

THE INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE  
AS TAUGHT BY THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY  
LUTHERAN DOGMATICIANS

A Thesis Submitted to the  
Faculty of Divinity of the University of  
Edinburgh in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for Ph.D. Degree

by

Robert Preus, B.A., B.D.

May 15, 1952



## CONTENTS

- Chapter One: Scripture as the Source of Theology
- Chapter Two: Scripture as the Word of God
- Chapter Three: The Inspiration of Scripture
- Chapter Four: The Relation of the Holy Spirit to the Amanuenses
- Chapter Five: The Inerrancy of Scripture
- Chapter Six: The Authority of Scripture
- Chapter Seven: The Sufficiency of Scripture
- Chapter Eight: The Clarity of Scripture
- Chapter Nine: The Efficacy of Scripture
- Conclusion

PREFACE

There are two reasons which justify an investigation into the position of the seventeenth century Lutheran dogmaticians regarding the inspiration of Scripture. In the first place the dogmaticians have had no small theological influence upon their Lutheran posterity even down to the present day. Succeeding generations of Lutherans have always studied their theology, though often superficially, unsympathetically and unfortunately from secondary sources. Their theological tenets and even their terminology and theological method have persisted in certain quarters to this day. This influence is an undeniable fact although many Lutherans today do not realize it and many others would not care to admit it. And this influence has made itself felt not only in conservative Lutheran circles but also in the liberal branches of the Lutheran church. K. Hase's book, Hutterus redivivus, and Luthardt's Compendium der Dogmatik, which has now gone through fourteen editions, have both served to stimulate interest in the theology of the dogmaticians on the part of liberal Lutheranism in Germany. Among the conservatives Philippi, who believed in the verbal inspiration of the Bible, shows his regard for and dependence on the dogmaticians in his Kirchliche Glaubenslehre and draws heavily from them in his prolegomena and consideration of Scripture. In America Heinrich Schmid's very useful book, Die Dogmatik der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche, has been translated into English and has received wide circulation in liberal circles. The tremendous influence effected by the old dogmaticians upon the large conservative segment of the Lutheran church in America is indicated in Franz Pieper's Christliche Dog-

matik, now being translated into English, and Adolf Hoenecke's Ev. Luth. Dogmatik, the two most exhaustive dogmatical works written by Lutherans in America. Both Pieper and Hoenecke evince a profound respect toward the seventeenth century dogmaticians as theologians, and in their treatment of Scripture they follow the dogmaticians very closely.

In the second place the attitude of the old dogmaticians toward Scripture has been the chief point where they, as representatives of seventeenth century Lutheran orthodoxy, are remembered and judged. No other era in Lutheran church history has been depicted by historians, even Lutheran historians, with such a spirit of antagonism, no other era has been described with such lack of sympathy and censured with such lack of justification, as the period which these men dominated. The seventeenth century has too often been brushed aside by historians as the period of dead orthodoxy in the Lutheran church, although a cursory study of the era will reveal a genuine Christian piety expressing itself in a wealth of devotional literature and hymns which are some of the finest ever brought forth in the Lutheran church. The bitterness and misery of that century in which Europe experienced only seven years of peace, the imminent threat to orthodox Lutheranism from Catholicism and Calvinism from without and syncretism from within, the fact that bitter invective was the rule in all controversial issues, the fact that abhorrence, hatred and intolerance of false doctrine all of which seems so strange now was a guiding principle then, all these important facts have been too often by-passed by church historians; and thus the possibility of appreciating the thinking and motives and desires of these dogmaticians has been all but destroyed. And why such almost universal disapproval

of these men by posterity? The answer to this question may be found partially in their stubborn, unrelenting assaults against Romanism, Calvinism, unionism and everything not strictly Lutheran. It may be found partially in their denunciation of syncretism and doctrinal indifferentism on the part of their more liberal brethren in the Lutheran church. But more than anything else, I believe, it is to be found in their rigid adherence to the Lutheran principle of  sola scriptura  and in their doctrine of verbal inspiration, tenets which are not cherished by the majority of modern theologians and historians. That this is the point where they have been remembered and judged will be brought out in the course of this dissertation.

In choosing the theologians to represent the seventeenth century Lutheran position regarding the inspiration of Scripture I have restricted my selection to those men who were and are universally regarded as exponents of strict seventeenth century Lutheran orthodoxy. I have therefore not considered the works of Calixt, important as his influence has been, since he was opposed by the orthodox Lutherans in matters of doctrine and practice. Musaeus, too, because of his synergism, his weakness as ever against certain aspects of the inspiration doctrine, and his mediating position between the syncretism of Calixt and the Helmstedt school and the confessionalism of Calov and the Wittenberg school, cannot be considered a representative of the prevailing orthodoxy of the age. On the other hand, I have included Baier in my investigation. It is true that he was a disciple of Musaeus and never completely abandoned the synergism of his master. Nevertheless living and working as he did after the syncretistic controversy he did much to heal the breach caused by

this strife. Moreover by his writings he proved that he deserves to be accorded a place as a champion of Lutheran orthodoxy. The fact that a much enlarged edition of his compendium theologiae positivae by C. F. W. Walther was until the present generation used as a textbook in more than one of the larger conservative Lutheran seminaries in America indicates that he is esteemed an advocate of the old orthodox Lutheranism, and for this reason alone I could not disregard him.

Chronologically my investigation starts with Aegidius Hunnius, who died a few years after the turn of the seventeenth century. The choice of this man does not mean to infer that he inaugurated the age of orthodoxy. The theology of the dogmaticians is due to the influence of more than one man and its roots extend far into the sixteenth century. My reason for beginning with Hunnius is that during his professorship at Wittenberg a number of controversies arose between the Lutherans and the Catholics regarding the perspicuity, authority, inspiration and authenticity of Scripture. Bellarmino, Tanner, Gretzer, Stapleton and many other Jesuit controversialists arrayed a mass of polemical literature against every Lutheran defence in these matters so that Hunnius and those who followed were driven to defend and clarify their position on a number of issues which had hardly been touched by their predecessors. We find Hunnius defending the authority and authenticity and clarity of Scripture in almost all his writings against the Jesuits, and in support of the divinity and inspiration of Scripture we find him writing his celebrated tractatus de sacrosancta maiestate, auctoritate, fide ac certitudine sacrae scripturae propheticae et apostolicae veteris & novi testamenti. Hunnius was greatly

respected by his successors in Wittenberg, and his authority is appealed to by Gerhard and especially Quenstedt to a remarkable extent. This fact, too, makes it imperative to include his works in a study of the old orthodox Lutheran doctrine of Scripture. The age of orthodoxy ends with David Hollaz and any consideration of the theology of this era must terminate with him.

In dealing with the tenets of the old dogmaticians concerning Scripture I have not treated each of them individually as a separate representative of a long era of Lutheran scholasticism, but have considered them as a unit or school, and have taken up their doctrine of Scripture point by point. The reason for this is obvious. Even the most casual perusal of the works of the dogmaticians will reveal that a marvelous unity of doctrine obtains between them, although of course certain differences exist. Although they employed both synthetic and analytic method and although their terminology was so multifarious that no two of them can be said to agree in outer mode of presentation, they all agreed remarkably in doctrine. This doctrinal unity is not due principally to the close intercourse and mutual respect which existed between these men. Nor is it due mainly to the marked extent to which they drew from each other's works.<sup>1</sup> It was certainly not due to any idea on their part that the substance of the doctrine which they had inherited could not be changed, as

---

<sup>1</sup> In many cases even the wording of the later dogmaticians was identical with that of their forerunners. Cf. e.g. the statement of Quenstedt, theologia didactico-polemica sive systema theologicum. Lipsiae. 1702. I, 104: "At regula partialis..." with that of Gerhard, loci theologici. denuo ed.... J. F. Cotta. Tubingae. 1762. II, 88: "Regula partialis..." This example is extreme but not unique. Baier's dependence on Musaeus is evident on every page of his compendium.

Nitzsch implies.<sup>2</sup> They would not have hesitated to overthrow the doctrine which they had inherited if they had thought it contrary to Scripture. The unity of doctrine which was present among them was due to something more fundamental than all this, namely, to the fact that they made the Lutheran sola scriptura principle the very alpha and omega of all their theological endeavor. All Christian doctrine must be drawn from Scripture alone. Not even an angel from heaven can establish articles of faith. This does not mean that the close friendship and intercommunion between these men contributed nothing to that doctrinal unity which persisted through the century. Just as Melancthon was an ardent disciple of Luther and wrote his loci communes as an exposition of Luther's doctrine, so also the loci theologici of Chemnitz and that of Hutter were both amplifications of Melancthon's eminent work; and Gerhard's loci theologici is based on Hutter's, etc. down to the time of Hollaz and beyond it into the eighteenth century. And yet the guiding principle of all these theologians and that which did most to unify them doctrinally was their unanimous conviction that Scripture was the source of theology.<sup>3</sup> When we recognize the importance of this principle to the dogmatists we have the key which unlocks the door to a true understanding of their theology.

My purpose in an investigation of this sort is not to apologize for the dogmatists or to criticize their teachings (except when their mistakes are of a technical nature owing to the many limitations under which they labored or when they are not consistent with their own principles, as

---

<sup>2</sup> Lehrbuch der evangelischen Dogmatik. dritte Auflage, bearbeitet von H. Stephan. Tübingen. 1912. p.26.

<sup>3</sup> Gass, W. Geschichte der protestantischen Dogmatik. Berlin. 1864. Cf. I, 338.

is sometimes the case), but to discover what they actually taught concerning Scripture and to shed light, if possible, on some of the misunderstandings which have risen within the last three hundred years regarding these men and their doctrine of Scripture. In carrying out this task I feel constrained at times to voice my hearty disagreement with some of the conclusions drawn by various historians and theologians who have studied the theology of these men, conclusions which I feel betray at times a superficial and uncritical method of investigation. Well-meaning as these scholars may have been, they have on occasion given a distorted picture of the dogmatists and have not always been accurate in their description of the position of these men regarding Scripture.

With this simple purpose in view I have thought it best not to enter into an investigation of the background of the old Lutheran inspiration doctrine, a subject over which there has been much heated controversy. Pieper, Hoenecke, Philippi and others are convinced that the dogmatists have derived their doctrine of inspiration from Scripture itself and that it is practically the same as that of Luther. Sasse believes their doctrine to be based upon a Calvinistic-Augustinian opinion which was a carry-over from Rabbinic Judaism which in turn had taken its doctrine from oriental-hellenistic heathendom. It is the conjecture of K. Heim that their position owes its origin to the scholastics of the later Middle Ages. Cremer feels that their doctrine is a complete innovation. In all these theories, some of which are too simple, others too complicated, there is no doubt some truth. There can be little doubt that in each case the personal opinions of the sundry scholars regarding the nature of inspiration has to some degree affected their views toward the doctrine

held by the dogmaticians. And this is inevitable since the doctrine of inspiration is after all a matter of faith. For my part I feel that my purpose can best be served if I omit any consideration of this controverted problem and allow the reader to form his own opinion as to how far the doctrine of the old Lutherans is correct, consistent and Biblical, something the reader would no doubt do in any case.

Where I thought it necessary I have included much of the argumentation employed by the dogmaticians in support of their views. Such a step, although it adds length and tedium to the dissertation, is necessary lest their contentions seem to rest on nothing; it also shows how these men thought. I have tried not to become involved unnecessarily in the morass of technical, exegetical material so laboriously worked out in support of their opinions. But it is not always easy to choose from this mass of material that which best expresses and clarifies their position. The fact that Gerhard, Calov and Quenstedt especially delve deeply into the exegesis of pertinent Bible passages supporting their views cannot be ignored. Some of their most important arguments are to be found in the exegetical sections of their works. To neglect these long and often tiresome passages would prove disastrous to any attempt to learn what they really taught concerning Scripture. The same might be said in regard to their extensive polemical sections. But to include any protracted survey of these sections is neither necessary nor of value. The fact that in his exegesis Gerhard in particular answers practically every objection which his adversaries can hurl against his Scripture proofs is commendable, but it pads his loci with much material which

is only indirectly relevant to the subject under consideration, and if anything makes too much of a good thing.

I have also omitted any lengthy description of the hermeneutical rules and exegetical method employed by the dogmatists and only when these rules and method are pertinent to the subject under discussion do I mention them in passing.

I have refrained from a prolonged consideration of canonicity. The question of the canon, of the homologoumena and antilegomena, is an historical problem, not an article of faith. It has no bearing on the doctrine of inspiration itself, but only raises the question of the inspiration and authority of certain disputed books. It is not deemed a matter of doctrinal significance to any of the dogmatists. They hold that there are no doctrinal differences in the various books of the Bible.<sup>4</sup> However it is not inopportune at this point briefly to discuss their views concerning canonicity, and this for two reasons. In the first place the views of the dogmatists regarding canonicity seem to misunderstand and therefore fail to meet the issues of the question as they existed in the ancient church. In the second place their views (starting with Gerhard) show a marked departure from the position not only of Luther, but also of Chemnitz, Aegidius Hunnius and Haffner. The dogmatists after Gerhard made little or no mention of the antilegomena. Among the later dogmatists Quenstedt makes a distinction of a sort although he does not question the canonicity of the antilegomena. He says,<sup>5</sup> "We should distinguish between the protocanonical and deuterocanonical books

<sup>4</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 107.

<sup>5</sup> op. cit., I, 235.

of the New Testament, or in other words, between the books of first and of second rank. The former are those books concerning whose authority and secondary authors there was never doubt in the church; the latter are those books whose authority was not in fact doubted, but whose secondary authors were at certain times doubted by some within the church. Such are the letter to the Hebrews, James, Jude, second Peter, 2 and 3 John and Revelation. The inquiry and controversy however in the matter of these books did not pertain to all, but to a few books, and did not remain forever but arose occasionally and for a time. Nor did the uncertainty pertain to the authority of these books, to the primary author, the Holy Spirit, so much as to the secondary authors." This statement indicates that Quenstedt does not consider the problem of the antilegomena seriously, since he regards the problem as one of authorship rather than authority. His last sentence reflects the opinion of Gerhard who also apparently did not understand that this problem, if it was to be a real problem, was definitely a question of the divine authority of these disputed books as well as one of authorship.<sup>6</sup> It is clear here that Gerhard and Quenstedt, who is quite obviously following Gerhard's lead, are not meeting the true issue involved in the question of the so-called deutero-canonical books as did Chemnitz before them when he said that the whole controversy reduced itself to the question whether

---

<sup>6</sup> Gerhard, loci theologici. II, 186: "Libri illi ὑπὸ τινῶν ἀντιλεγόμενα minus commode vocantur apocryphi...quia non tam de auctoritate canonica, quam de auctore librorum istorum secundo in primitiva ecclesia fuit dubitatum."

the disputed books were inspired.<sup>7</sup> This fact is further brought out when the above statement of Quenstedt is viewed in the context of others of his statements in which he says that the authorship of any book is not a matter which affects the status of the book either in respect to our faith in it<sup>8</sup> or in respect to its canonicity.<sup>9</sup> The question therefore is no longer one of canonicity but has descended to a purely academic question without any dogmatical significance whatever.<sup>10</sup> Philipp<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> examen concilii Tridentini. Francofurti ad Moenum. 1707.

p.75: "Tota igitur disputatio in hac quaestione consistit: An certum & indubitatum sit, libros illos, de quibus haec controversia est, esse Scripturam diuinitus inspiratam a Prophetis & Apostolis, qui diuinitus auctoritatem illam habuerunt vel editam, vel approbatam? Tota antiquitas respondet, non esse certum, sed propter multorum contradictiones fuisse dubitatum."

<sup>8</sup> op. cit., I,84: "Sive enim Philippus, sive Bartholomaeus illud scripserit Evangelium, quod sub Matthaei nomine legitur, nihil facit ad fidem salvificam."

<sup>9</sup> op. cit., I,235: "Nam etiam multorum librorum Canonicorum autores ignorantur, ut libri Josuae, Ruth, Judicum, Regum, Chronicorum, de quorum tamen Θεοπνευστία & Canonica auctoritate constat." I take it that he would apply the same rule to the books of the New Testament.

<sup>10</sup> This fact may also be learned from another distinction of Quenstedt, op. cit., I,235: "Disting. inter veritatem & Θεοπνευστίαν ipsam, & inter cognitionem ejusdem apud homines, Libri Deuterocanonici N.T. non sunt in dubium vocati propter veritatem & Θεοπνευστίαν, sed quia non aequaliter cum caeteris fuerunt cogniti ab hominibus. Sunt inquam aequalis auctoritatis cum reliquis, non autem aequalis cognitionis, apud homines." If Quenstedt had written only the last sentence in this paragraph he would have been on safe ground from his point of view. But he is wrong when he says that the truthfulness and inspiration of Scripture did not enter into the question of canonicity for the early church fathers. Many of the fathers of the church doubted books of the New Testament because of their spiritual content. This was the reason Origen doubted the Apocalypse. They did not think that the content in some cases was worthy of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and therefore of canonicity. This was one reason why the authorship of the antilegomena was questioned. This was also the main reason for Luther's doubt concerning these books. Furthermore, because some ancient churches and fathers did not use certain books and never got around to accepting them is not the only reason why their canonicity was so long disputed, as Quenstedt suggests.

<sup>11</sup> Kirchliche Glaubenslehre. Stuttgart. 1864. I,145.

has rightly pointed out that the later dogmaticians by firmly adhering to the fact that the Holy Spirit was the autor primarius of all disputed books of the New Testament and questioning only the autores secundarii of these books dropped any real distinction between the homologoumena and the antilegomena.<sup>12</sup> He also correctly observes that the later dogmaticians are not being true to history when they assert that the question in reference to the antilegomena was one of authorship rather than canonical authority. It is true, of course, that apostolicity was a major consideration in the early church in determining the canonicity of disputed books, but authorship and apostolicity could not be divorced from internal and external evidence. Moreover these church fathers believed that if a book was not apostolical it was not canonical. The later dogmaticians therefore are not representing the early church fathers correctly when they say that they questioned only the authorship of the antilegomena. Philippi also draws attention to the fact that Gerhard's and Quenstedt's view concerning the antilegomena had no "dogmatic significance". But this would have been true even had they seriously questioned the antilegomena. To them the

---

<sup>12</sup> Pieper, Christliche Dogmatik. St. Louis. 1924. I, 406, takes issue with this judgment. He quotes a statement of Gerhard which says, "Interim tamen, cum in primitiva ecclesia aliquamdiu apud quosdam de huius libri [Apocalypsis] auctore dubitatum fuerit, ideo ad secundi ordinis canonicos eum referimus; non quidem canonicam auctoritatem ei detrahentes, interim nec reliquis libris canonicis, de quibus nunquam dubitatum fuit, simpliciter et per omnia ipsum coniungentes." Cf. Gerhard, J. disputationum theologicarum...pars secunda. Jenae. 1625. p.1015. Pieper concludes that this statement amounts to a distinction between homologoumena and antilegomena. It appears that Pieper has not understood Gerhard's statement. Gerhard has already said that he does not doubt the canonicity of Revelation. But Revelation was a disputed book. Gerhard's last words reveal a certain inconsistency with what he said before, and this may account for Pieper's observation.

canon was not an article of faith.<sup>13</sup> They did not believe that there were doctrinal differences in the New Testament. Nor did they believe that the antilegomena contained doctrines not taught in the undisputed books. The acceptance of the antilegomena as canonical begins with Gerhard. Before his time the question of the antilegomena was definitely open. Chemnitz doubted these books because of the conflicting testimony of the early church and thought that they should be understood only according to the analogy of the undisputed books.<sup>14</sup> Aegidius Hunnius maintained that the antilegomena were apocryphal.<sup>15</sup> Haffenreffer calls the antilegomena apocryphal books of the New Testament which do not have the same authority as the homologoumena and yet possess more authority than the apocrypha of the Old Testament.<sup>16</sup>

According to the later dogmaticians a book of the Bible is canonical by virtue of its inspiration.<sup>17</sup> But inspiration is not the only criterion of canonicity. Calov states that a book, to be canonical, must also be written by prophets or apostles. It must contain divine mysteries, not mere fables. It must be written <sup>in</sup> Hebrew or Greek. It must have been used by the church at all times. It is to enjoy

<sup>13</sup> Gerhard, loci theologici. I, 11: "Dogma de canone proprie loquendo non est articulus fidei, siquidem Moses, prophetae, Evangelistae & apostoli sua scriptione non fabricarunt novum articulum fidei, prius, quos viva voce docuerunt, de novo superadditum."

<sup>14</sup> op. cit., p. 77.

<sup>15</sup> opera latina. Francofurti ad Moenum. V, 2.

<sup>16</sup> loci theologici. Wittebergae. 1622. p. 140.

<sup>17</sup> Calov, A. criticus sacer. vel commentarii apodictico elenchtici super Augustanam confessionem. Lipsiae. 1646. p. 237: "Omnes libros Canonicos oportet esse Θεοπνεύστους, vel ab iis auctoribus quos certum sit esse a DEO inspiratos."

the testimony of either the ancient Jewish or Christian church.<sup>18</sup> Calov makes no specific reference to the necessity of Christological content in discerning canonicity. He is however not unaware of Luther's strong emphasis on this point.<sup>19</sup> Kromayer offers a list of criteria which includes Luther's Christological stress at least. He says a canonical book must be inspired, it must be written in Hebrew or Greek, it must be Christological,<sup>20</sup> and it must have the testimony of the ancient church which saw and read and recognized the autographic texts. It should be said that all the dogmatists stressed the Christocentricity of all the books of the Bible.

One more point might be made by way of introduction. The term "Lutheran scholasticism" has been commonly applied to the period dominated by the old dogmatists. If this term means that after the time of John Gerhard philosophy was no longer dreaded by Lutherans as the arch-enemy of theo-

<sup>18</sup> Calov, A. spodixis articulorum fidei. Lunebergi. 1684. p.29: "Requiritur autem ad librum Canonicum (a) ut ratione principii, a Spir. S. sit inspiratus. (β) ratione instrumentalis causae, ut Propheta vel Apostolo scriptus. (γ) ratione materiae, ut mysteria divina non fabulas comprehendat. (δ) ratione formae internae, ut sit θεόπνευστος. (ε) ratione externae, ut ebraice in Ve. & graece in N.T. sit conscriptus. (ζ) ratione finis, ut sit testimonium Ecclesiae vel Judaicae, vel Christianae antiquae perhibeatur. Notabis autem haec requisita collectim esse sumenda."

<sup>19</sup> criticus sacer, p.234. Cf. Luther, Saemmtliche Werke. Erl. Aufl. 63,157 where he says, "Und darinne stimmen alle rechtschaffene heilige Buecher ubereins, dass sie allesamt Christum predigen und treiben. Auch ist das der rechte Pruefestein alle Buecher zu tadeln, wenn man siehet, ob sie Christum treiben oder nicht, sintemel alle Schrift Christum zeigt, Rom.3 (V.21.), und S. Paulus nichts denn Christum wissen will, 1. Korinth. 2. (V.2.). Was Christum nicht lehret, das ist noch nicht apostolisch, wenne gleich S. Petrus oder Paulus lehrete. Wiederumb, was Christum prediget, das waere apostolisch, wenne gleich Judas, Hannas, Pilatus und Herodes thaet." Cf. also 65,115 and 51,337.

<sup>20</sup> theologia positivo-polemica. Francofurti & Lipsiae. 1686. p.29: "Κριτήριον est, quod debeat docere Jesus esse Christum, Dei Filium." He bases this test on Jn.20.31; Matt.16.16; and Acts 9.22.

logy it is justified.<sup>21</sup> If it is meant to indicate syllogistic arguments, Aristotelian terminology, precise method and close distinctions employed by these dogmaticians (especially Baier, Hollaz, Calov, Quenstedt and Koenig), it is also justified, even if advanced in the spirit of criticism. If, as in the case of Kahnis,<sup>22</sup> it is meant to identify the rigid orthodoxy of these men, an orthodoxy which was built on a foundation which needed no authority outside itself, there can be no objection to the use of such a term. But if it is meant to represent their theology, as if these men sacrificed the interests of results for those of method in their theology, it is unjustified. Method was the handmaid of theology with these dogmaticians.<sup>23</sup> Kirn is correct in remarking that, although some prefer the synthetic and others the analytic method, all the dogmaticians operate with essentially the same method in that Scripture determines the content and form of dogmatic propositions.<sup>24</sup> The only dogmatician who could be accused of letting his method run away with him is Koenig whose theologia positiva acroamatica is filled with Aristotelian distinctions and is too short. The scholastic method of the dogmaticians is fraught with many grave dangers. Their whole idea of causal nexus cannot be carried out in many cases, and in many other cases it must be supplemented. Sometimes when mysterii fidei are forced to fit this method serious inconsistencies result. It is also perhaps

<sup>21</sup> Gass, W. Geschichte der protestantischen Dogmatik. I, 206ff.

<sup>22</sup> Die lutherische Dogmatik. Leipzig. 1874. I, 21.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Wundt, M. Die deutsche Schulmetaphysik des 17 Jahrhunderts. Tuebingen. 1939. p.110.

<sup>24</sup> Grundriss der evangelischen Dogmatik. Leipzig. 1905. p.3ff.

this causal methodology which moves the dogmaticians and especially Calov to indulge in the habit of drawing unnecessary and unwarranted conclusions from the statements of their adversaries, a habit which is not only valueless but also undoubtedly did their cause more hurt than that of their adversaries. It is ironical that it is this same fault which has been most often committed by later scholars in their study of the theology of the old dogmaticians. But in all justice to this Lutheran scholasticism which at times becomes very tiresome and involved, it must be said that it avoided ambiguity and equivocation to a remarkable degree. It is not easy to misunderstand the dogmaticians unless one is completely out of sympathy with them. It is worth remembering that scholastic method was to some extent thrust upon the Lutheran dogmaticians of the seventeenth century. Tholuck<sup>25</sup> has pointed out that a scholastic method was first used by the Wittenberg theologians in an effort to fight the Jesuits with their own weapons.

---

<sup>25</sup> Tholuck, A. Der Geist der lutherischen Theologen Wittenbergs im Verlaufe des 17. Jahrhunderts. Hamburg und Gotha. 1852. p.55.

CHAPTER ONE: SCRIPTURE AS THE SOURCE OF THEOLOGY

Just as to Luther doctrine was one continuous and round golden ring in which there is no break, it was to the orthodox Lutherans of the following century a unit<sup>1</sup> so that if we are to gain a complete picture of their conception of inspiration we must not restrict ourselves merely to those loci in their works which deal specifically with Scripture. Inseparably connected to their views regarding inspiration, and, one might add, basic to their whole interest in this doctrine, is the place they assign to Scripture as the source of theology (principium cognoscendi, principium theologiae). By this they mean that Scripture is the only norm of Christian doctrine; that is to say, the means, the causa media, by which we learn to know God and his will is his revelation which is contained in Scripture.<sup>2</sup> This source of theology is more sure and certain than heaven and earth. The sources of all other knowledge are in a completely different category. All other knowledge must be derived from empiric<sup>a</sup> evidence, from the light of nature and experience.<sup>3</sup> Revealed, supernatural theology is to be drawn only from the revealed and written word of God. Otherwise our theology is false and so is our Christ. "The norm and standard for portraying [Christ]," says Dannhauer,<sup>4</sup> "is the revealed word. If one

<sup>1</sup> Hunnius, Ac. opera latina. II, 458: "Atque sic habemus jam integrum et perfectum Systema, perfectum corpus Scripturae, non modo Propheticae, sed simul Apostolicae et Evangelicae: et proinde doctrinam suis undique partibus absolutam."

<sup>2</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 12: "Nihil enim de divinis Mysteriis scimus, nisi per divinam revelationem S. Literis comprehensam."

<sup>3</sup> Gerhard, J. methodus studii theologici. Holmiae, 1679. p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Χριστοσοφία seu sapientiarum sapientia, de salvatore Christo, ejus persona, officio, beneficiis, explicita atque variis corruptelis purgata. Argentorati. 1683. p. 2.

departs from this, he portrays not Christ, but his own dreams." Scripture is the principium cognoscendi of a theology which is specifically called "revealed" theology, and that not because it enlightens our minds with a supernatural knowledge of God, but because all things which are necessary to know about God and the worship of him have been supernaturally revealed through the means of inspired men in the written word of God. Revealed theology is to be distinguished from natural theology whose source is not supernatural revelation, but reason and nature, and which offers not a saving knowledge of the Gospel, but only a knowledge of God's law, of his existence and his justice.

The dogmatists also speak of divine and supernatural revelation as the source of theology.<sup>5</sup> They can say this with no contradiction because they regard Scripture as a species of the genus revelation. However the source of supernatural theology is narrowed down to Scripture as revelation. With the completion of the canon immediate revelation ceased. Therefore objective revelation, that is, revelation viewed as that which has been revealed, is to be sought only in Scripture today. And so Gerhard says,<sup>6</sup> "We conclude that the correct and exclusive source of supernatural theology is divine revelation which does not exist today except as found in the holy Scriptures, that is, the books of the Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles. Therefore we say that the written word of God, or in other words, the holy Scripture, is the one and the only source of theology."

---

<sup>5</sup> Calov, A. systema locorum theologicorum. Witebergae. 1655/77. I.268: "Principium SS. Theologiae est divina revelatio."

<sup>6</sup> loci theologici. II,8.

Quenstedt says that until the time of Moses revelation as it was handed down (propagata) by word of mouth was the source of theology. Immediately after the first canon was constituted which comprized the Pentateuch, the book of Job and Psalm 90, revelation as handed down (tradita) by word of mouth was no longer the norm of faith and life, but only that revelation which was recorded in books.<sup>7</sup> I do not think that Quenstedt wishes to imply here that revelation per se as it assumed various forms was no longer a principium cognoscendi after the formation of the first canon. Nor would he mean to imply that the word of God as it was actually preached by the inspired prophets and apostles was not normative in the same sense as the written word, although his words seem to say this. That would have involved him in a compromise of his firm position regarding the unity of the word of God,<sup>8</sup> and would have conditioned the old Lutheran rule, quicquid Deus proposuit, reverenter credendum est. In view of the polemical context of this statement it is reasonable to assume that his reference to revelatio viva voce tradita does not pertain to objective revelation as such, but to the account

<sup>7</sup> op. cit., I,35: "Distingu. inter tempore ante, & post Mosen; sive inter Revelationem, quae divinitus facta est Patriarchis, &...ab initio mundi, usque ad Mosen viva voce fuit propagata; & Revelationem, quae a Mose & Prophetis literis est consignata. Illa Theologiae principium fuit usque ad Mosen, haec post Mosen. Statim enim post primum Canonem constitutum, qui ex Pentateucho, libro Jobi, & Cantico Mosis constabat, non amplius revelatio viva voce tradita, sed sola illa, quae literis erat consignata, religionis norma fuit ac principium."

<sup>8</sup> op. cit., I,32: "Unicum est, Verbum DEI, sive hoc, DOMINUS DIXIT." loc. cit., I,54: "Adeoque Verbum Dei ἔχραφον seu scriptum, a Verbo DEI ἀγράφω, non scripto seu tradito & praedicato...non differt realiter, nec est divisio illa generis in suas species, vel totius in suas partes integrantes, sed subjecti duntaxat in sua accidentia."

of this revelation as it was given over a period of time. Polemical interests may also account for the words, "sola illa, quae literis erat consignata, revelationis norma fuit ac principium." If Quenstedt is not to contradict himself, this statement which is not entirely clear can only mean that the ordinary Hebrew of the Old Testament who perhaps had little contact with the prophets and those to whom God revealed himself immediately would use only the Scripture as his norm in matters of faith and life.

The dogmaticians think of Scripture as the organic foundation of our faith.<sup>9</sup> Scripture is the source of theology only in an instrumental sense. It is not the cause of the being of theology; that would be a deification of Scripture. God is the so-called principium essendi, the first cause of theology; he is its foundation, its beginning and its end. This important point is brought out by Quenstedt in the following manner. We must distinguish, he says, between the one who reveals truth, who is God, and the truth which is revealed, which is Scripture. The former is the principium essendi of theology, for theology has its being from God; the latter is its principium cognoscendi, for from Scripture theology is known and understood.<sup>10</sup> Scripture therefore as the source of theology is simply a directive principle.<sup>11</sup> It is nothing more than the norm by which we judge in doctrinal matters.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Hunnius, N. Διάσκεψις theologica de fundamentali dissensu doctrinae evangelicae Lutheranae, & Calvinianae, seu Reformationis. Wittebergae. 1628. p.540.

<sup>10</sup> op. cit., I, 32.

<sup>11</sup> Scherzer, J. A. systema theologiae. editio ultima auctior & correctior. Lipsiae & Francofurti. 1698. p.3.

<sup>12</sup> Calov, A. consensus repetitus fidei vere Lutheranae. Wittebergae. 1666. p.12: "Profitemur & docemus, unicum & certissimam regulam, & normam, seu principium, secundum quod omnia dogmata, omnesque Doctores aestimari, & judicari oporteat..."

Scripture is the source and norm of theology not only in regard to its letters and words but also in regard to its sense understood implicitly and explicitly so that everything which is contained in Scripture or drawn from Scripture through legitimate consequences is included in the word "Scripture".<sup>13</sup> This does not mean that theological conclusions, doctrines themselves, are to be thought of as a source of theology, for these conclusions are based on Scripture. Certain scholastics, such as Thomas Aquinas, had taught that the articles of faith were sources of theology. Gerhard<sup>14</sup> criticizes this view and points out that the articles of faith are merely theological conclusions which are based on the word of God. They are not principia, but principiata. Gerhard, of course, realizes only too well that such a contention as that of the old scholastics would completely destroy the Lutheran Scripture principle, since the Romanists held that all doctrines were not to be drawn from Scripture alone.

In support of their position the dogmaticians insist that Scripture itself knows of no other source of theology. There is no light in the person who does not speak according to the word of Scripture, Isa.8.20. Christ and his apostles always appealed only to Scripture in support of theological truth. And we today are to follow this precedent. Furthermore, since Scripture contains everything we need know for our salvation, it must be the source of revealed doctrine.

Of utmost importance to all the Lutheran dogmaticians is the proposition that Scripture alone is the source of

---

<sup>13</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,33.

<sup>14</sup> loci theologici. II,8.

all knowledge of supernatural theology. Scripture as the principium cognoscendi stands alone, by itself. For God does not speak to us except through the Scripture.<sup>15</sup> Scripture must stand alone in this respect or not at all. If it is not the only norm of doctrine, it is not a norm in the true sense of the word.<sup>16</sup> As Christians we accept Scripture and yield to all its utterances as if God himself had made them, since Scripture is God speaking to us. Nor do we believe the Scriptures because of external evidence or anything outside them: we simply accept the Scriptures in faith.<sup>17</sup> Not to believe in Scripture as the source of theology which needs no proof is heathenish: a Christian asks for no proof.<sup>18</sup> Hutter contends that God's word as the source (Grund) of all faith and life was the confession of Luther and of all the confessions. This fact, he maintains, distinguishes the Lutheran church from Catholics, Zwinglians, Calvinists and Anabaptists as "die reine rechtgleubige Kirche."<sup>19</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Dannhauer, C. mysterium syncretismi detecti, proscripti, & symphonismo compensati. Argentorati. 1648. p.68: "Silet Spiritus Sanctus cum in Scripturae oraculo non loquitur, non mandat, non promittit, non instituit."

<sup>16</sup> Calov, A. scripta philosophica. Lubecae. 1651. p.465. The nature of a principium demands that it stand by itself, according to Aristotle. "Principium est, quod est origo processionis alterius."

<sup>17</sup> Calov, systema. I, 598.

<sup>18</sup> Kromayer, op. cit., p.17: "Christiano quidem, ut Christiano, principium hoc esse debere ἀναπόδεικτον ε. i. indemonstrabile, alias ne quidem esset principium; quod si tamen incipiat dubitare, induere rationem Pagani, & iisdem argumentis, quibus Paganus convinci debere."

<sup>19</sup> examen oder Gruendlicher bescheidenlicher Bericht, von der zu Franckfurt an der Oder, ohnlangt anderweit gedruckten Glaubens Bekentnuss, der reformirten Evangelischen Kirchen in Deutschland, auff Rath und approbation der Theologischen Facultet zu Wittenberg. Wittenberg. 1614. pp.5-6.

This remark of Hutter gives us an idea of the importance of this Scripture principle in Lutheran theology.

The strong emphasis of the dogmaticians on this fact that Scripture alone was the means of knowing revealed theology was due mainly to the continual attacks made by Catholic controversialists against this position. Roman Catholic theology held that beside Scripture there were other sources of theological truth, namely, unwritten tradition, decrees of councils and of popes. This was the crux of all the doctrinal differences between the two parties. At this point all argumentation and discussion between the opposing sides was stalled. To be sure, the Catholics did not deny that revelation was the only source of theology. They did however include unwritten tradition and the decrees of popes and church councils as revelation along with Scripture. It was the Lutheran position that no unwritten tradition exists today which sheds light on any article of faith.<sup>20</sup> The church is under obligation to accept only an inerrant and inspired word of God. Such attributes cannot be predicated of unwritten tradition. Nor can unwritten traditions be regarded as infallible and be accepted with divine assurance along with Scripture. The doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture will not allow tradition to be considered revelation. All the counsel of God is set forth in Scripture, Acts 20,27. There is no need for more revelation. Moreover the origin of all unwritten tradition is uncertain. Traditions often contradict themselves. And the memories of those who hand

---

<sup>20</sup> Calov, systema. I,303ff.

down traditions cannot always be trusted. Christ himself rejected traditions as a source of theological knowledge when he constantly urged people to return to the Scriptures, Lk. 16.29; 24.27; Joh.5.39,46. He does not condemn these traditions as bad in themselves, but when they are placed beside Scripture and made a necessary part of worship he rejects them. It follows that the decrees of popes and church councils cannot be considered principia along side Scripture. Calov<sup>21</sup> points out that in the Roman church the pope is de facto not merely one of many authorities in matters of doctrine and life, but ultimately becomes the one and the highest authority, the very principium primum et summum. If Scripture is appealed to, the pope is its interpreter. If councils are appealed to, the pope alone can summon them and he alone can ratify them. This fact is brought out even more clearly in the claims regarding papal infallibility. None of his public utterances can be false or heretical. All his public pronouncements, conclusions and definitions are inerrant. In fact, whatever he defines pro cathedra he does with the direct assistance of the Holy Spirit. Thus with one stroke the papists have more than the fanatics with all their visions, revelations and angelic conversations, and more than the Photinians and Calvinists with all their reason. Calov argues that the pope must either make his pronouncements in accordance with God's word or in opposition to it. If he teaches contrary to the word of God he falls under God's curse. If he teaches in agreement with

---

<sup>21</sup> loc. cit., I,376ff.

God's word he differs in no way from any other minister of the word. Of course, the numberless examples of popes falling into error and heresy and contradicting themselves in their public utterances completely discounts their extravagant claims. And what applies to tradition and papal proclamations applies with equal force to decrees of church councils. Church councils and church fathers are all bound by the word of God. Their authority is drawn from the word of God and depends upon it. And they too, like tradition and the pope, are subject to error. The true church is the witness, guardian and interpreter of Scripture which is the church's source of theology. The testimony of the fathers and of church councils is human, and no human testimony can be a source in matters of divine truth.

It is the opinion of all the dogmaticians that the papists by adding to the Scriptures other principia as sources of theology do away with the sola scriptura principle entirely. If something is added to a principium, if something is made to condition it in any way, it ceases to be a principium. To place the authority of tradition, the church and the pope alongside Scripture denies to Scripture eo ipso the quality of a principium which in the very nature of the case is independent, and in effect reduces Scripture to a norma normativa, since in practice the papists subject it to the interpretation and authority of the church and the pope. In the preface to his philosophia sobria Balthasar Meisner<sup>22</sup> indicates that the cause of the vast chasm separating Lutheran-

---

<sup>22</sup> philosophia sobria. Rintelii ad Visurgim. 1626. editio sexta, pars secunda. p.1ff.

ism and Romanism is to be found in this antithesis regarding principles.<sup>23</sup> He begins by expressing his adherence to the proposition τὸ ἀληθὲς ἓν, τὸ δὲ ψεύδος πολυχρόες. Only the divine mind can measure truth. Because the measure of truth is one, constant and immutable, truth itself is one and unchanging. The standard and norm of all pure doctrine is the inviolate and divine book of Scripture which also is one and offers only the orthodox faith. The countless aberrations and heresies which are taught in the kingdom of Antichrist have arisen because the papacy has forsaken this one norm of truth, to such an extent that she now calls Scripture imperfect, obscure and flexible, a wax nose, a Lesbian norm, a cause of strife and insanity, a seed of heresy and controversy, a dead letter, a Sybillan truth, and a dead gospel. To Meisner the great gulf between Lutheranism and Catholi-

---

<sup>23</sup> The syncretists within the Lutheran church at this time took a mediating position in regard to the value of tradition, or as they termed it the consensus of the church, in settling matters of doctrine. Calixt, Hornejus, Lattermann and Dreier taught that tradition was a secondary source of theology, but a principle always dependent upon Scripture. Cf. Dreier, C. Gruendliche Eroerterung etlicher schwerer theologischer Fragen. Koenigsberg. 1651. p.25: "Die Goettliche Wahrheit wird erweisen/ principaliter, und vornehmlich/ auss der Schrift/ und secundario auss der Kirchen Zeugniß..." also ibid. "Und darum nehmen nun etliche die traditionem Ecclesiae, oder das Zeugniß der Kirchen/ principium fidei secundarium, nicht den vornehmsten Beweis/ sondern der nur auff dem vornehmsten folget." The orthodox Lutherans condemned the syncretists. To set tradition up as a secondary source is not only contrary to Scripture; it is also vain, since no indisputable consensus of the early church is available. Furthermore this idea as it worked out in practice compromised the sola scriptura principle. Calov, systema. IX, 6ff, attempts to show that Calixt and his followers taught a doctrine concerning tradition which was identical with that of Romanism. Like the papists, Dreier, for instance, argued that heretics could not be convinced by Scripture alone, but needed also the witness of the church.

cism is due primarily to the latter's setting aside Scripture as the source of theology. It is as simple as that. Meisner's contention is that false doctrine gave rise to the idea of unwritten tradition as a source of doctrine. They knew, he says, that their dogmas lacked the proper Scriptural foundation, and hence lest their human dreams be rejected they resorted to human tradition, and, true to the words of Tertullian, credunt sine scripturis, ut credent adversus scripturas.

It is important to bear in mind the great significance of this Scripture principle in the theology of the dogmatists. To uphold sola scriptura, to retain the authority of Scripture, was always a major concern of these theologians. The importance of this fact cannot be overemphasized. Sola scriptura was the basis and starting point of all their theological endeavor whether they were engaged in polemics or in peaceful theological pursuits. Constant fear and vigilance lest anything apart from Scripture compromise or limit this principle is a consideration which pervades their approach to every problem connected with Scripture in particular and theology in general, and is a factor which must be borne in mind constantly in any study or analysis of their position concerning Scripture if we are to draw a true picture of their theology. Their position concerning the attributes of Scripture will easily be recognized as subordinate always to this, their first concern, that Scripture maintain unadulterated its function as the only source of theology. It might even be asked whether it was not the aversion of their adversaries to this principle which necessitated a locus concerning Scripture in the writings of these men when treatment of such a doctrine was scarcely entertained in the pre-

ceeding century. To the seventeenth century dogmaticians Scripture as the source of theology and Scripture as the true, inspired and absolutely authoritative word of God are two truths which complement each other. If one falls the other must follow suit. By attacking the first of these truths the Jesuits were compelled to deny certain elements of the second, and the Lutherans in turn were forced to deal with the inspiration of Scripture in a way in which they had never done before, except by way of passing. It is at just this point concerning Scripture as the principium cognoscendi that inadequate attention has been paid their treatment of Scripture, and consequently there has resulted, I believe, a failure on the part of many to apprehend the real essence of their doctrine of Scripture. The following pages of this dissertation will bring this fact out.

The dogmaticians with one voice deny to reason the right to sit in judgment over matters of doctrine. Since human reason and philosophy are ignorant of supernatural theology and can offer no information about the way of salvation they cannot serve as sources of faith.<sup>24</sup> Quenstedt<sup>25</sup> expounds the Lutheran position more thoroughly than any of the others. He begins his discussion by asserting that he would never wish to do away with reason altogether. Reason used passively is necessary for gaining and understanding information.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Calov, apodixis articulorum fidei. p.26.

<sup>25</sup> op. cit., I, 38ff.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. also Calov, apodixis articulorum fidei. p.36. Calov says that man can use his reason apprehensively before he can believe the mysteries contained in Scripture. But faith must precede any comprehensive cognition. There is no such thing as ratio propter quam creditur.

In this sense it is a principium quo, for only through his reason, or intellect, does man understand. Without reason no one could occupy himself with theology which cannot be presented to dumb animals which have no understanding. Reason is the means employed with organic principles such as logic, language, grammar etc. which are essential to the meaning of theology. But reason as a principium quod has no place in theological discipline. A ratio ministerialis is never to be condemned; that is necessary to all understanding. Christ taught according to reason when he employed parables and illustrations. Only a ratio masisterialis which sets itself above the word of God is to be condemned. Calov also argues in great detail against the ability of reason to judge in doctrinal concerns.<sup>27</sup> He maintains that reason and theology belong in two entirely different spheres. For the one works with natural revelation, the other with supernatural; if not confused they will not conflict with each other. Faith is above reason. Reason therefore can and should not sit in judgment over faith. Since natural reason cannot aspire to a knowledge of supernatural revelation, it must, according to its own rule, refrain from all judgment in spiritual matters. 1 Cor. 2:14 proves this. If the natural man regards the things of the spirit of God as foolishness he is certainly incapable of passing judgment on them. The mysteries of our faith can only be judged spiritually by those who are led by the Spirit of God to understand the meaning of the divine words. This fact denies to carnal, unregenerate reason any such power. As further proof Calov

---

<sup>27</sup> systema. I, 364ff.

appeals to Rom.8.7. The carnal mind with its thoughts and reason is not able not to oppose God ("non potest non hostiliter repugnare Deo") and consequently everything which is of God, his wisdom and his truth. Since reason cannot understand and even despises divine things it cannot be a principium fidei. Rather because of this fact reason must be taken captive in obedience to Christ. To give reason a place in judging theology would utterly confuse reason and revelation,<sup>28</sup> and would cause great harm. Hence it is the Christian's noblest skill in all trouble and temptation to follow the examples of Abraham and Naaman and trust in the word of promise and not lean upon his reason which, as Luther says, is a liar.

This brings up the question, discussed more fully by the earlier dogmaticians, whether there is any real contradiction between theology and reason. The dogmaticians answer that Christian truth is not contrary to reason, but above reason.<sup>29</sup> A conflict occurs only when reason transgresses its boundaries and presumes to judge Scripture by philosophical and un-Scriptural principles. Then reason conflicts with all the mysteries of our faith.<sup>30</sup> Theologia non damnat rationis usum sed abusum. Brochmänd<sup>31</sup> analyzes

<sup>28</sup> loc. cit., I,366: "Si ratio principium constitutatur Theologiae, resolutio fidei nostrae in iudicium rationis fiet, confundentur principia disciplinarum, ac *μετάβασις* committetur *εἰς ἄλλο γένος*."

<sup>29</sup> Schroeder, J. opusculum theologicum de principio theologiae, et naturali notitia Dei. Swinfurti. 1605. p.6.

<sup>30</sup> Gerhard, J. loci theologici. II,372: "Ratio intra sphaeram suam sese continens non est scripturae contraria, sed quando sphaeram suam vult *μεταβαίνειν καὶ ὑπερβαίνειν*, & de summis fidei mysteriis ex suorum principiorum dictamine iudicare, tunc per accidens scripturae, de fidei mysteriis non informanti, adversatur."

<sup>31</sup> universae theologiae systema. editio V. Ulmae. 1658. p.35ff.

the relation between theology and reason in the following way. The articles of Christian faith are above reason and even contrary to unregenerate reason. Reason is a gift of God, but since the fall it cannot comprehend divine things, 1 Cor.2.14. Reason is of course required to understand Scripture; it perceives and retains what Scripture says. But left to itself reason would oppose all the divine mysteries taught in Scripture. Reason is a light in that it receives and understands the things of this world, but if required to comprehend heavenly mysteries which are the *βάθη τοῦ Θεοῦ* it is utter darkness as John says, Jn.1.15. Gerhard points out that even regenerate reason cannot serve as any aid to the Scripture principle, because, in the very nature of the case, regenerate reason employs the Scripture principle.<sup>32</sup> It is therefore impossible for regenerate reason in so far as it is regenerate to be at variance with any article of faith.<sup>33</sup> Even regenerate reason must be taken captive in obedience to Christ, for even though regenerate reason makes Scripture and not itself the principle of knowledge in matters of faith, it is nevertheless never completely enlightened and perfectly sanctified. In reply to the opinion that regenerate reason is to be made a principle of knowledge subordinate to Scripture Dannhauer says,<sup>34</sup> "This argument would

<sup>32</sup> loci theologici. I,76: "Renata ratio ex verbi principiiis disputat."

<sup>33</sup> ibid. "Ita renata ratio non adversatur fidei articulis, nimirum quatenus talis est, & quatenus ductum verbi sequitur; si vero ex suis principiiis verbum Dei velit oppugnare, errat & non amplius est renata."

<sup>34</sup> Quoted in Baier, J. G. compendium theologiae positivae. denuo edendum curavit C. F. G. Walther. In urbe Sancti Ludovici. I,85.

be accepted if man's reason had remained incorrupt and if a stream still polluted with sin had not flowed into it. But the water has been tampered with; it is like sweet water and yet it is suspected of being poisonous, since every imagination of man's heart is evil continually. And was not Sarah born again? And yet she ridiculed and derided the promise of God as an absurdity." The dogmaticians will allow no subordinate source of Christian knowledge to stand beside Scripture, not even the reason of the regenerate man. Scripture stands alone as the principium unicum et primum theologiae.

The old Lutheran dogmaticians loved Scripture. Revealed within this word of very God was everything they need know for salvation and right living. And Scripture not merely pointed the way to eternal life; it was an effective means of conversion and sanctification.<sup>35</sup> Sola scriptura was therefore a principle which they were anxious to observe and carry out in practice at all times. There is a statement of Calov touching the use of Scripture which tells clearly what this principle meant to the dogmaticians and how they thought it should be upheld. Calov says,<sup>36</sup> "This article is to be used in the following manner: 1. We are to recognize and accept without reservation the holy Scripture -- all of it, the Old Testament no less than the New -- as the word of almighty God, and we are to regard and cherish it as the most precious

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Dedekenn, G. thesauri consiliorum et decisionum. Jenae. 1671. appendix nova. Judicium facultatis Theol. Witteb. p. 168: "Dann die Schrift/ wie gemeldet/ ist nicht allein ein eusserliches Zeugnis/ sondern auch ein thaetiges Mittel/... durch welche der H. Geist kraefftiglich wircket/ welche zugleich ein Mittel und Wirkung sind unserer Bekehrung und Erleuchtung/ um welcher Instrumental Mitwirkung...uns bekehre/ heilige und selig mache."

<sup>36</sup> systema. I, 517.

of treasures. 2. We are devoutly to give audience to God speaking in the word, we are to reflect upon his word day and night and we are to explore it with true piety and utmost devotion. 3. We are to turn neither to the right nor to the left from Scripture, nor are we to suffer ourselves to be moved to the slightest degree by the solicitation of others or the desires of our own flesh, lest in some way we introduce something in doctrine or life which is contrary to better knowledge or against our conscience. 4. We are to accord faith to the Scriptures in all [their utterances] and place our trust only in the Scriptures, or the word of God, and bravely fight with them as with the sword of the Spirit against whatever temptations may arise. 5. We are to gain comfort from them alone in every necessity of body and soul, and through patient consolation of the Scriptures have a sure hope of life and remain steadfast to the end of life."

CHAPTER TWO: SCRIPTURE AS THE WORD OF GOD

The dogmaticians unreservedly and unequivocally call Scripture the word of God. To them it is the "vox Dei",<sup>1</sup> the "vox et verbum Dei",<sup>2</sup> "das rechte reine Wort Gottes",<sup>3</sup> "ipseissimum Dei verbum",<sup>4</sup> Scripture is the word of God because God speaks to us in Scripture. Scripture is God speaking. "The Holy Spirit speaks to us in and through Scripture, and so we must look for the word and will of the Holy Spirit in these words of Scripture."<sup>5</sup> Scripture is the word of God because its author is not a number of men, but very God. "God is the supreme author of Scripture."<sup>6</sup> The Scriptures have been delivered to us from the very hand of God. Commenting on Rom.3.2 Aegidius Hunnius<sup>7</sup> says, "And so we regard that volume of prophetic writing as having originated for our sake from the hand of God and from his heavenly mansions." The writers themselves speak of God as the author of their writings.<sup>8</sup> To the dogmaticians Scripture was an "epistola caelestis", a letter sent us from our Father in heaven, in-

<sup>1</sup> Gerhard, J. confessio catholica, Erfordiae. 1679. II,273.

<sup>2</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,93.

<sup>3</sup> Hunnius, N. epitome credendorum. Franckfurt und Leipzig. 1702. p.4.

<sup>4</sup> Calov, A. Socinismus profligatus. Wittebergae. 1668. p.60.

<sup>5</sup> Gerhard, disputationum theologicarum...pars secunda. p. 1116. Cf. also Hunnius, Ae. opera latina. II,231: "Sed loquitur in illo [volumen Bibliorum] Deus ipse."

<sup>6</sup> Gerhard, loci theologici. II,17: "Ergo etiam Deus est summus scripturae autor." Cf. also Calov, systema. I,543.

<sup>7</sup> thesaurus apostolicus complectens commentarios in omnia novi testamenti epistolae et apocalypsin Iohannis. Wittebergae. 1705. p.32.

<sup>8</sup> ibid.

structing us concerning his essence and will.<sup>9</sup> Gerhard<sup>10</sup> offers a definition of Scripture which is typical: "Holy Scripture is the word of God, reduced to writing according to his will by the evangelists and apostles, revealing perfectly and clearly the teaching of God's nature and will, in order that men might be instructed from it unto life everlasting." There is, therefore, no real difference between Scripture and God's word.<sup>11</sup> And, in a certain sense, the word of God can be found only in Scripture today, for all our proclamation and doctrine must be based upon Scripture alone.<sup>12</sup>

The meaning of the old dogmatists' conception of Scripture as the word of God is brought out most clearly in their discussion concerning the so-called forma and materia of Scripture. The terminology of the dogmatists as touching the materia and forma of Scripture differs slightly and becomes quite involved at times, especially among the later dogmatists. The materia of Scripture is either ex qua or circa quam. The materia ex qua of Scripture is the letters, syllables, words and phrases which go together to constitute Scripture. In this sense Scripture differs in no

---

<sup>9</sup> Gerhard, loci theologici. II, 426. Cf. also Haffenreffer, loci theologici. p. 114: "Scripturae... quae nihil aliud sunt, quam Epistolae, de patria aeterna nobis transmissae, quibus Dominus et de voluntate sua et de omni nostro officio, abunde clementerque nos erudit."

<sup>10</sup> loci theologici. II, 427.

<sup>11</sup> Gerhard, loc. cit., II, 15: "Inter verbum Dei & scripturam sacram, materialiter acceptam, non esse reale aliquod discrimen." Dorsch, J. G. sophismi theologici. Gryphiswaldiae. (no date). p. 1: "Inter verbum Dei de salute hominis prolatum & sacram scripturam non esse differentiam realem..."

<sup>12</sup> Hunnius, N. epitome credendorum. p. 5: "...ausser den biblischen Buechern nichts fuer Gottes Wort erkannt werden kann." Hunnius is speaking of Scripture here only as overagainst other writings which pose to be inspired revelation such as the Koran and Catholic tradition.

way from any other book. The materia circa quam of Scripture is specifically the doctrines and precepts contained in the Bible and in general everything which is contained in Scripture. The forma is either external or internal. The external forma is the idiom and style of writing. The internal forma of Scripture is its inspired meaning, the thoughts of the divine mind concerning divine mysteries, thoughts which were conceived in eternity for our salvation and revealed in time and which are communicated to us in Scripture. The forma, therefore, which is its inspiration, or inspired sense, is that which makes Scripture what it is, namely, the word of God, and is that which distinguishes Scripture from all other books.<sup>13</sup> In his characteristic way Quenstedt defines his position in unmistakable terms. He says,<sup>14</sup> "We must distinguish between the grammatical and outer meaning of the divine word and the spiritual, inner and divine meaning of the divine word. The former is the forma of the word of God insofar as it is a word, the latter is its forma insofar as it is a divine word. The former can be grasped even by any unregenerate man, the latter however cannot be received

---

<sup>13</sup> Calov, A. theologia positiva. Wittebergae. 1682. p.24. Cf. also Calov, systema. I, 454: "Forma dat esse rei; Scripturae autem sacrae Θεοπνευστία, seu divina inspiratio, ac sensus divinus de rebus credendis & agendis dat esse, constituit eandem, ac discriminat a quavis alia Scriptura, a quovis verbo humano, quum Scriptura S. exhibeat ipsissimum sensum divinum, vel in mente divina, ut ita loquamur, conceptum."

<sup>14</sup> op. cit., I, 56.

except by a mind which has been enlightened."<sup>15</sup> The dogmatists, therefore, when they speak of Scripture as the word of God, are thinking primarily of the divine meaning, the inspired content, of Scripture. This fact is brought out by a statement of Gerhard.<sup>16</sup> "By the term Scripture," he says, "we do not mean the outer form or sign, that is, the particular letters, the act of writing and the words with which the divine revelation has been written down so much as the matter itself and the thing signified, as that which is meant and designated by the writing, namely, the word of God which informs us about his essence and will. Some people have expressed it this way: the word of God may be viewed essentially as the very thoughts which God expresses or non-essentially and accidentally as preaching and writing. That is to say, as in every writing brought about by an intelligent and rational agent, so also in the prophetic and apostolic Scripture two things should be borne in mind, first the letters, syllables and words which are written and are outer symbols indicating and expressing the ideas of the

---

<sup>15</sup> Quenstedt, *ibid.*, has even more to say on this matter: "Tria hic spectanda, 1. sensus, 2. sensus divinus, 3. sensus divinus revelatus; quatenus Verbum Dei est Verbum, eatenus ejus formale consistit in sensu, seu significatione, sensus enim verborum forma & quasi anima est; Ast hic non absolvit formale Verbi Dei quatenus verbum est, (& hac ratione ab aliis sensus Verbi Dei Grammaticus, in oppositione ad spirituales; & externus, in oppositione ad internum & divinum, dici solet) in quantum ergo Verbum hoc est Dei verbum, eatenus formale ejus consistit in sensu divino, qui est conceptus in Deo, de salute nostra ab aeterno formatus, & Verbo divino inditus. Ast quia hic conceptus divinus nobis non innotescit sine revelatione, tantumque absolvit formale Verbi divini, in quantum divinum est, & in mente Dei existit, non quatenus est verbum revelatum; ideo addendum, quod S. Scripturae, seu Verbi Dei scripti formale sit, sensus divinus revelatus, sive expressio quaedam & ἔκτύπωμα sensus divini ἀρχετύπου in mente divina ab aeterno concepti, & sic est perceptibilis soli regenito, sive intellectui illuminato."

<sup>16</sup> Gerhard, *loci theologici*. II, 14.

mind; second the thoughts themselves which are the things signified, expressed with the symbols of letters, syllables and words. Accordingly in the term Scripture we include both of these, but especially the latter.<sup>17</sup> The later dogmatists are even more explicit. They not only say that it is the forma of Scripture which makes Scripture what it is, namely, the word of God. They go so far as to say that only the forma of Scripture can rightly be called the word of God. Calov,<sup>18</sup> for instance, says that in a discussion regarding the word of God he is not speaking about the material principle, the letters and words etc., but about the formal principle, the divine content expressed by the letters and words. The so-called material principle of Scripture can be called the word of God only improperly and in a significative sense. The formal principle of Scripture however is properly called the word of God because it is the wisdom of God and the counsel of God, the divine meaning of those things which are revealed to us in Scripture.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Cf. loc. cit., XIII, 74: "Verbum Dei scriptum sive scriptura sacra hic ab nobis accipitur non tam formaliter, prout literarum apicibus describitur vel nova articulata ministri profertur, quam materialiter, prout consilium et voluntatem Dei nobis proponit..."

<sup>18</sup> systema, I, 707.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. ibid. "observandum: quod sermo sit de verbo DEI προφορικῶ non ratione materialis, quod sunt literae, apices, Syllabae, externa scriptio, sinus &c: sed ratione formalis, vel sensus divini, vocibus scriptis, aut prolatis significati. Isto modo saltem σημαντικῶς & improprie dicitur verbum DEI, hoc vero modo κυρίως & proprie est sapientia DEI, mens DEI, consilium DEI &c: quia est sensus ipse DEI de rebus Scripturae s. comprehensis, & conceptus divinus, nobis revelatus." Cf. also Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 169: "Disting. inter Verbum Dei, materialiter, pro characteribus, apicibus, literis & syllabis, in charta sive membrana haerentibus, quibus Verbum salutis signatur, vel etiam pro sono & vocibus externis in aere formatis, transeuntibus & evanescentibus, (quae Verbi divini ὄχημα sive vehiculum potius sunt, per quod illud ad aures, & postea in cor hominis transfertur, quam ipsum Verbum Dei,) sed formaliter pro conceptu & sensu divino, literis & syllabis in scriptione, & vocibus in praedicatione expresso & exhibito. Isto modo tantum improprie & σημαντικῶς dicitur Verbum Dei, hoc vero modo κυρίως & proprie est Verbum Dei, sapientia Dei, mens Dei, consilium Dei."

The dogmaticians therefore when they identify Scripture as the word of God are speaking of the inspired content of Scripture, if they are speaking properly. This is a fact which is by no means insignificant and one which has not sufficiently been brought out by those who have offered expositions of the old dogmaticians' tenets concerning Scripture.

Viewed in reference to its inspired and intrinsic content Scripture is never uninspired. It is the word of God; it does not and, in the nature of the case, cannot become the word of God.<sup>20</sup> It does not become the word of God when the church recognizes it as such or when God acts upon a person to accept it as such. Just as the letter of a friend expresses his views, so the Scriptures present at all times God's plan concerning our salvation. God is speaking, always speaking, to us in Scripture. And God does not speak to us immediately today but only through his word as it is contained in Scripture.<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> Calov, systema. I, 711: "At Scriptura S. intrinsece, ac per se nunquam non θεόπνευστος, nec citra inspirationem divinam, utpote, quae ad formale ejus pertinet, nusquam datur, aut dari potest: quandoquidem per eandem a verbo humano discriminetur verbum DEI quatenus tale." Cf. Hutter, L. loci communes theologici. Ulmensi. 1619. p. 31.

<sup>21</sup> Gerhard, loci theologici. II, 360: "Qui legit amici epistolam, judicium & vocem amici se audire credit, qui audit recitari ex scripto sententiam imperatoris, judicium ejusdem se audire statuit.... Quod si enim in scripturis canonicis proponitur nobis Dei verbum, utique etiam in scripturis & per scripturae Deus nobis loquitur, unde ipse scripturae tribuitur loquela, nimirum quia est vox Dei, ac si Deus hodie ad nos immediate loqueretur, non alia uteretur voce in tradendis fidei dogmatibus, quem quae in scripturis extat.... Deus, vel quod idem est, Christus patris coelestis interpres & Spiritus sanctus, qui profunditates Dei scrutetur, & concilium Dei de salute hominibus revelat, hodie non amplius nobiscum immediate loquuntur, sed per verbum & in verbo prophetis & apostolicis libris comprehenso."

In keeping with this doctrine that the forma of Scripture makes it the word of God and gives Scripture its being the dogmaticians maintain the unity and sameness of the word of God regardless of the mode of communication attached to it. They mean to say that the external word of God is always the same, whether delivered to men by God viva voce, or through the mouths of angels or through writings given by inspiration. Caesar is Caesar whether represented on a canvas or a coin. So also the word of God whether preached by word of mouth or written remains the same. The things which pertain to faith and life are not changed when spoken about or put into writing.<sup>22</sup> The preached and written word of the prophets and apostles differ only in respect to the mat-eria, or outer mode of expression. Hence the difference between the written and spoken word of God is only accidental, since the mode in which the word of God is communicated does not effect the essence of the word in any way.<sup>23</sup> The identity

---

<sup>22</sup> Dannhauer, J. C. ΟΔΟΣΟΦΙΑ christiana seu theologia positiva. Lipsiae. 1695. p.29: "Ac ut Caesar a seipso non differt, representetur licet a pectore in mappa, a chalcographo in aere; ita verbum ore annunciatum, a verbo scripto non differt essentialiter: ταῦτα γὰρ, sc. quae ad fidem & cultus spectant substantiam, (alioquin, quod scripsit Apostolus ad Philemonem, in Ecclesia Corinthiaca non praedicavit) scripserunt Divini veri, quae annunciarunt, & contra." Cf. also Schmidt, S. compendium theologiae. Argentorati. 1697. p.15: "Inter Verbum Dei & Scripturam Sacram materialiter considerata nullam est discrimen. Idem est, quod Christus ore suo dixit autoribus suis;...et quod Prophetas scripserunt, idem est quod & locuti sunt..."

