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The Teaching of Martin Luther

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THE TEACHING OF MARTIN LUTHER

This year we commemorate the fifth centenary of Martin Luther's birth, but let us agree among ourselves that the epoch-making episodes in his career, the years when he altered the course of western history, came between 1518 and about 1530. Then it was that, protected by powerful German princes and cities, he defied the papal and hierarchical structure of the Church and set up Evangelical churches throughout Germany and Scandinavia. The missionary success of the Lutherans was phenomenal in and far beyond his lifetime. I have visited Lutheran congregations as far apart as Braşov in southern Rumania and in the forests of Finland, all founded before Luther died. And though the great transatlantic development occurred in the 18th and 19th centuries, one might well regard the Missouri Synod and the mid-west of the United States as containing the most lively areas of the Lutheran Church during most of the present century. One of my own abiding memories comes from a visit to Dubuque, Iowa, on the upper Mississippi, where I visited the Lutheran seminary to inspect a remarkable library of sixteenth-century religious works. Outside, a gigantic statue of Luther faced westward into the setting sun across the other half of the vast continent, wherein, at the time of its erection, his mission to the New World was already under way.

We need large-scale thinking on this theme, and in regard to so vast an episode as the Reformation, we should beware of reducing it to a "one-man-band". Luther was indeed a great man of religion, yet he commanded a group of outstandingly able assistants and, still more important, took advantage of an amazing conjuncture of social and political forces, without which even he could not have got his movement off the ground.¹ Large-scale history is more important, and harder to write, than mere biography! Today I cannot seriously attempt either. Rather shall I try to summarize what Luther taught. His religious convictions I shall consider under two heads: Justification by Faith and the Authority of the Bible. Subsequently I shall notice some characteristic features of his social teaching and human contacts in general.

The essence and the originality of his doctrine lies in his re-presentation of Pauline Christianity centred upon Justification by Faith.² The antithesis between God and man presented by the Apostle and further interpreted by Luther is stark in the extreme. On the one side stands the Deity in his terrible majesty and justice; on the other side languishes man in his corruption and selfishness. In Luther's phrase *curvatus in se*, man cannot approach God or merit salvation through his own trivial observance and "good works". Yet there remains one channel of approach. God's righteousness terrified Luther until, in studying the words of St Paul, he realised that God's loving purpose toward man was also boundless, and that in his Son he gave man the sole means of transcending that awful inadequacy. God will place men in a saving relationship with himself - this is the meaning of justification - provided they abandon all reliance upon their personal merits and trust solely in the merits of Christ. Good works spring from faith like fruits from

a healthy tree, yet in themselves they contribute nothing to the justification and salvation of man. Luther took this doctrine as the core of the original Christian message, and no wonder, since St Paul reverts to it again and again.

The classic passages occur mainly in Romans (3.20; 5.1-2; 9.31-2; 10. 2-4) and in Galatians (2.16; 3. 11-12). Nowhere does Paul, or perhaps his follower, make the point more concisely than in Ephesians, chapter 2, where he dwells upon the redemption of the flock from the death of sin by the quickening power of Christ, and then concludes: "For it is by his grace that you are saved, through trusting him; it is not your own doing. It is God's gift, not a reward for work done. There is nothing for anyone to boast of. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to devote ourselves to the good deeds for which God has designed us" (NEB).

The doctrine of Justification by Faith had not been forgotten during the Middle Ages: it survived all the more surely since it had been reinforced by the most revered of the Fathers, St Augustine. Nevertheless mediæval theologians had shown a marked indisposition to accept it without reserves. Elements of human merit tended to creep back, while grace did not match up to Paul's definition when it became regarded as a quality conveyed by the sacraments. Faith itself was too easily associated with assent to credal propositions, whereas when Luther came to interpret St Paul, he became insistent upon the distinction between *assensus* and *fiducia*. It was the latter mankind needed, that humble yet confident trust in God's redeeming mercy.

