

The LUTHERAN CLARION



Lutheran Concerns Association
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Reclaiming Our Squandered Heritage The Lutheran Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms (Part II)

Editor's Note: On January 20, at the 2014 LCA Conference, Rev. Thomas J. Queck read aloud Rev. Dr. Laurence L. White's paper; Dr. White could not attend due to an emergency.

In Part I, which was published in the May issue of the Clarion, Dr. White illustrated that the moral life of the United States, the foundation of our culture, has collapsed. At the same time, the church has allowed itself to be intimidated into silence. However, the Christian pastor must speak out and the Christian citizen must participate in the public debate. Part II of Dr. White's essay continues by emphasizing Luther's teaching regarding the responsibility of the Church and her pastors to address matters of public morality and to call the government and its leaders to account. The urgency of this should be evident to all. Part III will be published in the next issue.

III. The Two Kingdoms and the Church's Responsibility to Government

The proper distinction between the governance of God within the two realms or kingdoms is, as noted above, an extension of the proper distinction between law and gospel. Werner Elert notes:

"According to its origin and mission the church belongs to the order of divine grace while the state belongs to the order of divine law. Viewed from that angle the relationship between them is only an application or a test of the relationship between gospel and law." (Elert, p. 384)

Kurt Marquart agrees and indicates that therein lies the importance of this distinction:

"What all of this adds up to is that the proper distinction between the two kingdoms or governments is part and parcel of the right distinction between law and gospel. The former distinction is necessarily entailed by, or is 'nested in' the latter. Therein lies its enormous significance." (Marquart (2), p.179)

Prior to the Reformation, the divinely intended order had been perverted as the papacy enforced its will upon kings and princes through ban and bull. The popes asserted primary authority in all matters spiritual and temporal. The two kingdoms were intermingled with one another to the detriment of both the gospel and the civil government of the nations. The pope and his bishops exercised the coercive power of secular authorities. They constantly interfered in the temporal government of the countries of Europe. Accumulating massive landholdings and wealth,

commanding armies, and participating in economic, political, and military alliances most often seemed to be the major occupation of the church of Rome. The power of the gospel and the spiritual authority of the keys became little more than a sanctimonious sham to validate the worldly ambitions of the princes of the church. Through the confusion of the two realms and the intrusion of the church into the kingdom of the left hand, the devil was able both to pervert the Gospel and undermine the peace and order that worldly government was intended to maintain.

Luther describes the situation in this way:

"Once upon a time, popes, bishops, priests, and monks had such authority that, with their little letters of excommunication, they could force and drive kings and princes wherever they wished, without resistance or defense. In fact, kings or princes could not ruffle a hair of any monk or priest no matter how insignificant the maggot was. They had to put up with it when a rude jackass in the pulpit vilified a king and a prince and made fun of them as his wanton will suggested. That was called preaching and no one dared to utter a peep against it. The secular rulers were completely subject to these clerical giants and tyrants; these dissolute, rude fellows walked all over them... Besides, it was not understood or taught what temporal authority was or how great the distinction between it and spiritual government..." (AE 13,p.41)

Luther took considerable satisfaction from the fact that he had helped to restore respect and honor to civil government as a divine institution. In 1528 he bragged – *"I have written in such glorification of temporal government as no teacher has done since the days of the apostles, except, perhaps, St. Augustine. I can boast of this with a good conscience, and the testimony of the world will support me."* (AE,46, p.163,164) The Augsburg Confession followed the reformer's doctrine precisely on this point in distinguishing the authority of each of the two divinely established realms while affirming that both kingdoms have been established by God:

"Therefore our teachers, in order to comfort people's consciences, were constrained to show the difference between the authority of the Church and the Authority of the state. They taught that both of them were to be held in reverence and honor, as God's chief blessings on earth, because they

