an appendix to Müller’s essay.
- <sup>13</sup> Deinzer, I: 103–04. See also Müller, “Wilhelm Löhe,” 75.
- <sup>14</sup> Wilhelm Löhe, *Three Books about the Church* (trans., ed., and with an introduction by James L. Schaaf; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969), 5, n. 13.
- <sup>15</sup> Deinzer, I: 109.
- <sup>16</sup> Schlichting, “Löhe,” 421.
- <sup>17</sup> In its report, the Consistorium said that Löhe was a captivating man, but his understanding of worldly matters, his social skills, were lacking (Deinzer, I: 154).
- <sup>18</sup> Deinzer, I: 180–82. The language of the letter is strong, with phrases such as “ruthlessly strove,” “forced” or “compelled,” and acted “without knowing and observing the boundaries of pastoral power.”
- <sup>19</sup> Schaaf, introduction to *Three Books*, 8.
- <sup>20</sup> Deinzer, I: 177.
- <sup>21</sup> Müller, “Wilhelm Löhe,” 77; and Schaaf, introduction to *Three Books*, 11–12. Friedrich Roth, the brother of Löhe’s beloved rector at Melancthon-*Gymnasium*, was a lawyer with a distinguished record of service to the state, including serving as the president of the consistorium from 1828 until 1848.
- <sup>22</sup> Adolf Stählin, “Löhe, Wilhelm,” in *Realencyclopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, 11: 577.
- <sup>23</sup> The impact of the death of Löhe’s beloved Helene cannot be underestimated. Her death spurred Löhe to write *Three Books about the Church*. As late as 1859, he published a book of prayers (*Hausbedarf christlicher Gebete*) which included this “Prayer of a Father Whose Wife Died in Childbirth”: “O living God and Comforter of those who mourn, I have lost my dearest treasure on earth in childbirth. You have torn a rib and a piece of my heart from me. It is, however, your good will, Lord my God. You gave her to me and let her be with me for a short time and now she has been taken out of this misery back to you, because she knew and called upon your Son. Comfort me, a sad, miserable widower and help carry this pain and raise my children and send a holy glimpse that I and my children can come together before you in a new joy and eternal love, which you plant in all marital love and can make all suffering eternal joy and goodwill. We praise you in eternity. Amen.” See *Hausbedarf christlicher Gebete*, *GW* VII/2: 103.

- <sup>24</sup> For a description of Löhe's ministry in Neuendettelsau, see Kenneth Frederick Korby, "The Theology of Pastoral Care in Wilhelm Löhe with Special Attention to the Function of the Liturgy and the Laity" (Th.D. diss., Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, 1976), 132–45, esp. 132–36.
- <sup>25</sup> Hans Kressel, *Wilhelm Löhe als Katechet und als Seelsorger* (Neuendettelsau: Freimund-Verlag, 1955), 79, states that Löhe had an extraordinary charismatic gift of healing through prayer and the laying on of hands. Accounts of such healing are in Deinzer, II: 201–13. Eduard Thurneysen, *Die Lehre von der Seelsorge* (Munich: Christian Kaiser Verlag, 1948), 299, nearly a century after the publication of Löhe's opus on pastoral care, *Der evangelische Geistliche*, asserted that it is "to be considered still a standard work."
- <sup>26</sup> Both Löhe's and Wyneken's appeals were as much directed to Germans' sense of patriotism as they were to their evangelical spirit. See James L. Schaaf, "Wilhelm Löhe's Relation to the American Church: A Study in the History of Lutheran Mission" (D. Theol. diss., Heidelberg, 1961), 10–14, for a more extended account of this entire episode.
- <sup>27</sup> Wilhelm Löhe, "Brief an Prof. Winkler" (4 December 1842), *GW I*: 619–20.
- <sup>28</sup> James L. Schaaf, "Wilhelm Loehe and the Ohio Synod," *Essays and Reports of the Lutheran Historical Conference* 5 (1974): 88. Schaaf reports that "within six months more than one thousand books had been collected and dispatched to America" (89).
- <sup>29</sup> Löhe wrote in a letter to Ernst that he and the other missionaries should seek to ally themselves with a German Lutheran body which adheres to the Confessions. If that should not be feasible, then they should form their own independent synod. See Wilhelm Löhe, "Brief an Adam Ernst" (2 February 1845), *GW I*: 688.
