



# THE NEW MERCERSBURG REVIEW

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**An American Mediating Champion:  
Emmanuel Gerhart (1817-1904)**

*Annette G. Aubert*

**AGNUS DEI:  
The Cost of Discipleship**

*Thomas D. Busted*

**A Simple Reformation Bibliography  
with a Focus on Martin Luther**

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## The New Mercersburg Review 56

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The Mercersburg Society has been formed to uphold the concept of the Church as the Body of Christ, Evangelical, Reformed, Catholic, Apostolic, organic, developmental, and connectional. It affirms the ecumenical Creeds as witnesses to its faith and the Eucharist as the liturgical act from which all other acts of worship and service emanate.

The Society pursues contemporary theology in the Church and the world within the context of Mercersburg Theology. In effecting its purpose the Society provides opportunities for fellowship and study for persons interested in Mercersburg Theology, sponsors an annual convocation, engages in the publication of articles and books, and stimulates research and correspondence among scholars on topics of theology, liturgy, the Sacraments, and ecumenism.

The **New Mercersburg Review** is designed to publish the proceedings of the annual convocation as well as other articles on the subjects pertinent to the aims and interests of the Society.

# From the Editor

F. Christopher Anderson

Again we find a wonderful balance in this issue of the NMR. Dr. Annette G. Aubert is a lecturer in Church History at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. She is the author of the book *The German Roots of Nineteenth-Century American Theology* on Oxford University Press. Her article is clearly theological. Thomas Busted is a liturgical studies student at Yale Divinity School. He is a 2013 graduate of Lancaster Theological Seminary and former organist at Trinity United Church of Christ, East Petersburg, PA. His article is clearly liturgical. The bibliography is meant to be practical.

There are several reasons to rejoice in reading Annette G. Aubert's essay on Emanuel Gerhart. The most exciting to me is found in this quote.

*Similarities between Barth and Gerhart can be explained as the result of their sharing a mutual tradition rooted in the mediating movement associated with Dorner. Jürgen Moltmann, and Wolfhart Pannenberg have confirmed Dorner's influence on Barth. Barth did not discuss American religion in his famous history of nineteenth-century Protestantism. Had he known about Gerhart's work, he may have been sufficiently encouraged by Gerhart's Christocentric approach to engage with it in detail.*

This confirms what I have heard from others and thought myself. Reading Gerhart's Christocentric theology makes one think one is reading a mature Barth who lived in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Dr. Aubert teaches us that though we continually stress the wonders of Nevin and Schaff, we need to begin to stress Gerhart. When we do that, it then leads us back to the Mediating Theologians, especially Dorner. This essay opens a lot of area for doctoral studies.

Thomas Busted's article is the result of studies with Dr. Teresa Berger of Yale. The Fall 2013 NMR centered on two of her excellent articles on the Holy Spirit in theology and worship. Busted's article looks in depth into the history of The Agnus Dei.

We have included a non-exhaustive bibliography of works about the Reformation that center on Luther. The year 2017 is the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Reformation. This brief list is meant to encourage all of us to do some reading on this vast subject this year.

# An American Mediating Champion: Emanuel Gerhart (1817–1904)

Annette G. Aubert  
*Annual Convocation June, 2015.*

For the most part, recent historical studies on Mercersburg theology have dealt primarily with the works of John William Nevin and Philip Schaff. However, in 1918 Theodore Herman, Professor of Systematic Theology at the Theological Seminary of Lancaster, observed that “the foundations of the Mercersburg theology were being laid one hundred years ago, in 1817, the birth-year of Dr. Gerhart. Then the world was observing the tercentenary of the Reformation, after the travail and chaos of the Napoleonic wars.”<sup>1</sup> Herman praised Emanuel Gerhart as “the great instructive genius” of the Mercersburg movement.<sup>2</sup> In his assessment of Gerhart’s work, Heidelberg College President George Williard compared him to the early Reformers: “We had in respect [to Gerhart] anticipations almost equal to those of Melancthon when he started out upon his work of reforming the Church.”<sup>3</sup>

In this bicentennial year of Gerhart’s birth and the quinentennial of the Reformation, it is important to acknowledge his unique contributions not only to Mercersburg, but also to American religion. In this essay, I will explore some of those contributions, especially his Institutes of Christian Religion and

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For providing access to manuscript collections, I am grateful to the archivists of The Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society in Lancaster, PA.

<sup>1</sup> Theodore F. Herman, “The Theology of Professor Emanuel V. Gerhart,” *Reformed Church Review* 23 (April 1918): 238.

<sup>2</sup> Herman, “The Theology of Professor Emanuel V. Gerhart,” 213.

<sup>3</sup> George W. Williard, “The Student Life of Dr. Gerhart,” *Reformed Church Messenger* (June 10, 1897): 2.

mediating ideas, to show how his views of history, education, religion, and atonement were aligned with those of German-speaking mediating scholars. I will focus in particular on his attempt to use a Christocentric approach to mediate between modernity and tradition, thereby opening a window to his broader intellectual efforts.

While previous generations of historians may have discussed Gerhart's contributions and influence,<sup>4</sup> he has been overlooked by many contemporary historians. Even thirty years after Charles Yrigoyen's work on Gerhart's life,<sup>5</sup> his work is still unfamiliar to the Anglophone world,<sup>6</sup> despite his Mercersburg status and the positive acknowledgments he received from his nineteenth-century peers. Gerhart's American peers hailed him as a great prophet of the Mercersburg movement. Even among those who did not agree with Mercersburg theology, Gerhart was deemed worthy of respect. For example, B. B. Warfield, a vocal critic of Mercersburg, nevertheless acknowledged Gerhart's contributions.<sup>7</sup>

Gerhart became a leading figure in the German Reformed Church during an important watershed moment in American religious history, during which he worked as a pastor, missionary,

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<sup>4</sup> James I. Good, "Dr. Gerhart's New Theology," *Reformed Church Monthly* 2 (May 1869): 220–31. Thomas G. Apple, "The Crown of Dr. Gerhart's Life," *Reformed Church Messenger* (June 10, 1897): 2.

2. Herman, "The Theology of Professor Emanuel V. Gerhart," 211–38.

<sup>5</sup> Charles Yrigoyen Jr., "Emanuel V. Gerhart and the Mercersburg Theology" (Ph.D. diss., Temple University, 1973). See also Charles Yrigoyen Jr., "Emanuel V. Gerhart: Apologist for the Mercersburg Theology," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 57 (1979): 485–500.

<sup>6</sup> For recent works on Emanuel Gerhart, see Annette G. Aubert, *German Roots of Nineteenth-Century American Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Richard A. Muller, "Emanuel V. Gerhart on the 'Christ-Idea' As Fundamental Principle," *Westminster Theological Journal* 48, no. 1 (1986): 97–117.

<sup>7</sup> B. B. Warfield "Systematic Theology," *Presbyterian and Reformed Review* 7 (1896): 163.

college president, educator, theologian, and philosopher. He received degrees from Marshall College, and from Mercersburg Seminary, where he studied under Frederick Rauch, Lewis Mayer, and John Nevin. After graduating, he served for six years as pastor of the German Reformed Church in Gettysburg, after which he worked briefly as a missionary to German immigrants. In 1851, Gerhart was offered the position of president of Heidelberg College in Ohio; four years later he was called to Franklin and Marshall College to serve in the same position. He was selected to become professor of systematic theology at Mercersburg Seminary in 1868, a position he held until his death in 1904.<sup>8</sup> He also taught at a women's seminary in Mercersburg, and received an honorary doctoral degree from Jefferson College.

While performing his duties as an administrator and educator, Gerhart wrote on philosophy and divinity, co-edited the *Mercersburg Review*, penned various books, and wrote a key dogmatic work.<sup>9</sup> Fluent in German, he translated a philosophical German text for American readers, work that gave him access to transatlantic academic networks.<sup>10</sup> According to his unpublished lecture notes, it appears that Gerhart lectured on the same topics as

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<sup>8</sup> "Emanuel Vogel Gerhart," in *The New International Encyclopædia*, ed. Daniel Coit Gilman, Harry Thurston Peck, and Frank Moore Colby (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1902), 8:271. For a biographical reference, see also G. S. Smith, "Emanuel Vogel Gerhart," in *Dictionary of the Presbyterian and Reformed Tradition in America*, ed. D. G. Hart and Mark A. Noll (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 106–7.

<sup>9</sup> Herman, "The Theology of Professor Emanuel V. Gerhart," 213. Aubert, *The German Roots*, 97–98.

<sup>10</sup> Emanuel Gerhart, *An Introduction to the Study of Philosophy: With an Outline Treatise on Logic* (Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakiston, 1858). The outline of this book is a translation of Joseph Beck's work on logic published in 1845 in Stuttgart, Germany. For a review of this work, see "Notices of New Books," *Presbyterian Quarterly Review* 6 (1858): 700–701.

his European peers.<sup>11</sup> Even if not always in the U.S., on the other side of the Atlantic his work was positively reviewed.<sup>12</sup>

### **Post Enlightenment Modernity**

Gerhart worked during one of the most exciting and creative periods in the history of Protestantism. Yet it was also an era that some considered a secular age—in the words of Charles Taylor, “In the nineteenth century ... unbelief [came] of age.”<sup>13</sup> Gerhart responded to modern religion and education with a mediating position that he adopted from his Mercersburg and European mentors. In an 1888 essay, he wrote that in order “to meet the demands of the modern age, theology has advanced to a higher plane of thought ... it [is] necessary to grasp Christian truth from a new and different point of view.”<sup>14</sup> Gerhart was not alone in maintaining this position, with Protestant scholars worldwide expressing concern over modern challenges to faith. The global Protestant community used various methods in response to modernity; David Fergusson categorizes them as either “reactive and creative,” or mediating.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Emanuel Gerhart, “Lectures Prolegomena: First Course,” Ms. Coll. 1 Box 7 ff. 10, Emanuel Vogel Gerhart Papers, The Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society, Lancaster, PA. Emanuel Gerhart, “Lectures Theological Encyclopedia,” MC 9 Box 7 ff. 13, Emanuel Vogel Gerhart Papers, The Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>12</sup> The *Academische Revue* includes a positive review of Gerhart’s *Institutes*. “Bücherbesprechungen Theologie,” *Academische Revue: Zeitschrift für das Internationale Hochschulwesen* 2 (1896): 377.

<sup>13</sup> Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 374.

<sup>14</sup> Emanuel Gerhart, “Christian Consciousness a Source of Divine Knowledge,” *Reformed Quarterly Review* 35, no. 4 (1888): 414.

<sup>15</sup> David Fergusson, “Preface,” in *The Blackwell Companion to Nineteenth-Century Theology*, edited by David Fergusson (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2010), xi.



Gerhart found that the mediating approach was most helpful for addressing the challenges of post-Enlightenment culture, and for him personally it fit particularly well because of his understanding of the post-Enlightenment conflict between religious pluralism and change. At the beginning of his vocation, American religion was marked by revivalism,<sup>16</sup> with greater interest in the establishment of sects than in ecclesiology.<sup>17</sup> Throughout Gerhart's life, America was (to borrow John Butler's words) "awash in a sea of faith,"<sup>18</sup> with people using their right to express their opinions to create more personal and voluntary forms of religion. The movement of individuals between various religious groups resulted in a fragmentation of Christian religion.<sup>19</sup> Gerhart and his Mercersburg colleagues used distinctly religious and philosophical positions to respond to an American culture that was immersed in both popular religion and the philosophy of Common Sense Realism,<sup>20</sup> with Gerhart specifically using arguments based on a mix of mediating divinity and German idealism.

### **Mercersburg and German Mediating Theology**

Important histories of Mercersburg emphasize its connection with German idealism and Romanticism without going into great detail about German mediating theology.<sup>21</sup> However, the

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<sup>16</sup> For Gerhart's view on revivalism, see Emanuel Gerhart, "Modern Revivals," *Mercersburg Review* 24 (1877): 34–52.

