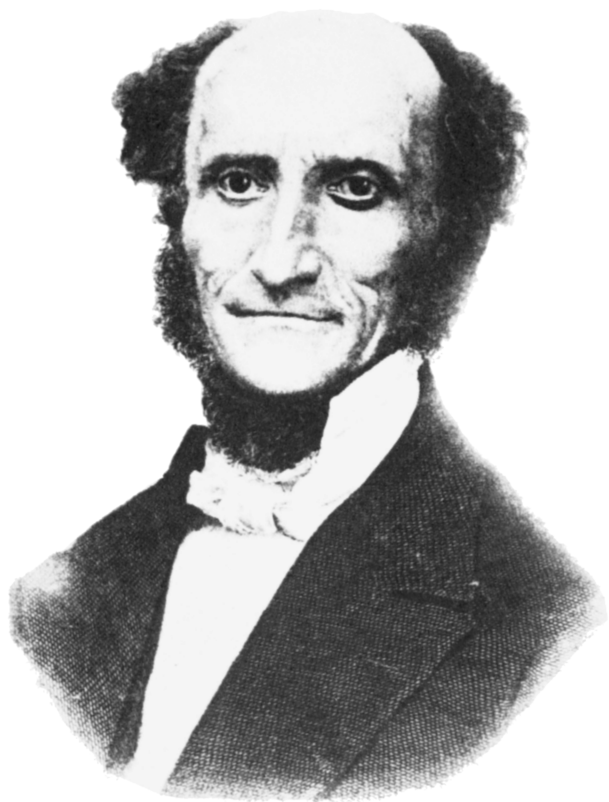


**Editorials from  
“Lehre und Wehre”**



**SELECTED WRITINGS  
OF C. F. W. WALTHER**

**Editorials from  
“Lehre und Wehre”**

Herbert J. A. Bouman, Translator

Aug. R. Suelflow, Series Editor



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## Introduction

It is an ambitious project to permit C. F. W. Walther (1811—87) to address English readers. Efforts to do so have occurred in the past from time to time. But this English edition constitutes one of the most significant contributions made to the study of the theology of Lutheranism in America within past years. The stereotype of Walther heretofore imposed upon him by those who were unable to read his German writings will now be significantly altered! It is to be regretted that a rich treasury of many other works from Walther's pen still await a future project.

Dr. Henry E. Jacobs (1844—1932), late president of Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pa., said of Walther:

He is as orthodox as John Gerhard, but as fervent as a pietist, as correct in form as a university or court preacher, and yet as popular as Luther himself. If the Lutheran Church will bring its doctrines again to the people, it must be as faithful and as definite in its doctrine and as interesting and thoroughly adapted to the times in form, as is the case in Walther. He is a model preacher in the Lutheran Church ("Dr. Walther as a Preacher, *Lutheran Church Review*, III [October 1889], 319).

In each of the volumes a special effort was made to select the most significant and relevant materials and to have Walther speak contemporary English. We have further endeavored, wherever possible, to quote from the American Edition of *Luther's Works* and to utilize the Revised Standard Version of the Bible for Scriptural references. Quotations from the Lutheran Confessions were keyed to the Tappert edition of the *Book of Concord*. It was helpful to be able to consult some resources which Walther had in his own library.

Walther was an exceedingly involved church leader. A founding father of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, he served as its first president 1847—50 and 1864—78. He was Concordia Seminary's (St. Louis) foremost instructor from 1849 until his death in 1887, and served as its president 1850—87.

His concern for Lutheran unity is demonstrative. He conceived the "Free Conferences" in the aftermath of the confessional crisis in 1855. Later, in 1872, he was elected the first president of a new pan-Lutheran federation, the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference.

The project to translate Walther into English received support from The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in 1962, when a special committee was formed. When funds were not available, the project was transferred to Concordia Publishing House. It has now become a pioneer in publishing both Luther's and Walther's select works in English.

Walther's classic *Law and Gospel*, generally considered one of the most important books produced within American Lutheranism, deserves a volume of its own. In it we see him as theological professor, with his students gathered around him.

Another volume acquaints us with Walther the preacher. He made a great impact on his hearers, and much of his sermonic and homiletical material was published in German during his lifetime and in the years following his death. In spite of this, several thousand sermon manuscripts still remain untouched.

In a further volume we see Walther the convention essayist. None of these essays, presented to Western District conventions between 1873 and 1886, with their ever-recurring theme "To God All Glory!" have seen the English light of day until now.

Of particular importance were Walther's writings on the church, and one of our volumes brings a condensation of these. *Church and Ministry* (1852), *The Proper Form* (1863), and *The True Visible Church* (1866) give the theological foundation for the Missouri Synod's strong emphasis on the congregation and on lay involvement.

We include a volume of Walther's correspondence. It lets us see him in his intense and complex relationships with many different people. Concordia Historical Institute, with funds provided by the Aid Association for Lutherans, has in recent years transcribed several hundred original *Fraktur* letters. Only a few have been published in English heretofore, and we too can bring only a selection.

Finally we take a look at Walther the editor—one of his most important functions. Through *Lehre und Wehre* (from which we bring articles never before presented in English) and *Der Lutheraner* Walther exerted a strong influence toward orthodox Lutheranism.

The translators of this edition hope that readers and users will develop a new appreciation for this 19th-century hero of faith, but above all, that Walther, as the preceptor of Luther in America, will direct the readers to the very cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, his and our only hope.