<sup>23</sup> Baier, J. G. compendium theologiae positivae. II ed. Jenae. 1704. p.117. Quenstedt, op. cit., I,54: "Actus scribendi, ut & praedicandi accidit Verbo Dei, estque extrinsecum ejus πάθος, seu accessorius proponendi & communicandi modus, qui ipsam essentiam Verbi divini non mutat. Unum enim & idem Dei Verbum est, quod Prophetas & Apostoli, per divinam inspirationem edocti, viva voce praedicarunt, & quod per literas & characteres in charta signarunt & expresserunt. Diversi-

of the divine word is indicated in certain passages of Scripture such as Phil.3.1: "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe." Cf. also Acts 15.27; 1 Jn.1.3,4. The *αὐτά* in this first passage designates the identity of doctrine.<sup>24</sup>

The identity of the word of God extends also to the inner word of God as it exists in God and to the word as it is conceived in the mind of man and as it produces godly fruits. This is also true because there is only one word of God.<sup>25</sup> The so-called verbum ἐνδιάθετον, the word which exists in God, is not a different but the same word which he has revealed to us in Scripture. Calov states,<sup>26</sup> "This word of God [Scripture] is not understood as the hypostatic or personal word which is the Son of God, Ps.33.6; Jn.1.1, or as the mental word, the mental, inner thoughts of God which are and remain in God, although the word which is in God and that which he makes known to us is the same."

tas modi proponendi & communicandi, qui est vel scriptio, vel oralis traditio, non infert diversitatem objecti vel materiae in verbo scripto & tradito contentas. Adeoque Verbum Dei ἔγγραφον seu scriptum, a verbo Dei ἀγράφοι, non scripto seu tradito & praedicato (V.G. Oratio Petri in die Pentecostes habita, ab ea, quae Act. ii. descripta est,) non differt realiter, nec est divisio illa generis in suas species, vel totius in suas partes integrantes, sed subjecti duntaxat in sua accidentia."

<sup>24</sup> ibid. "Hanc Verbi divini praedicati & scripti identitatem clare demonstrant dicta Scripturae, Phil. iii,1. Τὰ αὐτά, ... Per αὐτά non intelligitur idem communicandi modus, sed identitas doctrinae."

<sup>25</sup> Calov, theologia positiva. p.23. Calov, systema. I,454: "Inter Verbum internum, quod in Deo est, & verbum externum, quod Scriptura sacra exhibetur, vel viva voce profertur, nullum est reale discrimen, nedum qua Verbum internum dicitur, quod in hominis mente concipitur & fructum producit salutarem: quum non sit nisi unum Dei Verbi."

<sup>26</sup> systema. I,451.

There is a word in God which is different in a sense in that it is hidden in him and we cannot know it, but the nature of this word simply cannot be probed. "We do not deny," says Calov again,<sup>27</sup> "that there is a separate [diversum] word of God since many things lie hidden in God, but with Luther we differentiate between the hidden and the revealed God." The identity of the word of God extends also to the word as it existed in the minds of the prophets and apostles before the act of writing. Meisner calls the word of God as it was in the minds of the writers of Scripture the invisible word, but says it differs in no way from the visible word written by the apostles and prophets, that is, it does not differ in substance (ratione substantiae). In this sense, he says, there is an unwritten word of God.<sup>28</sup> No matter how the word of God is viewed it is the same, one, identical word of God. It may be viewed as in the mind of God, as in the minds of the prophets and apostles, as preached by the apostles and prophets, as written by these men, or as received into our hearts, but it remains the same word of God because its meaning, its forma, is always the same.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Hutter, L. controversiae suae theologicae: 1. de verbo Dei scripto, & non scripto. 2. de persona Christi Jesu Servatoris nostri unici...praeside L. Huttero. Wittebergae. 1610. p.65.

<sup>29</sup> Dedekenn, thesauri conciliorum et decisionum. appendix nova. p.160: "Hier finden sich fuenfferley Weise dieses Wortes/ dann es kan betrachtet werden im H. Geiste/ der es erstlich bedacht; im Gemueth der Aposteln/ denen es ist eingegeben; in der Rede der Aposteln/ die es ausgesprochen; in den Schrifften der Aposteln/ da es gelesen wird; in unsern Hertzten und Gedaechnuess/ darinnen es behalten wird/ und demnach wird daher gewisslich niemand schliessen/ das fuenfferley Wort sey eigentlich zu reden; sondern es ist einerley Wort dem Wesen nach/ weil es ueberall eine Meinung und Verstand hat." Quenstedt, op. cit., I,186, views God's word originaliter in God, repraesentative, in Scripture, habitualiter, in the hearts of people, and dispensative, in God's divine ordination and purpose.

The insistence of the old Lutheran dogmaticians upon the identity of the word of God is in antithesis to the Roman Catholic doctrine of unwritten tradition as the word of God along side Scripture, but also and especially in opposition to the opinion of Rathmann who held that the inner word, as he called it, which was the wisdom of God, was different from the external word of God which was Scripture. Rathmann taught that the inner word of God could not be put down in writing except in a believer's heart. Against this opinion the orthodox Lutheran theologians held that the word of God is one and the same no matter what outer form it may happen to take. The word was a genus and Scripture was a species of this genus. Although there were different species of this genus they did not oppose each other.<sup>30</sup> The word of God is one because the content of that word is one regardless of its outer form.<sup>31</sup>

The dogmaticians are careful to distinguish between the written word of God and the everlasting, hypostatic word of God who is the second person in the Trinity and according to his substance was begotten from all eternity. This does not mean that there is no real relationship between the written and the personal word. The personal word, along with

---

<sup>30</sup> Dedekenn, *op. cit.*, appendix nova. p.327: "Diversae enim species, quae non differunt re, non sunt oppositae species: Ist aber das eusserliche Wort einerley mit dem innerlichen/ so ist der angegebene Unterscheid ein blosses Mundwerck..."

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.* "In welcherley Wort einerley Glaubens-Articul und Lehre begriffen/ und uns vorgehalten werden/ die seynd ratione materiae circa quam quoad rem, quae tractatur, essentialiter, ὀπιστικῶς, nicht zu unterscheiden: Sondern wenn sie zu unterscheiden/ so ist nur ein accidentale discrimen, quod verbi unitatem, nec duplicat, neque essentiam variat."

the Father and the Holy Spirit, may be said to be the real author of the written word.<sup>32</sup> Therefore when we think of the verbum προφορικόν or the verbum ἐνδιάθετον we are to think of them only in the context of the λόγος ὑποστατικός through whom God speaks and without whom he will neither speak nor work.<sup>33</sup> In other word, such an intimate relationship exists between the prophetic and personal word of God that no word of prophecy can exist apart from the personal word. Therefore when God says, "Let there be light," he can only mean that through his Son he commands that there be light, for he speaks and commands and creates all things through his coeternal and consubstantial word.<sup>34</sup> And God will not speak apart from this word without which nothing

<sup>32</sup> Calov, systema. I,702: "Cum vero Filius dicitur verbum, longe alia obtinet significatio, quia verbum est Hypostaticum ab aeterno a DEI patre genitur, ac persona subsistens, indeque a verbo DEI tum προφορικῶ, tum ἐνδιάθετῶ maxime diversum: quippe cujus autor Filius DEI cum Patre, ac Spiritu S. est."

<sup>33</sup> Calov, A. biblia testamenti veteris illustrata. editio secunda. Dresdae & Lipsiae. 1719. I,223. Also Calov, A. commentarius in Genesin. Wittebergae. 1671. p.148: "Per illud dixit non solum mandati verbum notatur, sed quia Deus non mandat, aut operatur, nisi per λόγον ὑποστατικόν, per quem omnia facta sunt Johann. I,3 ideo verbum dixit ita intelligendum hic, ubi de creatione rerum agitur, ut tum verbum, quo dixit Deus Pater, notetur, Verbum nempe illud hypostaticum, per quod & loquitur, operatur Pater, & sine quo nec loquitur, nec operatur: tum verbum quod dixit, vel locutus est, λόγος προστακτικός verbum mandati, jussus, & motus divinus."

<sup>34</sup> Calov, loc. cit., "Ita cum Deus dixit, Fiat lux, etsi non verbum mandati tantum, sed etiam verbum illud hypostaticum, Filius DEI, intelligatur, manet una vocis significatio, quae plane ita explicatur, quod Deus per Verbum coaeternum, & consubstantiale, Filium suum mandavit, ut lux fieret, quia hypostaticum illud verbum dicendo manifestatur, quod nempe Pater sit dicens, a quo procedit vel oritur Verbum hypostaticum; Filius sit Verbum, quod a Patre ab aeterno procedit, per quod loquendo, mandato & creando (quia dicere Dei est facere) ab ipso producta sunt omnia."

was made.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore the words of God are in a certain sense not words, but deeds.<sup>36</sup> But the personal word of God is not merely the author of the prophetic word, he is not merely the logos through which God speaks to man; he is more than all this: he is the heart and content and meaning of the prophetic word, he is the message and purpose of all the Scriptures.<sup>37</sup>

There was good reason why the old Lutheran dogmaticians insisted upon identifying Scripture as the word of God. When they spoke of the word of God they ordinarily meant Scripture. When Catholic theologians, however, spoke of the word of God they meant not only Scripture but also what they called the unwritten word of God, namely, tradition. Confusion was therefore caused when both parties affirmed that the word of God was the norm of Christian doctrine. Moreover Roman Catholic theology when speaking of Scripture understood

---

<sup>35</sup> loc. cit., p.149: "Non dixit Deus absque Verbo illo, sine quo nihil factum est."

<sup>36</sup> loc. cit., p.161: "Illa verba, fiat lux, non verba, sed res sunt, ut hic monet Lutherus. 'Deus vocat ea, quae non sunt, ut sint, et loquitur non grammatica vocabula, sed veras et subsistentes, res, ut, quod apud nos vox sonat, id apud Deum res est. Sic sol, luna, coelum, terra, Petrus, Paulus, ego, tu, etc. sumus vocabula Dei, imo una syllaba vel litera comparatione totius creaturae. Nos etiam loquimur, sed tantum grammaticae, hoc est, jam creatis rebus tribuimus appellationes. Sed grammatica divina est alia, nempe, ut, cum dicit: Sol splende, statim adsit sol, et splendeat. Sic verba Dei res sunt, non nuda vocabula.'" Cf. Martini Lutheri exegetica opera latina. Erlangae. 1839. Ip.29.

<sup>37</sup> Calov, systema. I,457: "quia Christus & Legis finis est Rom.X,4. & Evangelii nucleus Joh.XX,31. ideo scopus ac centrum ad quod referuntur omnia in Scripturis merito constituitur Christus Jesus, Ps.XL,8. Joh.V,39. Act.III,19.24. cap.X,43. imo Epitome & summa universae Scripturae Esa.LIII, 11. Jer.XXIII,6. 1 Cor.II,2...."

also the apocryphal books of the Old Testament, thereby holding to the principle that the church and not God forms the canon. The attacks of the Jesuit theologians against the clarity and sufficiency of Scripture were actually directed as well against the Lutheran doctrine of Scripture as the word of God. Catholic theology held that Scripture was a dead letter and a wax nose without the necessary interpretation and explanation of the church. Only when its contents were understood according to the proper understanding of the church could Scripture be called the word of God.<sup>38</sup>

By their insistence that Scripture was the word of God the old Lutheran teachers also took a stand against the opinions of Rathmann, Andrew Osiander and the Schwenkfeldians all of whom held that Scripture, properly speaking, was not the word of God, that only Christ could properly be called the word of God. In marked antithesis to this view the dogmatists taught that Scripture was the word of God, not improperly, not metonymically, but simpliciter, in fact.<sup>39</sup> This is true because the Scriptures are called the *λόγια τοῦ Θεοῦ*, they were inspired and written by men who were *φερόμενοι* as they spoke. Through the Scriptures God speaks to us, Lk.1.7; 2 Sam.23.2. The words which the apostles spoke were to be regarded as the words of God, 1 Thess.2.13. Scripture is the living word of God, 1 Pet.1.23, which works faith unto life eternal, Rom.10.17, and regenerates and creates

---

<sup>38</sup> To the argument of Gretzer and other Jesuits that Scripture was a dead letter until it was received by the church, Calov, systema, I,531, answers that just as a papal decree is the word of a pope the moment it is issued so also Scripture is God's word without any succeeding action.

<sup>39</sup> "...etiam si Ecclesia non accedat propositio." Cf. Calov, systema. I,530ff.

spiritual life, Jas.1.18. This in no way controverts the fact that Christ is called the word of God. There exist simply two significations of the word λόγος. Christ is the author of the written word. Therefore λόγος denotes either the hypostatic or the prophetic word as it occurs in Scripture, but never something between the two.<sup>40</sup> Nor can one disclaim the proposition that Scripture is the word of God by saying that its words and phrases etc. merely indicate the divine meaning of Scripture which alone can be called the word of God. The letters and words of Scripture not only signify the inspired content of the Scriptures but actually impart this divine meaning and therefore cannot be separated from it.<sup>41</sup>

It should be said at this point that the terms materia and forma as they are handled by the dogmaticians are not merely scholastic and unnecessary jargon. These terms become important implements in their discussion of the inspiration and also the properties of Scripture. We cannot understand their views regarding these matters unless we know at all times whether they are talking about the materia or the forma of Scripture. The ideas behind such terminology have prevailed down to the present day, even in liberal Lutheran circles. This fact is clearly brought out by the use of the phrase "content and fitting word" as it occurs in the "Pittsburg Agreement" of the United Lutheran Church in America and the American Lutheran Church, church bodies which

<sup>40</sup> loc. cit., I,131: "...qua vel notat verbum Dei ὑποστατικὸν, vel προφορικὸν, nec inter se, uti sit a fanaticis, confundendae."

<sup>41</sup> Hollaz, op. cit., p.82: "S. scriptura sumpta materialiter pro literis & syllabis est signum verbi divini, non ἑμφαντικὸν, seu mere signans, sed μεταδοτικὸν, exhibens sensum Θεόπνευστον, qui est formale scripturae: complexe est verbum Dei scriptum, i.e. sensus literis a Spiritu S. amanuensibus sacris in calamus dictatis expressus."

have not hesitated to condemn the scholasticism of the old Lutheran dogmaticians.

One more thing should be said at this point. From what has been said it is obvious that the dogmaticians do not equate Scripture and the word of God. Scripture is the word of God; but the word of God is not Scripture. To represent their position as if they had narrowed the word of God down to the point where it could be equated with Scripture does violence to their doctrine of Scripture and the word of God and results in a caricature of their position.<sup>42</sup> It is basic in this connection to bear in mind that the old Lutheran teachers do not restrict the forma of Scripture to Scripture alone. It is true that the dogmaticians say that after the time of the apostles there was no word of God except Scripture.<sup>43</sup> By this they mean, in antithesis to the Catholics and enthusiasts, that there is today no inerrant, inspired and normative word of God apart from and in addition to Scripture. They certainly never denied that preaching was the word of God when and because it agreed with Scripture.<sup>44</sup>

Are the Scriptures necessary for the church today? Why were the Scriptures written? These questions, which are really only one question, are considered by the dogmaticians in opposition to the Roman Catholic theologians of their day who, in the interest of the supremacy of the church, denied that there was any simple necessity of the Scriptures.

---

<sup>42</sup> Such a distortion of their doctrine of the word is offered in the rather superficial analysis of their teaching by J. Sittler, The Doctrine of the Word. Philadelphia. 1948. pp.33ff.

<sup>43</sup> Celov, apodixis articulorum fidei. p.42. Huelsemann, J. Calvinismus irreconciliabilis. Wittebergae. 1667. p.423: "verbum DEI hodie aliud non est nisi scriptum."

<sup>44</sup> Huelsemann, J. breviarium theologicum exhibens praecipuas et novissimas fidei controversias quae hodie inter christianos agitantur. Wittebergae. 1640. Cf. Praefatio.

The dogmatists point out first of all that Scripture is not absolutely necessary for the church as if the church could not exist without the Scriptures. God cared for his church and saving doctrine was preserved for millenniums before Scripture was recorded.<sup>45</sup> But it pleased God to inspire the writing of his word as a means of revealing himself. And God does not indicate that he wishes to make use of any other method of revealing himself and his will today, Lk. 16.29; 2 Tim.3.15-17; 2 Pet.1.19.<sup>46</sup> As possible causes which induced God to cease proclaiming his word viva voce and to record it in writing the following are listed: the brevity of human life after the days of the patriarchs, the diffusion of the human race and of the church, the weakness of the human memory, the possibility of doctrinal corruption while people were taught viva voce, the need of a norm in defending the pure doctrine against heretics, and the wickedness of all men and their need of a fixed source of doctrine. All these possible causes lie in man. In God the cause lies in his benevolence and mercy toward fallen mankind. Quenstedt<sup>47</sup> lists a fourfold use of Scripture as evidence that it is necessary for the church: 1) Scripture is the means whereby we distinguish true from false doctrine; 2) through the promises and fulfillments of the Messiah contained in Scripture we are brought to faith in Christ by means of Scripture; 3) the promises in Scripture strengthen and confirm our faith, Phil.

---

<sup>45</sup> Calov, theologia positiva. p.29.

<sup>46</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., II,62.

<sup>47</sup> ibid.

3.1; 4) through Scripture the heathen also are called and saved. Gerhard holds that the usefulness of Scripture predicates its necessity, not its absolute necessity, to be sure, but its hypothetical necessity, due to the sinfulness of man. He says,<sup>48</sup> "No Christian can deny that the holy Scriptures are useful since the apostle says so in no uncertain words, 2 Tim.3.16. Now the Scriptures inform us of things unknown naturally, as is clear from the doctrine of the Gospel: they preserve purity of doctrine against error and corruption, Matt.22.39: they keep us in assurance, Lk.1.3; 2 Pet.1.19: and I may say they are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, which is the reason we are invited to read them with diligence and devotion, Jn.5.39; 1 Tim.4.13; 2 Tim.3.15. This leads us to the question, whether with their usefulness there is not also a certain necessity joined on account of which God wants the Scriptures in the church." Calov asserts that it was the "Scripture hating papists" who made imperative the discussion of the necessity of Scripture.<sup>49</sup> Pure doctrine can be maintained by means of tradition without the aid of Scripture, they said.<sup>50</sup> Like Gerhard, Calov wishes to uphold only the hypothetical necessity of Scripture. Whatever God in his wisdom and love has ordained to give

---

<sup>48</sup> Gerhard, loci theologici. II,28.

<sup>49</sup> systema. I,534ff.

<sup>50</sup> Bellarminus, R. de verbo Dei scripto et non scripto, Sedani, 1618. IV,IV: "...Ecclesiam sine Scriptura consistere posse, sine traditione non posse." Cf. Calov, systema. I,534.

his church is for this very reason necessary. Far from being a cause of heresies, as the papacy asserts, Scripture is a powerful means of preserving us in the pure doctrine,<sup>51</sup> and this in itself is proof of its hypothetical necessity. The purpose of Scripture which is our faith and salvation presupposes its necessity. Calov is quick to point out that not all Catholic theologians denied the necessity of Scripture. He remarks that the whole controversy arose because the Catholics and Lutherans did not agree on terms, the Lutherans speaking for the hypothetical, the Catholics against the simple necessity of Scripture.

---

<sup>51</sup> Calov, systema. I, 536: "At Scripturae S. ignorantia est causa errorum."

CHAPTER THREE: THE INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE

In his vindiciae s. scripturae John Huelsemann<sup>1</sup> asserts that had it not been for the rise of the Jesuits the inspiration and divinity of the Scriptures would not in his day have been questioned. Except for a few rather free thinking Catholic theologians like Erasmus and Albert Pighius most Catholics before the seventeenth century spoke of the origin of Scripture in terms very like those employed by the seventeenth century Lutheran dogmaticians.<sup>2</sup> The Jesuit order, according to Huelsemann, wished to render the doctrine of inspiration doubtful in order that they might prove the necessity of unwritten tradition in formulating Christian doctrine. There is no reason to doubt the correctness of Huelsemann's observation. Before the upsurge of the Jesuit controversialists in the late sixteenth century Lutheran theologians had never considered the inspiration of Scripture as a separate locus, although Chemnitz, for instance, expended a great deal of effort in defending the Lutheran position regarding canonicity and authority of Scripture in his celebrated polemic, examen concilii tridentini. Huelsemann also adds the interesting remark that the Augsburg Confession, although it does not specifically treat of a doctrine of inspiration, nevertheless presupposes that Scripture was the

---

<sup>1</sup> vindiciae s. scripturae. Lipsiae. 1679. p.208.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 81. Quenstedt mentions a letter from John Eck to Erasmus, written in 1518, in which Eck takes Erasmus severely to task for teaching that the evangelists could err in their writings, as if they wrote as other men do.

inspired word of God. This is also the judgment of Leonhard Hutter in the preface to his libri christianae concordiae.<sup>3</sup> Hutter was not unacquainted personally with the framers of the Formula of Concord. He says that the sola scriptura principle cannot be upheld unless the inspiration of Scripture is predicated. According to the dogmaticians, the inspiration of Scripture, as taken for granted in the confessions, becomes a confessional principle. The inspiration of Scripture is a doctrine of Scripture, but it is also a Lutheran confessional doctrine and divisive of church fellowship. This fact is clearly perceived in Calov's consensus repetitus fidei vere Lutheranae which he had designed as a new Lutheran confession. Calov argues that Scripture is sufficient and is the absolutely certain rule of faith (unica & certissima credendorum Regula) simply because it is ἀφίππιστος.<sup>4</sup> It was a canon with the dogmaticians that Scripture as the source of theology postulates αὐτοπιστία, inspiration and infallibility.<sup>5</sup> All this brings up the question of the dogmaticians' quia subscription to the Lutheran confessions. Can such an unqualified acceptance be made if one rejects the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture? Can one consistently claim that he irrevocably accepts the confessions "because" they agree with Scripture while at the same time he refuses to accept the infallibility and inspiration of Scripture? The dogmaticians would, of course,

<sup>3</sup> libri christianae concordiae; symboli ecclesiarum, novissimo hoc tempore, longe augustissimi; explicatio plana & perspicua. Wittebergae. 1609. Prolegomena. p.2.

<sup>4</sup> consensus repetitus fidei vere Lutheranae. p.7.

<sup>5</sup> Calov, Socinianismus profligatus. p.78. Calov, systema. I,579.

answer no. And it is difficult to understand how an idea so rigid and uncompromising as a guia subscription to the symbolical books could arise unless the inerrancy and complete self-authenticating authority and inspiration of Scripture were taken for granted.

Inspiration is generally defined by the dogmatists as the act whereby God conveyed to men both the content of that which he wished to be written for man's sake and the very words expressing that content. It connotes a communication of the content of Scripture (suggestio rerum), a communication of the words (suggestio verborum) and the urge (impulsus), or, what is the same thing, the command, to write (mandatum scribendi). Inspiration is not a general action of God like that by which he incites good works in all men. Neither is inspiration a special or advanced action (concurus specialis seu gradus) of God like that by which he is present in believers, guiding and approving their actions, Job 32.8. It is an "absolutely unique and extraordinary action" of God, according to Quenstedt,<sup>6</sup> which pertains only to Scripture. It embraces not only a supernatural enlightenment of the minds of the amanuenses, but "a unique impulse, urge, inspiration, inbreathing, incitement and suggestion to write this [Scripture] and nothing else."<sup>7</sup> Quenstedt goes on to explain himself further. 1) The writers were incited by God to apply their minds to the writing of doctrine and to move their pens with their hands, Acts 17.16. 2) They were enlightened inwardly with a supernatural light. 3) They were

---

<sup>6</sup> op. cit., I, 69.

<sup>7</sup> ibid. "...peculiarem motum, instinctum, afflatum, impulsum & dictamen Spiritus S. ad hoc et non aliud scribendum."

inwardly supplied by the Holy Spirit with those things which make for writing, both in respect to content and in respect to the very words. Dannhauer in his inimitable way remarks<sup>8</sup> that the *Θεόπνευσις* of Scripture is not only brought about by the Spirit's aspiration, or general command, such as the command to make disciples of all nations. Neither is it effected merely by the Spirit's postspiration which would resemble a teacher correcting and approving what his pupils had written. It consists also in his inspiration by which, through his concomitant grace, he reveals things which are above human understanding and certifies things which were seen and heard by the amanuenses. And it includes finally the respiration of the Spirit, since as a musical instrument when it is played comes to life, so to speak, and makes sound, the Holy Spirit also brings to life those who read Scripture and meditate upon it and teaches them all they need know for salvation.

Inspiration is an act of the Trinity, of the Father as the fountain of wisdom, of the Son Christ and through the Spirit who judges our hearts and by whose impulse men of God were moved and spoke.<sup>9</sup> Gerhard states that the author of Scripture, the causa efficiens scripturae principalis, is the true God in one essence and three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.<sup>10</sup> He says,<sup>11</sup> "As in the case of the other works of God, also in regard to the revelation of his word and promulgation of Scripture order and distinction

<sup>8</sup> ΘΑΘΣΟΦΙΑ christiana. 1713 ed. p.18ff.

<sup>9</sup> ibid. Cf. also Schmidt, S. compendium theologiae. Argentorati. 1697. p.26.

<sup>10</sup> loci theologici. II,17.

<sup>11</sup> loc. cit., II,25.

must be observed." He then goes on to say that according to Scripture the inspiration of Scripture is attributed to the Father, Lk.1.55; Heb.1.1; to the Son, Jn.1.18, who is called the word of God, Jn.1.1 and the wisdom of God, Prov. 8.12; Matt.11.19; and to the Holy Spirit, 2 Sam.23.2; Acts 28.25; 1 Pet.1.11; 2 Pet.1.21; Acts 15.28. The inspiration of Scripture is an opus ad extra of the Triune God. There is a manner of speaking however whereby that work which is common to the whole Trinity is ascribed in a special sense to the Holy Spirit.<sup>12</sup> But inspiration cannot be attributed to the Spirit exclusively. The dogmaticians firmly hold to the old rule, opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa.<sup>13</sup> To compromise this rule would involve them in a sort of tritheism which they very consciously wished to avoid. The dogmaticians are therefore almost wilfully careless, one might say, in the way in which they speak of the author of inspiration and of Scripture. They call Scripture not only the "vox Dei" but also the "vox ipsius Christi"<sup>14</sup> and the "vox supremi Iudicis Spiritus Sancti".<sup>15</sup> On the one hand the Holy Spirit is designated as the author of Scripture.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand Christ is said to be the only author of

---

<sup>12</sup> Baier, compendium theologiae positivae. p.72ff.

<sup>13</sup> Hollaz, op. cit., p.362: "Actiones ad extra essentialis sunt indivisae i. e. communes omnibus tribus divinitatis personis."

<sup>14</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,92.

<sup>15</sup> Gerhard, confessio catholica. I,85.

<sup>16</sup> Hunnius, Ae. opera latina. I,64: "Quis vere ex his vaticiniis illustrissimo rerum eventu comprobatis non oppido concludat universam hanc scripturam Propheticaam ad nullum alium, quam rerum omnium conscium praesciumque Dei Spiritum autorem esse referendam?" Gerhard, loci theologici. II,13.

Scripture.<sup>17</sup> This free manner of speaking indicates that the dogmaticians do not wish to ascribe inspiration exclusively to the Spirit but regard inspiration as an operation ad extra of the Trinity.

The Lutheran teachers of the seventeenth century are careful to distinguish inspiration from revelation. Revelation is defined generally as an act of God by which he reveals himself and his will to man. It is given not only to the regenerate but also to the reprobate as in the case of Balaam, Saul and Caiaphas. God is the author of revelation not only in the general sense that he is the truth and all truth and good have their origin in him, but also in a specific sense in that revelation is immediately given by him. Revelation is always to be considered an external act of God. Man is only the instrument through which revelation is made.<sup>18</sup> The ultimate purpose of all revelation is salvation. Revelation, then, may be said to be the means by which God speaks to us, -- in ancient times in a great variety of ways, but in particular through his Son.<sup>19</sup> The difference between revelation and inspiration is explained by Quenstedt<sup>20</sup> in the following manner: "The distinction between divine revelation and inspiration must be observed. Revelation is norma-

<sup>17</sup> Hunnius, Ae. opera latina, I, 29: "Ex tot igitur tantisque diversitatum ostensis rationibus, immotum adhuc perstat & inconvulsum id, quod supra firmissimis demonstrationibus astruximus, videlicet libros Novi Testamenti, & in iis descriptam religionem nulli alteri auctori, nisi Christo, nullis scriptoribus, nisi Apostolis & Evangelistis posse attribui." Gerhard, loci theologici, I, 10.

<sup>18</sup> Calov, theologia positiva, p. 18.

<sup>19</sup> Calov, biblia novi testamenti illustrata, Dresdae & Lipsiae, 1719, II, 1106.

<sup>20</sup> op. cit., I, 68.



ally and by virtue of its name a manifestation of something unknown and hidden, and can be made in many and various ways, namely, either through external speech or through dreams and visions (for 'to reveal' ἀποκαλύπτειν in Greek, is to uncover that which was hidden.). Inspiration is an act of the Holy Spirit whereby the actual knowledge of things is communicated supernaturally to the created intellect, or it is an inner suggestion or infusion of concepts, whether the concepts were known or unknown previous to the writing. The former (revelation) could antedate writing, the latter was concomitant with writing and was a part [confluebat] of the very writing itself. However I do not deny that that same Θεοπνευστία or divine inspiration can be called revelation according to this idea, namely, insofar as it is a manifestation of certain circumstances as well as of the arrangement and method by which facts were written and set down, and also when revelation concurs and coincides with divine inspiration itself, namely, when divine mysteries are revealed by inspiration and inspired by revelation in the same writing." From this statement of Quenstedt it would appear that the dogmatists think of inspiration as a mode of revelation.<sup>21</sup> However because revelation is always a communication and therefore a word, a word which is inspired by God in the very nature of the case, Calov<sup>22</sup> speaks of inspiration as the form of revelation, as that which makes revelation divine. In making this statement Calov is thinking of Scripture in particular. All the dogmatists call Scripture revelation.

---

<sup>21</sup> Gerhard, loci theologici. II,7.

<sup>22</sup> Calov, systema. I,280.

Scripture was more than merely a record or history of God's revelation; it was revelation, or, to put it more accurately, it was revelation put down in writing. Hence there was no real difference between the revealed word of God and holy Scripture.<sup>23</sup> However the dogmatists never called revelation Scripture: the two terms were never equated as if Scripture was God's only revelation. God's revelation has taken place in a great variety of ways: by personal encounter, Gen.18.2; 19.1 Ex.19.10; by the Urim and the Thummim in the breastplate of Aaron, Ex.28.30; by visions, Dan.10.15; Acts 10.10; Ez.1.4; through dreams; through riddles as in the case of Ezekiel and John; and finally by immediate illumination in the intellect without the use of dreams or visions, 2 Tim.3.16; 2 Pet.2.21.<sup>24</sup> God revealed himself *αὐτοπροσώπως* in the person of the Son, Jesus Christ, Jn.1.18. Today objective supernatural revelation has ceased and the record of God's revelation to man is to be found only in Scripture. However subjectively these mysteries of the faith which are the contents of the revealed word of God are being communicated and revealed to men today through the word and the Holy Spirit working in and through the word. For the holy Scriptures have been written and divine mysteries have been revealed therein in order that we might be instructed to eter-

---

<sup>23</sup> Gerhard, *loci theologici*. II,18: "Scriptura nihil aliud est quam divina revelatio in sacras literas reducta. Nam revelatum Dei verbum & scriptura sacra realiter non differunt, cum illas ipsas divinas revelationes sancti Dei homines in scripturas redegerint." Dannhauer, *op. cit.*, p.44, says that Scripture is not only divinely revealed things, but revelation itself.

<sup>24</sup> Balduin, Cf. Dedekenn, *op. cit.*, I,383, lists four sorts of revelation; visible, vocal, imaginary (dreams) and intellectual. Under intellectual revelation he lists: a) cases in which God raises man to understand what could not otherwise be known, b) ecstasy (Ezekiel), c) rapture (Paul).

nal life.<sup>25</sup> God speaks to us still today, but only mediately through his revealed word in Scripture, not through angels or outward appearances.<sup>26</sup> After God had made known to man what was necessary for his salvation and this knowledge had been perfectly inspired in a canon, he ceased revealing himself immediately. Therefore the church today is to look for the supernatural revelation of God only in Scripture.<sup>27</sup> For outside Scripture and the preached word there is today no revelation, only false enthusiasm.<sup>28</sup> It has been said that the dogmaticians "by their strong and almost exclusive emphasis upon the divine revelation as doctrine almost completely forgot what is fundamental, namely, the revelation by deed."<sup>29</sup> This is an overstatement. It is due, perhaps, to the fact that the old Lutheran dogmaticians do not clearly and systematically express their views regarding the whole idea of revelation. Furthermore what they say concerning revelation in their sections dealing specifically with Scripture gives at times a rather incomplete picture of their views in regard to revelation. In his isagoges ad SS. theologiam Calov<sup>30</sup> speaks about revelation specifically. He

<sup>25</sup> Gerhard, loci theologici. II, 283ff.

<sup>26</sup> loc. cit., XIII, 2.

<sup>27</sup> Baier, compendium theologiae positivae. p. 70.

<sup>28</sup> Gerhard, disputationum theologiarum... pars secunda. p. 245. Calov, systema. I, 613. The dogmaticians do not deny natural revelation. They speak of articuli puri which are derived only from Scripture (such as the doctrine of the Trinity or the incarnation) and articuli mixti which are derived also from reason and philosophy (such as the providence of God) but must be accepted only in so far as they agree with Scripture. Revelation therefore is not confined to Scripture, and yet Scripture is the only source of theology; for reason and philosophy can err and know nothing of the Gospel and must be based on Scripture. Cf. Calov, systema. I, 773.

<sup>29</sup> Reu, M. In the Interest of Lutheran Unity. Columbus. 1940. p. 53.

<sup>30</sup> isagoges ad SS. theologiam. editio secunda. Wittebergae. 1656. p. 101.

says that God revealed himself in many ways until the fulness of the time when he revealed himself through his Son. Then through the preaching and writing of the apostles to whom was given information of this revelation immediately and upon whom the Holy Spirit visibly descended God informs the world of his revelation in Christ. Essentially then revelation is an act whereby God reveals himself. But in this act he also reveals things about himself and his will.<sup>31</sup>

One way in which God has revealed himself is in his word which the apostles and prophets recorded under inspiration. It is incorrect to say that the old Lutheran dogmaticians almost exclusively emphasized revelation as doctrine. According to Calov God reveals not only doctrine,<sup>32</sup> but he reveals himself to us,<sup>33</sup> he reveals his Son Christ to us<sup>34</sup> and he reveals the Gospel to us.<sup>35</sup> It is very true however that the Lutheran teachers of the seventeenth century did not emphasize revelation as deed. It might be added here that the dogmaticians not only regarded Scripture as revelation; to them Scripture was also prophecy. There was no real difference between Scripture and prophecy.<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> loc. cit., p.128.

<sup>32</sup> biblia novi testamenti illustrata. I,247.

<sup>33</sup> loc. cit., II,1107.1108.

<sup>34</sup> loc. cit., II,539.

<sup>35</sup> loc. cit., II,537.

<sup>36</sup> Dorsch, J. G. synopsis theologiae zacharianae, editio II auctorior & emendatior. Francofurti. 1653. I,II,2: "Imo universa Scriptura Canonica prophetia est 2 Pet.1,21, quae definitur id esse." Calov, commentarius in Genesim. p.8. Calov criticizes the old Rabbinic idea that prophecy came in dreams and watchings, but Scripture was written by inspiration which was the moving of the will and enlightenment of the intellect of the writers.

Properly speaking inspiration pertains to the holy Scriptures themselves. However it may be said that the amanuenses too were inspired by God: they wrote by the illumination and inspiration of the Holy Ghost.<sup>37</sup> The *Φορὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου* designates not only a drive and enlightenment but also an inspiration.<sup>38</sup>

Inspiration pertains to all of Scripture. There is nothing in Scripture which is not inspired. This is what Hollaz means when he says,<sup>39</sup> "The meaning [conceptus] of all things written by the apostles was given them immediately by the Holy Spirit." It was in opposition to the Jesuits, Bellarmine, Hentley and Bonfrere and especially to the Lutheran, George Calixt, that the old dogmaticians insisted so strongly that inspiration pertained to all the contents of Scripture. Although there is complete unanimity of opinion among all the orthodox dogmaticians that everything is Scripture was given by divine inspiration, it was not until after the time of George Calixt that the question was given special consideration. It was also the opinion of the orthodox Lutheran theologians that everything contained in Scripture was divinely revealed by God to the writers. True, not everything in Scripture needed to be revealed to the writers, -- most of the contents of Scripture were known or at least knowable to the penmen before they wrote -- but all the contents of Scripture were actually revealed in the exact manner

<sup>37</sup> Gerhard, *methodus studii theologicici*. p.8. Calov, *criticus sacer*. p.339: "Omnes libros Canonicos oportet esse Θεόπνευστος, vel ab iis auctoribus quos certum sit esse a DEO inspiratos."

<sup>38</sup> Quenstedt, *op. cit.*, I,70. Gerhard, *loci theologicici*. II,23.

<sup>39</sup> *op. cit.*, p.90. Calov, *biblia novi testamenti illustrata*. II,1037: "Ad totam scripturam pertinet et ad omnes ejus partes τὸ εἶναι Θεόπνευστον: quia in eo Scripturae sacrae qua talis formale situm est."

in which they were recorded.<sup>40</sup> If therefore it was taught that some portions of Scripture were not revealed to the writers by God, this amounts eo ipso to a denial of the inspiration of these portions. Such a conclusion is consistent with Calov's idea that inspiration was the forma of revelation in the case of Scripture and with Quenstedt's opinion that God revealed the mysteries of his hidden wisdom to the amanuenses through inspiration.<sup>41</sup>

Even those things which were known by the apostles and prophets before the act of writing were divinely communicated and inspired by God. All the contents of Scripture may be classified as follows: 1) those things which can be known but are not because they happened in a remote place or time (such as the history of the flood or the destruction of the Sodomites as described by Moses); 2) those things which cannot be known by nature because of their exalted nature (such as the mysteries of our faith), because of their non-existence (such as events in the future), or because of their absence from our senses (such as the emotions of the heart); 3) those things which are knowable naturally (such as the exodus to Moses and the history of the judges to Samuel). All these things, whether knowable or not, were inspired and dictated

---

<sup>40</sup> Calov, systema. I, 551.

<sup>41</sup> op. cit., I, 70: "Revelavit Deus Apostolis hanc σοφίαν Θεοῦ ἐν μυστηρίῳ reconditam, non per alloquium externum, neque per somnia & visiones, his enim revelationum modis Deus tunc temporis vel non, vel saltem rarissime utebatur, sed per locutionem internam, seu inspirationem."

by the Holy Spirit.<sup>42</sup> It is, of course, true that much of that which the prophets and apostles wrote they already knew from history and experience, and it is true that they wrote much which was communicated to them through their parents and rulers and through the testimony of the church. Nevertheless even these matters were furnished them by divine revelation just as those things which were hidden from them and unknown to them.<sup>43</sup> The time and circumstances and manner in which these things were to be recorded were inspired and dictated and revealed by God.<sup>44</sup> Hollaz says,<sup>45</sup> "Although the sacred writers were informed concerning certain things of which they wrote before the act of writing, they did not know whether it was God's will that they put these things into writing, or under what circumstances, in what arrangement and with what words they were to write."

Even those things in Scripture which were not of a spiritual nature and did not pertain directly to Christian doc-

<sup>42</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 68. Baier, compendium theologiae positivae, p. 73: "Non solum autem rerum sublimium, humanae rationis captum excedentium, sed et caeterarum omnium, quas Scriptura continet, tanquam in literas referendarum, conceptus scripturis sacris a Deo inspiratos fuisse credimus; cum πάντα γραφή, tota Scriptura, non aliqua tantum pars ejus, divinitus inspirata dicatur."

<sup>43</sup> Beckmann, F. theologia polemica. Jenae. 1719. p. 79.

<sup>44</sup> Calov, systema, I, 555. Also IX, 47: "...revelatione proprie ita dicta, ut etiamsi aliquid antea iisdem cognitum exhibeant, tamen ut hic, & nunc ea, & non alia ratione scriberentur, ab ipsomet Spiritu Sancto ad istum finem tunc revelata, menti-que sanctorum Prophetarum & Apostolorum indita, suggesta, & inspirata sunt, quando scribebantur, & scribi debebant. Idcirco hic eodem sensu revelatio, suggestio, & inspiratio dicuntur."

<sup>45</sup> op. cit., p. 90.

trine were inspired by God.<sup>46</sup> It was the contention of the Jesuit, Francis Saurez, that those parts of Scripture which did not deal specifically with the mysteries of our faith were not communicated by God's inspiration. In writing of such matters, Saurez thought, the writers were guided by the Spirit and preserved from any error. This was also the position of Calixt. The orthodox Lutherans took the contrary view. Hollaz speaks for them when he says,<sup>47</sup> "There are present in the holy Scripture matters pertaining to history, chronology, genealogy, astronomy, physics and politics which are obviously not necessary to know for salvation; and yet they are divinely revealed because the knowledge of them contributes in no small degree to the interpretation of the holy Scripture, as well as to the elucidation of the doctrine of the faith and the demands of the law."

Even commonplace matters in Scripture are inspired, no matter how unimportant they may seem. There is a great difference in respect to the importance of the various matters recorded in Scripture, but there is no difference in respect to the inspiration of everything recorded in Scripture. If considered in itself according to the wisdom of man a thing may be a leviculum, but only if one refuses to take into consideration the wise counsel of God. Much in Scripture may seem of minor importance or of no consequence at all (i. e. the mention of Paul's cloke being left in Troas) and

---

<sup>46</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 71: "Non tantum illa, quae fidem & salutem concernant, sed quaecunque in Scripturis inveniuntur, Dei verbum sunt."

<sup>47</sup> op. cit., p. 89.

utterly unworthy of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, but such matters are of real importance if viewed as over against the whole purpose of God, and in his wise counsel he had good reason for recording them in Scripture, Rom. 15.4.<sup>48</sup> Thus the orthodox party denied not only the conclusion but also the minor premise of Calixt who felt that it was beneath the dignity of the Holy Spirit to inspire levicula. The very idea of levicula was impious to the old Lutheran dogmaticians. No one could truly worship God in a proper manner and yet regard as meaningless and unworthy of the Spirit that which God himself had caused to be written in his word.<sup>49</sup>

In asserting that everything in Scripture was given by inspiration the dogmaticians are careful to point out that this fact does not rule out what was obviously taught in Scripture, namely, that the amanuenses studied beforehand those things about which they wrote and in many cases gained knowledge from authoritative witnesses, Lk.1.3. The study of human sources antedated the act of inspiration which was concomitant with the writing of everything in Scripture, with the result that the choice of things to be recorded and the very order of the words were given by inspiration

---

<sup>48</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,71.

<sup>49</sup> Calov, systema. I,560: "Nam utut leviculum videri possit illud de penula [2 Tim.4.13], nihil tamen in Scripturis pro levi habendum; quum nonnisi sapientissimo Dei consilio etiam talia inserta literis sint, quae Canon fidei & vitae nostrae futurae erant." Quenstedt, op. cit., I,71: "Multa in Scripturis levia videntur, (quale est etiam illud de penula, quam Paulus in Troade apud Carpum reliquerat, 2 Tim.IV.13) ad quae existimant indignum esse, ut deducamus Spiritus S. majestatem, quae tamen magni momenti sunt, si finem spectemus, Rom.XV.4 & sapientissimum Dei consilium, quo etiam talia divinis literis inserta sunt."

without the possibility of error or lapse of memory.<sup>50</sup> To the argument of various Roman Catholic theologians that the lies, cursings and blasphemies recorded in Scripture were repugnant to the high majesty of the Spirit of God and therefore could not have been dictated by him Quenstedt<sup>51</sup> replies that incidents of this sort are recounted in Scripture in certain instances not to condone such practices but to teach us to avoid them. Tales of sin and blasphemy are related in the Scriptures not that we might imitate them, but that we might shun them. There is no sin in recording such events.

The dogmaticians confirm their doctrine that all the contents of Scripture are inspired with an appeal to Scripture. According to 2 Tim.3.16 it is not enough to say simply that all doctrinal portions of Scripture are inspired. Nor will this passage allow that certain sections of Scripture were written only by divine guidance. Such guidance, even though infallible, is a far cry from divine inspiration.<sup>52</sup> If the prophets and apostles were not inspired in everything which they wrote then all Scripture is not inspired as this passage states.<sup>53</sup> Additional Scriptural evidence for their

---

<sup>50</sup> Hollaz, op. cit., p.91.

<sup>51</sup> op. cit., I,71.

<sup>52</sup> Calov, systema. I,555: "Nam etsi scripta dicatur per assistentiam & directionem quandam Dei infallibilem, non tamen **Θεόπνευστος**, seu inspirata divinitus dicitur."

<sup>53</sup> Hollaz, op. cit., p.91: "Differt haec **Θεοπνευστία**, siue inspiratio divina, a gubernatione divina. Nam hac tantum cauetur, ne quidquam scribatur, quod non sit ex vero, decore, congruo; illa autem a dictante Spiritu sancto conceptus rerum scribendarum suggeruntur. Illa praestare potest scripturam sacram infallibilem, sed non **Θεόπνευστον**. Ex quo arguuntur: Si tantum mysteria fidei, quae in sacris litteris habentur, a divina inspiratione, reliqua autem, ductu luminis naturae cognoscibilia, tantum a directione divina pendent, tota sacra s. non est **Θεόπνευστος**."



position is found in 2 Pet.1.21. On the basis of this passage Calov<sup>54</sup> argues that the writers of Scripture, inasmuch as they did not write of their own human will but by divine activation, were not merely preserved from all error, but were actually incited and inspired to speak and write. Contributively the writers of Scripture were mere hands and penmen of the Holy Spirit and of Christ. As such they could not impose their own thoughts upon Scripture. And this, Calov asserts, was the persuasion of the writers themselves. Quenstedt's discussion of this passage is interesting. He says,<sup>55</sup> "The *λαλιά* of the prophets and apostles connotes and implies not only the great mysteries of our faith, or those things which pertain directly to saving faith, as if the holy men of God spoke and wrote only such things by the inspiration and activation of the Holy Spirit while other things, such as historical, ethical and scientific concerns, were added after the urge of the Spirit had ceased by their own free action and instigation; but the *λαλιά* pertains to all things which are contained in Scripture. For the apostle speaks generally when he says, *ὑπὸ πνεύματος ἁγίου φερόμενοι ἐλάλησαν*. It is clear from the preceding verses that this indefinite statement denotes a collective concept. This is seen by the fact that the *λαλιά* of the holy men of God, v. 21, the *λόγος προφητικός*, v.19, the *προφητεία*, v.21, and the *προφητεία γραφῆς*, v.20, mean the same thing, but to this concept the collective *πᾶσα* is expressly added. Therefore no prophecy came at any time by human will, with the result

<sup>54</sup> Calov, *systema*. I,555ff.

<sup>55</sup> *op. cit.*, I,70.

that no prophecy of Scripture is of private interpretation, nor ought to be, but whatever the prophets and apostles spoke and wrote they spoke and wrote by divine activation. And there is neither hint nor trace of limitations or restrictions of any kind to certain parts of Scripture in this matter of activation." Moreover there is the promise of Christ that the H<sup>l</sup>y Spirit would teach the apostles and bring to their remembrance all things which he said to them, Jn.14. 26. From this general statement of Christ there is no reason to assume that he is speaking only of certain things which he spoke to his disciples, especially since he says πάντα ἃ εἶπον ὑμῖν ἔχω. Finally Scripture knows no distinction between certain of its contents which were written by divine inspiration and revelation and other sections which were recorded merely by divine approval and assistance. All of Scripture is simply called τὰ λόγια τοῦ Θεοῦ.

The position of Calixt and the Jesuits was absurd according to the orthodox dogmaticians. If it is true that those matters which were before known to the writers were not revealed and inspired, we become immediately involved in the impossible task of ascertaining what was previously known to the penmen. Thus the whole theory of Calixt becomes unworkable and meaningless, for who can know precisely what the penmen knew before the act of writing? Undoubtedly they were acquainted with a great amount of what they would say prior to the time when they took up their pens to write. And certainly they already understood much of the doctrine which they recorded and explained in Scripture. And the idea that only those parts of Scripture which pertain to

salvation are inspired is equally unworkable and arbitrary. Who can say exactly what in the Bible pertains to doctrine? It is only begging the question when the papists answer by appealing to the church and Calixt to tradition. They have still not answered the question.<sup>56</sup> But the minor premise of the adversaries cannot stand. There is nothing in Scripture which does not concern doctrine, 2 Tim.3.16. True, much in Scripture is not of a doctrinal nature, -- we may be entirely ignorant of it and yet be saved -- but everything in Scripture is somehow related to Christian doctrine.<sup>57</sup> The rejection of the Lutheran doctrine of plenary inspiration, as the doctrine of the orthodox Lutherans of this period might be called, will eventually result, they claim, in an impossible search for what is human and what is divine in Scripture and will lead to uncertainty concerning the authority and reliability of what is recorded in Scripture. If the inspiration of only one verse is denied, then all Scripture is not inspired; the inspiration, authority and infallibility of Scripture all fall.<sup>58</sup>

The Lutheran dogmaticians believed in verbal inspiration. This doctrine is confessed and taught in the writings of all of them from first to last, but it is more precisely

---

<sup>56</sup> Calov, systema. I,558.

<sup>57</sup> Huelsemann, Calvinismus irreconciliabilis. p.415. Calov, systema, I,552: "...omnia, quae scripta sunt in S. literis ad nostram doctrinam faciunt."

<sup>58</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,71: "Si in libris Canonicis aliqua humano more aut industria, non inspiratione Spiritus S. essent scripta, periclitaretur Scripturae firmitas & certitudo, periret autoritas uniformiter divina, titubaret fides nostra. Si enim unicus Scripturae versiculus, cessante immediato Spiritus S. influxu, conscriptus est, promptum erit Satanae, idem de toto capite, de integro libro de universo denique codice Biblico excipere, & per consequens, omnem Scripturae autoritatem elevere."

defined and more tenaciously defended by the later representatives of Lutheran orthodoxy, particularly Calov, Quenstedt, Dannhauer and Hollaz, who devote special sections of their works to the question whether every word of Scripture was dictated and inspired by God. The denial of the strict doctrine of verbal inspiration as confessed by the orthodox Lutherans, the negation of a suggestio verborum, which as Calov remarks<sup>59</sup> is usually coupled with a rejection of a suggestio rerum, became more pronounced as the seventeenth century wore on, especially in the camps of the Jesuits and Socinians. Even Lutherans like Musaeus and Calixt could not accept the full implication of a suggestio verborum. An increasing number of attacks was leveled against the orthodox Lutheran position, precipitating in turn a more accurate and pointed formulation of the doctrine by the second and third generation dogmaticians.

By verbal inspiration the dogmaticians -- actually they never use the term "verbal inspiration" -- mean that every word in Scripture was inspired and dictated by God. With his characteristic precision which has made his name a symbol of scholastic Lutheran orthodoxy Quenstedt defines the Lutheran position:<sup>60</sup> "The Holy Spirit not only inspired in the prophets and apostles the content and sense contained in Scripture, or the meaning of the words, so that they might of their own free will clothe and furnish these thoughts with their own style and words, but the Holy Spirit actually supplied, inspired and dictated the very words and each and

---

<sup>59</sup> systema. I, 561.

<sup>60</sup> op. cit., I, 72.

every term individually." In his colossal biblia illustrata Calov<sup>61</sup> says much the same in commenting on 2 Tim.3.16: "He [Paul] wrote this by the dictation of the Holy Spirit who inspired in the apostles not only the dogmatical portions but also the historical portions, not only the thoughts but also the words, and he moved them to write even those things which were not known, and he showed them how they were to be written. πάσα γραφή Θεόπνευστος. There is no word of Scripture, no jot excluded, which does not occur by divine inspiration." When Calov says that God showed the amanuenses how the various things were to be written, he means that the words and also the very order of the words in the text are inspired.<sup>62</sup> Under his ἔκθεσις Quenstedt<sup>63</sup> further defines what is meant by verbal inspiration. From the fact that Scripture is inspired both in regard to its formal and material principle (quoad formale & quoad materiale) it follows that only the original text and not any of the versions was inspired. Inspiration pertains to each word separately and individually and not simply to the words as they are grouped together and give meaning. It concerns those words which

---

<sup>61</sup> biblia novi testamenti illustrata, II,1034. Cf. Dannhauer, ΘΑΘΣΟΦΙΑ christiana, p.57: "Συνόλως tota & totaliter, non sensu tantum, sed & verbis ac verborum vocalibus." Cf. Hollaz, op. cit., p.91: "Omnia & singula verba, quae in sacro codice leguntur, a spiritu sancto prophetis & apostolis inspirata, & in calamus dictata sunt." Hutter, L. loci communes theologici, Ulmensi, 1619, p.32: "Ipsa a Spiritu sancto inspirata, & quodammodo verbatim dictata, ita ut nullum Jota a Prophetis & apostolis in istis libris sit exeratum, quod non sit Θεόπνευστον."

<sup>62</sup> biblia novi testamenti illustrata, II,1031: "Non solum sententias, sed & verba scripta, ac verborum ordinem & dispositionem a Deo esse." Cf. Baier, op. cit., p.126: "...etiam idioma, seu verba certae linguae eorumque delectum, seriem & contextum, esse ex inspiratione divina profectam."

<sup>63</sup> op. cit., I,73.

express obvious moral, historical or scientific matters as well as those words which express the great doctrines and mysteries of our faith. Inspiration is not merely a direction of the Holy Spirit whereby the writers were preserved from error in their use of words while being actually inspired in reference only to the contents of these words. Not only the res but also the verba omnia et singula were given by inspiration. It is therefore impossible that the holy writers would or could have intruded anything into Scripture de suo labore, since all the words were dictated to them. And finally Quenstedt points out that it must be borne in mind that the "Holy Spirit wrote and spoke with the prophets and apostles in one and the same action, but in a different sense, he as the first cause and they as the instrumental cause."

Philippi<sup>64</sup> has termed the doctrine of the old dogmatists "Woerterinspiration" as if they held to the inspiration of the individual words and syllables and letters of the text even if separated from their meaning and context. Pieper<sup>65</sup> remarks that Philippi's differentiation between what he calls "Wortinspiration" and "Woerterinspiration" is a senseless distinction and adds that no sensible person ever taught "Woerterinspiration", least of all the old Lutheran dogmatists. Pieper is correct. So-called "Woerterinspiration" is definitely not in keeping with the old Lutheran view that the materia of Scripture, considered as such, differs in no way from that of any other book. Nor is it

---

<sup>64</sup> Kirchliche Glaubenslehre. I, 251.

<sup>65</sup> Christliche Dogmatik. I, 270.

consonant with the idea of a suggestio rerum. The dogmatists do not and cannot view the words themselves of Scripture apart from their logical order and their inspired sense. Litera sine sensu non est verbum Dei vere et proprie.<sup>66</sup> It is true that Quenstedt says that not only the order and arrangement of the words was inspired but also the words themselves were inspired,<sup>67</sup> but he does not mean that the words were inspired even if dissociated from their meaning and context.

The dogmatists make their appeal to Scripture in support of their doctrine of inspiration. This is in accordance with sola scriptura principle, and the dogmatists insist that this is the proper way to prove their doctrine. One proves God from God, the sun from the sun, color from color, and we must prove the divine origin of Scripture from Scripture itself.<sup>68</sup> Their locus classicus is 2 Tim.3.16. Calov<sup>69</sup> begins his discussion of this passage with the assertion that it is impossible to speak of the inspiration of Scripture unless we mean the inspiration of words, since Scripture consists of words. Because all Scripture, according to 2 Tim.3.16, was given by divine inspiration, each and every word must be inspired. His reasoning proceeds as follows:<sup>70</sup> "The whole of Scripture is inspired, according to the apostle's testimony in 2 Tim.3.16, not merely the meaning

<sup>66</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,157.

<sup>67</sup> op. cit., I,73.

<sup>68</sup> Scherzer, J. A. systema theologiae XXIX definitionibus absolutum. editio ultima auctorior & correctior. Lipsiae & Frankfurti. 1698. p.5.

<sup>69</sup> systema. I,561.

<sup>70</sup> loc. cit., I,563. Cf. also Calov, apodixis articulorum fidei. pp.29-30.

of Scripture, but the very Scripture itself and whatever pertains to Scripture. Therefore if even a word is found in Scripture which is not inspired, it cannot be said that *πάσα γραφή*, all Scripture, is *Θεόπνευστος*. Not only the forma or content inheres in Scripture, but also the materia, the words, syllables and symbols. In this passage Scripture is viewed in this complex sense, in respect to its material and formal principles, since the reading of Scripture is enjoined upon Timothy, who was obliged to observe both the meaning of Scripture and the individual words with careful scrutiny and with devotion to the Scripture which he as a teacher was bound to explain to others in respect to the meaning and even the inferences of the words." These words of Calov indicate that he feels that if the words of Scripture are not inspired Scripture itself cannot be said to be inspired in a true sense. The exegetical support which this passage gives the orthodox doctrine is more clearly brought out by Hollaz. He offers three arguments why this passage must be understood to support his position:<sup>71</sup> 1) The apostle does not merely say: every word of God is inspired. If that were the case one could understand the divine word in a formal sense as the divine meaning. But he says: *πάσα γραφή* all

<sup>71</sup> op. cit., p.92. Quenstedt, op. cit., I,74, argues along the same line as Hollaz in his second point: "Hic ipsum subiectum *γραφή*, Scriptura, in ipsum formale externum, seu actum externum scribendi, adeoque in ipsos vocum characteres scriptos digitum intendit. Neque enim dicit Apostolus, *πάντα ἐν γραφῇ* sunt *Θεόπνευστα* sed *πάσα γραφή Θεόπνευστος*, ut ostendat, non modo res scriptas, sed etiam ipsam scriptionem esse *Θεόπνευστον*. Et quicquid de tota Scriptura dicitur, idem etiam de verbis, seu parte Scripturae non postrema, necessario intelligendum est. Si enim vel verbum in Scripturis occurreret, non suggestum vel inspiratum divinitus, *πάσα γραφή Θεόπνευστος* dici non posset."

Scripture which denotes not only the divine meaning but the written words. 2) The apostle does not say: πάντα γεγραμμένα Θεόπνευστα, but πᾶσα γραφὴ Θεόπνευστος in order that he might show that not only the content of the sacred Scripture is divinely revealed but that even the very words were dictated to the penmen by the Holy Ghost. 3) In regard to those Scriptures the apostle tells how Timothy as a boy read them and how when he had been made bishop he was in the habit of reflecting on them diligently and expounding them to his hearers. Now he read and explained holy Scripture not only in terms of its content but also in terms of its written words."

The second passage used in support of their view of verbal inspiration is 2 Pet.1.21. According to this passage the apostles and prophets were immediately activated and moved by the Holy Spirit in their writing and speaking. If Scripture is not of private interpretation it is inspired; and everything, including words, which is contained in Scripture is inspired.<sup>72</sup> "We may conclude," says Calov,<sup>73</sup> "that whatever in the sacred writings is not of private interpretation has been recorded in Scripture not by the will or eloquence of man but by the divine inspiration of the Spirit. Now nothing, not even the smallest word in the sacred writings, not even one letter, is of private interpretation. Therefore nothing, not even the smallest word or symbol, came by private will or utterance, but everything was divinely inspired." This may be said because the amanuenses spoke

<sup>72</sup> Dannhauer, ΘΕΟΛΟΓΙΑ christiana. p.57: "Id omne Spiritus Sanctus inspiravit, quod non est ιδίας ἐπιλύσεως; at verba etiam non sunt ιδίας ἐπιλύσεως." Cf. Calov, apodixis articulorum fidei. p.31.

<sup>73</sup> systema. I,564.

only as they were moved by the Spirit of God. The *λαλιὰ* in this verse implies words and not thoughts.<sup>74</sup> Commenting on this passage Calov submits that the *φορὰ* includes, among other things, a word for word dictation to the penmen. He says,<sup>75</sup> "The *φορὰ* embraces both an inner enlightenment of the mind and communication of what was to be said and written and an external urge of such a nature that the tongue and pen no less than the intellect and mind acted by that impulse, with the result that not only was the materia, or contents, suggested but the words also which were placed in their mouth and dictated to their pen by the Holy Spirit were communicated to the individual amanuenses or men of God."

Many other passages are brought forth in support of their doctrine of verbal inspiration. In 1 Cor.2.12,13 the apostle Paul is saying simply that he is verbally communicating to the Corinthian congregation those mysteries of divine wisdom which were given him of God.<sup>76</sup> Matt.10.20 is pertinent: if such a promise holds true in the case of the apostles' preaching, how much more does it apply in the case of their writing those monumental works which were to serve as a means of instructing future generations in the way of salvation.<sup>77</sup> The repeated commands directed to the prophets to write the word of God also substantiate the Lutheran claim. "Thus saith the Lord," is a theme recurring in all the prophets. David says his tongue is the pen of a ready writer, Ps.45.2.

<sup>74</sup> Hollaz, op. cit., p.92.

<sup>75</sup> biblia novi testamenti illustrata. II,1547.

<sup>76</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,74.

<sup>77</sup> ibid.

He means that as a pen he writes nothing but what the author who is God wills.<sup>78</sup> Scripture is called the word of God, Rom.3.2; Ps.119.11, and cannot be called such unless not only the thoughts but also the words were given by inspiration. If the individual words of Scripture are called the oracles of God, -- everyone grants that the whole of Scripture is the word of God -- then no one can deny that the individual words of Scripture were given by inspiration.<sup>79</sup> God has promised that his word would be in the mouths of his prophets.<sup>80</sup> This can only mean that God inspired the very words which these men spoke and wrote. God governed the mouths and pens of his amanuenses not only in respect to a certain amount of eloquence or in respect to the content of what they wrote or spoke; he governed them completely and suggested the very words which they were to speak and write.<sup>81</sup> On the basis

<sup>78</sup> Calov, systema. I,565: "Argumentum etiam praebent verba Davidis Ps.XLV,2. Lingua mea calamus Scribae velociter currentis. Cur enim lingua dicitur calamus scribae, nisi quod veluti calamus scribit, quae vult scriba, nec quicquam de suo addit, sed verba scribae exprimit, ac merum tantum est scriptionis organum, ita lingua Davidis ea quae Spiritus sanctus voluit, protulerit, nec nisi organum linquae ipsius fuerit, caetera Spiritus sancti."

<sup>79</sup> loc. cit., I,564: "Quum itaque singula verba Scripturae sacrae verbum Dei sint, & eloquia Dei. Ps. CXIX,11. Rom.III, 2, idque in confesso sit apud omnes, universam Scripturam sacram pro verbo Dei haberi, quo pacto negari potest, singula scripturae verba a Spiritu S. inspirata esse sanctis Dei amanuensibus?"

<sup>80</sup> Ex.4.15; Num.23.12; 2 Sam.23.2; Isa.51.16; Acts 2.4; Jer. 1.9; Mk.13.11; Lk.1.70; 21.15.

<sup>81</sup> Dannhauer, ΘΑΟΣΟΦΙΑ christiana. p.57. Calov, biblia testamenti veteris illustrata. I,389: "Non satis plene exponitur phrasis. Non enim tantum eloquentiae donum, sed verborum etiam θεοσδοτών, quibus res divinae proponendae concessio probatur, a Deo nempe verba ipsa positum iri in ore Prophetae, utpote qui non tantum sensus eorum, quae proponenda sunt, suggerere, sed verba quoque iisdem promulcandis sufficere velit."

of Jer.30.1 and Jer.36.2 Calov<sup>82</sup> contends that Jeremiah, inasmuch as he wrote all the words which God spoke to him, did not write his own words, but the words of God. And what is true in the case of Jeremiah is equally true in respect to the rest of Scripture, for all Scripture is the word of God in the same sense. The only alternative to this conclusion is that Scripture is partly the word of God and partly a human word which was written by the will of the amanuenses themselves. Such an alternative is not consistent with the idea that all Scripture is the word of God.<sup>83</sup>

Actually the content of Scripture cannot be separated from its words. The meaning of God's self-communication to us is inextricably bound to the words of Scripture.<sup>84</sup> Content cannot be expressed without words; the very purpose of words is to convey thoughts, or content. In the case of something already written meaning cannot be known except from the words which express that meaning.<sup>85</sup> Consequently, unless we can say that the words of Scripture are given by God, we cannot say that Scripture is inspired, for Scripture consists of words.<sup>86</sup> Letters and words without meaning and content are like a man's body without a soul.<sup>87</sup> Finally,

<sup>82</sup> systema. I,566.

<sup>83</sup> ibid. "si ergo OMNIA VERBA, quae locutus est Dominus Jeremiae, scribenda fuere in libro ejus, non verbis suis, sed verbis Domini per omnia exprimere, ac consignare debuit vaticinia sua. Quae autem hujus voluminis est ratio, ea sine dubio est totius Scripturae, quum universa Scriptura verbum Domini sit, nisi velis dicere, eam exhibere partim ipsius Dei verba ex ore ejus profecta, partim vero verba humana, quibus scripturae sacri ex voluntate propria uti voluerunt, quod absonum."

<sup>84</sup> Gerhard, J. tractatus de legitima scripturae sacrae interpretatione. Ienae. 1663. p.8.

<sup>85</sup> Calov, systema. I,561.

<sup>86</sup> loc. cit., I,561.