<sup>17</sup> Aubert, *The German Roots*, 282, n. 18 (cf. Yrigoyen 1973).

<sup>18</sup> John Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).

<sup>19</sup> Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), 332.

<sup>20</sup> Peter J. Wallace, "History and Sacrament: John Williamson Nevin and Charles Hodge on the Lord's Supper," *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 11 (2000): 177.

<sup>21</sup> Linden DeBie's work is a notable exception, since it addresses both German idealism and the Mediating School. Linden J. DeBie, *Speculative Theology and Common-Sense Religion: Mercersburg and the*

Mercersburg literature reveals the considerable influence of German mediating theologians such as Isaak Dorner, Karl Ullmann, August Tholuck, Hans Martensen, and August Neander, among others.<sup>22</sup>

While Mercersburg beliefs were deeply confessional and rooted in Reformed and early church traditions, the movement prospered under the inspiration of mediating theology, which provided a selective blend of the viewpoints of Hegel and Schleiermacher.<sup>23</sup> Starting at the newly founded University of Berlin, Schleiermacher and Hegel exerted great influence on modern Protestantism. Indeed, Schleiermacher ushered in a new Protestantism, and likewise many “issues at the center of contemporary theology find their origin in Hegel.”<sup>24</sup> Hegel described Christianity to be the highest religion, defining “the

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*Conservative Roots of American Religion* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2008). James H. Nichols, *Romanticism in American Theology: Nevin and Schaff at Mercersburg* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961). Nichols’s work has scattered references to Dorner. William DiPuccio, *The Interior Sense of Scripture: The Sacred Hermeneutics of John W. Nevin*, Studies in American Biblical Hermeneutics 14 (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1998), 195. W. Bradford Littlejohn, *The Mercersburg Theology and the Quest for Reformed Catholicity* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2009).

<sup>22</sup> Gerhart noted that the Mercersburg movement “grew out of the contact between the modern Evangelical theology of Germany and Anglo-American church life.” Emanuel V. Gerhart, “Mercersburg Theology,” in *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge: Embracing Biblical, Historical, Doctrinal, and Practical Theology and Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Biography from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, ed. Philip Schaff et al. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1908), 311.

<sup>23</sup> Herman, “The Theology of Professor Emanuel V. Gerhart,” 219. According to Linden de Bie, Frederick A. Rauch informed John Nevin about the “new German learning” that was impacted by Hegelianism and Schleiermacher. Linden J. De Bie, “Real Presence or Real Absence? The Spoils of War in the Nineteenth-Century American Eucharistic Controversy,” *Pro Ecclesia* 4, no. 4 (1995): 433.

<sup>24</sup> James C. Livingston and Francis S. Fiorenza, *Modern Christian Thought* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 1:137.

incarnation [as] the essential moment of religion.”<sup>25</sup> Rauch, like his German contemporaries, asserted that “Hegelian philosophy had a fundamental affinity with Christianity such as no other philosophy ever possessed.”<sup>26</sup> Hegel and Schleiermacher were involved in moving away from both “enlightenment and orthodoxy” and explain that “religion” is an aspect of “human experience” at large.<sup>27</sup> Both figures helped shape what the famous Protestant theologian Ernst Troeltsch has called “the new Protestantism,” viewing the Christian religion as “the perfection of humanity” and “union with God.”<sup>28</sup>

The Mediating School that was influenced by Hegel and Schleiermacher emerged in Germany in the 1820s, within the context of modern universities as a movement for responding to modernity and Enlightenment ideas, mediating between modern culture and traditional faith, as well as between science and religion. Within the pioneering intellectual and social revolutions occurring at the time, Protestant theologians tried to create new and constructive renderings of long-held theological ideas.<sup>29</sup> During this period, orthodox doctrines were reviewed and analyzed in new contexts, in the words of Bruce McCormack, they were “dressed out in new categories for reflection.”<sup>30</sup> It is possible to view

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<sup>25</sup> Georg W. F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion* (Berlin: Verlag von Duncker and Humblot, 1840), 1:71.

<sup>26</sup> Howard J. B. Ziegler, *Frederick Augustus Rauch: American Hegelian* (Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh University Press, 1953), 82.

<sup>27</sup> Claude Welch, *Protestant Thought in the Nineteenth Century, Vol. 1, 1799–1870* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1972), 87, 94.

<sup>28</sup> Emanuel Hirsch, *Geschichte der neuern evangelischen Theologie im Zusammenhang mit den allgemeinen Bewegungen des europäischen Denkens* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1949), 5:364–66.

<sup>29</sup> Frederick Gregory, *Nature Lost? Natural Science and the German Theological Traditions of the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 34.

<sup>30</sup> Bruce L. McCormack, “Introduction,” in *Mapping Modern Theology: A Thematic and Historical Introduction*, ed. Kelly M. Kapic and Bruce L. McCormack (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 3.

theology during this time in terms of “a step from ‘accommodation’ to ‘mediation.’”<sup>31</sup> In Germany, the mediating approach was best represented by Karl Ullmann in Heidelberg and Isaak Dorner in Tübingen.

As the members of the Mediating School built on the ideas of Schleiermacher, they provided a more Christocentric approach as they advanced his ideas. In all this, a common characteristic of the mediating figures was that they established a Christo-centric methodology. God’s revelation in Christ they viewed as the source of religious knowledge. Gerhart, like mediating divines, believed that Christ is the “unchangeable source of divine knowledge.”<sup>32</sup> Karl Kahnis observed that for mediating figures, the most fundamental aspect of Christianity is not justification by faith, but the “union of man with God through Jesus Christ.”<sup>33</sup> In the dogmatic system of mediating divinity, Christ is always central to the mediating theologians’ responses to modernity.

How did mediating ideas spread in America? Educated in Germany, the immigrant scholar Philip Schaff was an important figure in terms of circulating mediating ideas in America. Schaff transmitted the ideas of many “theological luminaries” in Germany with whom he had connections.<sup>34</sup> Isaak Dorner, his former professor, encouraged his efforts, and wrote in an 1843 letter, “Especially do I think it exceedingly important that German

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<sup>31</sup> McCormack, “Introduction,” 3.

<sup>32</sup> Gerhart, “Christian Consciousness a Source of Divine Knowledge,” 405.

<sup>33</sup> Karl Friedrich August Kahnis, *Internal History of German Protestantism in the Middle of Last Century*, trans. Theodore Meyer (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1856), 259. Aubert, *The German Roots*, 67.

<sup>34</sup> Philip Schaff, *Theological Propædeutic: A General Introduction to the Study of Theology, Exegetical, Historical, Systematic, and Practical, Including Encyclopaedia, Methodology, and Bibliography, a Manual for Students* (repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2007). Walter H. Conser, *Church and Confession: Conservative Theologians in Germany, England, and America, 1815–1866* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1984), 279.

theological scholarship be represented [in America].”<sup>35</sup> Yet when Schaff arrived in the U.S., he received strong criticism for his 1844 inaugural address entitled “The Principle of Protestantism.” He later wrote, “I put into [this address] everything that my [German] professors had told me, and had no idea that my audience was not prepared to receive it.”<sup>36</sup> Specifically, his view of “development” was a target of criticism from Americans who were eager “to forget the European-Catholic past.”<sup>37</sup> However, Gerhart was among a small number willing to consider and adopt Hegelian and mediating ideas coming out of Germany.<sup>38</sup> The idealistic philosophy of Rauch, considered an insider of the German system, prepared the Mercersburg faculty for adopting such ideas by introducing its members to Hegelian philosophy and its concept of development.<sup>39</sup>

### Gerhart on Organic Development

German and American church historians discussed the idea of development before Charles Darwin proposed his theory of evolution. However, as Elizabeth Clark has shown, the idea of organic and progressive development was not readily accepted “in early and mid-nineteenth century Protestant America.”<sup>40</sup> Gerhart’s

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<sup>35</sup> David S. Schaff, *The Life of Philip Schaff: In Part Autobiographical* (New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1897), 75.

<sup>36</sup> J. H. Dubbs, *History of Franklin College; Franklin College 1787–1853; Marshall College, 1836–1853; Franklin & Marshall College 1853–1903* (Lancaster, PA: Franklin & Marshall College Alumni Association, 1903), 204.

<sup>37</sup> Alice Cowan Cochran, “Sin and Salvation in American Thought,” *Perkins School of Theology Journal* 30 (Fall 1976): 6.

<sup>38</sup> Herman, “The Theology of Professor Emanuel V. Gerhart,” 221.

<sup>39</sup> E. Brooks Holifield, *A History of Pastoral Care in America: From Salvation to Self-Realization* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1983), 150.

<sup>40</sup> Elizabeth Clark, *Founding the Fathers: Early Church History and Protestant Professors in Nineteenth-Century America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 175.

American counterparts at Princeton Seminary strongly opposed the idea of organic development that was linked with the Hegelian approach to history,<sup>41</sup> whereas Gerhart welcomed German historiographic premises and the idea of development. He enthusiastically adopted the organic method over what he referred to as a “mechanical” approach. Gerhart argued that the entire Bible had to be understood from the “organic relation ... [of the] new spiritual” manifestation of Christ.<sup>42</sup>

Hegel’s work triggered new scholarship in several fields, especially in the philosophy of history. Ferdinand Baur, a historian of dogma in the 1830s at the University of Tübingen, is an example of scholars who worked according to a Hegelian view of history. Baur understood the development of dogmatic history as a continuing “process of development, namely as a process of the Spirit itself.”<sup>43</sup> Gerhart expressed a similar view of organic development when he wrote that “a succeeding age is only the life of the preceding one, advanced to another stage of development.”<sup>44</sup> He described it as being “like a flower that must die or pass over into fruit.” He believed that no dogma or theological science is permanent, and that therefore they are both subject to “further development.”<sup>45</sup> Gerhart repeated the mediating concerns of the Swiss church historian Karl Hagenbach,<sup>46</sup> who under the inspiration

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<sup>41</sup> Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology* (1871–72; repr., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999), 2:533.

<sup>42</sup> Emanuel Gerhart, *Prolegomena to Christian Dogmatics* (Lancaster, PA: Lecture Printing Society of the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church, 1891), 100.

<sup>43</sup> Ferdinand C. Baur, *Lehrbuch der Christlichen Dogmengeschichte* (Tübingen: L. Fues, 1858), 9.

<sup>44</sup> Emanuel Gerhart, “The Historical Element in Theology,” *Reformed Church Review* 16 (1869): 129–30.

<sup>45</sup> Gerhart, “The Historical Element in Theology,” 145.

<sup>46</sup> Emanuel Gerhart, “Dogmatic Theology,” *Mercersburg Review* 17 (July 1870): 466.

of Neander wrote a history that stressed the progressive nature of dogma.<sup>47</sup>

By affirming a close link between history and divinity, Gerhart corroborated Hegel's and Neander's views of history, and echoed Schleiermacher's perception of theology as an "organic principle."<sup>48</sup> Gerhart perceived the Christian religion as a living development. As a mediating theologian, he noted a sense of organic development in the revelation of the divine-human life of Jesus Christ—beginning with his incarnation, and completed at the final consummation.<sup>49</sup>

To get a further sense of Gerhart's view, we may compare it to John Nevin's. Nevin himself welcomed Neander's notion of church history, which was of the church as an "organic, developing body" as an alternative to "a static institution."<sup>50</sup> The conclusion seemed clear to Nevin that historical development is "not a fact added to fact," but instead progress. Every life includes this progress. Unsurprisingly, Nevin applied this viewpoint not only to history but also to humanity and the church.<sup>51</sup>

### **Modernity, History, and Dogma**

As part of his effort to address history and dogma, Gerhart engaged with ideas from eighteenth-century Germany—an age of

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<sup>47</sup> Karl Hagenbach, *A Text-Book of the History of Doctrines*, ed. Henry B. Smith, trans. Carl W. Buch, 2 vols. (New York: Sheldon, 1868).