Aug. R. Suelflow, *Series Editor*



## Translator's Preface

The June 1887 issue of *Lehre und Wehre* announces the death of C. F. W. Walther on May 7 and refers to him as “a genuine, divinely equipped, truly great theologian.” Walther did an astonishing amount of work as pastor, church president, theological professor and seminary president, author, conference lecturer, and participant in an extensive handwritten correspondence. Small wonder that he often complained of being “dreadfully busy” (*entsetzlich beschaeftigt*). Yet in addition, he launched an activity as editor that in itself might be considered a full-time career. After beginning publication of *Der Lutheraner*, a biweekly church paper, in 1844, he promoted the idea of a separate journal of theology, which he referred to as the “preacher’s paper” (*Predigerzeitung*). From the first issue, January 1855, until a few months before his death, Walther was actively associated with this periodical as editor, coeditor, and principal contributor. He called it *Lehre und Wehre* [Doctrine and Defense], a title suggested to him by some words of Luther’s commentary on 1 Peter 5:2, which graced the masthead throughout the magazine’s existence:

A pastor must not only lead to pasture by teaching the sheep how to be true Christians: but, in addition to this, he must also repel the wolves, lest they attack the sheep and lead them astray with false doctrine and error (*Luther’s Works*, American Edition, Vol. 30, p. 135).

Walther kept and read a great variety of Lutheran church papers and theological journals from both America and Germany and commented incisively on what he read. These comments appeared in a department of *Lehre und Wehre* titled “Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches” [The Current Church Scene]. More than half of the 32 volumes published in his lifetime contain Forewords from Walther’s pen, although he was sole editor for only the first six years. In addition to his Forewords, often spread over several issues, he contributed various other articles.

The essays in this volume are a selection of Walther’s Forewords and a few other pieces. They are presented in chronological order without any attempt to group them around special topics. The reader will discover that certain basic concerns of Walther surfaced no matter what the topic might be. At his ordination to the pastoral ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church he had made a solemn pledge of allegiance to the Holy Scriptures

and the Lutheran Confessions. He was utterly serious about this pledge and remained passionately committed to it until his dying day. The full implications of that pledge controlled his stance as theologian and churchman. Vigorously he supported and promoted everything that conformed to the Lutheran Reformation and its confessional writings, and just as vigorously he opposed and rejected all that did not.

Walther's uncompromising stand drew him into a number of controversies. Yet he was not contentious. "I am regarded far and wide as a contentious person, but one who gets to know me better will soon realize that I suffer more from faintheartedness than from spoiling for a fight," he once wrote. But he was convinced that, far from causing disunity, his battles on behalf of the truth were the only way to true concord.

Since this volume offers a selection, the editor is necessarily involved in subjective judgments for which he must assume responsibility. To save space many of the extended quotations, especially from post-Reformation Lutheran authors, were greatly condensed, but almost none of Walther's own words were omitted.

Walther frequently emphasized certain words, and we have reproduced this in many cases. Italics for emphasis, even in quotations, are therefore Walther's. He also had quite a few footnotes, here given in the back of the volume. We have indicated these with the letter "W" (for Walther) after the note number. The notes without the "W," given in the back just after Walther's notes for each essay, are our own. Also our own are many of the paragraph breaks, since Walther's paragraphs were often very long. Walther has many references to contemporary and earlier theologians. The interested reader can usually find information on these in the *Lutheran Cyclopedia*, ed. Erwin L. Lueker (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House; Revised Edition, 1975).

A reading of even a selection of Walther's essays will disclose his far-ranging knowledge of Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, the writings of Luther and classical Lutheran theologians, and even the ancient church fathers. At the same time, Walther strove to remain completely current with regard to what was going on in the Lutheran church and theology of his day. In the opinion of Francis Pieper, his successor as professor, president, and editor, "with regard to spiritual experience, theological scholarship, logical acuity, and the ability to communicate, Walther was certainly not inferior to most of the old theologians of our church; in my opinion, he was the superior of many of them" (*Lehre und Wehre*, XXXIV, 266). These essays are part of the basis for Pieper's estimate.

Herbert J.A. Bouman





## Foreword to the 1856 Volume

*Lehre und Wehre*, II, 1, Jan. 1856, pp. 1—5

*Instruction and Defense!* This is the motto we expressed when we began to publish this periodical, and we have since been guided by these words. And as long as God gives us strength and opportunity, we shall continue to be guided by this motto.

We are well aware that thereby we set our course against the stream of what is currently popular. People want to be entertained rather than *instructed*. They repeat Pilate's question, "What is truth?" and deride as a fool anyone who dares to assert that he had found the truth and is proclaiming it. The current taste wants to hear nothing but "views," nothing but thoughts "without prejudice," expressed in attractive form. The man of today wants *his* age to be celebrated as the age of maturity and enlightenment, but past centuries to be smiled at as times of childish simplicity, darkness, and superstition. What was proclaimed as truth in a former day must now be relegated to a pigeonhole of history. Let us hear no more about people or about a *church* that always possessed the truth.

But if the current taste wants nothing to do with *teaching*, it is even more averse to *defense*. It thinks that it is all right to wage war for things that have reality, like land, money, honor, and the like, but fight for *the truth*?—folly! Who would and should fight for a phantom, for something that no one has and that no one can conquer? The spirit of the age believes that truth is the riddle of a sphinx that has not yet found an Oedipus. What truth there is on earth is parceled out, if not among the different chief religions, at least among the various parties in Christendom. All the various so-called churches are regarded as different branches of one tree, and the varieties of teaching in these churches are simply different refractions of the one sun, merely different colors of the one rainbow. They are all sisters, and only lovelessness and spiritual pride can stoke the fires of discord among them.