- <sup>30</sup> Schaaf reports that 22 of the 42 original clergymen and ministerial students came from the Neuendettelsau mission seminary. By the time Löhe ended his association with the Missouri Synod, 84 of his men had entered the ministry of the Missouri Synod. James L. Schaaf, "Wilhelm Loehe and the Missouri Synod," *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly* 45 (1972): 59, 64.
- <sup>31</sup> Erich Hugo Heintzen, "Wilhelm Loehe and the Missouri Synod, 1841–1853" (Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois, Urbana, Ill., 1964), 155. Much of the missionary zeal of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod can be attributed to Löhe and his men. For example, Adam Ernst, Löhe's first missionary, was instrumental in organizing congregations in southern Ontario. Ernst eventually became the first president of the Ontario District of the LCMS. See Norman J. Threinen, *Like a Mustard Seed: A Centennial History of the Ontario District of Lutheran Church—Canada* (Kitchener, Ontario: Ontario District, 1989), 5–20, esp. 6–7, 10–11. On Ernst's election as the first president of the district, see p. 25. Löhe was rightly proud of his role in the founding of the synod and its expansion; see Löhe, "Die Gesellschaft für innere Mission im Sinne der lutherischen Kirche und ihre Verhältnisse zu Nordamerika," *Kirchliche Mittheilungen aus und über Nord-Amerika* 17 (1859): 59.
- <sup>32</sup> Schaaf, "Löhe and Missouri Synod," 59–60. Löhe expresses his misgivings explicitly in *Rechenschaftsbericht der Redaktoren der kirchlichen Mittheilungen aus und über Nordamerika über das, was seit 1841 geschehen ist, samt Angabe dessen, was sofort geschehen sollte*, *GW IV*: 135. In the *Kirchliche Mittheilungen*, there was concern expressed about the "democratic, independent and congregationalist principles" that the Missouri Synod mixed into its constitution ("An den Präses der deutschen evangelisch-lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, Herrn

- Karl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther zu St. Louis, Mo.," *Kirchliche Mitteilungen aus und über Nord-Amerika* 6 [1848]: no. 6, col. 44). Having said all that, Löhe grieved the separation and lack of contact with the Missouri Synod; see Löhe, "Die Gesellschaft für innere Mission im Sinne der lutherischen Kirche und ihre Verhältnisse zu Nordamerika," *Kirchliche Mitteilungen aus und über Nord-Amerika* 17 (1859): 59. Hermann Sasse, "Zur Frage nach dem Verhältnis von Amt und Gemeinde," in *In statu confessionis: Gesammelte Aufsätze* (ed. by Friedrich Wilhelm Hopf; Berlin: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1966), 128, says that Löhe's misgivings were misplaced. The Missouri constitution had nothing to do with the democratic inclinations of the Americans.
- <sup>33</sup> Wilhelm Löhe, "Brief an G. M. Großmann und J. Deindörfer" (August 1853), *GW* II: 208. See also Schaaf, "Löhe's Relation to the American Church," 170–74.
- <sup>34</sup> For a fine analysis of the Iowa Synod's contribution to the debate on the ordained ministry in the United States, see Todd Nichol, "Wilhelm Löhe, the Iowa Synod and the Ordained Ministry," *Lutheran Quarterly* 4 (1990): 11–29. On the mediating position of Löhe and the Iowa Synod, see especially 15–18.
- <sup>35</sup> These questions of identity were raised in part by the union of Reformed and Lutheran churches in Prussia imposed by King Friedrich Wilhelm III beginning in 1817. For an account, see Walter H. Conser Jr., *Church and Confession: Conservative Theologians in Germany, England, and America 1815–1866* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1984), 13–27; and Bigler, *Politics of German Protestantism*, 37–38. Conser, "A Conservative Critique of Church and State: The Case of the Tractarians and Neo-Lutherans," *Journal of Church and State* 25 (1983): 332, states that "the theology of Wilhelm Löhe was influenced by the situation in Silesia [a center of resistance to the Prussian union]." This assertion is simplistic. It would be more accurate to say that the Silesian situation provoked Löhe to action in Bavaria during the *Kniebeugungstreit* in 1838 and the confessional struggles at the end of the 1840s.