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have God's command...The authority of the Keys is the commandment or the authority of God to preach the Gospel, to forgive and to retain sins, and to administer the sacraments...This authority is exercised only by teaching and preaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments, either to many or to individuals, according to their calling. In this way are given not only bodily but eternal things; eternal righteousness, the Holy Spirit and eternal life. These things cannot reach us except by the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments...Civil government deals with other things than the Gospel does. Civil rulers do not defend minds, but bodies and bodily things against obvious injuries. They restrain people with the sword and with physical punishment in order to preserve civil justice and peace (Romans 13:1-7). Therefore, the Church's authority and the States authority cannot be confused." (AC, XXVIII, 5-12 passim)

The devil, however, is the ultimate opportunist. When the Reformation broke Rome's stranglehold upon secular authority or, to use Luther's

"...the distinction between the two kingdoms does not limit the sovereignty of God. God remains the Lord of both of the two realms..."

more colorful language, muzzled the jackasses in the pulpits, Satan simply rode the pendulum in the other direction and encouraged the absolute autonomy of the princes and secular control of the church. Luther was completely aware of the dangers inherent in the new

situation. His critique of the prince's abuse of their authority is every bit as stern as his critique of the pope's.

"Now, however, the Gospel has come to light. It makes a plain distinction between the temporal and spiritual estate and teaches besides that the temporal estate is an ordinance of God which everyone ought to obey and honor. Therefore, they rejoice in their freedom; the spiritual tyrants have to pull in their pipes, and the tables are turned. Now popes, bishops, priests and monks have to fear and honor the princes and lords and nobles, give them gifts and presents, keep the fasts and the feasts, and worship at their feet as though they were their gods. This tickles them so that they do not know how to abuse this grace and liberty wantonly enough...Moreover, in order to show

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The Clarion is most appreciative of such continued support from Balance-Concord, Inc., as well as the wonderful support of our readers. These contributions make it possible to bring you substantive articles by respected and qualified authors on issues affecting YOUR Synod. Please continue your support. It is both appreciated and needed.

**Rev. Dr. Daniel L. Gard
Called to Presidency at
Concordia University, Chicago**

Thank You! Board of Regents, Concordia University, Chicago

Thank You! Board for University Education, Rev. Dr. Dean O. Wenthe

Thank You! President Matthew C. Harrison

Thank you for the call to Rev. Dr. Daniel L. Gard to the presidency of Concordia University, Chicago, and congratulations President Elect Gard. We pray for Dr. Gard and Concordia University, Chicago.

still more thanks to the Gospel, they will not allow it to rebuke their wickedness and self-will. They have now discovered a new device, and declare that whoever rebukes them is seditious, rebels against the authority ordained by God, and defames their honor. Thus since they are rid of the tyranny of the clergy and cannot be rebuked by them, they now want to be rid of the Gospel and be beyond its rebuke, although it has set them free. Their ultimate desire is to be able to do whatever they wish, without hindrance or rebuke, without shame or fear and with honor and glory." (AE, 13, p.41-42)

The princes and temporal authorities dare not be allowed to imagine that they are immune from criticism and answerable to no one. Luther believed that the pastoral office (*Predigtamt*) had a responsibility from God in relation to the civil government which had been established by God. In his view this responsibility was in no way inconsistent with the proper distinction between God's government in the two realms. This can be clearly seen in his commentary on Psalm 101. Here Luther strongly affirms the doctrine of the two kingdoms and the crucial importance of properly distinguishing between them. He writes:

"Constantly I must pound in and squeeze in and drive in and wedge in this difference between the two kingdoms, even though it is written and said so often that it becomes tedious. The devil never stops cooking and brewing these kingdoms into each other. In the devil's name the secular leaders always want to be Christ's masters and teach him how He should run His church and spiritual government. Similarly the false clerics and schismatic spirits always want to be the masters, though not in God's name, and to teach people how to organize the secular government. Thus the devil is indeed very busy on both sides and he has much to do. May God hinder him! Amen, if we deserve it." (AE, 13, p.194,195)

But the distinction between the two kingdoms does not limit the sovereignty of God. God remains the Lord of both of the two realms, although he has chosen to govern differently in each of them. He has not relinquished His control of the secular kingdom and those who reign therein remain accountable to Him. In the paragraph which follows his strong assertion of the importance of maintaining the proper distinction between the kingdoms, he goes

on to assert the right and the duty of pastors, as God's spokesmen, to speak the truth of God to the leaders of government. Luther specifically argues that this is not a confusion of the two kingdoms.