But however prevalent these principles have become in our day and however commonly they are expressed, sometimes in veiled, sometimes in unveiled form, we cannot subscribe to them. By a divine conviction we believe that there is a truth here on earth and that this truth is contained in God's Word, that is, in the divinely inspired writings of the apostles and

prophets. We also believe that these sacred writings have the purpose of imparting the light of this one complete truth to man sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, and that therefore these writings are so *clear* that a human being is able to recognize and draw this one complete truth from them. We are furthermore convinced that there have always been people who possessed this treasure and that in particular our fathers 300 years ago were granted this unspeakable grace by God and deposited this precious treasure in the Confessions of the so-called Evangelical Lutheran Church. Here we recall the beautiful statement of Professor *Philippi* in the Preface to his *Commentar über den Brief Pauli an die Römer* [Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Romans]:

If it is true that all systems of human wisdom lie like broken keys before the gate of truth, it is equally true that the church's analogy of faith, drawn from the Word that is the truth, is the long-lost but now rediscovered correct key. Even though covered with rust, this key will more easily work the old, well-known lock than all the prettier keys that are new but fashioned after a false model (p. VII).

Thus we cannot voice the truth we have found as our "opinion" that is not determinative, but we must speak of it as of the one old, eternal, unchangeable *truth*. We must advertise and defend it as our most precious possession, on which our own salvation and that of all people depends. We must reject and condemn all contrary opinions of men as dangerous, harmful, and destructive error. If the observation of such principles will close doors to our periodical—so be it! We are not interested in editing a widely read paper. Our sole interest lies in bearing witness to what we have learned to know as the truth; in passing on what we have received; in speaking because we believe. If this magazine cannot serve to keep or gain friends for the old truth, let it in God's name relapse into silence. There are already too many magazines that build Babel.

However, we would be completely misunderstood if the foregoing remarks were construed to mean that at the beginning of a new year we face the future discouraged either with regard to our periodical or the cause of our church in general. We can assure you of the opposite. As for this monthly journal, it does not yet have enough readers to live without the support it has thus far received from its older brother, the *Lutheraner*. Yet the experiences of the first year make us quite hopeful that the time is not too far distant when our *Lehre und Wehre* will no longer need the *Lutheraner's* charity. As for the cause of the church, especially here in North America, it seems to us that just in the last months the sky has visibly reddened again, giving us promise of brighter days than those recently passed (Matthew 16:2).

When last September the Wittenberg Synod of Ohio published its so-called Definite Platform<sup>1</sup> for a so-called *American* Lutheran Church with its official forsaking of the constitution, the Magna Charta of our church, the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, and urged all who are like-minded to leave too, a severe storm fraught with misfortune appeared to be gathering over the Lutheran Church of our new homeland and seemed about to unleash its fury. But what happened? Only three synods succumbed to the temptation and accepted the proposal, while nearly all other synods that had opportunity to discuss this matter in part turned back the new doctrinal basis as inappropriate and in part rejected and condemned it with a hardly-to-be-expected unanimity as a disgraceful public apostasy from the church of our fathers and from Biblical truth. No paper that purports to be an organ of the Lutheran Church, with the exception of the *Lutheran Observer*, has adopted the cause of an official change of symbol; even the Gettysburg *Lutherische Kirchenbote* and the *Evangelical Lutheran* of Springfield, Ohio, have not done so formally, although the latter gave space in its columns to favorable reactions to the proposal as well as to its refutation. On the contrary, especially the *Lutheran Standard* of Columbus, Ohio, has borne witness against it with Lutheran seriousness and manly determination. Also the *Lutherische Herold* of New York with righteous indignation rejected the disgraceful suggestion to Lutherans to level their own fortifications, and the *Missionary* of Pittsburgh has expressly and unreservedly embraced the condemnatory verdict on the project expressed by the East Pennsylvania Synod, among others.

Surely this constellation fills all who together with us love the Lutheran Zion of this country with equally great joy and hope for the future. It has become evident from this that the number of those who have not bowed, or will no longer bow, their knees to the Baal of the so-called progress and so-called higher enlightenment of the 19th century is undoubtedly greater than our weak faith and faintheartedness had imagined. The more this must strengthen the faith and courage of all loyal Lutherans in this country, the more urgent appears the challenge that we see in this situation, namely that the unity which God by His marvelous grace has already effected in our midst now be nurtured by us with the highest fidelity and the greatest diligence. At least we for our small part feel solemnly obligated to contribute our mite to this cause.

Our brethren in Germany, who do their work scattered among the various territorial churches, have chosen free conferences, church rallies, and the like as the means to nurture their unity of faith and confession. We are convinced that, after a time in which the various particular churches

had experienced a serious deterioration of doctrine and discipline (as in the past century), there is nothing more suitable (except public written testimony) for the individual awakening members in the various church bodies to further and strengthen resurging church unity than the means chosen within our German mother church. Do we not have similar circumstances in our country? May we not expect that similar joint conferences could by God's grace be all the more effective here, the more the church is free from the bonds of the state and the more mere theorizing conflicts with all church life in this country? We have no doubt of it.