<sup>48</sup> Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Kurze Darstellung des theologischen Studiums zum Behuf einleitender Vorlesungen*, ed. Heinrich Scholz (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1969), 34–35.

<sup>49</sup> Emanuel Gerhart, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1894), 1:140–141.

<sup>50</sup> Luther J. Binkley, *The Mercersburg Theology* (Manheim, PA: Sentinel Printing House, 1953), 13.

<sup>51</sup> John W. Nevin, "Historical Development," *Mercersburg Review* 1 (September 1849): 512–13.

Pietism and Enlightenment thinking, with Pietism considered the forerunner.<sup>52</sup> Based on his criticisms of both rationalism and Pietism, Gerhart paid close attention to those who shaped the Christian religion. As Pietism promoted studying the Bible for spiritual and moral instruction, method and dogma received less consideration.<sup>53</sup> Therefore, “piety and morality ranked above any dogma.”<sup>54</sup> According to Gerhart, Pietism emerged from a wrong notion of “religious feeling, laid undue stress on peculiar kinds of inward experience ... and was therefore indifferent to the theological formulas of Christian doctrine, as taught in the confessional books.”<sup>55</sup> He accused Pietists of being one-sided. The Enlightenment advocated concerns of Pietism, such as morality and a religion without dogma.<sup>56</sup> In Gerhart’s words, “Christianity was resolved into morality” and “not a new creation in Christ.” He believed that both Pietism and Rationalism tended “to undermine the foundations of the faith and churchliness of the great Reformation.”<sup>57</sup>

Rationalistic biblical scholars at the Germany university created “the Enlightenment Bible.”<sup>58</sup> In this new intellectual climate, an important characteristic was the paradigm shift that

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<sup>52</sup> Carter Lindberg, *The European Reformations* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 350.

<sup>53</sup> Jörg Lauster, *Prinzip und Methode: Die Transformation des protestantischen Schriftprinzips durch die historische Kritik von Schleiermacher bis zur Gegenwart*, *Hermeneutische Untersuchungen zur Theologie* 46 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 23.

<sup>54</sup> Thomas Nipperdey, *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck, 1800–1866*, trans. Daniel Nolan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 374

<sup>55</sup> Emanuel Gerhart, “The German Reformed Church in America,” *Mercersburg Review* 14 (April 1867): 253.

<sup>56</sup> Carter Lindberg, “Do Lutherans Shout Justification but Whisper Sanctification?” *Lutheran Quarterly* 13 (1999): 7.

<sup>57</sup> Gerhart, “The German Reformed Church in America,” 254–55.

<sup>58</sup> Jonathan Sheehan, *The Enlightenment Bible: Translation, Scholarship, Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 30.



occurred in the field of biblical and dogmatic studies. During the Enlightenment, scientific biblical studies introduced the historical-critical exegesis that promoted a rationalistic dogmatic.<sup>59</sup> Gerhart's work displayed a good grasp of neology. After noting how Johann Semler and other biblical critics were challenging key Christian doctrines, Gerhart expressed his disagreement with the use of reason as a guiding principle to judge doctrine and religious truth. He believed that the so-called "rationalistic school" was "ruled by a false principle."<sup>60</sup>

In addition to critically assessing Pietism and neology, Gerhart also interacted critically with Schleiermacher's dogmatics. The modern age of dogmatics began in Berlin with the publication of Schleiermacher's book *Christian Faith* (1821). After its publication, most of the leading scholars involved in dogmatics had been influenced in one way or the other by Schleiermacher. Even those who disagreed with his views felt compelled to respond to them.<sup>61</sup> Gerhart was one of several American theologians (another was Charles Hodge) who engaged Schleiermacher's ideas. He did so in an unpublished critical review in which he asserted that Schleiermacher's religious starting point was problematic. Gerhart argued that no dogmatic method should be based on subjectivism as authority, and took issue with what Schleiermacher called "the feeling of absolute dependence."<sup>62</sup> He complained that Schleiermacher's approach failed because "it makes religion mainly a sentiment, a subjective discipline, comparatively destitute of objective reality."<sup>63</sup> For his part, Gerhart most centrally emphasized

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<sup>59</sup> Albrecht Beutel, *Kirchengeschichte im Zeitalter der Aufklärung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009), 221.

<sup>60</sup> Gerhart, "The German Reformed Church in America," 254.

<sup>61</sup> J. S. Candlish, "Dogmatic," in *Encyclopaedia Britannica: A Dictionary of Arts, Sciences and General Literature* (New York: Werner Company, 1894), 7:297.

<sup>62</sup> Emanuel V. Gerhart, "Critical Review," 19, Emanuel Vogel Gerhart Papers, The Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>63</sup> Gerhart, "Critical Review," 19.

that Christianity is neither only a life nor a doctrine; instead, for him both the subjective and objective elements in Christianity belonged together.<sup>64</sup> In his manuscript, Gerhart did not acknowledge the connection between Schleiermacher’s method and Christology.

After Schleiermacher, the German mediating scholars—essentially Schleiermacher’s disciples—industriously wrote new dogmatics that focused on Christology. Hagenbach believed that a new approach to dogmatics, with a focus on a central dogma, was needed to overcome the dogmatic systems of the post-Reformation period. For Hagenbach and other mediating theologians, “Christology” forms “not only an essential aspect, but the proper center of dogmatic systems.”<sup>65</sup>

### **American Dogmatics: Gerhart’s Institutes of the Christian Religion**

In America, such work in modern dogmatics was lacking, and therefore German books translated into English became important texts for American Protestant scholars.<sup>66</sup> The dogmatic, historical, and biblical texts of Tholuck, Neander, Hagenbach, Dorner, and Ernst Hengstenberg were among the most popular translations and publications to come from Princeton, Mercersburg, and New England.<sup>67</sup> Yet in due time, Americans awoke from their dogmatic

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<sup>64</sup> Ellis N. Kremer, “Rev. Emanuel Vogel Gerhart,” *Reformed Church Review* 8 (1904): 571.

<sup>65</sup> Karl R. Hagenbach, *Encyklopädie und Methodologie der theologischen Wissenschaften* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1880), 341.

<sup>66</sup> Clark, *Founding the Fathers*, 75. Zachary Purvis, “Transatlantic Textbooks: Karl Hagenbach, Shared Interests, and German Academic Theology in Nineteenth-Century America,” *Church History* 83, no. 3 (2014): 654

<sup>67</sup> Annette G. Aubert, “Transatlantic Nineteenth-Century Protestantism: Academic Religious Networks,” in *Zwischen Aufklärung und Moderne: Erweckungsbewegungen als historiographische Herausforderung*; ed. Thomas K. Kuhn and Veronika Albrecht-Birkner (Berlin: LIT Verlag forthcoming 2017).

slumbers. Gerhart is credited with being the first American to write a systematic and Christocentric dogmatic text in the tradition of European scholarship. It is difficult to overstate the importance of Gerhart's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* for the country in general and Mercersburg in particular, as he was the only important member of the Mercersburg movement to write a complete Christocentric dogmatic.<sup>68</sup> According to the Yale historian Sydney Ahlstrom, "The 'Mercersburg Theology' received its doctrinal expression in Emanuel V. Gerhart's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*."<sup>69</sup> Schaff called it "the fruit of the Mercersburg Movement."<sup>70</sup> It was Schaff who encouraged Gerhart to finish this text. In an 1891 letter to Gerhart, Schaff wrote, "I hope you will finish your magnum opus during the winter. We must both hurry up. 'Vita brevis.'"<sup>71</sup>

There is evidence to indicate that Gerhart was eager to get his book published, evidence that includes a letter to the publisher in which he made forceful arguments for why his book should be approved. He introduced the book "as the first volume of Reformed Dogmatic from the pen of an American theologian ... [a] jubilee edition to the century ... of the German Reformed Church."<sup>72</sup> In addition to presenting his manuscript as an original text that should not be compared to any other published work, Gerhart described it as being in agreement with the ideas of European scholar Eduard Böhl, a Reformed professor at the University of Vienna who argued

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<sup>68</sup> Muller, "Emanuel V. Gerhart," 99–100. See also Yrigoyen, "Emanuel V. Gerhart and the Mercersburg Theology," 49.

<sup>69</sup> Sydney E. Ahlstrom, "Theology in America," in *The Shaping of American Religion*, ed. James Ward Smith and A. Leland Jamison (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961), 271.

<sup>70</sup> Schaff, *Theological Propædeutic*, 343.

<sup>71</sup> Schaff, *The Life of Philip Schaff*, 474.

<sup>72</sup> Emanuel Gerhart, "Institutes of Christian Religion Announcement," Ms Coll 1 Box 5 f.f. 1, Emanuel Vogel Gerhart Papers, The Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society, Lancaster, PA.

that “the whole system of dogmatics must be related to Christ.”<sup>73</sup> But Gerhart in his letter to the publisher also asserted that the content of his dogmatic text differed from those of leading German scholars, including Schleiermacher, Dorner, and Albrecht Ritschl.<sup>74</sup> While describing his manuscript as a pioneering effort, Gerhart also professed that he remained faithful to the Reformed tradition associated with the Heidelberg Catechism.

Having said this, Gerhart’s connections to his German counterparts are essential to understanding his theology. In the preface to his *Institutes*, he asserts that his work “is in sympathy with the Christological trend of the Christian sentiment and scholarship” of Europe.<sup>75</sup> In hindsight, it appears that Gerhart’s introduction of the Christ-idea was motivated by his wish to present a novel dogmatic text for America. The notion was most likely borrowed from Böhl, who was known for offering a Christological reading of the Old Testament and for writing a Christocentric dogmatic. Böhl, who studied under Tholuck and Hengstenberg, argued that dogmatics stand and fall on their Christology.<sup>76</sup>

Gerhart adopted the Christ-idea from Böhl, but he borrowed the title for his book from John Calvin, and some key ideas from the mediating theologians. The use of the *Institutes* title reveals Gerhart’s reliance on Calvin the Reformer as a foundation on which new dogmatics could be built, but it is also important to note that he included ideas of the mediators. Indeed, Gerhart refers to mediating figures about ninety times in his work, mostly Dorner, Martensen, Hermann Olshausen, and Richard Rothe, with noticeably fewer

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<sup>73</sup> Gerhart, “*Institutes of Christian Religion Announcement*.” Ms Coll 1 Box 5 f.f. 1. Eduard Böhl, *Dogmatik: Darstellung der Christlichen Glaubenslehre auf Reformirt-Kirchlicher Grundlage* (Amsterdam: Von Scheffer, 1887), xlv.

<sup>74</sup> Emanuel Gerhart, “*Institutes of Christian Religion Announcement*,” Ms Coll 1 Box 5 f.f. 1.

<sup>75</sup> Gerhart, preface to *Institutes*, ix.

<sup>76</sup> Böhl, *Dogmatik*, xliii. For a study on Eduard Böhl, see Thomas R. V. Forster, *Eduard Böhl’s (1836–1903): Concept for a Re-Emergence of Reformation Thought* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009).

mentions of Calvin.<sup>77</sup> In the spirit of mediating divinity, in *Institutes* Gerhart offered a blend of old and modern traditions.