"If a preacher, in his official capacity, says to kings and princes and to all the world, 'Thank and fear God and keep His commandments,' he is not meddling in the affairs of secular government. On the contrary, he is thereby serving and being obedient to the highest government. Thus the entire spiritual government really does nothing else than serve the divine authority which is why they are called servants of God and ministers of Christ in Scripture." (AE, 13, p.195)

This perspective is amplified in a 1530 sermon "On Keeping Children in School." Having recounted in glowing detail the great things that a pastor accomplishes spiritually, Luther proceeds to offer these remarks on the importance of the pastoral office within society.

"Beyond that, however, he (that is, the pastor) does great and mighty works for the world. He informs and instructs the various estates on how they are to conduct themselves outwardly in their several offices and estates, so that they may do what is right in the sight of God...For a preacher confirms, strengthens, and helps to sustain authority of every kind, and temporal peace generally. He checks the rebellious, teaches obedience, morals, discipline, and honor; instructs fathers, mothers, children, and servants in their duties; in a word, he gives direction to all the temporal estates and offices. Of all the good things a pastor does, these are, to be sure, the least. Yet they are so high and noble that the wisest of all the heathen have never known or understood them, much less been able to do them. Indeed, even to the present day no jurist, university, foundation or monastery knows these works, and they are not taught either in canon law or secular law. For there is no one who regards these offices as God's great gifts, His gracious ordinances. It is only the Word of God and the preachers that praise and honor them so highly. Therefore, to tell the truth, peace, the greatest of earthly goods, in which all other temporal goods are comprised, is really a fruit of true preaching. For where the preaching is right, there war and discord and bloodshed do not come; but where the preaching is not right, it is no wonder that there is war, or at least constant unrest and a desire to fight and shed blood." (AE,46,p.226)

"Of all the good things a pastor does," the Reformer cautions, "these are, to be sure, the least." And yet, the pastor's activity in this area is "high and noble," of profound significance for the culture in which he lives. This is not social ministry in the modern sense of the term - the church and her pastors have no calling as such to dabble in politics or social engineering. The church may not seek to take over worldly government, dictate its policies, exercise its power, or deprive it of its role. But worldly government is not autonomous - it remains responsible to the God who established it.

It becomes necessary for the Christian pastor to speak out

We Need Your Support

Even though some progress was made at the 2013 Synodical Convention, much work remains to be done to return our Synod to the Church of our Grandfathers and Reformation fathers! The Lutheran Concerns Association is dedicated to the effort to reclaim our full Lutheran heritage for the LCMS, but we cannot achieve this long-range goal alone.



We need your continued help so that a truly Lutheran church body will be there for our grandchildren and great-grandchildren. In some small way we at the LCA desire to be helpful in preserving our faith, under the Lord's blessing, so that the treasure of pure doctrine and right practice will be known for generations to come. Would you prayerfully consider assisting us in this on-going effort with your tax deductible donations?

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when the powers that be overstep their bounds. If the individual ruler in question is himself a Christian then he must be called to account on the basis of God's Word. Sin must be denounced and its deadly consequences proclaimed. The table of duties must be preached to all who God has placed in positions of authority. If the individual ruler is not personally a Christian, or if, as in our modern pluralistic democracies, the state is secular by design, then dialog within the public square must be conducted on the basis of natural law, reason, and common sense, apart from special revelation (although these are never in conflict with special revelation).