Herewith, therefore, we dare to make this public proposal: *Would it not be advantageous and helpful for the endeavor ultimately to achieve one Evangelical Lutheran Church of North America to arrange for the meeting of such members of the various synods bearing the Lutheran name as acknowledge and confess without reservation the Unaltered Augsburg Confession of 1530 as the pure and faithful expression of the doctrine of Holy Scripture and of their own faith?* We on our part would be eager to participate in such a conference of orthodox Lutherans, no matter when or where the majority of the participants choose to have it, and we can guarantee that a number of local theologians and laymen are equally willing. For them the well-being of our dear Evangelical Lutheran Church in our new home is no less the deepest yearning of their hearts, and we have already communicated to them the proposal published here.

In fact, also among Lutherans in this land who are sincerely committed to the primary confession of our church there are still some differences of conviction, and a discussion of these differences in our periodicals can easily do more to hinder than to promote the universally desired union of our church. Therefore a personal oral communication and exchange can no doubt only be salutary and, above all, would surely provide the incomparable blessing that the battle which will, of course, continue to be necessary also within our church would receive and keep the character of a mutual rivalry among brethren for the faithful preservation of the precious treasure of purity and unity of doctrine.

In order not to prejudge the matter for the brethren, we will say no more about our proposal at this time. We commend the cause to the invisible Lord and Head of the church. As for topics, format, time, place, etc., of such joint consultations, we await the opinion, whether through private letters or in our church papers, of those who deem the matter worth considering and discussing. We merely add that the meetings, in spite of their public form, will naturally be only of private character, and all persons present should participate only for their own persons without wanting to represent their respective synods.<sup>2</sup>



## Consubstantiation and Impanation

*Lehre und Wehre*, II, 2, Feb. 1856, pp. 33—43

If the opponents of the Lutheran Church here in America want to be concise in describing the teaching of Luther, the Augsburg Confession, the Formula of Concord, and the entire old Lutheran church on the Lord's Supper, especially as regards the manner in which the body and blood of Jesus Christ are present in this sacrament, they commonly resort to the use of the technical terms in our title, *consubstantiation* and *impanation*, or also *incorporation*.

This labeling is still used in the latest edition of the *Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, 1854, edited by J. Newton Brown. Under the entry "Consubstantiation" we read the following: "A tenet of the lutheran church respecting the presence of Christ in the Lord's supper. Luther denied that the elements were changed after consecration, and therefore taught that the bread and wine indeed remain; but that together with them, there is present the substance of the body of Christ, which is literally (!) received by communicants. As in red-hot iron it may be said, two distinct substances, iron and fire, are united, so is the body of Christ joined with the bread." Under the entry "Lutheranism" we are told that "It has undergone some alterations since the time of its founder. Luther believed the *impanation* or *consubstantiation*."

It is indeed a pitiable and devastating testimony to the level of theological education in this country when a book claiming to represent that education contains such disfigurements (to say no more) of the teaching of a church that is spread across the entire globe. But it is even more unpardonable and presupposes either the greatest ignorance or evil intent when alleged theologians who call themselves Lutherans are just as incorrect in presenting the teaching of the church whose servants, stewards, and watchmen they want to be. Alas, this is by no means an infrequent occurrence! The whole so-called "American Lutheran" church, led by such men as Dr. B. Kurtz and Dr. S. S. Schmucker, dissociates itself, to be sure, from *consubstantiation* or *impanation* in the Lord's Supper, yet, in spite of all protests on the part of Lutherans in this country who are faithful to the Symbols, keeps on boldly accusing these Lutherans and the whole old Lutheran Church that has remained loyal to Luther's teaching

of holding this unbiblical conception of the presence of the body and blood of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar. This is so notorious that we may dispense with documentation from the *Lutheran Observer* or the *Evangelical Lutheran*.

To be sure, the warning has often been issued in recent years against reviving the old controversy about the Lord's Supper. However, just those who issue this warning keep on attacking the teaching of the Lutheran Church on this point and not only call it a remnant of the papacy and a product of dark and superstitious days, but they also give that teaching a completely false interpretation and then make their renunciation of it a shibboleth of genuine American Lutherans. Who, then, is responsible for stirring up the old conflict? Those who remain faithful to the teaching of our church as deposited in its Symbols and defend it against attacks and distortions? Or is it not rather those who in the midst of our church oppose and misinterpret this teaching as unbiblical and papistic? Every fair-minded person, even among our opponents, must concede that it is the latter.

For the moment, we will confine ourselves to rejecting the doctrine of a consubstantiation or an impanation that is imputed to Lutherans who are faithful to the Symbols.

First of all, what do these terms mean?—*Consubstantiation*, as the word indicates, means a combination of two substances in such a way that by being mixed together they are fused into one substance or mass, consisting of different ingredients. For example, pouring the substances of water and wine together produces a watered wine (*Weinwasser*); blending honey and water produces mead; mixing meat and flour produces meat pies. Hence, in the Lord's Supper consubstantiation would involve the concept of a spacial combination, mixture, and fusion of the body and blood of Christ with the consecrated elements as a new dual mass, as Eutyches once asserted the fusion of both natures in Christ into one nature. *Impanation* signifies the spacial inclusion, concealment, incapsulation of an item within the bread, as in a capsule containing and enclosing the item. Hence, in the Lord's Supper impanation would express the idea that the body of Christ, compressed into a very small body, lies concealed under the consecrated bread and is enclosed by it as by its container.<sup>1W</sup>

These conceptions of the presence of Christ, that is, of His body and blood, in the Holy Supper are thoroughly *unbiblical*, materialistic, unworthy, and self-contradictory, and they are equally *un-Lutheran* and in contradiction to the Confessions of our church. In his essay, "That These Words of Christ, 'This is My Body,' etc., Still Stand Firm," 1527, Luther writes: "But *how* this takes place or how he is in the bread, we do not know

and are not meant to know. God's Word we should believe without setting bounds or measure to it. The bread we see with our eyes, but we hear with our ears that Christ's body *is present*" (*Luther's Works*, American Edition, Vol. 37, p. 29).