The qualifications made by Luther's opponents seem entirely intelligible. They could point to some scriptural passages, especially the Epistle of James, which laid stress upon good works, as opposed to the Pauline emphasis upon faith, and which Luther wanted to remove from the canonical Scriptures as a sub-Christian document. More important, the unqualified Paulinism demanded by Luther ran contrary to men's "natural" definition of justice. Their reaction was that of good Brother in the parable of the Prodigal Son. This notion of fairness, this moral accountancy, is thrust aside by Luther as a faded relic of the Old Law. And like St Paul before him, he perceived that the unaided rôle of this mysterious God in justifying and saving some undeserving men - but not others - entailed a doctrine of predestination equally opposed to our human sense of fairness. This doctrine he found clearly expressed in Romans (8,9) together with an attempt to reconcile it with human free will. Once again, this element had received the rigorous backing of St Augustine. Since that day many good Christians have found themselves unable to accept the full implications of such a solifidian system. It is not the business of a historian to take sides; yet I feel bound to suggest that amid the Pharisaic religion of good works and observances, which dominated the period around 1500, a return to the Pauline-Augustinian tradition was salutary. It was nevertheless bound to prove disturbing. Inevitably it struck hard at the habits of the popular religion: saint-worship, pilgrimages, penances, pardons, indulgences, chantries and the attempts of rich people to save their souls by endowing vast numbers of intercessory masses.³ This

system sounded to Luther a futile attempt to apotheosize human merit and to prevent the achievement of a genuinely spiritual relationship between God and man.

At the time (1518) when Luther arrived at a fresh definition of the doctrine of St Paul, it came to him as a wonderful relief from his extreme fear of God's justice. He had hammered upon the heavy door of the Scriptures and suddenly found it had been open all the time. In his *Autobiographical Fragment* written in 1545,⁴ he records this harrowing experience of inadequacy and unworthiness of salvation. The Last Judgment reminded him of a wall-painting seen in his childhood. It represented Christ sitting upon a rainbow and judging all men. But in place of this oppressive image he had found in the Pauline texts Christ the Redeemer, whose love for mankind was even greater than his awful purity and justice. At this moment, he says in effect, "I broke through". But was this interpretation an original discovery? Did it say any more than Augustine had said? The answer must surely be in the affirmative. At the time he made his discovery, Luther was not only a professor at a redbrick university, but still a monk, a member of a religious order dedicated to the tradition of St Augustine. That being so, he is unlikely to have regarded as a break-through what was merely a repetition of Augustine. Without question he did say something extra, something more original, more dramatic and moving.

For Augustine, a human being is indeed justified, and eventually saved, by divine grace alone and through his faith, yet the process is a gradual sequence of renewal, of cleansing and healing,⁵ which makes the person actually more righteous and acceptable. Once God has chosen him and has started the process, his refurbished will can at least co-operate, however wanly and wistfully, with divine grace. Luther doubtless began with this concept of Augustine, but from the autumn of 1518 his writings start displaying a somewhat different interpretation of the Pauline texts. He now sees the chosen person wholly and instantly justified, in his own expressive phrase, "not by pieces but in a heap". That person is at once justified by the imputation - the reckoning to his credit - of the righteousness, the pardon, earned solely by Christ. He is not merely given a gradual infusion of grace to help him work his passage, but has Christ's cloak of righteousness thrown around him to hide his sin. This is an imputed "extrinsic" righteousness, leaving him at once justified and yet still capable of sin: *simul iustus et peccator*. So this primary element of Luther's entire theology involves a wholesale remission of sin made solely by the merits of Christ's sacrifice and accounted to the credit of the trusting sinner. The message seems even more theocentric and christocentric than that of St Augustine.