The responsibility of the pastor in this situation becomes that of clearly addressing the moral issues which confront his people as citizens, warning against the consequences of wickedness and evil so that they, in turn, may responsibly participate in the formulation of public policy. A democracy is by definition a form of government in which the people rule, hence when that which is done by the people's representatives in government is contrary to the Word of God the rebuke and admonition of the Christian pastor must be addressed to the citizen rulers who make up his congregation, lest by their apathy and ignorance evil men are allowed to rule simply because good men have done nothing.

In 1933, with the Hitler government newly installed in power and the menace of a totalitarian state looming on the horizon, Herman Sasse and Dietrich Bonhoeffer were asked to prepare a modern declaration of the faith in response to the challenge of National Socialism. The result of their collaboration was the **Bethel Confession**, so-called because it was written in the town of Bethel in Westphalia. It was at the same time a stirring call to rouse a lethargic and intimidated church and a warning to an increasingly intrusive and evil totalitarian state. The original version of the confession was not published until long after the end of the Third Reich in 1959. In 1933, its rejection of

Nazi pretensions and anti-Semitism was judged to be too confrontational and controversial by the timid leadership of the confessing church. It remains, nonetheless, a most brilliant and incisive theological analysis of the issues at stake. Even church historian Klaus Scholder, himself a Calvinist and no friend of confessional Lutheranism, acknowledges:

“Ponderous though it was and loaded with numerous passages from the Bible, from Luther, and above all from the confessional texts, this confession was, nevertheless, theological-ly and politically clearer and more exact in some passages than the more famous Barmen Declaration of May, 1934.”

(Scholder, p.456)

“Franz Lau...concludes that Luther is clearly not an apostle of absolute obedience to all government authority. The reformer calls upon pastors to fearlessly...oppose evil and injustice.”

The **Bethel Confession** categorically rejects the mingling of the two realms and the “false doctrine of a Christian state” as a basic confusion of law and gospel. Yet, with Luther, the confession acknowledges that the church and her pastors do have a responsibility through “their proper proclamation” to remind the state and its representatives that they are not autonomous and that there are limits beyond which they may not properly go. No German in 1933, as the sound of the new “German Greeting,” “Heil Hitler!” reverberated through the land, could have had any doubt as to the application of these carefully chosen words:

“The connection between worldly government and the church consists of this alone, that the church points out to worldly government through its proper proclamation the limits of their own order so that they do not thereby become a tool of the devil, who in the end seeks only chaos so that he may destroy all life. Worldly government ought to expect this service, and this service alone, from the church. With this service the church preserves those under authority from the deceit of the devil who desires unlimited power to have himself worshiped as lifegiver and savior.” (Bonhoeffer/Sasse, p.113)

Luther makes the same point somewhat more flamboyantly in a 1532 commentary on the Sermon on the Mount. He urges pastors to grab the lords and princes by the snout, denouncing and cursing, rebuking and instructing.

“You see, that is how God’s Word proceeds. It challenges the whole world. It reaches into the mouth of the lords and the princes and of everyone else, denouncing and cursing their whole way of life, something that is not proper for you or me to do as individual Christians, except in our office and our teaching position. In Psalm 2:10-11 David dares to do this. He tells all the kings and lords to think, to humble themselves,

“If the state sins, then God’s church must fight. ... He who keeps silent and consents becomes the tool of Satan.”

Norwegian Lutheran Bishop Eivind Berggrav (1884-1959)

DVD Distribution

Please assist in making possible distribution of 2014 LCA Conference DVD’s to all LCMS congregations.



In past years, LCA Conference DVD’s, with assistance from Balance-Concord, Inc. have been sent to approximately 1,200 LCMS Synodical Convention delegates, Synod and District officers, etc. The 2014 Conference focused on what the American Bar Association called the second most important story of 2013, the extraordinary rapid advancement of same-sex marriage in the U.S. The LCA Conference speakers again were outstanding: Attorney Mark Stern; Chaplain Craig Muehler, Capt., U.S.N.; Rear Admiral Luther Schriefer (Ret.); Mr. Timothy Goeglein; Rev. Dr. Laurance White and Rev. Michael Kumm. See the January 2014 or November 2013 *Lutheran Clarion* for the full Conference Agenda.