In this confession of ignorance on this point the whole orthodox Lutheran church followed Luther. So that the Word of the eternal Son of God remain true, this church has at all times insisted that the body and blood of Jesus Christ *are there*, but it has never claimed to be able to explain the *how*, the manner of the presence. For that reason the church has called the presence of Christ's body and blood in the Sacrament one that is supernatural, mystical, hidden from reason, incomprehensible, unsearchable, completely unaccustomed (*inusitata*, something for which there is no full analogy, no second species of the same genus). But the church has also explicitly rejected and condemned all those crass, crude, carnal, Capernaitic (John 6:59-64) conceptions of an earthly, physical, spacial presence, that is, a presence that yields or takes up space. All ways of speaking employed by our church have the single purpose of acknowledging and affirming *the reality and verity of the presence* of the heavenly gifts of the Sacrament and at the same time excluding those unworthy conceptions hatched by reason. When the church calls the presence substantial or real, or at times also corporeal, it does not mean to define the mode of presence but to insist on nothing more than that the presence is a true one, that is, that the body of Christ is really there.

The first one to impute the conception of impanation and consubstantiation to Luther was *Carlstadt*, who therefore in a blasphemous way referred to the God of the Lutherans as a "God made of bread" (St. Louis Edition, XX, 577). Zwingli, Oecolampadius, and even Bucer of Strasbourg followed Carlstadt in this matter. *Bucer*, however, revoked his accusation after he had read Luther's "Confession Concerning Christ's Supper" and had talked with Luther. He wrote:

When Luther in the process of this disputation went into greater detail on this entire matter of the Sacrament, I perceived that he did not combine the body and blood of the Lord with bread and wine by a natural bond, nor enclose body and blood spacially in bread and wine, nor attribute to the sacraments the peculiar power through which these achieve the salvation of the communicants, but that he merely affirmed a sacramental union between the bread and the Lord's body, between His blood and the wine. Furthermore, he teaches that the strengthening of faith attributed to the sacraments does not rest on a power which inheres in the external elements as such, but a power which belongs to Christ and is imparted by His Spirit through the words and sacred signs. When I understood this, I was at pains to show and commend this also to

others. Therefore here and now I desire to testify to all who read this that Martin Luther and those who truly agree with him and duly follow his teaching *do not assume any impanation* in the Holy Supper, *nor any local inclusion* of Christ's body in the bread and blood in the wine, nor do they ascribe any saving power to the external actions of the Sacrament as such. They assume a *true, substantial presence and distribution* of the Lord's body and blood with the bread and wine in Holy Communion, as both the Lord's own words and the testimony of the apostle clearly express. This presence and distribution is based on the words and institution of the Lord Himself, *without any natural union* of Christ's body and blood with the elements . . .<sup>1</sup> (cf. *Concordia, Instituted at Wittenberg in the Year 1536. A Declaration Concerning the Presence of the Body and Blood of the Lord Is Added*. By M. Bucer.—Urcellis, ch. 3—6).

However, Bucer's retraction did not put an end to the controversy. As late as two years before his death Luther felt compelled to treat this matter again. In his last confession he writes:

Zwingli had a long, absurd talk with me [at Marburg] about local inclusion, that the body of Christ could not be in the bread as it would be in space or in a vessel, just as if we taught that Christ's body was in the bread like straw in a sack, or wine in a barrel. After that some of them excused themselves and said that they had understood that we and the papists taught that Christ's body was in the sacrament locally, like straw in a sack. Oh, that was a useless, insignificant, lame excuse!

For they knew very well that neither the papists nor we had taught that. Even if they had not understood it otherwise (which is entirely unlikely), they had to confess in this way that they, like mad persons, were attacking matters which they themselves had never heard of nor understood. . . .

The papists teach, yes, not the papists but the holy Christian church and we with them (for the pope, as stated, did not institute the sacrament), that Christ's body is not present locally [*localiter*] (like straw in a sack) in the sacrament, but definitively [*definitive*]. That is, He is certainly there, not like straw in a sack, but yet bodily and truly there . . . (*Brief Confession Concerning the Holy Sacrament, 1544, Luther's Works, American Edition, Vol. 38, p. 301*).

In fact, Luther could not have expressed more clearly how he wanted the presence of Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper taught than by saying, as he does here, that the body and blood of Christ are in the consecrated elements not locally but definitively. Hence he merely wanted to affirm the "where," that is, *the reality of the presence with the exclusion of all spacial forms of existence*; just as, for example, man's spirit, an angel, a glorified body, heaven and hell have their "where," or are definitively

somewhere, without possessing space or extension. To them belongs illocality, even though they are indeed somewhere.