<sup>87</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,157: "sicut enim corpus sine anima rationali, ne quidem corpus Hominis est; sic litera sine sensu, non est formaliter Scriptura divina."

we can never be certain of what the Spirit of God means in Scripture unless we can be sure that the words of Scripture were expressly given by him.<sup>88</sup>

Among the Lutherans of the seventeenth century Musaeus taught that the content of Scripture was inspired, but the words were written only by divine direction. It was in opposition to him and the Jesuits that the more orthodox Lutherans strongly insisted that the very words of Scripture were inspired. But there was another reason for their taking their stand on the doctrine of verbal inspiration. Rathmann, the Swenckfeldians and many of the Anabaptists held that Scripture was only the external word of God. The internal word of God was not the content of Scripture, but Christ who brings us to faith and sanctifies us completely apart from the external word. This means that they denied that the prophetic word, that is, the written and preached word, was a means of grace. But what concerns us at this point is that it meant also that they distinguished between the words of Scripture and the content of Scripture in such a way as to separate them into two completely different categories. The very idea of inspiration therefore becomes unnecessary and meaningless, since Christ works outside the word. Scripture is reduced to a dead letter. The dogmatists therefore, to safeguard the word as a means of grace and to vindicate the divine origin of Scripture, were obliged

<sup>88</sup> loc. cit., I, 83: "Ut certissime possimus in conscientia nostra, Prophetas & Apostolos sensum ac mentem Spiritus S. de rebus divinis recte assecutos fuisse, & ea, qua par est εμφάσει ac verbis expressisse, necessum est, ut cum sensu divino etiam verba divina ipsis instillata, atque ita S. Scripturam cum ratione formalis, tum ratione materialis πᾶσι γράφῃ Θεοῦ, seu supremi Numinis χειρόγραφον esse statuamus." Scherzer, systema, p. 8: "Si enim Deus inspirasset solos conceptus rerum: πᾶσα γράφῃ non posset dici Θεόπνευστος... nec certi essemus de fideli & adaequata redictione rerum revelatarum per verba convenientia."

to defend at great length the unity of Scripture according to both its formal and material principle. There is a statement of Quenstedt which clearly expresses the Lutheran view as touching the inseparability of the materia and the forma of Scripture, a statement which may profitably be quoted in our present context. Quenstedt says,<sup>89</sup> "It is to be granted that there is in the written and spoken word of God something internal, namely, the divine content and the meaning, and something external, namely, the words, symbols and letters, preaching, hearing, reading etc. Of these the former is called the formal, the latter the material, principle of the word. And yet for this reason the word of God is not divided in essence, as a class of things is divided into two different and separable and therefore separate species, namely, into the external and internal word of God. For everything internal and external goes together to make up one and the same word of God as a complex whole, so to speak. And that same word is divine and efficacious. Therefore the apostle's preaching which he also put in writing was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 1 Cor.2.4. And that divine word which is in God from eternity but was in time inspired immediately into the minds of the prophets and apostles and which today is received into the hearts of the believers and brings forth wholesome fruit in men, that divine word is no different in form from the word which was preached far and wide by the prophets, Christ and the apostles and which was later put in writing. And it is no different from the word which ministers preach today. As touching its essence

<sup>89</sup> op. cit., I,183.

it is one and the same word of God, whether viewed in God himself and in the mind of the Holy Spirit, whether in the mind of Peter, in the preaching of Peter, or in a letter of Peter, whether in the mind and voice of those who proclaimed it or in the ears and heart and memory of those who heard it." This statement of Quenstedt, stressing as it does the unity of the word of God, indicates how impossible it was for him to think of the content apart from the words of Scripture or to speak of the inspiration of the content apart from the inspiration of the words. The only alternative to verbal inspiration is no inspiration.

The Jesuits objected to the verbal inspiration of Scripture on the grounds that it was not necessary for God to reveal to the penmen what they already knew. The amanuenses knew the words which they would write before the act of writing. The words they wrote and their various styles of writing existed before they wrote Scripture. But the Jesuits are confusing revelation and inspiration. Words may be inspired whether they were previously in use or not. All the words in Scripture were not inspired ad sciendum, but only ad scribendum. The inspiration of words in regular usage was necessary because apart from inspiration the writers of Scripture could not infallibly express divine things. If left to themselves to convey an inspired meaning with words of their own choosing, even if God had kept them from all error, their autographic writings would differ in no way from any good version of Scripture.<sup>90</sup>

---

<sup>90</sup> Hollaz, op. cit., p93ff.

Are the apographic Scriptures which we possess today inspired? The opinion of the dogmatists on this question might briefly be mentioned at this point, although the question belongs in their discussion of the authenticity of Scripture. The question had to be answered by them since the Jesuits claimed that the Scriptures had become corrupt after many years of copying. Huelsemann<sup>91</sup> remarks that inspiration may be considered absolute, whether every word is inspired, or relative, whether every word or particular words in our present Scriptures are inspired. The second question, he says, belongs to a discussion of the authenticity of Scripture. Inspiration then is properly spoken of only in reference to the original manuscripts. Baier,<sup>92</sup> following Musaeus, maintains that the apographa can rightly be called inspired since they possess the same forma, or content, as the autographic Scriptures. All the apographa have been either mediately or immediately copied from the autographa. Hence today, in spite of the many codices extant with their many material variations, the meaning or the inspired sense of the autographa is with us. Hollaz seems to go further.<sup>93</sup> He asserts that the very words as well as the content of the autographic texts are today in the apographa. A good copy of an inspired writing is inspired like the original writing. Quenstedt<sup>94</sup> argues along the same line as Hollaz. He says, "Our argument runs as follows: every holy Scripture which existed at the time of Paul was *Θεόπνευστος* (2 Tim.

---

91 vindicatae s. scripturae. p.215.

92 op. cit., p.83.

93 op. cit., p.155.

94 op. cit., I,206.

3.16) and authentic. Not the autographic (for they had perished long before), but the apographic writings existed at the time of Paul. Therefore the apographic Scripture also is Θεοπνευστος and authentic. God, not the hand of Moses, gave authenticity to the Pentateuch. For although inspiration and divine authority inhered originally in the autographs, these attributes belong to the apographs by virtue of their derivation [radicaliter], since they were faithfully transcribed from them so that not only the sense but also the words were precisely the same." Of course, neither Hollaz nor Quenstedt would mean to imply that the very words of the apographs were inspired in every case. There were many manuscripts with variant readings which had to be studied and corrected.<sup>95</sup> Quenstedt's statement above ought not to be taken as if he were speaking in an absolute sense about the apographs of his own day. It is a question how far he would wish to push the above argument. I do not believe that he would have insisted on his argument pertaining with equal force to the apographs of his own day. There is certainly no reason to doubt that he, like Hollaz, was aware of the fact of variant readings among the manuscripts then accessible. He would hardly have considered the apographs of his time in the same category as those which Paul and Timothy used. However his statement indicates that he is not alive to the significance of the fact of variant readings. His argument that a copy of a document -- like Hol-

---

<sup>95</sup> Hollaz, op. cit., p.155: "Neque variantes lectiones dubiam reddere possunt auctoritatem canonicam scripturae; propterea quod genuinam lectionem e cohaerentia textus indagare & colligere proclius est."

laz, he uses the analogy of an imperial edict -- is as reliable and authoritative and, in the case of Scripture, as inspired as the original, is valid. But he never faces the issue as it existed even in his time when he fails to take into consideration what will be the case if the copy is not at all times accurate. The dogmaticians of the seventeenth century were scarcely informed and were not especially interested in the whole subject of textual criticism. There is no reason to think, however, that their comparative indifference toward this subject springs from their doctrine of inspiration. The dogmaticians maintain that we do not need the autographic Scriptures today in order to have an authentic and inspired word of God. The care of the Jewish copyists and the providence of God have preserved a reliable Bible. Dannhauer<sup>96</sup> says that it is as needless and foolish to suppose that we must have the autographa today as to think that we need the cup from which Christ drank before the eucharist can be rightly celebrated. The dogmaticians do not consider the inspiration of the apographa except occasionally in their discussion of the authenticity of Scripture. This fact perhaps accounts for their rather limited and unsatisfactory presentation of the whole question.

---

<sup>96</sup> ΟΔΟΣΟΦΙΑ christiana. p.31.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE RELATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT TO THE AMANUENSES

The dogmatists teach that inspiration includes an impulse and command of God to write. They held this in contrast to the Roman Catholic theologians of their day who taught that Scripture was written by God's will and by his inspiration but denied that there was a command to write. It was in the interest of unwritten tradition that the Catholics denied a mandatum scribendi. They maintained that there was no difference between the written word of God which was Scripture and the unwritten word which was tradition. Both derived their authority from the church. According to this teaching the church and the pope were, in the last analysis, placed above Scripture. The church could exist without Scripture but not without the pope who was divinely appointed by Christ. Against these claims of Rome the Lutherans held that Scripture was written by a command of God, and that by virtue of its inspiration. To the Lutherans it was impossible to speak of inspiration if the apostles did not write by divine command.<sup>1</sup> In the act of inspiration there was a divine and inner impulse according to 2 Pet. 1. 21. This impulse of the Spirit is itself a command which differs in no way from an expressed external command.<sup>2</sup> The dogma-

<sup>1</sup> Brochmann, systema. I, 13: "Dicunt jam ingenue Pontificii, an γραφή possit esse Θεοπνευστος, si Evangelistae et Apostoli ad scribendum accesserunt, non jussi, non impulsivi a Deo?"

<sup>2</sup> Gerhard, confessio catholica. II, 226: "Nam quid aliud est divinus ille impulsus interior, quam mandatum internum et occultum, ejusdem omnino autoritatis, roboris ac ponderis cum mandato externo et manifesto?" Calov, systema. I, 543: "Quid enim aliud est interior instinctus Spiritus sancti quam excitatio quaedam divina imperans scriptionem, imo procreans eandem."

ticians do not contend that there was necessarily an external command to write. According to the passage above holy men of God wrote not of their own free will, but being moved by the Spirit of God they wrote according to his divine will. And this will of God constitutes a divine command, not an external command, but a command nevertheless. Thus the divine activation in the act of inspiration is, in fact, an internal, hidden command of God to write.<sup>3</sup> And yet the mandatum scribendi was not merely a general command to write. Inspiration rules out such an idea. Not only the things to be written, but the Scriptures themselves were commanded by God.<sup>4</sup> There was then a definite command given to the whole school of apostles, a command to teach all nations, Matt.28.19. This command to teach was to be carried out by way of writing as well as preaching. That writing is included in this command is indicated by the following promise of verse 20. Evangelization viva voce without a written word would soon be impossible for the apostles. A half century of preaching could never reach the ends of the earth. Therefore a commission of this nature to teach all nations carries with it a command to write, even though this command is not specific.

<sup>3</sup> Calov, systema. I,545: "quia sermo ibi est de Scripturis sacris, & quum opponatur illa *φωρὰ* Spiritus sancti humanae voluntati, quid aliud indigitur, quam quod non humano placito, arbitrio, seu voluntate, sed voluntate divina loquenti sint, & scripserint sancti Dei homines, adeoque divino mandato: Voluntas enim Dei mandati instar obtinet. Et mandatum exterius, ac impulsus interior aequiparantur in sanctis Dei viris. Quid aliud est instinctus ille divinus, quam occultum Dei mandatum."

<sup>4</sup> Hutter, loci communes theologici. p.16: "Ubi observandum, quod Apostolus non dicit *πάντα ἐν γραφῇ* sunt *θεόπνευστα*; sed *πάσα γραφή* est *θεόπνευστος*; ut sic ostendat non modo res scriptas, sed ipsam scriptionem in se consideratam esse *θεόπνευστον*, hoc est, jussu Dei susceptam."

Wo der Apostolische Fuesse nicht hingelanget/ da ist der Apostolische Sendbrieff hinkommen.<sup>5</sup> The office of the apostles to testify of Christ comprised writing as well as preaching, Acts 10.42. This is seen from the fact that the apostles regarded their writings as testimonies of things which were to be made known, Jn.21.24. It was for the benefit of future generations and for those in remote places that they wrote, and for such people they wrote the same message as they preached to those about them while they were living, 1 Jn.1.1.<sup>6</sup> The apostles would not have dared to speak without divine authority; much less would they have written without a command from God. Peter thought it wrong to announce the Gospel to the Gentiles without a divine command, Acts 10.19,26.<sup>7</sup> There are, of course, many special commands to write recorded in Scripture. However, from the fact that these books were written in response to a specific command it does not follow that those books for the writing of which there was no command recorded in Scripture were written without a divine command. In fact, the very opposite is the case.<sup>8</sup> Actually the papists involve themselves in a contradiction when they say that Scripture was written according to God's will but not according to his command. Quenstedt<sup>9</sup> points this fact

<sup>5</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,65: "Quo non pervenit Ἀποστολή, εὐ' ἐπιστολή, ad quos non penetravit sonus & pes Apostolorum, ad eos manus, vel Scriptura eorum pervenit." Gerhard, loci theologici. II,31.

<sup>6</sup> Gerhard, loc. cit., II,33.

<sup>7</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,65.

<sup>8</sup> Gerhard, loc. cit., II,33.

<sup>9</sup> Quenstedt, loc. cit., I,66.

out. He argues, "An expressed command was not needful because the inspiration of things to be written and the inner urge to write constitute a command. It involves a contradictio in adjecto to maintain that the apostles wrote by the will, inspiration and suggestion of God but not by his command." God not only approves the writing of Scripture; he wills Scripture to be written. And this will constitutes a command. Voluntas Dei instar mandati est.<sup>10</sup> If the Scriptures were not written by a divine command they are neither divine nor inspired. Could anyone, even an apostle, claim that his writings are divinely inspired and at the same time imply that he writes without a divine command?<sup>11</sup> The papists only confuse the issue by talking of an expressed external command. No one has ever contended that Scripture was written in accordance with such a command. The Lutherans speak only of an inner command which is joined with the act of inspiration. This "hidden command" is nothing more than an excitatio divina, imperans scriptionem, imo & eandem procreans.<sup>12</sup> But what about the external occasions which brought about the books of the Bible? Do they not argue against a mandatum Dei? Not at all, for the occasions which prompted the writings were not accidental, but were divinely directed according

<sup>10</sup> Quenstedt, loc. cit., I, 65. Gerhard, loc. cit., II, 34: "Quam scriptionem Spiritus sanctus diserte comprobavit, ea non potest non esse divina & ex divino mandato perfecta, siquidem quod Spiritus sanctus approbat, illud est divinae voluntati & mandato conforme."

<sup>11</sup> Gerhard, loci theologici, II, 33. Also II, 311: "Si apostoli non habuissent mandatum scribendi quomodo scriptura ipsorum posset esse Θεόπνευστος?" Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 65: "Aut scripserunt Apostoli motu proprio, aut jusu divino."

<sup>12</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 56.

to the wisdom of God. In like manner, study and research on the part of the amanuenses do not rule out a mandatum scribendi but argue for it inasmuch as such investigation was undertaken under the guidance of the Spirit of God.<sup>13</sup>

What was the relation between the Holy Spirit and the writers? That they were inspired means that the holy writers wrote by an inner revelation and suggestion.<sup>14</sup> It means that they underwent a peculiar inbreathing, impulse and urge of the Holy Spirit,<sup>15</sup> a certain supernatural and extraordinary enlightenment of the mind,<sup>16</sup> a unique urge upon the will to write.<sup>17</sup> The dogmaticians describe the writers as writing by the influxus,<sup>18</sup> afflatus,<sup>19</sup> jussus & mandatum, ductus & impulsus,<sup>20</sup> suggestio, inspiratio & dictamen,<sup>21</sup> inspiratio & instinctus<sup>22</sup> of the Spirit. The holy men are said to be moved to write, that is, acti, ducti, impulsu, inspirati & gubernati by the Holy Spirit.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>13</sup> loc. cit., I,66: "Haec occasio exterius oblata non tollit internum scribendi mandatum, & divinam inspirationem, sed illud potius stabilis, cum de suavi divinae providentiae dispositione testetur."

<sup>14</sup> loc. cit., I,58: "...interior revelatio & suggestio..."

<sup>15</sup> loc. cit., I,65: "...peculiarem motum, instinctum, afflatum & impulsu Spiritus S..."

<sup>16</sup> Hollaz, op. cit., p.89.

<sup>17</sup> ibid. "...impulsu voluntatis ad scribendum..."

<sup>18</sup> loc. cit., p.79.

<sup>19</sup> Gerhard, loci theologici. II,249.

<sup>20</sup> loc. cit., II,23. Gerhard, disputationum theologiarum... pars secunda. p.1593.

<sup>21</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,68.

<sup>22</sup> Gerhard, confessio catholica. II,3. Calov, A. dissertationes theologicae Rostochienses. Rostochii. 1637. p. 129: "...ex instinctu Spiritus Sancti."

<sup>23</sup> Gerhard, confessio catholica. II, 267: "...ad scribendum permoti." Gerhard, loci theologici. II,26.

All the words of Scripture were written by the dictation of God.<sup>24</sup> Although men took part in the writing of Scripture God is the real author of the Scriptures and the one who has dictated them.<sup>25</sup> The prophets and apostles were subordinate authors,<sup>26</sup> they were merely the organs of God,<sup>27</sup> the hands of Christ,<sup>28</sup> the hands and penmen of the Holy Spirit,<sup>29</sup> the amanuenses, tabelliones, notarii and actuarii of the Spirit of God.<sup>30</sup> They were simply the means God employed in putting his word into writing. In scholastic terminology, God is the causa efficiens principalis scripturae and the apostles and prophets the causa efficiens instrumentalis.

What was the part these causae instrumentales played in the writing of Scripture? Gerhard answers,<sup>31</sup> "The instrumental causes of the holy Scripture were holy men of God,

<sup>24</sup> Huelsemann, vindiciae s. scripturae. p.221. Schroeder, opusculum theologicum de principio theologiae, et naturali notitia Dei. p.(:)7r.

<sup>25</sup> Schroeder, loc. cit., p.(:)7v. "Quod de sola librorum Canonorum scriptura vere dici posse, auctorem & dictatorem illius esse Deum."

<sup>26</sup> Calov, dissertationes theologicae Rostochienses. p.129: "Ita quum JEHOVAH dicit ad Moysen; 'Ego ero cum ore tuo et docebo te, quid loquaris,' Ex.ix.1, Moysen tantum secundarium autorem vel ministrum Verbi, JEHOVAH vero autorem principalem fuisse, recte inde colligitur."

<sup>27</sup> Gerhard, loci theologici. II,23.

<sup>28</sup> loc. cit., II,26. Gerhard, J. commentarius super posteriorem D. Petri epistolam, editio altera, priori correctior. Jenae. 1660. p.139: "...peculiaris Spiritus s. organa, quae ad hoc praedicationis & scriptionis ministerium sanctificavit & consecravit..."

<sup>29</sup> Calov, Socinismus profligatus. p.61.

<sup>30</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,55. Calov, systema. I,556: "... manus, calamus, aut amanuenses Christi & Spiritus S."

<sup>31</sup> loci theologici. II,26.

men called and chosen by God in a unique and immediate manner to this end, that they write divine revelations. Such men were the prophets in the Old Testament and the evangelists and apostles in the New Testament, men whom we therefore correctly call God's amanuenses, the hands of Christ, the secretaries and notaries of the Holy Spirit, since they did not speak or write according to their own human will but were *Φερόμενοι ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος ἁγίου*, prompted, moved, incited, inspired and governed by the Holy Spirit. They wrote not as men but as men of God, that is, as servants of God and special organs of the Holy Spirit." This statement expresses the sentiments of all the dogmaticians in reference to the relation of the Spirit to the amanuenses. Scripture is not the word of men, except in reference to its so-called materia ex qua, but the word of very God, so that it is perfectly proper to say, "The Holy Spirit speaks to us in and through Scripture. Therefore we are to look to the very words of Scripture for the word and thoughts of the Holy Spirit."<sup>32</sup> This conception of the relation between the Spirit and the penmen is monergistic. Scripture was not brought about by the will of men, nor even by the cooperation of men.<sup>33</sup> As

---

<sup>32</sup> Gerhard, disputationum theologicorum...pars secunda, p. 1116. Hutter, loci communes theologici, p.30: "Deus ipse autor est scripturarum, & singula verba singula Dei sunt eloquia." Gerhard, commentarius super posteriorem D. Petri epistolam, p.137: "Atque Spiritus Sanctus est principalis scripturae autor, qui eam promulgavit & sanctis DEI hominibus inspiravit."

<sup>33</sup> In speaking of revelation Calov, theologia positiva, p.18, says that he usually prefers to consider it in its narrow sense as that which is confined to the written word of God. He insists that revelation is an external act of God. It is not an act of man, but is delivered to man. Man is only the instrument through which revelation is made. Since inspiration is a mode of revelation, inspiration too must be monergistic.

instruments and amanuenses of the Spirit the writers could write nothing except what was dictated to them. Scripture is God's book: he alone has caused it to be written. Although he employed men as tools, and although he chose to write his word in no other way than by means of these penmen, still these tools played no principal part in writing God's word. Scripture is not man's, but God's word. To be sure, men participated in writing Scripture, but not in such a way that they became co-authors with God.<sup>34</sup> Scripture was not written partly by God and partly by men so that a joint human-divine product results. If such were the case it could no longer be called the word of God.<sup>35</sup> As in the case of the ten commandments the Scriptures were written, so to speak, with the finger of God in that he used and possessed the hearts and all the faculties of the amanuenses.<sup>36</sup> And so the dogmaticians do not shrink from saying that God himself wrote the Scriptures.<sup>37</sup> Hutter<sup>38</sup> explains how this may be said, "God himself is the principal author of Scripture. Therefore even if God did not immediately write the Scripture but deigned to employ the pen and service of the prophets and

---

<sup>34</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 55: "Solus ergo Deus, si accurate loqui velimus, S. Scripturae autor dicendus est, Prophetae vero & Apostoli autores dici non possunt, nisi per quadam catachresin; utpote qui potius Dei auctoris calami, & ἀρχι-γραμμάτης Spiritus S. verbum dicantis, & inspirantis, notarii, & amanuenses fuerunt."

<sup>35</sup> Calov, Socinismus profligatus. p. 62.

<sup>36</sup> Dedekenn, op. cit., appendix nova. p. 212.

<sup>37</sup> Dannhauer, ΘΑΘΣΟΦΙΑ christiana. p. 33: "Quis scripsit? DOMINUS ipse... exarit, sed quod per viros divinos exarrasset, ac eorum sibi scripturam approbriasset, tanquam suam."

<sup>38</sup> loci communes theologici. p. 30.

apostles, still nothing is thereby subtracted from the authority of Scripture. For it is God and God alone who inspired in the prophets and apostles both what they were to speak and what they were to write, and he used their mouths, their tongues, their hands and pens. In such a manner Scripture as such was written by God himself; the prophets and apostles were merely his organs."<sup>39</sup>

When the dogmatists attribute the authorship of Scripture exclusively to God and call the apostles and prophets amanuenses, letter writers and clerks of the Holy Spirit they are merely attempting to maintain the instrumentality of their office. This significant fact is pointed out by Quenstedt when he says that the writers of Scripture regarded themselves merely as instruments which could not work unless they were moved by God, as amanuenses who should write nothing unless it was dictated to them. Quenstedt maintains that the prophets and apostles contributed nothing in the writing of Scripture except their speech and their pens.<sup>40</sup> Calov

---

<sup>39</sup> Referring to the spoken apostolic word Balduin comments that God is the author of this too, Cf. Balduin, F. commentarius in omnes epistolas beati apostoli Pauli, editio altera priore longe emaculatio. Francofurti ad Moenum, 1710. p.1140: "Vox quidem audiabatur humana; sed ea vox erat vehiculum verbi divini."

<sup>40</sup> op. cit., I,72: "Habebant sese Scriptores sacri in concinnanda Scriptura S. ad modum instrumentorum, quae non operantur, nisi mota a causa principali, & instar amanuensium, quibus integrum non est, quicquam scribere, nisi quod in calamus ipsis dictatur, si vel maxime illorum, quae ex dictantis ore, tanquam amanuenses calamo excipiunt, non sint inscii. Sicut itaque amanuensi scribenda dictantur, etiam quae ante fuerant ipsi nota, ita Spiritus S. inspirando suggestit sacris Scriptoribus, quaecunque calamo erant consignanda, sive jam ante fuerint nota, sive minus Prophetae & apostoli nihil de suo contulerunt, praeter linguam & calamum." Cf. loc. cit., I,73: "Disting. inter Scriptores qui aliquid de suo labore conferunt; considerando, quibus rem scribendam verbis efferant; & Scriptores, quibus ipsa quoque verba in calamum dictantur, quique nihil, praeter externum scribendi seu literas pingendi laborem conferunt; non illis, sed his Scriptores sacri sunt adnumerandi."

is even more insistent in his emphasis upon the instrumentality of the writers of Scripture and upon the elimination of every possibility of synergism in regard to inspiration.

In his dissertationes theologicae Rostochienses he maintains that God did not furnish the holy writers with words in such a way that they could speak and write, but in such a way that he might speak through them.<sup>41</sup> They were no more than means through which he spoke and in whom he inspired his word.

Activated and inspired by him they spoke, but he spoke in the same act.<sup>42</sup> Calov writes,<sup>43</sup> "The Holy Spirit has imparted the word to the prophets and apostles. Hence the mystery of Christ is said to be 'revealed unto the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit,' Eph.3.5. and 'the Spirit of Christ which was in the prophets testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, and the apostles preached the Gospel through the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven.' 1 Pet.1.11,12. Now he who revealed this mystery to the prophets and apostles, he who dwelt in them and the announced beforehand what would happen regarding Christ, he who through the apostles preached the Gospel by which they evangelized, -- certainly he imparted and dictated, so to speak, the word to the prophets and apostles and moved the prophets and apostles by inspiration and activation as Peter testifies, 2 Pet.1.21. where he denies that prophecy came

---

<sup>41</sup> dissertationes theologicae Rostochienses. p.125: "Qui Prophetis & Apostolis Verbum indidit, eosque ita egit, ut non tam ipsi loquerentur, quam ille per os ipsorum, is est autor principalis Verbi."

<sup>42</sup> ibid. "Nam Prophetas & Apostolos tantum autores ministeriales esse constat, quibus inspiravit Verbum autor Verbi principalis, cujus impulsu & afflatu ipsi, locuti sunt quique per eosdem loquutus est."

<sup>43</sup> ibid.

by the will of men, but on the contrary says that holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. All this means that prophecies were not human fables of human fabrication but were oracles of the Holy Spirit. They were not devised and invented by men, but inspired by the Holy Spirit in the prophets who spoke not of their own will but from the free will and direction of the Holy Spirit."<sup>44</sup>

This monergistic doctrine of inspiration does not imply that God dehumanized his amanuenses and reduced them to mere mechanisms. They spoke consciously and out of understanding and experience and they wrote in the same way.<sup>45</sup> Quenstedt very definitely says,<sup>46</sup> "We must distinguish between those who have been snatched away and are in a trance and do not know what they are doing and saying and between the apostles whom the Holy Spirit activated in such a way that they understood those things which they were speaking and writing." Again he writes,<sup>47</sup> "The writers are said to be *Φερόμενοι*, activated, incited, borne, by the Holy Spirit not as if they were unconscious as the enthusiasts say of themselves and as the Gentiles imagine the ecstasy in their prophets. Neither is it to be taken as if the prophets did not understand their

<sup>44</sup> Cf. loc. cit., p.127: "Nulla Prophetia est ex proprio & privato cujusdam ingenio & arbitrio allata. Ex contra: omnis Prophetia est allata & annunciata per Prophetas a Spiritu sancti." Cf. Haffenreffer, loci theologici. p.117.

<sup>45</sup> Calov, dissertationes theologicae Rostochienses. p.130.

<sup>46</sup> op. cit., I,64.

<sup>47</sup> loc. cit., I,57. On the basis of Quenstedt Hoenecke, Ev.-Luth. Dogmatik, I,343, comments that the old dogmaticians definitely did not conceive of the writers as mere unconscious machines. In support of his contention he quotes a statement of Quenstedt, op. cit., I,72: "Habebant sese scriptores sacri in concinnanda scriptura sacra ad modum instrumentorum, quae non operantur, nisi mota a causa principali, &...si vel maxime illorum, quae ex dictantis ore, tanquam amanuenses calamo excipiunt, non sint inscii." Cf. Note 40.

prophecies of the things which they were to write which was the aberration once taught by the Montanists, Phrygians, or Cataphrygians, and Priscillianists." But not only did the writers write consciously; they were enlightened intellectually and spiritually so that they understood very well what they wrote under inspiration.<sup>48</sup> To write by inspiration of God is to write "immediate illuminatione intellectus".<sup>49</sup> According to Quenstedt inspiration embraces first of all a certain supernatural and extraordinary enlightenment of the minds of the writers.<sup>50</sup> Hollaz contends that the *φορά* of the Holy Spirit involves not merely an urge to speak and write but also an illumination of the Spirit to which is added the so-called *δύναμις ἑρμηνευτική*, that is, the gift of interpreting and explaining clearly the most lofty of divine mysteries.<sup>51</sup> The amanuenses then not only write consciously but possessed a most complete understanding of what they wrote. Thus the penmen as they were led by the Holy Spirit had a special knowledge of the divine mysteries about which they

---

<sup>48</sup> Dedekenn, op. cit., appendix nova. p.181.

<sup>49</sup> Baier, op. cit., p.80.

<sup>50</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,69: "...qui complectitur i. ἑλλάξι-  
ψιν, sive supernaturalem quandam & extraordinariam mentis  
illuminationem, quae inster coruscationis & irradiationis  
alicujus fiebat, & quidem non ad modum habitus permanentis,  
sed actus transeuntis."

<sup>51</sup> Hollaz, op. cit., p.84: "Nam ἡ *φορά* tum impulsus ad lo-  
quendum scribendum, tum illuminationem Spiritus sancti no-  
tat: quam consequitur *δύναμις ἑρμηνευτική*, facultas inter-  
pretandi, qua mysteria sublimissima perspicue enuclearunt,  
nec non donum infallibilitatis, ut ab errandi periculo fu-  
erint immunes."

wrote.<sup>52</sup> This exceptional comprehension of spiritual matters would, of course, pertain only to τὸ ὄτι, not to τὸ πῶς. We see that a mantic, Montanist conception of the relation between the Holy Spirit and the writers of Scripture is foreign to the dogmatists and by the later Lutheran teachers of this time and especially by Quenstedt is consciously and loudly condemned.

This monergistic doctrine of inspiration does not imply that the amanuenses were forced to write Scripture. They wrote willingly, but not of their own free will. God made them willing penmen.<sup>53</sup> As Christians whose wills were ruled by the Spirit of God they wrote willingly.<sup>54</sup> They themselves chose what they would write.<sup>55</sup> Therefore the apostles and prophets had the same purpose in writing Scripture as did God.<sup>56</sup> God did not violate the wills and personalities of his penmen but conditioned them and made them what they were.

---

<sup>52</sup> Gerhard, commentarius super posteriorem D. Petri epistolam. p.149: Gerhard says among other things that the *φωρά* of the Spirit embraces an inner enlightenment of the mind and an exceptional comprehension of spiritual truths: "...complectitur ἔλλαμψιν illuminationem mentis interiorem, qua eximia rerum divinarum & coelestium mysteriorem notitia per Spiritus Sanctum in illis accenditur." Cf. Gerhard, methodus studii theologici. p.8: "Prophetas & Apostoli per immediatam Spiritus sancti ἔλλαμψιν & extraordinariam divinam inspirationem sine ullis adminiculis vel laboribus humanis notitiam divinarum mysteriorum perceperunt."

<sup>53</sup> Baier, op. cit., p.73: "...voluntatem eorum ad actum scribendi excitavit."

<sup>54</sup> Hunnius, Ac. thesaurus apostolicus. p.1056: "Non enim Prophetas per Enthusiasmos Satanicos, nec ex proprio sensu & voluntate locuti sunt, sed ipse Spiritus sanctus ipsorum pectus, & linguam in proferendis vaticiniis suis rexit." This reminds one of Gerhard's statement, loci theologici. II,26, that the prophets and apostles wrote not as men but as men of God.

<sup>55</sup> Gerhard, aphorismi succincti & selecti. p.A7r.

<sup>56</sup> Gerhard, loci theologici. II,378: "Deus & sancti Dei homines scripturam omnibus distinarunt."

He prepared their intellect and incited their will to write what they did.<sup>57</sup> Quenstedt avers<sup>58</sup> that according to 2 Pet. 1.19ff Scripture was written apart from the will of man κατ' ἄρσιν θελήματος ἀνθρώπου. He means that the will of man as it functions in the natural domain and even the regenerate will of the believer as it is incited toward good have nothing to do with the writing of Scripture. But this, says Quenstedt, applies to the will as it is considered in a contributory sense, efficienter & originaliter. Subjectively and materially the will is active in the act of inspiration. In other words, the will of the amanuenses must not be excluded in the act of inspiration, says Quenstedt, "as though the amanuenses had written without and against their will, without consciousness and unwillingly; for they wrote voluntarily, willingly and knowingly." Psychologically the wills of the amanuenses were active when they wrote the Scriptures although they contributed nothing of their own will to Scripture.<sup>59</sup>

This monergistic doctrine of inspiration does not imply that the amanuenses lost their identity or that they did not retain their various stylistic differences. The dogmaticians

---

<sup>57</sup> Scherzer, systema theologiae. p.9.

<sup>58</sup> op. cit., I,57.

<sup>59</sup> Even the mandatum scribendi does not violate the wills or personalities of the penmen. Such a mandatum occurred only in the context of the various external occasions which prompted the men to write, occasions which were not accidental but were brought about by the providence of God. Cf. Quenstedt, op. cit., I,65. Cf. Dau, W. H. T. "'Mechanical Inspiration' the Stumbling-block of Modern Theology", Theological Quarterly. XVII, (1913). p.1ff. Dau says, p.6, that the mandatum scribendi in the theology of Quenstedt was a "suavis dispositio, not as a stern fiat, hurling itself with irresistible force upon the human intellect and will, and by sheer elementary power coercing its victim into obedience."

are all quick to note the dissimilarity between the penmen as touching their manner of writing. Baier says,<sup>60</sup> "The point is well taken that the manner of speaking in the Scripture is in some places more calm and gentle, in other places more severe and forceful; again in some places it is rather plain and less ornate, in other places quite grand and ornamented. Sometimes the use of a language seems to be pure; at other times there appears to be a mixture with the idiom of other languages." But if each of the amanuenses retained his own individual style of writing how can the Bible be verbally inspired? This was the question asked by Erasmus, Saurez and other Catholic theologians.<sup>61</sup> If Scripture is verbally

<sup>60</sup> Op. cit., p. 81.

<sup>61</sup> Rathmann taught that the outer word was an effect of the inner word which was in man. Therefore man, or at least something in man, was the cause of Scripture. He was consistent for he held that Scripture, or the outer word, was not in any sense divine. Such a view was, of course, synergistic and was not acceptable to the orthodox Lutherans. It was condemned by the faculty at Jena, Cf. Dedekenn, op. cit., appendix nova, p. 217: "Dass die heiligen Propheten und Apostel die heilige Schrift verfasset/ und in solchem respect causae ministeriales, Mittel-Ursachen der Beschreibung des Goettlichen Wortes genennet werden koennen/ davon ist deine Frage/ aber solch eusserliches beschriebenes Wort ist nicht bloss und allein ein eusserliches Zeichen und Zeugnuess des innerlichen im Hertzen der Propheten und Apostel verbliebenen Wortes/ sondern seiner innerlichen Form und Wesen nach/ ists der Goettliche Sin/ Verstand und Meynung von Goettlichen Geheimnuessen/ darum kan man proprie loquendo nicht sagen/ das geschriebene Wort Gottes sey ein effectus des innerlichen im Hertzen der Propheten und Apostel zurueck verbliebenen Wortes/ sondern es ist eben dasselbe innerliche Wort in die bedeutende Buchstaben verfasset. *Scriptiois causa efficiens ministerialis fuerunt Prophetas & Apostoli, sed non ipsius verbi quod scripserant.* Das Wort Gottes in den Prophetischen und Apostolischen Schriften verfasset/ hat seinen Ursprung und Anfang nicht von den Aposteln/ sondern von GOTT/ derselbe hat aus freywilliger Gnade diesen Rathschluss von der Menschen Heil und Seligkeit."

inspired it must possess a uniform style, they said. The dogmaticians reply that in a sense Scripture has a uniform style. Its unity of subject matter makes it appear as if it were written by one author. In regard to the obvious diversity of style between the various books as they were written by different authors, this diversity is explained by the fact that the Holy Spirit accommodated himself to the circumstances and abilities and natural endowments of the amanuenses; just as a musician might adjust himself to the various chords and tones of a musical instrument, and yet the notes which all musical instruments play are the same.<sup>62</sup> If Cicero can write in both a grand and a humble style the Holy Spirit can do likewise.<sup>63</sup> Feustking<sup>64</sup> in his typically abrupt manner answers the objection of the Jesuits against verbal inspiration with this argument of accommodation: "If anyone on account of the diversity of style and different manner of expression in phraseology and style disparages the inspiration of the Scriptures, he neither knows nor rightly judges that first of all this indisputable fact must be considered, that the Spirit when he dictated the words of Scripture accommodated himself to the natural abilities of each prophet,

---

<sup>62</sup> Dannhauer, ΘΑΘΣΟΥΦΙΑ christiana. p.58: "Proprietas styli uniformis quoad substantiam in utroque testamenti corpore, ut unum os omnium ΘΕΟΠΝΕΥΣΤΩΝ videatur, ut habuimus paulo ante: quanquam quoad accidentalem styli conformationem, singulari συγκαταβάσει Sp. Sanctus se dimiserit ad ingenia, studia, nationes ΘΕΟΠΝΕΥΣΤΩΝ: quo factum, ut Esias (regius sanguis) nitidius, Amos humilior, Lucas literis graecis imbutus, elegantius scripserit, sicut in organo musico substantia cantici, harmoniae, toni (Phrygii Lydiive) una est, fistulis autem acutioribus aliis, aliis obtusioribus se spiritus, qui inflat tibiae, accommodat."

<sup>63</sup> Hollez, op. cit., p.93.

<sup>64</sup> Hunnius, Ac. thesaurus apostolicus. p.843.

evangelist and apostle and to their scholarship and ordinary mode of speaking." Quenstedt explains that the Holy Spirit could only speak to us by accommodating himself to the human mode of speaking and communication. He too maintains that there is no contradiction between a suggestio verborum and an accommodatio ordinario dicendi modo. He says,<sup>65</sup> "A distinction must be observed between the genus loquendi and the phrases, words and terms themselves. The holy writers employed the genus loquendi in daily use according to the every day custom and meaning, and hence diversity of style arose, especially among the prophets. Now insofar as they were instructed in and accustomed to a lofty or mean style of speaking and writing the Holy Spirit chose to adjust and accommodate himself to the natural endowments of these men, and to express the same things through some in a magnificent manner, through others in an inferior manner. The Holy Spirit accommodated himself to the understanding and natural endowments of the holy writers in order that he might record the mysteries according to the usual mode of speaking."<sup>66</sup>

It has been pointed out<sup>67</sup> that Calov does not embrace this doctrine of accommodation as it is presented by Dannhauer and Baier and Quenstedt. Calov recognizes the stylistic variations in Scripture and he speaks of an accommodation

<sup>65</sup> op. cit., I,75.

<sup>66</sup> loc. cit., I,76: "Magna est inter sacros Scriptores, quoad stylum & genus dicendi, diversitas, ut supra dictum, quae ex eo esse videtur, quia Spiritus S. accommodavit se ordinario dicendi modo, uniusque suum sermonis genus relinquens; propterea tamen non negandum, Spiritus S. ipsa verba in individuo ipsis inspirasse."

<sup>67</sup> Philippi, Kirchliche Glaubenslehre. I,241.

of the Spirit but he says that this accommodation which is an act of God's free will is not in reference to the personalities and genus loquendi of the amanuenses but to the peculiarities of the various material touched upon in the Scriptures. The statement which sets forth Calov's views on this matter and which seems at first glance to contradict Quenstedt's position reads as follows:<sup>68</sup> "The Holy Spirit, the supreme author of sacred Scripture, was not bound to the style of anyone, but, as the absolutely free master of languages, he was able through anyone to employ the method, style and mode of speech which he pleased, and he could communicate divine oracles just as easily through Jeremiah in a highly ornate style as through Isaiah in an ordinary style. Moreover he regarded not so much the aptitude of the authors to speak as the nature of the contents which he wished to speak of. And throughout all he used his own absolute authority according to his unlimited wisdom." On the basis of this statement Hoenecke finds a disagreement between Calov and Quenstedt.<sup>69</sup> He criticizes Calov and points out that the styles of the different writers are present even when the contents of Scripture vary. Calov, however, does not state that the style in Scripture differs in respect to its content. Actually there is not so much difference between Calov and

---

<sup>68</sup> systema. I, 574: "Spiritus S. scripturae S. summus autor non adstrictus fuit ad ullius stylum, sed, ceu liberrimus linguarum Doctor caractere, stylo ac sermonis genere uti potuit per unumquemque quo libuerit, ac tam vacille per Jeremiam ornatu sermonis singulari, quam per Esaiam stylo simplici Oracula divina proponere: Qui vero non tam autorum dicendi facultatem, quam materiarum, de quibus dicere voluit, indolem spectavit, suaque per omnia *αυτεφουρία* usus est pro immensa sapientia sua."

<sup>69</sup> Ev.-Luth. Dogmatik. I, 347.

Quenstedt on this issue as one might at first suppose. Hoe-  
necke's strong conjecture may be due to the fact that he did  
not sufficiently study the context of Calov's statement, but  
more likely it is due to the fact that Quenstedt himself seems  
to think that Calov is at variance with his own view regard-  
ing the accommodation of the Spirit to his organs.<sup>70</sup> How-  
ever, Quenstedt does not criticize Calov's presentation of the  
whole matter, but merely comments that Calov does not wholly  
share his own views. Mild as he was, Quenstedt would have  
expressed himself in stronger language had he felt there  
was any basic disagreement between himself and his colleague.  
But the context indicates, as Dau has aptly shown,<sup>71</sup> that  
the divergence between these two representatives of the old  
Lutheran orthodoxy is only apparent. Calov is replying to  
an opponent who uses the doctrine of accommodation to argue  
against the common Lutheran view that the Spirit communicated  
to the writers the exact language in which they were to write  
their Scriptures ("nec docere eos linguam, in qua Prophetiam  
publicare debeant"). Calov simply replies that the Spirit  
was not bound to use a style which would have ruined the very  
purpose of Scripture, namely, that it be understood. And  
he emphasizes another kind of accommodation, an accommodation  
to the contents of Scripture and to the reader of Scripture.

---

<sup>70</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 74: "Verum haec sententia, quod  
scil. Spiritus S. sese accommodaverit ad organum suum, ejus-  
que ingenium ac dicendi genus consequutum, non omnibus placet,  
causamque diversi sermonis esse existimant: qui Spiritus S.  
unicuique dat eloqui, prout ipse vult, Act. ii, 4. & quod non  
tam auctorum dicendi facultatem, quam materiarum, de quibus  
dicere aut scribere voluit, indolem, respexerit. Ita Dn. D.  
Calovius System. T. i. c. 4. qu. 5. p. 574."

<sup>71</sup> op. cit., p. 83ff.

But from the above statement of Calov it is wrong to conclude that Calov does not teach an accommodation of the Spirit to the writers of the Scriptures. Calov teaches such an accommodation. He calls it by the term *συγκατάβασις*, condescension. He says,<sup>72</sup> "Finally even though it is said that the style of Scripture is clear and well suited not only to the intelligence of the readers and hearers but also to the old and accustomed manner of speech of the holy writers, still we would have to acknowledge with this admission [in eo] a condescension of the Holy Spirit in that he accommodated himself at times to the ordinary manner of speaking, leaving to the writers their mode of speech. And yet we must not deny that the Holy Spirit inspired in them the very words." Calov, then, teaches the same with regard to accommodation as Quenstedt except that he fears that such a doctrine may give occasion to a synergistic idea of inspiration. Quenstedt apparently does not share his fears. And yet he is just as careful to couch his discussion in terms which can-

---

<sup>72</sup> *systema*, I, 575: "Denique etiamsi accommodatius non tantum lectorum, & auditorum genio dicatur & apertus Scripturae stylus, sed etiam antiquo & unitato dicendi generi scriptorum sacrorum, agnoscenda tamen in eo foret Spiritus sanctus *συγκατάβασις*, quod ipse se accommodarit quandoque ordinario dicendi modo, scriptoribus suum sermonis genus reliquens, non vero negandum, quod Spiritus sanctus inspirarit iidem verba: Annon enim in verborum inspiratione sese illis accommodare potuit?"

not be taken in a synergistic sense.<sup>73</sup> Like Hoenecke, his student, Tholuck has drawn wrong conclusions from Calov's discussion of accommodation. He says,<sup>74</sup> that Calov objected to the doctrine of Musaeus that the stylistic variations in Scripture were accounted for by the different characteristics of the various writers. This is not true. Calov taught that stylistic dissimilarities obtained in Scripture, and he did not deny that these were due to the characteristics of the writers, although he did not, like Quenstedt, emphasize this idea. When Tholuck goes on to remark that Calov ignored the "later subterfuge" of accommodation of the Holy Spirit he is also in error. As his above statements show Calov was aware of this doctrine, and even taught it in a restricted manner.

That the Holy Spirit employed the differing styles of the penmen in recording his word in Scripture does not imply that there are barbarisms or solecisms in Scripture. The dogmaticians unanimously reject the possibility of solecisms occurring in Holy Writ. They grant that the Greek of the New Testament is definitely Hellenistic and differs from the pure classical style. They grant that there are count-

---

<sup>73</sup> In the midst of his discussion of accommodation Quenstedt says, op. cit., I, 75: "...quod vero has & non alias phrases, has & non alias voces, vel aequipollentes adhibuerunt Scriptores sacri, hoc unice ab instinctu & inspiratione divina est." Again he says, ibid. "Spiritus S. itaque qui per os sanctorum prophetarum & Apostolorum loquutus est, atque etiam illorum manu calamoque, quasi scripsit, uti in loquendo, ita & in scribendo, pro sua liberrima voluntate, suo cujusque ingenio & generi dicendi consueto se accommodavit, & attemperavit, ut ita velut ex sua cujusque naturali indole cum sermo, tum Scriptura illorum flueret."

<sup>74</sup> Tholuck, A. Der Geist der lutherischen Theologen Wittenbergs im Verlaufe des 17. Jahrhunderts. Hamburg und Gotha. 1852. pp. 353-354.

less Hebraisms in the Scriptures of the New Testament. To be sure, the Greek of the New Testament is not polished or elegant, but it is good Greek. This they would say, I am sure, even of the book of Revelation, although it certainly departs from the ordinary use of Greek syntax. To my knowledge they make no mention of the syntactical problems raised in this book. A departure from the conventional rule of Greek etymology and syntax, they say, is one thing; a solecism is another. The former is not necessarily based on inconsistency or ignorance. Even Augustine's definition of a solecism as a use of a style differing from any method which has previously been generally accepted (de doctrina Christiana. II,13) will not meet with their approval and cannot be predicated of Scripture, because Scripture was not written contrary to established linguistic usage.<sup>75</sup> It was mainly Erasmus who had driven the dogmatists to defend Scripture against the charge of solecisms. He asserted that the sermons of the apostles were not only unrefined and confused but also incomplete and disturbing and sometimes faulty in construction.<sup>76</sup> Quenstedt disagrees. He argues<sup>77</sup> that Erasmus labored under the false hypothesis that the gift of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost was only temporary, with the result that the style of the apostles was ordinarily rude and unlearned. This hypothesis was untenable for three rea-

---

<sup>75</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,85.

<sup>76</sup> Erasmus, D. in novum testamentum annotationes, ab ipso autore iam postremum sic recognitae ac locupletatae, ut prope modum notum opus videri possit. Basilae. 1542. p.317.

<sup>77</sup> op. cit., I,83.

sons. 1) The very purpose of the gift of the Spirit was that the apostles might preach and announce the wonderful works of God throughout the whole world. 2) The hypothesis fails to distinguish between the visible signs and the things signified. The visible sign which is the diaperiae linguae passes away, but the thing signified which is the gift of the Spirit remains. 3) The aorist ἐκάρθησε can only mean that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is permanent. Thus the gift of tongues remained with the apostles as long as they held their office. Hollaz maintains<sup>78</sup> that the possibility of solecisms is incompatible with the doctrine of verbal inspiration. Appealing to Matt.10.19 he remarks that if the Holy Spirit inspired the extemporaneous preaching of the apostles not only τὸ τί, in regard to content, but also τὸ πῶς, in regard to their manner of speaking, certainly he suggested to them a manner of writing works which was seemly and apt in conveying meaning.

Nor are there barbarisms in Scripture. A foreign word in Scripture is not necessarily a barbarism. Vocabula peregrina non statim barbarismum efficiunt. Because the New Testament contains many Hebraisms, Chaldaisms and Latinisms does not automatically mean that it contains barbarisms; by such a process of argumentation any writer who uses a figure of speech drawn from another language than his own must suffer his style to be branded barbaric. No, Hebraisms are essential in the writing of the New Testament, for the Old Testament is constantly echoed in the New.

---

<sup>78</sup> op. cit., p.104.

Nor does the fact that the apostles were called unlearned and ignorant men infer that Scripture contains solecisms and barbarisms. They were unlearned before Pentecost but not after that day. But even had they been unlearned they did not necessarily speak in solecisms.<sup>79</sup> Even ignorant people can write coherently. Finally it is simply not worthy of a Christian to attribute solecisms and barbarisms to Scripture. It is nothing short of blasphemy to judge God's inspired word by the laws of pagan literature. He who charges Scripture with solecisms and barbarisms is imputing such faults to God himself who has inspired and dictated the very words and phrases of Scripture.<sup>80</sup>

It has been said that the scholastic Lutheran dogmatists taught a mechanical theory of inspiration.<sup>81</sup> If this description of their view -- it is usually given in the form of an indictment -- means that they held to a verbal inspiration according to which the amanuenses were efficienter and originaliter passive instruments to whom God dictated the very words to be recorded in Scripture, it is correct. If it is meant to convey the idea that the dogmatists wished

---

<sup>79</sup> Olearius, J. de stylo novi testamenti. Suobaci. 1690. p.98. Olearius says that a solecism is not merely something unclear or common but something incongruous. His book deals quite thoroughly with the question of solecisms in the New Testament.

<sup>80</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,84: "Sane qui sacros scriptores βαρβαρίζειν & σολοικίζειν dicit, sive qui Apostolorum & Evangelistarum stylum turpi barbarismorum & solecismorum nota foedare & conspurcare ausus fuerit, Deo ipsi crimen illud impingit, qui verba ipsa & phrases illis infudit, situmque & nexum verborum dictavit & inspiravit." To judge Scripture according to profane syntactical laws would also have been opposed to the old Lutheran principle of sola scriptura and the ἀξιοπιστία of Scripture.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. the statements made by Oettingen and others in Hoencke, Ev.-Luth. Dogmatik. I,335.

to reduce the writers of Scripture to mere lifeless machines which experienced no mental activity but only moved their hands unconsciously in obedience to an irresistible impulse of the Holy Spirit, it is not in accordance with the facts in the case. It is true that Quenstedt, for instance, says that the prophets and apostles contributed nothing of their own in writing Scripture except their pens.<sup>82</sup> But from this statement it cannot be concluded that he wishes to reduce the writers of Scripture to a state where they experienced nothing during the act of inspiration. Quenstedt himself makes this fact clear when he says in the same paragraph that the writers took up their pens consciously. Actually the mechanical idea of inspiration was not only foreign to the dogmatists, it was loudly and consciously condemned by them. They were opposed to every conception of inspiration which would degrade the writers to some sort of inanimate objects which neither thought nor felt in the act of writing but to which God imparted revelation as one might pour water into a pail. Scherzer<sup>83</sup> says it is absurd to think of the inspired writers as inanimate instruments. The dogmatists denied all cooperation on the part of the writers, cooperation which would make Scripture a divine-human product. But with equal resolution they affirmed that the amanuenses wrote willingly, consciously, from conviction and experience, and

---

<sup>82</sup> op. cit., I, 72: "Prophetas & Apostoli nihil de suo contulerunt, praeter linguam & calamum." Cf. Calov, biblia novi testamenti illustrata. II, 1547.

<sup>83</sup> systema theologiae. p. 8. Scherzer does not shrink from saying two pages later, "Spiritus S. ipsis το πῶς καὶ τὶ suggestit, ut non ceu homines scriberent, sed Spiritus S. per illorum os loqueretur, & ipsorum manibus sacras literas exararet."

spontaneously.<sup>84</sup> That they called the writers pens and hands does not mean that they wished to de-humanize the writers. These terms were employed only to emphasize their conviction that God was in fact the auctor primarius of Scripture and the apostles and prophets the means or instruments through whom God reduced his word to writing. It is therefore strange that Luthardt represents the old Lutheran doctrine of inspiration as not considering the personal mental activity of the Biblical writers.<sup>85</sup> Dörner renders a still more distorted view of their position when he says<sup>86</sup> that the scholastic Lutherans regarded the writers of Scripture as instruments which were withdrawn from living reality. According to Dörner the doctrine of the dogmatists regarding inspiration not only excludes all human cooperation (which is true), but treats the holy writers as if Christianity had effected nothing in them. Dörner describes their position as violating the personality and destroying the individuality of the holy writers. Concerning their doctrine he says,<sup>87</sup> "If the Holy Spirit worked in them [the amanuenses] in such a way as to render them void of individuality, if he continues to be extraneous to their person, if Christianity cannot become the possession of man without suffering an obscuration, then this same fact must also pertain to posterity in their re-

<sup>84</sup> Calov, A. scripta anti-Sociniana. Ulmae. 1684. pars tertia. Voellige Entdeckung der Neuen Socinianischen hochtsschädlichen Sect. 1648-50. p.28: "...dass der heilige Geist den heiligen Evangelisten eingegeben habe/ wie/ und was sie schreiben sollen/ sondern das einjedweder von ihnen so gut schreiben/ als er etwas gewust/ gesehen/, oder erfahren."

<sup>85</sup> Kompendium der Dogmatik, Neunte verbesserte Auflage. Leipzig. 1893. p.326.

<sup>86</sup> Geschichte der protestantischen Theologie. Muenchen. 1867. p.559.

<sup>87</sup> loc. cit., p.550.

lation to Scripture and the whole inspiration theory ultimately appears as an unworkable and idle expense." Whether the conclusion Dorner draws from this travesty of their doctrine is necessary is of no consequence, since he has misunderstood and misrepresented their conception of the relation between the Spirit and the writers. To the dogmatists it was unthinkable that God would by-pass the individuality of the sacred writers in causing Scripture to be written. Their theory of accommodation teaches that the Spirit purposely employed the individuality and natural endowments (indoles) of the writers.<sup>88</sup> Nor did they ever imply that the Holy Spirit in the act of inspiration remained aloof from the personalities of the writers, if this is the idea Dorner wishes to convey. As to the idea imputed to them that Christianity suffers an obscuration the minute it becomes the possession of man, they would have rejected it unequivocally as militating against the perspicuity of Scripture. They were quite certain that Christianity had not been obscured in themselves. Dorner himself elsewhere says that they taught that certainty regarding the truth of Christianity was both possible and necessary.<sup>89</sup>

It has often been said that the scholastic doctrine of inspiration did away with the human side of Scripture, that it denied the necessity of self-preparation and the actuality

---

<sup>88</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 75: "Spiritus S. enim ad scriptorum sacrorum captum ac indolem sese attemperavit, ut mysteria secundum consuetum dicendi modum consignarentur."

<sup>89</sup> op. cit., p. 540.

of the writers' human emotions and personal witness in Scripture. Cremer<sup>90</sup> calls the doctrine of the Lutheran dogmaticians a complete innovation, lacking only ecstasy to be a renewal of the magic doctrine of Philo. He says that the dogmaticians reduce the magical theory of Philo into a mechanical one. Self-preparation of the writers is no longer necessary. Nor is there, he says, any place for personal witness in such a theory. Sasse comes to much the same conclusion.<sup>91</sup> He finds in the monergism of the dogmaticians a Monophysite-Docetic concept of Scripture which destroyed the human character of the Bible. He explains himself by saying that this destruction took place when the holy writers were represented as tools of the Holy Spirit who wrote without the use of their will or character. At this point Sasse has gone too far; the dogmaticians never teach that the human will was inactive or neutral psychologically (materialiter & subjective) as if they experienced nothing when they wrote the Scriptures (ac si citra & contra voluntatem suam inscii ac inviti scripserint divini amanuenses).<sup>92</sup> Sasse correctly observes that Calov taught that the writers did not write from their own private opinions, but that what they wrote was supplied by the Spirit. But when he goes on to quote Calov's words "in quibus nihil humani sit praeter organum oris"<sup>93</sup> in reference

---

<sup>90</sup> Real-Encyclopaedie fuer protestantische Theologie und Kirche, herausgegeben von Dr. J. J. Herzog und D.G. Plitt. Leipzig. 1880. VI,755.

<sup>91</sup> op. cit., p.20.

<sup>92</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,54.

<sup>93</sup> avatem. I,565.

to Isa.51.16 to support his contention that a human element in Scripture is so lacking in Calov that Scripture to him was written apart from the will of the writers, Sasse has exaggerated the true implications of Calov's presentation. The statement of Calov referred to intends to say merely that Isaiah as a prophet spoke not his own words, but the words of the Lord. The will of Isaiah is not mentioned, and there is nothing in the context to indicate that Calov thought that the Spirit of God disregarded the will of his prophet when he inspired him to write.

But did not the dogmatists ignore the human element in Scripture? According to the Lutheran dogmatists, what was the relation between the human and the divine in Scripture, if any? In a certain sense Calov and the other Lutheran teachers of his day held that Scripture was not human, but divine: they contended that Scripture contained no human doctrine, speculation, or animadversions, that human efforts and free will did not concur in bringing about Scripture in any contributory sense.<sup>94</sup> Even the very words of Scripture were in this sense not the words of the prophets and apostles, but the words of God which were communicated to the writers. This is what Calov means when he says that God put his words into the mouth of the prophet Isaiah.<sup>95</sup> And yet this does not mean that the words in Scripture were not human words,

---

<sup>94</sup> Viewed formally as the mens Dei Scripture is something of God. Cf. Calov, systema, I, 717: "Ideo dicunt nonnulli, verbum Dei esse aliquid DEI, uti Paulus loqui amat τὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ 1 Cor. 11, 11 esse ἀπόρροιαν quidam divinam."

<sup>95</sup> systema, I, 565: "Dicitur enim Deus verba sua ponere in ore Prophetarum, ut describatur ita officium Prophetarum, ut oracula divina proferantur non verbis Prophetarum, sed ipsius Domini, a Domino in ore ejus positum, in quibus nihil humani sit, praeter organum oris."

words which expressed the feelings and desires of the writers. For God used not only the genus loquendi of the writers, but also their emotions and their whole personalities in recording his word for the benefit of the human race. It is simply taken for granted by all the dogmaticians that the will and intellect and emotion of the holy writers were active and cooperative psychologically. They felt no need to emphasize this fact since it was accepted by everyone in their day. And in such a sense, then, Scripture was a human book, containing human words and human thoughts, human aspirations and human emotions. If there was no human side to Scripture, if there was no personal mental and volitional activity on the part of the writers, inspiration would have become a mechanical operation which is enthusiasm and Montanism.<sup>96</sup> One cannot help but feel that Sasse, like Dorner, has been so caught by the monergistic inspiration doctrine of the old dogmaticians that he has neglected to consider what is of equal importance, namely, their doctrine of accommodation. It is this failure to interpret their view of inspiration in the light of their accommodation doctrine which has resulted in a false analysis of their doctrine of inspiration itself, a false analysis which is not uncommon today. Sasse says, for instance, that to the dogmaticians everything in the Bible which pertains to the personal confession of the writers, everything which pertains to the crying out of their troubled and sin-laden souls, even their prayers as recorded in Scripture, are unreal, -- in the same sense as the suffering and

---

<sup>96</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 57.

death of Christ were unreal to the Gnostics, Marcionites and Monophysites. Thus the dogmaticians are pictured as advancing an illusionary, mechanistic concept of inspiration, a concept which they themselves were the first to denounce with fully as much vigor as Sasse.<sup>97</sup> This historical inaccuracy regarding the old Lutheran inspiration doctrine, as typified by Sasse, is unfortunate not only because it is believed by a large number of theologians today who should know better, but also because it really bars the way to a true understanding of the doctrine of Scripture as taught by the dogmaticians.

But do the dogmaticians not teach that the Spirit of God dictated each and every word of Scripture to the pens of his amanuenses? Is this not mechanical inspiration? It is true that they taught that the words of Scripture were written a dictatu.<sup>98</sup> Calov says,<sup>99</sup> "The individual words of the prophets and apostles were dictated by the Holy Spirit in the same way as they are contained in Scripture." On the basis of hundreds of other statements just like this Sasse<sup>100</sup> and others term the orthodox Lutheran doctrine of inspiration a "dictation theory". Such a term is certainly appropriate if it is meant to convey the thought of a mon-

<sup>97</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 57, 64. One need only read Calov's excursus on the fifty-first psalm to understand how he felt that the words of Scripture expressed the innermost thoughts and emotions of the writers, Cf. biblia testamenti veteris illustrata, I, 1024. And how impossible it would have been for Calov to understand this or any other psalm had he felt otherwise. The implications of Sasse's travesty are far-reaching indeed.

<sup>98</sup> Schroeder, opusculum theologicum de principio theologiae, et naturali notitia Dei. p. (:)7r. Hollaz, op. cit., p. 92: "At omnia & singula verba amanuensibus sacris in calamus dictavit...qui epistolas amanuensi in calamus dictitant..."

<sup>99</sup> apudixis articulorum fidei. p. 29.

<sup>100</sup> op. cit., p. 10.

ergistic suggestio verborum. But Sasse means more than this: he uses the term to connote an impersonal, mechanistic theory of inspiration. Is he justified in so doing? The dogmatists often use the word "dicto" to mean "dictate" in the ordinary sense of the term. Words are simply dictated to a penman.<sup>101</sup> However, at other times "dicto" and "suggero" are often equated.<sup>102</sup> Gerhard,<sup>103</sup> for instance associates the word "suggero" with the word "calamus" although "dicto" is ordinarily used. More often the two words, "dicto" and "suggero", are used together and with the word "inspiro" to denote a divine imparting or furnishing of the words of Scripture.<sup>104</sup> In these cases the words -- which are very close to being synonymous as used by the dogmatists -- complement each other and together portray the idea of inspiration in a way in which no single word could express the idea

---

101 Dedekenn, op. cit., appendix nova. p.179: "Wir halten sie darum fuer heilig/ dass sie vom Allerheiligsten ihren Ursprung: vom Heil Geiste den Propheten und Aposteln eingegeben und in die Feder dictiret, 2 Sam.23,v.2. Psal.45,v.1."

102 Calov, apodixis articulorum fidei. p.30: "Observetur emphasis vocis  $\Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\nu\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$ , quae infert, quod per se non sint locuti, sed quod ex inspiratione & suggestione scripserint, idque nihil aliud est, quam quod divinitus dictata sit."

103 loci theologici. I,7ff. Cf. also Calov, apodixis articulorum fidei. p.31.

104 Calov, systema. I,555: "...credendum est...ut ita omnia & singula quaecunque in S. literis habentur...singulari Spiritus sancti dictamini, inspirationi & suggestioni accepta ferenda sint." Calov, consensus repetitus fidei vere Lutheranae. p.8: "Profitemur, & docemus, omnia scripta Prophetica, & Apostolica dicta divina, quia a Deo, ceu fonte, sunt, & divinitus tradita veritas: nihilque in illis inveniri, quod Deum non habeat autorem, vel Deo inspirante, suggerente, & dictante, non sit scriptum, testibus Paulo 1 Corinth.ii. 13. 2 Timoth. iii.16. & Petro, 2 Pet.1.20,21." Quenstedt, op. cit., I,72: "Verba, & voces omnes ac singulas individualiter Spiritus S. sacris Scriptoribus suppeditavit, inspiravit & dictavit."

completely.<sup>105</sup> And even more words are used to bring out the full meaning of this divine act of inspiration: influxus, afflatus, instinctus and suppeditatio. All these words go together to express the divine imparting of the words of Scripture. The best single word to express what they designate is perhaps the German "Eingebung". What is important, however, in our present discussion is the fact that neither "suggestio" nor "dictatio" mean what their modern English derivatives imply. Both terms are best rendered by the word "Eingebung". That the troublesome word "dictatio" cannot possibly have a purely mechanical connotation is also clearly seen from the fact that the dogmatists speak of a dictatio rerum.<sup>106</sup> It has already been shown that the contents of Scripture were, according to the dogmatists, imparted to the holy writers in such a way that they understood what they were to write about. Therefore when Quenstedt says<sup>107</sup> that the amanuenses as instruments of the Spirit could write only what was dictated to them he does not mean that they wrote as lifeless automata who exercised no emotional or volitional activity, but he means that they wrote only those words which the Holy Spirit suggested and actually imparted to them.

<sup>105</sup> It was not an uncommon practice, when no satisfactory equivalent could be found, to represent a Greek word with two or more Latin words. The Greek φερόμενοι was rendered in Latin with the words acti, ducti, impulsi. Cf. Gerhard, loci theologici. II, 26. commentarius super posteriorem D. Petri epistolam. p. 138. Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 68. The word δύναμις was rendered with the words vis & efficacia. And such a practice was carried on in Classical times. Cicero often, in his philosophical works, rendered a single Greek word with two or more Latin equivalents, e.g. νοῦς with mens & ratio (de natura deorum. I, 39. 89), σοφία with ratio & sapientia (ibid. II, 18), and ὄρεξις with conatus & appetitio (ibid. II, 58).

<sup>106</sup> Hollez, op. cit., p. 89: "a dictante Spiritu sancto conceptus rerum scribendarum suggeruntur." Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 67.

<sup>107</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 72.

It must not be thought that all later theologians have misconceived the old Lutheran view pertaining to the relation between the Spirit and the writers of Scripture. Koelling, Rohnert and Hoenecke have correctly understood the old orthodox Lutheran position. Pieper has thoroughly discussed it and has contributed greatly to the eradication of many false notions regarding it. Philippi, in spite of the misnomer "Woerterinspiration" which he has applied to their doctrine, has correctly described the view of the dogmatists regarding the relation of the Holy Spirit to the penmen when he remarks that they conceived of the apostles and prophets not as blind and characterless but conscious and spontaneous organs of the Holy Spirit.<sup>108</sup>

The formulation of the doctrine of verbal inspiration as it was presented by the old Lutheran dogmatists underwent a definite development which at the close of the century culminated in Calov, Quenstedt, Baier and Hollaz. Although all the old dogmatists held the same view concerning inspiration, the later representatives of this orthodox Lutheran tradition go into the subject much more in detail. For instance, they are more explicit in teaching that the very words of Scripture<sup>was</sup> inspired, and they are quick to avoid embracing a mechanical theory of inspiration, whereas the earlier dogmatists, while certainly not teaching such a doctrine, make less conscious effort to reject it. This high degree of doctrinal formulation has its origin at least partially, as Kahnis has pointed out,<sup>109</sup> in the polemical ten-

<sup>108</sup> Kirchliche Glaubenslehre. Stuttgart. 1854. p.179.