This year the goal is to send the Conference DVD’s to every congregation in Synod. Your help is sought in raising approximately an additional \$8,500 to make this possible, something that certainly is possible. Contributions earmarked for this purpose should be sent to: **Lutheran Concerns Association**, 149 Glenview Drive, New Kensington, PA 15068-4921.

to fall at the feet of the teaching about Christ and to let themselves be rebuked and instructed. Otherwise they will be damned instantly and turned over to the devil. I would not dare to do that. But that is the way God’s Word proceeds. It hammers the great and mighty mountains with its thunder and lightning and storms, so that they smoke. It shatters everything that is great and proud and disobedient, as Psalm 29 says. But on the other hand it is also like a fruitful rain, sprinkling and moistening, planting and strengthening whatever is like the poor, parched plants that are weak and sickly. Now it is wrong for someone who is not a teacher and preacher, commissioned to administer the Word of God, to rush in, snapping and snarling and cursing. But whoever has been commissioned with this office must administer it. But it is wrong for him to neglect it and to be so scared that he refuses to open his mouth and to denounce what should be denounced. (AE,21, p.120)

Franz Lau, commenting on this passage, concludes that Luther is clearly not an apostle of absolute obedience to all government authority. The reformer calls upon pastors to fearlessly, almost foolishly, oppose evil and injustice. Nonetheless, a distinction between the two realms is consistently maintained. Lau writes:

“However, Luther often talks about how pastors must grab the mighty of this world by the snout...Luther is not the teacher of a silent, submissive obedience, but an almost foolhardy opposition against all governmental injustice. But Luther demonstrates one peculiar reservation; he speaks more negatively than positively. He raises his voice against the rape of the law in every respect and against godlessness. He meddles into very worldly things, because the world is so deluded that it can no longer tell the difference between right and wrong. He grabs hold of the politicians’ snouts, but still he does not interfere with their craft.” (Lau, p.88,89)

The “one peculiar reservation” which Lau points out, namely that Luther “speaks more negatively than positive-

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The above quote is from Rev. Jeffrey Horn, a CTS graduate and missionary, who, with his wife Lora, are serving the Lord in Papua, New Guinea. In addition to preaching and giving Bible studies, Rev. Horn teaches at Timothy Lutheran Seminary.

He faces many obstacles: the local pastors need more education, a local heresy has spread to many congregations, congregations need copies of the *Small Catechism* in the local language, they need new hymnals, congregations go without the Lord's Supper because there is no wine available.



So far, *Clarion* readers generously donated \$4,407.00 for Rev. Horn's work. \$500.00 has been donated for Rev. Wildaur and Rev. Gaugert in Togo, West Africa. We pray you will continue with your encouragement and support for these missionaries. Please send checks payable to:

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ly,” is a pertinent reminder for us that the great reformer does not presume to tell the government how to do its work – “*he does not interfere with their craft.*” He addresses sin and abuse, but he does not offer suggestions as to political solutions or governmental policy – that is not the role of the church or her pastors. We have no special insight or revelation from God on such matters. Marquart is quite right when he asserts:

“There is no distinctively Christian brand of politics. What distinguishes Christians from other persons of goodwill in the public arena is their supernatural motivation of love for God and their fellow human beings, and of that only God can be the judge (Col.3:3). The New Testament offers no blueprint for the reconstruction of society as such. Political or economic schemes may therefore be competent or incompetent, humane or barbarous, but they can be ‘Christian’ no more than chemistry can be ‘evangelical’ or botany ‘Lutheran.’” (Marquart (2), p.184,185)

When the pastor addresses such questions he does so not as a political agitator or a social reformer but as a faithful servant of the Word of God. Bishop Eivind Berggrav of Norway, who led the Lutheran Church of that land in principled opposition to the Nazi occupation and the Quisling government, cautions that in its opposition to evil in the civil estate the church must beware lest it succumb to the temptation to use worldly means to achieve its goals.