So much for Justification by Faith alone. However, if we seek the essence of Luther's teaching, we must surely detect a principle even more basic than this. It is the principle of Biblical Authority.⁶ When Luther replaced the seven sacraments by two, when he demanded the abolition of indulgences, purgatory, canon law, saint-worship, transubstantiation, people soon asked: "By what authority does this one German monk seek to dismantle these ancient traditions of the Faith?" Luther was quick to

answer that the authentic evidence for real Christianity, that taught by Christ and the Apostles, was to be found only in the Bible. This evidence must not be set aside, countermanded, or even have its emphases reversed, by mere church traditions, not even by the authority of Popes or Councils.

To a historian like myself, this idea seems highly appealing, since we are trained above all to seek for evidence; and I cannot understand how the much later "evidence" can be for a moment compared with that of these near-contemporary (if imperfect and problematic) documents of the New Testament. Though the western scholars of the sixteenth century were beginning to develop a historical sense, few fully appreciated the utter uniqueness of these early Fathers, whose writings have so little *independent* authority.⁷ Luther became one of those who developed this situation and he stands among the founders of modern biblical criticism. Yet here he did not start from scratch, because the need for a plain, literal and historical approach to the Scriptures, together with the necessity of a Bible-Christianity, had been admirably outlined by Erasmus in his *Enchiridion militis christiani*, published in 1504, fourteen years before Luther's revolt.⁸ Again in 1516, still before the world had heard of Luther, Erasmus demanded not only that the Scriptures be translated into the vernacular languages, but also that they should be distributed for private reading by ordinary people. These new demands appear in the *Paraclesis*, an introduction to his Latin translation of the Greek New Testament:

Indeed I disagree very much with those who are unwilling that Holy Scripture, translated into the vulgar tongue, be read by the uneducated, as if Christ taught such intricate doctrines that they could scarcely be understood by very few theologians, or as if the strength of the Christian religion consisted in men's ignorance of it. The mysteries of kings, perhaps, are better concealed, but Christ wishes his mysteries published as openly as possible. I would that even the lowliest women read the Gospels and the Pauline Epistles. And I would that they were translated into all languages so that they could be read and understood not only by Scots and Irish but also by Turks and Saracens. Surely the first step is to understand in one way or another. It may be that many will ridicule, but some may be taken captive. Would that, as a result, the farmer sing some portion of them at the plough, the weaver hum some parts of them to the movement of his shuttle, the traveller lighten the weariness of the journey with stories of this kind! Let all the conversations of every Christian be drawn from this source.⁹

So these "advanced" ideas did not come originally from Luther, but from what we call Christian Humanism, that aspect of the Renaissance which also links with the Reformation. The classical Renaissance had begun in the fourteenth century with the close philological and historical study of Greek and Latin pagan texts, but then in the fifteenth a growing number of scholars realised that, of all the texts coming down to modern

times from the Ancient World, none could claim a significance remotely rivalling that of the New Testament.¹⁰ By this time a good many were so proficient in Greek as to explore those Christian documents by the modern methods. Erasmus, who was publishing by 1500 and who died in 1536, formed the climax of this Christian humanist study, though it also attracted other distinguished scholars of his day, such as John Colet in England and Jacques Lefèvre of Étapes in France. The young Luther took care to obtain the works of Erasmus, and even though in 1524-5 they quarrelled seriously over the abstruse issue of Free Will,¹¹ and though they differed so clearly by temperament, they had almost everything in common when it came to this basic need: to teach a Christianity based upon the close textual study of the Bible - and the Bible understood literally, not allegorically.¹²

Of course Martin Luther was not a humanist in the sense that people apply that word to a pagan-minded scholar at the courts of the nasty Borgias and the nice Dukes of Urbino. Indeed in more recent times the word humanist has been applied to reformist agnostics and atheists, an unnecessary extension of a term hitherto applied to a classical scholar. At the other extreme, Luther was not a mere Bible-thumping German evangelist. Neither, for that matter was he a "case" of religious hypertension or psychological maladjustment. Unlike some world-famous evangelists of our own day, he was a thinking Bible-man, not a simplifier. Highly educated in several exacting disciplines, a devout yet incisive preacher, writer and exegete, he was capable of expressing new and complex ideas in concise and arresting terms. Unlike the psychotic and neurotic devotees, he turned spiritual suffering into creative scholarship and constructive theology.