In both his lectures and writings, Gerhart attempted to overcome old scholastic dogmatics and fill in the missing gaps of dogmatic divinity.<sup>78</sup> Taking into account the general interest in dogmatic method that was prevalent in the nineteenth century, Gerhart needed to establish a distinct foundation to express his ideas.<sup>79</sup> He understood the details of post-Enlightenment issues and the old version of dogmatics that leading American Reformed professors at Princeton and other seminaries held on to. He felt that their thinking failed to address adequately the essential tenets of Enlightenment thinking. One example is the textbook on dogma written by Francis Turretin that the Princeton faculty used in its classes; based on his proposal that Christian dogma is always changing, Gerhart considered that text to be outdated.<sup>80</sup>

### The Christ-Idea

Whereas Reformed scholastics discussed dogma derived from biblical facts and exegesis, Gerhart used the mediating approach of constructing theology based on a fundamental principle. His adoption of the Christ-idea placed him in opposition to almost all other American nineteenth-century scholars, especially Charles Hodge and his systematic divinity. Gerhart argued that the

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<sup>77</sup> Cf. Gerhart, *Institutes*, 1:109, 192, 195, 245, 268, 282, 299, 312, 321, 323, 331, 340, 356, 370, 375, 418, 430, 431, 436, 438, 482, 486, 503, 548, 649, 677, 687, 717. Gerhart frequently referenced here the ideas of Isaak Dörner. Aubert, *The German Roots*, 283.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Emanuel Gerhart, "Dogmatic Theology," *Mercersburg Review* 17 (July 1870): 461–80. Gerhart's class lectures on dogmatic theology and prolegomena are located at the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>79</sup> Mark Chapman, *Theology and Society in Three Cities: Berlin, Oxford and Chicago, 1800–1914* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: James Clarke, 2014), 32.

<sup>80</sup> Gerhart, *Institutes*, 1:22.

“divine-human person of Jesus Christ” is the greatest truth in terms of both revelation and redemption.<sup>81</sup> As Christocentric theologian Gerhart, like Dorner and later Karl Barth, attributed “objective revelation” to Christ.<sup>82</sup> Barth believed that “God’s revelation takes place in the fact that God’s Word became a man and that this man has become God’s Word.”<sup>83</sup> Gerhart expressed a similar description of revelation as “a movement that passes from above downward,”<sup>84</sup> implying that “the truth of divine revelation by the incarnate Son is objective.”<sup>85</sup>

In describing his disagreement with Reformed scholastics who subscribed to a mechanical view of revelation, Gerhart wrote: “Divorced from its objective connection with Christ, the written Word loses its power, and loses its legitimate authority. It becomes an external mechanical power, which does not help to save men.”<sup>86</sup> In short, Gerhart argued that Christ is not only the essential truth behind redemption, “but also the beginning, and the center, and the end of revelation.”<sup>87</sup> In addition, he believed that all dogma is “linked to Jesus Christ.”<sup>88</sup> With such views, it is not difficult to see

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<sup>81</sup> Emanuel Gerhart, “Dogmatic Theology,” *Mercersburg Review* 17 (July 1870): 312.

<sup>82</sup> Sang E. Lee, *Karl Barth und Isaak August Dorner: Eine Untersuchung zu Barths Rezeption der Theologie Dorners* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2014), 21.

<sup>83</sup> Karl Barth, *The Doctrine of the Word of God*, Volume one of *Church Dogmatics*, ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance, trans. G. T. Thomson and Harold Knight (London: T. & T. Clark, 2004), 1.

<sup>84</sup> Gerhart, *Institutes*, 1:136.

<sup>85</sup> Gerhart, *Institutes*, 1:471.

<sup>86</sup> Emanuel V. Gerhart, “The Idea of Church Authority: A Letter,” *Mercersburg Review* 19 (1872): 192.

<sup>87</sup> Gerhart, *Institutes*, 1:152. “Reformed Theology,” *Cumberland Presbyterian Review* 3 (1891): 368–369.

<sup>88</sup> Aubert, *The German Roots*, 103.

that Gerhart in a sense anticipated the work of Barth, whose Christocentric approach shaped his dogmatic structure.<sup>89</sup>

Similarities between Barth and Gerhart can be explained as the result of their sharing a mutual tradition rooted in the mediating movement associated with Dorner. Jürgen Moltmann and Wolfhart Pannenberg have confirmed Dorner’s influence on Barth. Barth did not discuss American religion in his famous history of nineteenth-century Protestantism.<sup>90</sup> Had he known about Gerhart’s work, he may have been sufficiently encouraged by Gerhart’s Christocentric approach to engage with it in detail.<sup>91</sup>

Of course, Gerhart’s ideas attracted criticism from the Princeton faculty. Warfield for example lamented that Gerhart had “taken his place alongside of those ... occupying themselves in smuggling the contraband of the German Vermittlungstheologie into the Calvinistic camp.”<sup>92</sup>

### Gerhart on Education

If the dogmatic theology that focused on a Christocentric method was central to Gerhart’s work, so was his concern for an educational approach that underscored a presupposition of faith. As a professor and college president, Gerhart was naturally involved in many educational issues. During his installation as president of

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<sup>89</sup> John P. Lewis, *Karl Barth in North America: The Influence of Karl Barth in the Making of a New North American Evangelicalism* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2009), 128.

<sup>90</sup> Karl Barth, *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century: Its Background and History* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002).

<sup>91</sup> John Stewart made similar observations about Barth and Hodge.

John W. Stewart, *Mediating the Center: Charles Hodge on American Science, Language, Literature, and Politics*, Studies in Reformed Theology and History 3.1, ed. David Willis (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Theological Seminary, 1995), 4.

<sup>92</sup> B. B. Warfield, “Literary Department: Book Review,” *Magazine of Christian Literature* 3 (1891): 311.

Franklin and Marshall College in the summer of 1855, he gave a brilliant inauguration speech on what he considered to be “the vital principle of college education,” in which he revealed his knowledge of the current American and European systems and expressed his dissatisfaction with anthropocentric education.<sup>93</sup> In contrast to the modern university system that had emerged in Germany—one that set aside presuppositions of faith—Gerhart expressed a strong concern that education be guided by certain presuppositions. Whereas Wilhelm von Humboldt (the founder of the University of Berlin) believed that modern universities should “live [only] for science,”<sup>94</sup> Gerhart promoted the idea that faith should play a vital role in education. In his Franklin and Marshall address he discussed the sources of knowledge, arguing that scholars needed to assess the starting points of all fields of science and philosophy.

Gerhart categorically rejected induction or common sense evidence as points of departure—reactions to both the Old School education system and the broader American context. He believed that alternative forms existed, and he was willing to adopt some aspects of German idealism into his envisioned educational system. This is another example of how Gerhart, in the tradition of Mercersburg, attempted to mediate between American culture and German idealism. He agreed with the idea that any source of knowledge must be derived from a single principle,<sup>95</sup> echoing Schelling’s “a priori knowledge from one principle” while avoiding Kant’s rational guiding principle for knowledge. He apparently agreed with Schelling’s maxim that “only one principle governed all

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<sup>93</sup> Emanuel Gerhart, *Addresses Delivered at the Inauguration of Rev. Emanuel V. Gerhart, A.M.: As President of Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pa., July 24th, 1855* (Chambersburg, PA: Printed by M. Kieffer & Co, 1855), 7.

<sup>94</sup> Thomas A. Howard, *Protestant Theology and the Making of the Modern German University* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 131.

<sup>95</sup> Gerhart, *Addresses*, 20. Friedrich W. J. Schelling, *The Grounding of Positive Philosophy: The Berlin Lectures*, trans. Bruce Matthews (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007), 128.



reality.”<sup>96</sup> A fundamental concern for Gerhart was showing how this a priori principle affects education. His philosophy of education highlighted not ethical religious instructions but posited that the most vital principle of education needed to be a “positive faith in Jesus Christ,” which he believed represented “the golden thread on which every pearl of philosophy and gem of poetry must be strung.”<sup>97</sup> While he acknowledged the value of some other assumptions for education, he felt that they could only be effective when regulated by a Christocentric principle.

Even if Gerhart did not adopt Rousseau’s romantic and revolutionary educational model, he was in tune with European mediating scholars who aligned science and religion. Gerhart rejected the science-religion warfare model, preferring instead to try and reconcile the two. Unlike Ritschl, he did not separate science and religion into different “fact and value” realms.<sup>98</sup> While Ritschl wanted “to purify religion from philosophical and scientific elements,”<sup>99</sup> Gerhart’s interest in Christian education influenced his attempts to bring science and religion together. A striking feature of his scientific approach was that it was Christocentric rather than cosmocentric.

Gerhart had no difficulty accepting an a priori “Christocentric framework,”<sup>100</sup> thereby distancing himself from Hegel’s disciples, who stressed the philosophical and speculative aspects of science. The idea that “scientific work” should be “free from presuppositions” was considered a critical “building block of the post-idealist conception of science” that emerged in 1830s

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<sup>96</sup> Nimi Wariboko and Amos Yong, *Paul Tillich and Pentecostal Theology: Spiritual Presence and Spiritual Power* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015), 31.

<sup>97</sup> Gerhart, *Addresses*, 14.

<sup>98</sup> Livingston and Fiorenza, *Modern Christian Thought*, 1:260.

<sup>99</sup> David C. Lindberg and Ronald L. Numbers, *God and Nature: Historical Essays on the Encounter between Christianity and Science* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 386.

<sup>100</sup> Lee, *Karl Barth und Isaak August Dorner*, 20.

Germany.<sup>101</sup> Gerhart and other mediating scholars resisted the efforts of some German scholars to promote an ideal “science without metaphysics” that omitted any religious or ideological interest.<sup>102</sup> Instead, Gerhart described the combination of science and theism as “an Infinite Unit,” with God standing as “the last ground of knowledge.”<sup>103</sup> As a mediating theologian, Gerhart believed that “the knowledge of Christ is the knowledge of God.”<sup>104</sup> A key issue for Gerhart was how to apply to education the idea of Christ as a revealer. He believed that if Jesus Christ is “the most complete and only true revelation of God, then it must follow ... [that] God in Christ is the ultimate ground of all logical reasoning and all correct systems of Education.”<sup>105</sup> Accordingly, Gerhart argued that in Christ “every branch of Science complete[s] itself.”<sup>106</sup> This meant that basically “the true principle of the objective world is Christ.”<sup>107</sup>

### **Revivalism, Atonement, and Incarnation**

In addition to American dogmatics and education systems, Gerhart also challenged the modern version of revivals that were common throughout nineteenth-century America. In 1877, thirty-four years after Nevin published *The Anxious Bench* (1843), Gerhart published a paper expressing his views on modern revivalism at a time when Dwight Moody was organizing revival meetings in the largest cities in North America.<sup>108</sup> For Moody, “conversion experience” was

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<sup>101</sup> Johannes Zachhuber, *Theology as Science in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 79–80.

<sup>102</sup> Zachhuber, *Theology as Science*, 79–80.

<sup>103</sup> Gerhart, *Addresses*, 18, 19.

<sup>104</sup> Gerhart, *Addresses*, 19.

<sup>105</sup> Gerhart, *Addresses*, 20.

<sup>106</sup> Gerhart, *Addresses*, 20.

<sup>107</sup> Gerhart, *Addresses*, 20.

<sup>108</sup> For revivalism in America, see William H. Cooper, *The Great Revivalists in American Religion, 1740–1944: The Careers and Theology of*

primarily “a function of technique,” and he attributed his success during the 1870s to “creating a certain mood.”<sup>109</sup> Gerhart wrote that he was “neither hostile nor indifferent” to modern revivalism, and did not deny “a revival of religion,” but he preferred to maintain a mediating view during a period of emotional attempts to win souls.<sup>110</sup>

Gerhart faulted the “one-sided subjective” trend advanced by revivalism. He saw as the main danger of modern revivals their focus on religious feelings and moralism, and he denounced “the sentimental piety” of revivalism that he believed wrongly replaced the true “Christian life.”<sup>111</sup> He concluded that the emotional element belittled the dogmatic and educational aspects of the Christian faith, and reduced concern for the church, the Bible, and Catechism. Consequently he argued that when this happens the “knowledge of God in Christ is not appreciated on its own account.”<sup>112</sup> Gerhart believed that there was a “better way” of winning souls. In contrast to the mechanical revival methods of leaders like Moody, Gerhart stressed the importance of mediating the person of Christ, arguing that individuals do not require “a revival of their religious life,” but need to “become partakers of new life, a life which none possesses but the members of Christ.”<sup>113</sup> According to Gerhart, the essence of the Protestant religion “is Christ Himself. He is the beginning, the middle and the end of the Christian life.”<sup>114</sup> Similar to Calvin, Gerhart believed that Christ is the “only Mediator.”