“If the state sins, then God's church must fight. The church is obliged to do this not because the church is over the state, but because it is called of God. He who keeps silent and consents becomes the tool of Satan. Luther had plenty of conflicts. We need not go to Worms to find him in conflict with civil authority. The thing that mattered

for Luther, however, was that it be a Christian struggle. If the church takes to worldly means, then it goes over to the camp of the enemy. The church's domain and existence is the Word, God's Word, the word of conscience.” (Berggrav, p.307)

It is also most significant to note that the reformer contends that while such activity would not be appropriate for a private individual, it is a necessary responsibility of the pastoral office. Bishop Berggrav observes:

“Luther does not take this lightly. He would be the last one to place private judgement above the state. Not only is conscience to be bound by God's Word and tested by the faith of the church, but it must also be willing to suffer injustice. He who opposes the state must have the office to do so. Here too, it is the office that speaks and not the person. Personal self-exaltation tempts conscience into all the bypaths of power. The willingness to suffer purges, the responsibility of office sharpens...As Luther sees it, the voice of the church is to come in the name of the office and not of the person. The office is a ministerium verbi divini, an administration of the Word of God. The situation is not one in which a spiritual person is to rebuke an official person. It is one in which one of God's offices is to speak to the other of God's offices. The one that is called on to speak in the name of the Gospel is not the private individual but the properly instituted authority in spiritual matters. This authority has not only the right but the duty of speaking.” (Berggrav, p. 307, 313)

Franz Lau offers another important distinction and qualification:

“The pastor who corrects the worldly estates performs, according to Luther an opus alienum, that is a strange or an alien work. His opus proprium, that is his proper or essential work is to preach the forgiveness of sins. When he proclaims the law that is not his essential work...The Christian pastor who calls the lords of this world to order is also preaching the law. That is not altered by the fact that the standard of good and evil to which the correcting pastor recalls the worldly estates is in itself a worldly standard. Preachers of the Gospel perform a vicarious service when they address the political world, in politiam. Nonetheless, they are never permitted, to seize the power in their own office and to attempt to rule the world according to the Gospel. The world must be ruled in worldly way.” (Lau, p. 74, 75)

Rev. Dr. Laurence L. White

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Brief Report on the 2014 ACELC Conference

Since 2011, the Association of Confessing Evangelical Lutheran Congregations (ACELC) has been hosting annual free conferences on issues that have troubled the Missouri Synod for many years. This year's topic was: "CHRIST FOR US: The Office of the Holy Ministry." It was held over three days, February 25-27, at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Cedar Falls, Iowa. It was a good and refreshing three days. People were there to talk about theology, greet old friends and meet new, and work on ways to strengthen the Missouri Synod's confession of the Truth. What's not to like about that?

The line-up of speakers was outstanding:

- *Conference Introduction* - Rev. James Gier, Mount Calvary Lutheran, Excelsior Springs, MO;
- *The Christological Nature of the Office* - Rev. Brian Saunders, Iowa District East President;
- *The Pastor in the Stead of Christ* - Rev. Brent Kuhlmann, Trinity Lutheran, Murdock, NE;
- *Bishops, Who Needs Them?* - Rev. Rolf Preus, First American Lutheran, Mayville, ND, and Grace Lutheran, Crookston, MN;
- *Priesthood and Office* - Rev. Prof. Roland Ziegler, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at CTSFW;
- *Call and Ordination* - Rev. Prof. Naomichi Masaki, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at CTSFW;
- *Post Convention Considerations on the SMP Program* - Rev. Prof. Richard Nuffer, Associate Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions at CTSFW; and
- *Consequences of the Office of the Holy Ministry* - Rev. Clint Poppe, Good Shepherd Lutheran, Lincoln, NE.