Thus, when Luther says that Christ's body is there definitively, he by no means intends to define the manner of the sacramental presence and consider it to be a definitive one *in the sense in which* it applies to angels. Here the point of comparison is solely *illocality*, the taking away of size, weight, extension, in short, of every way of being somewhere as it obtains in this world of the senses.<sup>2</sup> Carpzov is therefore correct in saying in his *Introduction to the Symbolical Books*: "We point out that this presence is *not* a limited or physical, that is, spacial, or angelic, that is, *definitive*, but an unlimited and divine presence, which belongs to Christ's body and blood by virtue of the union of natures. Thereby the power to be present wherever it wills, which belongs to the divine nature, is communicated to the human nature in Christ" (Isagoge, p. 345).

After Luther's death it was *Calvin* who revived the old accusation, as may be gathered from the *Apologia confessionis de coena Domini contra corruptelas Calvini* [Defense of the Confession Concerning the Lord's Supper, Against the Corruptions of Calvin], by Joachim Westphal at Hamburg (Urcellis, 1558, cf. pp. 297 ff.). Therefore our church has spoken clearly about this in the Formula of Concord of 1580. Here it says among other things (in a citation from the Wittenberg Concord, as it had been jointly composed and signed by Luther and Bucer and other Saxon and South German theologians in the year 1536): We "do not believe that the body and blood of Christ are locally enclosed in the bread, or are in some way permanently united with it apart from the use of the sacrament . . ." (Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, VII, 14; Tappert, p. 571).

In the Formula of Concord our fathers do not even reject the predicate "spiritual" with reference to the presence and reception of Christ's body and blood in the Holy Supper, so long as it is correctly understood. They write:

But when Dr. Luther or we use the word "spiritual" in this discussion, we have in mind the spiritual, supernatural, heavenly mode according to which Christ is present in the Holy Supper, not only to work comfort and life in believers but also to wreak judgment on unbelievers. Thus we reject the Capernaitic conception of a gross, carnal presence which the Sacramentarians<sup>2w</sup> ascribe to and force upon our churches in spite of our public and oft-repeated testimony to the contrary. In this sense, too, we use the word "spiritual" when we say that the body and blood of Christ in the Holy Supper are received, eaten, and drunk spiritually, for although such eating occurs with the mouth, the mode is spiritual (Solid Declaration, VII, 105; Tappert, p. 588).

Therefore they say in the Epitome:

Accordingly we herewith condemn without any qualification the Capernaïc eating of the body of Christ as though one rent Christ's flesh with one's teeth and digested it like other food. The Sacramentarians deliberately insist on crediting us with this doctrine, against the witness of their own consciences over our many protests, in order to make our teaching obnoxious to their hearers. On the contrary, in accord with the simple words of Christ's testament, we hold and believe in a true, though supernatural, eating of Christ's body and drinking of his blood, which we cannot comprehend with our human sense or reason. Here we take our intellect captive in obedience to Christ, as we do in other articles also, and accept this mystery in no other way than by faith and as it is revealed in the Word (Formula of Concord, Epitome, VII, 42; Tappert, p. 486).

Finally, the Formula of Concord, quoting Luther, teaches:

The one body of Christ has three different modes, or all three modes, of being at any given place.

1. The comprehensible, corporeal mode of presence, as when he walked bodily on earth and vacated or occupied space according to his size. He can still employ this mode of presence when he wills to do so, as he did after his resurrection and as he will do on the Last Day. . . . He is not in God or with the Father or in heaven according to this mode, as the fanatic spirit dreams, for God is not a corporeal space or place. The passages which the enthusiasts adduce concerning Christ's leaving the world and going to the Father [to refute the possibility of a presence in the Lord's Supper]<sup>3</sup> speak of this mode of presence.

2. There is, secondly, the incomprehensible, spiritual mode of presence according to which he neither occupies nor vacates space but penetrates every creature, wherever he wills. To use some imperfect illustrations, my vision penetrates air, light, or water and does not occupy or vacate any space; a musical sound or tone passes through air or water or a board and a wall and neither occupies nor vacates space; likewise light and heat<sup>3w</sup> go through air, water, glass, or crystal and exist without occupying or vacating space, and many more like these. He employed this mode of presence when he left the closed grave and came through locked doors,<sup>4w</sup> in the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, and, as people believe, when he was born of his mother.

3. Thirdly, since he is one person with God, the divine, heavenly mode, according to which all creatures are indeed much more penetrable and present to him than they are according to the second mode (Solid Declaration, VII, 98—101; Tappert, pp. 586 f.).

In view of these definite and crystal-clear explanations it would seem to be impossible for the Reformed to continue saddling the Lutherans with

impanation and consubstantiation. But behold! When they noticed that their battle against the true Biblical view of the sacramental union presented by Lutherans made even a seeming victory impossible for them, the Reformed clung to their old figment and continued to combat it as Lutheran superstition just as bravely and victoriously as Baron Muenchhausen. Also the later dogmaticians, therefore, saw themselves compelled again and again to repudiate those conceptions as unbiblical and un-Lutheran.

*[Editorial Note: Walther offers two lengthy citations from John Gerhard, who presents the same line of argument in opposition to impanation and consubstantiation and in favor of the supernatural mode of the presence of Christ's body and blood by virtue of the sacramental union. Walther continues:]*

It should therefore be perfectly clear that we Lutherans want nothing to do with either consubstantiation or impanation and that we are not minded at all to define the mode of the sacramental presence. Nevertheless, it might appear to many people that all our explanations seem to be contradicted by our customary way of speaking: *In, with, and under* the bread, the body of Jesus Christ is present in the Holy Supper.