<sup>109</sup> Die lutherische Dogmatik. p.276.

dency of the day and in the ever present threat of Romanism, syncretism, Socinianism, Arminianism and mysticism. The statement of Luthardt<sup>110</sup> that Gerhard was the first in a developed dogmatical manner to deal with Scripture and its inspiration to the point of making it the source of theology is not in accord with historical facts. Nicholas Selnecker had dealt with the inspiration of Scripture as early as 1573 in his institutio christianae religionis.<sup>111</sup> In 1575 Heerbrand<sup>112</sup> had specifically considered the inspiration and divinity of Scripture in his compendium theologiae. In 1601 Matthias Haffenreffer published the first edition of his loci theologici in which a special locus was devoted to a discussion of holy Scripture. In 1605 John Schroeder very definitely taught the verbal inspiration of Scripture and listed a large number of arguments in support of this contention, and he said that Scripture is the source and foundation of theological doctrine.<sup>113</sup> It is true that Gerhard's treatment of Scripture is very original and more developed than that of any of his predecessors. He was the first to speak in any great detail of inspiration. But he was not the first

<sup>110</sup> Compendium der Dogmatik. Leipzig. 1865. p.36.

<sup>111</sup> To my knowledge the earliest Lutheran work to include a locus on Scripture is Wigand, J. & Judex, M. syntagma seu corpus doctrinae veri & omnipotentis Dei, ex veteri testamento tantum, methodica ratione, singulari studio, fide & diligentia collectum, dispositum & concinnatum, first published in Basel in 1560. Due to the nature of their subject matter the authors do not always distinguish between the written and unwritten word, but they present basically, although not in so developed a manner, the tenets of the later dogmaticians.

<sup>112</sup> Heerbrand said among other things that God was the author of Scripture and had dictated the words to the prophets and apostles. Cf. compendium theologiae. Witebergae. 1582. pp.19-20.

<sup>113</sup> op. cit., p.\*8a: "Dictum autem est, principium & fundamentum theologiae doctrinae esse verbum Dei: Quo sane fermius aliquod, solidius, certius & luculentius ostendi non potest." Cf. (: )7v where he says that God is the one who had dictated Scripture and who is the author of Scripture.

to deal specifically with this doctrine and give it bearing on the principle of sola scriptura. Nor can it be said that he was the father of the so-called "Amanuenses Theory",<sup>114</sup> although again he employed the amanuenses, notarii, tabelliones terminology more than any Lutheran theologian before him.<sup>115</sup> The intimation of Ritschl<sup>116</sup> that the final development of the Lutheran teaching of verbal inspiration appeared in Gerhard's loci theologici is also misleading. As a matter of fact, there was more development of the formulation of the doctrine after Gerhard than there was before and during his period of activity. The statement of Cremer, on the other hand, that Calov was the originator of the rigid scholastic doctrine of inspiration as we know it today is entirely without foundation.<sup>117</sup> The terminology was indeed highly developed by Calov and even more so perhaps by Quenstedt, but Calov taught nothing in reference to inspiration of the Scriptures which had not been taught by Gerhard and Hutter before him.<sup>118</sup> Tholuck thinks that even after Gerhard a dogmatic

114 Koelling, W. Die Lehre von der Theopneustie. Breslau. 1891. p.244.

115 Such terminology was employed by the old church fathers and by the scholastic theologians of the Middle Ages, Cf. Gerhard, loci theologici. II,26ff. It was also used by Lutherans before Gerhard, Cf. Flacius, M. clavis scripturae sacrae. Lipsiae. 1595. II,62.

116 Dogmengeschichte der Protestantismus. Leipzig. 1908. I,166.

117 Real-Encyclopaedie fuer protestantische Theologie und Kirche. IX,754.

118 Cf. the statement of Gerhard, J. adnotationes ad D. Pauli ad Timotheum epistolam. editio tertia. Lipsiae. 1712. p.58: "Θεόπνευστος, divinitus inspirata, Spiritu sancto dictante conscripta. Syrus בְּרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים per Spiritum sanctum scripta, ita ut nonsolum sententiae, sed etiam verba singula ac verborum ordo & tota dispositio sit a Deo." Koelling seems to be thinking of Cremer when he says, op. cit., p.244: "Man irrt also, wenn man annimmt, erst Quenstedt und Calov haetten die aeussersten Schlussfolgerungen der Verbalinspiration gezogen."

consciousness of the dogma of holy Scripture first appeared.<sup>119</sup> He goes on correctly to point out that only after Gerhard did a doctrine of Scripture reach a conscious confessional status. Such was definitely the case with Calov's consensus repetitus fidei vere Lutheranae. While Gerhard would most certainly <sup>have</sup> agreed with what Calov said there about Scripture, he in his day never felt any need to put the doctrine in such dogmatic form or to make it a matter of confession.

---

<sup>119</sup> op. cit., p.253. There was, however, a Lutheran confession by J. Mennius written in 1549 which taught verbal inspiration. Cf. Schmidt, H. Justus Mennius, der Reformator Thuringens. Gotha. 1867. II,93.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE INERRANCY OF SCRIPTURE

The Scriptures have been divinely inspired. It follows, therefore, that these Scriptures possess certain divine characteristics, or properties. These properties are inerrancy, authority, sufficiency, clarity and efficacy. These properties all result directly from its inspiration. This is emphatically maintained by all the dogmaticians. All the divine attributes of Scripture stand or fall with its inspiration. This stress upon the relation between the divine origin of Scripture and its divine properties is significant. It helps to explain the vigor with which the dogmaticians sometimes expressed themselves in regard to the inspiration of Scripture. In defending their views concerning the integrity, authority, perfection and clarity of Scripture they appeal over and over again to its singular origin. One cannot help but feel when one studies the theology of the old Lutheran dogmaticians that their primary purpose in expending so much care in the interest of proving the inspiration of Scripture is not so much to substantiate this doctrine itself as to employ it in support of these divine properties of Scripture, and especially the principle of sola scriptura. Such a statement may appear bold, especially in view of what more than one scholar has said regarding the theology of these men concerning Scripture, but it is the statement of a fact which will be brought out in the course of the following chapters. And it is the statement of a fact which is, I believe, essential to a true understanding of the dogmaticians and their attitude toward the word of God.

Calov<sup>1</sup> discusses the inerrancy of Scripture in his section on the plenary inspiration of Scripture, thus indicating that he feels the relationship between these two questions to be very close. The seventeenth century Lutheran dogmatists hold that the prophets and apostles were sinners like all other men, but in the act of writing Scripture they were kept from all error and preserved by the Spirit of God from any lapse of memory.<sup>2</sup> This teaching which is embraced by all the dogmatists is emphasized and given special consideration by the later dogmatists beginning with Calov. It is a dogma which is simply taken for granted; it is accepted a priori. The possibility that the prophets and apostles could err in their writings is unthinkable.<sup>3</sup> According to Dannhauer,<sup>4</sup> Scripture is plena, that is, always the same and without any contradiction. It is never yes and no, but always yes or no. It is infallible. It can never be called into doubt. It was written for the very sake of our certainty. Quenstedt,<sup>5</sup> true to form, states the orthodox position in a manner which defies misunderstanding. He says,

<sup>1</sup> systema. I, 551.

<sup>2</sup> Baier, op. cit., p. 77: "Alias equidem a peccato non plane immunes: non tamen in actu scribendi, periculo errandi expositi: quippe Spiritui S. tunc plane subjecti, ut nec memorie lapsus aut alium quemcunque errorem admitterent, nec fallere velle possent."

<sup>3</sup> Huelsemann, J. breviarium theologicum exhibens praecipuas et novissimas fidei controversias quae hodie inter christianos agitantur. Witebergae. 1640. p. 1: "Causa ministerialis Revelationis Prophetarum & Apostolorum, fuerunt tam in perceptione, quam in relatione rerum revelatarum, sive verbo seu scripta facta fuerit, extra omne erroris periculum, extra omnem soli, simulationis, & oblivionis praesumptionem, Gal. 1, 11, 12. Luc. 1, 2, 3, 4. 1 Cor. XV, 15. Apoc. I, 2. Joh. XXI, 24."

<sup>4</sup> ΘΑΛΟΣΟΦΙΑ christiana. p. 65.

<sup>5</sup> op. cit., I, 77.

"The holy canonical Scriptures in their original text are the infallible truth and free from every error, that is to say, in the sacred canonical Scriptures there is no lie, no deceit, no error, even the slightest, either in content or words, but every single word which is handed down in the Scriptures is most true, whether it pertains to doctrine, ethics, history, chronology, typography or onomastics; and no ignorance, lack of understanding, forgetfulness or lapse of memory can or should be attributed to the amanuenses of the Holy Spirit in their writing of holy Scriptures."<sup>6</sup> Scripture, then, is the principium veritatis from which all derived, or revealed, theological truth is to be gained.<sup>7</sup> Inerrancy, of course, pertains only to the canonical Scriptures and only to the original autographic texts. There is no preclusion of error in copies and versions of the Bible. And inerrancy does not apply to what is recorded in Scripture recitative in every case, although the recording of what the devil or some wicked person said is always true. But it does apply to everything in Scripture which is stated assertive or approbative. And the inerrancy of Scripture extends also to all necessary and obvious conclusions which may be drawn from the word of God. Some theologians at the time of the orthodox period had maintained a distinction between errors of the inspired writers themselves and occasional slips of the pen on the part of their secretaries, opposing the possibility of the former while granting the possibility of the latter.

---

<sup>6</sup> Calov, systema. I, 551, says much the same, "Nullus error, vel in leviculis, nullus memoriae lapsus, nedum mendacius ullum locum habere potest in universa Scripture S."

<sup>7</sup> Dorsch, synopsis theologiae Zacharianae. p.71.

But to the dogmatists neither possibility could be conceded. Before Pentecost the apostles were subject to error, but after the gift of the Spirit on that day they were unable to err because the Holy Spirit had led them into all truth. This, of course, does not apply to their ordinary conversation but to their preaching and writing. Infirmittates vitae were always with them, but errores doctrinae were impossible. According to Quenstedt,<sup>8</sup> "The apostles could never err after receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit. Their mind and speech were in a sense the lyre and pen of the Holy Spirit who gave them utterance and spoke in them, Matt.10.19, and led them into all truth, Jn.16.13. Of course, in their outer lives and daily intercourse they were certainly sinners." But what about Peter? Did he not err when he ate with the Gentiles but ordered others not to do so? Peter erred. But this was a mistake in practice, not in theoria fidei. It was not possible for him to err in doctrine. His was a sin of weakness. He simply did not practice what he preached. Actually, the prophets and apostles must be viewed in a twofold manner: first as prophets and apostles who had the Spirit of God and who spoke by immediate direction of that Spirit and who were hence infallible, and second as men who had the spirit of man and spoke by that spirit and who were hence fallible. With his own spirit Nathan approved David's building a temple, but the Spirit of God soon corrected him. Nathan did not err with respect to his prophetic ministry when he favored the building of the temple, for he made his approbation without consulting God.

<sup>8</sup> op. cit., I,80.

In support of the truthfulness and reliability of Scripture the dogmatists appeal to its divine inspiration.<sup>9</sup> Scripture is given by inspiration. Therefore it is infallible, *ἀταλθηθινός*, and without contradiction.<sup>10</sup> The writers of Scripture wrote not of their own free will, but as hands and penmen of the Holy Spirit who could not err. The inspiration of Scripture rules out the possibility of any falsehood being present in it, -- unless one would wish to impute such falsehood to God.<sup>11</sup> And so we are under no obligation to prove that what Scripture says is true. We must simply accept what it says because it says so. The contents of Scripture are eternally and immutably true. Inspiration precludes the possibility of any error in Scripture because God cannot lie himself, nor can he lie through someone else.<sup>12</sup> Quenstedt argues this point on the basis of 2 Pet. 2.21:<sup>13</sup>

"The prophets and apostles spoke and wrote not from the decision and impulse of their own free will, nor, as Scripture says, *ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν*, of themselves, Jn. 11.51; 16.13, but *ὑπὸ*

<sup>9</sup> The dogmatists use the same arguments and proof texts for the inerrancy of Scripture as for its inspiration, Cf. e.g. Calov, *theologia positiva*, p.19.

<sup>10</sup> Gerhard, *tractatus de legitima scripturae sacrae interpretatione*, p.25: "Tota enim Scriptura est *θεόπνευστος*, proinde omnia in ea sunt *συναληθῆ*, nihil hic contrarium, nihil repugnans aut secum diffidens."

<sup>11</sup> Calov, *systema*, I, 551: "Quicquid divinitus inspiratum est, id non potest falsum, vel erroneum esse, nisi quis velit impii Deo errorem adscribere."

<sup>12</sup> Quenstedt, *op. cit.*, I, 79: "Quicquid autem a Deo inspiratum, illud est *αὐτόπιστον* & *ἀνυπεύθυνον*, perpetuae ac immutabilis veritatis, omnis erroris aut falsitatis expert. *θεόπνευστος* falsum esse nequit, cum Deus nec per se nec per alios mentiri possit, utpote *ἀψευσθῆς καὶ ἀταλθήθεια* mentiri nescius, ipsaque prima & summa veritas."

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

πνεύματος ἁγίου φερόμενοι, that is, led and moved by the Holy Spirit, or as Θεοφόρητοι. If this is true then it follows that they could under no condition make mistakes in their writing, and no falsification, no error, no danger of error, no untruth existed or could exist in their preaching or writing because the Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of truth and the fountain of all wisdom and who had as his hand and pen the holy writers cannot deceive or be deceived, neither can he err or have a lapse of memory." Christ promised his disciples that his Spirit would lead them into all truth.<sup>14</sup> And the Scriptures themselves witness that the apostles wrote those doctrines which had been delivered to them by God himself through the revelation of Christ, Gal.2.12. If there is a lapse of memory or mistake in Scripture, even in matters which seem of little importance, we can no longer call Scripture the word of God. In such a case it would be only partly the word of God and partly the fallible word of men.<sup>15</sup> And hence we can no longer be certain of anything which Scripture says. If it can err on one point it can be mistaken on another.<sup>16</sup> Finally, if Scripture is not entirely true it cannot be the organic foundation and source of theology. The organic norm of faith and life must be subject to no doubt whatsoever. It is not only foolish but wicked and blasphemous

<sup>14</sup> loc. cit., I,80.

<sup>15</sup> Calov, systema. I,552: "Si lapsus aliqui *μνημονευτικοί* & errores etiam in rebus saltim levioris momenti (quanquam nihil leve sit in Scripturis) occurrunt in S. literis, utique universa Scriptura S. non erit verbum Dei, sed partim Dei verbum, partim & in quibusdam verbum humanum, sed humano ingenio prolatum. Quod falsum." Cf. Bechmann, theologia polemica. p.76.

<sup>16</sup> Calov, loc. cit., "Si enim in uno alterove errare poterunt Scripturae S. quis certos reddet nos, quod in aliis non errarint?"

to charge the Holy Spirit with allowing any error to enter his book.<sup>17</sup> Quenstedt cannot hold back from pouring out his indignation upon those who will allow errors in Scripture. He says,<sup>18</sup> "Whatever fault or untruth, whatever error or lapse of memory, is attributed to the prophets and apostles is not imputed to them without blaspheming the Holy Spirit who spoke and wrote through them. Through his infinite knowledge God the Holy Spirit cannot be ignorant of anything, can forget nothing; through his infinite truthfulness and infallibility it is impossible for him to err, deal falsely or be mistaken, not even in the smallest degree; and finally, through his infinite goodness he is unable to deceive anyone, neither can he lead anyone into offence or error. With such an opinion the authenticity and authority of Scripture are overthrown and the certainty and assurance of our faith is destroyed. For if anything uncertain, doubtful, mistaken or false is present in Scripture what becomes of the authority, certainty and integrity of the rest? Even Socinus said, 'If a person can doubt concerning one passage, there is no reason why he may not doubt concerning all of them' Epist. 3. ad Radeo. fol.139ff. Unless we are made infallibly certain of the source of our faith, how can there be any *ὑπόστασις* to our faith, Heb.1.1, any assurance of salvation or even any peace of conscience?" Quenstedt is only echoing what Aegidius Hunnius had said almost a century before. Said Hunnius,<sup>19</sup> "That the apostles and evangelists who wrote the history of the words and deeds of Jesus recorded everything

---

<sup>17</sup> Gerhard, confessio catholica. II,199.

<sup>18</sup> op. cit., I,80.

<sup>19</sup> opera latina. I,29.

as it happened in a narrative which was holy and incorrupt in the memory of men is so certain that it is a sacrilege and a crime to dispute their veracity even in the minutest detail."

Among the opponents of the Lutheran doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture was the Catholic theologian Albert Pighius who held that the evangelists could forget and even prevaricate when they wrote Scripture. For they did not see what they wrote about Christ, he argues, but merely followed the reports of others. Erasmus too had taught that the memory of the evangelists was not always accurate. But it was mainly the Socinians who prompted these outbursts on the part of the dogmatists. The Socinians believed that it was not necessary for Scripture to be infallible or inerrant. In his Socinismus profligatus which was a polemic against Socinianism in general Abraham Calov bitterly attacks this view as utterly un-Christian and conducive to scepticism and even atheism. Calov offers a number of reasons why we must at all costs uphold the inerrancy of Scripture.<sup>20</sup> Scripture is the source of all our knowledge of revealed theology and must therefore remain infallible or we can gain no certainty of faith or assurance of salvation.<sup>21</sup> But our faith is immovable and certain, and this fact alone shows that its source is also infallible. The Socinians teach that the truth of Scripture is only probable. The consequences of such a view are disastrous. That there is a Christ, that Jesus is the Messiah, that we may hope for a life after death,

<sup>20</sup> Socinismus profligatus. p.57ff.

<sup>21</sup> ibid. "Quomodo animi hominum ἀμεταπτώτως certi reddentur, ut non dubitent vitam suam profundere pro vera Religione, si principium Religionis ipsis non est ἀμετάπτωτον?"

may, that there is even a God, is only probable. The consequences of such a heresy are simple Pyrrhonism, scepticism and ultimately atheism.<sup>22</sup> If Scripture is not certain there can be no real certainty of forgiveness of sins or the grace of God, God is made responsible for man's unbelief or lack of spiritual knowledge, and the efficacy of the Gospel to bring about faith in its own message is denied.

But the Socinians not only admitted the possibility of errors creeping into Scripture; they taught that the evangelists and apostles on many occasions had lapses of memory and actually fell into error. Again Calov vents his wrath against such a pernicious and false opinion. The writers of Scripture did not write of human volition, but ὑπὸ πνεύματος ἁγίου φερόμενοι, as hands and penmen of the Holy Spirit. Under his activation they were incapable of error or forgetfulness. Or, to put it more accurately, the Holy Spirit who wrote through them was unable to forget or make mistakes.<sup>23</sup> Since the doctrines and even all the words in Scripture are not the doctrines and words of men, but of God, there can be no possibility of untruth in Scripture, for God cannot lie, Heb.4.18. And did not Christ promise his disciples that the Spirit would lead them into all truth?

The Socinians, however, did not categorically affirm that Scripture was unreliable. They taught that those portions of Scripture which dealt with doctrine were indeed

<sup>22</sup> Cf. also Calov, scripta anti-Sociniana. III,28: "Dahin gehet endlichen diese Teuffelische Lehr/ dass sie allen Glauben aufhebet/ alle Schrift verdaechtig/ oder zweifelhaftig machet."

<sup>23</sup> Socinismus profligatus. p.60: "Quis literarum autores & s. scriptores non scripserunt humana voluntate, sed ὑπὸ πνεύματος ἁγίου φερόμενοι II Petr.1.21, fuerunt tantum manus & calamus Sp. S. vero amanuenses ejusdem. Sp. S. vero fallere & falli non potest, nec errare, aut labi memoria."

true and dependable. But this was not enough for Calov. Granting such an opinion for the sake of argument, we would then be forced to conclude that there is a possibility of error in those parts of Scripture which do not treat specifically with doctrine. But who can say that any given parable or historical incident recorded in Scripture does not and cannot pertain to doctrine? No, the fact of the matter is this: everything in Scripture concerns doctrine and should be believed by us. In his systema Calov writes,<sup>24</sup> "If it is enough that we believe that to be true in Scripture which pertains to true doctrine, as Socinus would have it, then the holy Scripture contains errors in many places, such as historical portions, parables and other matters which are contained in Scripture and which, according to Socinus, do not pertain to true doctrine. But if error, or even the intimation of error, is admitted in these matters, then not even that which pertains to true doctrine is above the suspicion of error, since both historical sections and parables contribute greatly to the truth of doctrine, nay, all things which are recorded in the sacred writings pertain to our doctrine and require our faith. We are to believe not merely some things or certain passages in Scripture, but everything which is contained in the holy writings." Thus the notion that only the doctrinal sections of Scripture are infallible

---

<sup>24</sup> systema. I, 552. The same is said in his Socinismus profligatus. p. 62: "Rursus, si in his admittatur error, vel erroris suspicio, tunc ne quidem id, quod ad veram doctrinam in S. literis pertinet, suspitione erroris vacabit; quando quidem & Historiae, & Parabolae plurimum faciunt ad veritatem doctrinae; quin imo omnia, quae scripta sunt in S. literis ad nostram doctrinam faciunt, fidemque nostram postulant. Credendum est non alicui saltim particulae Scripturae, vel quibusdam oraculis in Scriptura; sed omnibus in universum, quae in S. literis continentur."

casts suspicion upon the whole Bible. Again, assuming that Scripture erred in respect to matters of minor importance, how could it then be called God's word? But after all, what right have we to assume that Scripture erred only in unessential matters? If Scripture can be mistaken on one point it is only sensible to assume that it can be mistaken on other points too.<sup>25</sup> No, this Socinian aberration will only drive us to doubt and will discourage our love and study of the Scriptures.<sup>26</sup> It is highly significant that Calov conceived of everything in Scripture as pertaining at least indirectly to doctrine. This fact indicates how utterly opposed and irreconcilable were the views of the Lutherans toward Scripture and those of the Socinians. That there are no levicula in Scripture, that everything in Scripture pertains somehow to Christian doctrine, makes the inerrancy of Scripture an important consideration. The opposite opinion will be little concerned whether everything in Scripture is infallibly true.

Certain Arminians in the seventeenth century taught that the Holy Spirit, when he inspired Scripture, accommodated himself to common errors and misconceptions of the day. Calov attacks this opinion, too, in his consideratio Arminianismi.<sup>27</sup> He submits that such a teaching is incompatible with the doctrine that Scripture is the word of God, and it too leads to Pyrrhonism. If the Spirit accommodated

<sup>25</sup> ibid. "Is enim in uno alterove errare potuerunt Scripturae S. quis certos nos reddet, quod in aliis etiam non erraverint?"

<sup>26</sup> ibid. "Semper etiam ita haerebit mens nostra, neque firmiter innitetur iis, quae in Scriptura reperiuntur, siquidem ultima analysis fieri debeat in scriptorum probitatem, diligentiam, fidem, eamque errori obnoxiam."

<sup>27</sup> consideratio Arminianismi, editio tertia. Witebergae. 1671. p.47ff.

himself to errors in geography, science, chronology etc. why not to doctrine? The authority and the very meaning of Scripture fall, if such a view holds true.<sup>28</sup> Again Calov maintains that the religious content of Scripture cannot be dissociated from other interests.<sup>29</sup>

Not only the Socinians and Arminians taught doctrines regarding the inerrancy of the Bible which were considered unorthodox by their more conservative Lutheran contemporaries. In 1650 L. Cappellus wrote a book entitled critica sacra, sive de variis, quae in sacris vel V. T. occurrunt lectionibus in which he maintained that the Old Testament had been corrupted in those cases where New Testament writers quoted only roughly from it; he held that the form given in the New Testament quotations was the original and that the text of the Old Testament had been corrupted. His teaching therefore did not pertain to the doctrine of inerrancy specifically, but to the question of the authenticity of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. August Pfeiffer answered Cappellus in his own book, criticus sacer,<sup>30</sup> and his argumentation is of interest in our present discussion, since the question of the New Testament quotations from the Old was raised by

<sup>28</sup> loc. cit., p.51: "Aut si in iis solum, quae ad religionem non attinent, Scripturae auctoritas infallibilis non est, & authentica, annon in primis Geneseos capitibus, & innumeris locis aliis, ubi chronologica, Historica, Mechanica, Mathematica, Physica, Politica occurrunt, hoc uno elidi poterit Scripturae sententia sophismate, quod in illis Scriptura tantum accommodarit se vulgi captui, minusque accurata sit."

<sup>29</sup> Dannhauer, J. C. hermeneutica sacra. Argentorati. 1654. p.409, seems to teach what Calov is rejecting. He says, "Scriptura sacra saepe non tam ad rei existentiam ipsam, quam ad hominum opinionem sermonem accommodat. quomodo Joseph pater dicitur Christi, quia sic vulgo existimabatur: & stellae de coelo cadere; quia imperitum vulgus putat stellas esse cometas..." Dannhauer does not say how far he will go with this theory. Calov perhaps would not find fault with the two above examples.

<sup>30</sup> criticus sacer....Dresdae et Lipsiae. 1721. p.95.

others in connection with the inerrancy of Scripture. Pfeiffer believed such loose translations on the part of the New Testament writers as occurred so often in the New Testament were legitimate since these writers, like the prophets before them, were moved by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit, inasmuch as he is the true author of the Old and the New Testaments, has the right to quote himself freely or literally, as he chooses. That there can be no real contradiction as to meaning between the original statement and the quotation must be assumed a priori, since all Scripture is inspired.<sup>31</sup>

In regard to the many contradictions between statements of the Old and the New Testaments, contradictions mentioned by Cappellus in support of his position, Pfeiffer answers that they simply do not exist. If Scripture seems to contradict itself we must confess our ignorance and say, sic placuit Domino, dicere plura nefas.

The dogmatists affirmed that there was a unity of Scripture, a perfect and complete harmony between the Old and the New Testament and between all the books of the Bible. This does not mean that there is no difference between the Old and the New Testament. These two divisions of the Scriptures were written at different times and by different penmen.

<sup>31</sup> loc. cit., p.95: "In N. T. dicta V. T. non semper ad verbum, sed saepe ad sensum citantur, & libere jam ex Textu Ebraeo, jam ex versione LXX. interpp. jam ex utrisque. Si nulla hic deprehendatur contradictio, quid pluribus opus est. Spiritus Sanctus & V. T. revelavit & reservavit sibi potestatem illud in N. T. declarandi. Ubi id a LXX factum est, eorum Versio retenta fuit; Ubi minus, expressa sunt verba Ebraea. Alicubi neque ad istam Versionem, neque ad verba Textus Spiritus Sanctus se alligavit, sed sensum novis verbis expressit. Quicquid sit, idem Spiritus Sanctus utrobique locutus est, suorum verborum optimus interpres." Again he says in support of his point, p.108: "Par enim omnino est, ut Spiritus S. ipse sit interpres optimus verborum suorum."

The Old Testament points to the coming Messiah, the New to the Christ who has already come. Revelation is more complete in the New Testament than in the Old. The New Testament is clearer than the Old in that it explains more fully the mysteries of our faith.<sup>32</sup> And yet a marvelous unity prevails in Scripture. The content and the purpose of all the books are the same. And there is a perfect agreement doctrinally and in every other respect between all the statements of Scripture.<sup>33</sup> Inconsistencies and contradictions do not exist, but only seem to exist.<sup>34</sup> Vitiating this perfect unity of Scripture is the Socinian tenet that the Old Testament Scriptures were not as necessary for the Christian as the New. Calov counters<sup>35</sup> that the Scriptures of the Old Testament are the same inspired word of God as those of the New. God is the author of all the Scriptures. And the Old Testament no less than the New is the foundation of our faith, 2 Pet. 3.2. The Old Testament Scriptures are profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness. They also proclaim the same Christ and announce the same way of salvation as the New Testament, and they exhort us to worship

---

<sup>32</sup> Dannhauer, ΟΔΟΣΟΦΙΑ christiana. p.484: "Revelatio autem illa gradualis est, obscurior in Veteri Testamento, clarior in Novo. Ibi ἑπαγγελία, hic εὐαγγελία regnat, ibi proposita, hic exposita."

<sup>33</sup> Calov, theologia positiva. p.25: "...omnium in Scriptura contentorum mutuus & perpetuus, absque ulla ἀντιδοξία, consensus, vaticiniorum & eventuum conformitas, promissionum & comminationum certitudo, historiarumque omnium fides affatim testatur."

<sup>34</sup> Scherzer, J. A. colegii anti-Sociniani. editio tertia. Lipsiae & Francofurti. 1702. p.24: "Credendum enim est omnem Scripturam Θεόπνευστον esse 2 Tim.III.16. Admissa falsitas suspectam & incertam reddit veritatem. Quae ex Scriptura obvertuntur, apparentes tantum contradictiones & παρερμηνεῖαι sunt."

<sup>35</sup> Socinismus profligatus. p.79ff.

and serve the same true God. Moreover, without the Old Testament there could be no true Christian faith in or understanding of the New Testament, for the New Testament is vindicated by the Old. As was so often said by all the dogmaticians, in veteri testamento novum latet, in novo vetus patet. The messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth can be proved only from both Old and New Testaments, Acts 18.28. Not only did Christ himself urge us to search the Scriptures, but both he and his disciples sought to prove their authority from the Old Testament Scriptures.

My survey of Calov's and the other dogmaticians' stand on the inerrancy of Scripture has been protracted not merely to show that they regarded this doctrine as important in itself, but also to demonstrate that their attitude toward the reliability and infallibility of Scripture cannot be isolated from their doctrine of inspiration. To them a Scripture which is not *ἀταλθινή* and *ἀξιόπιστος* is simply not consonant with a monergistic idea of inspiration. The words of Quenstedt already alluded to are a postulate: "Quicquid autem a Deo inspiratum, illud est *ἀτόπιστον* & *ἀνυπέθουνον*, perpetuae ac immutabilis veritatis, omnis erroris aut falsitatis expers."<sup>36</sup> Inspiration per se precludes the possibility of error. It is surprising that Dörner<sup>37</sup> says that the fear of human error entering Scripture drove the dogmaticians to

---

<sup>36</sup> op. cit., I, 79. Among those who deny the inspiration of Scripture Quenstedt lists those who admitted that there were errors in Scripture, thereby indicating that he considered inerrancy a part of inspiration. To the point is also the fact, mentioned above, that Calov discussed the inerrancy of Scripture in his section on the plenary inspiration of Scripture.

<sup>37</sup> Geschichte der protestantischen Theologie. pp. 549-550.

their doctrine of a monergistic inspiration. The very opposite is the case. The dogmaticians were perfectly satisfied that the passages in Scripture dealing with inspiration taught a monergistic doctrine. It is unfair to state that their fear of a fallible Bible drove them to this conclusion. Inerrancy was always considered what we might call a concomitant consequence of inspiration, a consequence which in no way conditions it. Dorner has somehow interchanged cause and effect in this case, a curious mistake in view of the clearness of the facts in the case. More to the point is the criticism of Sasse<sup>38</sup> that the dogmaticians argue for the inerrancy of Scripture from the sola scriptura principle. Quenstedt,<sup>39</sup> for instance, defends the inerrancy of Scripture on the basis of the nature of a principium. Sasse picks on this rather sophistic bit of argumentation -- he calls it rationalism -- in an attempt to demonstrate how the seventeenth century Lutherans departed from Luther's simple trust in the truthfulness of Scripture. Sasse's criticism is valid. But he omits mentioning the fact that the argument from the nature of a principium is not the main proof of Quenstedt or of any other dogmatician for the inerrancy of Scripture. Quenstedt's first argument and that which he obviously considered basic to his thesis was from Scripture, from the teachings of a long list of Scripture passages which he felt supported his position. Hence not sola scriptura, but the application of sola scriptura was Quenstedt's appeal for the reliability and infallibility of Scripture. The habit

<sup>38</sup> op. cit., p.22.

<sup>39</sup> op. cit., I,80.

of Sasse and other theologians of comparing the scholastic dogmaticians with Luther is highly interesting and instructive and often very necessary, but at times I believe it degenerates into a petitio principii of the questions involved. Because one does not happen to follow Luther does not mean that one is automatically wrong. Such a comparison, moreover, ought to be made with some appreciation of the great changes which had transpired in a century. Arrayed against the dogmaticians was a host of highly skilled controversialists, armed with ability, scholarship and persuasiveness, the like of which Luther had not encountered except in the case of Erasmus who was not primarily a theologian but a humanist and who was not of a bellicose temperament.

CHAPTER SIX: THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE

The authority of Scripture is that property by which it demands faith and obedience to all its declarations. This authority, or divinity, of Scripture which is the same as the excellence and loftiness of Scripture may be viewed in two ways, absolutely and relatively. Considered absolutely, it possesses the independent majesty which is natural and essential to the word of God in view of its supernatural origin, or, as Gerhard puts it,<sup>1</sup> it has in and of itself divine authenticity, stability and inspiration (*αὐθεντία, ἀσφάλεια, Θεοπνευστία*) from which its so-called criteria result. Viewed relatively (*ratione nostri*), its authority consists in this, that it is regarded by men as the true word of God and the canon of faith and life. By virtue of the fact that Scripture is the word of God and derives its authority from him alone, its authority cannot be augmented or disparaged by Christians or the church. A Christian, because he is a Christian, cannot doubt Scripture or its authority. All Christians must agree on the *principium* of theology, and must accept the authority of Scripture, if they are to merit the name Christian.<sup>2</sup> Gerhard writes,<sup>3</sup> "If the believer in times of temptation begins to doubt the authority of Scripture, we must deal with him as we would with those who deny such authority, since doubt is the next thing to denial."

---

<sup>1</sup> *confessio catholica*. II,274.

<sup>2</sup> Brochmand, *universae theologiae systema*. I,13.

<sup>3</sup> *loci theologici*. I,9.

The authority of Scripture is intrinsic. It possesses majesty in se, apart from men, apart from the church and apart from anything in the amanuenses.<sup>4</sup> Just as the sun is in itself light and the measure of light, even though a blind man or one who hides himself from it may not see it, Scripture is absolutely divine, even if there is no one to hear it, read it or meditate upon it. Scripture is the same and its authority is the same no matter what men may think about.<sup>5</sup> For Scripture derives its authority from God alone.<sup>5</sup> Its authority is therefore based upon its divine origin, upon its inspiration. Auctoritatem habet a Θεοπνεύσει.<sup>6</sup> And the authority of Scripture does not differ essentially from the authority of God himself. Quenstedt says,<sup>7</sup> "The authority of the holy Scriptures and the authority of God are one and the same thing although the one pertains to God and the other to Scripture. The authority of God is by him and of him. The authority of Scripture is due to the unique ordination of God and to the fact that it was written by divine inspiration."

Since Scripture is infallible and authoritative, it goes without saying that its testimony must be accepted a priori. In other words, Scripture is αυτόπιστος. Its authority is absolute. This view was in direct contrast to the Socinian doctrine that Scripture was to be accepted as re-

<sup>4</sup> Huelsemann, breviarium theologicum. p.2.

<sup>5</sup> Baier, op. cit., p.90. Hollaz, op. cit., p.112.

<sup>6</sup> Dannhauer, ΘΑΟΣΟΦΙΑ christiana. p.99.

<sup>7</sup> op. cit., I,87. Cf. also Dorsch, synopsis theologiae Zacharianae. I,II,11: "Auctoritas ejus est tanta, quanta Dei, qui in ea & per eam dominium suum gratiosum exhibet."

liable and authoritative only a posteriori. Socinians believed that investigation was necessary before one should put his faith in what Scripture said. The Lutherans, on the other hand, held that scientific, historical, archeological or rational inquiry could never disprove the truthfulness of delimit the authority of Scripture, although such investigation was interesting and beneficial as an external criterion by which heathens might be convinced, although only intellectually, of the reliability of Scripture. But Scripture which derives its authority from God alone needs no other source to strengthen its authority.<sup>8</sup> In the very nature of the case Scripture which is God's word is immutably true and can depend upon nothing apart from itself except God.<sup>9</sup> Scripture is, to quote Dannhauer,<sup>10</sup> "tanquam *αὐτοφῶς*, principium indemonstrabile & revelatio ipsa, in quam ultima omnis veritatis divinae *λύσις* terminatur." When the Lutherans say that Scripture is *αὐτόπιστος* they are emphasizing that its authority is absolute and independent. In fact, Scripture must be *αὐτόπιστος*, if it is authoritative. And

<sup>8</sup> Cf. thesaurus theologico-philologicus, sive sylloge dissertationum elegantiorum ad selectiora et illustriora veteris et novi testamenti loca a theologis protestantibus. Amstelædami. 1701. I, 955. Calov says here, "Scriptura non eget teste alio, ipsa in se est *ἀξιόπιστος*, sufficit si e proprietate sermonis aliisque locis hermeneuticis demonstretur, id quod a nobis jam præstitum esse omnino speremus."

<sup>9</sup> Dorsch, synopsis theologiae Zachariæ. I, II, 116.

<sup>10</sup> ΟΔΟΣΟΦΙΑ christiana. p. 39. Cf. Calov, criticus sacer. I, 69: "Scriptura S. est summum, immediatum, primum, necessarium, per se fide dignum, omni exceptione, & probatione superius principium fidei nostræ." What does this mean? "Tale autem principium nullum aliud est in theologiae, quam hocce, Quicquid S. Scripturæ docet, id verum est."

10. this unconditioned authority, this ἀφισπιστία, is a necessary consequence of the inspiration of Scripture.<sup>11</sup> Calov in his Socinismus profligatus attempts to show the impossible consequences of the Socinian position. But first he offers a statement of the Lutheran position which is worth quoting at this point. Calov was never one to equivocate. He says,<sup>12</sup> "Every word of God is ἀφισπιστος and αὐτόπιστος and must be believed per se simply because it is the word of God, because <sup>God</sup> has declared it and said it, even though our reason may not understand or grasp it. This is demanded by the divine authority and unfailing truth of the divine word. Because it is the word of very God it has a divine authority which is under no obligation to give an account of itself and it is above every limitation and worthy of faith per se. It must be accepted by faith per se, not on account of something else, because God cannot receive authority from another. Because it is the infallible truth of God our faith must be grounded in it unquestionably. Everything which is recorded in Scripture is the word of God. If it says in Scripture that God became man, that Christ made atonement for us, that the Son of God made reconciliation, we must by all means accept that as the word of God and put our faith in it because it is contained in Scripture." Calov then proceeds to show the absurdity

---

11 Gerhard, loci theologici, II, 36: "Quia enim scriptura S. Deum autorem habet, cujus immediata inspiratione prophetæ, evangelistæ & apostoli scripserunt, inde atque ideo divinam auctoritatem obtinet; quia est Θεόπνευστος divina inspiratione edita ac promulgata, ideo est αὐτόπιστος, τὸ πιστὸν ἀφ' ἑαυτῆς ἔχουσα." Cf. Gerhard, confessio catholica, II, 279.

12 Socinismus profligatus. p. 78.

of denying this position. The denial or slightest limitation of this basic principle reduces Scripture to a norma normata. If the authority of Scripture or our acceptance of Scripture depends on any opinion of human judgment, even to the slightest degree, then human judgment ultimately becomes the norm of articles of faith in place of the divine word, and that word is received only on account of human opinion. Propter quod enim unusquodque tale est, illud magis tale est.<sup>13</sup> Of course, Calov says, if one will not accept the clear testimony of Scripture, but prefers his own perverted and corrupt reason, he will not hesitate to accuse God's infallible word of lies. But reason cannot comprehend the mysteries of our faith, 1 Cor.2.14. Revelation is above reason. Therefore reason cannot sit in judgment over Scripture. If Scripture had to conform to the dictates of reason, not one article of our faith would remain. How, for instance, could we demonstrate per causas vel effectus the virgin birth or the resurrection or creatio ex nihilo? Reason must be taken captive in accordance with Paul's admonition, 2 Cor.10.5. It was Calov's opinion that if the statements of Scripture were to be judged by a posteriori evidence, Scripture could no longer be considered the word of God. If rational or empirical investigation contributes anything toward strengthening the truthfulness

---

<sup>13</sup> loc. cit., p.77: "At consequens est absurdum: ita enim fidei articuli, seu res credendae pro norma agnoscent iudicium humanum potius, quam Verbum divinum, ita verbo DEI credendum foret propter suffragium humanum, & DEO propter hominem, adeoque humani iudicii major erit autoritas, quam Verbi divini, in rebus fidei ac religionis, quod impium."

or authority of Scripture, then Scripture is no longer *αὐτόπιστος*, in fact, it is no longer authoritative, and, what is of infinitely greater concern, our Christian faith is undone.<sup>14</sup>

This attribute of *αὐτοπιστία* as it attaches itself to Scripture is of far-reaching significance. According to the dogmatists, the fact that Scripture is *ἀνυπεύθυνος* and *αὐτόπιστος* means that a posteriori evidence on behalf of Scripture is simply not valid in a discussion of its authority and reliability. Otherwise sola fide and the very nature of faith is denied. This explains the fact that the dogmatists pay so little heed to external considerations in their discussion of the authority of Scripture. It is needless to say that sola scriptura and the doctrine of verbal inspiration lose their force if the *αὐτοπιστία* of Scripture is not upheld.

There is good reason why, immediately following his treatment of the *αὐτοπιστία* of Scripture, Calov<sup>15</sup> entertains the question whether there are historical or mathematical or scientific errors in Scripture due to the limitations of the time in which it was written. The Socinians were of the opinion that Christ and his apostles were limited to that which was known in their day, and that they necessarily accommodated themselves to many commonly held errors of a scientific, chronological and topographical

---

<sup>14</sup> Calov, systema. I, 605: "Si credendum his quae in scripturis diserte perscripta sunt, haud est, ubi forte ratio eadem non assequitur, aut contradicit, sequatur ultimam fidei ἀνάλυσιν fieri debere non in verbum Dei, sed in iudicium nostrae rationis, quod ἄλογον, καὶ ἀθεόλογον."

<sup>15</sup> systema. I, 607

nature. Naturally Calov vehemently denied the possibility of such errors appearing in Scripture, and he offers the same arguments against this opinion as he had tendered against the Arminians. It becomes evident in his discussion of this question that to him the Socinian doctrine springs from a rejection of the *αὐτοπιστία* of Scripture. According to this Socinian position the authority of Scripture is not infallible, but only probable, and hence theological conclusions which are based on Scripture are only probable, for a conclusion cannot be more certain than that on which it is based. And finally Pyrrhonism results, and that is always the result when the *αὐτοπιστία* of Scripture is questioned, when all of Scripture is not accepted a priori. I quote a portion of Calov's argumentation: "If Pyrrhonism be granted in some things which have been revealed, then that also which concerns faith and salvation is subject to Pyrrhonic doubt, and all theology lapses into academic probability, or rather, uncertainty. That is to say, if the source of theology is not at all times infallible, trustworthy and entirely above human criticism [*ἀνοπεύθουνον* ], but in certain matters is only probable and of limited application, then there are no theological conclusions which are infallible and absolute, since it is unthinkable that a conclusion can be more certain than its own one authentic source. If this axiom, 'Whatever God has said is irrevocably true and must be accepted with divine trust', were not true in all cases but only in certain instances, if it were made to be doubtful to the extent that some things have been said and made known by God which are only probable and need

not be accepted with a divine trust which must be absolutely certain, then who would be able to determine and decide with certainty in matters of theology that any of those things which are contained in the word of God are incontrovertibly true and should be received with Christian certainty? Such will be the result as touching the reliability and authority of God's word, for when certain things appear which are doubtful and of questionable authority, how shall one be sure of the certainty and infallible authority of what is left?" This statement of Calov is interesting. It reveals to us how he thinks regarding the relation between the reliability and the authority, or *αὐτοπιστία*, of Scripture. The infallible truthfulness of Scripture must be acknowledged a priori, for Scripture's authority is infallible, Scripture is *αὐτόπιστος*. The authority of Scripture must be received a priori, for Scripture owes its origin to God alone and was written under his divine inspiration. And the divine origin of Scripture is accepted a priori; the witness of the Holy Spirit convinces the believer of this divinity of Scripture. Due to the power of the Spirit and to the inherent power of the word, acceptance of the infallibility and authority and divinity of this word is not a mere intellectual assent, but a true and real faith (fides divina). This last fact which is not mentioned by Calov in the statement quoted will be discussed in the course of this chapter.

The importance of the authority of Scripture to the orthodox Lutheran teachers of the seventeenth century cannot be overestimated. Their entire theological position over against Rome stood or fell with the doctrine of sola scrip-

tura, and this principle postulated a standard of doctrine and life which was in all respects authoritative. For fundamental in Catholic theology was the proposition that Scripture derived its authority from the church. The status controversiae between Lutheranism and Romanism lay, as Gerhard points out,<sup>16</sup> not so much in the authority of Scripture as in the question whence Scripture derives its authority. The common Jesuit standpoint expressly stated that the Scriptures had no authority so far as we are concerned (quoad nos) until the testimony of the church was added.<sup>17</sup> One notices in this tenet a close resemblance to the opinion held by the Socinians. To the Socinians the authority of Scripture is conditioned by empirical and rationalistic observation; to the Catholics it depends on the authority of the church. In either case the authority of Scripture is not absolute and its αὐτοπιστία is denied. And consequently neither Socinians nor Catholics could accept the principle of sola scriptura. The Lutheran theologians, on the other hand, by insisting that the authority of Scripture was in-

<sup>16</sup> loci theologici. II, 36.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Gretzer: "nisi Ecclesiae testificatio accederet, ipsa divina revelatio de libris Canonicis, atque adeo etiam Majestas ipsa, & autoritas, qua Canonici libri in se sunt praediti, nunquam nobis innotescerent." quoted in Calov, systema. I, 582, with no reference given. Calov shows that this is also the teaching of the so-called "Novatores" (Syncretists). Cf. e.g. Dreier, Gründliche Erörterung, p. 5: "Dass diese Episteln Pauli an die Roemer/ Galater/ Epheser goettliche Schrifften seyn/ die Episteln Pauli an Senecam keine goettliche Schrifften seyn; das ist nirgends geschrieben/ und wen es schon da stünde/ so were noch die Frage/ ob auch dasselbe Buch das rechte were/ das solches sagte; derowegen muss hiervon die Kirche zeugen." Perhaps a clearer statement of the position of the Novatores is one of Hornejus, also quoted by Calov, "auctoritatem librorum Canonicorum non posse aliunde constare, aut demonstrari, quam e concorde & interrupta Ecclesiae testificatione." disput. II de Canon. Script. p. 122.

trinsic and absolute, denied that that authority depended upon the authority of the early church or the church today or upon the purely human authority of a hierarchy or pope. The authority and testimony of the church is a clear and powerful medium through which we may know that Scripture is the word of God, but this testimony is not absolutely necessary, much less does it establish the authority of Scripture. Experience has abundantly shown that many have been brought to a faith in Christ without the aid or authority of the church, simply by reading their Bible. The duty of the church as over against Scripture is to testify concerning it, protect it, preach it, interpret it and study it, but all this the church performs as the handmaid of Scripture, not as the lord over Scripture. To be conceded is the fact that the divinity of Scripture may be known a posteriori from the witness and arguments of the church, but this fact does not imply that the authority of Scripture depends upon the testimony of the church or upon its authority. As a witness to the authority of Scripture the church testifies to a fact already in existence; the church does not give existence to the fact. A goldsmith or jeweler may describe truly and accurately a precious item; he does not thereby make that object valuable. No, the witness of the church which is only human can produce only a human faith, an intellectual assent (fides humana), a notitia probabilis,<sup>18</sup> a fides acquisita,<sup>19</sup> in the authority of Scripture. But of what value is such a faith? Real faith, Christian cer-

---

<sup>18</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 91.

<sup>19</sup> Calov, criticus sacer. I, 280.

tainty (fides divina), in the authority of Scripture is brought about by Scripture itself which is αὐτόπιστος and needs no further proof of its authority.<sup>20</sup> Putting it in another way, Christian faith, or certainty, in the divinity and authority of Scripture is engendered only <sup>by</sup> the Holy Spirit who works through Scripture.<sup>21</sup> These two thoughts touch upon the very heart of the controversy. Catholic theology did not contest the authority of Scripture. Roman Catholics went so far as to grant that Scripture was divine and owed its authority to God, but only on the condition that this concession was understood quoad rem et secundum se, that is, if Scripture is viewed as over against itself and in an absolute sense. So far as man is concerned, Scripture has no authority except by the church. Hence Bellarmine could say,<sup>22</sup> "Non aliunde habemus, Scripturam esse divinam, et

---

<sup>20</sup> loc. cit., I, 278: "Porro creditur aliquid dupliciter: vel propter aliud, ut conclusiones fidei creduntur propter verbum DEI, vel quia DEUS id verbo revelavit: vel propter seipsum, ut principium fidei, verbum DEI seu revelatio divina non propter aliud creditur, sed per se; cum verbum DEI sit αὐτόπιστον, nec ulteriori probatione egeat." This twofold aspect of fides divina is significant.

<sup>21</sup> loc. cit., I, 280. Calov's whole statement is worth quoting: "Proinde ad id ut fide divina credamus scripturam esse verbum DEI requiritur, partim scripturae ipsius attestatio, qua verbum DEI, Prophetis & Apostolis inspiratum in scriptura proponi, testatur scriptura S. αὐτόπιστος καὶ ἀξιοπιστος; partim ipsa Spiritus S. operatio, qua per scripturam sese exerit, efficacia Scripturae congenita ad producendum in nobis fidem divinam, eandemque obsignandum; utrumque enim mediante Verbo DEI seu Scriptura S. praestat S. S. Producit nempe fidem in nobis, et fidem productam interno suo testimonio obsignat, quod uti de omnibus, quaecunque credenda sunt, vel sub fidem cadunt, certum est, nec adeo negare possunt adversarii, ita & de eo, quod credimus, scripturam S. esse ipsum DEI verbum, negari non debet."

<sup>22</sup> Bellarminus, R. de verbo DEI scripto et non scripto. Sedani. 1618. IV, IV, 317.

qui sint libri sacri, quam ex traditione non scripta." Here we see that the Lutheran-Catholic controversy which centered around the authority of Scripture was also very much concerned with the efficacy of the Scriptures; to the Lutherans the authority of Scripture consisted in part in its ability to convince men of its own authority.

Because it was mainly the polemical situation of the day which necessitated a locus on the authority of Scripture, most of the dogmaticians' argumentation is in opposition to doctrine that the authority of Scripture depends upon the church. In his *Βεβαιωσις* of the authority of Scripture in general Quenstedt offers only one Scripture passage, 1 Thess. 2.13. Commenting on this passage he says,<sup>23</sup> "Here the Thessalonians are praised because they did not reject the preaching they heard from the mouth of Paul and his companions -- and nothing could be more contemptible than they -- but accepted it, not as human preaching or as a new doctrine ingeniously invented by men, but as the word of everlasting God himself, even though it was preached by men." Quenstedt goes on to say that to regard Paul's preaching as merely a human message and to accept it as the word of God which is absolutely certain and infallible and binding are two opposed ideas which cannot be reconciled. Paul describes his preaching in two ways: first in reference to its author who is God not by signification or metaphorically but in truth, and second in reference to its effect which is faith in the hearts of many who hear it. Both the author and the effect of Scrip-

---

<sup>23</sup> op. cit., I, 88.

ture show that it is authoritative. Quenstedt concludes by saying that what can be said of Paul's preaching can be said of all of Scripture, for he preached the same essential message as Moses and the prophets, Acts 26.22. To defend his position that the authority of Scripture did not depend on the church Quenstedt goes more into detail. He appeals to the testimony of Christ himself. He remarks in reference to Jn.5.34 that just as Christ needed the extra witness of no one, the Bible needs no testimony beside its own to prove its authority. Just as John the Baptist spoke of Christ, the church speaks of Scripture. His argument is weak here. What is true of Christ is not necessarily true of Scripture. Quenstedt seems to be assuming what he is attempting to prove. He is on firmer ground when he appeals to Jn.4.42, although he still argues by way of analogy. From the report of the Samaritan woman her countrymen arrived only at an opinion that Jesus was the promised Christ. But after hearing Jesus and being enlightened by the Holy Spirit this human opinion was converted into a Christian certainty that Jesus was truly the Christ and the Savior of the world. In this story the woman represents the church which commends and recognizes the authority of Scripture and which invites and leads men to accept the same. After reading or hearing this word and being enlightened by it they no longer accept Scripture because of the church, but because of Scripture itself, because it is the word of God which is *αὐταλήθεια* and *αὐτόπιστος*. Quenstedt says in conclusion,<sup>24</sup> "By the witness of the church

---

<sup>24</sup> op. cit., I, 92-93.

as by a guide, one might say, we are led to Christ who speaks in the Scriptures. Afterwards that voice of Christ so touches our hearts that we accept Scripture no more because of the church's word, but by the operation of the Holy Spirit we clearly perceive in our hearts the majesty and holiness and truth of the word."

The dogmaticians are alert to the fact that any claim which makes the divinity and authority of Scripture dependent upon the church vitiates not only the authority, but also the inspiration of Scripture. Scripture owes its being and its authority to God alone by whom it was divinely inspired.<sup>25</sup> Only by virtue of its inspiration can Scripture be said to be invested with intrinsic authority and majesty.<sup>26</sup> Scripture was written by the inspired penmen before and apart from any judgment of the church.<sup>27</sup> Did Paul's epistles need to wait for the imprimatur of the church before they were accepted as Christian and authoritative?<sup>28</sup> But what do the papists mean by the church? Do they mean the church today? Then the pope is the judge over Scripture. But thousands have accepted the authority of Scripture who have never heard of a pope. Do they mean the ancient church? Then let them

<sup>25</sup> Calov, systema. I, 583.

<sup>26</sup> Gerhard, confessio catholica. II, 279.

<sup>27</sup> Calov, criticus sacer. I, 275. Calov, systema. I, 583.

<sup>28</sup> Calov says, systema, I, 583, that the letter to the Romans, for example, as it was delivered through Phoebe was authentic and αὐτόπιστος per sese before the church added its testimony. In fact, "Scripturas Θεοπνεύματος semper in sese manere divinas, etsi a nemine pro te libus agnoscentur..." Hutter remarks, loci communes theologici. p. 25, that if Scripture needs the authority of the church today quoad nos, it must claim less authority today than when it was written which is impossible.

go back and find that before all the church fathers and councils were the holy Scriptures.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, the authority of any writing depends on its author, not upon its reviewer or reader, and God, not the church, is the author of Scripture.<sup>30</sup> The fact of the matter is that the authority of Scripture establishes the authority of the church, and affords us the only way of knowing the true church.<sup>31</sup> In the nature of the case, Scripture is divine. That Scripture is divinely inspired and immediately dependent upon God can only mean that its authority is above and beyond that of the church and that it is absolutely divine and authoritative not only in se but also quoad nos.<sup>32</sup>

The inspired character of Scripture, to be sure, but also the very nature of the church disproves the contention that the authority of Scripture depends on that of the church. The church is the communion of saints, a certain number of believers. Now this fact is known from Scripture. And that the authority of the church rests on the authority of Scrip-

---

<sup>29</sup> Gerhard, loci theologici. II,40.

<sup>30</sup> Hollarz, op. cit., p.129.

<sup>31</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,93.

<sup>32</sup> Gerhard's argument from absurdity is interesting, loci theologici, II,44, though a little far-fetched as is so often the case in that method of argumentation: if the authority of Scripture depends on the church there is no authority for the authority of the Scriptures other than the witness of the church, the authority of Scripture rests on human authority, Scripture is no longer the source of theology, doubt is cast over the whole Christian religion and without the church Scripture has no efficacy. Arguing in the same vein in his confessio catholica. II,280, he says that if the authority of Scripture depends on the authority of the church, there can be no other criteria which witness to the authority of Scripture, nor can the inner testimony of the Spirit convince us of this, nor can we believe that God speaks to us in and through Scripture.

ture is also known from Scripture, Jn.4.7ff; 3.29; 5.34. Hollaz describes the relation between the church and Scripture as follows:<sup>33</sup> "The church is not the lord, but the servant of Scripture, not the mother, but the daughter, not the author, but the guardian, witness and interpreter, not the judge, but the one who testifies of and vindicates Scripture." The testimony of the church cannot prove the authority of Scripture, much less establish this authority, because this testimony and is liable to err. But the pope claims that the testimony of the church is absolutely certain. But, asks Gerhard,<sup>34</sup> where does he get this idea? The pope replies in the Council of Trent that the Holy Spirit will not allow the judgments and decrees of the church to err. How does he know this? From Matt.28.20. But these words are found in Scripture, and they show that the church derives its authority from Scripture. Here was the real point of controversy between the two parties. The Lutherans believed that the testimony of the church was human, the Catholics held that it was divinely revealed and inspired.<sup>35</sup> It is at this point that Calov in his criticus sacer attacks the Roman position. He claims that the Jesuits are arguing in

<sup>33</sup> op. cit., p.130: "Ecclesia non est magistra, sed ministra scripturae, non mater, sed filia; non autor, sed custos, testis et interpres; non iudex sed index et vindex."

<sup>34</sup> loci theologici. I,30.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Gretzer, J. opera omnia. Ratisbonae. 1736. VIII,985. Gretzer says in his tractatus de questione unde scis, scripturam cum generatim, tum speciatim hanc vel illam eius partem, canonica auctoritate constare? cap.VII: "Nam fides nostra non nititur testimonio humano, sed divina revelatione; & testimonio Ecclesiae, quae est conditio, sine qua fides non acceptaretur, non est humana solummodo, sed ut aliqui appellant; humana divinitus inspirata, seu, divina per participationem, & in se prorsus infallibilis."

"a most vicious circle"; they are attempting to prove two things by each other.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, this Jesuit doctrine is utterly un-Scriptural; nowhere does Scripture even hint that unwritten tradition should be accepted as divinely inspired. Calov proceeds shrewdly to argue that if something beside Scripture is needed to convince us of Scripture's authority and divine origin, then we also need something else to convince us of the authority of that which convinces of the authority of Scripture, and thus we become involved in an impossible processus in infinitum. Or perhaps we should accept unwritten tradition simply on account of itself. If we should do this, why not then accept Scripture in the same manner? But the papists reply that the church distinguishes between true and false tradition. Calov counters that even the Jesuits will not go so far as to claim that the church establishes Scripture as a "new word of God";<sup>37</sup> they say only that the church proves that Scripture is the word of God. Bellarmine teaches that Scripture is certain and true not because of human authority, but because it contains the oracles of God.<sup>38</sup> Calov

---

<sup>36</sup> criticus sacer. p.284. Hutter says, loci communes theologici. p.30, that the adversaries have no right to appeal to Matt.16.18 in support of their position since they have rejected Scripture's authority.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Bellarmine, de verbo DEI scripto et non scripto. IV, II,305. de conciliis. II,XII,5.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Gerhard, J. E. Bellarminus OPΘΘΑΘΞΙΑΞ testis. Jenae, 1658. p.67. Bellarmine grants that the church does not invest Scripture with authority but only witnesses to this authority. Gerhard asks for no more, for, he says, if Scripture does not depend upon the church for its authority, certainly the authority of the church is not greater than that of Scripture.

says he will be content if the cardinal will stop at this point. But he protests against Bellarmine going on to say that, though the Scripture is divine, the testimony of the church is required to convince us of this fact.<sup>39</sup> Such an idea completely cancels the previous thought and renders the whole Bible no more reliable than the story of Mohammed. Calov then makes it clear that he does not wish to do away with the testimony of the church as something per quod the authority of Scripture may be ascertained, but only as the one and only thing propter quod the divinity of Scripture is established. The church, then, is a sort of medium through which God can bring about faith in Scripture and its authority. As such the church enjoys a pedagogical office by which it leads us to the authority of Scripture and is able to work an occasion whereby we accept Scripture in terms of divinity and authority, although only with an intellectual assent, a fides humana. There is, however, another medium through which God engenders faith in his word, a medium which is causative and which itself works faith in the word. This medium is the word itself which is αὐτόπιστος. We believe that the word of God is the word of God, not on account of

---

<sup>39</sup> Bellarmine, de verbo DEI scripto et non scripto. IV, IV, 317: "Quarto, necesse est nosse extrare libros aliquos vere divinos, tamen non certo id credam, nisi prius credidero, Scripturam quae hoc dicit, esse divinam. Nam in Alcorano Mahumeti passim legimus, ipsum Alcoranum de coelo a Deo missum, & tamen ei non credimus. itaque hoc dogma tam necessarium, quod scilicet aliqua sit scriptura divina, non potest sufficienter heberi ex Scriptura."

some other word, but on account of itself.<sup>40</sup> It is clear from Calov's whole discussion that he is conscious of defending not simply the authority of Scripture, but the Lutheran principle of sola scriptura as well. It is quite clear that he thinks of these two ideas as correlatives. Quenstedt too is careful to avoid any possible misunderstanding on this point, that the authority of Scripture is proved to us (respectu nostri) not propter ecclesiam but per ecclesiam. He freely allows that through the ministry of the church we are brought to faith in the divinity of Scripture, but this is accomplished insofar as the church possesses the ministry of the word. For Scripture is the chief means not only through which but on account of which (medium principale per quod et propter quod) we accept Scripture. Quenstedt reasons as follows:<sup>41</sup> "Although Pharaoh once believed through a butler, the queen of Sheba through a rumor, Naaman the Syrian through a young Israelitish maid, her fellow citizens through a Samaritan woman, these people did not believe because of the butler, the rumor, the young maid or the woman.

---

<sup>40</sup> Calov, systema. I, 598: "Distinguendum insuper inter medium fidei divinae & infusae, quorum aliud est παιδαγωγικόν, quod ad auctoritatem divinam scripturae nos manu ducere potest, quod de Ecclesiae testificatione non diffitemur, quae occasio credendi esse potest, imo & argumentum quoddam praebere credendi, quantum ad fidem acquisitam & humanam, aliud est ἀποτελεσματικόν, quod fidem divinam in nobis producit atque efficit: quod uti solus Deus facit ceu causa princeps, ita non immediate vel nova quadam revelatione, nec tantum per vocem Ecclesiae, quae humana solum est, testimonium autem humanum fidem divinam gignere non potest, sed per ipsummet verbum scriptum, quod est αὐτόπιστον; credimus verbum Dei esse Dei verbum, non propter aliud verbum, sed propter sese: Nam ut omne revelatum creditur propter verbum divinum, quia eo ipso continetur, ita revelatio ipsa & verbum Dei proprie creditur non propter aliud verbum, sed revelationem, ne processus fiat in infinitum, sed propter se, & quia est verbum Dei, eaque est ratio formalis objecti illius fidei, non autem Ecclesiae auctoritas."

<sup>41</sup> op. cit., I, 95.

In like manner we acknowledge Scripture through the church, not because of the church." The Roman church, in fact, employs Scripture in her efforts to persuade men of her authority and that of Scripture. By so doing she denies in fact what she maintains in theory. It is true, of course, that Scripture would have no way of touching the hearts of sinners and curing the ills of the present world if the church were not in the world. In a sense, therefore, the church resides in the world as a very precious treasure because the oracles of God were delivered to her, and thus she can lead men to a knowledge of the truth. But with such a commission the church does not contribute anything to Scripture; she merely bears witness to Scripture.

What do the papists mean by the testimony of the church? Quenstedt<sup>42</sup> asks this question and insists that his adversaries never give answer. And consequently complete confusion is imposed upon the controversy. If they mean the testimony of the universal church, no such testimony exists. If they mean the testimony of a peculiar or particular church, any testimony it might offer would obviously be subject to doubt and would be insufficient. If they mean the testimony of the church in respect to the communion of saints, it is superfluous, for all believers already accept Scripture. If they mean the testimony of the church in respect to unbelievers, such unbelievers will accept the authority of the church no more than that of Scripture.

The papists confound the issue still more when they refuse to distinguish between a purely intellectual opinion,

---

<sup>42</sup> op. cit., I, 93.

a fides humana which is based on the opinion of the church, and a Christian assurance, or certainty, which is brought about by the testimony of the Holy Spirit working in and through Scripture.<sup>43</sup> This is the chief argument advanced by Calov against the Roman Catholic position. According to Rom.10.17 Christian certainty of the inspiration and the authority of Scripture can be effected only by the word of God itself and the Holy Spirit working through that word. Faith is always connected to the word of God in such a manner that nothing, in fact, is believed with Christian assurance apart from the word of God.<sup>44</sup> It is absurd to assume that we are to believe in the inspiration of Scripture because of human tradition rather than because of that inspired word itself. The Holy Spirit works faith in us never through men, but only through his word which is the medium illuminationis & conversionis simply because it is God's and not man's word. Properly speaking, the testimony of the church is not a means of inciting faith, for this testimony is not immediate and per se fide dignum, but is human. Hence, if the witness of the church were necessary before we could believe in Scripture, our faith would depend on men and not God; such faith would be founded on something which is time-bound, on something which is a "veritas creata", as Calov puts it.<sup>45</sup> This is impossible, unless we wish to deny sola gratia, for Scripture abundantly testifies that faith is a

---

<sup>43</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,94.

<sup>44</sup> Calov, systema. I,598: "Verbum enim & fides relata sunt, ut omne verbum sit fide divina amplectendum, & quicquid fide divina creditur, sit Dei verbum, Rom.X.17." Cf. Calov, criticus sacer. I,294.