- <sup>36</sup> Hebart, *Wilhelm Löbes Lehre von der Kirche*, 125.
- <sup>37</sup> Deinzer, II: 247. For an account of Löhe's political sympathies and activities, see Friedrich Wilhelm Kantzenbach, *Gestalten und Typen des Neuluthertums: Beiträge zur Erforschung des Neokonfessionalismus im 19. Jahrhundert* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1968), 227–33.
- <sup>38</sup> James L. Schaaf has done a fine translation of *Drei Bücher*. The quote is from *Three Books*, 152.
- <sup>39</sup> For more on the kneeling controversy, see Schaaf, introduction to *Three Books*, 35–36; as well as Conser, "Tractarians and Neo-Lutherans," 333–34; and Conser, *Church and Confession*, 51–52.
- <sup>40</sup> "Vorschlag zu einem Lutherischen Verein für apostolisches Leben samt Entwurf eines Katechismus des apostolischen Lebens" in *GW* V/1: 213–52. The quote is from 226; hereafter, "Vorschlag."
- <sup>41</sup> "Aphorismen über die neutestamentlichen Ämter und ihr Verhältnis zur Gemeinde," *GW* V/1: 320; hereafter, "Aphorismen."
- <sup>42</sup> Gerhard Müller, "Die Erlanger Theologische Fakultät und Wilhelm Löhe im Jahr 1849," in *Dem Wort Geborsam: Landesbischof D. Hermann Dietzfelbinger DD. zum 65. Geburtstag* (ed. Wilhelm Andersen et al; München: Claudius Verlag, 1973), 242–54, esp. 247, 254, provides a helpful account of the role of the theology faculty at Erlangen (especially Johann Christian Konrad Hoffman and Gottfried Thomasius) when, in 1849, Löhe was threatening to leave the *Landeskirche*.

Friedrich Wilhelm Kantzenbach, "Die 'befreundeten Gegner': Ekklesiologische Konzepte rund um Wilhelm Löhe," *Zeitschrift für bayerische Kirchengeschichte* 44 (1975): 114–42, provides a detailed examination of the events and especially the personalities involved in this church-state struggle in these years.

- <sup>43</sup> Müller, "Wilhelm Löhe," 82. In 1852, as the confessional struggle reached its peak, Löhe wrote that leaving the *Landeskirche* would be a step of last resort for him and his friends; they were inclined to remain in the Bavarian church. He wrote that the question of altar fellowship (inter-Lutheran communion) was "the last resort for those who wanted to remain in the Bavarian Church." See "Einige Worte über Herrn Prof. Delitzsch's neueste Schrift betreffend die 'bayerische Abendmahlsgemeinschaftsfrage,'" *GW* V/1: 634. He repeated this in his lecture, "Das Verhältnis der Gesellschaft für innere Mission im Sinne der lutherischen Kirche zum Zentralmissionsverein in Bayern." In this lecture, Löhe said that he felt it was important for him to stay within the *Landeskirche* so as to continue to struggle for confessional renewal; see *GW* V/2: 695; hereafter, "Das Verhältnis."
- <sup>44</sup> Herbert Krimm, "Wilhelm Löhe und Johann Hinrich Wichern: Vergleichende Betrachtung anlässlich der 150. Wiederkehr ihrer Geburtstage," in *Diakonie der Kirche* (Herbert Krimm, Walter Künneth, and B. Dyroff; Nürnberg: Landesverband der inneren Mission in Bayern, 1958), 18. Wolfgang Trillhaas, "Wilhelm Löhe—ein unbürgerlicher Christ," *Zeitwende* (Hamburg) 25 (1954): 379, states that Löhe forced the ouster of Harless's predecessor, thus paving the way for the appointment of Harless and guaranteeing that Harless had the freedom to institute much-needed reforms in the Bavarian church.
- <sup>45</sup> See Stählin, "Löhe, Wilhelm," 582, for a fuller description of the conflict between Löhe and the state over his refusal to conduct this wedding.
- <sup>46</sup> Anne Stempel-de Fallois argues persuasively that the impulses for Löhe's interest in diaconal service stem from his early association with the Awakening movement (above all through Christian Krafft) and Pietism. On the impact of the Awakening movement and its theology, see Anne Stempel-de Fallois, "Die Anfänge von Wilhelm Löhes missionarisch-diaconischem Wirken im Bannkreis von Erweckungsbewegung und Konfessionalisierung (1826–1837)," *Pietismus und Neuzeit* 23 (1997): 40–45. On the impact of Pietism on Löhe through his reading of Spener's *Pia desideria*, see Stempel-de Fallois, 47–48.