Obviously, much care was put into crafting a conference that would be engaging for pastors and laymen alike. A masterful Conference Introduction was given by Rev. James D. Gier to focus the participants and set the stage for the presenters. Iowa East District President Saunders brought greetings on behalf of the district where the conference was held. Presenting as well, Saunders got the conference off on the right foot by walking through what the Bible and the Lutheran Confessions have to say about the Office of the Ministry. While space does not permit me to report on each presentation, all were engaging and worthwhile. I highly encourage the reader to take the time to carefully study the presentations, which are available online.¹

Perhaps the most beneficial aspect of the presentations was

We are Already Planning the 2015 LCA Conference!



Please mark your calendar for **Monday, January 19, 2015**. The focus of the 2015 Conference will be the Bible. Again, we have a great line-up of speakers:

- Rev. Dr. Cameron A. MacKenzie (Chairman, Historical Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne)
- Rev. Dr. Peter J. Scaer (Exegetical Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne)
- Rev. Dr. Jeffrey J. Kloha (Provost; Exegetical Theology, Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis)
- Rev. Dr. Martin R. Noland (Pastor, Trinity Lutheran, Evansville, Indiana)
- Rev. Dr. Brian S. Saunders, Iowa District East President;
- Vicar Christian A. Preus (Good Shepherd Lutheran, Lincoln, Nebraska)

Look for more information in future issues of *The Lutheran Clarion*.

the care that was taken to define terms and dismiss false alternatives.² Of course this procedure does not clear up all arguments, but it does help to avoid manifestly silly ones. I highly recommend the 2015 ACELC free conference, February 10-12, 2015, at Holy Cross Lutheran, Kansas City, Missouri, which will be a continuation of the same topic: "Office of the Holy Ministry, Part II (Unbiblical Removal of Pastors)."

On behalf of LCA I was permitted to extend greetings during the business meeting:

"Lutheran Concerns Association extends its greetings to our brothers in Christ at the ACELC Conference, prays that our Triune God will bless the ACELC Conference and encourages the ACELC to continue to faithfully carry out a Biblical witness to our One, True Christian faith in conformity with our Lutheran Confessions which both organizations hold to without reservation. LCA is open to conversations in the future as to how the organizations can best assist each other in their witness to the One, True Christian faith."

Having attended the free conference and conversed with many folks involved with the ACELC, I found them an impressive group. These men were earnest, sincere, amazingly calm, and committed to taking steps toward a more faithful Missouri Synod. While not everyone may agree with every choice or tactic they have used, it was greatly refreshing to see men hard at work—and putting their money where their mouth was—with action. They view themselves directly in line with the call from (now) Synodical President Matthew Harrison's 2008 paper *It's Time* to have a synod-wide discussion about what troubles the Synod. The ACELC has a schedule, a timetable, topics, a way to produce theses for discussion, a functioning forum—in short, a plan that is public, transparent, and getting accomplished. My thought as I drove away from the conference was: Perhaps the official *Koinonia* Project, with all the backing and resources of Synod, could take some pointers?

Rev. David P. Ramirez

Pastor, Zion Lutheran Church, Lincoln, Illinois

1 To read these papers and more about the conference: http://www.ancelc.net/page/2014_free_conference_16151

2 One false alternative that was particularly enjoyable to see deconstructed was the rabbit hole of the ontological vs. functional views on the ministry.

Book Review: Darwin's Doubt The Explosive Origin of Animal Life and the Case for Intelligent Design

Stephen C. Meyer. Harper Collins Publishers, New York, 2013. 498 pages. Hard cover. \$20.00

This book deals in detail with a major problem that stands in the way of accepting Darwin's theory of evolution of all living forms from a first primeval cell, which itself came from non-living material. Darwin was puzzled by a pattern in the fossil record which seemed to document the geologically sudden appearance of animal life in a period of the fossil record called the Cambrian. It was dated at about 530 million years ago. The problem was that some 23 major phyla appeared suddenly with no record of their development from simpler forms in the underlying strata.