Like most Americans concerned about religious topics, Gerhart was particularly drawn to the atonement. Ever since

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*Jonathan Edwards, Charles Finney, Dwight Moody, Billy Sunday and Aimee Semple McPherson* (Jefferson, N.C: McFarland & Co, 2010).

<sup>109</sup> James F. Findlay and Martin E. Marty, *Dwight L. Moody: American Evangelist, 1837–1899* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 260.

<sup>110</sup> Gerhart, “Modern Revivals,” 34.

<sup>111</sup> Gerhart, “Modern Revivals,” 46.

<sup>112</sup> Gerhart, “Modern Revivals,” 46.

<sup>113</sup> Gerhart, “Modern Revivals,” 38.

<sup>114</sup> Gerhart, “Modern Revivals,” 44.

Augustine, religious figures in the Western world have focused on salvation and grace, whereas Eastern Orthodoxy has been more concerned with the “deification of the human.”<sup>115</sup> Traditional American Protestants have generally supported Augustine’s focus on atonement, commonly disconnecting “Christ’s death from his incarnation” and focusing on the removal of sin.<sup>116</sup> In contrast, Gerhart viewed the work of Christ as something that did not occur in isolation; rather, he believed that “Christ did much more than simply remove the curse of sin.”<sup>117</sup> Gerhart was concerned to avoid a one-sided view of the atonement, and thus he clearly elucidated in his *Institutes* that “the atonement is a twofold idea, including the two forms of [Christ’s] His mediatorship, the new life-communion and the deliverance from sin.”<sup>118</sup> Gerhart has drawn special focus of not separating “the life-giving work and the redemptive work of the Mediator, and then lay stress exclusively on either, the doctrine fails to contain the whole truth.”<sup>119</sup> Gerhart’s view of the person of Jesus differed significantly from the prevailing view in American Protestant culture at that time, in which Jesus was above all considered to be a moral teacher.<sup>120</sup>

In a post-Kantian period that emphasized a relational ontology, most Americans resisted the idea of a union between “Christ and the Christian,”<sup>121</sup> and especially what Eastern Orthodox believers describe as human participation in a “divine life.” In Gerhart’s time, Americans were not prepared to consider the relationship between

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<sup>115</sup> Cochran, “Sin and Salvation in American Thought,” 1.

<sup>116</sup> John B. Payne, “John W. Nevin and the Mercersburg Theology,” *Lutheran Forum* 26, no. 2 (1992): 44. Aubert, *The German Roots*, 136.

<sup>117</sup> Aubert, *The German Roots*, 136.

<sup>118</sup> Gerhart, *Institutes*, 2:339.

<sup>119</sup> Gerhart, *Institutes*, 2:344.

<sup>120</sup> Donald S. Lopez and Steven C. Rockefeller, *The Christ and the Bodhisattva* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987), 18.

<sup>121</sup> Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *One with God: Salvation as Deification and Justification* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2004), 39, 46.

humans and God as an “ontological union,” although it was common among some Protestants to describe believers as being “in union with Christ” in the form of a religious covenant<sup>122</sup>—in Hodge’s words, “a federal union.”<sup>123</sup> Gerhart disagreed with Hodge on this point. Influenced by the views of the early church fathers and the mediating theologians of his day, Gerhart’s soteriology was marked by traces of deification. According to Gerhart, believers share a “true and real communion” with the life of Christ.<sup>124</sup> Based on his belief that Christ’s work was not merely a substitute effort to acquit man in a divine courtroom, he described Christ’s relationship “with a sinful world [a]s inward, not outward; organic, not mechanical.” Thus, for Gerhart, becoming a Christian meant being “identified with the Redeemer.” In his *Institutes*, Gerhart posited that partaking in Christ’s benefits represented an assumption of “participation in [Christ] Himself.”<sup>125</sup> In an unpublished sermon, Gerhart described believers as “members of His mystical body being identified in spirit and character with Christ.”<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Richard Lints, “Soteriology,” *Mapping Modern Theology: A Thematic and Historical Introduction*, ed. Kelly M. Kapic and Bruce L. McCormack (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 285.

<sup>123</sup> Charles Hodge, *Conference Papers: Or Analyses of Discourses, Doctrinal and Practical; Delivered on Sabbath Afternoons to the Students of the Theological Seminary* (New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1879), 213.

<sup>124</sup> Emanuel Gerhart, “The Good Shepherd Gives His Life for the Sheep,” (1869): MC 1 Gerhart Sermons 1860s Box 4 f.f. 5, Emanuel Vogel Gerhart Papers, The Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>125</sup> Gerhart, *Institutes*, 2:295.

<sup>126</sup> Emanuel Gerhart, “Suffering in the Service of Christ,” (1861) Ms Coll. 1 Gerhart Sermons Chapel of Franklin and Marshall College Box 4 f.f. 4a, page 5, 17, Emanuel Vogel Gerhart Papers, The Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society, Lancaster, PA.

# AGNUS DEI: The Cost of Discipleship

Thomas D. Busted

“He laid it down that at the time of the breaking of the Lord’s body the clergy and people should sing ‘Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us’.”

*Liber Pontificalis* 86.14<sup>127</sup>

## I. Background for This Current Inquiry

One time in a conversation with retired clergy about Eucharist liturgies, the topic of the “Agnus Dei” arose. One pastor in particular found this chant particularly troubling because of its penitential character in the liturgy. Especially in the season of Easter when Eucharist should take on the character of a joyful feast, the Agnus Dei acts as a “killjoy” in the liturgy, returning us to Good Friday and Lent. Therefore, this pastor concluded, it would be better to remove the Agnus Dei from the liturgy, especially in more joyful seasons of the liturgical year.

I responded to this proposal viscerally. Although I could not deny the penitential overtones of the Agnus Dei, I have personally experienced this chant as a meaningful part of the liturgy that offers both peace and consolation. I reasoned that the chant is older than the Reformation era obsession with sin and repentance and therefore this chant must have been introduced for much broader reasons. Thus began my search for the origin and meaning of the Agnus Dei.

## II. Two Currently Existing Hypotheses

Most sources make reference to the *Liber Pontificalis* when explaining the historic origin of the Agnus Dei chant in the liturgy. The *Liber Pontificalis* is the earliest known document to mention the Agnus Dei in the liturgy. It says that around the year 700 AD

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<sup>127</sup> *The Book of Pontiffs (Liber Pontificalis): The ancient biographies of the first ninety Roman bishops to AD 715*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Raymond Davis (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010) 86.14, p. 84. Referred to as “*Liber Pontificales*” from here on.

Pope Sergius I introduced the chant into the liturgy during the fraction rite, or the breaking of the bread.<sup>128</sup> A considerable amount of time was needed to break the bread into enough pieces for all to receive, and the chant served to fill that time.<sup>129</sup> Therefore, the chant served a practical purpose of filling the time required to break the bread. That is as far as the facts will allow; beyond that is hypothesis. There are at least two main hypotheses that have become common, as follows:

### **Hypothesis 1: Eastern Origins**

Luther Reed and others have supposed that Pope Sergius I's Syrian ethnicity may have played a part in the introduction of the Agnus Dei chant.<sup>130</sup> Even if one disputes Sergius I as the originating pope, the influx of Greek-speaking refugees from Syria and other eastern regions suggests an influence of eastern liturgical practice.<sup>131</sup> The presence of Greek speakers in Rome warranted the liturgical practice of bilingual chanting and recitation.<sup>132</sup> Joseph Jungmann and Luther Reed reference eastern liturgical texts that refer to the bread as the "Lamb."<sup>133</sup> Eamon Duffy cites eastern influence on the church in Rome in areas of art and liturgical celebration as a 'melting-pot', "in [which] many of the traditions of the East and West were flowing together, to create a vibrant and

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<sup>128</sup> *Liber Pontificalis* 86.14, p. 84.

<sup>129</sup> Luther D. Reed, *The Lutheran Liturgy: A Study of the Common Liturgy of the Lutheran Church in America*, revised edition (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1947) p. 369.

<sup>130</sup> "Sergius was a Syrian by birth, and the Greek Liturgy may have influenced him in his choice of a liturgical text at this point in the Service." Reed, p. 369.

<sup>131</sup> Joseph A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development (Missarum Sollemnia)*, New revised and abridged edition in one volume, translated by Francis A. Brunner, revised by Charles K. Riepe (New York: Benziger Brothers, Inc., 1959) p. 485.

<sup>132</sup> Andrew J. Ekonomou, *Byzantine Rome and the Greek Popes: Eastern Influences on Rome and the Papacy from Gregory the Great to Zacharias, A.D. 590-752* (New York: Lexington Books, 2007) pp. 250-251.

<sup>133</sup> Jungmann, pp. 485-486. Reed, pp. 369-370.

solemn religious culture which fascinated and dazzled the newly Christianized peoples of Europe.”<sup>134</sup>

There are two difficulties in confirming the theory of an eastern origin of the Agnus Dei:

First, any dispute over Sergius I being the originator of the Agnus Dei in the liturgy has to answer to the text of *Liber Pontificalis*. It is true that *Liber Pontificalis*' descriptions of early liturgical changes are somewhat suspect given that they occurred before the book's compiler's time. However, from the late fifth century onward, we enter the time of the original compiler and later continuators of *Liber Pontificalis*.<sup>135</sup> Therefore, the burden of proof rests on those who would dispute Sergius I as originator of the Agnus Dei in the liturgy.

Second, Sergius I was born in Sicily, not Syria.<sup>136</sup> Though ethnically Syrian, “Sergius I's loyalty in matters of religion lay solidly with the customs, practices, and traditions of the Roman church.”<sup>137</sup> *Liber Pontificalis* says “he came to Rome under the pontiff Adeodatus...” which would have been between the years 672 and 676.<sup>138</sup> He started out in the Roman church as an acolyte between the ages of nineteen and twenty-three and gradually rose through the ranks within the Roman church.<sup>139</sup> Sergius I also rejected the canons of the Council in Trullo, aka “Quinisext Council,” as against Roman custom, “choosing to die sooner than consent to erroneous novelties.”<sup>140</sup> It cannot be ruled out that Sergius I's Syrian ethnicity played a part in his choosing to

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<sup>134</sup> Eamonn Duffy, *Saints and Sinners: A History of the Popes* 4<sup>th</sup> edition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014) p. 84.

<sup>135</sup> “When, however, we come to the statement that Gelasius (492-496) was a liturgical author, we can accept it without reservation: we have reached the period of the compiler's personal knowledge. With the attributions of liturgical changes to particular popes by the later continuators of the LP there is no problem.” From Raymond Davis's “Introduction” to *Liber Pontificalis*, p. xxvi.

<sup>136</sup> *Liber Pontificalis* 86.1, p. 80.

<sup>137</sup> Ekonomou, p. 223.

<sup>138</sup> *Liber Pontificalis* 79.1, p. 70; 86.1, p. 80.

<sup>139</sup> Ekonomou, p. 223.

<sup>140</sup> *Liber Pontificalis*, 86.6-7, p. 82.



introduce the *Agnus Dei*, but the evidence suggests that Sergius I's formation and loyalties laid predominately in Roman customs.

### **Hypothesis 2: Political Protest**

Another popular explanation for the introduction of the *Agnus Dei* is that it is a political protest that centers around two men: Pope Sergius I and Emperor Justinian II.

Sergius I would not have been the first pope to defy an emperor's authority. Pope Gelasius (492-496) set a shocking precedent for the tone of relationships between the emperor and the pope. Gelasius argued that though the pope was a loyal subject of the emperor, the world is ruled by two powers: one royal and the other priestly (bishops), the priestly more important because this power must "render account for the kings of men themselves at the judgement seat of God".<sup>141</sup> No eastern bishop would dare stand up to an emperor like this, but Gelasius was not the last *Roman* bishop to defy an emperor.