- <sup>47</sup> "Die Gesellschaft für innere Mission im Sinne der lutherischen Kirche am Anfang des Jahres 1855," *Korrespondenzblatt* 6 (1855): 2, 3.
- <sup>48</sup> Stählin, "Löhe, Wilhelm," 583.
- <sup>49</sup> Deinzer, III: 327.
- <sup>50</sup> Sihvonen, "Wer sein will, der muß werden," *Homiletisch-Liturgisches Korrespondenzblatt* n.s. 13 (1995–96): 455; also Kantzenbach, "Die 'befreundeten Gegner,'" 142.
- <sup>51</sup> Hebart, *Wilhelm Löbes Lehre von der Kirche*, 8.
- <sup>52</sup> Theodor Schober, "Die Gemeindediakonie," in *Wilhelm Löhe—Anstöße für die Zeit*, 111, rightly notes that Löhe's understanding of "community" is incomprehensible seen apart from Pietism and Romanticism.
- <sup>53</sup> Hebart, *Wilhelm Löbes Lehre von der Kirche*, 13; see also 32 (as well as 294) where Hebart writes that Löhe took the best of both traditions.
- <sup>54</sup> Löhe, "Brief an Karl von Raumer (23 November 1837)," *GW* I: 517; also cited in Deinzer, II: 104.
- <sup>55</sup> Conser, *Church and Confession*, 321; see also Friedrich Wilhelm Kantzenbach,

“Wilhelm Löhes Stellung in der Frömmigkeitsgeschichte,” *Zeitschrift für bayerische Kirchengeschichte* 41 (1972): 56.

- <sup>56</sup> Löhe reports that he read Herder’s religious writings regularly while in university; see Deinzer, I: 55; see also *GW* II: 557, 590–91, 620. Regarding the influence of Herder, see Hebart, *Wilhelm Löhes Lehre von der Kirche*, 22.
- <sup>57</sup> Deinzer, I: 37–38. In this same passage, Deinzer also mentions that Löhe read “Klopstock, Herder, Goethe, Schiller, Jacobi, and Matthisson.” That Löhe enjoyed Jean Paul is confirmed by a cursory reading of his diaries. See, for example, *GW* II: 565, 567, 568, 570, 582, 583, 584, 589. That Löhe read Schiller is confirmed by at least one passage in the same diary; see *GW* II: 575.
- <sup>58</sup> Trillhaas, “Wilhelm Löhe—ein unbürgerlicher Christ,” 383.
- <sup>59</sup> Löhe wrote, for example, a history of the Reformation in Franconia: “Erinnerungen aus der Reformationsgeschichte von Franken, insonderheit der Stadt und dem Burggraftum Nürnberg ober und unterhalb des Gebirgs,” *GW* III/2: 523–681. On the Romantic (and Idealistic) organicism of Löhe, see Martin George, “In der Kirche leben,” 214.
- <sup>60</sup> *Three Books*, 55–57.
- <sup>61</sup> Gerhard Müller, “Wilhelm Löhes missionarisch-diakonisches Denken und Werke,” in *Sichtbare Kirche: Für Heinrich Laag zu seinem 80. Geburtstag* (ed. Ulrich Fabricius and Rainer Volp; Gütersloh: Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1973), 47.
- <sup>62</sup> On the influence of the Awakening and Krafft, see Martin Wittenberg, “Wilhelm Löhe und die lutherische Kirche,” *Lutherische Kirche in der Welt* 19 (1972): 11, 13; see also Gerhard Müller, “Wilhelm Löhes Theologie zwischen Erweckungsbewegung und Konfessionalismus,” *Neue Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie* 15 (1973): 1–7.
- <sup>63</sup> Müller, “Löhes Theologie zwischen Erweckungsbewegung und Konfessionalismus,” 36.
- <sup>64</sup> Merz, *Das bayerische Luthertum*, 24.
- <sup>65</sup> Müller, “Löhes Theologie zwischen Erweckungsbewegung und Konfessionalismus,” 8.