It needs to be realized that the fossils appear in a top down fashion. Representatives of the higher taxonomic categories (phyla, subphyla, and classes) appear and only diversify later into the lower taxonomic categories (families, genera, and species). This is exactly the reverse of what Darwin's theory calls for. No wonder Darwin was troubled. The rocks told an exactly different story than that which his theory called for.

The fossils in the Cambrian include brachiopods, creatures with shells like clams and oysters; trilobites, animals with pairs of legs and compound eyes. There are also animals with hearts and relatively large brains. Recent digs have even found fossils of fish.

The basic problem for Darwinism is that these fossils appear suddenly in the Cambrian with no relatives or simpler forms in the pre-Cambrian. Meyer points out that off-shore deep well drilling has found no pre-Cambrian fossils in ocean beds.

In the second section of his book Meyer explores the difficulties facing evolutionary theory in showing how mutations could build animal structures. This represents another challenge to evolutionary theory. To build new forms of life from simpler preexisting forms requires new information. In 1953, James Watson and Francis Crick discovered the existence in genes of a complex chemical which they named deoxyribonucleic acid. For short this is usually referred to as DNA. DNA molecules have a double helix structure. Long strings of sugar and phosphate bases wind round each other, linked by a series of four chemical bases. These are named Adenine, Thymine, Guanine and Cytosine. These bases differ in their order as they go down the two strings of DNA and thus provide a chemical code for the DNA to provide the chemical information to build a protein. A simple single celled organism requires between 318,000 and 562 base pairs of DNA to produce the proteins it needs to maintain life. More complex forms of life require more base pairs of DNA. It is said a fruit fly has DNA base pairs of the order of 140 million, thus life in the cells is enormously complex. DNA for higher forms of life is even more complex.

It is a challenge for evolutionary theory to explain how such

complex structures could have been produced by chance mutations in the genes as Darwin proposes. For instance, the mutation of a gene will destabilize the formation of the folds that cover proteins. As a result the organism dies. To develop organs such as jaws, intermediate changes from mutation will not work. Organs such as eyes and ears would require many mutations virtually simultaneously. This is obviously not likely to happen. Moreover evidence has emerged indicating that factors other than DNA are needed in developing the structure of an organism.

On page 292, Meyer refers to a group of biologists who are united in the conviction that the neo-Darwinian theory has run its course and that a new approach is needed. Meyer examines many of these new attempts, but in each case shows them to be unproven. He states that the problem is how to account for the origin of the massive amount of information needed to explain the intricate and complicated biological machines found in nature.

Meyer then proposes that the answer to the sudden appearance of life forms in the Cambrian is to be found in what is called Intelligent Design. Living systems have features that are best explained as having been designed by an actual intelligent, conscious and rational agent, a mind as opposed to a materialistic process. The theory of Intelligent Design does not reject the evidence for microevolution, that is, change within the species, minor changes. But it does dispute Darwin's idea that the cause of major biological change and the appearance of design are wholly blind **and** undirected. The information bearing properties of DNA point to the activity of a designing intelligence—to the work of a mind, an intelligent cause.

Proponents of Intelligent Design say that it is not a religiously based idea. They insist that the science points to a designer, an intelligent cause. They also realize that this is the reason that evolutionists oppose Intelligent Design theory. They insist that they will only accept theories based on materialism. In other words they reject the concept that there is an almighty God who is the designer.

For the Christian there is no problem. Romans 1:19-20 speaks clearly. "For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. Ever since the creation of the world His invisible nature, namely, His eternal power and deity has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made."

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Editor's Note: This is the last *Clarion* article written by Dr. Paul A. Zimmerman who contributed multiple articles and expressed his intent to continue doing so but the Lord called him to heaven on January 28, 2014, at age 95. He was, of course, much more than an author—a friend of decades, an exceptionally gifted and committed orthodox Lutheran theologian, scientist (chemist) and consultant. He served the Synod as president of three Concordia Universities—Seward, Ann Arbor and River Forest (now Concordia University—Chicago), as Chairman of Synodical President J. A. O. Preus' Fact Finding Committee (1970-73) and multiple other capacities.

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