Before becoming a biblical scholar, Luther had enjoyed a good training in the pagan classics, which in later life he constantly recalled, quoting a wide range of Latin works from memory. From the early years of the century he worked hard at both Greek and Hebrew. He was using Reuchlin's *Rudiments of Hebrew* soon after its publication in 1506, and he then hastened to obtain the most up-to-date Greek and Hebrew texts by Erasmus, Lefèvre and Reuchlin.¹³ As a professor of theology at Wittenberg he specialised primarily in the Old Testament, of which he became a bold and original expositor. He had a strong, intuitive feeling for style, which in many cases guided him toward conclusions eventually endorsed by modern scholarship, especially in regard to the complex authorship of several Old Testament books, such as Isaiah. In regard to some books of the New Testament he made even more daring speculations, especially in regard to St James, whom he supposed to have been a Jew who had heard of the Christians but had not joined them. Following Erasmus, he did not hesitate to correct inaccurate translations in the Vulgate, including the notorious "do penance" (*agite penitentiam*) in place of "repent". More debateably, in his German version he translated *ecclesia* not by *Kirche* (church) but by *Gemeinde* (congregation). All the same, this translation forms by far his greatest literary achievement, and a monument in the history of literary German,

which at that time was afflicted by a host of dialects and experimental usages. While he claimed to base his language on that of the Saxon chancery, he also listened carefully to the idiom of the streets and market places, since he planned his work for the people. In all such matters he exercised a considerable degree of personal freedom, which in later life he proved reluctant to extend to others.

Also among the controversial aspects of his biblical studies was his selection of a "core" of the New Testament, which appeared to him more authentically Christian than the remainder. He selected as this "core" St John's Gospel and his first Epistle, St Paul's Epistles, especially Romans, Galatians and Ephesians, and St Peter's First Epistle. In view of his emphases in doctrine, I can see his point here, yet I cannot accept his implication that the Synoptic Gospels are primarily a historical record, lacking in the deepest spiritual insights of his favourite books.¹⁴ As a translator of the Bible Luther constantly stresses the need for hard work on the linguistic disciplines:

Translating is not an art that everyone can practise, as the mad saints [radical sectarians] think; it requires a right pious, faithful, diligent, God-fearing, experienced and practical spirit.¹⁵

Fascinated by language, he thought of humanist studies not only as indispensable tools for the reform of religion, but also as a sacred cult, providentially brought forth by God and pre-figuring the attainment of a restored Christianity. Incidentally, he also wrote to similar effect concerning that other "providential" discovery: the craft of printing, which had indeed so greatly magnified the impact of his own propaganda. Yet his prime concern was to stress the constant need for linguistic humanism. In a tract directed at the city councils of Germany (1524) he writes:

No one knew why God allowed the study of the languages to come forth, until it was finally realised that it had happened for the sake of the Gospels, which he wished to reveal thereafter.¹⁶

In a letter he broadens and clarifies this statement:

I am persuaded that without a skilled training in literary studies, no true theology can establish and maintain itself, seeing that in times past it has invariably fallen miserably and lain prostrate with the decline and fall of learning. On the other hand, it is indubitable that there has never been a signal revelation of divine truth unless first the way has been prepared for it, as by a John the Baptist, by the revival and pursuit of the study of languages and literature... My ardent desire is that there should be as many poets and rhetoricians [i.e. humanists] as possible, because I see clearly that by no other methods is it possible to train men for the apt understanding, the right and felicitous treatment of sacred things.¹⁷