<sup>45</sup> ibid.

work of God, Jn.6.29, and a fruit of the Spirit, Gal.6.23; Col.2.12. The church can only urge us to believe in Scripture, it cannot work such faith.<sup>46</sup> Scripture, however, in and of itself has the power (because God has inspired it and speaks through it) to enlighten our intellect and move our will, Ps.18.8-9; Jn.6.36; Rom.1.16; 1 Cor.1.18; 2 Tim.3.15. The church has no such power. Furthermore, Scripture not only works faith; it has the secondary function of working faith in itself.<sup>47</sup>

Catholic theologians offered, in the main, three arguments in support of their position. First they argued that the church was older than Scripture. The Lutheran dogmatists answered that if the church is older than Scripture, it is not older than God's word of which Scripture is an accidens and on which the church is built and has its foundation. What is more, the papists err when they fancy that what is more ancient must possess more authority, for, says Quenstedt,<sup>48</sup> "the law is older than the Gospel, the prophets and John the Baptist than Christ, but they do not have greater authority." Quenstedt's argument is sound, but he could hardly have chosen less applicable examples to prove his point, Gal.3.17; Jn.8.58.

<sup>46</sup> Calov, criticus sacer. I,295: "Fides infusa dependet a solo DEO. Quamquam enim Ecclesia nos invitare possit, ut credamus, fidem tamen infundere non potest."

<sup>47</sup> loc. cit., I,296: "Habet enim Scriptura hanc efficaciam a Θεοπνευδρία seu divina inspiratione, adeoque per se, non ab Ecclesiae testificatione, seu aliunde; tum in sensu composito, tum in diviso, hoc est, non minus, quod actu secundo eam exerat, ut credamus, eidem, quam quod actu primo habeat eandem, ut fidem producere possit."

<sup>48</sup> op. cit., I,93.

Second the Catholics argued that the canon of Scripture was determined by the church. The dogmaticians vehemently oppose this argument. They maintained that a book of the Bible is canonical only by virtue of its divine origin.<sup>49</sup> Roman theology held that the canon was an article of faith. This article of faith was not to be found in Scripture but was established by the church. Quenstedt<sup>50</sup> states that the canon can be considered in two ways. Viewed as nothing more than the canonical books themselves, the canon is identical with Scripture. Viewed as a number of canonical books (pro numero libris canonicis) -- the Catholics regarded the canon in such a way, as a list of canonical books -- such a catalog is not found in Scripture, but is based on tradition and the writings and witness of the church, Jewish as well as Christian, which testifies that so many and no more books are canonical. Such a catalog, however, is definitely not an article of belief but has been "superimposed upon Scripture".<sup>51</sup> At this point the whole controversy regarding the bearing of the canonicity of Scripture upon its authority comes to a head. If the church has established the canon, both the authority and the inspiration of Scripture lose their importance and meaning, and, what is more, the principle of sole scriptura collapses. Recognizing this inescapable fact, Gerhard is very careful but firm in articulating the Lutheran posi-

---

<sup>49</sup> Hutter, loci communes theologici, p.20. Calov, criticus sacer biblicus, Witebergae, 1673, p.41. Whatever is immediately inspired by God must be regarded as his word and apostolic, Cf. Calov, syncretismus Calixtinus, Witebergae, 1653, p.329.

<sup>50</sup> op. cit., I, 94.

<sup>51</sup> ibid. "Negamus vero Librorum Canonicorum catalogum esse articulum fidei, reliquis in Scriptura contentis superadditum."

tion. He offers a thorough discussion of the entire question in his loci theologici.<sup>52</sup> The dogma of the canon is, properly speaking, not an article of faith. Moses and the prophets and apostles did not, by their act of writing, construct a new doctrine. The holy writers wrote articles of faith, but the fact that they wrote is no article of faith. It is true that all articles of belief are based on this foundation, that the books in which they are contained are canonical. This means that the dogma of the canon is the source of doctrines of faith; it does not mean that it is an article of faith itself. The church, therefore, by its testimony concerning the canon does not construct a new doctrine, but only recognizes a principium. The knowledge of Christian doctrines is contingent upon the acceptance of this principium.<sup>53</sup> And so it cannot simply be conceded that the doctrine of the canon is not found in Scripture, for Scripture is the canon. But does not the church determine what books in the Bible are canonical? No. The church only witnesses to what God has already decided and established. And the internal criteria and the witness of the Spirit also testify to this fact. The church can make a beginning in convincing us of the canonicity of certain books, but ultimately the Scripture must testify of itself and the Holy Spirit must convince us through Scripture.<sup>54</sup> What long ago persuaded the hearers

<sup>52</sup> loci theologici. I, 11.

<sup>53</sup> ibid. "...ex cognitione principii postea pendet cognitio articulorum fidei." This shows how Gerhard's opinion that the formation of the canon is dependent upon God is consistent with  sola scriptura and how to him these two thoughts were correlative.

<sup>54</sup> ibid. "Ecclesiae testimonium nunquam sufficiens erit ad fidei πληροφορίαν."

of the word to believe the preaching of the apostles now persuades us to believe their writings. Gerhard summarizes his thoughts as follows: "We believe the canonical Scriptures because they are the canonical Scriptures, that is, because they were brought about by God and written by the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit. We do not believe them because the church testifies concerning them....The canonical books are the source of our faith from which the church itself and its authority must be proved. A principium is believed on account of itself, not because of something else. A principium can be demonstrated a posteriori, but it cannot be proved by means of something older. In such a case it would not be a principium. We believe the church insofar as it adheres to Scripture, that is, the word of God. We do not believe Scripture because of the church, that is, the witness of men, but because of itself, because it is the voice of God."

It might be added at this point that whereas, according to the dogmatists, the question of the canonicity of the books of Scripture definitely effects saving faith, the question of the authorship of the various books effects only our historical judgment (cognitio historica).<sup>55</sup> Our saving faith would not be effected if the Gospel according to Mathew were written by someone else. The primitive church accurately bears witness to the authorship of certain canonical books because she actually saw the autographed copies of Scripture. But the mere witness of the ancient church cannot establish the fact that the Gospels of Mathew and Luke are canonical or the fact that the Gospels which went under the names of Thomas or Bartholomew were not.

---

<sup>55</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 94. Hutter, op. cit., p. 73.

Third the Catholics argued that only the church could testify with certainty of the original idiom of the autographic Scriptures. Quenstedt<sup>56</sup> counters that his contention is contrary to all historical evidence and is also un-Scriptural. He says, "The Holy Spirit bears witness to the fact that all Scripture is inspired by God, 2 Tim.3.16, and that not only in respect to its formal principle, in respect to its sense and the divine meaning conveyed in the words and sentences, but also in respect to its material principle, in respect to the titles, letters, words, idiom and speech which were set down by God; and the holy Scriptures which Timothy learned from childhood were originally written in no other language than Hebrew. St. Paul also says, Rom.3.2, that to the Jews were committed τὰ λόγια τοῦ Θεοῦ, the oracles of God (which with the holy fathers we understand as the holy Scriptures of the Old Testament). Now how could these oracles be delivered except in Hebrew?" For, says Quenstedt, these oracles of God must have been delivered and entrusted to the Jews in the same language as God originally revealed himself to the patriarchs and prophets, and in a language that they could understand. Although Paul does not, in so many words, say that these oracles of God were written in Hebrew, it is most reasonable to assume this fact, since this was the language in which the Scriptures were preserved. Still alluding to 2 Tim.3.15ff, Quenstedt concludes his rebuttal of the third Catholic argument by writing, "If all the words contained in the Biblical codex in the original language [Quenstedt means here the Hebrew Old Testament to

---

<sup>56</sup> op. cit., I,96.

which Paul had access] were dictated and inspired individually by the Holy Spirit, it follows that the idiom itself was immediately set down by God." In other words, Paul in 2 Tim.3.15 was referring to a contemporary Old Testament text which was written in Hebrew. It is worthy of note that Musaeus followed the line of argumentation of the Catholic theologians on this question. He was severely reprimanded by his more orthodox Lutheran contemporaries. According to Calov,<sup>57</sup> the denial that the Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew or the assertion that only the church can affirm with certainty the original idiom of Scripture weakens not only the authority of Scripture but also its verbal inspiration and makes the latter doctrine unworkable and meaningless.

How can we know that Scripture is divine if the authority of the church cannot make us divinely certain of this fact? The dogmaticians all answer that there are a great number of criteria, both external and internal, which powerfully speak for the authority and heavenly origin of Scripture. Markedly less emphasis is placed on these criteria by the later dogmaticians. These criteria are able to convince the unbeliever who is not incorrigible that Scripture is the inspired word of God, but however convincing they may be, they can bring about only a human conviction and opinion. The so-called external criteria are: 1) the antiquity of Scripture, 2) the spiritual insight of the amanuenses and their deep concern for the truth, 3) the miracles performed by Christ and the apostles and prophets, miracles accompanying their preachment and performed to prove the divine authority

<sup>57</sup> Calov, systema. IX,50. Calov, by the way, argued that Hebrew had to be the idiom of the Old Testament inasmuch as it was the native tongue of the prophets, Cf. commentarius in Genesis. p.16.

of their message, 4) the steadfast adherence of the church to this message for hundreds of years, 5) the constancy of myriads of martyrs, 6) the testimonies of many who have not known the Scriptures, 7) the swift propagation of the Christian faith throughout the whole world, 8) the severe punishment which has so often been meted out to those who persecute the Christian faith. These external criteria are able to break down some of the barriers which hinder the unbeliever from accepting the authority of Scripture, but their influence can extend no further. They can only pave the way for Scripture to testify concerning itself. The internal criteria of Scripture which are able to convince us of its divine authority are: 1) the majesty of God who speaks of himself in Scripture, 2) the truthfulness of Scripture, 3) the sublimity of the mysteries revealed in Scripture, 4) the perfection of the teachings and precepts in Scripture, 5) the manner of speaking in Scripture, so profound, so simple, so clear and so brief, 6) the power of Scripture to move the hearts of sinful men, 7) the capacity of Scripture to maintain its truthfulness over against all time and opposition, 8) the remarkable harmony between the New and the Old Testament and the perfect doctrinal agreement between all the books. The dogmatists teach that these internal criteria too can only beget a human intellectual conviction regarding the authority of Scripture. They have no power to create a Christian certainty in Scripture's divine origin and authority.<sup>58</sup> Hollaz, however, asserts that the internal criteria of Scripture can make us divinely certain

---

<sup>58</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., 1,94.

of the authority and inspiration of Scripture.<sup>59</sup> He does not hereby wish to reject what all the earlier dogmatists said before him. To him the internal criteria are identical with Scripture itself. Hence, to say that the internal criteria make us divinely certain of the authority of Scripture is another way of saying that Scripture itself convinces us of its own authority. Hollaz quotes with approval the statement of Adam Oslander,<sup>60</sup> "Quod est idem cum verbo divino, illud eandem fidem generat, quam verbum divinum. Atqui contenta dogmata abstrusa, vaticinia divina, praecepta sanctissima identificentur verbo divino." Hollaz is not unaware of the disagreement on this point. Against this latter position of Hollaz the Catholics argued that it was an attempt to prove something by itself (idem per idem). Hollaz replied that the internal criteria are essentially (realiter) the same as Scripture. Because they are coincident with Scripture they are able to engender a fides divina. However, because they differ with Scripture in form (formaliter) they can prove its divine origin. Hollaz is here indulging in some pretty close scholastic argumentation to prove on rationalistic grounds what, according to his own principle of sole scriptura, needed no a posteriori proof. Inasmuch as it had even in his day become a generally accepted practice of becoming certain of a thing by examination, he would have done better if he had refuted the objection of his adversaries by simply saying that the divine attributes of Scripture are able to convince us of its divine origin, which he does in

---

<sup>59</sup> op. cit., p.121.

<sup>60</sup> Oslander, J. A. collegium theologicum systematicum. Stutgardiae & Francofurti. 1686. p.108.

the last sentence of his rebuttal anyway; and he would have done still better if, according to his own principles, he had remarked that the Catholic objection was invalid, that it constituted a *μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος*, and that, in fact, it was a usurpation of reason over sole scriptura. It does no credit to the dogmaticians nor to the congruity of their theological position that they feel constrained at all times to give answer to all the objections of their adversaries, especially that they do so with the weapons of their adversaries.

But if we cannot become certain of the divinity of Scripture by its criteria (as was taught by all the dogmaticians through Quenstedt), how may we come to such a Christian certainty? The dogmaticians all answer that Scripture itself has the power to make us divinely certain of its authority.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, the Spirit testifies through Scripture that Scripture is divine. This internum Spiritus Sancti testimonium is to be regarded as his supernatural work by which, through our reading and hearing God's word, he moves and enlightens our hearts to faith in his word and promises. In this action of the Spirit the word of God participates as an organic cause (causa organica); that is to say, the witness of the Spirit is never immediate but always per verbum.<sup>62</sup> This testimonium internum is not something outside and apart from man, as if it were another internal criterion of Scripture

---

<sup>61</sup> This is taught by even the earlier dogmaticians, Cf. Schroeder, op. cit., p. 64r.

<sup>62</sup> Kromayer, theologia positivo-polemica. p. 21. Calov, systema. I, 603.

and nothing more, but it is a living witness in the believer's heart.<sup>63</sup>

In support of this doctrine of the inner testimony of the Spirit the dogmaticians appeal to 1 Jn.5.6. They understand "spirit" in the second half of the verse to mean the word of God, or Scripture, in a metonymical sense.<sup>64</sup> And they point to other passages in Scripture where this is the case, Jn.6.63. *Ὅτι*, then, is not causal but determinative, so that the sense would be: the Spirit testifies that the doctrine of the Spirit is true, since he works through this doctrine in the hearts of men, convincing them that what has been set down by God in Scripture is truly divine. Verse 10 adds weight. Here we learn that believers have the testimony of the Spirit in them, because faith which trusts in

<sup>63</sup> Haegglund, Die heilige Schrift und ihre Deutung in der Theologie Johann Gerhards. Lund. 1951. p.94, states that the "internum" of the testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum refers to Scripture and not to the believer in Gerhard's theology. He appeals to a statement of Gerhard, loci theologici. II,43: "sed testimonium illud, quo Spiritus sanctus per interna scripturae κριτήρια in corde nostro de autoritate scripturae testatur, est vere divinum." Such evidence does not stand up. The statement may just as well mean that the testimonium resides in the hearts of believers. But Gerhard elsewhere says clearly that this witness of the Spirit abides in the believer. Cf. loc. cit., VII,107: "...Spiritus sancti in cordibus nostris testificantis & promissionem obsignantis veritas. Deus non solum exterius in verbo testatur de sua gratia credentibus in Christum promissa, sed etiam donat illis Spiritum sanctum, qui testimonium reddit spiritui ipsorum, quod sint filii Dei, sicque interius eos confirmat de gratia Dei, de beneficiis Christi, ac de speciali eorum applicatione." VII,108: "ideo idem ille Spiritus, per quem prius editae sunt, datur in corda eorum, ac promissiones divinas interius obsignat." Cf. II,37. Haegglund says that Hollaz was the first dogmatician to teach expressly that the "internum" pointed to the inner subjectivity of man. But this had always been taught by the dogmaticians. Calov, systema. I,603, expressly speaks of "ipsa testificatio Spiritus Sancti, quae sit in cordibus hominis." It is true that the witness of the Spirit is the witness of the Scripture itself, but this witness resides in the hearts of believers. Regarding this matter, I cannot see that there is any real difference among the dogmaticians.

<sup>64</sup> Hollaz, op. cit., p.126. Quenstedt, op. cit., I,100.

the Son of God is a work of the Holy Spirit through his witness in the heart of man. Another proof text is 1 Thess. 1.5-6. Here it is taught that the Thessalonians received the Gospel of Paul with great joy because his Gospel was not a simple and meaningless message but a message carrying with it the power of the Spirit of God who enlightened and gave faith to those who heard it. 1 Thess. 2.13 is also mentioned in support of the Lutheran doctrine. That the Thessalonians received the word from the mouth of Paul as the very word of God means that they regarded it as an authoritative word preached by the suggestion and inspiration of God. Finally, the tremendous effect upon the hearts of those reading and hearing the divine word of law and Gospel is indicated all through Scripture. One need only think of the effect of Peter's Pentecost sermon upon the three thousand, the effect of Isa. 53 on the Ethiopian eunuch and the effect of Paul's message on Lydia. The dogmaticians insist that this inner testimony of the Spirit never operates immediately, for the Holy Spirit does not work apart from the word of God.<sup>65</sup>

The emphasis of the old Lutheran teachers upon the testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum and upon the *αὐτοπιστία* of Scripture was necessitated by the Roman Catholic doctrine that only the testimony of the church could convince us of the authority of Scripture. The Jesuits who discarded the whole idea of an inner witness of the Spirit attacked the Lutheran position, insisting that they were arguing in a circle; on the one hand they prove the divinity of Scripture by the witness of the Holy Spirit and on the other hand they prove the divinity of the Spirit and his testimony by Scrip-

---

<sup>65</sup> Hollez, op. cit., p.128.

ture. Hollaz<sup>66</sup> replies that he is not operating with a sophistic circle. In a sophistic circle the unknown is proved by that which is equally unknown; the Lutherans, however, are merely employing a perfectly legitimate regressus demonstrativus which argues from effect to cause. The divinity of Scripture is proved by its supernatural effect.<sup>67</sup> And no one will dispute that the Spirit who bears witness to Scripture is divine. One need only look at the results of his witness.<sup>68</sup> Calov does not take refuge in a "regressus demonstrativus" in defending the Lutheran position against the Jesuits. We accept the word of God, he says,<sup>69</sup> because of itself, because it is *αὐτόπιστον*, not on account of something else outside the word. This word of God is *ἀναπόδεικτον* and is itself the ratio credendi ultima.<sup>70</sup> Scripture can convince us of its own authority because of its own inherent power and efficacy, because it is not only a principium cognoscendi but a principium operandi, and because the Holy Spirit works always through Scripture. He says that this is not arguing in a circle and lets it go at that.

<sup>66</sup> op. cit., p.126.

<sup>67</sup> Bechmann, theologia polemica. p.87, makes much of the idea that the witness of the Spirit is proved by experience, -- as if such a witness needed such a proof.

<sup>68</sup> Again Hollaz' argumentation seems to be borrowed from J. A. Oslander, collegium theologicum systematicum. p.104.

<sup>69</sup> Calov, criticus sacer Biblicus. p.44: "Verbum Dei seu revelatio divina non propter aliud creditur, sed per se; cum verbum DEI sit *αὐτόπιστος*, nec ulteriori probatione egeat."

<sup>70</sup> ibid. "Credimus ergo verbum DEI esse DEI verbum non propter aliud, sed propter sese: nam ut omne revelatum creditur propter verbum divinum, quia eo continetur, ita revelatio ipsa, & verbum DEI proprie creditur non propter aliud verbum seu revelationem, ne processus fiat in infinitum, sed propter se. Nec ideo idem per idem probari dicendum est: Nam praeterquam quod in aliquo tandem oportet terminari fidem nostram, quod sit *ἀναπόδεικτον*, & ratio credendi ultima, quod non est aliud quam ipsa divina revelatio."

Because of Calov's emphasis upon the *αὐτοπιστία* of Scripture in authenticating the authority of Scripture quoad nos, K. Heim has remarked that Calov, unlike Gerhard, completely divorced the inner witness of the Spirit from the axiomatic self-authenticating property of Scripture, thereby reducing the testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum to the secondary function of validating what is already objectively certain from the fact of inspiration, a fact which is separated from living experience.<sup>71</sup> It is true that Calov places less emphasis upon the witness of the Spirit in this matter than Gerhard, but from this fact we have no right to conclude that he has departed from the teaching of Gerhard and his other theological forerunners that the *αὐτοπιστία* of Scripture and the witness of the Holy Spirit belong together in certifying to us the divine origin and authority of Scripture. Calov gives no indication of wishing to dis sever all relation between the testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum and the efficacy and *αὐτοπιστία* of Scripture. Certainly he never would have said that we become convinced of the authority of Scripture without the testimony of the Spirit working in the word. Calov's words, however, which Heim himself cites, suggest rather that he consciously wants to unite the action of Scripture and the action of the Spirit in reference to the authority of Scripture into one action. Calov says that the witness of the Holy Spirit comes through the

---

<sup>71</sup> Das Gewissheitsproblem in der systematischen Theologie bis zu Schleiermacher. Leipzig. 1911. p.325.

power of Scripture.<sup>72</sup> It is true that Calov speaks of an objective authority of Scripture which is apart from our attitude toward it. But he does not differ from Gerhard on this point. Heim says that Gerhard, in defense against Romanism, seized upon the identity of the objective certainty and the subjective certainty of the axiomatic self-evidence of the witness of the Spirit, and that this blurring of the two was no longer possible for Calov who taught the authority of Scripture as a thing in itself. But is this conjecture correct in view of the fact that Gerhard, too, views Scripture absolute as possessing divine authority in se ac per se and also respectu nostri as being recognized as authoritative by us?<sup>73</sup> Heim bases his surmise that Calov separated the testimony of the Spirit from the *αὐτοπιστία* of Scripture and reduced the latter to a stiff concept divorced from human experience upon the fact that Calov was the first to bring into view the idea of verbal inspiration as a thing by itself and upon the fact that Calov insisted that all of Scripture, whether pertaining to salvation or not, was the word of God in the same sense by virtue of its divine inspiration. Whether Heim's opinion that Calov was the first to present verbal inspiration as a thing in itself is questionable, but the conclusion he draws from this opinion is still

---

<sup>72</sup> systema. I,460: "tandem obsignat Spiritus sanctus Scripturam in cordibus hominum per Verbi efficaciam, ac vivum priorum sensum Rom.IIX,26. 1 Joh.V,6. Observa vero, quod aliae quidem rationes divinam auctoritatem Scripturae S. probabilem reddant: at divina solum testificatio, ac efficacia verbi divini cum interna Spiritus S. per verbum attestations credentibus reddat eandem infallibilem, ita ut fide divina suscipiatur, Eph.I,13. 1 Thess.II,13. 1 Johan.V,8,9,10." Cf. op. cit., I,603. It should be admitted that Calov's emphasis favors Heim's conjecture, but not his words.

<sup>73</sup> loci theologici. II,36.

more open to question. I cannot see that such a conclusion follows from such a premise. Furthermore, Helm's statement that Calov reduced the witness of the Spirit to the merely secondary function of authenticating subjectively that which was already true objectively, if such a statement means to imply that Calov wished to de-emphasize the importance of the testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum, is hardly in keeping with the fact that Calov, in spite of his lack of emphasis upon this doctrine, teaches that only this testimony working through the word can engender in man a fides divina in the authority and inspiration of the written word of God. Nor is it in keeping with the teaching, so often reiterated in Calov's theology, that all spiritual effects in man are results of the Holy Spirit's activity.<sup>74</sup> Finally, when Calov and the other dogmatists spoke of Scripture as a principium operandi they definitely did not mean every verse of Scripture, nor did they mean the materia of Scripture.<sup>75</sup> According to all the dogmatists, the causative authority of Scripture resides not in the words of Scripture, but in its inspired sense.<sup>76</sup> Translations are equally efficacious and authoritative with the original Scriptures. The testimony of the Spirit works through the efficacy and authority of Scripture, properties which inhere in the divine meaning of Scripture. It is therefore difficult to see what specific bearing verbal inspiration has on Calov's doctrine, in particular, of the testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum.

<sup>74</sup> systema. X, 30ff.

<sup>75</sup> Calov, systema. I, 707.

<sup>76</sup> Hollez, op. cit., p. 134.

It might have been kinder to the old dogmaticians had I omitted such a detailed examination of their scholastic methodology in regard to the authority of Scripture quoad nos, but such an examination, although it necessitated a certain amount of repetition, is of value because it shows their thought process in this matter and indicates how great an influence their methodology exerted upon their dogmatical position in certain instances. There is reason why the dogmaticians' argument for the authority of Scripture quoad nos is more involved, more scholastic and perhaps more objectionable than the arguments upon which they based their other propositions concerning Scripture. They were contending against the Jesuits and were using the tools of their adversaries. Although Haffenreffer and Hunnius and the other earlier dogmaticians concede the definite limitations of both internal and external criteria, although they explain that these criteria can actually accomplish no spiritual effects, although they teach theoretically and consistently that all spiritual results in man as over against Scripture and in every respect are wrought by the operation of the Spirit through the word, the fact that they devote such a big amount of space to this matter of criteria suggests that they feel their position to be insecure, as if added rationalistic apologetics were required to bolster what is simply above all rationalistic considerations, namely, the testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum. In view of this doctrine of the inner witness of the Spirit, intensified as it is by the earlier Lutheran teachers, it is hard to get the point of their equally pronounced emphasis on the criteria of Scrip-

ture. If it is the Spirit of God alone who through the word teaches us to believe the Scriptures, why so much talk about these criteria which at best can only effect a fides humana which is really no faith at all? This whole emphasis reveals a certain concession to rationalism which is inherent in their theological method unless carefully guarded against, and it betrays a certain inconsistency with their rigid adherence to the αὐτοπιστία of Scripture and to their principles of sola scriptura and sola fide. The witness of the Spirit which is sola fides and which is the result of sola gratia simply rules out the necessity and the validity or any observable criteria. This inconsistency between criteria and the action of the Spirit seems to be sensed by the later dogmatists beginning with Gerhard, although they do not rid themselves of it. It remained for John Adam Osiander, who as we have mentioned was closely followed by Hollaz, to attempt to reconcile this conflict. To the objection that a principium was not demonstrable he agrees if one tries to prove it demonstratione proprie, but it can be proved sensuali exhibitione.<sup>77</sup> To the further objection that this makes faith knowledge he replies that something can be believed simplici influxu vel operatione and can also be known ex ratiocinative deductione, for example, the resurrection, Cf. Jn.5.28 with Matt.22.32.<sup>78</sup> This is true, of course, but it proves nothing, and the objection remains unanswered. Osiander had become so occupied with giving reply to every possible objection to his argument from criteria that he

<sup>77</sup> collegium theologicum systematicum. I,92.

<sup>78</sup> loc. cit., I,94.

forgets in this instance the implications of the Lutheran formula of sola fide and of the nature of faith itself. That he intends to make Scripture as the principium cognoscendi reasonable and knowable through criteria compromises sola scriptura as well as the proposition that Scripture is ἀναπόδεικτος and weakens the antithesis between faith and knowledge, in spite of what he says, rather sophistically, to the contrary. The same inconsistency comes out when he and Hollaz resort to a regressus demonstrativus which argues from effect to cause in defense against the Jesuit indictment that they are arguing in a circle in proving the deity of the Spirit from Scripture and the divinity of Scripture by the witness of the Spirit. Even the earlier dogmaticians seem frightened of this idem per idem accusation hurled against them by the Jesuits, but Calov<sup>79</sup> more wisely answers the objection with an appeal to the power of the word of God and to the witness of the Holy Spirit.

The manner in which the old dogmaticians have treated this testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum is perhaps unfortunate. They have taken this doctrine into account almost exclusively in reference to the authority of Scripture,<sup>80</sup> and they speak of it far less often in reference to Christ as the object of saving faith or in reference to the believer's personal assurance of faith. Because of this rather unbalanced consideration of the doctrine they have, I believe, been misunderstood by more than one of the many theologians who have undertaken a study of their theology. Dörner,<sup>81</sup>

<sup>79</sup> systema. I, 603.

<sup>80</sup> Dorsch, synopsis theologiae Zacharianae. I, II, 39.

<sup>81</sup> Geschichte der protestantischen Theologie. p. 554.

for instance, says that Calov changed the religious importance of the testimony of the Spirit into a purely intellectual process of accepting the truth of theological propositions. This judgment is oversimplified and overstated,<sup>82</sup> but it is a reproach which is not without some justification since it is based on the dogmatists' one-sided emphasis of the witness of the Spirit in respect to Scripture. In all justice to the dogmatists, however, it must be pointed out that they do not deal with the witness of the Spirit exclusively in relation to the authority of Scripture. A statement of Gerhard is quite typical of all the dogmatists. He says,<sup>83</sup> "God witnesses to believers concerning his promised grace in Christ not only outwardly in his word, but he also gives his Holy Spirit to them. He gives witness to their spirit that they are the sons of God. And thus he strengthens them inwardly concerning God's grace, the merits of Christ and their personal application of them."<sup>84</sup> A later remark of Dorner<sup>85</sup> that the dogmatists' concept of faith in its re-

---

<sup>82</sup> Calov, systema, I, 460, says that the inner witness of the Spirit working through Scripture engenders in the believer a Christian certainty regarding the authority and origin of Scripture. Such certainty is, to Calov, a far cry from the purely intellectual process of accepting theological propositions which Dorner speaks of, -- unless when Calov speaks of fides divina he means fides humana. It is significant that Calov here says that the witness of the Spirit is given to believers, Cf. also Gerhard, loci theologici, II, 37; VII, 198. And so not a saving faith, to be sure, but still a "Christian certainty" which is far more than a mere intellectual assent is the result of this witness.

<sup>83</sup> loci theologici, VII, 107.

<sup>84</sup> Gerhard finds support for this statement in the following passages: Rom. 8.14, 16, 17; Gal. 4.6; 2 Cor. 2.12; 1.21; Eph. 1.13, 14; 4.30. Cf. also Hunnius, Ae. opera latina, I, 10. thesaurus apostolicus, p. 11.

<sup>85</sup> op. cit., p. 560.

lation to the testimony of the Spirit is a "pathology of justifying faith" is unjustified. In the old Lutheran theology the testimony of the Spirit was always given to believers. An unbeliever cannot have the testimony of the Spirit. This fact is clearly shown in the above statement of Gerhard and by the passages which he brings in support of his conviction. Therefore the witness of the Spirit does not bring about in the believer a saving faith since that already exists, but rather a Christian certainty (fides divina) in the authority of Scripture and in his own personal sonship. Strictly speaking, the testimony of the Holy Spirit as it is put forward in the theology of the dogmatists has nothing to do with fides justificans. Dorner has apparently missed the point of their whole teaching regarding this matter.<sup>86</sup> More curious is the observation of Heim that the testimonium Spiritus Sancti in Gerhard's theology represents a departure from Luther in that Gerhard restricts it to the criteria of Scripture whereas Luther is said to have taught that it was given through the whole of Scripture.<sup>87</sup> In other words, Gerhard confined the working of the Spirit in connection with Christian faith to Gospel portions of Scripture or the word of God. Heim is correct regarding Gerhard. Although Gerhard often

<sup>86</sup> It seems that Dorner has not read the dogmatists carefully enough, especially their loci on justification. He would certainly not wish to impugn Quenstedt's definition of saving faith as that "qua Christum Redemptorem nostrum in Verbo Evangelii recte agnoscimus." systema, II, 593. Cf. also Quenstedt's statement that "fidei justificantis Objectum proprium est justitia Christi Redemptoris nostri, quam fides justificans apprehendit, sibi que applicat." op. cit., II, 582. Again Quenstedt speaks of faith as "meritum Christi apprehendens." ibid. Cf. Calov, systema, X, 349: "fides justificans in eo consistere dicitur, quod intueatur Christum Joh. III, 15. quodque apprehendat Christum, Joh. I, 12." Cf. Hollaz, op. cit., p. 1164. Statements to the effect that the object of saving faith is Christ could be greatly multiplied.

<sup>87</sup> op. cit., p. 304.

says that the witness of the Spirit comes through Scripture,<sup>88</sup> he means to say that the witness of the Spirit works through the inner criteria of Scripture, or more exactly through the promises of Scripture.<sup>89</sup> And he does not differ with Calov on this point. Although Calov says<sup>90</sup> that the testimony of the Spirit comes through the efficacy of Scripture he means the same as Gerhard, because the efficacy of Scripture resides primarily and properly speaking in the promises of the divine word.<sup>91</sup> Nor is there, I believe, any difference between Gerhard and Luther in this matter. It is true that Luther says that the Spirit works through all of Scripture,<sup>92</sup> but he certainly emphasizes that it is properly the word of promise through which the Spirit of God testifies in our

---

<sup>88</sup> loci theologici. I,11,13.

<sup>89</sup> loci theologici. II,43: "Sed testimonium illud, quo Spiritus sanctus per interna scripturae κριτήρια in corde nostro de autoritate scripturae testatur, est vere divinum." Cf. this statement with loc. cit., VII,108: "Certum est, promissiones evangelicas editas esse per Spiritum sanctum, ut igitur credentes certi sint, ad se quoque pertinere promissiones illas, ideo idem ille Spiritus, per quem prius editae sunt, datur in corde eorum, ac promissiones divinas interius ob-signat."

<sup>90</sup> systema. I,460: "...per Verbi efficaciam..."

<sup>91</sup> systema. I,709.

<sup>92</sup> opera exegetica latina. Erlangae. XXII,159. Saemtliche Werke. Erl. Aufl. 12,227. Cf. also op. cit., 52,28: "Denn die ganze Schrift ist dahin gerichtet, dass sie uns von unsern Werken reisse und zum Gleuben bringe." 52,305: "Das ist des Heiligen Geistes Buch, nemlich die heilige Schrift, darin muss man Christum suchen und finden, nicht allein durch die Verheissung, sondern auch durch das Gesetz. Denn auch das Gesetz ausser Christo nicht kann verstanden werden, weil niemand weiss, was es will, und wie es zu erfuellen ist."

hearts.<sup>93</sup> When Gerhard and the other dogmaticians speak of the Spirit witnessing to the believer that Scripture is the word of God, they say that this witness works through the internal criteria of Scripture. When Gerhard speaks of the Spirit witnessing to the believer that he is a believer, he says that this witness works through the promises of Scripture.<sup>94</sup> Certainly Luther would not have questioned this latter teaching: certainly he never could have taught that the precepts contained in Scripture played any part in inciting assurance of faith in the believer.<sup>95</sup> Whether Luther ever envisions the testimony of the Spirit over against the authority and inspiration of Scripture I cannot say, but it is quite clear that the dogmaticians' emphasis upon the

---

<sup>93</sup> Saemtliche Werke. Erl. Aufl. 48,210: "Denn das ist des Heiligen Geistes eigenliches Werk und Amt, dass er Christum offenbare und verklaere, predige und gebe Zeugniß von ihm." 8,321: "Darum siehe je darauf, dass du ja den Heiligen Geist nicht fuer einen Gesetzmacher haltest, sondern fuer den, der das Evangelium Christi ins Herz predigt, und den Menschen so frei mache, dass kein buchstabe da bleibe, oder nur um des Predigens willen bleibe." 50,166: "Denn das ist des Heiligen Geistes Amt und Werk, dass er durch das Evangelium offenbart, wie gross und herrlich Ding Gott durch Christum uns gethan, nemlich, von Suende, Tod und Teufels Gewalt erloest, in seine Gnade und Schutz genommen, und sich ganz und gar uns gegeben hat."

<sup>94</sup> Cf. footnote 92. Heim notices an analogy between these parallel aspects of the witness of the Spirit and the scholastic division of faith into knowledge, trust and assent. He points out that, according to Gerhard, loci theologici. VII, 75, notitia and assensus have as their object the whole Scripture, but fiducia which is a matter of the heart and will be grounded only in the promises of the word of Christ.

<sup>95</sup> This can be said in spite of the fact that Luther repeats the refrain so often that Christ is the content of all of Scripture and that all Scripture teaches Christ, Cf. Saemtliche Werke, Erl. Aufl. 33,21; 37,88; 52,304; 26,183: "Denn was will die Schrift von Anfang zum Ende aus anders, denn dass Messias, Gottes Sohn, kommen sollt, und durch sein Opfer, als eines unschuldigen Laemmlins Gottes, der Welt Suende tragen und wegnehmen, und also vom ewigen Tode erloesen zur ewigen Seligkeit." If all of Scripture points to Christ, still not all of Scripture is promise.

testimony of the Spirit witnessing to the authority of Scripture cannot be found in Luther, as Dorner has pointed out.

The dogmaticians teach that Scripture is the norm of all doctrine and controversies in the church. It is such a norm because it is clear and perfect and also because it is intrinsically authoritative.<sup>96</sup> That it is the norm in matters of controversy is proved by the fact that Scripture in Ps.19.5 is called a norm, as well as in Gal.6.16 where Paul calls the doctrine he set forth in his epistle a rule, *κανών*. It is proved by the fact that God obligates his church to go to Scripture alone to settle all controversial issues. The reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah were both brought about by a return to the word of God as the only norm of doctrine and life. Both Christ and his disciples appealed to the written word in times of controversy, Matt.4.4; 19.4; 22.29; Mk.9.22; Lk.10.26; 24.26; Acts 3.22; 7.2; 13.33; 26.22. Gerhard and Quenstedt go into great detail in their exegesis of these passages in order that they might show the rightness of their position. This place of Scripture as a norm in controversies Hollaz calls "the canonical authority of Scripture."<sup>97</sup> This so-called canonical authority of Scripture is the excellent dignity of Scripture which, by reason of its singular origin, renders it according to both its content and inspired idiom the norm of faith and life and makes it the

---

<sup>96</sup> Hutter says that the only reason the Augustana can call Scripture the only norm and rule of faith and life by which doctors and doctrines ought to be judged is that it presupposes the verbal inspiration of Scripture. libri Christianae concordiae; novissimo hoc tempore, longe augustissimi; explicatio plana & perspicua. Wittebergae. 1609. prolegomena. p.2.

<sup>97</sup> op. cit., p.134.

judge in all theological controversies and of all writings of a theological nature. Such authority must not be confused with the so-called causative authority of Scripture which incites faith and is not necessarily changed in translation. The real message of Scripture which converts the heart is found also in translation. The canonical authority of Scripture is effectual only in the words given immediately by God in the original text of Scripture. Versions can err. They are only human. The canonical authority of Scripture is employed and needed most when controversies arise.

According to the dogmatists Scripture is also the judge in all controversies, which, so far as I can see, is the same as calling it the norm in controversies. Not merely the word of God in the broad sense of the term, but Scripture is such a judge. The papists grant that the word of God is judge. But they divide this word into the written and unwritten word. The unwritten word consists of tradition, papal decrees etc. Scripture, of course, is not a personal judge. Properly speaking, God is the judge in all controversial matters and Scripture is the voice of the judge, the iudex directivus. Gerhard explains the relation between God, Scripture and the church in doctrinal issues:<sup>98</sup> "Deus iudicat πρώτως, ἔφοχικῶς et αὐθεντικῶς, scriptura κανονικῶς, ecclesia διακονικῶς." In Scripture God pronounces his judgment regarding controversies of a doctrinal nature. Therefore Scripture is the voice of the judge and in a real sense the judge in such matters. Just as the law in a republic is

<sup>98</sup> loci theologici. II, 358.

the voice of the highest tribunal according to which all judgment must be passed, so Scripture is the judge and norm in all religious controversies. Every decision in doctrinal controversy must be sought from Scripture, and in this sense Scripture is a judge.<sup>99</sup> Scripture acts as a judge in a three-fold manner: first, as a touchstone which directs the church so that she can render infallible judgment insofar as she abides by Scripture; second, as the voice of the supreme judge who settles all problems of doubt in religion; and third, as that which influences the heart to accept the teaching of Scripture. In divine matters Scripture acts as plaintiff, witness and judge.<sup>100</sup> In judging doctrine the church is subordinate to Scripture. Also doctors and teachers in the church are to be judges in doctrinal affairs, but their judgment is valid only if it follows Scripture whose judgement is infallible.

The arguments for the doctrine of Scripture as judge of all doctrine are much the same as those worked out to prove the normative authority of Scripture. The dogmaticians and Quenstedt, in particular, make much of the example of the Bereans in Acts 17.11. Commenting on this passage, Quenstedt says,<sup>101</sup> "The Holy Spirit does not say that they looked up only those testimonies cited by Paul, but that they carefully searched the Scriptures in a general way not 'where' but 'whether those things were so'. Therefore they brought together passages from Scripture in order that they might

---

<sup>99</sup> Gerhard, confessio catholica. I, 85.

<sup>100</sup> ibid. "In iudicio humano nemo simul potest esse accusator, testis et iudex simul; sed in iudicio divino, quod per scripturam exercetur, hac omnia simul sunt conjuncta."

<sup>101</sup> op. cit., I, 153.

be proved correct in this true interpretation. Our conclusion is this: the Bereans examined the doctrine of Paul according to the rule of Scripture alone, and they judged this doctrine from no other point of view than from Scripture." Gerhard points out that God no longer speaks to us immediately, but only through his word. Therefore Scripture is God's voice in all matters of controversy and may rightly be called a judge.<sup>102</sup> Also God attributes to his word a part in his judicial purpose, Ps.149.9; Dan.7.10; Jn.12.48; Rom.2.16; Heb.4.12. The word therefore cannot be separated from God's judgment.<sup>103</sup>

From the fact that Scripture alone is the norm and voice of the judge in all doctrinal controversies it follows, as a matter of course, according to all the dogmaticians, that nothing else can have any place in such matters, neither human reason, new revelations, the pope, church councils or the church fathers.<sup>104</sup> This, of course, means that everyone who denies sola scriptura will be opposed to the idea that Scripture is the judge in controversies. The most violent opponents of this position were the Catholics, led by the Jesuits. The reason for their antagonism was naturally their interest in the absolute supremacy of the pope. They protested that the Lutheran doctrine was inadequate for the

<sup>102</sup> loci theologici. II,360: "Christus est iudex a Deo constitutus. Atqui idem remittit nos ad scripturas Joh.V.39 & notanter dicit Joh.XII.48. Qui non recipit verba mea, habet qui iudicet eum. Verbum, quod locutus sum, iudicabit eum in die novissimo, ubi in praesenti & in futuro sermo Christi dicitur iudicare, ex quo profluunt haec axiomata. Christus iudicat per verbum. Et verbum Christi iudicat tanquam vox iudicis."

<sup>103</sup> Hutter, loci communes theologici. p.53, says that God who is judge uses Scripture as his means in bringing judgment. The πρὸς ἔλεγχον in 2 Tim.3.16 proves this, he says.

<sup>104</sup> Gerhard, loci theologici. II,362.

maintaining of pure doctrine as well as decency and order in the church. What if a controversy regarding Scripture itself should arise? How could Scripture judge in such a case? No one has the right to judge himself. Quenstedt<sup>105</sup> answers this objection by reasoning that in divine matters God is the accuser, the witness and the judge. Christ said, "I am one that bear witness of myself." Jn.8.18. And he said, "Though I bear witness of myself, yet my record is true." Jn.8.14. Quenstedt's whole argument is worth quoting. He says, "When a controversy concerning Scripture itself arises, let us say, regarding its authority, the canon or its interpretation, our quarrel is either with unbelievers outside the church or with those who are in the church. If some unbeliever persistently denies that Scripture is the word of God, it becomes obvious that Scripture is not an adequate judge or norm in that controversy, since every disputation must proceed on the basis of principles common to both parties. As the philosophers teach, 'Those who wish to arrive at any conclusion must first agree on some sort of principle.' But such a dispute is not on some article of faith, but on the very source of our faith, which in our discussion we accept as true, known, of primary importance, immutable and needing no demonstration. Hence unbelievers cannot be convinced by the book of Scripture but must be convinced by the book of nature and must first be led to Scripture by certain external criteria. If an argument arises with one in the church regarding the authority of Scripture, he should be convinced by Scripture itself, and the contro-

---

<sup>105</sup> op. cit., I, 154.

very can be judged on the basis of Scripture. The point of controversy need only be stated correctly. The same must be said of the canon, namely, that it is not so much an article of faith as a source of faith which is, of necessity, taken for granted in eliciting articles of faith. Even in arguments on the interpretation of Scripture, Scripture ought to enjoy the function of a norm and rule. For it is obvious that metaphrastic interpretation must be based on the original text. But that Scripture itself is the norm of exegetical interpretation is clear from the fact that Scripture must be interpreted in the same spirit in which it was dictated. Furthermore, it is false thinking that Scripture is its own judge. It is enough that it is our judge and the judge of our faith. For Scripture has no other judicial function than to judge us."

Again the Jesuits object that a judge must be able to be consulted by all. This is not true of Scripture, because everyone cannot read it. The dogmatists reply that those who cannot read Scripture can listen when others read it. But a judge must be able to condemn heretics; Scripture does not have this power. Answer: it is true that Scripture is not a personal judge, but it is nevertheless a real judge. Although it does not judge persons individually, it contains many sharp general judgments, Jn.3.18; 1 Jn.2.22.

The principal objection of the Catholic theologians to the Lutheran dogma of the judicial authority of Scripture was that a judge in all doctrinal matters must be personal and visible. The pope, of course, fit this description quite well.<sup>106</sup> The Lutherans denied that such a personal judge

---

<sup>106</sup> Gretzer, opera omnia. VII, 579.

was necessary. The church needs only a judex normalis. The papacy substitutes the pope for Scripture.<sup>107</sup> The papists pretend that the church is the judge in controversial issues, but they really mean the pope, because it is he who convenes all the church councils in the name of the Roman church and interprets all tradition. In a sense, it is true that the church is infallible and is the judge in spiritual matters, since its faith is and must be grounded in Christ. But it is quite another thing to claim that a church council or Roman bishop cannot err. It is true also that church councils have proved to be useful on many occasions, but they are not absolutely necessary nor can they be considered a judge in controversies in the strict sense of the word. The fact that a church council must be approved by the pope after it has been dissolved renders its authority innocuous anyhow. In his polemic, prima controversia generalis Roberti Bellarmini pontificiae ecclesiae cardinalis, de verbo Dei scripto, Aegidius Hunnius<sup>108</sup> defines briefly the Lutheran position regarding Scripture as the judex controversiarum. Then he proceeds to defend this position against the attacks of the Roman theologians. If some doctrinal disagreement arises within our midst, how, he asks, may this matter be resolved when we have no visible judge to whom we may appeal? We reply that we have a judge in such controversy who is God himself. To his church he has committed his prophetic and apostolic Scriptures as a sure canon in rendering judgment. This judgment does not make void the judgment of doctors

---

<sup>107</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 158ff.

<sup>108</sup> opera latina. II, 232.

and Christians whose duty it is, like the Bereans, to test all doctrine by Scripture, but it is understood that their judgment must always conform to that of Scripture. Bellarmine says that the interpretation of Scripture and the judgment in doctrinal disputes must be sought from one visible and universal judge and not left to the private whim of certain individuals. Since Scripture is unclear, he argues, it is only reasonable and necessary that the authority to judge in disputed matters be placed in the hands of the Roman pontiff. Such an exaggerated representation and indictment of the Lutheran position incites the anger of Hunnius. "Who has said, who has written, who has taught," he asks, "that this [judgment in controversies] should be handed over to the opinion of each and everyone? With one voice we teach that this should not be committed to the will of anyone, especially not to the caprice of the pope, inasmuch as this is not a matter of private interpretation, 2 Pet.1. Therefore the Jesuit has lied from the beginning. This is the point which must be settled when the question of the judge in controversies arises: are the sacred Scriptures which were dictated by God, or (to say the same thing in a different way) is God speaking to us in the holy Scriptures, to be the judge in controversies, or is it to be the Roman pope and his councils?" Bellarmine's mistaken idea of the Lutheran doctrine of private interpretation was, of course, common in those days as well as today.

It was in the interest of the primacy of the pope that the Jesuits fought so doggedly against the judicial authority of Scripture. If they could destroy this one idea, the Jesuits knew that sola scriptura would fall too and any idea

of verbal inspiration would become meaningless. The Lutherans realized this too. Accordingly, they violently attacked the claims of papal authority and infallibility. Their polemics become quite severe and sarcastic at times. Scherzer cannot understand why, if the pope is infallible, he has not long ago put out an infallible commentary on the Scriptures, since they are so unclear that we cannot understand them without his aid. The argument of the adversaries that David sought enlightenment Scherzer turns around and comments, "Then understanding is possible for a believer, since it can be imparted by God in view of prayer." Poor David! He did not have a Roman pope to aid him. If only he could have consulted the pope he would not have needed to pray to God.<sup>109</sup> Hunnius attacks the wicked lives and glaring contradictions of so many of the popes. When the Jesuits defend themselves by admitting that the popes err, but only as private persons, never as popes, Hunnius thinks he has his opening. It is as if a judge steals something; he would not then have stolen it as a judge but as a thief. According to such reasoning, says Hunnius, a monk who violates a chaste and innocent woman brings no dishonor upon his office since he commits such a crime not as a monk but as an adulterer.<sup>110</sup> This argument of Hunnius is clever and amusing, but it might be asked whether it could not be applied also with equal force to the Lutheran doctrine that the apostles

---

<sup>109</sup> Scherzer, J. A. Anti-Bellarminus, sive in IV tomos controversiarum Rob. Franc. Rom. Bellarmini, politici, jesuitae, E. R. quondam cardinalis presbyteri, et archiepiscopi Capuani, disputationes academicae...Lipsiae. 1703. p.130.

<sup>110</sup> opera latina. II, 232. He cannot find adjectives abusive enough to describe this wicked opinion: "Haec absurda, inepta, insulsa stolidae pronuntiata obtruduntur mundo ab istis latinis animerum, pro certis & indubitatis oraculis, cum nihil aliud sint, quam merae praestigiae & nugae gerris Siculis ineniores."

could err in their ordinary living but not in matters of faith?<sup>111</sup> Hunnius would have done better if he had confined his attacks to the contradictions between papal decrees and to the statements of Scripture.

According to the Jesuit controversialist, Gretzer, Scripture cannot be both a norm and a judge in doctrinal controversies. To the dogmatists there was no difference between Scripture as a norm and as a judge. Why then did they not, for the sake of peace, cease using the latter expression? The answer to this question is found at least partially in an incident which occurred in 1601. At that time a theological disputation took place between the Lutherans and the Jesuits. The occasion of this meeting was an attempt on the part of Duke Maximilian of Bavaria and Duke Philip Ludwig of the Palatinate to air their differences regarding this question. In 1599 these two leaders who were also good friends had visited, and, as was their wont, their conversation led to theological questions. It was then that they decided upon a colloquy to meet at Ratisbon. It was a long time before this colloquy was realized. The Lutherans, under the leadership of Aegidius Hunnius, laid down the conditions that laymen should have a share in judging the outcome of the debate, that the questions to be debated should be decided beforehand, and that Scripture alone should decide doctrine. Such conditions were impossible for the Jesuits to accept. The Jesuits, on the other hand, made even more stringent demands before they would consent to the colloquy. The Lutherans must prove that they had the Holy Spirit, and they

---

<sup>111</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 80.

must join the Catholic church before discussion could commence, since only the Roman church could rightly interpret Scripture. They further insisted that the subject of Scripture as the principium cognoscendi be discussed first, because this blasphemous and impious teaching was the fountain-head and root of all heresies and confusion within Christendom. Compromise was finally reached and the colloquy convened. Chief among the Lutherans to take part in the disputation were Aegidius Hunnius, and Jacob Heilbrunner. Among the Jesuits were Albert Hunger, Jacob Gretzer, Adam Tanner and Johannes Zehender. Both sides had arrayed some of their most celebrated controversialists for the battle. According to the reports of both Lutherans and Jesuits regarding the colloquy, neither side could be accused of understating its case. The Lutherans tenaciously insisted that Scripture was in the true sense of the word a judge in all controversial issues. The Jesuits denied this. They denied also that God was able to judge men through Scripture. They denied that Scripture was the word of God and that God spoke through it. Tanner even went so far as to assert that heresy could never be refuted by Scripture alone.<sup>112</sup> However nothing was settled. The debate was broken off when, in discussing the question of the pope's power in matters of controversies, the Lutherans not only denied that he was the head of Christendom, but insisted that he was the very Antichrist prophesied in 2 Thess. 2. Hunnius, however, protests that the Lutherans were <sup>not</sup> responsible for becoming side-tracked on this

---

112 Cf. Hunnius, Ac. opera latina. II, 375.

subject.<sup>113</sup> Tanner had appealed to 2 Thess.2 in support of the authority of unwritten tradition, and the Lutherans were forced to state their views regarding the passage. Hunnius also complains that the whole effort was doomed to failure from the start, because the Jesuits, convinced that the Lutherans were heretics because they denied doctrines taught by the pope, considered everything they had to say as worse than worthless.<sup>114</sup> Of course, both sides thought they won the debate.<sup>115</sup> Both sides wrote reports of the colloquy. And, as we might expect, each side condemned the reports of the other as being full of lies.<sup>116</sup> The meeting, however, accomplished something. Both Lutherans and Jesuits were forced to state their respective positions clearly and boldly. After this colloquy practically every Lutheran to deal with the subject of Scripture considered the judiciary function of Scripture. It is quite evident that what happened at

<sup>113</sup> loc. cit., II,338.

<sup>114</sup> Hunnius, Ae. relatio historica de habito nuper Ratisbonae colloquio inter augustanae confessionis theologos et pontificos. Jenae. 1602. p.D2v.

<sup>115</sup> Cf. Hunnius, Ae. opera latina. II,547. Cf. also Gretzer, opera omnia. VIII,653.

<sup>116</sup> Hunnius and Heilbrunner wrote a tract, anti-Tannerus, hoc est, scriptum apologeticum, contra turpissima mendacia Adami Tanneri, societatis antiesuiticae monachi, quibus et theologos Augustanae Confessionis, in Ratisbonensi disputatione collocutores, calumniose proscindere, et Colloquium ipsum in aliam quaeque speciem veteratoria πανουργία, per relationem compendiarium suam transmutare non erubuit. Hunnius, opera latina. II,366ff. They say that they were forced to write this because of the malicious and false report in Tanner's relatio compendiarium. Tanner had had the audacity, they say, to claim that the Jesuits had defended all their tenets by Scripture alone. Gretzer, on the other hand, had written a tract entitled, responsum Jacobi Gretzeri societatis Jesu theologi ad theses Aegidii Hunii praedicantis Wittenbergensis, de colloquio cum pontificiis inuendo. opera omnia. VII,547ff. In this response he accuses Hunnius of lying in his report of the colloquy. So the two sides are even.

this colloquy made it imperative that the Lutherans retain the term "judex" as applied to Scripture, lest they appear to leave or weaken their former position or compromise their doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture. This whole controversy which has its amusing side is not insignificant in our present investigation. Scripture as the judge of all theological controversies is relevant to the subject of the divine origin and authority of Scripture and to the principle of sola scriptura. According to the orthodox dogmaticians, it was impossible to deny that Scripture was the judex controversiarum and at the same time uphold the inspiration of Scripture. This is evidenced by the fact that the Jesuits in this debate at Ratisbon were driven to deny that Scripture was the word of God.<sup>117</sup> It is correct to say that, had it not been for the Jesuit reaction, the Lutherans would not have insisted so strenuously that the term "judex" be predicated of Scripture.<sup>118</sup> The lasting influence of the results of this colloquy in the thinking of the dogmaticians may be seen from the many times practically all of them, especially Gerhard and Quenstedt and, of course, Hunnius, refer to it in their writings. Apparently they all considered the results of the meeting, although negative, to be important.

---

<sup>117</sup> Hunnius, opera latina. II, 226: "Id monstrum est execrabilis illa blasphemia Gretzeri Iesuitae, non modo in scripturam, sed in ipsum Spiritum Sanctum jacta, quando blasphemavit, nec Scripturam Sacram, UT EST VERBUM DEI, NEC SPIRITUM SANCTUM per scriptura loquentem, posse esse judicem controversiarum religionis."

<sup>118</sup> All the dogmaticians following Hunnius who deal fully with Scripture take up this question. But before 1601 Scripture as a judex controversiarum is not spoken of. Even Hunnius in his tractatus de sacrosancta maiestate, autoritate, fide ac certitudine sacrae scripturae written in 1594 does not mention the subject. Nor does he speak of Scripture as a judge in his thesaurus evangelicus of 1584 which contains much of a polemical nature and would afford him ample opportunity to speak in such terms.

The disputation at Ratisbon brought out another important element in the old Lutheran theology of Scripture, namely, the conviction which was not new that Christian union could be achieved only on the basis of Scripture. The only principium disputandi to which the Lutheran party will submit with Catholics or anyone else is Scripture, and that interpreted by itself.<sup>119</sup> If Scripture is the norm of Christian doctrine, it is the only adequate norm for the reunion of Christendom, unless one believes that Scripture is uncertain.<sup>120</sup> The part which their doctrine of Scripture played in all union negotiations is clearly seen in a letter of John Conrad Dannhauer to the Scotsman John Duraeus.<sup>121</sup> Like Calixt, Duraeus had irenic tendencies, and devoted his life to the effort of reconciling Lutheran and Reformed Christians. He believed that the fundamental tenet of all Christians was the same, namely, that Christ was the only begotten Son of God who in Scripture has been revealed as the Savior of the world and that through faith in his name God leads regenerate sinners to life. This fundamental article was enough to bring Calvinists and Lutherans into fellowship. Dannhauer does not agree. He answers that at this rate not only Zwingli, Calvin and Besa, but even the Socinians and papists, by palliating their views slightly, were brethren with the Lutherans. Duraeus felt that the communion of saints was the means

---

119 Scherzer, anti-Bellarminus. p.35.

120 Calov, A. syncretismus Calixtinus. Wittebergae. 1653. p.221.

121 nuncius nuncio-Britannico Johann. Duraeo missus a Johan. Conrado Dannhauero, doctore & professore theologo in academia Argentoratensi cui accessit hypomnema apologeticum Baltasar. Bebelii SS theol. D. & professoris publici in academia Argentoratensi. 1664.

through which concord between the two parties could be effected. Dannhauer replied that Scripture alone was the only norm whereby true unity could be attained.<sup>122</sup> Duraeus' minimum foundation is not enough for a God pleasing Christian union.<sup>123</sup> From this letter of Dannhauer it is evident that his attitude toward Scripture conditioned his attitude toward outward church union. Because Scripture is clear and authoritative everything contained therein is to be believed and no one is to be admitted into fellowship who denies so much as one verse of Scripture or teaches contrary to it. One who sincerely believes that Scripture is God's word will not compromise one verse of Scripture. Such an attitude toward Scripture, an attitude which attributed to Scripture alone the power to unify Christians in the true doctrine, drove Dannhauer and N. Hunnius and Hutter to a decided stand against the union of Pareus too. But it was in opposition to the Lutherans at Helmstedt that the orthodox Lutheran teachers waged their most bitter attacks, for here was syncretism within their own ranks. All the orthodox dogmaticians, especially Calov and Dannhauer, condemned this syncretism in the strongest terms. Calixt taught that all Christians should unite on the basis of the Apostles' Creed. In 1648 Dannhauer wrote an interesting book, mysterium syncretismi detecti, proscripti, et symphonismo compensati, a violent polemic against the syncretism of Calixt, Pareus, Johan Sturm and others. This book, the most effective of its kind to be written, shows, like his later letter to Duraeus, how his

---

<sup>122</sup> loc. cit., p.36: "Aliam normam veram ad unitatem procurandam praeter Scripturam Sacram, nescio."

<sup>123</sup> loc. cit., pp.78-80.

position in regard to Scripture forced him to assume the most conservative stand over against all unionism and fraternization with those who held doctrines contrary to his own. If the Bible is God's word and therefore authoritative, one who denies even a non-fundamental teaching of Scripture blasphemes God and can have no fellowship with orthodox Lutherans, for that very word forbids such fellowship, Tit.3.10; Rom.16.17.<sup>124</sup> Syncretism is a contradiction and denial of the authority of Scripture.<sup>125</sup> Truth is one and is to be found in Scripture. This truth must never be sacrificed. Like a measure or number, if something is taken from it or added to it, it is no longer the same. There can be no mixture, no compromise, between truth and error. They are irreconcilable opposites, as one can see from the sad example of Solomon. Only falsehood can arise from falsehood. There is nothing which is both true and false.<sup>126</sup> Truth cannot be learned from falsehood, except per accidens, no more than one can gather grapes from thorns or figs from thistles. Such a strict view of external church fellowship was strongly opposed in their day as it would be in ours. In all fairness to them, however, we ought to remember that this view was the result of theological considerations, of their attitude

---

<sup>124</sup> mysterium syncretismi detecti, proscripti, et symphonismo compensati. Argentorati. 1648. pp.68.69.

<sup>125</sup> loc. cit., p.57. N. Hunnius had called syncretism "Satanae vehiculum ad Epicureismum & Atheismum." Cf. loc. cit., p.97. Calov called it "nihil aliud quam Atheismus inchoatus: et per Syncretismum via sternitur ad Atheismum." commentarius in Genesis. p.366. Here we see how very heated this controversy within the Lutheran church was.

<sup>126</sup> mysterium syncretismi detecti. p.57.58: "Ex falso & falso falsum tertium, participationis ut fieri possit, tamen non debet: producti tale quid, quod neque verum neque falsum sit, interum impossibile, cum verum & falsum immediate & contradictorie sint opposita."

toward Scripture, of their concern for purity of doctrine, and not the result of plain stubbornness. The Lutherans wanted the reunion of Christendom, but on their own terms, on the basis of unity in doctrine, -- Lutheran doctrine.<sup>127</sup> And they were not unaware of the Charybdis of separatism.<sup>128</sup>

It was a comforting doctrine to the Lutherans that in spite of divisions in the visible church a real spiritual union and unity existed between all believers and their Master, Christ.<sup>129</sup> Such a thought could prompt a Gerhard to flaunt unconcern when Catholics insisted that true Christian union could obtain only under the Roman pontiff. Gerhard writes,<sup>130</sup> "We grant that in a certain sense we are schismatics because we have left the Roman church and its head, the Roman pope, but we have not thereby separated ourselves from the unity of the church catholic and its head, Christ Jesus. O blessed schism through which we are united with Christ and the true catholic church." We learn to understand the actions of the dogmatists better when we recognize the influence their doctrines of divine inspiration and sole scriptura had on

---

127 Even Hoe who does not enjoy a very good reputation because of the advice he gave John George in the Thirty Years War said in the Leipzig Colloquy of 1631, as quoted in the minutes, "Er were auch willig gewest/ mit seinem Blut darzu zuhelffen/ dass ein gaenslich/ chrietlich unnd Gottes Wort gemeesse/ Vergleichung zwischen uns und den Calvinisten gesehen moechte." Cf. mysterium syncretismi detecti. p.97. It might be said that Huelsemann's Calvinismus irreconciliabilis is too pessimistic in view of the strong conviction of the unifying power of the word.

128 A middle course must always be maintained between separatism and unionism, mysterium syncretismi detecti. p.3: "Caeterum ut semper Christus inter suos letrones, ita puritas virginiae inter duo externa remigat: hinc Puritanismus, illinc Syncretismus, illum superstitionis filium, hanc atheismi partem." Touching unionism the watchword was, loc. cit., p.68: "Pax habenda quantum in nobis cum omnibus, Rom.2.13. sed salva gloria Dei, conscientia, totaque adeo tabula primae religionis."

129 Quenstedt, systema. 1715 ed. Lipsiae. II, 887, 888.

130 loci theologici. XI, 224.

their teaching regarding church fellowship. It is not strange that the irenic inclinations of Calixt and even Musaeus would be coupled with a more liberal doctrine of Scripture.<sup>131</sup>

It is apropos at this point to discuss briefly the attitude of these old Lutheran theologians toward tradition and their own Lutheran confessions. The Lutheran church has always had a deep regard for her confessions; she has always entertained a profound respect for her historical doctrinal position, for her own tradition. Did such a regard toward the confessions degenerate in the case of the dogmaticians into nothing more than party spirit? I believe not. Henke has said<sup>132</sup> that Huelsemann when professor at Wittenberg and during his controversy with Calixt felt that he no longer needed to investigate the proof for his theological position, but only demanded agreement with his confession. This observation, had it meant to imply that Huelsemann regarded his position and that of the Lutheran confessions as the correct one, or had it been intended to point out that Huelsemann was convinced that the Lutheran confessions agreed with Scripture and that this was a fact which could not be altered, would have been an observation well made. But Henke means more than this. He pictures Huelsemann as no longer searching for the truth, as having attained <sup>it</sup> in the Book of Concord alongside which he scarcely needed Scripture. Huelsemann and all the other dogmaticians were strictly confessional Lutherans. Of all who would fellowship with them

---

<sup>131</sup> The dogmaticians believe that there are no lacunae in Scripture. Gerhard's words are axiomatic: "Periculosum est vel minima ex parte a Dei verbo discedere. Nihil parvum in magni Dei verbis aestimandum." Cf. commentarius super Genesim... editio novissima & emendatior. Jenae. 1653. p.83.

<sup>132</sup> Henke, E. L. T. Georg Calixtus und seine Zeit. Halle. 1853. II,II,182.

they did not hesitate to demand unconditional acceptance of all the Lutheran symbolical books. And they were intolerant. Modern ideas regarding religious freedom which were being increasingly voiced and even practiced in the Europe of their day were neither appreciated nor understood by the theologians of electoral Saxony. Saxony was Lutheran and they meant to preserve the status quo. However, they thought of themselves first of all as Scriptural theologians. They were firmly convinced that the confessions in the Book of Concord were Scriptural. And for this reason, but only for this reason, they felt justified in demanding a quia subscription to their confessions. It might be added that their confessional emphasis is not nearly so pronounced or so tiresome as their constant appeal to the old church fathers. In fact, in their purely doctrinal works one finds very few allusions to the confessions. Gerhard's harmonise evangelicæ and Calov's biblia illustrata as well as their many other exegetical works should be witness enough that they were always seeking a more complete understanding of Biblical theology.