This is not the place to demonstrate whether this grammatical and logical paraphrase of the Lord's words is suitable; we hope to do so another time. Here we simply want to point out that in the light of what was said above it is self-evident that those words are meant to express neither an impanation nor a consubstantiation, but nothing more than faith in the real and true presence of Christ's body and blood in the Holy Supper. We Lutherans are not remotely interested in binding anyone to the explanatory words "in, with, and under," as long as he confesses without subterfuge that he believes that the body and blood are really and truly present. At the same time we are convinced that one who sincerely believes in the real presence as the Lord promises it in the words, "This is my body," as the bread is given, and "This is my blood," as the cup is given, will not be offended by those words. On the contrary, he will acknowledge them as a human way of speaking that could not be otherwise in view of the faith of his heart.

Therefore Luther says: "When the fathers and we occasionally say, 'Christ's body is in the bread,' we do so quite simply because by our faith we wish to confess that Christ's body is present. Otherwise we may well allow it to be said that it is in the bread, it is the bread, it is where the bread is, or whatever you wish. Over the words we do not wish to argue, just so the meaning is retained that it is not mere bread that we eat in Christ's Supper, but the body of Christ" ("That These Words of Christ, 'This Is My Body,'

etc., Still Stand Firm,” 1527; *Luther’s Works*, American Edition, Vol. 37, p. 65). Gerhard speaks in the same vein: “Only grant us the true, real, and substantial presence of Christ’s body and blood in the Holy Supper. Agree that the words of Christ as they read must be taken in their original, natural, and proper sense, and we will easily come to terms with them regarding the use of these particles.” (*Loci theologici*, “Locus de sacra coena” [Theological Topics, Topic on the Lord’s Supper], par. 98, ed. Cott.).

More weight might apparently be attached to the objection of the Reformed that we do, after all, sing in our church:

That we never may forsake Him,  
His body gave for us to take Him,  
Hidden in the bread so small,  
And in the wine His blood for all.<sup>4</sup>

This is the second stanza of the incomparable Communion hymn “Jesus Christ, Our Blessed Savior.” This hymn is Luther’s German version of a hymn by John Hus, perhaps (as Wackernagel<sup>5w</sup> thinks) originally composed in Bohemian and later put into Latin. In the Latin text the words in question are *Nobis in sui memoriam dedit hanc panis hostiam* [In His memory He gave us this offering of bread]. However suspicious the words “hidden in the bread so small” might appear to those who do not know our church’s teaching, the solution of the riddle of this mode of speech, which seems to express impanation, is quite simple. Here the word “hidden” is not an adjective modifying “body,” nor does the word “small” refer to the body. Rather, “hidden” is here used as an adverb belonging to the verb “gave,” and the word “small” modifies “bread.” Therefore the sense is: In a manner “hidden” from our understanding, that is, incomprehensibly, the Lord gave us His body, the highest and greatest gift, to eat in and with so “small” a morsel of bread. So our theologians have always understood these words. To cite just one theologian, *John Andrew Quenstedt*:

When we sing Luther’s translation of Hus’ hymn, “hidden in the bread so small” (Latin: *parvo latens in crustulo*), we are not, as the Calvinists accuse us, singing of an inclusion of the body lying hidden in the bread (for we say expressly that no divine presence can be described as lying hidden), but we sing of the depth of the mystery, we praise the ineffable presence, and we lift our spirit to the incomprehensible greatness of the benefit imparted to us in this most sacred meal. The word “hidden” refers to the mode of *giving*, namely that Jesus Christ presents His body for sacramental reception in a manner hidden and beyond all understanding. We are here not concerned about the Latin translator who refers “hidden” to body, as an adjective modifying the noun. But if he takes it

adverbially, he is correct. Therefore “hidden” must not be referred to an inclusion but to an understanding of the matter, since for His most sacred remembrance the Lord Jesus has presented the greatest mystery in a tiny morsel of bread, and has given His body hidden, hidden not in the crumb of bread, but *hidden in the manner of its presence*, as we have learned to know it entirely from revelation and do not acquire by any shrewdness on our part (*Theologia didactico-polemica* [Didactic-Polemical Theology], chapter 6, section 2, question 3, folio 1221).

We hope that this short discussion will settle the question for those who are sincerely concerned about the truth whether our church teaches consubstantiation or impanation. But to try to silence those who substitute desire for reason would be just as foolish and futile as trying to silence an echo by means of louder shouting. By the way, we are firmly convinced that many a person who is still secretly afraid of the Lutheran, that is, Biblical teaching on the Lord’s Supper would accept this teaching with joy if he learned to know it as it really is and if it were not presented to him as something monstrous through the unconscionable distortions of our opponents. One who sincerely believes that Holy Scripture is God’s Word and that Christ is God and man in one person cannot do otherwise than believe that also the word: “This is My body,” is the truth and that the God-man, who gives Himself wholly to us sinners, also desires and is able to impart to us His humanity assumed into His deity.