In 653, Pope Martin I attempted to defy Emperor Constans II over monothelism. Martin I placed his bed in front of the altar at the Lateran basilica for sanctuary. Despite this, he was arrested and treated terribly. His captors refused to let him wash for 47 days as he suffered with dysentery. Once in Constantinople, Martin I was found guilty of treason, "stripped of his vestments, dragged in shackles through the streets and publicly flogged."<sup>142</sup> Ten years later in 663, Constans II visited Rome and stripped the city of the "bronze tiles and fittings from the great imperial monuments of the city," which accelerated their decay.<sup>143</sup> Constans II then entered Sicily and

[h]e imposed such afflictions on the people, occupiers, and proprietors of the provinces of Calabria, Sicily, Africa, and Sardinia for years on end by registrations of land and persons and by imposts on shipping as had never before been seen, and such as even to separate wives from their

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<sup>141</sup> Duffy, p. 50.

<sup>142</sup> Duffy, pp. 76.

<sup>143</sup> Duffy, p. 77.

husbands and sons from their parents; so much else unheard of did they suffer that *no one expected to survive*. They even took away all the sacred vessels and equipment from God’s holy churches, leaving nothing behind.<sup>144</sup>

But Sergius I, who would have been between six to fourteen years old at the time these afflictions began, did survive these harsh years in Sicily. Sergius I would surely have remembered this time, as well as the harsh treatment of Martin I, when he decided to oppose the emperor.

Emperor Justinian II came into power in 685 at the age of sixteen.<sup>145</sup> He was a “rash and headstrong” person noted for his “ferocious” manner and “uncontainable anger.”<sup>146</sup> He surrounded himself with officials who were equally savage and cruel, including one who had the emperor’s mother, Anastasia, whipped.<sup>147</sup> Justinian II sought to assert his authority over the Church in 692 by calling a council in Trullo “to complete the disciplinary work of the Fifth and Sixth General Councils.”<sup>148</sup>

Sergius I refused to accept the canons of the council in Trullo; this had major political ramifications. In effect, the emperor’s loyal subject in the West, refused to submit to the emperor’s will. The emperor retaliated by sending Zacharias the *spatharius* to Rome to capture Sergius I and bring him back to Constantinople.<sup>149</sup> Zacharius was unsuccessful and when a mob of Ravennate soldiers threatened to kill him, he sought refuge in Sergius I’s bedroom.<sup>150</sup> Sergius I had mercy on Zacharius and convinced the crowd to not kill Zacharius and let him leave Rome.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> *Liber Pontificalis*, 78.4, p. 70. Emphasis is mine.

<sup>145</sup> Ekonomou, p. 268.

<sup>146</sup> Ekonomou, p. 268.

<sup>147</sup> Ekonomou, p. 268.

<sup>148</sup> Duffy, p. 78.

<sup>149</sup> *Liber Pontificalis* 86.7, p. 82.

<sup>150</sup> *Liber Pontificalis* 86.8, p. 82.

<sup>151</sup> *Liber Pontificalis* 86.9, p. 83.

Some have supposed that Sergius I's introduction of the Agnus Dei chant would have effectively rubbed the emperor's nose in his failure to capture Sergius I or make him accept the canons of the council in Trullo. Canon 82 states:

The artists are not to portray the Forerunner pointing to a Lamb. In some depictions of the venerable images, the Forerunner is portrayed pointing his finger to a lamb, and this has been accepted as a representation of grace, prefiguring for us through the law the true Lamb, Christ our God. Venerating, then, these ancient representations and foreshadowings as symbols and prefigurations of truth handed down by the Church, nevertheless, we prefer grace and truth, which we have received as fulfillment of the law. Therefore, in order that what is perfect, even in paintings, may be portrayed before the eyes of all, we decree that henceforth the figure of the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, Christ our God, should be set forth in images in human form, instead of the ancient lamb; for in this way we apprehend the depth of the humility of the Word of God, and are led to the remembrance of his life in the flesh, his passion and his saving death, and of the redemption which thereby came to the world.<sup>152</sup>

Thus the introduction of the Agnus Dei chant is considered a direct contradiction of this canon and therefore a protest against the Emperor's authority.<sup>153</sup> Some have added that Sergius I also at this time renovated two important murals in Rome that portrayed Christ

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<sup>152</sup> *The Council in Trullo Revisited* in *Kanonika* vol. 6 edited by George Nedungatt and Michael Featherstone (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1995) pp. 162-164.

<sup>153</sup> Though some have pointed out that this canon prohibits only *pictures* of the Lamb, *not* musical chants.

as a Lamb, the most important of these on the façade of St. Peter's!<sup>154</sup>

One challenge to the notion of Sergius I as a pope concerned with “showing off” his political authority is that it is inconsistent with his character. There were two other men who were candidates for pope in 687: archpriest Theodore and archdeacon Paschal. *Liber Pontificalis* tells us “[n]either would give way to the other, but each ferociously continued trying to dislodge the other[.]”<sup>155</sup> A crowd convened and selected a “venerable priest,” Sergius I, from the midst of them and pushed him into the papacy.<sup>156</sup> There is no indication that Sergius I actively sought the papacy, but was chosen spontaneously because he was “venerable.” Paschal had promised 100 lbs. of gold to the exarch John Platyn if he would come to Rome and secure Paschal's election, but the exarch did not arrive quickly enough. Nonetheless, the exarch still required St. Peter's to pay what was owed, despite Sergius I's protest that it was not he, but Paschal, who promised payment. Sergius I reluctantly paid Paschal's debt with the “chandeliers and crowns which from of old had hung before the holy altar and confession of St. Peter.”<sup>157</sup> Furthermore, remember also that Sergius I showed mercy to Zacharias the *spatharius* and further advocated for his life against a crowd who would have killed him if Sergius I had let them. None of these instances paint the character of a power-seeking pontiff who would gleefully assert himself over an emperor. Thus, the introduction of the Agnus Dei as a *purely* politically inspired protest lacks substance.

### III. An Alternative Hypothesis

The following hypothesis locates the origin of the Agnus Dei within a complex matrix of late seventh century interpretation of scripture, tradition, art, and ritual stemming from the Western use of

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<sup>154</sup> Éamonn Ó Carragáin, *The City of Rome and the World of Bede* (Jarrow Lecture 1994) (Newcastle upon Tyne: J. & P. Bealls Ltd, 1994) p. 29. Thanks to Prof. Felicity McGowan of Yale Divinity School for introducing me to the writings of this scholar.

<sup>155</sup> *Liber Pontificalis*, 86.2, p. 81.

<sup>156</sup> *Liber Pontificalis*, 86.3, p. 81.

<sup>157</sup> *Liber Pontificalis*, 86.4, pp. 81-82.

the book of Revelation. The hypothesis immediately raises the question though of what was at stake theologically that the introduction of the Agnus Dei chant would have attempted to safeguard.

### **The Book of Revelation**

There is much speculation over which of the canons of the council in Trullo Sergius I would have found objectionable. Andrew Ekonomou conjectures that Sergius I did not approve of the council's acceptance of the entire eighty-five Apostolic Canons, of which the Roman church recognized only the first fifty.<sup>158</sup> This point may have more significance than first meets the eyes. Canon eighty-five of the Apostolic Canons lists books of scripture then considered canonical; the book of Revelation is missing from this list.<sup>159</sup> Michael D. Marlowe claims that St. Cyril of Jerusalem omitted the book of Revelation from the list "due to a general reaction against this book in the east after excessive use was made of it by the Montanist<sup>160</sup> cults."<sup>161</sup> Stephen Finamore confirms this, making reference to the famous 4<sup>th</sup> century church historian Eusebius, saying: "[Eusebius] does not reject [the book of Revelation] outright, although others did so because of the use allegedly made of Revelation by the Montanists. Eusebius's views

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<sup>158</sup> Ekonomou, p. 222. See also canon 2 of the council of Trullo found in *The Council in Trullo Revisited*, p. 64: "Confirmation of the Apostolic constitutions, of the traditions of the Fathers, and of the previous councils. It is the most noble and serious resolve of this holy council that the eighty-five canons which have come down to us under the name of the holy and glorious Apostles, received and confirmed by the holy and blessed Fathers before us, should henceforth remain firm and secure, for the healing of souls and curing of passions."

<sup>159</sup> Michael D. Marlowe, "The "Apostolic Canons" (about A.D. 380)," *Bible Research* < <http://www.bible-researcher.com/apostolic.html> > Accessed 22 November 2016.

<sup>160</sup> Montanism, a heresy named after its founder, Montanus, "claimed that their movement was the beginning of a new age [...] characterized by a more rigorous moral life" which included celibacy; one of its most famous adherents, attracted to its moral rigorism, was Tertullian. See: Justo Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity vol. 1: The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation*, revised and updated (New York: Harper One, 2010) pp. 91-92.

<sup>161</sup> Michael D. Marlowe, "Cyril of Jerusalem on the Canon," *Bible Research* < <http://www.bible-researcher.com/cyril.html> > Accessed 22 November 2016.

proved influential and caused the authority of the work to be doubted by many, especially in the East.”<sup>162</sup> Another reason why Eusebius could not fully endorse the book of Revelation is that the text “could be understood to relativize the imperial claims to earthly sovereignty” and thus undermine Emperor Constantine’s rule as being “ordained by God and that the emperor’s earthly rule reflects heavenly reality.”<sup>163</sup> The book of Revelation received relatively little attention in the East until the fall of Constantinople in 1453.<sup>164</sup>

The importance of the book of Revelation in the West cannot be doubted. The East was preoccupied by Christological controversies; the West was preoccupied with its own collapse at the hands of successive barbarian onslaughts.<sup>165</sup> The Roman population dropped from 800,000 in 400 AD to 30,000 in 546 AD.<sup>166</sup> The aqueducts were destroyed and the escaping water turned the countryside into a swamp.<sup>167</sup> The Senate ceased to exist and much of the aristocracy left for lands east.<sup>168</sup> Pope Pelagius II (579-590) had to beg the bishops in Gaul for food and clothing for the poor and formerly wealthy of Rome.<sup>169</sup> The Tiber River flooded the city in 589, filling Rome with snakes, rioting, famine, and plague.<sup>170</sup> All of this collapse did much to feed the imaginations of Westerners with images of the Apocalypse.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Stephen Finamore, *God, Order, and Chaos: René Girard and the Apocalypse* (Colorado Springs: Paternoster, 2009) p. 6.

<sup>163</sup> Finamore, p. 5 and footnote n. 29, pp. 5-6.

<sup>164</sup> Finamore, p. 14.

<sup>165</sup> Frederic J. Baumgartner, *Longing for the End: A History of Millennialism in Western Civilization* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999) p. 47.

<sup>166</sup> Duffy, p. 60.

<sup>167</sup> Duffy, p. 60.

<sup>168</sup> Duffy, p. 59.

<sup>169</sup> Duffy, p. 60.

<sup>170</sup> Rob Meens, “Penitential Varieties,” Chapter 15 in *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval History*, ed. John H. Arnold (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014) p. 255.