If such views - together with his own achievement as a translator - do not make Luther a Christian humanist, I do not understand what the term can mean. So far from rejecting humanism, the Pauline version of Christianity demanded the humanist critiques in order to define and establish the authority of the Scriptures. Part of the confusion about Luther's humanism no doubt arises from his pessimistic view of perverse man, and from his Nominalist concept of an inscrutable God, always balanced against the boundless mercy declared in the redeeming Christ. It is of course true that this mainstream of Luther's teaching runs far distant from the glorification of man which characterised some (but not all) Italian humanists: indeed, it does not wholly square with the somewhat more optimistic thinking of Erasmus. Nevertheless, seen in full context, Luther's pessimism concerning human nature should not for a moment indicate any remoteness from the struggles of men and women in their everyday lives. Whatever certain writers may suggest, he did not disbelieve in human free will. Man's powerlessness only applies upon the high plane of salvation, where man's feeble "good works" avail not a jot to save him. Nevertheless on the plane of earthly affairs man does enjoy free will, and here, says Luther, the genuine man of faith will make every effort to serve his fellows "like a little Christ". Luther did not merely write such genial passages: he also lived them, setting an admirable example by his tireless interest in human beings, seen not as statistics or "cases" but as living creatures with problems. No religious leader has manifested a greater regard for people: as a correspondent and a personal counsellor of troubled souls, as an enthusiast for popular education, as a commonsense propounder of practical reforms in German society and government. And contrary to popular impressions, he did not want to educate people simply that they might read the Bible, together with his own propaganda. In his clear statement, people should also receive education in order to serve the commonwealth.

It would be a mistake to end my lecture without spending a few more minutes on this human and practical Luther. Like most great men and great writers, Luther was multilateral, not a man to be type-cast or labelled by some easy slogan. On the one hand he shows a deep, ever-present sense of God, "the holiest in the height"; on the other hand a playful sense of humour, seen to best advantage in his "modern" and comradely letters to his wife. While in hiding on the Wartburg after his ordeal at the Diet of Worms, he wrote a coarse tract abusing the Pope, yet he also wrote there a devoted treatise on the Virgin Mary, whose prayers he beseeches, while refusing to put her (as many did in that day) in the place of God.¹⁸

Though a prophet of sorts, a scholar and a voluminous writer, he was as far as possible from being either Moses on a mountain or a remote academic on a cloud. He retained a lively and informed interest in both the large-scale issues and the personal problems of his time. He had no alternative to accepting the protection of the Electors of Saxony; otherwise he would have been arrested and burned with great expedition. It so happened that the three successive Electors of his day were all pious men and conscientious rulers. In accordance

with Romans 13.1, he believed that "the powers that be are ordained of God". Politics as such did not attain that higher plane of salvation, and provided rulers¹⁹ did not manifestly command subjects to sin against the law of God, he firmly insisted upon obedience to their commands.²⁰ In regard to the huge peasant revolts of 1524-5 the practical considerations harmonised with the Scriptural command. The peasants were following a sure route toward anarchy and disaster, since they could not by any extremity of imagination be thought capable of erecting a new structure of government in central Europe. In that age, responsible people feared social chaos much as we fear the nuclear holocaust. When the trouble started, he went on a preaching-tour to dissuade the peasants, and when this attempt failed, he made his unchristian declaration to the effect that the princes could now lawfully suppress and kill the rebels.²¹ It seemingly did not occur to him that this tragedy was going to happen in any event, and that his credibility as a Christian leader would be far better preserved by simply keeping his mouth shut - for once! In this art, however, he cannot be said to have excelled.

Again, having at first preached Christian liberty, in due course he denounced the radical sectarians as "mad saints". Today this also seems unchristian, yet one must constantly recall that Luther did not live today. The sectarians differed from one another to an almost infinite extent and their extremists were wild revolutionaries in both religion and society. They imperilled all reform and played into the hands of religious reaction. The sixteenth century was an appalling age for anyone who, by some controlled process, wanted to reform the Church and bring it nearer the Gospel. Certainly Luther did not shrink from involvement in the worldly affairs of the human race. He was anything but a spiritualizer of religion, or one who trusted to some "Inner Light" of his own, as opposed to the objective manifestation of God in Christ: "the Word".