What was specifically their attitude toward their Lutheran symbols? Hutter makes a statement regarding the confessions which is surprising and could no doubt be used against him.<sup>133</sup> He does not shrink from saying that the confessions

<sup>133</sup> libri Christianæ concordiæ... prolegomena, p.1: "Autorem libri Concordiæ primum, sive <sup>αἰτίον κυρίου</sup> constitutum, non hominem aliquem, sive theologum, sive politicum: sed ipsum DEUM SPIRITUM SANCTUM, fontem & largitorem omnis boni: usque adeo, <sup>Θεόπνευστον</sup> divinitus inspiratum ipsum appellare minime dubitemus: eo tamen servato discrimine, quod scripturis sanctis, & scriptis Symbolicis sive Ecclesiasticis invicem intercedit." He means, of course, only that the teachings of the confessions are God's teachings, that they agree with Scripture. The statement does not seem so strong when we note that Huelsemann in the preface to his breviarium theologicum says that God is the author of the doctrine he sets forth in that book, which means nothing more than that he is teaching according to God's word. "Tutissimum igitur mihi visum est, eum proponere doctrinæ ordinem, qui nihil incommodi, cum primus autem Spiritum Sanctum Autorem habet."

are inspired, that their author is God. He adds that he can make such a statement because the fundament of the confessions are the "divinissima oracula SPIRITUS SANCTI" as contained in Scripture by which all doctrine must be judged. But his is a strong statement nonetheless. Later, however, he explains himself more fully in regard to the confessions by offering what he believes to be the three fundamental distinctions between Scripture and the confessions. First Scripture is the infallible rule of truth; the confessions must be judged by Scripture. Second Scripture is the judge in all matters of controvery; the confessions act only as a witness to this judge. Third Scripture is *αὐτόπιστος* and *ἀναπόδεκτος* and needs no further proof for its divinity; the confessions are to be believed only in so far as they agree with Scripture.<sup>134</sup> In his exegeta Augustanae Confessionis<sup>135</sup> Calov says much the same as Hutter concerning the relation between Scripture and the confessions, although he employs more guarded language. The one requisite of a symbol is that it agree with Scripture and contain nothing which is not in Scripture either literally or virtuelly. He then lists the differences between Scripture and the confessions. 1. The Scriptures

<sup>134</sup> libri Christianae concordiae...prolegomena. p.5: "Quibus accuratius consideratis triplex emergit discrimen sacrarum scripturarum: & scriptorum Symbolicorum sive Ecclesiasticorum. Primum enim scriptura sacra est immota & prorsus infallibilis Regula veritatis: Scripta vero Symbolica ad hanc solam Regulam examinari ac dijudicari debent. Diende scriptura, tanquam Fundamentum coelestis veritatis, est Judex omnium controversiarum: Scripta vero Symbolica testium loco funguntur, & tantum de Fundamento illo testantur. Tandem: Scriptura sacra est *αὐτόπιστος καὶ ἀναπόδεκτος*, per se fidem meretur, neque ulla ulteriore demonstratione opus habet: scripta vero Symbolica sive Ecclesiastica, secundo sive *ἐπομένως* fidem merentur, quatenus nimirum cum scripturis consentiunt." Cf. Dannhauer, mysterium syncretismi detecti. p.157. Cf. Hutter, L. irenicum vere Christianum. Wittebergae. 1641. p.126.

<sup>135</sup> exegeta Augustanae Confessionis. editio altera. Wittebergae. 1665. p.Blr.

come to us immediately from God and inspired in every respect; the confessions are brought about mediately on the basis of Scripture. 2. In respect to form, Scripture is the counsel and meaning (sensus) of God; the confessions are the consensus of the church. For this reason, not the symbols, but only Scripture is *ἀταληθής, αὐτόπιστος* and *ἀνυπεύθυνος*. 3. In respect to materia, Scripture contains the sources of divine truth; the symbols contain only conclusions derived from Scripture. Hence the authority of Scripture is *πρώτως* and *κατ' αὐτό*; the authority of the confessions is *δευτέρως* and *κατ' ἄλλο*. Sources (principia) are simply accepted; conclusions are accepted on account of sources. Calov then adds that Scripture contains everything one must know to be saved. 4. Scripture is a rule or norm of faith; the symbols are a witness of the faith of the church. Still Calov feels he has the right to say that the confessions are infallible, not because of the suffrage of the church, but because of the Scriptural doctrines which they confess; not because they themselves are inspired, but because they are based on inspired Scripture. Their forma, not their materia, is inspired. The purpose of symbols is to test orthodoxy. Therefore opposing doctrines must be stated in order that they may be distinguished from each other.<sup>136</sup>

Polemical interests alone prevented the Lutherans of the seventeenth century from falling into any kind of traditionalism. For a century they had been battling against the Roman doctrine that unwritten tradition was the word of God. In fact, not only their sole scriptura principle

<sup>136</sup> loc. cit., p.B2r: "Symbolum sit tessera dignoscendi heterodoxos. Debet ergo confessio continere articulos fidei, in quibus una pars ab altera dissentis, ut haec ab illa discerni queat."

but also their confessional principle was opposed to every form of traditionalism. The introduction to the Formula of Concord had stated that no writings could be regarded as having equal authority with Scripture. But with the advent of the Syncretists there was added reason why the orthodox theologians should oppose any authority being given to tradition. Calixt taught that early and reputable Christian tradition could be considered Apostolic. Hornejus held that tradition could rightly be called the word of God. Dreier made tradition a secondary source of theology. Such a view which they branded the "double-source theory" was intolerable to the orthodox dogmaticians.<sup>137</sup> Scripture is the source of all true tradition and of all church confession. Scripture is the norma normans of doctrine, the symbols and tradition a norma normata.<sup>138</sup> The position of the Syncretists destroyed both sola scriptura and the perfection and clarity of Scripture. Calov grants<sup>139</sup> that the testimony of the fathers of the church may be a source of theological conclusions, but never a source of true faith. At best such testimony can only beget probable conclusions. Their enemies, the Romanists and Syncretists, were constant warnings against regarding any tradition as any more than a norma normata. The emphasis of the later Lutheran teachers was definitely less confessional than their predecessors. Their emphasis on the testimony of the early church fathers was also less pro-

<sup>137</sup> Cf. Huelsemann, dialysis apologetica problematicis Calixtini num mysterium sanctissimae trinitatis aut divinitatis Christi e solo V.T. possit evinci et omnibus eius temporis fidelibus ad salutem creditu fuerit necessarium. Lipsiae. 1649. Cf. Henke, op. cit., II, II, 180.

<sup>138</sup> syncretismus Calixtinus. p. 318ff.

<sup>139</sup> loc. cit., p. 312. Cf. Dannhauer, mysterium syncretismi detecti. p. 49: "Unde a symbolis ad Scripturam, a symbolorum sensu ad scripturae (quem exponit Spiritus Sanctus in Scriptura) sensum datur provocatio."

nounced. John Gerhard made much more of the testimony of the fathers than any of the other dogmaticians. Much space is given in his loci theologici to the testimony of the church fathers, even the scholastics, always with the purpose of besting the Catholics with their own theologians. His confessio catholica which has just this purpose in mind is almost one long catena of quotations from the fathers. Gerhard was always careful to explain why he resorted to this procedure which we today would call laborious and practically useless.

In their defense of the authority of Scripture the dogmaticians were obliged to enter upon an involved discussion of the authenticity of the Hebrew and Greek texts of Scripture. It was their conviction, as opposed to the Catholics and Socinians, that there had been no general corruption of the Scriptures. Not only the canonical books themselves, but also the sentences and words and letters of these books are authentic. They have not been corrupted by Jews or Christians, or by the errors or negligence or ignorance of copyists, but by divine providence they have been preserved intact and incorrupt. There are, of course, innumerable individual errors in the thousands of codices just as there are in copies of other books and these errors may even have been inserted intentionally by Jews or heretics, but there has been no general corruption of Scripture.<sup>140</sup> Most of the individual

---

<sup>140</sup> Calov, criticus sacer, vel commentarii apodictico-elenchtici super Augustanam confessionem. I, 430: "Etenim quod ad nostram sententiam: distinguendum primum & nos censemur inter particularem Codicum quorundam corruptionem, & universalem omnium Ebraeorum Codicum depravationem. Nam ut in omnium librorum descriptione solet contingere, ut nonnullae mendae irreparent; ita potuisse in codicum Ebraeorum descriptione quoque lapsus & errores designari a quibusdam scriptoribus vel librariis, haud quaquam inficiamur. Universalem autem Codicum Ebraeorum corruptionem factam esse adeo ut quaedam hunc vel illum codicem occuparint, eae omnes tandem

errors in Scripture are variant readings of a technical nature and of little importance, such as omissions, spellings, transpositions and the like, and can be quite easily corrected.<sup>141</sup> Such variations along with diversities in pointing and accent cannot be called corruptions. It goes without

infecerint, ut nulli relictis fuerint his in locis incorrupti, e quibus deprehendi & emendari possent ejusmodi lapsus vel errores; id est, quod pernegam. Quod si ergo in uno alterove loco quibusdam scriptoribus obrepere potuerint errores *γραφοικόν*; non tamen in iisdem statim locis reliquos omnes describendo lapsos fuisse credendum est, nec eundem illico casum, eandemque fortem omnes expertos esse verisimile est, nullo relicto extra corruptionis aleam." Cf. Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 194: "Disting. inter particularem quorundam Codicum Sacrorum corruptionem, & universalem omnium Codicum seu Exemplarium depravationem. Licet in hoc vel illo Exemplari, in hac vel illa Bibliorum editione quaedam *σφάλματα*, errata & vitia, vel Descriptorum imperitia, vel Typographorum incuria, vel Correctorum escitantia, vel etiam Judaeorum malitia, aut haereticorum fraude, in puncto, sive accentu, sive litera, sive etiam integra dictione irrepserint, vel inserta sint, inde tamen non est inferendum; Textum Hebraicum V. & Graecum N.T. universaliter in omnibus Codicibus ita corruptum esse, ut ex nullo alio exemplari mendum illud corrigi queat, vel ut nulla hoc tempore reperiantur Exemplaria Hebraea vel Graeca, eosque pura, ut ex collatione Veritas lectionis, quam Spiritus S. suis dictavit & inspiravit Amanuensibus, deprehendi possit. Nos uti particularem quorundam Codicum Hebraeorum V. & Graecorum N.T. corruptionem non inficiamur, ita universalem omnium Codicum seu Exemplarium depravationem nequaquam admittimus."

<sup>141</sup> loc. cit., "Disting. inter Lectionis varietatem & diversitatem, & textus originalis falsationem universalem. Diversas & variantes diversarum editionum lectiones, in plusculis locis fontium, dari concedimus, praesertim in N. Testam. & concedunt nobiscum textus originalis Vindices acerrimi, non tantum quaedam dictiones, sed etiam quaedam integras sententias sive omissas, sive immutatas, sive transpositas. Ast inde perperam Papicillae universalem omnium Codicum falsationem & depravationem inferunt, cum inter variantes illas Lectiones etiam verae & genuinae asserventur. Illa quoque Lectionum discrepantia ex collatione probatissimorum Codicum emendari potest, pensis habitis contextus circumstantiis, Fidei analogia, aliisque Scripturae locis & Veterum lectione. Lectiones variae & diversae non corrumpunt Scripturam, sed incitant ad laborem." Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 201, also distinguishes between corruption of the text, which occurs at times, and corruption of the message or meaning of Scripture. Huslsemann, vindiciae s. scripturae, p. 221, however, argues that words are symbols of meaning. Therefore if the words in Scripture have been changed due to the whim or evil designs of copyists the content too may have been changed and may even conflict with the truth of God.

saying that the dogmaticians argue for the authenticity of only the original Greek and Hebrew texts, not for translations.

It was chiefly in reference to the Old Testament that the Catholics claimed that there were corruptions. The dogmaticians go into great detail in meeting this charge.<sup>142</sup> They argue that Scripture must have been corrupted either before or after Christ. Assuming that the corruption took place before Christ, and assuming that it was due to the malice of the Jews as the Catholics suggested, why did not Christ and his disciples mention such a crime when they condemned so many others? But Christ directed his followers to the Scriptures and himself read Scriptures in the synagog. And Paul commends the Thessalonians because they judged his teachings by the Old Testament Scriptures. He commends Timothy for reading Scripture and urges him to continue reading it. And does not Paul say that to the Jews were committed the oracles of God? If Scriptures had been corrupted he never could have made such a statement. And what reason would the Jews have had for corrupting Scripture before the advent of Christ? But maybe the Old Testament was corrupted after Christ. The Lutheran teachers say that such a contention is likewise impossible. The Jews had a great reverence toward Scripture. They never would have purposely falsified it. Moreover, they were so scattered in every land that they never could have efficiently perverted the text. And could they have agreed among themselves in such an undertaking?

---

<sup>142</sup> Cf. Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 194ff. Calov, Socinismus profligatus. p. 64ff. Gerhard, loci theologici. II, 258ff. Calov, criticus sacer... I, 380-438. Brochmann, universee theologiae systema. p. 16ff.

Furthermore, the Christians were watching, and they had scholars well acquainted with the Hebrew language so that the Jews would not have dared to falsify the Scriptures. If they had tampered with Scripture after Christ, they certainly would have changed or taken out those prophetic sections of the Old Testament which point to Christ. Augustine and Jerome remark that even the Jews of their day praise the translation of Jerome.

The Catholic theologians also argued that the carelessness of the copyists was responsible for perversions in the Scriptures. The dogmatists teach that such carelessness could not account for universal corruptions. They appeal to the providence of God and to the authority of Scripture which is proved by the very words of Christ, Matt.5.18; Lk. 16.17. And how could general corruptions enter Scripture when we recall the care of the Masoretes who counted the very words and letters of each copy of the Scriptures and noted every error? A comparison of the extant MSS will bear out the diligence of these copyists. Finally, if corruptions are present in Scripture, we have no firm foundation for our faith, no divine word upon which to rely. Either God was unable or unwilling to preserve the Scriptures inviolate.<sup>143</sup> But after all, the burden of proof lies with the papists, and they offer no evidence for their position.<sup>144</sup>

<sup>143</sup> Calov, systema. I,732: "Si DEus & voluit & potuit textum originale inviolatum servare, nullum dubium est, eundem conservatum esse." Gerhard, loci theologici. II,261.

<sup>144</sup> Jean Morin argued that because the New Testament writers quoted from the LXX the Hebrew text must have been corrupt, and the LXX was to be preferred to the Hebrew text. Quenstedt, op. cit., I,201, replied that the New Testament writers were under no obligation to render the Hebrew literally. It was enough that they gave the sense.

It is apparent why the Catholic theologians would insist that the Scriptures had been corrupted and why the Lutheran teachers would defend the integrity of the texts of Scripture so passionately. It was Catholic doctrine that the Vulgate version was the authentic text of Scripture, and that it owed its authenticity to the authority of the church. The controversy, therefore, centered not so much around the question of the integrity of the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures as around the question whether the original Greek and Hebrew writings or the Latin Vulgate was authentic. The Lutherans taught that because the Old Testament was written in Hebrew and the New Testament in Greek, these original Scriptures were authentic and must be the only basis of all versions.<sup>145</sup> Translations, because they are produced by men, are not authentic nor of infallible authority. They must always be judged according to the original text. The question does not pertain to the relation between autographa and apographa, but concerns the texts of Scripture as they exist today according to the original MSS. Only the apographa are extant, but these are authentic and are so in contradistinction to all versions. Inspiration and divine authority which inhered originally in the autographic texts pertain also to the apographa by virtue of derivation (radicaliter), just as a copy of a constitution is as valid and authentic as the original. The apographa are authentic because they

---

<sup>145</sup> Some of the dogmaticiens thought that Hebrew was the original language, Cf. Calov, criticus sacer...I,311; Hunnius, Ac. opera latina. I,6; Calov, commentarius in Genesin. p.16. Calov says that Hebrew was the language God spoke in Eden.

retain not merely the contents but also the very words of the original inspired Scriptures; translations have preserved only the divine meaning of Scripture.<sup>146</sup> True, a translation offers both the original meaning and the words of Scripture, but always transferred into a different idiom. A transcription, on the other hand, offers the exact words of the original (ipsissima ἀρχετύπου verba) in the same idiom in which it was originally written. Therefore Quenstedt can make the statement,<sup>147</sup> "Versions of the Bible are the word of God in content and words, but the apographa are the word of God in content, words and very idiom."

Gerhard advances four arguments in support of the opinion that only the original Hebrew and Greek Scriptures can be considered authentic.<sup>148</sup> 1. In the case of all public documents the language in which the document was originally written must be considered authentic and all translations must be judged and compared with it. If a controversy arose, for instance, concerning some point in a French decree which had also been translated into other tongues, all appeal would have to be made to the original French text. This rule applies in all controversial matters. Even the papacy will allow no appeal to be made to translations of papal decrees. 2. Only the apostles and prophets were instructed by the im-

<sup>146</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 207: "Ipsa quidem Prophetarum & Apostolorum αὐτογραφα propriissime authentica sunt, utpote quae immediate a Spiritu S. dictata & inspirata, imo ab eo per illos exarata sunt; ἀπόγραφα vero sive transcripta etiam authentica sunt in oppositione ad versiones, quia sunt exemplaria, quae continent non tantum sensum divinum, sed etiam illa ipsa verba, quae Spiritus S. Mosi, Prophetis & Apostolis inspiravit & dictavit."

<sup>147</sup> ibid.

<sup>148</sup> loci theologici. II, 251ff.

mediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit and were able therefore to produce an inspired and authentic Scripture. Only they were given a command to write the words of God and were moved to do so by God's Spirit. Since these men wrote in Hebrew and Greek, the authentic Scriptures must be the Hebrew and Greek writings of these men. 3. That which is the norm of religion is authentic. Only Scripture in the original languages is the norma normans of theology and hence only this Scripture can be considered authentic. 4. Those editions of Scripture which were accepted by the Jewish church in the Old Testament and by the primitive apostolic church in the New Testament are to be considered authentic.

Most Catholic teachers would have granted that the ancient Greek and Hebrew autographa were authentic. They argued that the MSS which we have today, however, cannot be regarded as authentic because, after many years of copying, they have become corrupt and impure. This thought naturally led back to a discussion regarding the integrity of the contemporary text, and was no doubt the main reason for the prolonged discussion concerning this point. The Lutherans answered that their adversaries could not prove their point. Quenstedt asserts that it is unthinkable that God in his providence would preserve intact a certain human version of Scripture but allow the original inspired texts to become mutilated. He writes,<sup>149</sup> "We believe, as is our duty, that the providential care of God has always watched over the original and primitive texts of the canonical Scriptures in such a way that we can be certain that the sacred codices

---

<sup>149</sup> op. cit., I, 206.

which we now have in our hands are those which existed at the time of Jerome and Augustine, nay, at the time of Christ himself and his apostles." This was the Lutheran position in a nutshell. Quenstedt argues<sup>150</sup> that, if the copyists made mistakes of such a nature that the Scriptures in their original idiom are no longer authentic, certainly the Vulgate which is based on these corrupted Scriptures can hardly be considered authentic. His adversaries would have had a ready answer for such an argument. The Vulgate is authentic because of a decision of a church whose authority is over that of Scripture. Thus we see how this antithesis regarding principles between Lutherans and Catholics recurs again and again in all their theological controversy.

The Greek and Hebrew Scriptures were inspired in respect to both materia and forma. Their authenticity is due to this divine inspiration.<sup>151</sup> The Vulgate cannot be authentic because it is not inspired, but is a human accomplishment which contains, in fact, many errors. Bellarmine contended that the Vulgate could not err because it enjoyed the approbation of the church.<sup>152</sup> Quenstedt replies that by denying such an indisputable fact the Jesuit Cardinal arrives at the impossible conclusion that "errors approved by the church are not errors."<sup>153</sup> He then proceeds to remind the Jesuit Cardinal, "Error is error, Bellarmine, even if it has been approved a thousand times by the church." Again we see the antithesis concerning principles. If the Vulgate is authen-

<sup>150</sup> loc. cit., I,201.

<sup>151</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,210: "Θεοπνοῆν enim, sive divina inspiratio est sola & unica causa αὐθεντίας."

<sup>152</sup> de verbo Dei scripto et non scripto. II,II,120: "Admittimus enim, interpretatem non esse prophetam, et errare potuisse: tamen dicimus, eum non errasse in illa versione, quam Ecclesia approbavit."

<sup>153</sup> op. cit., I,211.

tic, Quenstedt says, it must be authentic either 1.) because of the translator, Jerome, or 2.) because of the approbation of the church, or 3.) because it is in perfect agreement with the Greek and Hebrew texts. 1. Jerome himself did not regard his translation as authentic. In many cases he frankly doubted whether he had rendered the original languages correctly. Concerning the true meaning of many passages he found it necessary to elaborate in his commentaries. Moreover, if the authenticity of the Vulgate is established because of Jerome, such authority should also make his commentaries authentic. 2. No decree was ever made by the church concerning the authenticity of the Vulgate until the infamous Council of Trent. The church can only acknowledge, it cannot decree that a certain version of Scripture is authentic. 3. The Vulgate does not agree perfectly with the original texts of Scripture but contains many bad translations and errors. It was around the second point that the controversy between the two parties centered.

Closely akin to the authenticity of the Old Testament Hebrew text was another controversy, equally intense and drawn out, between the Lutherans and Jesuits. This controversy, too, arose about the turn of the seventeenth century. Were the Hebrew vowel points authentic? Were they coeval with the original Hebrew writings? This was a dispute which was already raging with even more fury in the camp of the Reformed between Cappellus and the Buxtorfs. The Jesuit theologians contended that the vowel points were inserted at a much later date than the original Old Testament Scriptures were written. This was also the persuasion of Cappellus. But the purpose of the Jesuits in defending such a thesis was far different from that of Cappellus. He was

only trying to get at the truth of the matter. The Jesuits argued that the later insertion of vowel points was proof of the fact that the Old Testament Hebrew text could no longer be considered authentic; their motives were controversial. Calov<sup>154</sup> observes that they argue against the authenticity of the Hebrew vowel points in order that they might destroy the clarity of Scripture and thereby enhance their doctrine of ecclesiastical tradition and interpretation. The dogmatists follow the argumentation of the Buxtorfs quite closely, but their contention is with the Jesuits more than with Cappellus. In itself the importance of a question of this nature merits only passing attention in a dissertation of this nature. However, the great importance attached to this question by students of the history of dogma, the excessive criticism lodged against the dogmatists for their adherence to the authenticity of the Hebrew pointing and the contention of some critics that their views on inspiration drove the seventeenth century Lutheran teachers to such a conclusion necessitate an investigation into their tenets regarding this matter. It might be said at the outset that the views of Cappellus, although scholarly and plausible, could at that time only be regarded as an hypothesis, since final evidence to support them was lacking. Almost all the dogmatists, in fact, almost all theologians of that day, argued for the authenticity of the Hebrew vowel points. Because Gerhard has borne the brunt of the criticism directed against the dogmatists and because he went into great detail in defense of his position, I shall attempt to offer a short

---

<sup>154</sup> systema. I, 728.

resume of his stand concerning the authenticity of the vowel points. He begins his discussion by remarking that the papists denied the authenticity of the vowel points and said they were added by Jews out of hatred toward Christians.<sup>155</sup> Hence the meaning of the text was changed and the integrity of the text was made to be doubtful. Gerhard maintains that vowel points were coeval with the original writings of Scripture. He offers the following arguments in support of his position. 1. Christ refers to Hebrew vowel points, Matt. 5.18. The *κεφαλαίαι* in this passage means "eminentiae & apices, hoc est, puncta, quae vocalium vicem in lingua hebraea obtinent." There were many opinions about what this hapaxlegomenon meant. Against those who felt that it referred to certain extremities of the Hebrew symbols Gerhard, in his thorough manner, counters, "If those who hold the opposite opinion can understand *κεφαλαία* metaphorically as little cross lines which are not horn shaped, certainly *κεφαλαία* may be understood metaphorically as vowel points many of which are designated with small points and therefore called *κεφαλαία* in a synecdochical sense."<sup>156</sup> 2. Vowels are the very soul and spirit of writing and speaking and could not have been omitted therefore when Moses and prophets wrote Scripture. Writing consists of words; words of syllables; syllables of consonants and vowels. Without vowels there can be no syllables and hence neither words nor speech. Consonants are forms which have no sound without vowels. If vowels are withdrawn from speech, its meaning cannot be known. And when the real mean-

---

<sup>155</sup> loci theologici II,265. Calov and August Pfeiffer go into this matter in great detail.

<sup>156</sup> Cf. Calov, biblia novi testamenti illustrata. I,186ff.

ing of speech is unknown the meaning of thoughts is unknown as well. Gerhard concludes, "If some wish to argue that points are indeed necessary for reading but not for writing, I reply that the purpose of writing is reading and understanding." This whole argument which represents a certain theory of language is, I believe, Gerhard's main reason for taking the position he does. 3. If vowel points were added by the Jews, Scripture becomes ambiguous and uncertain. Variations in vowel pointing often change the meaning of Hebrew appreciably. The LXX contains many bad mistakes because its translators used an unpointed text. 4. Without points the Old Testament is obscure. If vowel points were added to the Old Testament, Scripture is made clear by human efforts. If Scripture is made more understandable by the additions of Rabbis, we would do better to read and use an unpointed text. But was not the true pronunciation handed down by word of mouth and preserved in the synagog? No. The true sense of Scripture would depend on the church, if such were the case. No memory is good enough to remember the myriads of vowel points in the whole Old Testament. At the time of Menassah and Ammon before Josiah the book of the law was neglected for about sixty-seven years. The best medium through which the purity and integrity of the Scriptures could be maintained in the church is the system of pointing. 5. The perfection of Scripture is overthrown, if points were added to the Old Testament. Scripture is perfect, and will brook no addition or subtraction. Often the real meaning of Scrip-

ture can only be known by means of vowel points.<sup>157</sup> In this argument Gerhard's major premise does not agree with what he elsewhere says about the perfection of Scripture, namely, that it inheres not in the express words of Scripture, but in its sufficiency of everything necessary to know for salvation.<sup>158</sup> The same observation might be made in regard to his third and fourth arguments.<sup>159</sup> 6. The reverence of the Jews toward Scripture would have kept them from adding even vowel points to the sacred text. Even when strange constructions were found they never tampered with the text but put notes in the margins. 7. Finally Gerhard argues from absurd-

---

<sup>157</sup> Calov, criticus sacer, vel commentarii apodictico-elenchitici super Augustanam confessionem. I, 328, makes much of the argument that our faith is grounded in human tradition if the Jews after Jerome added pointing to the Hebrew text. He believes that, although Jerome may not have used a pointed text, he at least had access to a text with some sort of "vowel letters" (litterae vocalae) since Jerome makes mention of this fact. Cf. Jerome, opera omnia, per D. Erasmus, Basileae. 1565. Tom. III, fol. 40: "Nec refert utrum Salem, an Salim nominetur, cum vocalibus in medio literis perraro utantur Hebraei, & pro voluntate lectorum, atque varietate regionum, eadem verba diversis sonis atque accentibus proferantur." This passage proves nothing. Jerome is only comparing Hebrew script with alphabetical systems of writing. From another quotation of Jerome Calov attempts to prove that a system of pointing existed at the time even though Jerome did not use a pointed text. Cf. opera omnia. Tom. V. fol. 287: "Verbum Hebraicum quod tribus literis scribuntur רַבִּי vocales enim in medio non habet: pro consequentia & legentis arbitrio si legatur רַבִּי sermonem significat; si רַבִּי mortem: si רַבִּי loquere. Unde & LXX & Theodotio iunxerunt illud praeterito capitulo, ut dicerent, disperdent parvuloe de foris, iunenes de plateis morte. Aquila vero & Symachus transtulerunt λάλησον, id est loquere." Calov finally admits that we cannot know with certainty from Jerome whether he used a pointed text or no. Even if Calov had proved this point, his main thesis would not have been strengthened appreciably.

<sup>158</sup> loci theologici. II, 286: "Perfectionem scripturae aestimandam esse...ex sufficientia dogmatum ad salutem scitu necessariorum."

<sup>159</sup> loci theologici. II, 330: "Multa scripturae loca, quoad verborum & sententiarum involucra sunt obscura, nullum autem dogma est obscurum."

ity. If the vowel points were inserted into the Hebrew Scriptures long after they were written, then the contents of Scripture were not complete originally, Scripture has its certainty and clarity from men, Scripture was not given to men by God in respect to every word since words cannot exist without vowels (all Scripture is not inspired), the true reading of Scripture depends on the judgment of men, the meaning of Scripture may always be changed by changing pointing, no one is obliged to believe Scripture since its sense cannot always be known. This is essentially the position which almost all the dogmatists take.

It has been stated that their doctrine of verbal inspiration necessarily drove the dogmatists to the assumption that the vowel points were inspired.<sup>160</sup> This conjecture is without foundation. It is true, as Ritschl has mentioned, that Gerhard argues that all Scripture cannot be inspired if the pointing was not originally inspired.<sup>161</sup> However, this argument of Gerhard does not support Ritschl's theory that Gerhard's supposition regarding points is the logical consequence of his inspiration doctrine. This statement of Gerhard is only one of many arguments from absurdity. He would never have meant to prove the authenticity and inspiration of points from this or any other argument from absurdity. It will be remembered that Gerhard had already advanced

---

<sup>160</sup> Nitzsch, Lehrbuch der Evangelischen Dogmatik. p.251. Cremer, op. cit., VI,755. Ritschl, Dogmengeschichte des Protestantismus. I,171.

<sup>161</sup> loci theologici. II,272: "Scripturam non esse a Deo per prophetas traditam quoad singula verba, cum sine punctis vocalibus verba constrare, nullo modo possint, proinde non totam scripturam esse Θεόπνευστον."

six arguments in support of his position. Gerhard's chief interest in his discussion of the Hebrew vowel points is not their inspiration, but their authenticity. He felt that the Jesuit attack against the authenticity, and consequently the clarity and perfection, of the Hebrew Old Testament would have to be met by asserting that the vowel pointing was coeval with the original Hebrew writings. None of the dogmatists make any mention of vowel points in their sections on inspiration.

The whole conjecture of Cremer and the others breaks down when we discover that at least one of the dogmatists, Hutter, a model of orthodoxy, denied the authenticity of the Hebrew vowel points.<sup>162</sup> Also Dannhauer, who personally held to the authenticity of the pointing, definitely felt that it was an open question. He said that the authenticity of the vowel points had nothing to do with their inspiration. When Paul said that all Scripture was inspired he meant all Scripture, including vowels, whether or no those vowels were actually written in the autographs. Even if pointing itself was not coeval with the original writing, the vowels themselves which are understood and implied in the Hebrew script are inspired.<sup>163</sup> Even August Pfeiffer

---

<sup>162</sup> Cf. triumph. de regno pontifico. l.1,c.6, quoted in A. Pfeiffer, critica sacra. p.71: "Ut ad Puncta ipsa, & litterarum apices vel accentus articulorum fidei veritatem adstringi patiamur, illud certe tanquam indignae servitutis jugum, studio quo possumus maximo, recusamus. Constat enim punctuationem Bibliorum non ejusdem esse antiquitatis cum ipso textu Ebraeo, sed multis seculis posteriorem."

<sup>163</sup> Dannhauer, J. C. hermeneutica sacra. p.16: "Quicquid hic assumes, manebit verum illud Paulinum, πᾶσα γράφη (sc. γραφῆ perfecta constans anima & corpore) est θεόπνευστος. Si aliquamdiu sive punctis fuerunt, formaliter; numquam tamen sine fuerunt virtualiter, quia quaevis consona suam vocalem virtute

does not deny that the Rabbis, versed as they were in Scripture, read their Scriptures without a pointed text and did so accurately and with safety.<sup>164</sup>

It was not their doctrine of verbal inspiration which forced them to the conclusion that the vowel points were inspired and authentic, but rather a false linguistic principle which was based on rationalism and ignorance. The dogmatists could not understand how there could be written a correct representation of words without some sort of vowel symbols.<sup>165</sup> The Jesuits claimed that an unpointed text could

---

eadem, qua permissae suam conclusionem, etsi ῥητῶς non expressam, continet. Sicut qui scribit S.P.Q.P. vel I.N.R.I. vel I.U.D. is non solas literas, sed quae iisdem significantur voces simul scribit, nimirum, Senatus Populusque Romanus: Jesus Nazarenus, Rex Judaeorum; Iuris Utriusque Doctor. Ita cum Spiritus Sanctus scripsit consonas, scripsit simul iis debitas vocales. Sicut cantari potuit olim ante inventas notulas UT, re, mi, fa, sol, la; Ita et legi hebraeus textus ante inventa puncta. Omnis igitur Scriptura etiam virtute contenta est **Θεόπνευστος**. Unde, si vel maxime nulli Masorethae fuissent, qui puncta ista addidissent, quo modo tamen ab ingenio solerte & **στοχαστικῶ** sensus aliquatenus indigari potuisset virtute latens.... Si punctata sunt Biblia ab Eadro & viris synagogae magnae, jam denuo origo est **Θεόπνευστος** per viros divinos prodita. Si recentius post Christum a Masorethis Judaeorum inventum est, tamen istiusmodi punctatio non potuit aliena fuisse ab ea quae sensui debebatur, sed illa ipsa fuit, quam habuerunt **Θεόπνευστοι** per **πατροπαρόδοσιν**." The same words are found in Dennhauer's OΔOΞOΦIA christiana. p.60ff.

<sup>164</sup> op. cit., p.73. Haggglund, op. cit., p.80, has correctly pointed out that the question with Gerhard and with the other dogmatists was not whether the vowel points were inspired, but whether they were present in the original texts of Scripture. He then adds that any question about the inspiration of the vowel points is senseless so long as the origin of Scripture is viewed as being in the oral preaching of the prophets, and that such a question arises only if a purely mechanical conception of inspiration which ignores the mental activity of the writers is thought of. I cannot see the point of his last observation. Is it any more mechanical to inspire vowel points in one who is writing than to inspire words which consist of phonemes in one who is speaking? After all, words, whether spoken or written, are combinations of phonemes which are made up of consonants and vowels.

<sup>165</sup> Cf. Hoepfner, H. loci theologici. Francofurti & Lipsiae. 1673. p.49. Pfeiffer, critica sacra. p.71.

not have clear and unequivocal meaning. Apparently it never occurred to any of the Lutheran theologians to question this premise of the Jesuits. Like the Jesuits, the Lutheran dogmaticians, with the one exception of Dannhauer, jumped to the absurd conclusion that vowels could not be implied, but must be represented in writing. They did not realize that words, and consequently thoughts, could be truly represented otherwise than by alphabetical symbols. They did not realize that the Hebrew writing system was, strictly speaking, not an alphabet, but a consonant syllabary which, in the nature of the case, did not represent and had no need to represent vowels with specific symbols. Their false conclusion was abetted by a background in and adherence to an Aristotelian philosophy of language.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE

Since it is the purpose of God, who is the author of Scripture, to inform men of his nature and will and instruct them regarding faith and life, it is his will also that Scripture be sufficient and clear. An ambiguous and imperfect Scripture would frustrate the very end to which Scripture was written.<sup>1</sup> The very purpose of inspiration is the perfection of Scripture.<sup>2</sup> And what does it mean that Scripture is sufficient? It means that everything a believer must know to be saved and everything he must do to live a life pleasing to God is contained in Scripture.<sup>3</sup> The Lutheran position is explicitly stated by Calov.<sup>4</sup> Scripture sufficiently and adequately contains everything necessary for faith and life, and that either expressly (*αὐτολεξεῖ*) with words conveying the intended meaning (*quoad verba κατὰ τὴν διάνοιαν*) or by implication with clear consequences drawn from what is expressly written. Dorsch<sup>5</sup> points out that the sufficiency of Scripture is not absolute; that is to say, Scripture does

---

1 Gerhard, *loci theologici*. II, 286. Gerhard, *confessio catholica*. I, 30: "Talis causa scripturae est Deus, quippe qui eo fine scripturas exarari et extrare voluit, ut de sua essentia et voluntate ad salutem plene nos instruerent, neque ullam impedimentum huic effectibus productioni intervenit vel intervenire potuit."

2 Schroeder, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

3 Hunnius, *N. epitome credendorum*. p. 3: "Alles, was ein Christ zu seiner Seligkeit wissen und glauben muss, soll einig und allein aus der Bibel, das ist, aus den Prophetischen und Apostolischen Schrifften gelernet werden." p. 4: "Wir, die wir den christlichen Nahmen fuehren, glauben und bekennen, dass die Schrifften...das einige Mittel sey, dadurch die Menschen von Gott gelehret werden, was sie zu ihrer Seligkeit und ewigen Wohlfart zu wissen von noethen haben."

4 *systema*. I, 610.

5 *dissertationum theologicarum*...Argentorati. 1638. p. Xlv.

not contain all theological truth. There exists a theologia ἐκτυπός which is in God and has never been revealed. The sufficiency of Scripture is restricted; Scripture is sufficient only in reference to its end, namely faith in Christ and eternal salvation.<sup>6</sup> Nor is Scripture perfect in such a way that it presents a theological system which is perfectly logical and of equal validity for all ages. There are doctrinal and historical gaps (lacunae) in Scripture. Nor does the perfection of Scripture imply that everything Christ and his apostles spoke and did is recorded in Scripture. The careful and thorough discussion of this whole question by the dogmaticians was provoked by the Roman Catholic dogma that unwritten tradition enjoyed equal authority in doctrinal matters with Scripture. It is for this reason that the Lutheran teachers speak of a sufficiencia exclusiva. Nothing except Scripture can teach or prove what is necessary for salvation. Therefore it is not enough simply to say that the word of God is sufficient for faith and life, for the papists do not identify Scripture with the word of God, but teach that unwritten tradition and decrees of councils are also God's word. It is to be expected that, in view of this fact, both Dorsch and Meisner note the closeness between the perfection of Scripture and the sola scriptura principle and argue that anything which is added to Scripture as a source of theology, even though it may not contradict Scripture, will not only compromise the perfection of Scripture, but

---

<sup>6</sup> Baier, compendium theologiae positivae. p.151.

will also vitiate the principle of sola scriptura.<sup>7</sup> Quenstedt<sup>8</sup> further explains the Lutheran position. The sufficiency of Scripture resides in Scripture as a whole. All the articles of our faith are not necessarily set forth in any one given book of the Scriptures. Furthermore, it is not the Lutheran position that all important articles of faith are set forth in Scripture in concreto, in so many words. Many fundamental doctrines of faith are taught in Scripture in abstracto, in words which convey an indisputable meaning but do not do so expressly, that is to say, quoad phrases aequipollentes, e.g. the Trinity and the incarnation.

In their dispute with the Catholics concerning the sufficiency of Scripture the Catholics confuse the whole issue, so the Lutheran theologians charged, by misrepresenting the Lutheran position. When Bellermino says<sup>9</sup> that everything necessary for faith and life is not expressly taught in Scripture, he is playing with words and avoiding the issue, according to Gerhard,<sup>10</sup> since no Lutheran ever taught that everything necessary for faith and life was taught in Scripture in so many words (αὐτολεξεί sive κατὰ ῥητόν). The Lutheran position is this: of those things necessary for doctrine and Christian life certain things are taught in Scripture

---

<sup>7</sup> Dorsch, dissertationum theologicarum...p.23r. Hutter, controversiae duae theologicae: 1. de Verbo Dei scripto, & non scripto. 2. de persona Christi Jesu Servatoris nostri unici...praeside Leonharto Huttero. p.65. Baier, op. cit., p.149.

<sup>8</sup> op. cit., I,109.

<sup>9</sup> de verbo DEI scripto et non scripto. IV,III,202: "Nos pontifici asserrimus, non contineri inScripturis Expresse totam doctrinam necessariam sive de fide, sive de moribus."

<sup>10</sup> loci theologici. II,286: "Quod si enim per τὸ expresse hoc intelligit, omnia necessaria αὐτολεξεί in scripturis exterrere, non recte formavit controversiae statum, cum nemo nostrum hoc asserat."

explicitly (secundum literam) and other things are taught only implicitly (secundum rem) and must be drawn from Scripture through legitimate deduction. Quenstedt<sup>11</sup> too thinks that Bellarmine is fighting windmills. He says, "Bellarmine says, 'We affirm that all necessary teaching concerning faith and life is not contained expressly in Scripture. But the Evangelicals teach that all things necessary for faith and life are contained in Scripture.' Now if by 'expressly' he means that all things necessary are present in Scripture in so many words [αὐτολεξεί] he has not correctly presented the point of controversy, since none of us teach this. He says that the adverb 'expressly' refers only to the mode of presentation, to the presentment of the things to be believed as expressed in so many clear syllables and words, not to the sufficiency of these things to be believed, around which the controversy centers. Whatever articles of faith have not been expressly recorded in holy Writ in so many letters and syllables can nevertheless be educed through right and lawful consequences in such a way that unwritten tradition is not added to Scripture. This is our position: all things necessary to a saving knowledge and worship of God and to an attainment of everlasting blessedness are sufficiently contained in the written word of God, either expressly and in so many words or κατ' ἰσοδυναμίαν, in words with the same meaning and taken from that same fountain of holy Scripture through good, legitimate, necessary and certain consequences."<sup>12</sup>

The papists confuse the issue still more, says Quenstedt,<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> op. cit., I, 203.

<sup>12</sup> Scherzer, anti-Bellarminus, p. 149: "Questio enim est de objecto proposito, non vero de proponenti modo."

<sup>13</sup> op. cit., I, 202.

by teaching that Scripture is sufficient implicite, in other words, that Scripture contains all that is necessary for salvation and right living in the same way as a seed contains everything necessary for a mature tree. It is the position of Rome that Scripture is perfect because it directs us to the church which leads us to salvation.<sup>14</sup> But this, Quenstedt argues, actually denies the sufficiency of Scripture. Either Scripture is perfect in itself or it is imperfect.<sup>15</sup>

Norma remissiva non est norma.

The Lutheran theologians also taught that Scripture was sufficient implicite, but they did not mean what the Roman Catholics meant. The Lutherans held that certain legitimate conclusions drawn from Scripture were also necessary for salvation.<sup>16</sup> This was affirmed in antithesis to the Socinians. Christ himself appealed to consequences in demonstrating fundamental articles of faith. He proved that he was the promised Messiah by his miracles and urged men to believe in him on the basis of his works. He proved the resurrection of the dead from a statement of Moses which does not explicitly speak of the resurrection, Mk.12.26. Again he told his disciples that it was written that Christ must rise from the dead, but this is never stated explicitly in the Old Testament. Peter says, Acts 10.23, that all the prophets testified that everyone who believed in Christ would receive remission of sins. But all the prophets do not teach

---

<sup>14</sup> de verbo DEI scripto et non scripto. IV,X,236.

<sup>15</sup> op. cit., I,202: "Hoc ipso Ecclesia redditur perfecta & sufficiens ad omnia salutis dogmata, Scriptura vero imperfectissima, utpote quae, ut a se ad aliam doctrinam nos amandet, necesse habet."

<sup>16</sup> Calov, systema. I,653ff.

this explicitly. Jesus cannot be shown to be the Messiah except through legitimate conclusions drawn from the Old Testament. Nor can we today be certain of Jesus' messianic office without drawing certain inferences from Scripture. Calov attempts to expose the absurdity of the Socinian position by saying that their opinion that we need accept nothing in Scripture except what is stated explicitly denies the very existence of fides specialis, personal faith. A person cannot, if such an opinion is to stand, be certain of his personal salvation, since Scripture does not say explicitly that God wishes to be gracious to him. A sinner can be sure of his salvation only if he draws conclusions from passages which teach that God wishes to save all men. Finally, the Socinians do not observe their own rule when they teach that Christ was created by the Father and that the Holy Spirit is only the power (virtus) of God.<sup>17</sup>

Catholic theology distinguished between a complete and a partial norm of faith. Scripture was a norm, but only a partial norm. It must be supplemented by tradition to be complete. The dogmatists insisted that such an opinion made Scripture depend upon tradition, at least in practice, and shattered the whole concept of the sufficiency of Scripture.<sup>18</sup>

The locus classicus for the Lutheran doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture is 2 Tim. 3.15,16. The *δύναμις* which

---

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Scherzer, colegii anti-Sociniani. p.25.

<sup>18</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,104: "At regula partialis encomium regulae sustinere nequit, aut ergo plane negandum Scripturam esse fidei regulam, aut concedendum esse regulam totalem, planam et integram."

the apostle Paul attributes to Scripture brings forth three fruits according to this passage: 1.) true and lasting wisdom, 2.) faith whose object is the one Mediator between God and men, and 3.) eternal salvation which is the end of our faith and to which we are led through the wisdom which Scripture teaches. The inevitable conclusion from these observations is this: that which makes a man wise unto salvation must contain the doctrine necessary for salvation and in that respect be sufficient. In other words, whatever is useful for doctrine and reproof and instruction to the end that we are made wise unto salvation is perfect.<sup>19</sup> Whatever furnishes a man perfectly equipped to perform good works is perfect.<sup>20</sup> In this passage Paul speaks of the origin of Scripture. He says it is *Θεόπνευτος*. We must conclude from this simple statement that Scripture is sufficient.<sup>21</sup> The result of the divine origin of Scripture, the very purpose of Scripture, is this, that it is "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteous-

---

<sup>19</sup> Calov, biblia novi testamenti illustrata. II,1031: "Quod ita utile est, ut nos sapientes reddat ad salutem per fidem, id sufficere ad salutem, certo certius est." Gerhard, loci theologici. I,16: "Uterius, quicquid sufficienter utile est ad doctrinam, ad confutationem errorum, ad informationem morum, ad consolationem, illud etiam est perfectum."

<sup>20</sup> Hutter, loci communes theologici. p.66: "Quicquid enim hominem PERFECTE instruit ad OMNE opus bonum, illud utique sufficiens etiam sit, necesse est."

<sup>21</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,106: "A causa enim perfecta voluntarie, perfectum effectum producere volente & non impedita, perfectus procedit effectus." Calov, biblia novi testamenti illustrata. II,1037: "Nam et Scriptura tota est divinitus inspirata atque utilis ad docendum, redarguendum etc. nihilque in scriptura est, quod non sit inspiratum divinitus, quod non sit utile, si non ad omnes illas fines, ad aliquem certe eorundem."

ness." Doctrine and reproof pertains to faith. Correction and instruction in righteousness pertains to life. That these actions, or influences (actus), of Scripture upon men are spoken of in reference to salvation indicates that these actions are sufficient, or, in other words, that Scripture is sufficient.

Bellarmino said<sup>22</sup> that 2 Tim.3.15 used as a proof passage of the sufficiency of Scripture was the Achilles' heel of the Lutheran doctrine. He declared that what could be said of the whole Bible could be said of any part of it. Accordingly, if this passage is to stand as a proof text, every book of the Bible must be perfect by itself. These, he says, are the absurd consequences to which the Lutheran doctrine leads. Adam Tanner also takes issue with the Lutheran exegesis of this passage. He mentions that Paul here did not say "the whole Scripture" but "all Scripture". The πάσα in this verse must be taken distributively. The dogmatists reply<sup>23</sup> that πάσα in this case is to be understood collectively, since γραφή is not a genus consisting of species, (totum universale), but a perfect whole consisting of parts (totum integrale). πάσα γραφή, then, is to be taken as signifying the whole of Scripture, as ὅλη γραφή. Calov says<sup>24</sup> that even if πάσα needed to be understood distributively in connection with the first predicate θεόπνευστος, it need not be taken distributively in reference to the second predicate, ὑφέλιμος. πάσα often takes on the meaning of tota

<sup>22</sup> de verbo DEI scripto et non scripto. IV,X,359.

<sup>23</sup> Meisner, philosophia sobria, pars secunda. p.425. Quenstedt, op. cit., I,106.

<sup>24</sup> systema. I,618.

or universa, like the Hebrew כָּל. In his biblia illustrata he probes more deeply into the meaning of this passage and offers a thorough exposition of it. As touching the interpretation of πάντα he has this to say:<sup>25</sup> inspiration pertains to the whole of Scripture and to all its parts. In like manner the ὠφέλιμος pertains to all the parts of Scripture as well as to Scripture as a whole, for Scripture which is divinely inspired is not able not to be profitable. This can be said because the parts of Scripture cannot be dissociated from the whole. Scripture is a unit. Passages must always be understood in their context and in the context of the general purpose of Scripture.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, the sufficiency and perfection of Scripture in teaching everything necessary for salvation is not inferred merely on the basis of the fact that Scripture is called ὠφέλιμος, certainly not on the basis of the interpretation that πάντα γραφή signifies Scripture as a whole, but it is established mainly on the basis of the whole context of the passage.<sup>27</sup> Calov con-

---

<sup>25</sup> biblia novi testamenti illustrata. II,1037ff.

<sup>26</sup> ibid. "Omnes conjunctim totius sunt Scripturae: Partium Scripturae autem, ita, ut nulla sit earum, quae non ad aliquem aut aliquos horum usus faciat & conducat."

<sup>27</sup> ibid. "Cum autem ex utilitate ista Scripturae inferatur ejusdem sufficientia & perfectio, quoad ea, quae ad salutem scitu necessaria sunt, non tantum vox ὠφέλιμος spectatur, neque praecise inhaereamus, opus est, interpretationi vocis πάντα, quod explicari debeat ΤΟΤΑ, sed imprimis respiciendam συνέχειαν textus censemus; quod probet atque explicet Apostolus τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα Scripturas S. sapientes nos reddere posse ad salutem per fidem in Christum: quia omnis Scriptura Sacra divinitus inspirata est, & utilis ad doctrinam, ad re-dargutionem, ad correctionem, ad institutionem in justitia & quidem ita, ut perfectus sit homo DEI ad omne opus bonum instructus. Quum hoc fine a DEO inspirata sit Scriptura, eoque utilitas Scripturae tendat, atque istud tam perfectum ἀποτέλεσμα, Scriptura sit, quomodo Scriptura ipsa non erit perfecta."

cludes,<sup>28</sup> "Since Scripture is inspired by God to this end [that man might be made wise unto salvation] and since its usefulness is directed to this same end and since the effect of Scripture is perfect, how can Scripture itself not be perfect and sufficient?"

Another passage which the dogmatists say supports their position is Deut.4.2. This passage argues for the sufficiency of Scripture by forbidding anyone from adding to it or diminishing from it. The prohibition pertains not only to the word of God which was handed down by word of mouth, but also to the written word. And it does not pertain only to the Pentateuch, for the same warning is uttered in Prov.30.5,6 and Rev.22.18,19. The prohibition does not apply to God inasmuch as he is not bound by his decrees. Such a law God has established for men. He reserves for himself the right to add to these books when he pleases. Hence, when certain apostles affirm that certain books are authoritative and inspired, they do not by their own judgment determine what is canonical and inspired, -- a judgment God has strictly forbidden them -- but they are moved by the Holy Spirit to present God's word regarding these books. There-

---

<sup>28</sup> ibid. Cf. Calov, systema. I,619: "Cui scripturae autem tribuuntur omnes actus necessarii ad aeternam salutem, ex qua haberi potest perfecta ad justitiam instructio, illa non tantum utilis est, sed sufficiens ad salutem, & salutarem informationem in fide & vita Christiana. Adde, quod jubet Paulus manere Timotheum, in iis quae didicit, quae e sacris literis hausit, ut ipse interpretatur: ac proinde non agnoscat quicquam aliud necessarium: & quod *δυνάμειν* adscribat S. Scripturae, vim & efficaciam divinam sapientes nos reddendi ad salutem. Nihil ergo, quod ad sapientiam hanc requiritur, desiderari potest in scripturis, sed *δυνάμει* instructis: alioquin, non essent illae vere *δυνάμεναι σοφισαί εἰς σωτηρίαν*. Si e Scriptura s. homo Dei, minister verbi perfecte instructus sit, oportet eandem non tantum aliquali ratione utilem, sed prorsus sufficientem esse."

fore the prohibition is not directed against adding canonical books to Scripture but against placing foreign doctrines beside Scripture. Strictly speaking, the other canonical books of Scripture are not additions to the Pentateuch, since their dogmatic content is essentially the same as that of the Pentateuch.<sup>29</sup> But the papists contend that this divine interdict applies only to private individuals, not to the church. Quenstedt replies<sup>30</sup> 1.) that the words of the text do not lend themselves to such a distinction, 2.) that the whole church has been called to account for just such a transgression, 1 Ki.22.24; Jer.18.18, 3.) that the church cannot be permitted to do what is forbidden individuals because the church is made up of individuals, 4.) that the command was given to all people, leaders and followers, clergy and laity, for the Lord said, "Hearken, O Israel."

Calov points out that apart from Scripture there is today no divine revelation. Therefore nothing can be added to Scripture. The practice of Christ and his apostles of proving all doctrine from Scripture upholds the Lutheran doctrine that Scripture is sufficient. Paul does not hesitate to say, "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Acts 20.27, Cf. Acts 26.22. Here Paul has definitely pledged himself to the Scripture principle which postulates the perfection of Scripture.<sup>31</sup> This argument of Calov

---

<sup>29</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,107, is employing the Thomistic definition of "addere" here as adding something which was not previously present or which is contrary to the previous sense. Aquinas, T. summa theologiae. Marietti. 1948. III,60, 8,1. p.373. Cf. Dorsch, dissertationum theologiarum...p.23r.

<sup>30</sup> loc. cit., I,108.

<sup>31</sup> systema. I,615.

is important. In arguing for the sufficiency of Scripture the Lutheran teachers were actually doing little more than upholding the sola scriptura principle, as one can see from their presentation of the teaching. Calov also makes much of the fact, as I have already implied, that the purpose of Scripture, that sinners come to saving faith and eternal life, postulates the sufficiency of Scripture, Rom.15.4; Jn.20.21.<sup>32</sup>

It was inevitable that Catholic theology would deny the perfection of Scripture. It was the position of Rome that doctrines based on unwritten tradition were necessary to accept for salvation. In the fourth session of the Council of Trent the Roman church placed Scripture and tradition side by side as a basis of doctrine. Thus Rome not only does away with the Scripture principle, but, according to Quenstedt,<sup>33</sup> she places tradition above Scripture, inasmuch as tradition interprets Scripture and in many cases has superseded Scripture. As proof of this one need only read a statement of Baronius in which he says that traditions are above Scripture, since Scripture cannot exist without traditions, but traditions can remain without Scripture.<sup>34</sup> The Lutherans refute their adversaries' claim with Gal.1.8. Here Paul is speaking in a general way about the word which was preached by him. What he preached he also wrote, 2 Cor.1.13; 10.11; 13.2. And he preached nothing which was not included in the

---

<sup>32</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,112. Calov, systema. I,616: "Quae eo fine scripta sunt, ut & fidem saluificam & vitam aeternam inde habeamus ea continere necessum est omnia, ad fidem & vitam aeternam necessaria."

<sup>33</sup> op. cit., I,112.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. ibid. "Traditiones excellere supra Scripturae, quando Scripturae non subsistunt, nisi traditione firmentur, traditiones vero sine scriptis suam retinere firmitatem." annal. tom.I, Anno 53, num.7.

Scriptures of the Old Testament, Acts 26.22. No Christian will deny that what Paul preached was written in the New Testament. But the papists, led by Bellarmine, maintain that *παρὰ* signifies *ἀντί* in this passage. They say that only teachings against the Gospel are condemned. This may be true in the case of some passages of the New Testament, says Quenstedt, but it is impossible in this verse because of the context. Nothing can be tolerated even alongside the Gospel of Christ. Actually, to add something to Scripture as necessary for salvation is to teach contrary to Scripture. The curse is directed against doctrines taught in addition to the Gospel as well as those promulgated contrary to the Gospel. To add to the Gospel is to oppose the Gospel. But what if the papists are right about this passage? They have still gained nothing, says Quenstedt. He writes, "The traditions of the papists are not only un-Scriptural but anti-Scriptural, diametrically opposed and repugnant to the written word of God, partly because they oppose the sufficiency of Scripture and its perfection and partly because they contain teachings directly contrary to the infallible word of God." Tradition always usurps the authority of Christ and the apostles, and opposes the very source of revealed theology. Traditions have their origin in the sect of the Pharisees. They are the weapons of heretics. They propagate countless lies and false doctrines and, when made to be equal with Scripture, they destroy the whole organic foundation of our faith. The origin of traditions is often unknown. They often contradict each other. Their pernicious effects have been clearly seen in the abuses of the Roman church.

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE CLARITY OF SCRIPTURE

The dogmaticians teach that the divine origin, the sufficiency and the clarity of Scripture are articles of faith which ought to be accepted with faith because they are revealed in Scripture.<sup>1</sup> Scripture is clear and sufficient because it is God's word to men. Unless Scripture is clear, it cannot be said to be sufficient. How can we be saved through faith in the message of Scripture if that message is not clear?<sup>2</sup> Rome taught that the witness of the church was needed to make Scripture clear. This was also the persuasion of the Lutheran syncretists. The orthodox teachers hold that the church is the interpreter of Scripture, but in such a way that each Christian searches and interprets Scripture himself. The Bible does not require the interpretation of others. It is not clear merely implicitly: it clearly sets forth all we need know to be saved. The perspicuity of Scripture consists not merely in the fact that it enlightens the person who already understands its literal meaning; Scripture is itself a light, it is inherently clear, making wise the simple, namely, those who allow themselves to be persuaded. The apostle calls this prophetic word a *λύχνον φαίνοντα ἐν ἀύχμηρῷ τόπῳ*. It is a medium through which God enlightens us, and hence it is called not only a *φῶς* but also a *φωτισμός*, 2 Cor. 4. If Scripture were lucid only because it gave enlightenment after it was understood,

---

<sup>1</sup> Calov, *systema*. I, 875.

<sup>2</sup> *loc. cit.*, I, 634: "Quod si ea non perspicue tradit illa, quae ad salutem cognita necessaria sunt, quo modo ex illarum lectione haberi potest vita aeterna?"

it would not differ from the most obscure enigma or Sibyllen oracle. But it actually illumines our understanding and leads us to Christ, and when he is found we have everything necessary for salvation.<sup>3</sup> What is not clearly revealed in Scripture is not necessary for salvation.<sup>4</sup> Quenstedt explains the Lutheran position very explicitly.<sup>5</sup> The Lutheran thesis does not pertain to the clarity or understandability of the contents of Scripture (evidentia rerum), but to the clarity of the words (claritas verborum) with which the revealed content of Scripture is made known. There are many impenetrable mysteries in Scripture which are unclear in that they cannot be grasped by human intellect, but these mysteries have not been recorded in Scripture in obscure or ambiguous language. The Lutheran thesis does not pertain to the things of God (res Dei) but to the things of Scripture (res scripturae). The things of God are unknown oftentimes and obscure to us, but the things of Scripture are clear.<sup>6</sup> It is enough that we accept the  $\delta\acute{\omicron}\tau\iota$  of the mysteries contained in Scripture without attempting to search out the  $\delta\iota\acute{\omicron}\tau\iota$ . The things of God are obscure in themselves, but they are recorded clearly in Scripture. The Lutheran thesis does not pertain to every verse of Scripture. There is much in Scripture which is obscure and difficult to understand not only because of the rerum sublimitas but because of the Holy Spirit's wording

<sup>3</sup> Gerhard, loci theologici. I,27.

<sup>4</sup> Gerhard, confessio catholica. II,209: "Quae in Scripturis nusquam discrete et perspicue exposita habentur, eorum cognitio non est ad salutem absolute necessaria."

<sup>5</sup> op. cit., I,117.

<sup>6</sup> Quenstedt is following Luther at this point, Cf. Luther, opera latina. Francofurti ad M. 1873. VII,124.

in Scripture. However, the fact that articles of faith and precepts are stated in certain passages in a manner obscure to us does not imply that they are dark and obscure whenever they are spoken of in Scripture. In other words, it is the Lutheran position that, although many passages in Scripture are not clear, all necessary doctrines and precepts are clearly revealed in Scripture.<sup>7</sup> The perspicuity inhering in Scripture does not comprehend onomastics, chronology, typography, allegory or unfulfilled prophecy, but matters pertaining to history, doctrine and morals. Difficult passages in Scripture can often be clarified by referring to lucid parallel passages and observing the analogy of faith. The hermeneutical rule that Scripture interprets Scripture is based on the clarity of Scripture.

---

<sup>7</sup> Quenstedt, *op. cit.*, I, 117: "Disting. inter universum S. Scripturarum Codicem, & fidei dogmata ac morum praecepta. Non dicimus universam Scripturam & quasvis ejus particulas esse claras, & perspicuas.... Articuli enim fidei & praecepta morum in propriis suis sedibus non obscuris, aut ambiguis, sed perspicuis, propriis, & ab omni ambiguitate alienis verbis in Scriptura proponuntur, ut quilibet sedulus Scripturae Lector, qui devote & pie Scripturam legit, ea possit intelligere." True to type, Hunnius violently attacks the Catholics because of their stand regarding this matter. In his polemic, prima controversia generalis Roberti Bellarmini pontificiae ecclesiae cardinalis, de verbo Dei scripto, opera latine, II, 30ff, he says, p. 205, that the Lutherans claim only that the articles of faith are set forth clearly in Scripture, but they do so with intrepidity. To the papists who refuse to recognize this fact the Scriptures are not only obscure but "obscurissima, in superlativo". But this is not the fault of Scripture. The fault lies with the papists who close their eyes to the sun, who prefer the darkness of error to the clear light of truth and whom therefore God, according to his word, has sent a strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they might be damned who loved not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. Hunnius is not too bitter to state the Lutheran position clearly, "Certum est, et per inductionem demonstrari potest, Omnium ac singulorum capitum doctrinae, quorum quidem notitia nobis est ad salutem necessaria, extrare in divinis scripturis indubitata fundamenta et testimonia, e quibus illa vel ad literam ostendi, vel per bonam, firmam et immotam consequentiam educi queant." One might think Hunnius is arguing for the sufficiency of Scripture here. We see how closely the two thoughts are linked in the thinking of the dogmaticians.

If read according to its literal sense<sup>8</sup> Scripture is clear to anyone, whether regenerate or unregenerate. Even an unbeliever is able to comprehend the literal and historical meaning of Scripture. Even an unbeliever is able to acquire what Gerhard calls a notitia literae.<sup>9</sup> But a true spiritual understanding, a notitia Spiritus, of Scripture is attained only by the regenerate and only by means of the illumination which the Holy Spirit bestows through Scripture. Scripture itself is clear, and it becomes dark and difficult only per accidens through the blindness and spiritual perversity of man. If the Gospel is obscure, it is obscure to those whose minds Satan has blinded, 2 Cor.4.3. Of course, if the perspicuity of Scripture is taken as inferring that the mysteries contained therein comply with human reason, then, says Gerhard, "we reply without scruple, nothing is more obscure than Scripture." And the fact that our darkened intellect must be enlightened by the Spirit of God before we can understand Scripture does not militate against the clearness of Scripture. The sun is not less bright because a blind man cannot see it.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> The clarity of Scripture demands that it be read according to its literal sense, Cf. Scherzer, systema theologiae. p.25: "Ad perspicuitatem istam pertinet omnino Sensus literalis seu Logici i.e. quem Spiritus S. per se primo ac proxime intendit, sive figurato sermonis genere efferatur."

<sup>9</sup> loci theologici. II,329.

<sup>10</sup> confessio catholica. II,210.

<sup>11</sup> Gerhard, loci theologici. I,52: "Sic intellectus noster adeo tenebrosus est, ut fidei mysteria verbis clavis & perspicuis in scriptura proposita non percipiat, quis vero propterea ipsi scripturae tenebras hasce tribuere velit?" Dannhauer, hermeneutica sacra. p.51: "Sol clarissimus obscurus est caeco."

To substantiate their doctrine of the perspicuity of Scripture the dogmaticians appeal to Deut.30.11-14 and Rom. 10.8, where the word of God is said to be nigh to those who read it. It was the Hebrew habit to picture anything which was difficult to comprehend as being far away, Ecc.7,24,25. And it is absurd to say that the spoken word of God is clear, but not the written word. The purpose of writing is the same as the purpose of speaking.

The main proof for their doctrine was to be found in the many Bible passages which speak of Scripture as a light, Prov. 6.23; Ps.19.9. In 2 Pet.1.19 the apostle says that Scripture is like a light shining in a dark place, in other words, that it enlightens the minds of men. Therefore it must be clear. If it did not illumine men's minds, it was written <sup>in</sup> vain.<sup>12</sup> Bellarmine argued that Scripture is called a light not because it is easily understood, but because it enlightens the intellect. He meant that Scripture was not clear in itself, that the interpretation of the church was needed to make it clear to us.<sup>13</sup> Gretzer was more explicit. He said that Scripture was a lamp which was lighted by the church.<sup>14</sup> Dannhauer replies that, according to such a supposition, Scripture is no more clear than a foreign language, than a Delphic oracle. Scripture becomes as dark as the darkness of Egypt. Quenstedt says,<sup>15</sup> "Our enlightenment comes

<sup>12</sup> Quenstedt discusses this passage in great detail, op. cit., I,121.

<sup>13</sup> ibid.

<sup>14</sup> His words are quoted in Dannhauer, ΘΑΘΣΟΦΙΑ christiana, p.82: "Scriptum lucerna, non quod per se nobis luceat; sed quis, quando ab Ecclesia explicetur, tum demum nobis lucet?"

<sup>15</sup> op. cit., I,124.

either from the inherent light of Scripture or from the foreign and inconsistent light of interpretation and unwritten tradition. If [it is based] upon the inherent light [of Scripture, Scripture is] lucid and not obscure, if [it is based] upon something else, then [Scripture] is obscure in itself and does not deserve to be called a lamp, much less a light."

The clarity of Scripture is demanded by its inspiration. God is able to speak clearly, for he is the master of language and words. To say that the divine author of Scripture speaks in an obscure manner is to perpetrate blasphemy. What is more, Scripture tells us that it brings forth wisdom and understanding in children and unlearned people, Ps.19.9; 2 Tim.3.15. It reveals hidden mysteries, Rom.16.25; 1 Cor. 2.9; Col.1.26,27. The purpose of Scripture is that men might be brought to eternal life, Rom.15.4; Jn.20.31. Why are all commanded to read Scripture if it is not clear?