## Is It Heretical to Question the Canonicity of Some New Testament Writings?<sup>1</sup>

*Lehre und Wehre*, II, 7, July 1856, pp. 204—16

We are led to this question by the comments on the Revelation of St. John which Pastor Roebbelen published in *Der Lutheraner*, where he also confessed that together with Luther he did not regard Revelation as canonical. It has come to our ears that this has here and there caused great offense. We, too, cannot agree with our dear brother Roebbelen in this point, since we are convinced that Revelation, that precious book of comfort for Christians and for the church, belongs to the canon. Nevertheless, we believe that it is improper and probably based on ignorance of the situation to regard an otherwise blameless theologian as a dangerous false teacher who makes God's Word itself suspect because, even though he sincerely regards all homologoumena (universally accepted books) as canonical, he questions the canonicity of one or the other antilegomenon (a disputed book). Such an attitude would be thoroughly un-Lutheran, since *our revered fathers in the faith almost without exception until after the writing of the Formula of Concord were of the opinion and so stated that either all or at least some of the antilegomena did not belong into the canon*. They did this not from undue haste or levity over against the Word of God but, on the contrary, out of profound conscientiousness with respect to the same. *Luther's* judgments on the antilegomena are not only no "stain" on our church but rather give testimony to the care which men in our church once took regarding what should be the rule and norm of our faith and life. On the other hand, the summary decrees of papists and Reformed that every Christian on the pain of losing his salvation *must* accept also all antilegomena as canonical is not only no testimony to reverence for the Word of God in these denominations but is in fact a demonstration of how easy it is for those who want to see Scripture interpreted either in a blind collier's faith according to the *church's* (i.e., the pope's) whim or according to the principles of *reason* to receive something into the canon.

It is, therefore, our opinion that this might be the proper place to

transmit to our cherished readers some testimonies of what our fathers especially of the 16th and the first half of the 17th century thought about this matter; not because we ourselves share their opinion but only to show that doubts about the canonicity of *disputed* books may be fostered even by those whose reputation of orthodoxy no Lutheran will dare to deny. In this way we hope to clear Luther, among others, of the suspicion that with reprehensible boldness he passed judgment on books of the New Testament canon in a subjective and arbitrary way.

It will not be necessary to print *Luther's* views here, since they are contained in his Prefaces to the New Testament and to the antilegomena.<sup>2</sup>

Of especial importance is the testimony of Martin Chemnitz, chief co-author of the Formula of Concord. He speaks at length on this question in his *Examination of the Council of Trent*. He may lead the procession of witnesses.

At the Council of Trent it was decreed:

If anyone does not accept as sacred and canonical the aforesaid books in their entirety and with all their parts as they have been accustomed to be read in the Catholic Church and as they are contained in the old Latin Vulgate Edition, and knowingly and deliberately rejects the aforesaid traditions, let him be anathema (H. J. Schroeder, *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, 4th Session, first decree, p. 18).

On this decree *Martin Chemnitz* writes in his *Examination of the Council of Trent*, among other things, as follows: [*Editorial Note: In a lengthy quotation covering five closely-printed pages, Chemnitz reviews the matter. He asserts that the church has no authority to wipe out distinctions between New Testament writings universally accepted and those whose place in the canon was disputed in the past, in the early history of the church. Since this is a historical question, the issue must be left undecided. The writings of Eusebius and Jerome clearly indicate that the early church distinguished between homologoumena and antilegomena, the latter comprising the epistles of James, Jude, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Revelation, and perhaps Hebrews. Chemnitz states that "this whole matter depends on the sure, firm, and harmonious testimonies of the first and ancient church, and where these are lacking, the later church, as it cannot make genuine books out of spurious ones, so also it cannot make certain writings out of doubtful ones without clear and firm proofs." This does not mean, says Chemnitz, that those disputed books should simply be rejected and condemned. The purpose of this dispute is "that the rule of faith or of sound doctrine in the church may be sure." While the antilegomena should not be made the basis of church dogma, they may well be read for the edification of the people.*]<sup>3</sup>

*Walther then cites statements of varying length from the Magdeburg Centuries (a 16th-century work on church history by Flacius, Wigand, Judex, and Basilius Faber), Andrew Osiander (died 1617), Aegidius Hunnius (died 1603), Dr. Hafenreffer (died 1619), Conrad Dietrich (died 1639), Friedrich Balduin (died 1627), and Dr. Theodore Thummus (died 1630). Then Walther continues:]*

May God grant that these testimonies may serve the purpose that everyone will strive to become very sure of his faith in these last distressful days and realize that in many points such certainty can be obtained only through conscientious and serious research and great inner struggles of conscience. But may these words also warn everyone against the serious sin of immediately suspecting those of opposing the Word of God who cling to all articles of faith together with the most faithful teachers of our church in its best and most blessed days and acknowledge as the divine rule and norm of faith and life those holy books that have been *universally received* at all times by Christendom, but who nevertheless hesitate to accept as on the same level of authority those books that have been opposed and about whose origin and authority also upright and faithful Christians and teachers of the church have had their doubts at one time or another.

Such people do not attack the divine *teaching* contained in the disputed writings but desire to see them interpreted in the light of the homologoumena, rather than the other way around. If there is no unchristian procedure in the discussion of this question, and if the poor people are not confused by dishonest treatment of this issue through partisan exploitation of a thesis which the people will have great difficulty understanding—which is very easy in this case—then a treatment of this question can only serve to arouse Christians to serious searching and be used as an opportunity to establish them more deeply and more firmly in their faith.

In case any periodical should take note of this matter, we state in advance that we will not deign to answer stupid prattle that may pretend to be a defense of the Word of God. However, we will give appropriate consideration to an objective discussion of this important matter, even though in the process our old teachers, men like Luther, Brenz, Chemnitz, Veit and Conrad Dietrich, and others, should be most severely judged.