Though Luther feared and detested rebellion and extremism, his social outlook was also creative and reformative. If you want to see him exercising commonsense in both ecclesiastical and secular matters, read for example his tract *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation* (1520),²² which concentrates into a few pages one of the great reform-programmes of European history. Both here and in his almost equally famous pamphlet urging all town-councils to found Christian schools (1524)²³ he stands among those great figures of his period who were the fathers of all that is best in western Christian education. What is more, he believes that these schools should instruct girls as well as boys, a distinctly enlightened notion at that time and as yet accepted only by a small minority of intellectuals. By marrying an admirable ex-nun and establishing a model Christian home and family, he set at defiance that unwise act of the eleventh-century papacy, which sentenced not merely monks but even parish priests to celibacy, and brought endless trouble to the Church even to our own day. Marriage and families made clergymen into fellow citizens instead of being members of a separate and privileged order of men, a clerical

caste which Luther denounced as unscriptural, and which he sought to abolish by his controversial notion of the "priesthood of all believers". The more secular aspect of this revolutionary idea lay in the replacement of a mediatorial and juridical hierarchy by the ideals of popular education and congregational fellowship. Closely related was his insistence upon the sacredness of all professions and callings, even the most humble:

What you do in your house is worth as much as if you did it up in heaven for our Lord God... It looks a great thing when a monk renounces everything and goes into a cloister, carries on a life of asceticism, fasts, watches, prays, and so forth... On the other hand it looks a small thing when a maid cooks and cleans and does other housework. But because God's command is there, even such a small work must be praised as a service of God far surpassing the holiness and asceticism of all monks and nuns, for here there is no command of God.²⁴

Here is the source of George Herbert's poem, which we sing as a hymn:

A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine,
Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws
Makes that and the action fine.

It is in such notions, no doubt debateable, yet challenging and intent to exalt service above privilege, in the true spirit of the Christian Gospel, that Luther's originality and perennial freshness are most clearly displayed.

NOTES

- 1 A. G. Dickens, *The German Nation and Martin Luther* (New York, 1974; Fontana, 1976) is mainly concerned to identify and analyse these forces.
- 2 The subsequent passage is based on such books as E. G. Rupp, *The Righteousness of God: Luther Studies* (London, 1953); J. Atkinson, *Martin Luther and the Birth of Protestantism* (Pelican, 1968); G. Ebeling (trans. R. A. Wilson), *Luther: an Introduction to his Thought* (Philadelphia, 1964); J. Pelikan, *Obedient Rebels* (New York, 1964).
- 3 For example, Henry VII of England provided by will that 10,000 masses should be said for his soul during the month after his death; for each mass the priest received sixpence, which was twopence above the ordinary rate (H. Maynard Smith, *Pre-Reformation England* (London, 1938), p.8.
- 4 Printed in O. Scheel (ed.), *Dokumente zu Luthers Entwicklung* (Tübingen, 1911, 1929). The important passages are translated into English by E. G. Rupp and B. Drewery (eds.), *Martin Luther* (London, 1970, in the series *Documents of Modern History*), pp.5-7, 173-9.
- 5 The process whereby Luther progressed from Augustine's viewpoint to his own is convincingly described in U. Saarnivaara, *Luther Discovers the Gospel* (St Louis, Mo., 1951).
- 6 On Luther and the Bible, see J. Pelikan, *Luther the Expositor* (Companion Volume to the American Edition of Luther's Works, St Louis, 1959).