The Roman theologians advanced many reasons why Scripture was not clear. Why did the Ethiopian eunuch require the help of Philip before he could understand Isa.53? Why does Paul say that we see through a glass darkly? Why does Peter say that the epistles of Paul contain some things which are hard to understand?<sup>16</sup> Moreover, why do the Lutherans

---

<sup>16</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,124ff, explains that none of these references militates against the clarity of Scripture. The eunuch was only one man and Isa.53 was only one passage from Scripture. It was not the words which he did not understand, but the fulfilment of the prophecy. The *ἐν αἰγίσματι* in 1 Cor. 13.12 pertains not to the words of Scripture but to the often incomprehensible content of these words which will only be understood in eternity. Peter does not say that everything Paul wrote was difficult to grasp, nor did he speak about the words of Paul, but he referred to Paul's teachings which were above rational comprehension. We see that Quenstedt thinks that in all these passages his adversaries are arguing from the incomprehensibility of the mysteries of Scripture to the obscurity of the words of Scripture which they have no right to do.

occupy themselves with writing and reading commentaries if the Scriptures are clear? To this objection the Lutherans reply that the Scriptures can be understood without commentaries or tradition. Commentaries are written for the simple and unlearned. They attempt to clarify, if possible, certain difficult passages. They are not merely written to explain Scripture, but to apply what Scripture clearly teaches.<sup>17</sup>

Finally, an interpreter of Scripture draws from Scripture nothing else than what the clear words say.<sup>18</sup> If tradition is absolutely needed to interpret Scripture, then tradition must be more clear than Scripture. But there is hardly anything more obscure than tradition.<sup>19</sup> The Roman theologians attacked the perspicuity of Scripture in order to clear the way for their dogma of papal supremacy. If the interpretation of the church was essential to a true understanding of Scripture, they had gained their point. There was really only one dispute between Lutheranism and Romanism: is the authority of Scripture greater than that of the church, or is the church above Scripture?

Aegidius Hunnius<sup>18</sup> alert to the fact that it is their dogma of ecclesiastical authority which prompted Roman Catholic theologians to oppose the clarity of Scripture and to becloud<sup>the</sup> issue with every manner of irrelevant objection.<sup>20</sup>

No one will dispute, he says, that there are present in Scripture many difficult and obscure passages. The question is simply this: are the doctrines which we must believe for salvation clearly set forth in Scripture? Lutheran theology

<sup>17</sup> ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Bechmann, theologia polemica. p.104.

<sup>19</sup> Calov, syncretismus Calixtinus. p.326. Calov says, consensus repetitus, p.10, that Scripture, if it is not clear, needs explanation and is insufficient.

<sup>20</sup> opera latina. II, 206ff.

answers with a decided yes. The deity of Christ can be upheld and Arius can be proved a heretic by Jn.1, Col.1, Heb.1 and Jn.5 without outside corroboration. The adversaries have good reason for obscuring the issue. It is done in the interest of their own private interpretation which the Roman Antichrist arrogates to himself. Here is the real difference between the Lutherans and the papists. Bellarmine contends that Scripture must be obscure because it conveys mysteries which surpass all human understanding. This objection which has nothing to do with the controversy serves only to confuse the issue. Pertaining to doctrines of Scripture the  $\pi\acute{\omega}\varsigma$  is often unclear, but never the  $\acute{\omicron}\tau\iota$ . Hunnius says,<sup>21</sup> "It is best to illustrate this truth by an example. That Christ is man and God at the same time is a mystery which utterly transcends not only metaphysical knowledge (about which the Jesuit prattles) but absolutely all philosophy and human reason. This is a simple matter of confession. But now it is asked whether God has revealed this mystery in Scripture obscurely or clearly. I answer, it is clearly set forth in the holy Scriptures not only when John proclaims that the Word was made flesh (where the context indicates what is meant by the term 'Word'), but also when the prophet Jeremiah says that the seed of David is the Lord himself, when Gabriel calls the son of Mary the Son of the Most High, when Peter says that the Son of Man is coeval with the Son of God, and when Paul says that Christ sprang from the fathers to be over all, God blessed for ever, Rom.9, and when he proclaims that the second Adam is the Lord from heaven, 1 Cor.15."

<sup>21</sup> loc. cit., II,209.

Hunnius then proceeds to speak of the virgin birth of Christ which, although above reason and incredible to heathen philosophy, is nevertheless taught clearly as a fact in Scripture and needs no illucidation from the fathers or the church. He concludes, "If the Jesuit still insists that even such clear teachings stand in need of the interpretation of the fathers, thinking Christians can only judge him to be an impudent sophist who should be thrown outside like rotten eggs." The above argument of Bellarmine seems to have bothered the dogmaticians or at least made them angry, (as we see from the quotation of Hunnius), although they are convinced it was only a blind to uphold the sovereignty of the Roman papacy. Quenstedt feels that it reveals more than a clever attempt to confuse matters: it indicates an utterly mistaken conception of the nature of faith. He says, "It is possible to write clearly of obscure things, to write in an humble fashion of sublime things, to write in a simple manner of difficult things, and to write openly of hidden things. The incarnation is a great mystery, 1 Tim.3.16, and yet there are many passages pertaining to it which are clearer than the sun itself. The justification of a sinner before God and the resurrection are numbered as mysteries. Could you wish for anything clearer than what the apostle writes of the former in his letter to the Romans and of the latter in 1 Cor.15? As touching mysteries we must distinguish between the that and the how. The former is clearly declared in Scripture; the latter, if not declared, is not necessary to know for salvation. For instance, I read in Scripture clearly that God is one and yet three persons, that the Son

of God was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Now if a person is not content with this, but in an officious manner searches into the how and why of it, he has no reason to espouse the obscurity of Scripture, but every reason to condemn his own effrontery. Faith does not rest upon proofs from reason, but upon divine testimony."<sup>22</sup>

The Socinians, like the Jesuits, believed that the Scriptures were not clear. They taught that Christ and his apostles purposely spoke ambiguously. In his Socinismus profligatus Calov combats this view. He says it violates the very purpose of Scripture and of the prophetic office of Christ. Christ came and his apostles were commissioned not to confuse, but to inform and enlighten sinners. Otherwise why should he be called the light of the world? The contents and full import of his utterances may well have transcended human comprehension, but his words were never obscure or ambiguous.<sup>23</sup> Christ made use of parables and allegories to clarify what he was saying, not to bewilder people. Often we read that he convinced and silenced the Jews, Lk.14.6; Matt.22.34ff; this was accomplished only by means of plain language. And the effect of his lucid preaching is indicated by the testimony of his hearers, Jn.7.46; Matt.22.16; Jn.3.2. If many did not understand Christ, it was not his fault. And if many do not understand or appreciate the Scriptures, the blame must be placed where it belongs, in the blindness and perversity of their own sinful hearts, not in the Scriptures which were written for the sake of their edification and

---

<sup>22</sup> op. cit., I,128.

<sup>23</sup> Socinismus profligatus, p.86: "Nulla verborum obscuritas, etiamsi rerum sublimitatem non capiat ratio humana." Cf. Calov, systema, I,660.

salvation.<sup>24</sup> Christ would have made himself responsible for their sins, if he had spoken purposely ambiguously to the Jews. Socinus taught that God purposely made much of the Bible unclear; this, says Calov, denies gratia universalis.<sup>25</sup>

But why did God allow any passages in Scripture to remain unclear? The dogmaticians make no attempt to answer this question categorically, but they do offer certain reasons which they think may be plausible: 1. that we might the more diligently search the Scriptures, 2. that we might be given no occasion for contemning the sacred writings because of their simplicity, 3. that all human pride and arrogance might be quenched, 4. that we might be reminded of our congenital blindness in spiritual matters, 5. that we might approach Scripture with reverence and with a prayer that we grow in sanctification, 6. that we might strive the more zealously for a fuller knowledge of Scripture.<sup>26</sup>

The Roman church in the seventeenth century forbade the laity to read the Scriptures; this was perfectly consistent with their doctrine that Scripture was unclear and did not

<sup>24</sup> Calov, Voellige Entdeckung der Neuen Socinienischen Hoehst-schaedlichen Sect. Scripta anti-Sociniana. III,27: "Da vernehmen wir/ dass die Ursach/ dass nicht all das helle Licht dess Evangelii sehen/ oder Schriften dess Neuen Testaments/ nicht zusuchen oder zu setzen sey in GOTT/ oder in der heiligen Schrift/ (so wenig als die Ursach/ dass das helle Licht der Sonnen von dem Blinden nicht gesehen wird/ zu-zuschreiben ist der Sonnenlicht) sondern dass sie herkommen von dem GOTT dieser Welt, dem Geist der Finsternuess/ und zum Theil von den Unglaubigen selbst/ die ihre Augen selbst blenden/ dass sie nicht sehen das helle Licht des Evangelii."

<sup>25</sup> ibid. Calov maintains that the Socinians also deny gratia when they deny that the enlightenment of the Spirit is necessary for a saving knowledge of Scripture. systema. I,656ff. And this so-called Gnadenlicht does not conflict with the clarity of Scripture. The trouble with the Socinians is that they do not grasp the perversity of natural man.

<sup>26</sup> Gerhard, commentarius super posteriorem D. Petri epistolam. p.459. Quenstedt, op. cit., I,119.

offer all teachings necessary for salvation. And this was the practical conclusion to which their doctrine of Scripture led them. If Scripture is not the only source of theology, if the authority of Scripture is derived from the church, if Scripture is imperfect, obscure, ambiguous and unnecessary, there is little reason for encouraging the laity to read and study it. The Lutherans, on the other hand, would most naturally submit that there is every good reason why all who can read should study Scriptures. Their whole doctrine of Scripture -- if it were not to degenerate into idle theorizing -- demanded such a conclusion. Scripture was written for all people to read and meditate, Deut.6.6; Isa.34.16; Jn.5.39. Everyone who reads Scripture is approved by God, 2 Tim.3.15. The epistles of the New Testament were written usually to whole congregations, not merely clergymen. And it has always been the practice of Christian lay people to read the Scriptures, Acts 8.30; 17.11. On the basis of such passages as 1 Cor.1.2; Col.4.16; 1 Thess.1.4; 2 Thess. 1.1 and Phil.1.1 Brochmand<sup>27</sup> contends that the Scriptures were addressed to all Christians. He says, "As many therefore as are beloved of God, as many as are called to be saints, as many as are sanctified in Christ, as many as are faithful brethren in Christ, can and by all means should be allowed to read the sacred writings. Or should we say that only those who are ordained priests and not of the common people are the beloved of God and the faithful brethren of Christ? But notice what John writes in his epistle, 'I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. I write unto you, fathers, because

---

<sup>27</sup> universae theologiae systema. I,25.

ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.' 1 Jn.2.12,13. And so no man, no age, which is capable of devout reading, is to be stopped from reading Scripture." When the Scriptures are withheld from the laity the very purpose of Scripture is violated. Everyone who can read is to read the Scriptures. It is the height of presumption, nay, the devil himself, which has inspired the papacy to wrest from believers what God has given them. How strongly the dogmatists felt regarding this matter is evinced in a statement of Calov, "What evil spirit has ordered the pope to place among the prohibited books the holy Scripture which has been committed to all men to read? Who gave him the power to grant one and not another the right to read the books of the Bible? How can he say that the divinely inspired Scriptures which are able to make us wise unto salvation can bring damnation on anyone, without heaping shameful abuse on Scripture, nay, blasphemy upon God, the author of Scripture? The good which God wishes all to enjoy the church has no right by some legal enactment to take from most people and reserve for a certain number. Whoever does this sets himself above God, and by this very deed he proves himself to be the Antichrist."<sup>28</sup>

And the papists rave in vain that the Scriptures are obscure, that laymen cannot understand them, that the church is required to interpret them for the laity. Anyone who can understand can understand Scripture when it speaks of his

---

<sup>28</sup> Calov, biblia novi testamenti illustrata. II,1035.

salvation in Christ.<sup>29</sup> It is wrong to abstain from reading the Bible simply because there are many passages which want interpretation. To every Christian has been given the gift of reading and interpreting Scripture and the duty of judging all things by it. This does not mean that Christians may judge Scripture according to human standards. It was a stock proposition of the Jesuits that Scripture was a wax nose which could be twisted by any heretic to fit his own preconceived sectarian tenets; thus Scripture could be used as a cloke to cover false doctrines. The dogmaticians reply that to break a law does not make the law void. Abusus enim non tollit usum.<sup>30</sup> And laymen are no more guilty of this offence than the clergy. When Bellarmine claims that all sorts of heresies arise when the uneducated read Scripture, he is wrong, says Quenstedt, and denies Eph.3.4. Quenstedt says,<sup>31</sup> "If the laity are to be forbidden reading the Scriptures because of the danger of heresy, how much more the clergy, the bishops and presbyters. Experience has proved this, and Bellarmine himself confesses, de Rom. Pontif. I,8, 'There has been hardly any archheresy, even among the less

---

<sup>29</sup> A statement of Dannhauer is interesting in this connection, hermeneutica sacra. p.2: "Ideoneus scripturae S. Interpres est Christianus omnis, certo tamen ordine, modo, gradu ac talenti mensura. Sicut elegantissima aliqua Alberti Düreri imago, e.g. Trojae incendium depictum, incurrit in oculum vel vulgarem, vel pictoria arte imbutum: ille colores, figuras, lumina, umbras, historiam ipsam animadvertit; hic insuper affectus, mores, genium artis, decorum, symmetriam; ille vidit quantum satis est; hic plus videt, plenius, clarius. Jam quid est universa scriptura S. nisi pictura rerum divinarum? Quid S. Codex nisi speculum in quo se Numen depinxit? Nemo Christianorum est, qui non hic videre possit, quantum ad salutem ei sufficit."

<sup>30</sup> Meisner, B. consolatio catholica de fide Lutherana capessenda, ex Romana-papistica deferenda. Geissae. 1611. p.606.

<sup>31</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,224.

notorious heretics, which has not sprung from the clergy.'" And Lutherans have not taught that every Christian has a right to impose his own private interpretation upon Scripture. It is the papists, not the Lutherans, who degrade Scripture to a careus nasus.<sup>32</sup>

Certain Jesuits in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries took an extreme position in this controversy. They taught that it was dangerous, even injurious, for a layman to read the Bible. Chief among the protagonists of this extravagant view were Bellarmine and two notable English controversialists of the sixteenth century, Thomas Stapleton and Thomas Harding, who fled England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Bellarmine and Harding go so far as to submit that Bible reading is harmful to faith and morals. The Lutheran theologians point out that such a teaching makes Scripture a bad thing. It is due to their own rashness and evil nature, not to Scripture, that the laity sometimes take offence at some of the frank and open stories recorded in Scripture.<sup>33</sup> Quenstedt says,<sup>34</sup> "The prophetic and apostolic Scripture is holy, just, good and salutary. In itself it harms no one, leads no one into error, and is not the cause of any heresy. It shows man his depraved nature, it reveals

---

<sup>32</sup> Gerhard, commentarius super posteriorem D. Petri epistolam. p.164: "Calumniæ igitur nos onerat Bellarminus, quando nobis tribuit, quod ad privatum cuiusque spiritum homines in Scripturæ expositione remittamus. Si privatus aliquis ex claris & perspicuis Scripturæ locis de quadam religionis controversia iudicat, hoc non proficiscitur ex spiritu privato, sed est publicum Spiritus sancti in Scripturis loquentis iudicium."

<sup>33</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,224: "Si quæ corruptio doctrinæ & vitæ ex Scripturæ lectione, a quibusdam desumitur, id non oritur ex Scriptura per se, (alioquin apud omnes crederetur, & Spiritus S. Scripturæ autor, causa esset mali per se) sed sit per accidens, ex legentium vitio & temeritate."

<sup>34</sup> ibid.

his failings and accomplishments. It deters him from what is evil and urges him toward what is good. If the occasion of errors or unorthodox opinions is brought about when one reads certain passages from Scripture that is purely accidental." Quenstedt says that by reading the Bible the laity is given the right to check on what is publicly preached and taught. Bellarmine protests that lay people have no such right. They are in duty bound to follow their pastor even if he is known to be in error. If they had the right to judge their pastor, they would not need a pastor. In his locus on the ministry Gerhard carefully and thoroughly refutes these objections of Bellarmine. His whole long argument is interesting and merits being quoted as this point. He writes,<sup>35</sup> "Bellarmine objects: 'because the common people are unlearned they are unable to judge the doctrine of their pastors in any other manner than by comparing it with the teaching of former pastors.' We reply that this is proved false by the example of the Bereans who daily searched the Scriptures, inquiring carefully whether these things were so which Paul and Barnabus preached, Acts 17.11. They set up as norm of judgment not the doctrine of their ordinary pastors, but the holy Scriptures, and they were commended for this by the Holy Spirit. The ignorance of the people under the papacy about which Bellarmine speaks, arose because they were forbidden to read the holy Scriptures. For this sacrilege its authors will one day give strict account. But we turn Bellarmine's argument around: if the ignorance of the people does not prevent them from comparing the doctrine of their pastors with the doctrine of their predecessors or

---

<sup>35</sup> loci theologici. de vocatione mediata. XIII, 89.

regular pastors, certainly it will not keep them from comparing the doctrine of their pastors with the doctrine of Christ, the prophets and apostles which is presented in Scripture and from judging according to this norm a true prophet from a false one. If the former is true, so is the latter. The inference of the major premise is proved by the fact that Christ, the prophets and apostles could and did teach clearly as did the regular pastors. When Christ, the prophets and apostles performed their ministry of teaching on this earth, they preached not only to the learned but to the ignorant people and in such a way that they were able to be understood. How then are the writings of the prophets and apostles so obscure and complicated that simple people are unable to judge doctrine from them? Certainly the prophets and apostles did not write anything else than what they preached with their mouths. 'But', says Bellarmine, 'if the people could by themselves judge the teaching of their pastors they would not need preachers.' We reply: that conclusion is illogical. Both things have been commanded by God, namely, that the people prove the doctrine of their pastors -- Bellarmine himself granted this above in express words -- and that there be nevertheless certain ordained ministers in the church, for 'they are not all teachers.' 1 Cor.12.29. Eph.4.11. It is one thing to search into the truth of doctrine and to know the difference between heresy and orthodoxy, between false prophets and true teachers; this is a general call which is extended to all Christians. It is another thing to teach publicly in the church; this is a special call. We do not make shepherds of the sheep but insist that they be and remain sheep. However, we do not want them to be brute sheep, who can and should not tell the difference between shepherds

and wolves. The papists make their hearers brute sheep, who without any sense follow their pastor, even if he leads them into poisonous pastures or turns into a wolf. They make out of their hearers parrots who hang on the nod of the prelates, and of the prelates they make angels who are infallible and responsible to no one. Luther says, 'If a man appears who teaches doctrine contrary to that of other pastors, his doctrine should be subject to doubt.' Later he says we should find out whether his call is legitimate. The conclusion which Bellarmine adds is simply ridiculous: 'When the regular pastor and one who has not been called teach things which conflict with each other, the people ought to follow their pastor rather than the one who is not their pastor, even though it may chance that the pastor has erred.' But this is wrong. Luther was not a legitimately called pastor.<sup>36</sup> And it is wrong to follow a regular pastor even when he errs. This is nothing else than to order sheep to follow their shepherds into noxious pastures, to ask Christians to prefer darkness to light, error to truth, human regulations to divine authority. Bellarmine submits, 'It is incredible that God would allow a regular pastor to err so that simple people are deceived.' But he disputes in vain about whether a thing can happen when it is plain that it has happened. Not without brazen impudence can he deny that appointed pastors have often erred and led the unlearned people astray."

---

<sup>36</sup> Luther would certainly have disagreed with such a verdict. Saemtliche Werke. Erl. Aufl. 26,231; 26,188ff. Luther would not have preached a word in public unless he thought he had a call to do so. Cf. Augsburg Confession. Art. XIV. Gerhard is probably granting for the moment the Roman dogma regarding the call and ordination into the ministry.

CHAPTER NINE: THE EFFICACY OF SCRIPTURE

There is an urgency on the part of all the orthodox Lutheran theologians of the seventeenth century to uphold the principle that Scripture is the only source of revealed theology. Certainly this was their chief interest in all their discussions of Scripture. The necessity, authority, perfection, truthfulness and clarity of Scripture all directly support the principle of sola scriptura. But their doctrine of Scripture, or the word of God, is utterly incomplete, if viewed exclusively in the light of this principle. Their doctrine of the word of God assumes its true significance only when viewed soteriologically, when considered as an operative factor in God's plan of salvation. This aspect of their doctrine has not been relegated into the background by the dogmatists as some have implied when they say that the Scripture principle was to the old Lutheran teachers the fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith upon which their whole theological system was built (if they can be said to have had a system at all!), as if sola fide had been effaced by sola scriptura. On the contrary, the concept of the word of God as a gracious means whereby God brings the sinner to faith in Christ is in no way subordinated to the authority of Scripture. In fact, only one who has been touched, yes, converted by this word of life will accept its authority. For this reason the dogmatists teach that the word of God must not only be viewed ratione γνώσεως as a principium cognoscendi, but also ratione πράξεως, as a principium operandi, vel efficiendi seu ποιητικόν, vel effect-

ivum, quatenus est medium convertendi, regerendi, iustifi-  
cendi, salvandi.<sup>1</sup> In other words, the written and preached  
word of God has the intrinsic power to convert all men in-  
discriminately.<sup>2</sup> In brief, the Lutheran doctrine of the  
divine efficacy of the word of God is this, according to  
Quenstedt:<sup>3</sup> the word of God (Quenstedt is speaking of Scrip-  
ture here, but also of the verbum προφορικόν in all its var-  
ious forms) by virtue of the ordination and will of very  
God possesses a certain intrinsic, divine power which is  
also sufficient and indiscriminate. This word works grac-  
ious results by effecting enlightenment, conversion, regen-  
eration and salvation, and also punitive results, punishment,  
death and damnation. Such results the word accomplishes  
immediate, vere ac proprie, but also -- and this is impor-  
tant -- organically and instrumentally. This means that  
the word of God does not act as the moving cause in man's  
conversion and regeneration and salvation, but only as the  
means or organ by means of which God chooses <sup>to</sup> bring about  
his gracious purpose.<sup>4</sup> The Holy Spirit does not ordinarily

<sup>1</sup> Calov, systema. IX,2.

<sup>2</sup> Huelsemann, J. extensio brevarii theologici. Heilbronnæ. 1667. p.6.

<sup>3</sup> op. cit., I,169.

<sup>4</sup> loc. cit., I,172: "Verbum Dei vim & efficaciam suam exirit  
ὀργανικῶς, organice seu instrumentaliter. Neque enim divinum  
Verbum est agens Principale, in conversationis, regenerationis  
& salvationis negotio, sed tantum idoneum medium sive organon,  
quo Deus in producendis effectibus spiritualibus ordinarie  
utitur, non quidem ex necessitate quadam, & indigentia, quasi  
efficaciam suam homines convertendi ita alligaverit Verbo  
suo, ut non possit vel ἀμέσως, & absque ullo medio, vel etiam  
per aliud organon aut medium, quam per Verbum suum homines  
convertere, illuminare, salvare, si vellet, sed ex libera  
sua voluntate, qua Deo ita placuit, διὰ μωρίας τοῦ κηρύγματος,  
per stultitiam prædicationis salvos facere credentes, 1 Cor.  
1,21."

work conversion and bestow faith without means, but with and through the word as the usual means of working spiritual effects.<sup>5</sup> This truth is brought out by those passages of Scripture which teach that God works faith and regeneration and conversion through the word, Rom.10.17; 1 Cor.4.1,5; Acts 11.21. The gift of the Holy Spirit is bestowed through the word as through a means or conveyance (ὄχημα, vehiculum).<sup>6</sup> Christ dwells in the hearts of those who receive and keep his word, Jn.14.23; Eph.3.16,17.

The word of God as a means of grace is not a passive instrument (instrumentum passivum, ein leidendes und empfahendes Werkzeug) which must be used before it has power, as a man would use a hammer to pound a nail. It is, according to Baier,<sup>7</sup> an instrumentum cooperativum, "ein kraefftiges mitwirkendes Werkzeug" like the hand or the eye of a living being.<sup>8</sup> Gerhard calls it a causa instrumentaliter agens.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Calov, systema. I,704.

<sup>6</sup> ibid. "Si Spiritus S. sese per ipsum verbum προφορικὸν insinuat in corda nostra, & per ministerium verbi tanquam per ὄχημα & vehiculum quoddam, ut in iisdem operetur, utique non ferit tantum aures verbum externum, nec sine illo ἀμέσως in corda illabatur Spiritus. At verum prius Gal.III.2 Anne acceptistis Spiritum ex auditu fidei? Act.X.44 Adhuc loquente Petro verba illa cecidit Spiritus S. super omnes audientes verbum; Conf. Eph.I.13. 1 Thess.II.13."

<sup>7</sup> Baier, compendium theologiae positivae. p.144.

<sup>8</sup> Dedekenn, op. cit., appendix nova, p.272: "Das Wort Gottes ist nicht ein instrumentum passivum, ein leidendes und empfangendes Werkzeug/ welches erst im Gebrauch zur Krafft und Wirckung erhoben wird/ sie die Art von deme/ so damit hauen will/ erhoben/ und die Hauungs-Krafft ihr von aussen zu- und beygefueget wird/ wie Rathmann und Movius immerdar dahinaus wollen/ sondern es ist ein lebendiges und kraefftiges Wort/ und demnach ein instrumentum activum & cooperativum, ein kraefftiges mitwirkendes Werkzeug/ wie eines lebendigen Menschen Hand oder Auge..."

<sup>9</sup> loci theologici. XIII,74,0253: "...Deo placuit ad divinum illum effectum conversionis ac salutis hominum verbum externum tanquam causam instrumentaliter agentem evehere..."

The dogmatists mean to bring out that it is not only the object or purpose of the verbum προφορικόν to bring about spiritual effects, but it is its actual work to accomplish such works in man: the word of God is not a mere signum, a sign pointing the way to eternal life, but a gracious medium ordained to exert spiritual effects and efficacious to that end.<sup>10</sup> The Gospel not merely offers us righteousness and salvation, it not only invites us to accept Christ and enter his kingdom; it actually confers such great blessings on us, it quickens us and makes us partakers of Christ's kingdom. This is the conclusion Gerhard comes to on the basis of 1 Pet. 1.23. He writes,<sup>11</sup> "[The word] regenerates us not merely theoretically in that it enlightens the mind with a knowledge of the divine will and indicates to us what we must believe and do, but it does so actually in that it really turns the will to accept the divine witness and moves and transforms and awakens the heart to believe in it so that we cling to this grace which is offered in Christ and find happiness in it, and through this faith we become children of God and heirs of everlasting life. [The word] quickens us not only in that it invites us to enjoy God's favor toward us and encourages us with a living comfort, but it also makes us partakers of that spiritual life." It is chiefly on the basis of Jn.6.63 that the old Lutheran teachers hold that the power of the word is not symbolical or theoretical, but real and true. Calov reasons on the basis of this passage that the word of God, because it is indued with spirit and life, has

---

<sup>10</sup> Calov, systema. I,706.

<sup>11</sup> Gerhard, J. commentarius super priorem D. Petri epistolam. editio altera priori correctior, Jenae. 1660. p.145.

the power to enlighten a sinner and is, moreover, gracious and efficacious in such a way that it actually confers spirit and life upon a sinner by virtue of God's ordination and the union of the Spirit of God with it.<sup>12</sup> Quenstedt is more precise in his interpretation of this passage.<sup>13</sup> The words of Christ which were afterward put in writing are spirit, i.e. animated with the Spirit of God, in such a way that Paul can say that the spirit, or Gospel, gives life, 2 Cor.3.6. And they are life not only because they work spiritual life in man and confer eternal life upon believers; they are living words endowed with the power and faculty (vis et facultas) of conferring life. Because the power of the word is real power its effects are real effects. The power of the word penetrates to the very heart of man, converts, regenerates and completely changes him inwardly.<sup>14</sup> That the word of God is itself efficacious is shown in Rom.1.16. According to Quenstedt,<sup>15</sup> the *δύναμις* in this verse can only connote

---

<sup>12</sup> systema. I,707: "Quodcumque enim verbum Spiritu & vita instructum est, id non destituitur lumine gratiae principali, sed quum sibi unitum habeat spiritum, lumine illo instructum est, nec ἄεργον, aut signum mere σημαντικόν haberi potest, sed medium est ἐνεργητικόν, καὶ μεταδοτικόν, divinitus ordinatum ad effectus spirituales, & efficax ad id, ut spiritum & vitam nobis conferat, vi divinae ordinationis." The "lumen gratiae" (Gnadenlicht) is the gift whereby we spiritually understand spiritual things, a gift bestowed by the Spirit through the word.

<sup>13</sup> op. cit., I,176.

<sup>14</sup> Gerhard, commentarius super priorem D. Petri epistolam. p.140: "Verbo DEI non solum tribuitur ἐνέργεια ζωοποιητική, actio vivificandi, sed etiam δύναμις potentia salvandi, Rom. 1.v.16. Dicitur ergo verbum DEI vivum, quia ut DEI vivi verbum internum vim vivificandi obtinet, quam in hominibus spiritualiter vivificandis efficaciter exerit."

<sup>15</sup> op. cit., I,177.

the power and faculty inhering in the Gospel through which God converts, regenerates, enlightens and saves men. For this reason it is called the "power of God unto salvation," which means the same as the Gospel of salvation, Eph.1.13. This power is not significative or representative like a statue of Mercury, but it is real and brings conversion and salvation. In the words of Quenstedt, "This Gospel is called the *δύναμις Θεοῦ εἰς σωτηρίαν* in the same way as the 'weapons of our warfare' are called *δυνατὰ τῷ Θεῷ* to the pulling down of the strongholds of Satan, 2 Cor.10.4 and it does not mean 'to signify' but 'to exert power'." And this power does not come to the Gospel from without but is always in the Gospel itself. Paul is not speaking here of the object of the Gospel or its content, namely, Christ, as the Schwenkfeldians taught, or of the mysteries of the Gospel, namely, the incarnation and passion of Christ etc., as Bellarmine taught, but of the preaching of the Gospel. Finally, the many passages in Scripture which speak of the effects of the word of God prove that this word has the power to work and actually does work spiritual effects. To the word is attributed the power to convert and regenerate, Ps.19.8,9; Jer.23.29; 2 Tim.2.25; 1 Pet.1.23; Jas.1.18; 1 Cor.4.15; Gal.4.19, to bestow faith, Jn.1.7; 17.20; Rom.10.17; 1 Cor.3.5; Col.1.5,6; 2 Pet.1.19, to purify, Jn.15.3,4, to quicken, 2 Cor.3.6; Eph.2.5; Phil.2.16; Acts 5.20, to justify, Rom.3.27,28, to sanctify, 1 Pet.1.22; to renew, Eph.4.23, to preserve in grace and faith, 1 Pet.5.10, and to save, Jn.5.24,39; 6.69; 1 Cor.1.21; Acts 11.14. The law is said to harden, kill and damn. Now whatever brings about such supernatural ef-

fects must have the power to produce these accomplishments.<sup>16</sup> For this reason the word of God is likened to things which have intrinsic power, to a seed, to food, to medicine, to rain and snow, to wine, fire etc.

The efficacy of the word of God does not inhere in the letters and syllables and words as they are written; These are merely symbols, the vehicle (vehiculum) of the divine content, the forma, of the word which alone is the word of God, properly speaking.<sup>17</sup> The dogmaticians will have no part of that ancient superstition which supposed that the words of the Bible as words could cure sickness and exorcise devils.<sup>18</sup> In medieval times it was the practice of some to carry the Bible from their shoulders in the hope that it would ward off evil spirits and calamities. Only the inspired content of the word which is the mind and counsel of God has the power to work conversion and other spiritual realities in man. It is extremely important to bear in mind that the dogmaticians are never speaking of the Bible as a book, of the materia of Scripture, or of the materia of the word of God in general, when they say that the word of God is efficacious.

As already intimated the orthodox Lutherans held that the word of God has power in itself (per se). No outside influence must enter the word before it can exert its power and regenerate man. That the word of God is powerful means

<sup>16</sup> Calov, systema. I, 708: "quod autem ejusmodi effectus supernaturales producit, id virtute intrinseca ad producenda ejusmodi ἀποτέλεσματα divina pollere oportet, quum actus secundus praesupponat primum." Cf. Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 169.

<sup>17</sup> Hollaz, examen theologicum acroasmaticum. ed. 1750. p. 994. Dedekenn, op. cit., appendix nova. p. 268. Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 169.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Quenstedt, loc. cit., I, 169. Baier, op. cit., p. 141.

that it is powerful intrinsically.<sup>19</sup> This is what Quenstedt is driving at when he says that power does not enter the Gospel from without before it can act upon man, but power is always in the Gospel.<sup>20</sup> And it is what he and Calov are driving at when they claim that the effects which Scripture attributes to the word of God postulate its intrinsic efficacy, or power. Actus secundus praesupponit primum.<sup>21</sup> However, from the fact that the word is powerful inherently it does not follow that Scripture has this power independent or "urspruenglich" as if the word were the only or even the chief cause of regeneration or as if the word alone possessed this power. It is the Holy Spirit who converts man through the word. Nor is the power in the word of God of absolute necessity as if God could not work without it. God has simply willed that his word have this power. The power of the Spirit has been communicated to the word so that it can be called the word of life; the word has power "aus freywilliger Goettlicher Ordnung", 1 Cor.1.21.<sup>22</sup>

Consistent with the idea that the word of God is powerful intrinsically is the profession that the word possesses this power apart from its use and before it is read and used

<sup>19</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., I,177: "Nam quodcumque Verbum est potentia Dei ad salutem, id intrinseca potentia ac virtute in se ac per se praeditum sit..."

<sup>20</sup> ibid. "Haec potentia non advenit Evangelio ab extrinseco, sed ipsi semper inest." I,170: "Haec [verbum Dei] vero a prima institutione & productione sufficienti, h.e. divina & summa vi ac efficacia praedita sunt, nec indigent nova & peculiari aliqua elevatione ultra efficaciam ordinariam, Jam dum ipsis inditam ad producendum spiritualem effectum."

<sup>21</sup> Dedeckenn, op. cit., appendix nova. p.273: "...sie [die Schrift] auch actu primo eine Lebens-und Liechtes-Krafft in sich habe/ cum actus secundus praesupponat primum, operatio virtutem."

<sup>22</sup> loc. cit., p.168,264.

by men. Starting with Gerhard the dogmatists teach in unmistakable terms that Scripture or the word of God, by virtue of God's ordination, possesses a certain communicated divine power (vis, virtus) even ante, & extra usum.<sup>23</sup>

The tenacity with which they held to this doctrine and the unyielding insistence with which they retained <sup>the</sup> easily misunderstood phrase "ante & extra usum" was due to the influence of the renegade Lutheran, Rathmann, who flourished during the first quarter of the seventeenth century. Rathmann taught that God converted sinners without the word of God, that Scripture was a dead letter, a powerless thing. He distinguished between the inner and the outer word of God. The outer word which was Scripture was only a picture or witness (Zeugnis) of the inner word which was Christ. This outer word in and of itself is only the natural meaning of the words (this means that Rathmann denied that there was an internal forma of Scripture); it is no more than a "Wegzeigner". Even when viewed over against its appointed use (in actu secundo) the outer word has no power; it is the Holy Spirit alone who converts man. Such views were branded by Calov and others as Schwenkfeldianism. In harmony with the Formula of Concord the Lutherans of the period of orthodoxy believed that there were two causes of man's conversion, the Holy Spirit and the word of God, and that in this connection the word acted as a powerful means of grace. Such a

---

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Calov, systema, I, 710: "Scriptum S. virtute divina pollet intrinsece, ac per se, ex ordinatione & communicatione divina, etiam ante, & extra usum."

doctrine was expressly denied by Rathmann.<sup>24</sup> In 1621 Rathmann published a book expressing his ideas, called Vom Gnadenreich Christi, which caused a great furor among the orthodox Lutherans. He was opposed most vehemently by John Corvinus who condemned him from his pulpit and agitated against him continually. In a book he urged the authorities to take action against Rathmann. The controversy was brought before the universities, and the faculty at Wittenberg, followed by the faculties at Jena, Helmstedt and Rostock, condemned Rathmann. The controversy ended with Rathmann's death in 1628.

Calov offers the following arguments in defense of the doctrine that the word of God is powerful even ante usum:<sup>25</sup>

1. Scripture, by virtue of its divine origin, must be invested with divine efficacy, and this efficacy is intrinsic and present extra usum because Scripture is never not inspired, it is never merely a human word. 2. Scripture, the word of God, according to its nature, is spirit and life and therefore endowed with divine efficacy also before and apart from its use. The power of the word is, in the nature of the case, manifested in its use, but this use is accidental to the word, it does not condition the inherent properties of

---

<sup>24</sup> Rathmann said, "Wir werden nicht selig durch Worte/ sondern durch wesentliche Dinge/ und zwar nicht durch irdische/ sondern durch himmlische/ das ist recht geredet." Cf. Hartknoch, C. Preussische Kirchen-Historia. Franckfurt am Mayn und Leipzig. 1684. 804. Hartknoch offers a minute description of the whole controversy with Rathmann.

<sup>25</sup> systema. I, 711ff.

the word. 3. the word is the power of God and is to be understood as having this power in itself. It is true that the power of God is only in God essentially (οὐσιωδῶς & essentialiter), but through communication this divine power inheres also in the word and the sacraments which, according to the unique dispensation of God, work as organs which are not impotent but efficient. Calov then follows with the same passages upon which he based his other conjectures concerning the efficacy of the word, e.g. those passages where the word is likened to snow, rain, wine, food etc. 4. The word has been designated by God to achieve certain spiritual results, namely, illumination and regeneration. If the word enjoys this power only in usu, the power to effect these results depends upon the contingency that the word is used, and consequently the word itself has no such power at all. If the word of God does not have the power intrinsically to produce conversion and regenerations, it follows that the word of God is a dead letter intrinsically, and conversion and regeneration occur only when the word, or Scripture, is elevated to this capacity by an outside influence in usu legitimo. But this usus legitimus, as before said, is only accidental to the word.

Calov has been severely criticized for the way he has gone about proving his contention that the word of God is powerful extra usum. It may certainly be said that, in a certain sense, the old dogmatists' discussion of this question is vain, since the Scriptures and the word of God can hardly be thought of abstractly as if completely divorced from their appointed use and since, according to the reasons

offered for their position regarding the hypothetical necessity of Scripture, the dogmatists themselves imply that the existence of Scripture is due to its purpose which is God's purpose. Against Calov, Movius and others protested that there was no word of God extra usum just as there was no sacrament extra usum. Calov answered,<sup>26</sup> "The essence of the sacraments consists in their administration and cannot exist except in use. But the word of God does not consist essentially in the act of meditation, reading and preaching; these are accidental to the word. When these have passed away, the word will endure forever." This idea of Calov<sup>27</sup> that the reading and preaching of the word of God are only accidental to it is bitterly denounced by Gruetzmacher as logical nonsense, as a thoroughly unreligious, un-Lutheran proposition which entirely forgets the "for us" of Scripture which deserves utmost emphasis.<sup>28</sup> I wonder if Gruetzmacher has not misunderstood Calov at this point. When Calov says that preaching and reading are accidental to the word of God, he does not mean that these activities are purely incidental or fortuitous: he means only that the same properties inhere in God's word ante usum as in usu, the word of God does not become the word of God or change in usu. The

<sup>26</sup> systema. I, 718.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. also Hollaz, examen theologicum sacrosancticum. ed. 1750. p. 994: "Sacramenta enim formaliter in actione consistunt: E. extra usum nulla gaudent efficacia. At quis diceret, verbum Dei formaliter esse actionem; quippe cui actus praedicationis, lectionis & meditationis tantum accidit."

<sup>28</sup> Gruetzmacher, R. H. Wort und Geist, eine historische und dogmatische Untersuchung zum Gnadenmittel des Wortes. Leipzig. 1902. p. 266.

context of Calov's statement bears this out. Calov is answering the objection that there is no word of God extra usum. He replies that the word of God is present extra usum. It exists in God originaliter; it exists in the Bible representative; it exists in the minds of men subjectively (it is in a man's heart although he may not be thinking of it). The fact that he says that reading and preaching are accidental to the word of God means here only that there is a word of God before it is put into use, and elsewhere<sup>29</sup> it means only that this word is divine and powerful intrinsically. If Calov's terminology in this matter is bad, it is of little consequence. Gruetzmacher's remark that Calov here has completely forgotten the personal "for us" purpose of God's word would have been quite pertinent, had it been couched in less superlative terms. It is wrong to dissociate Scripture from its purpose. But Calov, as a matter of fact, does not ignore the purpose of Scripture in the present discussion. He points to the purpose of the word of God as evidence that inherent efficacy obtains in this word.<sup>30</sup>

The controversy with Rathmann settled the problem of the word and its efficacy in Lutheran circles, but this matter was still handled in different ways by different theologians. Strangely enough, Dannhauer's treatment of the question is carried out in a much different spirit from that

---

<sup>29</sup> systema. I,711: "Si verbum DEI natura & proprietate sua Spiritus est, & vita, ac divina efficacia praeditum, utique non demum in usu incipit esse efficax, sed efficax etiam est extra usum, quippe qui accidit solum eidem, & ab eodem abesse potest. Eo ergo absente, quid erit verbum. Num aliud in sese evadet, quam erat in usu? Accidens recte naturam & proprietatem rei non mutat."

<sup>30</sup> systema. I,712.

of Calov, Quenstedt, Hollaz and the other dogmaticians after Gerhard. It appears as if Dannhauer has no fear whatever of Rathmann's opinions. He says<sup>31</sup> that Scripture is efficacious "in its appointed use", that is, when it is heard and meditated upon and preached. Viewed as deposited in the pages of the Bible, it is powerless to exert any supernatural action. Scripture can be said to be a powerful organ of God only in its use.<sup>32</sup> On the basis of these and other statements<sup>33</sup> it might appear that there is a basic doctrinal disagreement between Dannhauer and his brethren in Wittenberg. Gruetzmacher<sup>34</sup> is convinced that there is such a difference. He says that Dannhauer, like Luther, taught that Scripture was powerful ("kraeftig") only in its use. He says that, according to Dannhauer, Scripture derives its power from the Holy Spirit who comes upon it from without and who is always present in it when it is being used in any way. He says that Dannhauer's thoughts on this question are the same as those expressed by Chemnitz and the Formula of Concord and are witness to the fact that Luther's doctrine of the word had persisted down to that day. But is there a real difference between Dannhauer and the other theologians of the orthodox school? Quenstedt,<sup>35</sup> like the other dogma-

<sup>31</sup> ΘΑΛΟΣΟΦΙΑ christiana. 1713 ed. p.48.

<sup>32</sup> ibid. "Denique efficax in suo debito usu, auditionis lectionis, meditationis, praedicationis constituta....Etenim quoties scriptura praedicat sui efficaciam, semper connotat usum; organum est Dei (non causa principalis) cujus totum esse in usu consistit."

<sup>33</sup> loc. cit., p.49: "Ita & Scriptura Sacra in debito suo usu constituta gaudet virtute promissionum, gratiosa Spirit. S. praesentis, animantis τὰ λόγια Θεοῦ, ut sint ζῶντα, & oracula coelestia fundentis; ac afflatu suo e divinae mentis adyto mentem humanam ineffabili modo afficit, trahit, transfiguratur."

<sup>34</sup> Wort und Geist. p.277.

<sup>35</sup> op. cit., I,171. Cf. also Gerhard's statement, note 14.

ticians, distinguishes between the power of the word before its action on man, in itself (in actu primo), and during or in its action on man, (in actu secundo). The so-called actus primus is not an action at all, but only the capacity of the word to accomplish spiritual results (δύναμις ἐνεργητικῆς, potentia operandi); it is the δύναμις τοῦ Θεοῦ which Paul speaks of in Rom.1.16. The actus secundus is the actual working of the word upon men which Paul calls the ἐνέργειαν τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ in Eph.3.7. The word of God, because it is the word of God, has power even in actu primo. Speaking of the word of God, Hollaz<sup>36</sup> remarks that the power (vis) of an instrument consists in the fact that it is appointed to be used (in ordinatione ad usum), even though it is not actually in use, just as an eye has the power to see, even though it sees nothing at some given moment. Would Dannhauer find fault with these remarks of Quenstedt and Hollaz? Not at all. He himself remarks<sup>37</sup> that a distinction must be observed between the power to work and the actual working of the word. Dannhauer here means the same as does Hollaz when he later says that although the word of God accomplishes nothing apart from its use and exerts no power, its power is nevertheless not purposeless and it is not thereby a dead letter.<sup>38</sup> Gruetzmacher is not correct when he says that Dannhauer taught that Scripture was powerful only in its

---

<sup>36</sup> examen theologicum acroasmaticum. 1750 ed. p.993. Cf. Calov, systema. I,716: "DEI verbum instrumentum est ratione externae dispensationis."

<sup>37</sup> op. cit., 1713 ed. p.430: "Advertenda hic differentia inter efficiendi potentiam in actu primo; efficaciam in actu secundo."

<sup>38</sup> op. cit., 1750 ed. p.994: "Quamvis verbum Dei extra usum nil efficiat, aut operetur; ad salutarem tamen effectum & operationem destinatum est, adeoque vis eius non est frustranea, nec illud mortuum dicendum est."

use. Nor is there any basis for his saying that Scripture, or the word of God, according to Dannhauer, received its power from the Spirit who comes upon it when it is in use. All the dogmaticians, as we shall see, believed that the word derived its power from its union with the Holy Spirit. And there is no reason to think that Dannhauer, unlike the other dogmaticians, conceived of this union as sporadic. Gruetzmacher is right when he states that Dannhauer's views concerning the efficacy of the word correspond closely to those of Chemnitz, but neither did Chemnitz hold that Scripture was impotent in se, that it had power in its use only. Chemnitz says,<sup>39</sup> "The word of God has in itself [in se] the the spiritual and life-giving power to regenerate man." That these words of Chemnitz also express Dannhauer's conviction is shown by the fact that Dannhauer quotes<sup>40</sup> this

---

<sup>39</sup> Martini Chemnitii harmonia quatuor evangelistarum. quam ab eodem feliciter inchoatam theologus uterque non minus celebris, D. Polycarpus Lyserus, et D. Johannes Gerhardus, felicissime is quidem continuavit. Hamburgi. 1704. I, 648.

<sup>40</sup> op. cit., 1713 ed. Chemnitz goes on to say, "Sicut autem semen non fructificat cistae inclusum, aut in horreum reconditum, sed in terram projectum; ita nisi Dei verbum in aures & animos hominum disseminetur, sterile relinquitur, nec homines regenerat, nec fidei fructus profert. Sub Papatu admodum parci fuerunt in spargendo hoc semine, prodigi autem suarum traditionum, ac proinde etiam exiguum fructum, qui Deo gratus esse potuisset, protulerunt. Sicut in seminando requiritur benedictio Dei, nisi semen frustra abjecisse velimus; ita in praedicando verba Dei, nihil est qui plantat, neque etiam qui rigat: sed Deus qui dat incrementum." There is nothing here with which the later Lutheran theologians would not wholeheartedly agree. Nor does Chemnitz go beyond Luther who says, Erl. Aufl. 4, 307 that "das Wort und die Predigt recht und gut und an sich selbst fruchtbar ist." Cf. also 8, 288; 18, 215; 33, 21 and especially 51, 377-388. Koestlin says that Luther does not answer whether the word has power extra usum. The Theology of Luther, translated by C. H. Hay, Philadelphia. 1893. II, 493. Neither does the Formula of Concord.

statement of Chemnitz. Now it cannot be denied that Dannhauer's whole emphasis in his treatment of the efficacy of the word differs noticeably from that of the other dogmaticians. He says that Scripture extra usum has no ability to produce supernatural results; but here he is speaking of Scripture as a book, according to its materia (in membrana aut charta). I believe that the difference between Dannhauer and the other orthodox Lutheran teachers on this point lies in the fact that Dannhauer refuses, even hypothetically, to consider or think of Scripture or the word of God apart from its use and work. One must suppose that Dannhauer did this consciously, whereas Luther and Chemnitz before him probably did so unconsciously. And Dannhauer did this no doubt also to preserve in its proper emphasis and setting the "for us" purpose of Scripture which Gruetzmacher talks about, and perhaps also to avoid much of the needless and endless scholastic argumentation which the other Lutherans, especially Calov, had engaged in in their writings. But had Dannhauer or any of the other orthodox theologians of the day supposed for a moment that there was not full doctrinal harmony on this point, they would surely have mentioned such a fact in their writings; these men were incapable of palliating or ignoring doctrinal differences.

Another factor which confuses this issue is the way in which the old Lutheran teachers use the word "efficacia". One would ordinarily think of this word as connoting active power, the power of a thing in operation. Now if the dogmaticians had used the word with such a meaning, they would be promoting an idea that the word of God acts ante usum,

which is absurd. But to the dogmaticians, and even to Dannhauer at times, efficacia is merely a synonym of vis or potentia. Hollaz says<sup>41</sup> that the word has an inner vis, or efficacia, even extra usum. But then he goes on to say that this efficacia is exerted only when Scripture is rightly used, when it is read or preached or heard. Calov says<sup>42</sup> that the power of the word is of such a nature that in actu primo it is able to work. This, by the way, is all he or any of the dogmaticians mean when they speak of an efficacia extra usum. Calov also speaks of "intrinsic efficacy"<sup>43</sup> and equates it with intrinsic potentia.

It is unfortunate that Hollaz<sup>44</sup> has likened the power of the word to the power of the sun which has the power to give light even during an eclipse, inasmuch as this analogy, when pressed, does not express his views. The sun is actually generating heat and light in an eclipse; the word is inactive when it is not in use. The analogy with a seed which is used by all the dogmaticians is better. There is a precedent for this analogy in Scripture. Barth<sup>45</sup> disapproves of any analogy being employed in this connection, -- as if analogy with the physical had to or needed to exist in this case. But the dogmaticians never imply that these analogies were essential to the discussion. It was the polemical situation over against Rathmann and Movius which brought

<sup>41</sup> examen theologicum acroematicum. 1750 ed. p.992.

<sup>42</sup> systema. I,711.

<sup>43</sup> loc. cit., I,708.

<sup>44</sup> op. cit., 1750 ed. p.993: "...sicut soli vis illuminandi constat, licet, obiecta lunae umbra, nemo ipsum conspiciat." Notice that Hollaz does not talk of the sun shining here but of its power to give light.

<sup>45</sup> Barth, K. Die Kirchliche Dogmatik. I,I,113. Zuerich. 1947.

them to make use of these analogies in the way they did -- and they employed these analogies not to prove anything, but only to illustrate their doctrine -- and to term the power of the word a vis hyperphysica. If one hears in mind the dogmatists' teaching that there is a constant union of the word (which is also and always in Scripture) and the Spirit of God so that the word which is at all times in existence (even ante usum) is inherently and perpetually powerful, and consequently requires no nova elevatio, as if some outside influence needed to be added, analogies like those employed are not irrelevant, and their whole doctrine gives the appearance of being consistent and impressive, as Berth says. If it is denied that the word of God exists extra usum of that the Spirit is at all times in union with the word, the whole structure of their doctrine falls.

And now we consider the reason why, according to all the orthodox Lutheran theologians, the word of God is powerful. There is a perpetual union of the Spirit and the word.<sup>46</sup> Every spiritual accomplishment in man is brought about by the Holy Spirit who works only through the word. The sanctifying work of the Spirit cannot be separated from the efficacy of the word. The Spirit does not choose to work apart from the word of God.<sup>47</sup> Quenstedt says,<sup>48</sup> "God does not work separately without the word, nor the word sep-

---

<sup>46</sup> N. Hunnius in a letter to C. Myslents dated Sept. 12, 1628 wrote, "Unio Verbi & Spiritus S. est perpetua, & ubicunque Verbum est, illic Spiritus S. est." Cf. Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 183. This aphorism was often quoted.

<sup>47</sup> Dedekenn, op. cit., appendix nova. p. 194: "Denn ausser und ohne dem Worte/ koemt ja der H. Geist nimmermehr/ mit seinem seligmachenden Gnadenlicht in eines Menschen Hertz: Verbum est vehiculum Spiritus Sancti, sagten die alten."

<sup>48</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., 1715 ed. II, 704.

arately without God, but God works with the word and through the word, and the word works with God and from power divinely bestowed." The work of conversion and all spiritual work must properly be attributed to the Spirit, but this fact does not reduce the word to an inanimate instrument which has no intrinsic power. The word is called a hammer, Jer. 23.29, a shepherd's staff, Ps.25.4, and a scepter, Ps.45.7 all of which are passive instruments, but it is also called a living and incorruptible seed, 1 Pet.1.23, a fire, Jer. 23.29, rain and dew, Deut.32.2, a lamp giving light, Ps.119.105, and honey, Ps.119.103. Hence by virtue of divine ordination and communication Scripture and the word of God are intrinsically endowed with power to regenerate and convert. And yet this power of the word is subordinate and dependent on the moving cause of all spiritual life, just as the eye is not inanimate and yet is dependent on the mind to see.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., 1702 ed. I, 184-5. Dedekenn, op. cit., appendix nova. p.267: "Wie auch eine Wirkung ist, welche vom H. Geist und vom Wort herruhret/ also ist auch eine Krafft der Erleuchtung/ Bekehrung und Seligmachung in H. Geist/ und im Wort/ weil der H. Geist vom Wort/ und das Wort vom H. Geist nicht kan noch soll getrennet werden/ nur allein ist diss der Unterscheid/ dass dem H. Geist die Krafft der Erleuchtung/ Bekehrung und Seligmachung zustehet urspruenglich/ als der Haupt-Ursache/ dem Wort aber Mittheilungs-Weise/ als der Mittel-Ursachen aus Goettlicher Ordnung zum kraefftigen Mittel der Erleuchtung/ Bekehrung und Seligmachung verordnet." Cf. Hollaz, op. cit., 1750 ed. p.992: "Est haec efficacia vere diuina, eundem cum Spiritu S., qui perpetuo cum verbo unitus est, producens effectum, in quem Spiritus influit una cum verbo per vim diuinam, quae Spiritui S. originaliter & independenter, verbo Dei, communicatiue & dependenter, propter mysticam verbi cum Spiritu S. unionem intimam & indiuiduam, competit." Baier, op. cit., p.139 and Dannhauer, ΘΑΘ-ΣΟΦΙΑ christiana. 1713 ed. p.49 and even Calov, biblia novi testamenti illustrata. II, 25, understand the δύναμις in Rom. 1.16 metonymically as the organ through which God exerts his power in believers unto salvation. The Gospel then is the power of God not substantially, but as an organum potens. Cf. also Dedekenn, op. cit., appendix nova. p.308.

In this connection the dogmatists point out that the work of the Holy Spirit and the work of the word of God are not two works, nor are they merely a union of two distinct operations, but they are one work, they are a unity of effect (unitas ἀποτελέσματος) and a unity of operation (unitas ἐνεργείας). The Holy Spirit does not do one thing and the word another in working out God's saving purpose in man, but by the same action they perform one work and accomplish one effect, just as the mind and eyes see by one and not by different actions.<sup>50</sup> And it is only by virtue of the fact that God is in the word that this word has the power to accomplish anything spiritual.<sup>51</sup> The word is powerless, if God is not present in it.<sup>52</sup> Any word which proceeds from God brings God with it. All this is very important. If the Spirit is separated from the word of God, it is no longer the word of God.<sup>53</sup> And because God is always with his word, the power

<sup>50</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., 1702 ed. I,183. loc. cit., 1715 ed. II,704-5: "Non est hic tantum unio distinctarum actionum, vel etiam effectus & ἐνεργήματος statuenda, sed etiam unitas ἐνεργείας & operationis: Spiritus S. enim non agit & operatur distincte & seorsim sine Verbo, nec Verbum distincte & seorsim sine Deo seu Spiritu S. in hominis ἐπιστροφῇ."

<sup>51</sup> Hollaz, op. cit., 1750 ed. p.992. Quenstedt, op. cit., 1702 ed. I,184: "Verbum Dei, quatenus Verbum Dei est, semper & indefinenter efficax est, quantum ad actum primum. Unio enim Verbi & Spiritus S. est perpetua, ut ubicunque verbum est, illic & Spiritus S."

<sup>52</sup> Calov, systema. IX,3: "Ex ore DEI egriditur; non ita, ut a DEO separaretur, sic enim non haberet divinam virtutem, quae idem realiter est cum ipsa DEI natura; sed quod ad extra sese prodat, hominis non tantum aures feriendo, sed etiam virtutem illam κατ' ἔξω secum ferenda, eandemque in corda nostra inferendo, & inserendo, si μετὰ πραότητος suscipiatur, utpote quod est ἑφύτος λόγος, verbum insitum, δυνάμενος σῶσαι τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν."

<sup>53</sup> Calov, systema. I,713. Hollaz, op. cit., 1750 ed. p.993: "Nam si a verbo Dei separaretur Spiritus S. non esset id Dei verbum, vel verbum Spiritus, sed esset verbum humanum."

of the word is the power of God.<sup>54</sup> Finally, the word is powerful simply because it is the word of very God, because its author is God himself and not men, and because it is inspired by him.<sup>55</sup> Because it is God's word, God cannot be separated from it.

It was only after the controversy with Rathmann that the union of the Spirit and the word of God was emphasized and spoken of in clear terms by the Lutheran teachers. Hutter, for instance, who wrote before this controversy, never speaks of such a union, and he makes, in fact, a number of statements which appear to suggest that he would not favor such a teaching. He says, for example, that the power of

---

<sup>54</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., 1715 ed. II,704: "Voce enim *δυνάμει* *θεοῦ* intelligitur virtus & efficacia, seu vis divina ordinata, Verbo Evangelii indita, per quam Deus constituit homines convertere, regenerare, illuminare, sanctificare &c. Haec vero efficacia divina Verbi non differt quoad rem a virtute Spiritus S. operantis in cordibus hominum, h.e. Gratiōsa Spiritus S. virtus & operatio ab hoc sanctissimo organo suo nunquam abest, sed eidem indivulso nexu est conjuncta, imo vis & efficacia Verbi Dei non differt quoad rem a virtute Spiritus S. sed est una ac eadem vis ac efficacia convertendi, illuminandi, regenerandi, quae competit Spiritui S. ex se, a se, & per se, ut causae principali, verbo vero Dei participative, ut causae organicae, sive est in Spiritu S. essentialiter, originaliter & independenter, in Verbo Dei gratiose & communicative."

<sup>55</sup> Dedekenn, op. cit., appendix nova. p.271: "Wie die H. Schrift vor unsern lesen und meditiren ist Scriptura *θεόπνευστος*, eine von Gott eingegebene Schrift 2 Timoth.3. v. 16 Also ist sie auch vor unsern lesen und meditiren eine Krafft Gottes/ sie da kan selig machen/ wen sie wird gelesen/ betrachtet/ und mit Glauben angenommen, Rom.1. v.16. Ursach ist diest/ denn die H. Schrift wird eine von Gott eingegebene Schrift genennet..." Calov, bibli novi testamenti illustrata. II,25: "Est tamen vere potentia Dei, non quidem materialiter ratione literarum, apicum, & externi soni, sed formaliter, ratione divini sensus intellectum, quia est *θεόπνευστος*, & per *θεοπνευστίαν* divina virtute animatum ad illuminationem, conversionem, vivificationem & salutem, quia per verbum non docetur tantum, sed illuminatur animus; non afficitur tantum solatio vitae, sed revera vivificatur, nec tantum in vitam spiritualem revocamur per verbi virtutem, sed conservamur etiam ad aeternam vitam."

Scripture cannot effect conversion and faith without the added power and operation of the Holy Spirit.<sup>56</sup> He says that the whole operation of conversion must be attributed to the Holy Spirit alone.<sup>57</sup> He says that the doctrine of the Gospel in itself can accomplish nothing; the Holy Spirit must be added who employs this Gospel to bring faith about.<sup>58</sup> He says that the word of God cannot be grasped or accepted unless enlightenment of the Spirit is added.<sup>59</sup> On the basis of these last three statements Gruetzmacher<sup>60</sup> observes that Hutter teaches much which is found in the later tenets of Rathmann. He remarks that, according to Hutter's presentation, the Bible in itself is not a means of grace, but the Spirit must be added to it. It would be a simple matter to conclude on the basis of these statements of Hutter that

<sup>56</sup> loci communes theologici. Ulmensi. 1619. p.31: "Nam ad cordium conversionem & fidem, scripturae non sunt efficaces, nisi interna Spiritus Sancti vis & operatio accesserit."

<sup>57</sup> loci communes theologici. Wittebergae. 1661. p.285: "Conversionis in solidum & ex asse est adscribenda soli Spiritui Sancto, qui in Homine audiente Verbum non est otiosus, sed movet & impellit voluntatem..."

<sup>58</sup> loc. cit., p.920: "Quod Evangelium hoc non praestet aut efficiat per se, & a se. Nam doctrina etiam Evangelii per se ita nude accepta & considerata, nisi aliud accedat, tantum annunciat fidem in Christum, & vitam pollicetur credentibus: & praeterea nihil efficit. Quia sic nude tantum ratione doctrina & praedicationis, neque fidem largitur, neque vitam. Alioquin omnes, qui audiunt Evangelium, reciperent fidem, & per fidem vitam aeternam. Ergo aliud accedat necesse, nempe Spiritus Sanctus, qui praedicatione & doctrina Evangelii, tanquam organo, & quasi ὀχήματι utitur, in accendenda fide, & efficienda vita aeterna, in illis omnibus, qui ipsius operationi non contumaciter resistunt."

<sup>59</sup> loc. cit., p.285: "Verbum tamen salutis vel amplecti, vel intelligere nullo modo potest, adeo ut stultitia ipsi sit, nisi Spiritus Sancti illuminatio superveniat."

<sup>60</sup> Wort und Geist. p.95.

there is a fundamental difference between his teaching and that of the later dogmaticians on this point, but such a judgment might be premature. Let us examine these rather un-Lutheran statements of Hutter in their wider context, in the light of other statements which he makes regarding the relation between word and Spirit. As mentioned above he says that the word cannot convert unless the power of the Spirit is added. Does he wish to teach here that the word has no power to convert, that it has no power in se to work spiritual results? Not necessarily. He teaches clearly that the word of God begets faith, that the church as a number of believers owes its very being to the word of God.<sup>61</sup> He teaches that the word is always an organ which is able to create faith and which the Spirit employs to this end.<sup>62</sup> And he teaches that the word has power in itself to produce spiritual effects in man.<sup>63</sup> Again, as pointed out above, Hutter holds that man's whole conversion must be attributed to the Holy Spirit alone. Does such an idea give the word any place in man's ordo salutis? Does it not deny all power to the word? Not at all. Not only does the Formula of Concord teach that the Spirit alone is responsible

---

<sup>61</sup> op. cit., 1619 ed. p.26: "Ecclesia nihil est aliud, quam coetus fidelium: Fides vero nascitur ex audito verbo: Ergo verbum Dei, sive scriptura sacra non modo est nota, sed etiam causa efficiens, sive principium constitutivum Ecclesiae: ita ut suum τὸ εἶναι non nisi ex sola Scriptura habeat."

<sup>62</sup> loc. cit., p.31: "Scriptura enim semper est medium etque organum, quo Spiritus Sanctus utitur ad renovandas mentis nostras, & excitandam fidem: quandoquidem Scriptura semper est verbum Dei, ideoque etiam verum semper & aptum fidei procreandae, nostrisque renovandis mentibus organum."

<sup>63</sup> op. cit., 1661 ed. pp.25,929.

for man's conversion, but the later dogmaticians, even Calov,<sup>64</sup> say so as well. But neither the Formula of Concord nor Hutter nor Calov mean that the word of God is inherently impotent or that it is not a cause along with the Spirit in man's conversion. Moreover the Formula of Concord says,<sup>65</sup> "Therefore, before the conversion of man, there are only two efficient causes, namely, the Holy Spirit and the word of God, as the instrument of the Holy Spirit, whereby he works conversion." And Hutter, consistent with his own rigid confessional position, dutifully follows the confession on this point.<sup>66</sup>

Neither Hutter nor the Formula of Concord nor any of the later Lutheran theologians intimated that the word was a cause of conversion coordinate with the Holy Spirit. And yet, in spite of these many similarities between Hutter's doctrine and that of his followers, the conclusion on the basis of at least one of his statements already alluded to is inevitable that a difference exists. The statement reads as follows: "The Gospel does not perform or accomplish this [conversion] in and of itself. Unless something else is added to it, the Gospel in itself, viewed and regarded alone, only tells about faith in Christ and only offers life to believers,

<sup>64</sup> systema. X,14: "Causa utriusque conversionis non est, nisi DEUS." X,30: "Scriptura Sacra uni & soli Spiritui S. totum conversionis nostrae opus, quod ad initium, medium, & complementum." X,57: "...denuo repetitum volumus ex supra dicta explicatione, quod conversio ad Deum est solius Spiritus Sancti opus, qui solus est egregius ille artifex, haec in nobis efficiens." Cf. X,19.79. Formula of Concord. II,90.

<sup>65</sup> epitome,19.

<sup>66</sup> op. cit., 1661 ed. p.285: "Proinde si Homo infidelis & nunquam renatus converti debeat, suas tantum causas concurrere statuimus: Sed sub diversissimo causarum genere: Unam nimirum efficientem, quae est, solus & unus Spiritus Sanctus: Alteram vero Organicam sive instrumentalem, quae est, Verbum Dei praedicatum auditumque."

and beyond this accomplishes nothing. Considered alone as doctrine and proclamation it confers neither faith nor life. Otherwise everyone who hears the Gospel would come to faith and through faith to life. But something else must be added, namely, the Holy Spirit who employs the doctrine and the preaching of the Gospel as an organ and sort of means of inciting faith and bestowing life upon all those who do not persistently resist his operation."<sup>67</sup> The inescapable inference of these words is that the Spirit must come upon the word from without before it can exert any influence. This statement implies that even the preaching of the word, even the word in actu secundo, is not at all times accompanied by the Spirit of God. It certainly teaches that the efficacia of the Gospel is not a potentia existing even ante usum, but at most a salutary operatio in the elect.<sup>68</sup> Such a teaching, and in particular the inference that the Spirit could be absent from the preached word, would definitely not have been acceptable to the later Lutherans, and it seems strange that they did not criticize it.<sup>69</sup> Hutter is more careless in his treatment of the efficacy of the word, and this is understandable because he wrote before Rathmann. Controversy

---

<sup>67</sup> op. cit., p.920. Cf. note 58.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. ibid. "...Et hoc est, quod Apostolus Evangelium non simpliciter voluit nominare doctrinam vivificantem: sed Spiritum vivificantem: quia videlicet haec doctrina Spiritum Sanctum sibi habet adjunctum, & per hunc est efficax in credentibus Electis, non modo ad fidem, sed etiam ad vitam aeternam: secundum illud Apostoli, Gal.3.2."