<sup>171</sup> Ulrich H.J. Körtner argues that the Western predisposition to “apocalyptic thinking” was most recently reinvigorated by the French Revolution and contributed to the “crisis” philosophies of Hegel, Ranke, Burckhardt and Droysen, Saint-Simon or Comte. *The End of the World: A Theological Interpretation*, translated by Douglas W. Stott (Louisville: John Knox Press,

## St. Augustine's City of God

St. Augustine of Hippo did much to establish the book of Revelation's validity in book twenty of his work *City of God*. Written in the context of the sack of Rome by the Goths in 410, Augustine attempted to defend the Christian religion against the pagans who claimed that Rome fell because it abandoned the old gods and customs and allowed the Christian religion to thrive.<sup>172</sup> Augustine argued that there are two social orders: an earthly city built on love of self (egocentric), and a City of God built on love of God (Theocentric).<sup>173</sup> All of human history is filled with successive earthly kingdoms built on love of self, rising and falling, passing with time. But the City of God co-exists through history, mingled with the rising and dying earthly kingdoms, and will at the end remain.<sup>174</sup> Anyone who does not belong to the City of God "shall inherit eternal misery [...] the soul shall then be separated from God its life [...] and the body shall be subjected to eternal pains. And consequently this second death shall be more severe, because no death shall terminate it."<sup>175</sup> The Church exists in the exile of the current intermediate period between Christ's incarnation and Christ's second coming to judge the living and the dead.<sup>176</sup>

### Worship of the Lamb in Western Art

In early Roman church art, the Lamb is usually depicted in reference to the Lamb of the book of Revelation, not just the reference of John the Baptist referring to Christ as the Lamb of God

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1995). This mindset has probably shaped how we perceive catastrophic events since then, including New York City, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001.

<sup>172</sup> Justo L. Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity vol. 1: The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation*, revised and updated (New York: Harper One, 2010) p. 250

<sup>173</sup> Gonzalez, p. 250.

<sup>174</sup> Gonzalez, p. 250.

<sup>175</sup> Augustine of Hippo, *City of God* XIX:28 in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church vol. 2* edited by Phillip Schaff (Edinburgh: T&T Clark) p. 420.

<sup>176</sup> Alister E. McGrath, *A Brief History of Heaven* (Blackwell Publishing, 2003) p. 14.

in the Gospel of John (1:29).<sup>177</sup> In Rome alone, the Lamb was depicted in towers, catacombs, apses, vaults, baptisteries, and facades.<sup>178</sup> The worship of the Lamb (Christ) by the twenty-four elders (Revelation 4:4, 10, 5:8, 14) appeared in Rome in the fifth and sixth centuries (after the sack by the Goths!)<sup>179</sup>

One of the most interesting of these depictions of the worship of the Lamb is in the triumphal arch mosaic of Saints Cosma and Damiano from 526 to 530.<sup>180</sup> In the apse just below this arch, Christ is shown as he ascends to heaven, morphing into the heavenly Jerusalem of the arch where the Lamb sits enthroned on an altar, with a scroll at the foot of the altar and a cross behind the altar, all this flanked by seven golden candlesticks and angels in a glassy sea. A “Handbook on the Apocalypse of the Apostle John” from the seventh century interprets the seven candlesticks as the seven churches under the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.<sup>181</sup> The glassy sea mixed with blood/fire signifies baptism in the blood/fire of the martyrs.<sup>182</sup> This echoes the interpretation in chapter four, where water signifies baptism, sulfur signifies penance, and fire

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<sup>177</sup> Though the Lamb appears predominantly with apocalyptic imagery from the book of Revelation, John the Baptist is in at least one important depiction of the Lamb; Constantine’s baptistery contains a nearly life-sized John the Baptist with the inscription: “BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD, BEHOLD HIM WHO TAKES AWAY THE SINS OF THE WORLD.” *Liber Pontificalis* 34.13, p. 17.

<sup>178</sup> Dale Kinney, “Early Christian Monumental Decoration,” in *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, ed. Richard K. Emmerson and Bernard McGinn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992) pp. 211-216. It is striking that the list of known art with apocalyptic motifs (350-565 AD) numbers 32 in the West and only 5 in the East. Of these 5, only the one in Egypt depicts the Lamb.

<sup>179</sup> Peter K. Klein, “The Apocalypse in Medieval Art,” in *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, ed. Richard K. Emmerson and Bernard McGinn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992) p. 160.

<sup>180</sup> *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, ed. Richard K. Emmerson and Bernard McGinn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992) figure 1, p. 150.

<sup>181</sup> “Handbook on the Apocalypse of John,” in *Early Latin Commentaries on the Apocalypse*, ed. Francis X. Gumerlock (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2016) 1:12, p. 23.

<sup>182</sup> “Handbook on the Apocalypse of John,” 15:2, p. 33.



signifies martyrdom.<sup>183</sup> The phrase “in the midst of the throne” is interpreted “in the midst of the

[Editor’s note this image has been deleted but can be seen online.

*Figure 1: Adoration of the Lamb (526-530AD) SS. Cosma e Damiano, Rome*  
Photo by Miguel Hermoso Cuesta - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0,  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=31693304>]

Church.”<sup>184</sup> Christ sits on the throne of God in heaven/ the throne of God in the church.<sup>185</sup> The sealed scroll at the foot of the altar is the obscured meaning of the Scriptures, the meaning opened when Christ came; one must “take and eat” the Scriptures that they may fill the stomach (the will); the taste is “bitter” because when preached, “we must leave behind all things for the sake of Christ”; but the taste is also “sweet” because “eternal life is promised.”<sup>186</sup> This mural is but one instance in the Roman church of the rich imagery and symbolism associated with the Lamb of the Apocalypse; this symbolism points to the Lamb as Christ’s presence in the Church, the New Jerusalem, on the throne of the altar, judging the living and the dead.

### **Altars, Martyrs, Relics, and Eucharist**

The legends of St. Peter and St. Paul preaching and being martyred in Rome are nearly as old as Christianity itself. Pope Gregory I moved the altar of St. Peter’s in Rome directly above the tomb of St. Peter; this way the Eucharist could be performed directly over the martyr’s body.<sup>187</sup> By the end of the eighth century, Rome had become a popular pilgrimage site. One pilgrim from England named Willibrord went to Pope Sergius I in search of relics of apostles and martyrs to put in the altars of new churches, as had been the practice during the time of Gregory I.<sup>188</sup> Eucharist celebrated on these altars was a “pledge” of the vision of peace of

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<sup>183</sup> “Handbook on the Apocalypse of John,” 4:3, p. 25.

<sup>184</sup> “Handbook on the Apocalypse of John,” 4:6, p. 25.

<sup>185</sup> “Handbook on the Apocalypse of John,” 4:2, p. 25.

<sup>186</sup> “Handbook on the Apocalypse of John,” 10:2,4,8,9, p. 30.

<sup>187</sup> *Liber Pontificalis*, 66.4, p. 60.

<sup>188</sup> Alan Thacker, “Rome of the Martyrs: Saints, Cults, and Relics, Fourth to Seventh Centuries,” in *Roma Felix: Formation and Reflections of Medieval Rome*, ed. Éamon Ó Carragáin and Carol Neuman de Vegvar (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007) p. 15.

the heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>189</sup> As Jeffrey Burton Russell explains, “Gregory saw the communion of saints as the heavenly assembly of joy, a joy reflected on earth in the liturgy and in the sacraments. Each Holy Communion, each Eucharistic feast, is a shadow of the feast to come. Heaven is our homeland (*patria*), the land of our Father (*Pater*), and the city of God (*superna civitas*).”<sup>190</sup> The visible relics of the martyrs pointed to the invisible reality of their presence in the celebration of the Eucharist.

In *The Spirituality of Martyrdom: to the Limits of Love*, Servais Pinckaers explains that “Christians understood martyrdom to be a reproduction of the Passion of Jesus... the Eucharist appears first as the proper food for martyrdom, perfectly suited to sustain the courage of the martyrs amid the difficult battle that they wage on behalf of Christ and in imitation of him.”<sup>191</sup> Pinckaers continues:

In the sacrament, the Christian receives the body and blood of Christ and becomes intimately united to him in *agape*, which is also the wellspring of martyrdom. In this Eucharistic *agape*, the Christian receives, under the veil of faith, the “Jesus event” and, as it were, Christ’s [own] witness to himself, which the martyr’s testimony before the judges then produces and echoes. Through the personal contact established in faith through the Eucharist, the light and strength pass into the Christian. This union extends itself into the greater unity of Christians gathered around the bishop in the celebration of a single Eucharist. “Let all of you run together as to one temple of God, as to one altar, to one Jesus

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<sup>189</sup> *Roma Felix: Formation and Reflections of Medieval Rome*, ed. Éamonn Ó Carragáin and Carol Neuman de Vegvar (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007) pp. 8-9.

<sup>190</sup> Jeffrey Burton Russell, *A History of Heaven: The Singing Silence* (Princeton University Press, 1997) p. 98.

<sup>191</sup> Servais Pinckaers, *The Spirituality of Martyrdom: to the Limits of Love*. Translated by Patrick M. Clark and Annie Hounsokou (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 2016) p. 74.

Christ, who came forth from one Father and remained with the One and returned to the One.”<sup>192</sup>

Pinckaers goes on to quote Augustine:

The Eucharist should be a defense to those who receive it, and so those whom we desire to see defended against the adversary should be nourished and comforted by the Sunday meal. How can we teach them and invite them to spill their blood in confession of Christ if we refuse them the blood of Christ when they go to fight? How can we render them capable of drinking the cup of martyrdom if we do not first allow them to drink the cup of the Lord in the church, on account of the regulations governing our communion? (*Letter 57.2.2*)<sup>193</sup>

Martyrdom is thus intimately connected with Eucharist. Eucharist is also intimately connected with the resurrection of the flesh in the future, experienced in the present in ritual form.<sup>194</sup> The *Agnus Dei* is the song that accompanies this sacramental participation in the City of God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, in the present moment, through the body and blood of the Lamb.

### **Summary of Hypothesis: *Agnus Dei*, “Song of the Martyrs”**

The Lamb represented so much more in the Roman mind of the late seventh century than just a “representation of grace, prefiguring for us through the law the true Lamb, Christ our God.”<sup>195</sup> The Lamb is the Lamb of the Apocalypse, found in the book of Revelation, reiterated in the artwork of Rome. The Lamb’s throne is the altar of the Eucharist which contains the relics of apostles and martyrs. As the Lamb opens the fifth seal, we participate in the martyrs’ cry for justice:

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<sup>192</sup> Pinckaers, p. 75; He quotes “Letter of Ignatius to the Magnesians,” in *The Apostolic Fathers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Edited by Michael W. Holmes (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991) p. 95.

<sup>193</sup> Pinckaers, p. 79.

<sup>194</sup> Outi Lehtipuu *Debates over the Resurrection of the Dead: Constructing Early Christian Identity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015) p. 199.

<sup>195</sup> *The Council in Trullo Revisited*, p. 162-164; canon 82.

“How long, Master, the holy and true, until you judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” A long white robe was given to each of them. They were told that they should rest yet for a while, *until their fellow servants and their brothers, who would also be killed even as they were, should complete their course.* (Revelation 6:10-11 WEB)<sup>196</sup>

The worship of the Lamb is a ritual participation in the eternal New Jerusalem, the City of God, in protest to the rising and falling egocentric kingdoms of earth. The Lamb as a symbol functioned in the Roman church like the mockingjay symbol functions in the fictional movie and book series, *The Hunger Games*.<sup>197</sup> Every Eucharist is a subversive act, a sacramental participation in the New Jerusalem, that through Christ’s life and sacrifice uniting with ours, it may “quickly come” (Revelation 22:20).

#### **IV. Concluding Theological Reflection on Significance of Agnus Dei as “Song of the Martyrs”**

To belong to Christ is to be Christ’s disciple, that is to “belong, both body and soul and in life and in death, not to myself, but to my faithful savior Jesus Christ, who has totally paid for all my sins with his precious blood and completely liberated me from the power of the devil[...].”<sup>198</sup> The cost of discipleship is a sacrifice. Costly discipleship is a lifetime sacrificed on the altar of the

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<sup>196</sup> Emphasis mine.

<sup>197</sup> Suzanne Collins, *The Hunger Games* trilogy (New York: Scholastic, 2008, 2009, 2010); *The Hunger Games* movies < <http://www.thehungergames.movie/#/?lang=us-en> > Accessed 26 November 2016.