- 7 On some issues, see S. L. Greenslade, *The English Reformers and the Fathers of the Church* (Inaugural Lecture, Oxford, 1960).
- 8 A translation (from the Basle edition of 1519) is in R. Himelick (ed.), *The Enchiridion of Erasmus* (Gloucester, Mass., 1970).
- 9 J. C. Olin (ed.), *Desiderius Erasmus: Christian Humanism and the Reformation* (New York, 1965), pp.96-97.
- 10 L. W. Spitz, *The Religious Reformation of the German Humanists* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963) locates Luther at the end of a sequence of Christian humanists. The chief initiator was Lorenzo Valla (d.1457), whose work had direct and remarkable influence upon both Erasmus and Luther. Valla demolished the Donation of Constantine (1440), violently attacked Scholasticism, collated the Vulgate with the Greek New Testament, and, in his *De Libero Arbitrio* (printed 1493), denied the possibility of reconciling God's omnipotence with man's free will.
- 11 On this clash see J. I. Packer and O. R. Johnson (eds.), *Martin Luther on the Bondage of the Will* (London, 1957); E. G. Rupp et al. (eds.), *De Servo Arbitrio* in *Library of Christian Classics*, xii (1970).
- 12 On the support given by Erasmus to Luther, see e.g. J. C. Olin, *Desiderius Erasmus* (note 9 above), pp.147-9; M. M. Phillips, 'Some Last Words of Erasmus' in J. C. Olin, D. S. Smart and R. E. McNally (eds.), *Luther, Erasmus and the Reformation* (New York, 1969), pp.87-113. Luther influenced Erasmus as well as vice versa: cf. R. G. Kleinhans, 'Luther and Erasmus, another Perspective' in *Church History*, xxxix (1970).
- 13 R. H. Fife, *The Revolt of Martin Luther* (New York, 1957), pp.51-6, 150-4, 211-12.
- 14 The relevant passage from Luther's *Preface to the New Testament* is translated in Rupp and Drewery (note 4 above), pp.93-4. In fact Luther seems to cite Matthew at least as often as John.
- 15 From the *Open Letter* on translating (1530), of which the main passages are in Rupp and Drewery (note 4 above), pp.87-91.
- 16 *An die Rathherren aller Städte* (1524) in *Weimarer Ausgabe*, xv.37.
- 17 *Letter to Eobanus Hessus*, 29 March 1523, in *Weimarer Ausgabe, Briefwechsel*, iii.49-50; translated in J. Mackinnon, *Luther and the Reformation* (4 vols., London, 1925-30), iii.216.
- 18 I refer to his *Bull on the Last Banquet of our most Holy Lord, the Pope and his Commentary on the Magnificat*, begun earlier but finished on the Wartburg. Cf. R. H. Fife (note 13 above), pp.643-7. Regarding Luther's sermons on the Nativity and on the Virgin, see R. H. Bainton, *Here I Stand, a Life of Martin Luther* (Mentor Books, New York, 1955), pp.276-8.
- 19 It should here be recalled that a very large part of the early Lutherans were ruled by city councils rather than princes. On the urban Reformation, see B. Moeller, *Imperial Cities and the Reformation* (Philadelphia, 1972); S. E. Ozment, *The Reformation in the Cities* (New Haven and London, 1975); A. G. Dickens, *The German Nation* (note 1 above), ch.7, 8, 9.
- 20 W. D. J. Cargill Thompson, *Studies in the Reformation* (London, 1980), ch.1, 2, gives the best account of Luther's political thought.
- 21 Rupp and Drewery (note 4 above), pp.121-6, translate passages from Luther's tract *Against the Robbing and Murdering Hordes of Peasants* (May, 1525). They precede these (p.120) by the lethal encouragements

of Thomas Müntzer, which tend to justify Luther's attitude!

- 22 Translated in H. Wace and C. A. Buchheim (eds.), *Luther's Primary Works* (London, 1883), and in J. Dillenberger (ed.), *Martin Luther. Selections from his Writings* (New York, 1961).
- 23 Cf. note 16 above and compare the *Sermon on Keeping Children at School* (1530) in Rupp and Drewery (note 4 above), pp.151-3, which makes the point about secular careers.
- 24 Luther frequently stresses this view on secular callings. Compare Dillenberger (note 22 above), pp.78, 159, 311, 410; also Bainton (note 18 above), pp.180-2.

Luther's view of Justification was not maintained in its total rigour by all early Protestant theologians. For the complex detail see A. E. McGrath, "Humanist Elements in the Early Reformed Doctrine of Justification", *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 73 (1982), pp.5-20.

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