<sup>69</sup> The lack of censure may be due to the fact that this is an isolated statement and to the added fact that Hutter does utter other statements which closely approach the stand of the later Lutherans, Cf. op. cit., 1619 ed. p.293: "Evangelium vero laetificat & vivificat." Cf. note 61.

has a peculiar way of making statements which to one age seem perfectly harmless appear dangerous and even heretical to a later and more circumspect age. Hutter would, of course, have rejected much of what Rathmann taught. But it is an undeniable fact, as Gruetzmacher has pointed out, that his doctrine approaches that of Rathmann at times; Rathmann did not hesitate to support some of his theses with quotations from Hutter. This may account for the fact that Gerhard was reluctant to condemn Rathmann, and for a long while thought that the controversy was merely due to misunderstanding over terminology. The difference between Hutter and the later dogmatists seems to be basically this: to Hutter it was not only hypothetically possible but actually true that the word of God could at times be without the Spirit, to the later Lutherans of this period even the hypothetical possibility of such a circumstance was unthinkable. It is true that Calov, for instance, speaks of the word as powerless if it is alone. But the word is never alone. Take the Spirit from God's word and it is no longer God's word; it has become a human word.<sup>70</sup> And this is true of the word of God whether viewed as existing in himself or inspired in men of God, whether recorded in Scripture, preached or treasured in the heart of the believer. Calov is unable to visualize the word of God without the Spirit. God's word, simply because it is God's word, is associated with the Spirit and possesses divine power.<sup>71</sup> Here we see the big difference

---

<sup>70</sup> systema. I, 713: "Nam si a verbo DEI seperetur Spiritus Sanctus, non esset id Dei verbum, vel verbum Spiritus, sed esset humanum solum verbum."

<sup>71</sup> ibid. "Quid, quod verbum Dei, qua tale, non possit fingi sine divina virtute: aut sine Spiritu S. qui a verbo suo est inseparabilis."

between Calov and Rathmann, namely, their conception of the word of God. To Calov Scripture was Deus loquens in the same way as he spoke at Sinai or the mount of transfiguration. And Calov understood the word of God in a much more comprehensive sense than did Rathmann. But in this Calov and Hutter are one.

Why did Hutter speak as he did? Gruetzmacher suggests<sup>72</sup> that Hutter, like Rathmann, is attempting to solve the problem why the word does not always accomplish its desired effect upon all men. The words of Hutter quoted above, "otherwise everyone who hears the Gospel would come to faith and through faith to life," seem to support this idea. The burden of these words is that the Spirit entering upon the word accounts for the fact that some accept the word and are converted and others not. Thus the cur alii alii non question is solved, it is answered in God. But according to Lutheran theology the question cannot and must not be answered at all. Any answer will result either in a denial of gratia universalis, as is the case here, or of solae gratiae, and both these principles must be upheld. The orthodox dogmatists, therefore, in accordance with the second article of the Formula of Concord, teach and confess that God alone is responsible for man's conversion and salvation, but man and man alone is responsible for his own perdition. Hence, if the word of God is not accepted, the fault does not lie in the word of God or in the Spirit who works through the word,

---

<sup>72</sup> Wort und Geist. p.95.

but only in the stubborn resistance of man.<sup>73</sup> The efficacy of the word extends to all men everywhere.<sup>74</sup> It is always the purpose of God and his word that all men should be converted and saved.<sup>75</sup> But the efficacy of the word is not irresistible.<sup>76</sup> Hutter's words above can only be explained by saying that he has in this case become very careless, for later in the same paragraph he says that man's resistance is the cause of his not accepting the word and of his non-conversion.<sup>77</sup>

---

<sup>73</sup> Calov, scripta anti-Sociniana. III, 28: "So ist eben darumb die heilige Schrift/ das Wort des Lebens/ uns Menschen gegeben/ das wir dadurch bekehret werden moegen: Und da jeman nicht bekehret wird/ so ist die Schuld nicht an der heiligen Schrift/ als were das Wort Gottes darzu nicht genug nach Goettlichem Rath/ und sonderbarer disposition, dass Gott dass Wort so klar und hell/ so kuendlich gewiss und unsehlbar nicht fuerstellen wollen/ sondern die Schuld ist ander verkehrten gottlosen Welt/ die widerstebet dem heiligen Geist/ welcher durch das Wort Gottes unser Heyl und Bekehrung suchet." Dedekenn, op. cit., appendix nova. p. 189: "Die Gottlosen aber/ dass sie nicht bekehret werden/ ist nicht die Schuld der Schrift/ noch des H. Geistes/ gleich als wann dieser nicht willig/ die Schrift nicht maechtig und tuechtig waere/ selbige zu bekehren/ Sondern daher bleiben sie unbekehret und unerleuchtet/ dass sie dem H. Geiste widerstreben."

<sup>74</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., 1702 ed. I, 171.

<sup>75</sup> Calov, systema. IX, 4.

<sup>76</sup> Hollaz, examen theologicum acroamaticum. 1735 ed. II, 458: "Virtus quippe divina Spiritus S. cum verbo conjuncta non est absoluta, sed ordinata, cui a voluntaria hominis repugnantia impedimentum objici potest."

<sup>77</sup> This is his real stand in the matter and is brought out in all his writings, Cf. libri Christianae Concordiae. p. 162: "Quibus ita stantibus, promptum jam est ex adverso colligere, quae causa sit, quod plurimi non convertantur ad Deum, neque fidem concipiant? Cujus certe rei culpa non haeret in Deo, ut qui medium hoc salutis, nempe verbum suum omnibus ex sequo offert: imo serio vult, ut omnes illud diligenter audiant: Quo facto promisit etiam se certo operaturum conversionem & fidem: sed culpa haeret in ipsis hominibus, qui neque verbum Dei audire, neque legere volunt: sed potius Ministerium Verbi, & Ecclesiam Dei contumaciter negligunt ac contemnunt: & sic in peccatis fuit moriuntur ac pereunt."

The dogmaticians were opposed to every kind of enthusiasm, to every idea of an immediate illumination or an immediate conversion. In accord with the fifth article of the Augsburg Confession they held that the Holy Spirit does not come to men except through the external word.<sup>78</sup> Hutter speaks for all the dogmaticians when he says,<sup>79</sup> "In every conversion, whether violent or gentle, the divine word is the one means through which the Holy Spirit wishes to be effectual in our conversion." Enlightenment, conversion and sanctification from beginning to end are brought about through the word of God.<sup>80</sup> The church lives by the word of God, and where there is no word there is no church.<sup>81</sup> When Rathmann contends that the naked Scripture left to itself can accomplish nothing, he is fighting a battle without an adversary, for the Lutherans denied that Scripture was ever left to itself; the Spirit was always in the word, and in its every form.<sup>82</sup> God will not deal with men apart from his word. One will not fail to see the importance of this fact in the old Lutheran doctrine of the efficacy of the word of God.

It is the conviction of all the dogmaticians that only the Gospel, properly speaking, is a means of grace. They

---

<sup>78</sup> Dedekenn, op. cit., appendix nova. p.194.

<sup>79</sup> Hutter, op. cit., 1619 ed. p.161.

<sup>80</sup> Dedekenn, op. cit., appendix nova. p.252: "Wider solche irrige falsche Lehren hat die rechtglaubige Kirche jederzeit gelehret und bekennet/ dass die Erleuchtung/ Bekehrung und Seligmachung von Anfang biss zu Ende GOTT der HERR allein durchs Wort/ und keine hierzu gehoerige geistliche Wirkung ohne das Wort/ oder auch vor dem Wort wolle verrichten."

<sup>81</sup> Gerhard, commentarius super Genesis. p.82: "Fides Dei verbo adhaerens est cor Ecclesiae. Satanas igitur in exitium hominem perducturus, primo omnium verbum Dei homini eripere & fidem in ipso extinguere conatur, sicut venenum primo omnium cor occupat & aggreditur."

<sup>82</sup> Dedekenn, op. cit., appendix nova. p.169.

often speak generally of the word being a means of grace, but they mean the Gospel. When the Bible says that we are born again by the word of God it is speaking only of the word of the Gospel.<sup>83</sup> The law is not a means of grace; it cannot incite faith; it can only kill.<sup>84</sup> If the law leads a sinner to Christ, it does so only indirectly by showing him his lost condition, driving him to despair and thereby showing him a good reason for seeking Christ.<sup>85</sup> Scripture is often spoken of as a means of grace, but this may be said by virtue of the fact that Scripture contains the Gospel, that the redemption in Christ is the heart and message of all the Scriptures; Scripture as such is not a means of grace, for all of Scripture is not Gospel.<sup>86</sup> And why is the Gospel a means of grace? Because Christ crucified is its message. Because Christ is its essence, soul and center. Because

---

<sup>83</sup> Gerhard, commentarius super priorem D. Petri epistolam. p.141: "Verbum Evangelii est medium regenerationis & vivificationis." p.163: "Verbum Evangelii est semen, ex quo regeneramur; ac animae nostrae cibus & potus, quo nutrimur."

<sup>84</sup> Calov, opodixis articulorum fidei, p.341: "Lex enim nihil tradit horum, quae ad fidem faciunt." Hutter, loci communes theologici, 1619 ed. p.920: "Ergo de lege etiam affirmari nequit, quod sit Spiritus vivificans: sed est & manet Litera occidens." Cf. Quenstedt, op. cit., I,170: "Licet enim Lex effectus gratiosos directe & per se non producat, hoc est, fidem in Christum accendat, & conversionem operetur, hoc enim potius Evangelio adscribitur; non tamen propterea litera mortua est, ut falso Schvvenckfeldiani & papistae contendunt, sed & in suo genere efficax est, dum occidit...operatur iram..." There is no difference between Hutter and Quenstedt here. Hutter calls the law a dead letter, not because it is powerless, but because it works no salutary results in man.

<sup>85</sup> Calov, systema. V,414.

<sup>86</sup> Dannhauer, ΘΑΘΣΟΦΙΑ christiana. 1695 ed. p.488ff; p.1327: "Tota Scripturae historia utique credenda, sed non tota solatia suppetit in circo justificationis. Nam fulmina legis, minae, & exempla suppliciorum terrent potius conscientias, quam ut erigant."

only that message of Christ can restore hope and the very image of God.<sup>87</sup> The Gospel is a means of grace because it brings Christ himself to those who hear it. Calov says<sup>88</sup> that the word of God as it is written and proclaimed is powerful and accomplishes great things by virtue of its union with the personal word who is one in essence with the Father and the Holy Spirit. In their discussion of the power of the word the old Lutherans emphasized its Christological content. They emphasized the fact that Christ was in the Scriptures or the word of God not only κετικῶς (significative, objective, ut significatum in significante) as if he could not come to us in Scripture, but that Christ confronts us in the word, that the word of God truly brings Christ. The faculties of Jena and Wittenberg wrote the following regarding this point:<sup>89</sup> "Until the present time we have been taught

<sup>87</sup> ibid. "Atque hic thesaurus Evangelicus Christus ipse, ut QUI vel ut QUOD, τὸ ἀντίλυτρον est id, quod justificat: Christus ipse ut trahens ad se & apprehendens salvificat; Christus ipse, ut Eleemosyna coelestis ditat." Dannhauer, Χριστοθεοφία seu sapientiarum sapientia. p.1: "Arti pictoriae inter alia Ministerium verbi comparare amat gentium Doctor Apostolus, in gravi illa sua in Galatas invectiva, c.3.vl. O stulti Galatae, quis vos fascinavit, ut non crederetis veritati? οἷς κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς προεγράφη, ἐν ὑμῖν ἐσταυρωμένος. & cap.4.19 filioli mei quos iterum parturio, ἄχρις οὗ μορφωθῆ Ἰησοῦς ἐν ὑμῖν. Pictores sunt Apostoli & horum successores. Objectum pingendum, sunt non commenta & somnia, non dona ministrorum in animos auditorum ac applausus inferenda, sed CHRISTUS crucifixus omnium scripturarum, caput, scopus, centrum, nucleus, thesaurus, margarita, ut per primum Adamum deperdita imago ex Christi characteris hypostatici imagine restauretur."

<sup>88</sup> systema. IX,2: "Effectus autem illi, etsi propter unionem cum Verbo hypostatico, quod cum patre & spiritu s. unum est essentia, 1 Joh.V.7. verbo προφορικῶ convenient, non tamen ita λόγῳ vindicandi sunt, ut Verbo denegentur, cum Schwenkfeldio, sed ut Verbo propter unionem illam tribuatur."

<sup>89</sup> Dedekenn, op. cit., appendix nova. p.332.

in the churches and in the schools that Christ was the purpose for God recording Scripture, Jn.5.39, that he is the foundation, Eph.2.20, the kernel, the star, the treasure and shrine of Scripture, the one man of whom Scripture testifies, to whom it directs us, whom at one time it proclaimed and promised and whom later according to his person and work and merits it makes known and explains and bestows upon us in such a way that we receive Christ with his sufferings and death from the Scriptures." Who does not find Christ in the Scriptures may just as well not read them. For Scripture not only speaks of Christ; it brings Christ. And "was Gott und Christum mitbringet/ das bringet ihn mit ενεργητικως effective." The word, then, is a means of grace because it brings Christ, because it is the proclamation of the counsel of God concerning our redemption and salvation,<sup>90</sup> because God confronts us in the word and reveals himself in the word.<sup>91</sup> There are, therefore, as I have intimated above, basically three reasons for the old Lutheran teachers attributing efficacy to the word of God: 1. the fact that its author is very God, 2. the fact that there exists a permanent union of word and Spirit, and 3. the fact that the word proclaims and actually brings and bestows Christ.

---

<sup>90</sup> loc. cit., p.206.

<sup>91</sup> loc. cit., p.221.

CHAPTER TEN: CONCLUSION

It is surprising how many confused ideas have been circulated concerning the old Lutheran doctrine of Scripture by scholars who are otherwise eminently discerning and competent. Two mistakes have been made generally by these scholars in their manner of investigation, mistakes which are certainly unintentional and yet are fundamental and far-reaching in scope. First the Lutheran theologians who represent the prevailing orthodoxy of the seventeenth century have been studied as dogmatists and nothing more: they have been portrayed as hidebound systematists who were uninterested in Biblical theology and sound Scriptural exegesis. Consequently their exegetical works have been quite neglected. Now it is an undeniable fact that these theologians, conservative to the point of zealotry in some cases and irrevocably committed to their theological confessional heritage, were concerned primarily with polemics and dogmatics. They would not have been children of their age had these not been their first concern. But this is all the more reason why their exegetical writings which in many cases are their finest writings should be studied. The influence of polemical motives upon their dogmatical works cannot be emphasized too strongly. A spirit of polemics colored and dominated practically all their doctrinal discussion which meant that their doctrinal writings were necessarily unbalanced. A classic example of this fact is their treatment of Scripture. How different their whole presentation of this subject would have been, had there been

no Rathmann or no Jesuit order! Many aspects of this doctrine, for instance, their views on revelation, the efficacy and the uniqueness of the word, cannot be known from their writings in the field of systematic theology; they had no occasion to speak their mind in these matters. Only when we repair to their exegetical writings which usually offer a far more dispassionate and objective presentation of their theology do we get a glimmer of their views in these matters, but even then oftentimes only a glimmer. But it is untrue to say that they were not concerned with Biblical exegesis. The Lutheran teachers of the seventeenth century occupied themselves to no small degree with exegetical study. Consider the lengthy commentaries of Sebastian Schmidt on all the books of the Old Testament. Consider Balduin's enormous commentarius in omnes epistolas beati apostoli Pauli. Consider the four immense folio volumes comprising Calov's biblia illustrata which may correctly be called his opus magnum and which is far more exact and carefully written than his systema which, except for the first volume, seems to have been produced in a great hurry. Consider Gerhard's many exegetical works on practically all the books of the New Testament and especially his continuation of Chemnitz' harmonia quatuor evangelistarum. And consider Aegidius Hunnius who, in spite of the violent controversies in which he was engaged, still found time to write commentaries on all the Gospels and most of the epistles of the New Testament. Such exegetical achievements represent an almost unbelievable amount of labor, although they too become excessively controversial at times, and contain much independent and original investigation and usually reveal a higher level of scholarship than the dogmatical works of these

men -- another reason why they should be studied in connection with their doctrine of Scripture. Their exegetical works contain much which cannot be found in any of their other writings.

Second the theology of the orthodox dogmaticians has been often studied piecemeal or locally which is perhaps justified but at times unwise when inquiring into the theology of those who used a local method of presentation. For instance, the relevance of the Scripture principle upon the inspiration of Scripture is often completely overlooked. Their doctrine of inspiration is studied as if detached from other aspects of their doctrine of the word, as a thing in itself. Such an atomistic method of research may well result in a grotesque exaggeration of this doctrine. The same result may occur when scholars confine their investigation to the sections of their works dealing specifically with Scripture; restricting his study in this way, how could Joseph Sittler come to any other conclusion than that their doctrine of the word was "static"? A study of Scripture cannot be divorced from the doctrine of the means of grace. The very purpose of the divine origin of Scripture, of its clarity, its perfection, its authority, is soteriological. The word of God must be viewed therefore in its proper soteriological context, in the context of sola gratia and gratia universalis -- and it must be done so seriously.

As a result of these two mistakes of later scholars serious misrepresentations of the old Lutheran doctrine of Scripture have been made, and false estimations of their position naturally follow. It is particularly in reference to inspiration, to the relation between the Spirit and the writers of Scripture,

that the orthodox Lutheran position has been singled out for attack and quite drastically distorted by the majority of scholars and theologians of the last century. In the first place, the importance of this doctrine which the earlier dogmaticians never discussed specifically and which the orthodox teachers after Calixt treat more or less briefly is overemphasized to the extreme. In the second place, as I have already mentioned, verbal inspiration has been falsely depicted as "mechanical inspiration", as a "dictation theory" of inspiration. That the dictatio which the dogmaticians speak of so often, like suggestio, denotes no more than a divine supplying or furnishing of words in Scripture, that this dictatio does not indicate the manner in which the impartation of the words of Scripture took place, that no attempt is made by any of the dogmaticians to explain the how of the suggestio verborum, -- these highly significant facts are very seldom taken into consideration by their critics. The question to be answered in this connection is simply this: does a suggestio verborum, a divine communication of the very words of Scripture, obviate all requirement and significance of a doctrine of accommodation whereby God adapted himself and his message to man to the normal speech of ordinary men, to their intellect, their emotions and their natural endowments? The answer of the orthodox dogmaticians is an unqualified no. They confess both verbal inspiration and accommodation.<sup>1</sup> Those who have made studies

---

<sup>1</sup> Many will not agree with the dogmaticians at this point. Still they cannot say that a mechanical theory of inspiration was taught during the period of orthodoxy. Richard Rothe thinks that verbal inspiration and accommodation are irreconcilable, Zur Dogmatik, zweite Auflage. Gotha. 1869. I.135. He says the dogmaticians explained the stylistic differences in Scripture by accommodation, not the characteristics of the writers. This is self-contradictory since accommodation postulates that the personalities and endowments of the writers account for the variations in style in Scripture.

of their position on inspiration have, by ignoring their doctrine of accommodation, too often interpreted their concept of the relation between the Spirit and the writers as mechanistic and coercive. It is, I believe the consistent monergism of their doctrine of inspiration which has confused Cremer, Luthardt, Sasse and so many others and blinded them to the true facts in the case. These men have made the mistake of drawing conclusions from the teachings of the dogmaticians, conclusions which seem reasonable and necessary to them, but which never would have been granted by the dogmaticians themselves. The orthodox Lutheran theologians teach on the one hand that Scripture is God's book, that it was verbally dictated and inspired by him and that no human cooperation concurred efficienter in bringing it about. On the other hand they teach with equal clarity that the amanuenses retained their individual styles, that they wrote consciously, willingly, spontaneously and from experience and conviction, that psychologically and subjectively (materialiter & subjective) they cooperated in writing Scripture. If these two parallel thoughts seem paradoxical, if they seem to contradict each other, the orthodox teachers make no effort to harmonize them. Such a lacuna in their theology will of course trouble those who study them, but the minute the dogmaticians are represented as crossing this lacuna they are certain to be misrepresented. This habit of blandly refraining from drawing what seem to be the logical consequences of their tenets was not uncommon among the Lutheran theologians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; in fact, it was a principle with them. Analogous to their position concerning inspiration was their doctrine of conversion. They taught in accordance with the second article of the Formula of Concord that conversion was

was monergistic, that it was effected by the grace of God alone, that the human will was completely passive in conversion,<sup>2</sup> and yet they did not thereby conclude that man as the subiectum convertendi was a mere robot or that God converted man against his will or that he did not in the fullest sense experience his conversion.<sup>3</sup> Lacunae of this nature are common in the theology of all the dogmaticians and the dogmaticians are not unaware of them. Their refusal to answer the cur. ali. ali. non question, their firm adherence to both sola gratia and universalis gratia, is other evidence of this fact. And other examples could be multiplied. This willingness on the part of these theologians to abstain from drawing conclusions to which their doctrines seem irrevocably to point, irritating as it may be, must always be borne in mind, if we are correctly to understand their theology and avoid the pitfall of fabricating a straw Quenstedt or Calov.

This brings up the question whether the very idea of lacunae is not opposed to their theological method, or at least whether their circumscribed causal methodology did not in the nature of the case wrongly attempt to synthesize what was paradoxical in their theology, whether it did not at times point to theological conclusions which, though logically nec-

<sup>2</sup> Calov, Socinismus profligatus, p.673: "Quandoquidem voluntas humana a Spiritu S. convertenda sit, adeoque pure passive hic sese habet, nec quicquam cooperatur ad sui conversionem."

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Calov, systema, X,15. Calov does not hesitate to discard the terms "block" and "stone" and "Klotzbutz" which had been applied to the unregenerate man by the sixteenth century Lutheran theologians in their controversy with the synergists. He discards them as misleading and unnecessary although he has no personal objection to them if properly understood. And yet Calov was a monergist: unregenerate man is not able not to resist God, man's will in conversion is pure passive, God is the beginning, middle and end of conversion. In other words Calov held that man, although spiritually dead and impotent before conversion, was nevertheless psychologically conscious and active (this latter fact which was obvious neither he nor the earlier Lutherans felt any constraint to emphasize).

essary, were theologically unwarranted. That their method did involve them in such inconsistencies is seen in their discussion of the criteria of Scripture which was a fruitless attempt to put into smooth and coherent logical formulae what could only be accepted with faith. Putting it bluntly, it was an attempt to make faith reasonable which was a contradiction of everything these theologians stood for. An even more flagrant example of this weakness in their method was the regressus demonstrativus argument of Hollaz which I have already mentioned and in which happily the earlier Lutheran teachers did not take recourse. The most kind criticism which can be made of this contradiction between their theology and their method is to say that it is just that, a contradiction between theology and method. When they refrain from the use of their restricted methodology or from the conclusions to which it seems to point and apply sola scriptura, lacunae appear and their theology becomes consistent with the principles of sola fide and sola scriptura.

It might be mentioned at this point that the orthodoxy and the scholasticism of the dogmatists do not necessarily go hand in hand, any more than in the theology of the medieval scholastics. Much of their theological method was taken from Calixt who was certainly not orthodox in their opinion. Moreover, during the period of pietism an even more rigid scholasticism reigned in the field of systematic theology; Buddeus and Breithaupt who were opposed to the orthodoxy of the seventeenth century outdid their predecessors in this respect.

The analogy between a monergistic conception of inspir-

ation and their doctrine of conversion leads to the question, what is the relation between anthropology and inspiration in the theology of the Lutheran dogmaticians? Did their anthropology, their profound sense of the spiritual perversity and moral corruption and positive concupiscence of the natural man, their deep-seated belief that man, even in a regenerate state, was unable to accomplish anything <sup>pleasing</sup> to God without the Spirit of God, their persuasion that the Holy Spirit was the cause of every good work performed by the believer,<sup>4</sup> did such an anthropology have any bearing on their doctrine of inspiration? The proximity of these two thoughts, even in respect to the terminology employed by the dogmaticians, is striking, and they unquestionably recognized its existence. But due to their local and analytical method of development it is difficult to determine whether their anthropology effected their idea of inspiration. It strongly appears that it did not. The monergistic doctrine of inspiration was doubtlessly worked out independently of their doctrine of man. Nevertheless, it is undeniably true that with such an anthropology it would have been impossible for them to adopt any other conception of inspiration than the monergistic doctrine which they taught.

It is apropos in this connection to mention a mistaken idea which Dorner and others have circulated about the theology of the dogmaticians. Dorner has represented these theologians as teaching that faith in the truth of Scripture must

---

<sup>4</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., 1702 ed. IV,306: "Causa efficiens bonorum operum est Spiritus S. (unde & fructus Spiritus dicuntur Gal. V,22) & per ejus gratiam, ipsi quoque renati & justificati, qui non ex suis naturalibus viribus, sed per gratiam inhabitantis Spiritus S. sive ex viribus supernaturalibus in regeneratione acceptis, bona opera faciunt. Rom.VII,22 VIII.14 Eph.II,10."

preceed saving faith in Christ.<sup>5</sup> This is untrue. All the dogmaticians and particularly Calov who is Dorner's chief object of reproof teach that before conversion man cannot comprehend the spiritual truths revealed in Scripture, much less accept them. Calov takes special pains to emphasize just this point in opposition to the Socinians who denied that spiritual enlightenment was necessary for a spiritual understanding and saving knowledge of the teachings of Scripture.<sup>6</sup> Calov clearly speaks his opinion in this matter,<sup>7</sup> "The unregenerate man is so destitute of all spiritual light that he cannot understand anything profitably in spiritual matters without the grace of the Holy Spirit, no matter how it is externally revealed and presented, because he has a darkened understanding." It seems needless to repeat that the dogmaticians are unanimously in accord with the teaching of the second article of the Formula of Concord that the unregenerate man not only fails to comprehend the divine mysteries revealed in Scripture, but that he actively contends against this heavenly wisdom and regards it as foolishness and falsehood.<sup>8</sup> Faith in the divinity of the word of God is a fruit of the

---

<sup>5</sup> Geschichte der protestantischen Theologie. p.547. Cf. also p.537.

<sup>6</sup> systema. I,656: "Nos vero distinguendum censemus inter scripturae sensum Grammaticum & externum nec non salvificum & internum: Quanquam enim externus forte scripturae sensus a non renatis habeatur, non tamen absque Spiritus S. illuminatione, salutaris & internus haberi potest cum pleno assensu conjunctus, tantum abest ut sine illa fide salvifica verbum DEI apprehendamus." Cf. also I,658ff.

<sup>7</sup> Socinismus profligatus. p.89. Cf. also Calov, systema. I,658.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. e.g. ibid.

Gospel.<sup>9</sup> Only a believer will receive this apostolic witness.<sup>10</sup> Gospel preaching works faith, but it also brings about an acceptance of the word of the apostles and prophets as the very word of God. This is of great significance. The old Lutheran teachers know of no separation of saving faith in Christ and a belief in the authority and inspiration of the written word of God.<sup>11</sup> Part of Dorner's trouble is that he fails to understand what the dogmatists mean by faith as notitia, assensus and fiducia. He describes their position as if they divide faith into these three elements as a man might cut an apple into three separate pieces, as if according to their notion notitia could be present before true faith, or at least could have being apart from faith. It is true that the dogmatists speak of historical faith as lacking only fiducia,<sup>12</sup> but usually they speak of notitia as an essential element of

---

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Balduin, commentarius in omnes epistolas beati apostoli Pauli. p.1137. Commenting on 1 Thess.2.13 Balduin says, "Fructum sui Evangelii apud Thessalonicenses in hoc versu exprimit triplicem: (1.) quod verbum Apostoli exceperint, ita nimirum, ut examinerint illud, an ἀνάλογον esset scripturis; sicut, Act.17.11. explicatur: quod multae aliae Gentes non fecerint, quae respuerint verbum, & ludibrio habuerunt, quemadmodum Athenis factum est, Act.17.18. (2.) quod exceperint ut verbum Dei, licet ab homine praedicatum, agnoscentes Dei verbum virtutem in ministerio. (3.) quod fidem ex verbo audito acceperint: ait enim, verbum illud operari in ipsis, qui crediderunt. Referendum enim est relativum ὅς non ad Deum, sed sermonem seu λόγον, ut ostendit particula ὅς καὶ ἐνεργεῖσαι, qui et operatur in vobis, q.d. non tantum praedicavi vobis verbum Dei; sed & ita praedicavi, ut illud operatur in vobis fidem."

<sup>10</sup> Gerhard, loci theologici. II,37; VII,107; Hollaz, op. cit., 1750 ed. p.116. Calov, systema. I,460.

<sup>11</sup> Gerhard, loci theologici. VII,75. Calov, systema. I,579.

<sup>12</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., 1702 ed. II,593: "...Fidem historicam, quae in sola notitia & assensu constitit..."

saving faith.<sup>13</sup> It is not a prerequisite of faith, nor is it a notitia historica or implicita. It is supernatural and personal and it is the gift of God in conversion.<sup>14</sup> The dogmaticians do not hesitate to equate it with saving faith.<sup>15</sup> Before conversion there can be no true knowledge of Christian doctrine nor any acceptance of spiritual truth. This is the definite conviction of all the dogmaticians. Brunner<sup>16</sup> has followed the lead of Dorner: he says that the authority of Scripture, according to the orthodox Lutheran theologians, precedes all faith. It is, of course, impossible that they could have taught what Brunner and Dorner say they taught without overthrowing the whole structure of their anthropology. To the old dogmaticians any spiritual action attributed to the natural man, such as accepting the authority of Scripture, was synergism.

<sup>13</sup> Hollaz, op. cit., 1741 ed. p.1171: "Notitiam fidei accensendam esse actibus, partibusque fidei, constat..."

<sup>14</sup> op. cit., p.1170: "Notitia fidei est notitia supernaturalis, euangelica, explicita, a Spiritu S. per gratiam illuminantem accensa de omnibus credendis, in primis de Christo, eiusque merito & gratia Dei, de remissione peccatorum & salute aeterna per mediatorem Christum obtinenda."

<sup>15</sup> Cf. op. cit., p.1171: "Fides est notitia." Dorner says that Chemnitz sowed the seed of this later view that an acceptance of the truth of the Bible must precede faith. But that Chemnitz could not have taught such a doctrine any more than the later dogmaticians is amply shown in his loci theologici, edita nova, Witebergae. 1623. II,260: "Status autem hic est, ut probetur, fidem esse talem notitiam in mente, ad quam, si vera fides est, sequatur assensus in voluntate, & notus cordis, desiderio & fiducia apprehendens & applicans sibi objectum, quod bonum esse monstratum est ita ut in eo acquiescat." Again he says, II,261: "Diende adjicienda sunt exempla ex novo Testamento. Et illa quidem, quod fides significet notitiam..." Had Chemnitz held the view that Dorner imputes to him he would have denied the very heart of what he himself on behalf of the Lutheran church stated so clearly and unequivocally in the second article of the Formula of Concord. Like the other dogmaticians he at times equates notitia with faith.

<sup>16</sup> Revelation and Reason. translated by Olive Wyon. Philadelphia. 1946.

An analogy has been observed between Christology and inspiration as the two teachings are presented by the old Lutheran teachers, an analogy which is the more pronounced because of their fixed Aristotelian terminology.<sup>17</sup> The terminology used in reference to these two teachings is indeed similar. The dogmatists, however, make no mention of such an analogy, and with good reason. To press this analogy would almost certainly do violence to the doctrine of the personal union as it was confessed by Lutheran theology. Although the Lutheran symbols employ the analogy of iron glowing with fire in speaking of the personal union,<sup>18</sup> Lutheran theologians of the sixteenth and seventeenth century recognize the utter inadequacy of analogy in describing the hypostatic union. For it was their firm conviction that this union, properly speaking, was unique and without analogy, inasmuch as it was a union between God and man, a union between disparata which were mutually exclusive.<sup>19</sup> Also their stand regarding the ἀνυποστασία and ἑνυποστασία of the human nature of Christ,

<sup>17</sup> Haagglund, op. cit., p.109. Haagglund appeals to the analogy of Gerhard's doctrine of the forma and the materia of Scripture and the genus maiestaticum of the communicatio idiomatum. Then follows a discussion of Gerhardian Christology and its relation to his doctrine of Scripture.

<sup>18</sup> Formula of Concord. epitome. VIII,9.

<sup>19</sup> Quenstedt, op. cit., 1715 ed. II,132: "Sicut enim ipsa unio personalis...res est singularissima, & cujus nullum aliud exemplum in natura reperitur; Ita etiam praedicationes illae extra sortem caeterarum positae sunt & sine exemplo singulares & inusitatae." II,121: "Forma specifica Unionis plane singularis est, ἑφαίρετος, καὶ μονότροπος, prae caeteris unionum formis eximia, & ab omnibus aliis exempta." Cf. also Cundisius, G. D. Leonharti Hutteri compendium theologicum notis illustratum. Jenae. 1652. p.189: "Est enim unio personalis (quae etiam ab unione Sacramentali numquam quantum distat) plane μονότροπος καὶ ἑφαίρετος, ὑπὲρ φύσιν, ὑπὲρ νοῦν, καὶ ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν κατάληψιν, ut loquitur Iustinus."

namely, that Christ's human nature has no personality of itself but subsists in the personality of the λόγος,<sup>20</sup> would prevent them from using the analogy of the unio personalis with the human and the divine factor in Scripture, since in the case of inspiration the human personality, so to say, the genus loquendi, the words, the personal witness etc., that is, the human element in Scripture, existed before the divine act of inspiration and is always present in the Scriptures.

There is only one statement which I have found in all the dogmaticians to indicate any awareness of such an analogy; the reference is found in Calov's systema where he says that efficacy, or more properly power, has been communicated to Scripture in the same manner as divine attributes were communicated to the human nature of Christ.<sup>21</sup> However, when he speaks here of a communicated virtus, he means that "power" is communicated only to the forma of Scripture which is not human but divine. This is seen clearly from the fact that he previously stated that the divine power and efficacy of Scripture resides not in its materia, the written words and documents, but only in its forma, its divine and inspired

<sup>20</sup> Gerhard, loci theologici. III, 427: "Quia hypostasis λόγου facta est carnis ὑπόστασις, ideo caro Christi est ἐνυπόστατος. Neque enim est αὐθυπόστατος καὶ ἰδιοσύστατος, propriam habens subsistentiam, neque ἀνυπόστατος prorsus nullam habens subsistentiam, utique ergo est ἐνυπόστατος ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ λόγῳ subsistens." ibid. "hypostasis λόγου facta est carnis hypostasis, ideo carni hypostasis λόγου est communicata. Λόγος ὑπόστασιν illam habet in se propriam, caro per unionem ear habet communicatam."

<sup>21</sup> systema. I, 711: "...per κοινωνίαν divina virtus ὑποστατικῶς etiam humanae Christi naturae convenit; est eadem communicative quoque verbo DEI, & sacramentis, secundum dispensationem peculiarem ut eadem agant ὀργανικῶς, vel ita, ut sint ea ὄργανα non ἄεργα, sed ἐνεργητικά, & efficacia."

meaning, which is the mind and the counsel of God,<sup>22</sup> and which is common to the word of God in whatever form it may take. The analogy seems to be this: as divine attributes are communicated to the human nature of Christ, so the divine power is communicated to the divine in Scripture. At this point there seems to be an inconsistency. What need is there for power being communicated to the forma of Scripture which is already divine (since it is the mens Dei and the sapientia Dei) in its very nature? Calov might reply that the analogy ought not be pressed so far. And there might be some justification for such a reply when we note that he previously said that the word of God, viewed formally, in the nature of the case, because it is the word of God, is divine and powerful.<sup>23</sup> This, by the way, was his first argument for the efficacy of the word.

Actually there is no clear-cut distinction by the dogmatists between the divine and the human element in Scripture. And for this reason it is dangerous and almost insuperably difficult to apply any Christological analogy to their doctrine. For want of a better way to give expression to their position in this matter, let us assume that the human side of Scripture is the so-called materia ex qua which they talk about and the divine side is the inner forma of Scripture. According to all the orthodox Lutheran teachers, inspiration and inerrancy (which is really a part of inspira-

<sup>22</sup> systema. I,707. Cf. Baier, op. cit., p.141. Quenstedt, op. cit., 1702 ed. I,169: "Non illis [literae, syllabae], sed huic [forma] vim & efficaciam divinam adscribimus. Neque enim statuimus; ipsis literis, characteribus, syllabis aut vocibus, quae talibus, vim quandam divinam conversivam, regeneratricem, illuminatricem &c. subjective inesse aut inhaerere."

<sup>23</sup> systema. I,711.

tion) are predicated of both the content of Scripture and its materia, the letters, words etc. (human side). The properties of Scripture, however, are predicated only of the forma of Scripture. The authority of Scripture does not reside in the words, but in the content, the doctrines of the word. A translation possesses the same causative authority as the Greek and Hebrew MSS. The same may be said in reference to the sufficiency and clarity of Scripture: not all the words of Scripture are clear, but all doctrines necessary for salvation are clearly revealed in Scripture.<sup>24</sup> That the efficacy of the word inheres only in the divine forma has already been shown. In fact, in his discussion of the efficacy of Scripture Calov goes so far as to state that only the forma of Scripture, properly speaking, can be called the word of God.<sup>25</sup>

Still assuming that the human side of Scripture is the materia and the divine side the forma, we see that it would be wrong to think of the relation between the two in terms of a genus maiestaticum. There is never any vis or efficacia in the materia of Scripture: nothing in this respect has been communicated to the so-called human side of Scripture. And although the materia of Scripture is given by inspiration and

<sup>24</sup> This important point is, in effect, denied by the dogmatists in their argument for the authenticity of the Hebrew vowel points; they deny that the original Hebrew Scriptures could be clear and sufficient if the vowel points had not been present. But vowel points are materia.

<sup>25</sup> systema. I, 707: "observandum: quod sermo sit de verbo DEI προφορικῶ non ratione materialis, quod sunt literae, apices, syllabae; externa scriptio, sinus &c: sed ratione formalis, vel sensus divini, vocibus scriptis, aut prolatis significati. Isto modo saltim σημαντικῶς & improprie dicitur verbum DEI, hoc vero modo κυρίως & proprie est sapientia DEI, mens DEI, consilium DEI &c: quia est sensus ipse DEI de rebus Scripturae S. comprehensis & conceptus divinus, nobis revelatus." Cf. Quenstedt, op. cit., I, 169. Dedekenn, op. cit., appendix nova. p. 168.

divine direction, this is not due to any communication from the forma. Even speaking of a genus apotelesmaticum would be fraught with difficulties. True, Scripture as a whole, according to both its formal and material principle, was inspired, but efficacy and causative authority reside only in its forma.

Another analogy with Christology might easily present itself: the analogy of the word, considered formally, as an instrument (vehiculum, instrumentum) of the Spirit in his soteriological activity and the human nature of Christ as the instrument of the  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  in his mediatorial office. In both cases there is a  $\kappa\omicron\iota\nu\omega\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha \acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\omega\nu$ . I quote a statement of Quenstedt regarding the instrumentality of the human nature of Christ in his work of redemption:<sup>26</sup> "We must distinguish between a separated instrument and a united instrument, between an instrument which is inactive and one which is cooperative. In [carrying out] the works of the mediatorial office the human nature of Christ is, in truth, the organ of the  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ ; however, not a separated organ, but one which is personally united with the  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ . It is not inactive like the rod of Moses, but a cooperative organ, namely, an instrument of such a nature that the subsistence and majesty of the  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ , or primary cause, was imparted to it." This statement could describe in every respect the union of the word and the Spirit in bringing about conversion, except for one very important point, the latter union is not personal. It is interesting how close their terminology is on these two counts. An analogy of the relation of the eye to the mind

---

<sup>26</sup> op. cit., 1702 ed. III, 208.

was used to illustrate their point in both cases. But we must never forget in this connection what the dogmatists never forgot, that the incarnation was a union which was unique and without parallel. We must not forget their reverence toward this event.

Much criticism has been directed against the dogmatists because of their doctrine of the divine efficacy of the word of God. Movius accused them of idolatry because they taught that the word possesses power even apart from its use. And in modern times Dorner has called the doctrine a "deification" of the holy Scriptures.<sup>27</sup> This is strong criticism. Calov and Hollaz answer the objection of Movius by saying that they do not wish to attribute power to the Scriptures originaliter and independententer -- that would be idolatry -- but only by virtue of divine communication and ordination and by virtue of the union of the Holy Spirit with the word.<sup>28</sup> Then they go on to say that the word, viewed formally as the divinely inspired meaning, is not a creature, but is the mens et consilium Dei. Some -- Calov does not say who -- have preferred to call it something of God, 1 Cor.2.11, a sort of divine outflow or emanation (ἀπόρροια quaedam divina). Be that as it may, divine power is not communicated to a creature of God, to a creature. One wishes to ask at this point: if the word

<sup>27</sup> op. cit., 554. This exaggerated judgment is based on his former observation: "Jetzt war die Mittheilung der goettlichen Eigenschaften (communic. idiom.) von der Christologie auch auf die heilige Schrift uebertragen."

<sup>28</sup> Calov, systema. 1,717: "Non alligamus virtutem divinam verbo, sed communicatam ei per mysticam Spiritus cum verbo unionem." Hollaz, op. cit., 1741 ed. p.988: "Quicumque rei creatae attribuunt virtutem diuinam, perinde ac si ei competeret originaliter & independententer, illi sunt idololatrae, concedo. At doctores euangelici statuunt, virtutem illuminandi, regenerandi, renouandi, competere S. scripturae dependententer, communicatiue & ex ordinatione diuina."

(viewed formally) is something of God, how can and why should power be communicated to it? Calov never taught that power was communicated to the materia of the word. And under these same circumstances, if the forma of the word is already divine, what need is there for a union of the Holy Spirit with it? Calov would have answered that the forma of the word is divine, that it is the mens Dei by virtue of communication, by virtue of the union of the Spirit with it; otherwise it is only human. But if this is the case, what need is there for his first point in his reply to Movius? If the word of God is the mens Dei, why should it not possess power independentiter? Calov and Hollez would have done better if they had offered one rather than two replies to Movius. Calov goes on in his reply to Movius to add that if it is idolatry to ascribe power to the divine word, it is equally idolatrous to confess that Christ exerted divine power also according to his human nature. Such reasoning would hardly have silenced Movius who would have had no scruples about rejecting the second genus of the communicatio idiomatum and accusing the Lutherans of deifying the human nature of Christ. At this point the opposing Christology of Movius and Calov would share in determining what side they would take in this controversy over the efficacy of the word.

An additional observation might be made in reference to the efficacy of Scripture: if Scripture according to its forma is the word of God, not metonymically or significatively, but realiter, that is to say, if it is, strictly speaking, not a creature, but rather the mens et sapientia Dei, it cannot be an hypostatization to attribute divine power to it. Those

who would criticize the Lutheran doctrine at this point must attack them further back in their theology of the word of God, they must part ways with the dogmatists when they teach that Scripture is in truth the very word of God. It is apparent that, when Dorner says<sup>29</sup> that in the old Lutheran theology God simply abdicated his saving activity to Scripture, he is making no attempt to understand their position.

A similar but far less justified charge of biblicism and scripturalism has been leveled against the old Lutheran theologians because of their devotion to the Scripture principle. As early as 1525, long before any of the seventeenth century "biblicists" had arrived on the scene, Eck had called the Lutherans "theologi stramentales" because they believed that all Christian doctrine should be derived from Scripture.<sup>30</sup> Henry Lancelotus in his tract Hunnius' Halter (capistrum Hunniarum) calls the Lutherans of his day "deifiers of the word" (verbi deistae).<sup>31</sup> Gabriel Prateolus calls the Lutherans biblicists and scripturalists in his elenchus haereticorum.<sup>32</sup> At the colloquy at Ratisbon the Lutherans were called

<sup>29</sup> op. cit., p.554.

<sup>30</sup> Eck, J. enchiridion locorum communium adversus Lutherum, et alios hostes ecclesiae. Parisiis, 1572. p.32,36: "Lutherani recipiunt scripturas sicut Judaei vetus testamentum, quia insistunt solum sensui literali, et quae sunt eis contraria ipsi torquent, unde sunt theologi stramentales, secundum corticem et superficiem."

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Gerhard, confessio catholica. II,318ff.

<sup>32</sup> elenchus haereticorum omnium. Coloniae. 1605. II,101. The Lutherans in Wittenberg even going back as far as Melancthon were called "Biblistae" because they insisted that "nihil recipiendum, legendumque, aut proponendum populo in ecclesia, vel in scholis inuentum, praeter solum et nudum Bibliorum textum." This was of course an exaggerated description of the Scripture principle. Cf. also loc. cit., XVII,437.

"Wortsknechte" and "scripturarii" for holding to sola scriptura.<sup>33</sup> And these same accusations are brought today against the Lutherans of the seventeenth century and their Scripture principle. They are accusations which are not meant to be complimentary and yet they are not entirely inaccurate. Certainly the Lutherans of the seventeenth century had what some have called a "paper pope". But the dogmaticians do not resent being called such names. To all such charges Gerhard mildly replies,<sup>34</sup> "So long as God allows them [the papists] to be rulers and lords over the word, manhandling it and wresting it according to their own whims, we shall be servants and students of that word. Let them be traditionalists and we shall be biblicists and scripturalists." Today he would not answer differently those who deny the authority and inspiration of Scripture.

Finally, one more point should be re-emphasized in retrospect, even at the risk of becoming repetitious: their main thesis in their doctrine of Scripture is to maintain unadulterated the principle of sola scriptura. This highly important fact bears constant repetition and cannot be overstressed. Their laborious efforts to vindicate the inspiration of Scripture, the necessity, the perfection, the clarity and authority of Scripture, were directed to this one end, that Scripture reign inviolate as the principium unicum cognoscendi, the only norm of Christian doctrine and conduct.<sup>35</sup> To the orthodox Lutheran teachers inspiration was subordinate

---

<sup>33</sup> Cf. anti-Tannerus... in Hunnius, Ac. opera latina. II,369.

<sup>34</sup> confessio catholica. II,320.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. e.g. Calov, systema. I,579.

to the Scripture principle and, if considered alone, apart from sola scriptura and the efficacy and gracious purpose of Scripture, inspiration was simply meaningless. This emphasis which is more than an emphasis sets the old Lutheran teachers apart from much of what goes by the name of fundamentalism today.

Perhaps the most <sup>serious and</sup> surely the most unkind criticism which has been leveled against the old Lutheran doctrine of Scripture is the indictment of Sasse and Dorner and others that these theologians substituted sola scriptura for sola fide. Both Sasse and Dorner charge that the period of orthodoxy manifested a different spirit from the Reformation in that the Lutheran theologians of that day no longer regarded justification by faith as a principle coordinate with the Scripture principle. Sasse compares these theologians of the seventeenth century with Luther. He says that Luther believed in the Bible because he believed in Christ: the later orthodox dogmaticians believed in Christ because they believed in Scripture. With them sola fide was the result of sola scriptura.<sup>36</sup> Dorner<sup>37</sup> goes so far as to assert that the material principle of Christianity was gradually extinguished by the dogmaticians who made it depend entirely on the Scripture principle. These criticisms are so sweeping that one is tempted to brush them aside and discount them entirely. But there is much truth in them. There is a spirit manifesting itself during the period of Lutheran orthodoxy which is quite different from that of Luther. The intensity and beauty of Luther's unbroken, ring-

---

<sup>36</sup> op. cit., p.27.

<sup>37</sup> op. cit., p.541. Cf. also p.554.

ing refrain of justification by faith is missing in much of the theological literature of the following century. Luther's fresh and exciting approach to theology, always in the light of forgiveness for Christ's sake through faith, gives over to a rather dry, matter-of-fact presentation of doctrine (except perhaps in the cases of Gerhard and Dannhauer whose writings become stimulating and truly beautiful at times). One cannot approach the ponderous tomes of the dogmaticians without some apprehension and as one opens them and reads one is often repelled by the scholasticism and impersonal objectivity which he finds therein. Yes, the powerful emphasis of a Luther upon the centrality of justification is wanting in the theology of the seventeenth century teachers. But a lack of emphasis, important and far-reaching as it may be, is not necessarily a deviation in doctrine. What do the dogmaticians teach about faith and its relation to Christ and to Scripture? According to the dogmaticians saving faith is a personal trust in and application of the merits of Christ<sup>38</sup> so that the believer says, I believe that Christ suffered and died for me and offers me salvation.<sup>39</sup> Saving faith is always and only in Christ, in his person and his work.<sup>40</sup> It is true that a

<sup>38</sup> Calov, systema. X,322: "Nam illud EGO CREDO est actus fidei formalis, qui consistit in individuali applicatione meriti Christi." Saving faith is the "fiducialis applicatio gratiae DEI in Christo, vel meriti Christi." Socinismus profligatus. p. 729. Justification is always through faith in the satisfaction wrought by Christ. loc. cit., p.373.

<sup>39</sup> Calov, systema. X,322: "Fundamentum [fidei salvificae] in apprehensione fiduciali meriti Christi consistit, ut quis in individuo dicere possit, ERGO CREDO, Christum PRO ME passum, & mortum, MIHIQUE vitam aeternum promeritum esse."

<sup>40</sup> Calov, Socinismus profligatus. p.725: "...ut quis qui in Christum credit necessario credat Christum pro suis peccatis mortuum esse, quodque fides salvifica in hac cognitione Christi constet." Cf. Calov, systema. X,348. Gerhard, loci theologici. VII,81,84,95.

believer accepts all of Scripture,<sup>41</sup> there are certain art-  
iculi antecedentes et consequentes which the Christian must  
and will believe.<sup>42</sup> But real, justifying faith is always  
and only in the grace of God which is promised in Christ.<sup>43</sup>

In view of these observations it is nonsense to submit that  
the material principle of Christianity was extinguished by  
the Lutherans of the seventeenth century.<sup>44</sup> It is true, their  
treatment of the sola scriptura principle is more detached  
from the article of justification by faith than it might have  
been -- such a fault is inherent in their systematic method --  
but they did not do away with the article of justification  
as the foundation of living and personal Christianity, as  
the above observations show.<sup>45</sup> They will not even speak of  
inspiration or the authority of Scripture as a fundamental

---

41 Cf. again Gerhard, loci theologici. VII, 81, 84, 95.

42 Calov, systema. X, 337.

43 Calov, systema. X, 348: "Quamquam vero fidem ratione assen-  
sus omne & solum verbum DEI respicere fateamur, attamen qua  
fiducia est, respicere eam dicimus specialiter promissiones  
gratiae DEI, qua omnes credentes propter Christum se in gratiam  
recepturam promisit, vel meritum Christi, qua salutem acqui-  
sivit omnibus." Cf. also pp. 350-351.

44 It is interesting that Hoenecke, op. cit., I, 269, praises  
the dogmatists for the very reason that Dorner censures  
them, namely, that they so admirably uphold this so-called  
material principle of theology.

45 Cf. Hollaz, op. cit., 1741 ed. p. 48: "Fundamentum fidei  
est vel reale, sive substantiale: vel dogmaticum, sive doc-  
trinale. Fundamentum fidei & salutis substantiale est Christus,  
quatenus est causa meritoria consequendae a Deo remissionis  
peccatorum & vitae aeternae, promissae in euangelio omnibus  
per efficacem spiritus sancti influxum in ipsum credentibus.  
Fundamentum fidei & salutis dogmaticum est complexus dogmatum  
diuinitus reuelatorum, quibus Christus fundamentum fidei sub-  
stantiale, & cum eo necessario connexa principia mediaque  
salutis explicantur."

article of faith. People have been saved who have never heard that there is such a thing as a Bible. The dogmaticians regard Scripture as the source of Christian theology, as the infallible norm of faith and life, but never as the source of Christianity itself. Like Luther they believed that justification was the articulum stantis et cadentis ecclesiae.<sup>46</sup>

One can only presume that Sasse is indulging in satire when he says that the old Lutheran teachers made the inspiration of Scripture the fundamental article of the Christian faith upon which all other doctrines must follow.

Again we must ask, was it, at least partially, their theological method which prevented the dogmaticians from bringing out Luther's important emphasis upon the centrality of justification in all theological thought? And again the answer will be yes. Lutheran theology in the seventeenth century was searching for an adequate means of expressing itself in terms of both proclamation and apologetics. Unfortunately they embraced an Aristotelian-scholastic mode of presentation which, although exact and clear, was definitely limited. Set in the framework of a causal methodology their theological position often gives the appearance of being logical and impressive and was articulated in a manner which was clear and understandable. One will not often have to fault the dogmaticians for inconsistency in this respect. But this strength of their theological method was also its weakness. Lutheran theology could not always be expressed in the fixed categories of such a method, and in many cases its exponents either had to refrain from applying their method or were compelled to

---

<sup>46</sup> Brochmand, universae theologiae systema. I, 27.

augment it somehow. When they failed in this, they failed to present true Lutheran theology as we have seen in their treatment of the criteria of Scripture as over against the witness of the Spirit and sola scriptura. When Gerhard, followed by Hollaz, Baier and others, partly in conformity with the dictates of this causal methodology and partly to defend the Lutheran doctrine from the charge of Calvinism, taught a predestination intuitu fidei praevisae, he departed from the teaching of Luther and the Formula of Concord and set in motion a controversy which even to this day has not been settled in Lutheran circles, -- a good example of the influence apologetics and theological method could exert on their theology. The aim of all the orthodox dogmaticians was to be faithful to the principles and the theology of the Reformation. I believe that, in the main, they succeeded in this aim, even though their treatment of justification by faith alone lacks some of Luther's urgency and warmth and even though they by no means avoided all the pitfalls of their Aristotelian methodology.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Primary Sources

- Baier, J. G. compendium theologiae positivae. II ed. Jenae. 1704.
- Baier, J. G. compendium theologiae positivae. denuo edendum curavit C.F.G. Walther. In urbe Sancti Ludovici. 1879.
- Balduin, F. commentarius in omnes epistolas beati apostoli Pauli. editio altera priore longe emaculatio. Francofurti ad Moenum. 1710.
- Bechmann, F. annotationes uberiores in compendium theologicum Leonhardi Hutteri. Francofurti et Lipsiae. 1703.
- Bechmann, F. theologia polemica. Jenae. 1719.
- Brochmand, C. E. universae theologiae systema. editio V. Ulmae. 1658.
- Calov, A. apodixis articulorum fidei. Lunebergi. 1684.
- Calov, A. biblia novi testamenti illustrata. Dresdae et Lipsiae. 1729.
- Calov, A. commentarius in Genesisin. Wittebergae. 1671.
- Calov, A. consensus repetitus fidei vere Lutheranae. Wittebergae. 1666.
- Calov, A. criticus sacer vel commentarii apodictico-elenchtici super Augustanam Confessionem. Lipsiae. 1646.
- Calov, A. dissertationes theologicae Rostochienses. Rostochii.
- Calov, A. exegema Augustanae Confessionis. editio altera. Wittebergae. 1665.
- Calov, A. isozoges ad SS. theologiam. editio secunda. Wittebergae. 1656.
- Calov, A. scripta anti-Sociniana. Ulmae. 1684.
- Calov, A. scripta philosophica. Lubecae. 1651.
- Calov, A. socinismus profligatus, hoc est, errorum socinianorum luculenta confutatio. editio secunda locupletior, et emendatior. Wittebergae. 1668.
- Calov, A. syncretismus Calixtinus. Wittebergae. 1653.
- Calov, A. systema locorum theologicorum. Wittebergae. 1655/77.
- Calov, A. theologia positiva. Wittebergae. 1682.

Dannhauer, J. C. hermeneutica sacra. Argentorati. 1654.

Dannhauer, J. C. ΘΑΘΟΘΦΙΑ christiana, seu theologia positiva. Argentorati et Lipsiae. 1713.

Dannhauer, J. C. mysterium syncretismi detecti, proscripti, et symphonismo compensati. Argentorati. 1648.

Dannhauer, J. C. Χριστοσοφία seu sapientiarum sapientia, de salvatore Christo, ejus persona, officio, beneficiis, explicita atque variis corruptelis purgata. Argentorati.

Dedekenn, G. thesauri consiliorum et decisionum. Jena. 1671.

Dorsch, J. G. aphorismi theologici. Gryphiswaldiae. no date.

Dorsch, J. G. dissertatio de autoritate ecclesiae sive explicatio verborum b. Augustini contra ep. Fundamenti, evangelio non crederem, nisi me autoritas ecclesiae moveret. Argentorati. 1653.

Dorsch, J. G. dissertationum theologicarum....Argentorati. 1638.

Dorsch, J. G. synopsis theologiae Zacharianae. editio II auctorior & emendatior. Francofurti. 1683.

Gerhard, J. adnotationes ad posteriorum D. Pauli ad Timotheum epistolam. Jenae. 1643.

Gerhard, J. aphorismi succincti et selecti, in viginti tribus, totius theologiae nucleum continentes. Jenae. 1611.

Gerhard, J. commentarius super Genesin in quo textus declaratur, questiones dubiae salvuntur, observationes eruuntur, & loca in speciem pugnantis conciliantur. editio novissima & emendatior. Jenae. 1653.

Gerhard, J. commentarius super posteriorem D. Petri epistolam, editio altera, priori correctior. Jenae. 1660.

Gerhard, J. commentarius super priorem D. Petri epistolam, editio altera, priori correctior. Jenae. 1660.

Gerhard, J. confessio catholica. Erfordiae. 1679.

Gerhard, J. confessionis catholicae in qua doctrina catholica et evangelica, quem ecclesia augustanae confessioni addictae profitentur, ex Romano-catholicorum scriptorum suffragiis confirmatur. Jenae. 1634.

Gerhard, J. disputationum theologicarum....pars secunda. Jenae. 1625.

Gerhard, J. loci theologici. denuo ed.....J.F. Cotta. Tubingae. 1762.

- Gerhard, J. methodus studii theologici. Jenae. 1622.
- Gerhard, J. tractatus de legitima scripturae sacrae interpretatione. Jenae. 1663.
- Gerhard, J. E. Bellarminus ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΙΑΣ testis. Jenae. 1658.
- Haffenreffer, M. loci theologici. Wittebergae. 1622.
- Hoepfner, H. loci theologici. Francofurti et Lipsiae. 1673.
- Hollaz, D. examen theologicum acroamaticum. Holmiae et Lipsiae. 1741.
- Huelsemann, J. breviarium theologicum, exhibens praecipuas et novissimas fidei controversias quae hodie inter christianos agitantur. Wittebergae. 1640.
- Huelsemann, J. Calvinismus irreconciliabilis. Wittebergae. 1667.
- Huelsemann, J. extensio brevarii theologici. Heilbronnae. 1667.
- Huelsemann, J. vindiciae s. scripturae per loca classica systematis theologici: praelectiones academicae in librum concordiae: patrologia succincta, vice appendicis loci de ecclesia representativa: annotationes ad breviarium theologicum, accessere denue animadversiones in Bellarminum de verbo Dei. Lipsiae. 1679.
- Hunnius, Ae. opera latina. Francofurti ad Moenum. 1608.
- Hunnius, Ae. relatio historica de habito nuper Ratisbonae colloquio inter Augustanae Confessionis theologos et pontificos. Jenae. 1602.
- Hunnius, Ae. thesaurus apostolicus complectens commentarios in omnes novi testamenti epistolas et apocalypsin Iohannis. Wittebergae. 1705.
- Hunnius, N. διάσκεψις theologica de fundamentali dissensu doctrinae evangelicae Lutheranae, & Calvinianae, seu Reformatae. Wittebergae. 1628.
- Hunnius, N. epitome credendorum, oder inhalt der ganzen christlichen lehr so viel einer davon in seinem christenthum zu seiner seelen seeligkeit zu wissen und zu glauben beduerfftig. Franckfurt und Leipzig. 1702.
- Hutter, L. controversiae duae theologicae: 1. de verbo Dei scripto & non scripto. 2. de persona Christi Jesu servatoris nostri unici...praeside Leonharto Huttero. Wittebergae. 1610.
- Hutter, L. compendium theologicum. Jenae. 1648.

Hutter, L. examen oder gruendtlicher bescheidenlicher bericht, von der zu Franckfurt an der Oder, ohnlangst anderweit gedruckten glaubens bekentniss, der reformirten evangelischen kirchen in Deutschland, auff rath und approbation der theologischen facultet zu Wittenberg. Wittenberg. 1614.

Hutter, L. libri christianae concordiae: symboli ecclesiarum, novissimo hoc tempore, longe augustissimi: explicatio plana & perspicua. Wittebergae. 1609.

Hutter, L. loci communes theologici. Wittebergae. 1619.

Koenig, J. F. theologia positiva sacramentica. Gryphiswaldiae. 1668.

Kromayer, H. theologia positivo-polemica. Francofurti & Lipsiae. 1687.

Meisner, B. disputatio theologica IIII de perfectione scripturae...sub praesidio reverendi, & clarissimi viri Dr. Leonharti Hutter. Wittebergae. 1606.

Meisner, B. philosophia sobria. Rintelii ad Visurgim. 1626.

Olearius, J. de stylo novi testamenti. Suobaci. 1690.

Olearius, J. summa universae theologiae. Francofurti ad Moenum. 1664.

Pfeiffer, A. critica sacra de sacri codicis partitione, editionibus variis, linguis originalibus et illibata puritate fontium, interpretatione scripturae legitima. Dresdae et Lipsiae. 1721.

Pfeiffer, A. opera omnia. Ultrajectae. 1704.

Quenstedt, J. A. theologia didactico-polemica sive systema theologicum. Lipsiae. 1715.

Scherzer, J. A. anti-Bellarminus, sive, in IV tomos controversiarum Rob. Franc. Bellarmini, politiani, jesuitae, E. R. quondam cardinalis presbyteri, et archiepiscopi Capuani, disputationes academicae. Lipsiae. 1703.

Scherzer, J. A. collegii anti-Sociniani. editio tertia. Lipsiae et Francofurti. 1702.

Scherzer, J. A. systema theologiae. Lipsiae et Francofurti. 1698.

Schmidt, S. compendium theologiae. Argentorati. 1697.

Schroeder, J. opusculum theologicum de principio theologiae, et naturali notitia Dei. Swinfurti. 1605.

thesaurus theologico-philologicus, sive sylloge dissertationum elegantiorum et illustriorum veteris et novi testamenti loca a theologis protestantibus. Ametelaedami. 1701.

## Secondary Sources

Buddeus, J. F. isogoge historico-theologica ad theologiam universam singulasque eius partes. Lipsiae. 1727.

Dorner, J. A. Geschichte der protestantischen Theologie. Muenchen. 1867.

Ebrard, J. H. A. Handbuch der christlichen Kirchen-und Dogmen-Geschichte fuer Prediger und Studirende. Erlangen. 1866.

Fischer, E. R. vita Ioannis Gerhardi. Lipsiae. 1727.

Gass, W. Geschichte der protestantischen Dogmatik. Berlin. 1854.

Gruetzmacher, R. H. Wort und Geist. Leipzig. 1902.

Haegglund, B. Die heilige Schrift und ihre Deutung in der Theologie Johann Gerhards. Lund. 1951.

Hartknoch, C. Preussische Kirchen-Historia. Franckfurt am Mayn und Leipzig. 1684.

Hase, K. Hutterus redivivus. Leipzig. 1885.

Heim, K. Das Gewissheitsproblem in der systematischen Theologie bis zu Schleiermacher. Leipzig. 1911.

Henke, E. L. T. Georg Calixtus und seine Zeit. Halle. 1853.

Hoenecke, A. Evangelische lutherische Dogmatik. Milwaukee. 1909.

Kahnis, C. F. A. Die lutherische Dogmatik. Leipzig. 1874.

Koelling, W. Die Lehre von der Theopneustie. Breslau. 1891

Luthardt, C. E. Compendium der Dogmatik. Leipzig. 1865.

Philippi, F. A. Kirchliche Glaubenslehre. Stuttgart. 1854.

Pieper, F. Christliche Dogmatik. St. Louis. 1924.

Planck, G. J. Geschichte der protestantischen Theologie von der Konkordienformel an bis in die Mitte des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts. Goetingen. 1831.

Ritschl, O. Dogmengeschichte des Protestantismus. Leipzig. 1908.

Rohmert, W. Die Inspiration der heiligen Schrift und ihre Bestreiter. Leipzig. 1889.

Sasse, H. Zur Lehre von der heiligen Schrift (Briefe an lutherische Pastoren • Nr.14). North Adelaide. 1950.

Schmid, H. Die Dogmatik der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche.  
6. Aufl. Frankfurt a/M. 1867.

Tholuck, A. Der Geist der lutherischen Theologen Wittenbergs  
im Verlaufe des 17. Jahrhunderts. Hamburg und Gotha. 1852.

Tholuck, A. Lebenzeugen der lutherischen Kirche aus allen  
Staenden vor und waehrend der Zeit des dreissigjaehrigen  
Krieges. Berlin. 1859.

Walch, G. bibliotheca theologica selecta. Jenae. 1757.

Walch, G. Historische und theologische Einleitung in die  
Religionsstreitigkeiten der Evangelisch-lutherischen Kirchen  
von der Reformation an bis auf jetzig Zeiten. Jena. 1730/39.

Wundt, M. Die deutsche Schulmetaphysik des 17. Jahrhunderts.  
Tuebingen. 1939.