<sup>198</sup> Question 1 “What is your only comfort in life and in death?” in *The Heidelberg Catechism: A New Translation for the Twenty-first Century*, translated by Lee C. Barrett (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2007) p. 29.

Gospel.<sup>199</sup> It is a life united to Christ’s life and his sacrificial death on Calvary through the Eucharist. If the Sanctus is the song of the angels, then the Agnus Dei is the song of the martyrs—an “altar call” to living self-sacrifice for the love of God and God’s reign.<sup>200</sup> Costly discipleship is a longing for God’s perfected reign of love of God and neighbor, without sorrow or death, over and against this world’s demonic and destructive love of self. Costly discipleship is a life lived in unity with the martyrs and in obedience to the Lamb enthroned on the altar, who will come again to judge the living and the dead, whose blood alone takes away the sins of the world, and whose love and mercy for us sinners *is* peace.

## APPENDIX

### Timeline

95 AD	Book of Revelation written <sup>201</sup>
313	Edict of Milan (officially legalized Christianity in empire)
325	Council of Nicea
340	Eusebius of Caesarea, death (Revelation’s authority doubted, esp. in East)
380	Apostolic Canons (Revelation omitted from list of authoritative writings)

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<sup>199</sup> “And be pleased now, O most merciful Father, graciously to receive at our hands this memorial of the blessed sacrifice of Thy Son... in union with which we here offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, the reasonable sacrifice of our own persons; consecrating ourselves, on the altar of the Gospel, in soul and body, property and life, to Thy most blessed service and praise.” From the Oblation in the “Mercersburg Liturgy” of 1866, which can be found in *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, ed. Geoffrey Wainwright and Karen B. Westerfield Tucker (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006) pp. 612-613.

<sup>200</sup> *The Heidelberg Catechism*, Question 32, p. 56: “But why are you called a Christian?—Because through faith I am a member of Christ and therefore share in his anointing, so that I can also confess his name, offer myself as a living sacrifice of thankfulness to him, and fight against sin and the devil throughout this life with a free and good conscience, and hereafter reign with him in eternity over all creatures.”

<sup>201</sup> Stephen Finamore, *God, Order and Chaos: René Girard and the Apocalypse* (Colorado Springs: Paternoster, 2009) p. 168.

400	Rome's population: 800,000
410	Fall of Rome
410-430	<i>City of God</i> by St. Augustine of Hippo (Revelation's authority secured in West)
492-496	Pope Gelasius defines priestly power superior to emperor's power
526-530	Worship of Lamb mural at Saints Cosma and Damiano
546	Rome's population: 30,000
579-590	Pope Pelagius II
590-604	Pope Gregory I "The Great"
649-657	Sergius I born in Sicily
653	Pope Martin I unsuccessfully defies Emperor Constans II
655	Pope Martin I, death
663	Constans II strips Rome of its bronze
663-669	Constans II afflicts Sicily (Sergius I age 6-14)
669	Justinian II, birth
672-676	Sergius I moves to Rome (age 19-23)
685	Justinian II becomes emperor (age 16)
687	Sergius I becomes pope (age 30-38)
692	Council in Trullo
700	AGNUS DEI enters Ordinary of Mass at Fraction rite
701	Sergius I, death (age 44-52)
1453	Fall of Constantinople; The East's interest in book of Revelation increases

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# A Simple Reformation Bibliography with a Focus on Martin Luther

Prepared by F. Christopher Anderson with  
Lee C. Barrett, Byron Berger, Harry Serio, and Jane Ellingwood

## Notes:

1) This bibliography was prepared for the 2017 Craigville Theological Colloquy, on the theme of “The Reformation at 500: Is Grace Still the Answer?”

(<http://craigvillecolloquy.com/wordpress/>).

2) Books marked with three asterisks (\*\*\*), as well as many other books, can be ordered from Hearts & Minds Books

(<http://www.heartsandmindsbooks.com>).

## GENERAL HISTORY ON THE REFORMATION(S)

Eire, Carlos, *Reformations: The Early Modern World, 1450-1650* (Yale, 2016). This is spectacular and gives an integrated account of the Protestant and Catholic reform movements.

Ozment, Steven, *The Age of Reform, 1250-1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe* (Yale, 1981; various newer editions). Probably the BEST overview of the Reformation EVER.

\*\*\* MacCulloch, Diarmaid, *The Reformation: A History* (2005). A moderate and judicious Anglican account of the Reformation. It is considered one of the very best books of history overall, let alone Reformation era history, and it has won some prestigious awards.

\*\*\* MacCulloch, Diarmaid, *All Things Made New: The Reformation and Its Legacy* (Oxford, 2016).

Payton, Jr., James R., *Getting the Reformation Wrong: Correcting Some Misunderstandings* (2010). This might be one of the best

books to read first on the reformation. Payton gives context and history and discusses ways in which Protestants incorrectly view the Reformation. Great for an Adult Sunday School class.

\*\*\* Sunshine, Glenn, *Reformation for Armchair Theologians* (WJK). This is part of a bigger series (see also *Luther for Armchair Theologians* below) that takes theologians and makes them accessible to ordinary folks. There's even some whimsical cartoons and wit about them. This volume looks at all the key players in the tumultuous time of the Reformation.

Dowley, Tim, *Atlas of European Reformations* (2015). This brief and beautiful book offers maps, graphs, timelines, and pictures that give great overviews of the various Reformations.

Ozment, Steven, *The Serpent and the Lamb* (Yale, 2013). Looks at the spread of Lutheran sensibilities through visual art and printed material.

Lindberg, Carter, *The European Reformations* (2009). Encyclopedic, thorough, and fair.

\*\*\* Nichols, Stephen, *The Reformation: How a Monk and a Mallet Changed the World* (Crossway). This is a fun "behind the scenes" look that uncovers some of the dynamics behind this era and the stories of the Reformation. History comes alive in about 180 pages.

\*\*\* Ives, Eric, *The Reformation Experience: Living Through the Turbulent 16th Century* (Lion Press). Ives gives us a "down to Earth" street level view of life in England during the era of the Reformation. This book is different. It is less about the "great figures" (Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, Cramner, etc.) and more about the common people.

\*\*\* McGrath, Alister, *Christianity's Dangerous Idea: The Protestant Revolution -- A History from the Sixteenth Century to the Twenty-first* (HarperOne). This is a great overview of the social,

political, theological and cultural implications and legacy of the "revolution" that that Reformation began. This is a pretty fresh interpretation, unique and really interesting.

\*\*\* Hendrix, Scott H., *Recultivating the Vineyard: The Reformation Agendas of Christendom* (Westminster/John Knox, 2004).

\*\*\* Hillerbrand, Hans, *The Division of Christendom: Christianity in the Sixteenth Century* (Westminster/John Knox).

\*\*\* Reeves, Michael, and Tim Chester, *Why the Reformation Still Matters* (Crossway, 2016).

## **THEOLOGICAL WORKS ON MARTIN LUTHER**

Hendrix, Scott H., *Luther: Visionary Reformer* (Yale University Press, reprint edition, 2017).

Hendrix, Scott, *Luther* (Abingdon Pillars of Theology, 2009). A brief and insightful introduction.

Paulson, Steven D., *Luther for Armchair Theologians*, illustrated by Ron Hill (2004). A great simple introduction to the thought and life of Luther. The illustrations are funny and insightful. The series of books are "written by experts but designed for the non-expert."

Lohse, Bernhard, *Martin Luther: An Introduction to His Life and Work* (German 1980). The title gives the impression that this is about Luther's life. It is more a study of Luther's work and how it has been interpreted. Excellent introduction.

Hoffman, Bengt R., *Theology of the Heart: The Role of Mysticism in the Theology of Martin Luther*, trans. by Pearl Willemssen Hoffman (2003).

Wengert, Timothy J., *Martin Luther's Catechism: Forming the Faith* (2009). Wengert is one of the top scholars on Luther. Wengert's translation of Luther's *Small Catechism* is listed below.

Althaus, Paul, *The Ethics of Martin Luther* (1965). Highly recommended by Bernhard Lohse.

Gritsch, Eric W., *The Wit of Martin Luther* (2006). This book is about Luther's humor and is written by a Luther scholar.

\*\*\* Trueman, Carl, *Luther on the Christian Life: Cross and Freedom* (Crossway). This is in a series that is less designed just to be a full biography (although it does offer a great overview of Luther's life), but more to take the thinker's key ideas and apply them to our spiritual lives today. In this case, it's Luther's view of freedom in Christ.

## LUTHER'S LIFE AND CONTEXT

\*\*\* Marty, Martin, *October 31, 1517: Martin Luther and the Day that Changed the World*, with a foreword by James Martin, SJ (Paraclete, 2016). This one you can read in one sitting, probably, by one of the great Lutheran leaders of our time, with a foreword by a prominent and well-loved Jesuit. It's a splendid, short overview of that key day, what happened, and why.

\*\*\* Bainton, Roland, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther* (Abingdon, 1950). This small biography is still a stand-out, just a really engaging read. For years, it was the standard life of Luther.

Marty, Martin, *Martin Luther* (2004). A short popular book that is on his life. It is not meant to give a history of the Reformation.

Wilson, Andrew, *Here I Walk: A Thousand Miles on Foot to Rome with Martin Luther* (2016).

Tjernagel, Neelak S., *Martin Luther and the Jewish People* (2016).

*The Fables of Aesop.* This was Luther's favorite book after the Bible!

## **LUTHER'S OWN WRITINGS (PRIMARY WRITINGS)**

*Selected Writings of Martin Luther* (4 volumes), ed. by Theodore G. Tappert (Fortress Press, 2007). The first volume covers 1517-1520. It includes Luther's "Ninety-five Theses" (1517), "Heidelberg Disputation (1518), "The Babylon Captivity of the Church" (1520), and other works from the beginning of the Reformation.

*Table Talk*, Vol. 54, Luther's Works, ed. by Theodore G. Tappert (1967). There are many abbreviated versions of this work but the full one is so much fun! It contains the notes of students on what Luther said during meals while he was drinking beer!

*A Commentary on Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians.*

*A Compend of Luther's Theology*, ed. by Hugh Thomason Kerr, Jr. (1943). Kerr divides theology into eleven parts and places quotes by Luther in these various loci. It is an old work but not a bad way to get a picture of Luther's theology in 252 pages.

*A Contemporary Translation of Luther's Small Catechism*, trans. by Timothy J. Wengert.

*The Bondage of the Will*, ed. by J.I. Packer & O. R. Johnston (1957). Many say this is Luther's most theological and important work. It deals with the Augustinian issues of free will and grace. It gets one into the heart of the Erasmus - Luther controversy.

*The Large Catechism of Martin Luther.* This is the catechism that Luther created for the local pastors. Luther was shocked at the ignorance of many pastors and this was meant to give them theological basics. The 1959 Fortress edition is only 105 pages long!

*Through the Year with Martin Luther: A Selection of Sermons Celebrating the Feasts and Seasons of the Christian Year* (Hendrickson Publishers, 2007). These sermons of Luther's are often long and odd, but because they are unedited somehow one is taken back to experience how sermons were quite different when Luther was preaching.

## **DEVOTIONALS BASED ON LUTHER'S WRITINGS**

*Daily Readings from Luther's Writings*, Barbara Owen, editor (1993). Unlike the other three, immediately below, this does not have a devotional for every date in the year, but it has many more than the last one in this list. Other than that it is very good.

*Day by Day We Magnify You*, Marshall D. Johnson, editor (original 1946). This is considered the best by many.

*Faith Alone: A Daily Devotional*, James C. Calvin, editor (1998). An excellent devotional put together by someone from Youth For Christ.

*Luther Brevier / Luther's Breviary*, Gledhill & Wilson, translators (2007).

*Praying with Martin Luther: Companions for the Journey*, Peter E. Bastien (1999). Includes 15 meditations which are longer than the others on the list above.



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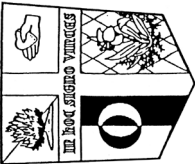
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